


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 14, 2005

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CITY'S MARKETING FUND APPLICATION GUIDELINES

ISSUE: Proposed amendments to the City's Marketing Fund Application Guidelines.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council adopt the proposed amendments to the Marketing Fund Application Guidelines (Attached) as proposed by the Marketing Committee.

DISCUSSION: The Alexandria Marketing Committee (Committee), established in 1993 by City Council as an economic development initiative, oversees the administration of the City's Marketing Fund. Every fiscal year since FY 1994 City Council has allocated \$100,000 to the Marketing Fund (except in FY 2000 when Council divided the Marketing Fund into \$50,000 for the 250th Anniversary activities and \$50,000 for regular Marketing Fund activities).

The goals of the Marketing Fund as stated in the Guidelines have been, and are recommended to continue to be:

- To develop the marketing projects that enhance the long-range marketing plans adopted by the Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association (ACVA) and the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership (AEDP);
- To foster cooperation among City, civic, and business organizations in the promotion and the marketing of Alexandria;
- To increase the awareness and expand the quality of Alexandria's diverse retail, dining, hospitality, and other businesses;
- To promote Alexandria as a destination for the leisure and business traveler; and
- To generate additional business sales and tax revenues in Alexandria.

Alexandria-based organizations or groups of businesses interested in promoting visiting, shopping, dining or doing business in Alexandria may apply to the Committee for monies in the Marketing Fund on at least a one-to-one matching basis. Funds must be used for direct marketing expenses, and the match to the Marketing Fund must also represent direct marketing expenditures. The application for marketing funds includes a project description, project budget and planned marketing effectiveness evaluation criteria. The Committee reviews the applications (which may be submitted at any time during the fiscal year) and then determines whether to provide funds, as well as establish how much of these funds would be used.

The Marketing Committee is proposing an amended set of Marketing Fund Application Guidelines to address the following two issues.

- Committee Membership. The Committee proposes the deletion of the Old Town Business Association (OTBA) from the membership roster due to the recent merger of OTBA and the King Street Metro Enterprise Team (KSMET). KSMET will retain its seat on the Committee. The Committee also recommends that a seat on the Committee for the newly formed West End Business Association (WEBA) be created.
- Review Criteria. It is proposed that language be added to the Guidelines stipulating that applicants for funding make a “good faith effort” to purchase goods and services from Alexandria businesses where feasible and cost effective, thereby supporting local businesses and keeping more City money in Alexandria.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no fiscal impact from these proposed changes.

ATTACHMENT: Proposed Amended Alexandria Marketing Fund Application Guidelines

STAFF:

Mark Jinks, Assistant City Manager

Carol Fetgatter, Administrative Officer, City Manager’s Office

**Marketing Committee
Draft Revisions
2-24-05**

**Alexandria Marketing Fund
Application Guidelines
(as approved by City Council on 3/9/04)**

Background

First introduced in Alexandria's FY 1994 budget as part of then-Councilman Kerry Donley's Business Development Plan, the Alexandria Marketing Fund is designed to increase revenues within the City by fostering public/private partnerships that promote Alexandria as a destination for visiting, shopping, dining and doing business. City Council has appropriated \$100,000 to the Marketing Fund each fiscal year since that time.

To administer the Fund, the City Council created the **Alexandria Marketing Committee**, a public/private group with representatives of:

- City Council
- City Manager
- Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
- Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association (ACVA)
- Alexandria Economic Development Partnership (AEDP)
- Alexandria Hotel Association (AHA)
- Alexandria restaurants (to be appointed by the Marketing Committee)
- Eisenhower Partnership
- King Street Metro Enterprise Team (KSMET)
- Landmark Mall
- ~~Old Town Business Association (OTBA)~~
- Potomac West Business Association (PWBA)
- Torpedo Factory Artists Association
- **West End Business Association**

In 1994, the Committee conducted a survey of Alexandria businesses and developed an initial marketing plan to identify the goals of the Marketing Fund. Since that time, these goals have been adapted to enhance the long-range marketing plans of ACVA and AEDP as approved by their respective boards of directors and the Alexandria City Council.

