



# *City of Rockdale*

## **Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund Visitor Center Grant Application Packet**

**NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION REQUESTING FUNDS:**

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*Revised as of 2020*

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## Overview of the Application Process

This packet was designed to establish guidelines to apply universally to all entities requesting funds from the City of Rockdale in regard to financial support from the City Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) Fund. There are stringent requirements in the Tax Code regulating the use of HOT funds. A copy of the applicable sections of the Tax Code has been included in this packet for your review.

The City will review the application and make recommendations to the City of Rockdale City Council regarding approval or denial of the request and give additional comments as to the size of the financial funding request based on estimated economic impact relevant to the request, as well as taking into consideration the need for local community economic impact relevant to the community calendar. The City will work with the applicant to ensure that all necessary documentation is included when presenting to the City of Rockdale City Council. The City of Rockdale City Council will make the final decision on funding the event and at what level.

## Rules Governing Your Application

1. The applicant must present reasonable evidence that the event will directly impact the hotel/convention business AND promote tourism in the City of Rockdale.
2. For any applicant applying for HOT funds to advertise an event, the City requires these funds focus on targeting visitors outside a **50 mile radius** of the City of Rockdale. *Applicant must also attach a copy of their marketing plan for advertising including (1) vehicle for advertising; what medium (magazine, newspaper, radio etc.); (2) rate card/sheet for said vehicle (3) expected run date or issue.*
3. After the application process is complete, the applicant may be expected to present an overview to the city manager & marketing director to evaluate application items such as visitor attendance of the event, hotel selection, and overnight stays directly attributed to the event. If initial estimates upon which the event funding was predicated were not met, the city manager will recommend an amount of reimbursement back to the HOT Fund.

## Process Overview

### **The Pre-Event Funding and Reimbursement Process:**

1. The City of Rockdale reserves the right to decide how funds will be dispensed; annually, quarterly, or monthly.
2. The City of Rockdale reserves the right to decide if **partial** or **all** funding should be reimbursed to the city provided the organization or event did not meet the requirements of said contract.
3. The City of Rockdale reserves the absolute and ongoing right to conduct an audit of anyone receiving HOT Funds to ensure correct use of HOT Funds.

### **The Post-Event Process:**

The Post Event Analysis must include all items outlined in the application, including samples of advertisements produced with the use of HOT funds. If the Post Event Analysis and the final accounting of room nights are not received by the due date, the City of Rockdale reserves the right to reject any future application by the organization and to request reimbursement of partial or all HOT Funding.

It is the responsibility of the event to monitor the number of out-of-town guests who stay in City of Rockdale lodging properties in relation to their event. It is strongly recommended to work with the local hotels to ensure proper credit and tracking. Some suggestions for tracking out-of-town guests would be to use a zip code tracking system or tracking through hotels. Please note that stated room nights generated will be subject to an audit by the City of Rockdale.

A hotel list has been included in this packet for your reference in coordinating room blocks and/or directing people to overnight accommodations.

It is extremely important that applications be filled out completely and accurately.

## Support Considerations Checklist

Name of Entity: \_\_\_\_\_

Year Applying: \_\_\_\_\_

YES    NO   The request “directly enhances and promotes tourism AND the convention and hotel industry.” (Tax Code, Section 351.101)

YES    NO   The request qualifies under AT LEAST ONE of the following categories:

**(Please circle category number)**

- 1) the establishment, improvement, or maintenance of a convention center or visitor information center
- 2) administrative costs incurred for assisting in the registration of convention delegates or attendees
- 3) advertising, solicitations and promotions that attract tourists and convention delegates to City of Rockdale
  - NOTE: If applying under this category, legitimate media must be utilized IN ADVANCE of the event (examples include direct mail, postage, newspapers, magazines, radio, television, billboards, newsletters, targeted Facebook Boosts, brochures and other collateral material) with a targeted audience or reach beyond 50 mile radius from Rockdale.
- 4) the encouragement, promotion, improvement and application of the arts
  - NOTE: Must be a viable art form (examples include instrumental and vocal music, dance, drama, folk art, creative writing, architecture, design and allied fields, painting, sculpture, photography, graphic and craft arts, motion pictures, radio, television, tape and sound recording)
- 5) the enhancement of historical restoration and preservation projects
- 6) certain expenses, including promotional expenses, directly related to a sporting event where the majority of the participants are tourists that substantially increase hotel activity
- 7) signage for tourism related facilities
- 8) funding transportation systems for tourists

