



Special Event/Conference Grant Funding Program Guidelines & Application

This program is administered by the Highlands County Tourist Development Council (TDC), which is overseen by the Highlands County Board of County Commissioners. Approved by TDC on April 30, 2020. Updated Nov. 15, 2021.

AUTHORIZATION HISTORY

The Florida State Legislature enacted the Local Option Tourist Development Act ([Section 125.0104, Florida Statutes](#)) in response to the growing need of Florida counties to provide additional revenue sources for Tourist Development in an effort to stimulate the local economy. The Highlands County Tourist Development Council (TDC) was created in 1995 pursuant to Highlands County Ordinance 95-4, and it operates in accordance with Section 125.0104, Florida Statutes. The county's 4% Tourist Development Tax (TDT) is levied on occupied transient lodging sales, i.e. hotels/motels, campgrounds and other short-term rental properties. The TDT Revenues are designated to promote Sebring/Highlands County as a preferred visitor destination and assist with increasing tourism to the county in the non-peak tourism months.

The nine-member Highlands County Tourist Development Council (TDC) is an appointed advisory group tasked with making recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) on how the TDT funds should be spent to achieve the County's tourist development goals. More information about the TDT can be found in the enabling legislation, Section 125.0104, Florida Statutes.

Why Tourism Development?

Tourism is an economic development tool that provides great benefits to the citizens of Highlands County including job creation, sales and gasoline taxes, plus millions of dollars in ad valorem tax revenue paid by local tourism businesses, all which help pay for the quality of life we enjoy. So, while overnight visitors pay the TDT, the approximate \$150 million in direct spending that visitors pay annually to local businesses does much more.

Uses of the Tourist Development Tax are restricted by Florida Statute and County Ordinance. Simply put, the TDC's Grant Program is permitted only as a means of advertising and promoting tourism. **Therefore, events funded through this program must demonstrate the intent and effect of attracting visitors to Highlands County.**

Visit Sebring leads and supports the Highlands County tourism industry by providing innovative marketing programs and promotions to ensure the continued growth of tourism and travel from visitors. The purpose of the Special Event/Group Meeting or Conference Grant Program is to position Highlands County as a must-experience destination in Florida through quality events and initiatives. The TDC recognizes special events, group meetings and conferences as a major contributor to the overall tourism economy. In order to assist these special events, the TDC has guidelines for special events seeking funding.

All requests for funds from organizers (Applicants) seeking to host an Event must be reviewed and approved by TDC Staff, the TDC and the Highlands County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). Funds that will be submitted for TDC reimbursement cannot be spent until final approval by BOCC has been granted and contract with County has been fully executed.

Once a funding amount has been approved, funds will not be disbursed until after the Event has been completed and both a post-event economic impact report and the final Room Night Verification Form(s) have been produced and timely submitted to the TDC for review.

The number and extent of these grants will be dependent upon the availability of designated funds and specific allocations. Ideally, the funds allocated by the TDC will eventually be returned through overnight lodging sales and the TDT generated from those sales. The intent of the Special Event/Group Meeting or Conference Funding Program is to provide funding assistance for events that attract overnight visitors to Highlands County.

Special Event/Conference Criteria

For special events/conferences staged in Sebring/Highlands County April-December that attract overnight visitors in county, grant program criteria include:

1. Room night minimum: At least 50 verified room nights
2. Exceptions can be made for January events with verified rooms nights on weekdays
3. Maximum funding: \$10,000 based on \$20/verified room night
4. Application period: Quarterly at TDC meetings; must be 6 months before event
5. Funding: Grant funds can assist with out-of-county advertising and marketing, entertainment (for events open to the public; events that are not for conference attendees only); facility rental. A/V equipment rental; in-county group transportation/tours, etc.
6. Not applicable to exclusive events such as weddings, family reunions, class reunions, etc.