Marketing Fund Goals

- To develop the marketing projects that enhance the long-range marketing plans adopted by the Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association (ACVA) and the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership (AEDP).
- To foster cooperation among City, civic and business organizations in the promotion and marketing of Alexandria.
- To increase the awareness and expand the quality of Alexandria's diverse retail, dining, hospitality and other businesses.
- To promote Alexandria as a destination for the leisure and business traveler.
- To generate additional business sales and tax revenues in Alexandria.

Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted by organizations not organized for profit, or groups of businesses interested in promoting visiting, shopping, dining or doing business in Alexandria. Only Alexandria-based organizations or groups may apply.

City agencies (defined as any agency under the direct control of an elected City official; or which reports directly to the City Manager; or any board or commission where all its members are appointed by the Alexandria City Council) may not apply directly to the Marketing Fund; however, they may be a partner (but not a principal partner) in a project proposed by an organization or group.

Eligible Projects

Proposed projects must meet the goals of the Fund by:

- Noting how the proposal enhances the long-range marketing plans of either ACVA or AEDP, or both.
- Fostering cooperation and coordination among multiple businesses and organizations to promote Alexandria as a destination for visiting, shopping, dining and doing business.
- Leveraging public dollars with private investment by at least one-to-one.
- Increasing visitors and/or business in Alexandria.
- Including marketing campaigns outside Alexandria and marketing in advance of the event.

In general, Marketing Fund grants will be made available for new or increased marketing efforts as well as the continuation of previous marketing efforts at the same level. However, priority will be given to the new or increased marketing effort applications. Grants from the Marketing Fund will not be considered for project expenses which have already been incurred prior to consideration by the Marketing Committee.

Proposals must demonstrate measurable ways in which funding will generate increased business sales and tax revenues in the City. Proposals that do not clearly define measures of success will not be reviewed by the Committee for consideration.

Applications may be submitted for promotional activities related to special events, but not for operational costs. The Committee will review direct marketing or advertising expenses only, not labor, office, or other logistical costs of the event. The dollar for dollar match will be based upon direct marketing or advertising expenses (including distribution and postage costs only). (See section below on "Marketing Funds.")

If advertising is being proposed, reference must be made if feasible to at least one of the following organizations and include logo identification (if available), phone number and, if possible, web site address:

- Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association (ACVA)
- Alexandria Economic Development Partnership (AEDP)
- Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
- Alexandria Hotel Association
- *Park Alexandria* (required for projects impacting the special parking district in historic Old Town Alexandria)
- City of Alexandria

Copies of the logos and related information may be obtained from the respective organizations.

Parties who will provide goods or services in connection with the proposed project for which they will earn fees, commissions, or other compensation must state the amount of such payments. Grant funds, defined as the funding made available from the Alexandria Marketing Fund, may not be used to support operations of any organization or contribute to profits earned.

Marketing Funds

Grants from the Marketing Fund must be matched at least 1:1 by private sector or other organizational dollars. Other organizational dollars include, but are not limited to, governmental funding. As noted earlier, the Committee will review only direct marketing or advertising (including distribution and postage) expenses when considering matching

funds. Labor, office, and other logistical costs should be included in the budget provided, but will not be counted towards the dollar for dollar match. The dollar for dollar match will be based upon direct marketing or advertising expenses only.

If the dollar for dollar match is not finalized by the date of application, groups must note on the application cover sheet and in the written proposal a listing of at least 50% financial commitments in order for an application to be considered. Such groups will be given an additional 30 days (or date established by the Committee) to obtain remaining financial commitments or forfeit their grant award. Commitments must be presented to the Committee Chairman. In-kind funding will not be permitted to be used towards matching funds.