**FOR USE BY NON-CITY OF ROCKDALE ENTITIES**

YES     NO    An End of Year Analysis for has been previously submitted. (Write “N/A” if you did not receive support last year) \_\_\_\_\_

YES     NO    It has been determined how the entity will track out-of-town guests, demonstrating that the event will attract tourists that will support the convention and hotel industry. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

YES     NO    The application is filled out thoroughly and completely with all requested documentations attached.

**Please note: All items must be completed before the application can be submitted.**

## Entity Support Application

### Organization/Business Information

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Event Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Organization/Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Address

City

State

Zip

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Status of organization:    Non-Profit                  Private/For Profit                  Govt. Agency  
*Circle the one that best describes your organization*

Tax ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose of your organization/business:

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### Expenditure Description

*Please answer all items that apply to your request.*

Name of your entity:

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Website address of your entity:

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Date(s) of expenditure:

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How will the funds be used to directly enhance and promote tourism AND the hotel and convention industry in the City of Rockdale?

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Funds to be paid:     Reimbursement only     Advance Total     Advance Partial \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Check one)*

**FOR USE BY NON-CITY OF ROCKDALE ENTITIES**

List other means of financial support including in-kind support

<b>Name</b>	<b>Amount to receive</b>

Primary location of expenditure:

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Number of persons expected to visit entity monthly/yearly:

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Approximate number of people attending/visiting event or expenditure will stay overnight in local hotels, motels or bed & breakfasts?

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**List normal and special Visitor Center Operating Hours and projected events or activities promoting Tourism.:**

***Required Attachments:***

Check all documents that are attached along with the application

- P&L from previous year's program
- Projected budget for entire program
- Itemized, detailed list of expenditures relevant for HOT revenue use
- Advertising / Marketing Plan, including target audience
- List of Board of Directors with contact phone numbers
- Event planning timeline, if applicable
- Schedule of activities relating to your event/expenditure
- Copy of Tax Exempt certificate, if applicable

# Funding Request Overview

Amount Requested: \$

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Amount Granted In Past For Same Entity Expenditure: \$

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Which Expenditure Category From Page 4 Is Most Relevant To Your Expenditure?

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## HOT Fund Grant Application Packet Form

Please return completed application with necessary attachments and signature to the City of Rockdale Marketing Director – no later than **60 days** prior to event or project – so it may be reviewed and submitted for Council Agenda.

HAND DELIVERY:  
City Manager  
505 W. Cameron Ave.,  
Rockdale, Texas 76567  
(City Hall)

MAIL:  
City Manager  
Rockdale City Hall  
P.O. Box 586  
Rockdale, TX 7656

FAX -- Attn: City Manager 512-446-6258

EMAIL: [BHOLLY@RockdaleCityHall.com](mailto:BHOLLY@RockdaleCityHall.com)

I have read the HOT Tax Fund Grant Application Process including the Rules Governing the Application and the Reimbursement Process.

I fully understand the HOT Tax Fund Grant Application Process, Rules Governing the Application and the process established by the City of Rockdale. I intend to use this grant for the aforementioned event/project to forward the efforts of the City of Rockdale in directly enhancing and promoting tourism and the convention and hotel industry by attracting visitors and hotel guests from outside City of Rockdale into the city. A tourist is defined as coming from 50 miles away from Rockdale.

I understand that if I am awarded a HOT Fund Grant, any deviation from the approved project or from the rules governing the application may result in the partial or total withdrawal of the HOT Fund Grant or a requirement to refund any and all funds received.

I understand that this Organization will reimburse the City of Rockdale no later than 60 days from Post Event Report if funded room nights are not met.

**Business/Organization Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Applicant's Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Applicant's Role in Organization*

# City Staff Recommendation

*City Staff Representative Recommended Grant Amount:*

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Payment:

\_\_\_\_\_

Conditions of Grant:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*City of Rockdale Approval*

*City of Rockdale Designee:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*