STATEMENT OF POLICIES

1. To be considered for the maximum award available, applications are due at a MINIMUM six (6) months prior to the Event/Project start date. (Exceptions can be made with special circumstances)
2. Staff will conduct a preliminary review of the application.
3. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Not applicable or N/A should be marked if needed.
4. Funding is not intended to support administrative costs. Funding is intended to support marketing and promotional efforts, venue/site rentals and costs directly related to hosting the event, etc.
5. The Visit Sebring logo block must appear prominently in all advertising and publicity (written or electronic) for the Event/Project.
6. Hotels/accommodations secured for the Event must be located within Highlands County.
7. Funding shall be provided as reimbursement for approved actual expenditures upon completion of the Event. Proof of payment must be provided. Proof of payment may be submitted in the form of a vendor receipt and a front and back copy of cleared check or credit card receipt. Cash receipts will not be accepted for reimbursements.
8. The TDC will only pay the agreed upon facility fees directly to the Applicant with a required submission of receipt copy.
9. To be eligible for payment, Applicant must timely submit completed, signed and verified Room Block Report(s)/Room Night Certification Form(s). Failure to submit completed Room Block Report (s)/Room Night Certification Form(s) will result in disqualification for support. Applicant must provide the written report including documentation of the actual room nights generated in

comparison to the initial room night guarantee indicated in the application not more than 60 days after the Event/Project concludes. It is the responsibility of Applicant to provide proof of room nights generated. This is not the responsibility of Visit Sebring. Visit Sebring staff may confirm accuracy of the Room Night Verification Form at staff discretion. Any funds granted will be subject to audit by the Highlands County Clerk of the Court – Internal Auditor or other representative the County may designate.

10. To qualify for reimbursement, Applicant must provide proof of liability/medical insurance from the host organization. A Commercial General Liability Insurance Policy should be obtained for the Event of \$500,000 / \$1,000,000 limits, with the “Highlands County, a political subdivision of the State of Florida, its officials, employees and volunteers” being named as an additional insured on the policy. The term of coverage must include not only all days of the Event, but set up days and take down days, as well.
11. The TDC may lend assistance or administer funds approved in the form of advertising, public relations, promotions or marketing programs through an outside vendor on behalf of Applicant.
12. Recognition of Visit Sebring must be included where appropriate on all marketing materials, on Applicant’s website & referred to in public relations activities. All printed materials with the Visit Sebring logo must be presented with the reimbursement request.
13. Upon approval of funds, Applicant must provide at least four (4) media passes for use by TDC staff to attend and cover the Event for the TDC’s marketing and public relations purposes.
14. Applicant is to have only one designated contact (Designee) for the duration of the Event Funding process. Designee is responsible for turning in all application documents, as well as follow up paperwork needed prior to the Event/Project. Additionally, Designee will be responsible for executing the funding contract and providing a W-9 for Applicant. Funds will be released only to Designee upon completion of post-Event/Project documentation and room night certification. Should Designee change at any point during the process, written notification to the TDC office is required. Failure to provide notification will adversely affect funding.
15. If any details (date, time, name of event, etc.) change prior to the Event execution, a letter must be sent to the TDC office advising of the changes. Date changes require a vote by the TDC and must be submitted 90 days prior to the originally approved date or new date (whichever comes first).
16. Applicant must meet with a representative of the Visit Sebring/Highlands County TDC (via phone or in person) prior to submitting an application.
 1. Please contact (863) 402-6909 for an application and/or to set an appointment.
 2. The application is also available at www.VisitSebring.com.
17. By submission of an application, the applicant grants Highlands County and all of its employees, officers, contractors, subcontractors, volunteers and agents, the right to use and reproduce any and all photographs, digital images, videotapes or recordings made at or made in relation to the Event/Project, including those of Applicant’s employees, volunteers, invitees, and those that contain Applicant’s name, artwork, logo or trademark, for use by Highlands County, and the right to copyright and/or use, reuse and/or publish, republish photographic pictures, digital images, videotapes or recordings. Applicant affirms that applicant it is the legal owner of any artwork, logo or trademark used by Applicant and acknowledges that Highlands County is relying on this representation and to the extent there is any claim by any third party against Highlands County or its representatives, Applicant will indemnify and hold Highlands County and its representatives harmless as to any such claim or damages arising from such claim. Applicant is required to grant Highlands County permission for the photographs, digital images, videos, or recordings to be used in their entirety and/or edited versions as deemed necessary by Highlands County. Applicant accepts and understands those items will become the property of Highlands County and all rights to inspect or approve those items as well as any royalties or other such compensation are waived. Applicant further grants Highlands County permission to use the photographs, digital images, videotapes or recordings to be used by Highlands County at any time in the future without

