



Orange County Economic Development Corporation
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Orange TX 77630
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For Immediate Release:
Orange County Hotel/Motel Tax Committee

Orange County, Texas (January 5, 2012)—The Orange County Hotel/Motel Tax committee has rereleased applications for non-profit entities within Orange County to apply for a portion of the County’s Hotel/Motel Tax funds. The earlier release contained an error that limited the application to “501(C)(3)” organizations and should have been to any “501(C)” organizations. Any 501(C) organization in Orange County that attracts visitors to Orange County Texas can make application to the committee. Any organizations that have already submitted applications do not need to resubmit their application.

There are a number of restrictions by state law as to how the funds can be utilized. First, the funds must be used in a manner that encourages overnight visitors to Orange County. Secondly, expenditures must fall within one of the following categories.

1. Convention Centers and Visitor Information Centers: the acquisition of sites for and the construction, improvement, enlarging, equipping, repairing, operation and maintenance of convention center facilities or visitor information centers, or both;
2. Registration of Convention Delegates: the furnishing of facilities, personnel, and materials for the registration of convention delegates or registrants;
3. Advertising, Solicitations and Promotions that Directly Promote Tourism and the Hotel and Convention Industry: advertising and conducting solicitations and promotional programs to attract tourists and convention delegates or registrants to the county;
4. Promotions of the Arts that Directly Promote Tourism and the Hotel and Convention Industry: that the encouragement, promotion, improvement, and application of the arts, including instrumental and vocal music, dance, drama, folk art, creative writing, architecture, design and allied fields, painting, sculpture photography, graphic and craft arts, motion picture, radio, television, tape and sound recording, and other arts related to the presentation, performance, execution, and exhibition of these major art forms,
5. Historical Restoration and Preservation Activities that Directly Promote Tourism and the Hotel and Convention Industry: historical restoration and preservation projects or activities or advertising and conducting solicitation and promotional programs to encourage tourists and convention delegates to visit preserved historic sites or museums.

6. Sporting Event Expenses that Substantially Increase Economic Activity at Hotels: Expenses including promotional expenses, directly related to a sporting event in which the majority of participants are tourists who substantially increase economic activity at hotels and motels within the county.
7. Certain Portions of Sporting Facilities: Expenses for a certain percentage of a facility's patrons that are directly contributing to increased local hotel activity.
8. Shuttle Services for Convention Activities: Shuttle services for an event is an eligible expense provided the shuttle services begins or terminates at a local hotel facility.

Applications can be downloaded from the Orange County Economic Development Corporation web site at www.orangecountyedc.com. Applications will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. January 20, 2012 at the OCEDC offices; 1201 Childers Road, Orange, TX 77630 or interested persons can call the OCEDC offices at (409) 883-7770 and have an application mailed to you. The Hotel/Motel Tax Committee will review the applications and hold a public hearing in February. The committee will then make recommendations to the Orange County Commissioner's Court for expenditure of the funds.

One major project that will be considered for funding will be the CHAMPS project to be located on Highway 1442. This proposed facility was the focal point for the passing of the tax. This will be a multi-million dollar project that will serve many uses for Orange County. It has not been determined how much of the tax funds will be dedicated to that project. All remaining funds will be dedicated to the various projects around Orange County.