



Memorandum

Date: 4/5/2022

Meeting of: Committee of the Whole - Planning and Public Works

File No. CM 22-297

Type: Committee Memo

TO: Committee of the Whole - Planning and Public Works

FROM: Mayor Angela Birney

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR CONTACT(S):

Planning and Community Development	Carol V. Helland	425-556-2107
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DEPARTMENT STAFF:

Planning and Community Development	Sarah Pyle	Manager
Planning and Community Development	Jackie Lalor	Program Administrator

TITLE:

Approval of the Round Two 2022 Tourism Fund Allocation for Matching Grants

OVERVIEW STATEMENT:

Council is being asked to approve the recommendation of the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) for allocation of the round two 2022 matching grants from the Tourism Fund. Due to the impacts of the pandemic and the uncertainty of mandates for the 2022 event season, many producers did not know last year if they would be able to host events. This second window is to ensure that all producers holding events in 2022 had an additional opportunity to apply for the event matching grants and aid in the city's economic and community recovery.

☒ **Additional Background Information/Description of Proposal Attached**

REQUESTED ACTION:

☐ **Receive Information**

☒ **Provide Direction**

☐ **Approve**

REQUEST RATIONALE:

- **Relevant Plans/Policies:**
Comprehensive Plan, Long-Term Recovery Plan, RMC Title 4
- **Required:**
N/A
- **Council Request:**
N/A
- **Other Key Facts:**

The City of Redmond collects a lodging tax of one percent on each overnight stay at hotels located within Redmond and allocates these revenues to the Lodging Tax Fund. The purpose of the Lodging Tax Fund ("Tourism Fund") is to increase tourism in Redmond by attracting visitors from 50 miles or more away, especially overnight

visitors who stay in Redmond hotels, by funding event marketing, operation of special events, festivals, and/or tournaments.

Applications Received: The City received 14 external grant applications from non-profit and for-profit organizations. There were nine applications in round one for 2022 that were already approved by Council on November 1 for grant funds.

Criteria: Applications are reviewed against the program fund criteria for tourism promotion, which prioritizes:

- Benefit to the community
- Innovation
- Overnight stays
- Community support
- Partnerships
- The scale of the project
- Other funding sources and
- New or ongoing funding

Per Council's feedback from January 2020 and additional feedback from November 2021, the grant application criteria were broken out and application components that support the criteria were assigned points. Each application received a weighted ranking to increase equitable evaluation of the applications. The current criteria have been in place for approximately 10 years. City staff recently updated documents for this last round to further create clarity per the added direction provided by Council in November of last year as well as event producers. Additional criteria details and scoring methods will be provided to applicants moving forward.

A joint meeting between City Council and LTAC is planned for October 2023. That meeting is intended for an annual report, joint discussion, presentation of the proposed updated strategic plan, and rules of procedure; as well as a decision on the 2023 matching grants.

OUTCOMES:

LTAC recommends funding 13 of 14 applications that demonstrated alignment with the grant criteria and tourism goals. Recommended Round Two 2022 Applications:

- 1. Crossfire Challenge:** One of the state's largest reoccurring youth soccer tournaments hosted by Crossfire Premier Soccer Club, an affiliate of Lake Washington Youth Soccer Association. Location: 60-Acres; *Non-profit*
- 2. Crossfire Select:** Large three-day youth soccer tournament on the West Coast, an affiliate of Lake Washington Youth Soccer Association (separate event from Crossfire Challenge). Location: 60-Acres; *Non-profit*
- 3. Dribble, Shoot, Swish:** 3 on 3 Basketball tournaments. Location: Downtown TBD; *For-profit*
- 4. ECNL Girl's Soccer Tournament:** Large girl's playoff soccer tournament that comes every 2-3 years (rotating venues). Location: 60-Acres; *Non-profit*
- 5. Evergreen Tabletop Expo:** Event for participants to design and play tabletop games but also includes panels, lectures, and contests. Location: Marriott; *Non-profit*
- 6. JBMV Junior Take Over:** New junior track cycling clinics and racing event. Location: Marymoor Park; *Non-profit*
- 7. PNW Chalkfest:** Chalk art festival. Location: Redmond Town Center; *For-profit*
- 8. Redmond Arts Festival:** Multiday event connecting the community to local artists. Location: Redmond Town Center; *Non-profit*
- 9. Second StoryRep:** Live theater performances. Location: Redmond Town Center; *Non-profit*
- 10. Simon:** A one-day event with the World's Largest Game of Simon and also includes family-friendly games and a video game art exhibition at VALA Eastside. Location: Downtown Park and Redmond Town Center *Non-profit*