provision of notice being provided and that Highlands County’s use may include use for trade, commercial and advertising purposes, to promote the product or service of Highlands County, and to simply report happenings in Highlands County, and may include the use of items on Highlands County websites. Applicant shall inform its invitees aware of Highlands County’s intentions and rights as described in this paragraph and obtain executed Release and Waivers from Applicant’s invitees as a requirement to participate in the Event.

APPLICATION DEADLINE AND GUIDELINES

Applications will be reviewed as outlined in the schedule below. Applications are due no later than the deadlines listed herein. If the deadline falls on a weekend or holiday, then the applications are **due the last County business day prior to the posted deadline**. One application will be accepted per Event. The application **must be completely filled out**. Not Applicable or N/A should be marked if needed. Completed applications will be date stamped and added to the TDC agenda in the order that they are received. **To be considered for the maximum award available, applications shall be submitted at a MINIMUM of six (6) months prior to the Event/Project start date.**

The TDC Staff and TDC will review funding for Special Event Funding Requests as outlined below:

Submittal & Meeting Schedule for Special Event Funding

Grant Application Submittal Deadline	TDC Meeting*
October 10	Last Thursday in October
January 10	Last Thursday in January
April 10	Last Thursday in April
July 30	Second Thursday in August

ALL FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS REQUIRE FINAL APPROVAL BY THE HIGHLANDS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS *Dates are subject to change

You may e-mail, mail or hand deliver the **ORIGINAL** application to:
 Highlands County Tourist Development Council (TDC)
 Attn: Lori Krinke
 501 S. Commerce Ave.
 Sebring, FL 33870
LKrinkey@highlandsfl.gov
 (863) 402-6909

VISITOR TRACKING

In order to assess the impact of each Event on the Sebring/Highlands County transient lodging industry, the TDC requires the tracking of the number of overnight visitors attending the Event/Project.

Room block reports from hotels are the preferred method of reporting room data. However, a *Room Night Certification Form* (page 9) is an acceptable means of tracking. For the Events that impose an online booking tool and/or event page for direct tracking of host hotels, it is the Applicant's responsibility and make every effort to track room nights from overnight stays at all accommodators, whether or not they were selected as a host hotel. This information will be used to track the number of visitors attending each Event/Project and staying overnight in short term accommodations.

NOTE: For the purpose of calculating creditable overnight stays, only rooms subject to Tourist Development Tax shall be included, i.e., rooms exempt from payment of tax or provided on a complimentary (free of charge) basis shall be excluded from the calculation.

Following the Event, the TDC reserves the right to conduct an audit of information presented for each funded Event/Project. All lodging accommodations listed may be contacted to confirm the number of room nights generated for the Event/Project. **PLEASE NOTE THAT ANY MISLEADING OR FALSE INFORMATION PRESENTED CAN AND WILL ADVERSELY AFFECT CURRENT AND FUTURE FUNDING AWARDS.** Not tracking your rooms and/or visitors could void your post Event/Project funding.

CONCLUSION

Applicants are encouraged to not contact members of the TDC, Board of County Commissioners or non-TDC County staff in order to provide a fair and equitable process of consideration of each applicant. Applicant may make contact with TDC staff to address any concerns or deliver updates. Additionally, the Event/Project director, fiscal administrator or other contact person may be called upon by TDC staff at any time during the review process. TDC meetings are held on the last Thursday of each month (unless otherwise noticed) in October, January, April and July. Applicant is required to attend the TDC meeting (either in person or via phone) for which the Event application is scheduled for review. This will be the only opportunity to speak directly to the TDC in regard to the Event application.

