Tourism Development Authority Grant Process Update

Asheville City Council
November 14, 2023

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Key Takeaways

- Grants from the Tourism Development Authority (TDA) provide the City with opportunities to leverage funds for tourism-related capital projects.
- The City's goal is to align capital needs with the allowable uses for TDA grant funding.
- TDA uses the Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF) and Legacy Investment from Tourism (LIFT) funds to support grants to government and nonprofit agencies.
- The City continues to work with the TDA and other partners to plan projects.
- Phase 1 Applications for LIFT funding are due December 1, 2023.

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Grant Funds

- Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF)
  - Focused on major tourism capital projects

- Legacy Investment from Tourism (LIFT)
  - Focused on projects that:
    - Increase patronage of lodging facilities, meeting facilities, and convention facilities by attracting tourists, business travelers
    - Benefit the community at large in Buncombe County

2023 TPDF Project Awards

2023 TPDF Awarded Projects	Amount
• Harrah's Cherokee Center Asheville - TPDF	$1,586,000
• McCormick Field - Major Works Funding	$22,950,000

2023 LIFT Applications

Project	Description	Amount
1. Coxe Avenue	Partially grant funded planning, environmental and engineering work to improve the pedestrian and multimodal infrastructure along Coxe Ave, from Patton Ave. to Short Coxe Ave.	$3,000,000
2. Thomas Wolfe Auditorium	HVAC Repair and Design for Auditorium	$1,792,000
3. Big Belly Trash Cans	Big Belly Trial in key areas with 10 Big Belly Units	$30,000
4. Harrah's Cherokee Center	HVAC upgraded, Elevator replacement, Loading dock suring.	$675,000
5. Aston Tennis Center	Design of rebuild of 6 tennis courts	$15,000
6. Nasty Branch Greenway	Urban greenway linking the southern River Arts District / Livingston Street neighborhood to the South French Broad neighborhood. The greenway will include two retaining walls, benches, approximately 4,000 linear feet of 10-foot (typical) asphalt greenway, entry treatments, and historical markers.	$1,000,000

Upcoming Possible TDA Project Applications

Infrastructure	Regional Assets
● I-26 Recommended Priorities ○ Bowen Bridge Enhancements ○ Haywood Bridge and Interchange ○ Hill Street and I-240 Pedestrian Bridges ● Affordable Housing ● Infrastructure improvements Downtown ○ ADA Sidewalks based on the GAP Plan ○ Parking Garage improvements ● Greenways	● Thomas Wolfe Auditorium ● Harrah's Cherokee Center Asheville ● Municipal Golf Course ● Nature Center ● Aston Park Tennis Center

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LIFT Grants Timeline

Date	Milestone
October 31, 2023	Phase I Applications Open
December 1, 2023	Phase I Applications Due
December 18, 2023	Phase I Applicants Notified (Invite to Phase II)
February 28, 2023	Phase II Applications Due
April 24, 2024	Funding Recommendations presented to the BCTDA Board

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Questions?

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Occupancy Tax Changes

House Bill 1057/SL 2022-40 amended the Local Occupancy Tax Rules:

- Marketing allocation reduced from 75% to 66%
- Created the Legacy Investment from Tourism (LIFT) fund for tourism related projects that attract tourists and benefits the community at large
- Changes maximum debt service period of performance from 10 to 15 years

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