11. Sip Redmond Wine Walk: Inaugural Sip Redmond Wine Walk weekend in August to coincide with the Washington State Wine Commission's August month-long wine activities. Location: Redmond Town Center; *Non-profit*

12. Winter Festival Holiday Market: Will coordinate with Redmond Lights and bring vendors, music, multicultural entertainment, and interactive activities to the City that highlights our multicultural residents. Location: Downtown Park/Redmond Town Center TBD; *Non-profit*

13. Youth Mariachi Conference: A three-day Youth Mariachi Conference, the first-ever in Western Washington, will invite acclaimed, professional Mariachi musicians to lead and instruct a cohort of 100-125 youth musicians from across the region. Location: Old Fire House Teen Center TBD; *Non-profit*

Match Requirements: One of the events recommended for funding did not include a match equivalent to their recommended awards. For all applicants, staff will require proof of matching funds. If the match is not met, the awarded amount shall be reduced to the documented match provided.

Other Grant Requirements: Of the applications received, one did not meet the requirements necessary to be considered - Let's Move Redmond: The event is limited in its external audience, does not generate significant traffic to local businesses or night's stay. This event may be eligible for other grants.

Conflicts of interest can occur due to a requirement that the board members must either be an entity for which the tax is charged or an entity that can receive grant dollars. Additionally, it is encouraged that members are active in the community and tourism.

Per MRSC guidance <<https://mrsc.org/Home/Research-Tools/Ask-MRSC-Archives/Legal.aspx>>, members may participate in votes of *recommendation* where a conflict might be present.

COMMUNITY/STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH AND INVOLVEMENT:

- **Timeline (previous or planned):**
Application window January 25, 2022 - February 16, 2022
- **Outreach Methods and Results:**
 - o Application notification via e-mail
 - o Application window notification via enews and press release
 - o Application window messaging from local partners
- **Feedback Summary:**
N/A

BUDGET IMPACT:

Total Cost:

A total of \$160,000 for matching grants is recommended by the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee for City Council's approval.

Approved in current biennial budget: ☒ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **N/A**

Budget Offer Number:

000250 - Community and Economic Development

Budget Priority:

Vibrant and Connected

Other budget impacts or additional costs: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

If yes, explain:

N/A

Funding source(s):

Lodging Tax

Budget/Funding Constraints:

N/A

☐ **Additional budget details attached**

COUNCIL REVIEW:

Previous Contact(s)

Date	Meeting	Requested Action
	Item has not been presented to Council	

Proposed Upcoming Contact(s)

Date	Meeting	Requested Action
4/19/2022	Business Meeting	Receive Information
5/3/2022	Business Meeting	Approve
10/11/2022	Study Session	Receive Information
11/1/2022	Business Meeting	Approve

Time Constraints:

To allow adequate time for applicants to plan appropriately with their available funding and to being alignment with state decision timelines, we would like to complete the grant approval process no later than May 3, 2022.

ANTICIPATED RESULT IF NOT APPROVED:

If the LTAC recommendation is not approved, proposed events would not receive matching grant funds from the City and may be unable to proceed as planned.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. General Tourism and LTAC FAQ and Overview-2022
- B. Grant Application Matrix
- C. Slides