REIMBURSEMENT/ACCOUNTABILITY

- Within 60 days after the completion of the Event, Applicant must submit:
 - >Post Event Report (required form found on www.VisitSebring.com), copy of event collateral displaying approved logo block.
 - >Invoice for TDC/BOCC approved funds (addressed to Visit Sebring/Highlands County TDC) and all supporting reimbursement documentation.
- If original award amount must be prorated due to the actual room nights being less than the guaranteed room nights, an updated invoice will be required with the new award amount.
- The TDC will conduct audits to promote accuracy of attendance and room nights reported in Post Event Report.
- Incomplete reports will not be considered. A request for an extension of the 60-day deadline will require approval from the Tourist Development Council.

SPECIAL EVENT FUNDING REQUEST LEVELS

There is a maximum funding level of \$10,000. The guaranteed number of room nights does not guarantee the level of funding at which the Event may be approved. The final funding recommendation will be based on the TDC's discretion. As an example, if the TDC finds that an Applicant has overstated the room nights, the TDC has the right to place the application at a lower funding level. All requests will be submitted as a recommendation by the TDC to the Highlands County Board of County Commissioners.

SPECIAL EVENT GUIDELINES

Funding is available for Special Events/Group Meetings/Conferences staged in Sebring/Highlands County by organizations that attract large numbers of visitors from outside the County. Such an Event must generate a **minimum of 50 TOTAL room nights** to be considered for funding.

Consideration for funding is determined by the number of room nights and the overall economic impact the Event will bring to Sebring/Highlands County. The funding level will be determined strictly based on \$20 per each verified room night that the Event brought to Sebring/Highlands County lodging partners.

Exceptions for Extraordinary Circumstances

It is to be acknowledged that while it is clearly not possible to legislate for the unknown, it is possible to identify and anticipate the potential for exceptional circumstances and to weigh our response to them. The TDC may recommend increasing funding in extraordinary circumstances. These extraordinary circumstances will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis for consideration and recommendation to the Highlands County Board of County Commissioners for final approval.

The TDC will only reimburse for actual, verified room nights only. For example:

If the TDC approved a grant for \$10,000 for an event that guaranteed 500 room nights and the event actually only generated 300 total room nights, the TDC would determine the total percentage of what was produced based upon what was guaranteed by taking $300/500 = 60\%$. The maximum total amount awarded in this case based upon the % formula would be 60% of \$10,000 which equals \$6,000.

ELIGIBLE USE OF FUNDS

The list below is how Tourist Development Funds may be used to promote tourism for Highlands County.

1. Out-of-County Advertising Expenses

Advertising and publicity outside of Highlands County to increase participation, attendance and awareness of the Event and generate hotel room nights. The Visit Sebring logo must appear in or with the ad, which must be pre-approved by TDC staff. Advertising examples include:

- Digital Online Advertising: geofencing, social media, retargeting, SEO/SEM, display ads, targeted email campaigns, digital content creation via online storytelling, etc.
- Print: advertising, direct mail, flyers/posters, etc.
- Radio & TV Advertisements placed outside Highlands County
- Public Relations/Media Events
- Targeted Audience Outreach, such as trade show booth rental

2. Promotional Items

Must be tied to a direct “experience” with the event (i.e. themed reception, activity, etc.) and the Visit Sebring logo must be included on the promotional item, and the item with logo must be pre-approved by TDC staff before they qualify for reimbursement. Please consult TDC staff regarding any direct experience ideas. Promotional items will only be funded with a robust marketing plan as generating attendance is the TDC’s priority.

3. Event Fees

- A/V equipment rental, MOT fees, in-county group transportation/tours, entertainment (for events open to public; an event that is not for conference attendees only)
- Facility fees - for Events that take place at Highlands County facilities.
- Necessary event-related operational expenses, as approved per Florida State Statute 125.0104 and indicated in the final motion to approve funding.
- Event fees will only be funded with a robust marketing plan as generating attendance is the TDC’s priority.

