



City of Mount Vernon 2020 Lodging Tax/Tourism Promotion Funding Application Guidelines

2020 funding requests are now being accepted by the City of Mount Vernon.

Applications for Lodging Tax/Tourism Promotion Funding are due by August 23, 2019 at the Finance Office in City Hall.

What is the Tourism Promotion Fund?

Funding for this program comes from the Mount Vernon Tourism Promotion Fund which receives hotel/motel taxes from lodging establishments inside the city limits. The City collects a four percent tax on charges for overnight lodging (2% is considered a basic hotel/motel tax and the second 2% is a credit against the sales tax that lodging establishments collect).

What can be funded with Lodging Tax Revenue?

Lodging taxes can be used for:

- tourism marketing,
- marketing and operations of special events and festivals,
- operations of tourism-related facilities owned or operated by nonprofit organizations,
- operations and capital expenditures of tourism related facilities owned by the City of Mount Vernon.

State Law Defining the Use of Lodging Tax

Revised Code of Washington (RCW), Chapter 67.28 - *Public Stadium, Convention, Arts and Tourism Facilities*, governs the use of lodging tax funds and outlines required annual reporting of the lodging tax revenues. The required reporting to the State of Washington is incorporated into the City of Mount Vernon's application forms and process.

Important Terms Relating to RCW 67.28

Tourism: economic activity resulting from tourists, which may include sales of overnight lodging, meals, tours, gifts, or souvenirs

Tourism promotion: activities, operations, and expenditures designed to increase tourism, including but not limited to advertising, publicizing, or otherwise distributing information for the purpose of attracting and welcoming tourists; developing strategies to expand tourism; operating tourism promotion agencies; and funding the marketing of or the operation of special events and festivals designed to attract tourists

Tourism-related facility: real or tangible personal property with a usable life of three or more years, or constructed with volunteer labor, and used to support tourism, performing arts, or to accommodate tourist activities

Who May Apply?

The 2020 funding program is open to non-profit organizations with the demonstrated ability to achieve tourism goals as outlined below.

- Increase hotel occupancy in Mount Vernon by creating overnight stays.
- Increase overnight stays during the off season.
- Provide visitor attractions and/or promote the area's existing attractions.
- Attract more businesses to Mount Vernon and thereby generate additional business for hotels and motels.

All applications must include estimates of how funding the activity will result in increases to people staying overnight, travelling 50 miles or more, or coming from another state or country.

Selection and Award Process

Funding of the program and specific awards are dependent on recommendations of the City's Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC). The LTAC will receive all applications and recommend a list of candidates and funding levels that will be forwarded to the Mount Vernon City Council for final determination. **Funds will be awarded on a competitive basis**, and applicants will be notified following City Council decision.

The LTAC and City Council will make awards based on the most competitive applications that meet the criteria for funding.

Application Requirements

All organizations seeking funding under this program must submit a completed application form along with all required documentation in order to be considered for funding. Incomplete applications will not be considered by the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee.

Applications must be received at Mount Vernon City Hall by 5:00 p.m. on August 23, 2019. Please submit only one fully completed and signed original. All applications must be able to be clearly reproduced in black and white.

Mount Vernon City Hall mailing address: Becky Jensen
Finance Department
910 Cleveland Ave.
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

For more information contact Becky Jensen at 360-419-3253 or by email at mvfinance@mountvernonwa.gov.

Organizations awarded funds will be required to execute a contractual agreement that will set out the performance expectations, level of funding and the mechanism for invoicing for payment.

Reporting

The State of Washington requires municipalities to report on the use of funds for the year. Specific questions are included in the application form for this purpose.

Additionally, all recipients of lodging tax revenue, regardless of what the revenue is to be used for, must submit a post-event activity report to the City describing the actual number of travelers generated.

The City will, as part of the contract with the recipients, require that the post-event report be provided after the event or activity, but no later than January 31st of the next year. The City compiles all report information, then files an annual report to the State of Washington Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLAR C) by March 15th of the following year.

The post-event activity report must include the following:

- Total amount spent on the event.
- The number of participants who attended the event/activity in each of the following categories:
 - Staying overnight in paid accommodations away from their place of residence or business;
 - Staying overnight in unpaid accommodations (e.g. with friends and family) and traveling fifty miles or more one way from their place of residence or business;
 - Staying for the day only and traveling more than fifty miles or more one way from their place of residence or business;
 - Attending but not included in one of the three categories above.
- The estimated number of participants in any of the above categories that attended from out-of-state (includes other countries).
- A description of methods used to determine attendance and distinguish among the visitor categories at the event/activity.

Any recipient awarded funding must complete the reporting requirements.



City of Mount Vernon 2020 Tourism Promotion Funding Application

Applicant Information	
Organization Name:	
Project Title:	
Amount of Funding Requested:	
Address:	
Website:	
Contact Person:	
Contact Phone Number:	
E-mail:	
Signature:	
Date Submitted:	

Project Summary
Provide a Description of the Project Activity:

How will requested funds be used for tourism promotion, marketing special events, acquisition of tourism-related facilities or operation of tourism-related facilities?

Required documentation that must be submitted with Funding Application:	"X" if enclosed
Proposed budget for project or organization (whichever is most applicable)	
Balance Sheet for Organization	

Additional information about the Agency's project	Enter amount
Total amount anticipated to be spent on the project	\$
Estimated number of participants who will attend in the following categories:	
1. Staying overnight in paid accommodations away from their place of residence or business	
2. Estimated paid lodging nights	
3. Staying overnight in unpaid accommodations (e.g. with friends and family) and traveling fifty miles or more one way from their place of residence or business	
4. Staying for the day only and traveling more than fifty miles or more one way from their place of residence or business	
5. Attending but not included in one of the three categories above.	
The estimated number of participants in any of the above categories that will attend from out-of-state.	
Please provide a description of methods the Agency will use to determine attendance and distinguish among the visitor categories.	