

ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE

STAFF REPORT

Department of Finance & Administration



MEETING DATE: February 18, 2025
 SUBJECT: The Rotary Club of Bluffton: 2025 Mayfest Weekend in Bluffton
 PROJECT MANAGER: Shannon Milroy, Budget, Grants & Procurement Administrator

Summarized below is the application from The Rotary Club of Bluffton for Accommodations Tax grant dollars in support of advertising and expenses related to providing for tourists for the 2025 Mayfest Weekend in Bluffton.

Total Budget, per application: \$53,000
Requested Amount: \$24,000
Percentage of Request^: 26%

^Includes up to 100% for Advertising & Promotion plus up to 50% of remaining expenses

Eligible Tourism-Related Expense Categories (per SC Code of Laws)	Total Budget for Category, per budget form		Budget Items Eligible for ATAX Funds
Advertising & Promotion of Tourism or Arts and Cultural Events	\$15,080		\$ 15,080
Facilities for Civic and Cultural Events	3,000		3,000
Public Facilities	1,700	*	595
Municipality and County Services	7,500	*	2,925
Tourist Transportation	6,000	*	2,400
Other/Ineligible Project Expenses	10,500		
Total	\$43,780		\$ 24,000

*Estimated and reimbursement will be based on the percentage of tourists provided for.

Budgeted Eligible Expenses:

Advertising & Promotion:

Total budget \$15,080

- Local and Regional Newspaper and Magazine ads, regional radio and television spots and posters/banners/signage

Facilities for Civic and Cultural Events:

Total budget \$3,000

- Rentals of tables, chairs, stages, tents

Public Facilities:

Total budget \$1,700

- Rental of portable/temporary restrooms for attendees

Municipality and County Services:

Total budget \$7,500

- Dumpster Rental, Security provided by BPD (\$3,000), Security not provided by BPD (\$4,000)

Tourist Transportation:

Total budget \$6,000

- Old Town Trolley shuttles for attendees

Other/Ineligible Project Expenses:

Total Budget: \$10,500

- Vendor business licenses, and bar supplies.

Table Rating (Scores 0-5 with 5 satisfying the qualifications best, exception Advertising 0-15)

Amount Recommended	Advertising (15)	Festival/Event (5)	Bluffton Event (5)	Tourism Draw % (5)	Benefit to Tourism (5)	Self-Sufficiency % (5)	Total of 40 possible	Comments
\$24,000	9	5	5	2	5	4	30	

Advertising: Comprises about 63% of the requested funds. Advertising will be placed in local and regional marketing vehicles.

Festival/Event: Mayfest is a one-day festival held the Saturday of Mother's Day weekend each year from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Food, music, craft and artisan vendors line the streets to celebrate the quirky, eclectic, different and unique people and identity of Bluffton.

Bluffton Event: Mayfest is held in Old Town Bluffton.

Tourism Draw %: Tourists comprised 25% of the 2024 Mayfest Event attendees; zip codes were collected as attendees boarded the shuttles.

Benefit to Tourism: Additional advertising dollars would allow for the event to be marketed in out-of-town markets as a Mother's Day weekend destination, thus increasing Bluffton tourism numbers and revenue.

Self-Sufficiency % (Financial Need): Eligible amount requested is 26% of total expenses budget. Revenues of \$74,450 (not including an ATAX award) are anticipated from merchandise and alcohol sales, vendor fees and sponsorships and include the value of in-kind contributions. Based on the budget submitted, a profit of \$30,670 is anticipated.

Previous Funding Amounts						
Fiscal Year	Requested Amount	% of Budget	Advisory Committee Recommendation	Town Council Approved	Expended	Comments
2024	\$15,000	29%	\$25,000	\$25,000	approx. \$15,000	Final Report submitted 1/31/2025; not all invoices/reimbursables received
2023	\$15,000	36%	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$6,734.05	Final Report submitted; Reimbursement disbursed

Accommodations Tax Committee Recommendations and Comments:

The Committee recommends funding \$24,000 for eligible expenses for Mayfest Weekend in Bluffton.