INELIGIBLE USES OF FUNDS:

1. Prize money, scholarships, awards, plaques, trophies, certificates, event shirts
2. Any and all travel expenses (includes, but is not limited to, mileage reimbursement, car rental fees, airline tickets, hotel/accommodations, food, luggage fees, etc.)
3. Private entertainment, food, beverages, or any type of concession
4. Annual operating expenditures not directly related to the Event/Project
5. Legal, medical, security, engineering, accounting, auditing, planning, feasibility studies or other consulting services
6. Employee salaries
7. Rental Items: tents, barricades, toilets, etc.
8. Real property or capital improvements to facilities
9. Tangible personal property including but not limited to office furnishings or equipment
10. Interest or reduction of deficits and loans or sales tax
11. Expenses incurred or obligated prior to or after the grant Event period
12. Advertising/promotional materials distributed in Highlands County, during or after the Event
13. Receptions or social functions other than those specifically designed for pre-event promotional purposes
14. Website design
15. Ongoing or annual facility maintenance
16. Any use not authorized as determined by the Florida State Statute 125.0104

ROOM NIGHT TRACKING

Applicant will be required to provide to all hotels with room night certification forms and submit the **Room Night Certification Form** (page 9) to the TDC at the conclusion of the Event. Applicant is strongly encouraged to conduct their own room night surveys to verify room nights and hotels in order to complete the **Room Night Certification Form** for back up documentation should there be any discrepancies in determining the total number of room nights generated from the event. All documents verifying room nights must be signed by an authorized representative of the lodging partner.

All Applicants that receive grant funds based on room verifications from the TDC are required to follow the procedures listed below to secure hotel and accommodation verifications:

1. Applicant must include the Visit Sebring logo block and link www.VisitSebring.com on the Event website (if applicable).
2. When Applicant has selected the participating hotel or hotels, Applicant must notify the TDC. **The Applicant is responsible for the setup of a tracking code or system that enables hotel front desk and sales staff to track and document all Event related room nights.**
3. Applicant may list as many, or as few, “participating hotels” on the Event website, and may post as much information, including pictures, amenities, etc. for these hotels as long as the listed hotels on the Event website are hotels located in Highlands County.
4. Applicant may utilize a third-party housing provider for accommodations as long as the selected accommodators are within Highlands County. Applicant may not list hotels outside of Highlands County unless the Applicant receives special permission from the TDC.
5. After the Event, Applicant will submit the Room Night Certification Form from all of the hotels that generated room nights from the Event. That form is the tool the TDC uses to verify the actual number of room nights generated from the Event. That form, which can be found herein, needs to be filled out and signed by an authorized representative of the lodging partner.



ROOM NIGHT CERTIFICATION FORM

Attention: General Manager and/or Director of Sales

The Event, _____, was awarded Funding through the Highlands County Tourist Development Council (TDC) to assist in the advancement of bringing additional economic impact through tourism into our community. The purpose of this form is to certify the number of room nights in Highlands County that were attributable to the Event/Project.

Name of Hotel/Accommodation: _____

Contact Person: _____ **Telephone:** _____

	TRACKED ROOM NIGHTS					
GROUP NAME						
EVENT NAME						
DATE (s)						
PAID ROOM NIGHTS						
COMP ROOM NIGHTS						

Hotel Representative Signature: _____

APPLICANT: I certify that Event listed above consumed the reported room nights.

Name of Applicant:

By: _____ **(Signature) Title:** _____

Your cooperation in completing this form is greatly appreciated.

The TDC reserves the right to unilaterally reduce the maximum amount of reimbursement if Applicant's room night guarantee is not satisfied or documented with this Room Night Certification Form. This SIGNED form must be completed and returned before final payment is delivered to Applicant.

APPLICATION GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

The application **must be completely filled out**. Not Applicable or N/A should be marked as appropriate.

Copies of the following items must be attached to your application:

- List of Applicant’s current Officers and/or Board members (if applicable)
- Applicant’s W-9 tax form for post-Event payment
- Sample Visitor/Attendee Survey for the Event
- Overall & detailed Marketing Plan for the Event. This plan must outline product (event); market position/competitive analysis; target audience; target markets; marketing goals, objectives and tactics; market strategy; budget and evaluation metrics.