Review Criteria

The Alexandria Marketing Committee will review and rank applications to the Marketing Fund according to the following criteria. The Marketing Fund Committee will review applications for eligibility, completeness and relevance to the Fund's goals and objectives based upon the following:

- Specific relevance to the long-range marketing plans of either ACVA or AEDP, or both. *Executive summaries of these plans are attached to these guidelines.*
- Appropriateness of target market(s). Such target markets might include, for example, attracting meetings and conferences, attracting tour bus groups, increasing overnight weekend visitation, promoting the City during holiday seasons or promoting business development or redevelopment in the City.
- Clear description of how proposed project generates new or increased marketing for the City, or the continuation of previous efforts at same level. Cooperative advertising is strongly encouraged if the advertising meets the other criteria listed and promotes the City as a good place to visit, shop, dine and do business. Ads that simply list participating businesses without promoting the City will not be considered.
- Demonstration of public/private partnership or cooperation and the involvement of many businesses. If feasible, reference must be made in all printed materials and advertising to at least one of the following organizations with its logo, phone number and, if available, web site address: ACVA, AEDP, Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, Alexandria Hotel Association, or the City of Alexandria.
- Commitments of participation by at least 50% of the required number of businesses to meet the dollar for dollar match. (e.g., If 20 businesses must participate in order to meet the matching requirement, the names, addresses and

phone numbers of at least 10 businesses must be presented to the Marketing Fund Committee for consideration.)

- Mock up dummies of all printed advertising, including newspaper, magazine, brochures, direct mail pieces, web sites, dioramas, etc., are required on the application review date for the Marketing Fund Committee.
- Specific techniques to be used to measure the success of the project in terms of increasing business sales and tax revenues in Alexandria. (e.g., How will the estimated return on investment or effectiveness of the marketing efforts be determined?)
- Detailed income and expense marketing budget for the Application. Specific line items for all income and marketing expenses for the project must be included as part of the application.
- The application must be in a form and structure as prescribed by the Marketing Committee or it will not be considered by the Marketing Committee.
- **Applicants should make a good faith effort to use Alexandria companies where feasible and cost effective, and explain that effort in their application.**

Application Review Process

For an application to be reviewed, the Marketing Committee Chairman must receive an original and 14 photocopies of a complete application, including cover sheet and accompanying materials requested on the application two weeks prior to the Marketing Committee's established due dates. The Marketing Committee may establish a process of electronic filing of the applications. The Marketing Committee will review applications for eligibility, completeness and relevance to the Fund's goals and objectives.

Because of the nature of this public/private partnership effort, the Committee reserves the right to request additional information. The Committee may request a five-minute presentation by the applicant(s) to ensure that the Committee has adequate information for a funding determination. Following presentations, the Alexandria Marketing Committee will review applications and evaluate them according to the criteria stated above. Committee recommendations will be determined by majority vote of those in attendance. The Committee reserves the right to fund a project fully, partially or not at all.

If a profit is made on an event/project, grantees may be required to make a contribution to the Marketing Fund from the proceeds of a project supported by the Marketing Fund. All such contributions will be used for additional Marketing Fund projects.

Final Reports

Applicants receiving grants from the Marketing Fund must provide the Committee Chairman with a final report within 30 days of the completion of the project. Final reports should describe the project and identify how well it met the goals and objectives of the Marketing Fund's contributions, including what measurements and evaluation process were used. Be as specific as possible.

Note: Final report extensions may be granted at the sole discretion of the Marketing Committee Chairman.

Application Submission

Subject to appropriation by City Council, for each fiscal year there will be \$100,000 available to the Marketing Fund. Send one original and 14 photocopies of the completed application, including cover sheet and accompanying materials to:

Mr. Roger Parks, Chairman
Alexandria Marketing Committee
c/o American Advertising Distributors of NOVA
708 Pendleton Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
(703) 549-5126

Attachments

- Summary of ACVA/AEDP Three-Year Marketing Plans