Please note: All final paperwork as outlined in the application must be submitted to the TDC **within 60 days of the conclusion of the Event**. The request for reimbursement will be considered incomplete until all of the required forms are submitted to the TDC.

HIGHLANDS COUNTY TDC SPECIAL EVENT FUNDING REQUEST APPLICATION

Total Amount Requested from TDC: \$ _____

I. General Information

1. Name of Applicant:
2. Name of Event:
3. Contact person:
4. Contact person e-mail:
5. Complete address of Applicant:
Cell phone:
6. Applicant’s Chief Official/Event Coordinator:
Title:
Address if different from above:
Cell phone:
Email:
7. Has Event ever received funding from the TDC? Yes No
>If yes – list years and amounts:
8. Amount Applicant is requesting for the Event/Project: \$
9. Intended use of funds:

(Refer to page 7 – Eligible and Ineligible Uses of Funds)

II. Details about Applicant (describe business or organization):

III. Schedule of Event:

IV. Event Specific Information

1. Event name:
2. Type of event or project:
3. Dates of Event:
4. Location of Event:
5. Number of days:

Hours:

6. Projected number of out of town participants:
Out of state:
In-state:
7. Projected number of attendees per day:
8. Projected number of media, staff, officials:
Out of state:
In-state:
9. Event promoter (if other than Applicant):
Name of promoter:
Company name:
Contact name:
Address:
Phone:
Email:
Website:

11. Event/Conference Admission Price (if applicable)

12. What is the GUARANTEED MINIMUM NUMBER OF PAID ROOM NIGHTS the Event will bring to Sebring/Highlands County? (This is the minimum number of rooms that must be captured by the Event and documented by submitting the Room Night Certification Form within 60 days of the conclusion of the Event/Project. The TDC reserves the right to reduce the reimbursement amount should the Event fail to meet this minimum room night guarantee.):

13. Provide the previous year's event information, (if applicable):

Previous Event or Project:
Date:
Location:
Total Room Nights:
Contact Name/Phone:
Funding amount awarded:
Economic Impact (If available):

EVENT BUDGET SUMMARY

EVENT INCOME

Visit Sebring cannot be the sole source of income. Please list all Event income sources, types and amounts, including grants, sponsorships, registration fees, and in-kind services provided from public agencies, such as Police Department, Fire Rescue, etc. Please designate hard dollars versus in-kind.

Income Source & Type (i.e. Publix Sponsorship or Attendee Registration Fees)	Income Amount (or In-Kind Amount)
Visit Sebring/TDC Funding Request	\$
TOTAL INCOME ALL SOURCES	\$

EVENT EXPENSES

Provide an itemized summary indicating the intended use of TDC funds at the bottom of this page. Please be as detailed as possible, including intended media outlets, promotional materials, etc. and the dollar amount that will be expended (tentatively) for each category. This chart will reflect the total amount of the grant you have requested. Use additional sheets if necessary.

Expense Type (Event Speakers, Signage, Insurance, etc.)	Expense Amount
	\$
TOTAL EVENT EXPENSES	\$
Intended Use of Tourist Development Tax Funds (provide details)	Amount
TOTAL TDC EXPENSES	\$

Grant Application Checklist

Please initial next to each item and fill in the blanks below. This list must accompany your grant application.

Initials

- _____ This application is being submitted at least four months (120 days) prior to the event start.
Date of Event: _____
Date of Application: _____
- _____ I understand that the reimbursement request must be completed and submitted to the Tourism Office with all back up and supporting material no later than 60 days after the event ends, which will be on _____ (date 60 days after event ends).
- _____ I will obtain the signatures of the organization's President & Secretary on the proposed grant contract by _____. (date one week after the application is submitted to and accepted by the Tourism Office)
- _____ I understand that the "Visit Sebring" logo must appear in any print advertisements that are funded by the TDC. For digital ads, the "Visit Sebring" logo must either be featured on the advertisement or on website/landing page linked to the ad or the ad must link to the TDC's website.
- _____ I have included an IRS W-9 Form and a copy of the Florida Division of Corporations form with the application.
- _____ I understand that someone representing this grant application must be available at the TDC meeting when it considers the application for funding or the application will not be considered.
- _____ I understand that no expenses incurred before the TDC recommends approval of the grant application will be reimbursed under any circumstances. I also understand that no funding has been approved until the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approves execution of the Grant Contract and that no expenditures will be reimbursed if the BOCC does not approve execution of the Grant Contract.
- _____ I understand that reimbursements following the event will only be made for itemized, authorized expenses approved by the BOCC in the fully executed Grant Contract.
- _____ Each reimbursement request must include copies of paid invoices, screenshots of digital ads, copies of the ad/tear sheets, invoice for reimbursement amount to the Highlands County Board of County Commissioners, copy of front and back of cleared checks paying for advertising, and outreach figures identifying the number of people your ad reached outside Highlands County and inside Highlands County.
- _____ Reimbursement will only be provided at a rate of \$20/verified room night.
- _____ The funds Applicant receives will ONLY be used in accordance with the eligible and ineligible uses of funds. (page 7)

_____ Applicant understands that it is required to submit a **Room Block Report/Room Night Certification Form** in order to track the amount of rooms the Event produces in order to receive funding. (page 9)

_____ Applicant has included a list of its current Officers and/or Board members (if applicable) with the application.

_____ Applicant will provide the Visit Sebring office with a Certificate of Insurance (COI) naming “Highlands County Tourism Office” as additionally insured no later than 10 days before the event begins.

_____ Applicant has included a detailed **Marketing Plan** for the Event.

_____ Applicant has included a sample **Visitor/Attendee Survey** for the Event.

_____ As an authorized representative of Applicant, the person submitting this documentation acknowledges that he/she is also the person required to execute the contract and prepare the Post-Event Report for the Event within 60 days after completion of event to receive payment. This report should include: total number of participants, total number of coaches, spectators, staff, media, etc., information regarding where attendee came from, feedback about destination (what did they like/not like).

_____ The authorized representative of the Applicant acknowledges that the representative is required to submit documentation of the authorization provided by the Applicant to the representative that confirms the representative’s authority to act on behalf of the Applicant, such as a corporate resolution or a copy of a record from the State of Florida Division of Corporations that lists the person submitting the Application as an officer who has statutory authority to represent and bind the Applicant.

_____ Applicant acknowledges that any material made or received by Highlands County in connection with Applicant’s request for Program funding is a public record and subject to public inspection unless there is a legislatively created exemption that makes it confidential and not subject to disclosure. Applicant acknowledges that it cannot dictate to Highlands County what material is open to public inspection or the circumstances under which material is deemed confidential.

_____ Applicant understands that as a requirement to receiving funding, Applicant will execute a release to permit Highlands County to photo and/or record the Event and Applicant must make Event invitees aware of this and make the signing of a release a requirement to participate in the Event.

_____ Applicant understands that all funds received are subject to audit by the Highlands County Clerk of the Court – Internal Auditor or other representative as Highlands County may designate.

_____ Applicant understands that this event may require a Highlands County Special Event Permit, and it is up to the applicant to complete that permit request and pay the required permit fee.

Authorized Agent: _____

Title: _____ *Date:* _____

Authorized Agent Signature: _____

CERTIFICATION OF APPLICANT

Applicant has reviewed this Application for Funds from the Highlands County Tourist Development Council. Applicant is in full agreement with the information contained herein. To the best of Applicant's knowledge, the information contained in this Application and its attachments is accurate and complete.

Applicant Name: _____

Date: _____

By: _____
(Signature)

Its:

(Title)

State: _____ County: _____

Before me this day personally appeared _____ (name) as
_____ (title) of _____ (applicant) to
me well known or produced identification _____ (type of ID) and who executed
the foregoing instrument, and who acknowledged that he/she did so freely and voluntarily for the uses
and purposes herein expressed.

Witness my hand and seal (date)

My Commission expires (date)

Signature of Notary