

# RENAISSANCE INITIATIVE GRANT PROGRAM

## **Background/Rationale:**

In preparation for the local option sales tax referendum, a committee of citizens and the City Council discussed ways in which additional sales tax revenue might be used to strengthen the quality of life in Spencer. In addition, the City Council and the Community and County Progress Committee designed a distribution plan which included a wide range of initiatives for revenue distribution. One of those components recognized the importance of non-profits, community based organizations and agencies to Spencer. Central to these early discussions was the notion that this extra cent should be an investment in extraordinary projects not possible within the constraints of customary funding sources.

After the passage of the local option sales tax, the Sales Tax Advisory Committee and the City Council created the Renaissance Initiative as a mechanism to distribute a portion of the tax revenue to local organizations. Providing approximately \$26,000, this fund was designed to annually support a variety of community projects and to encourage innovation in meeting the needs of a progressive community. Importantly, the advisory committee envisioned a fund where local groups could access extra dollars in order to design, plan, and implement innovative projects or community activities not possible within the parameters of their annual budgets. In addition, the Renaissance Initiative may also support infrastructure needs critical to an organization's mission. Finally, the advisory committee designed a bi-annual grant application process in order to award funds for a wide range of local organizational initiatives.

## **Procedure:**

Two rounds of funding will be held each year. Applications for funding will be received at the Office of the City Clerk. Applications will be as follows:

March 1<sup>st</sup> ----March 30<sup>th</sup>  
later

September 1<sup>st</sup> ----September 30<sup>th</sup>  
30<sup>th</sup>

Note: Applications must be in no  
than 4:00 p.m. on March 30<sup>th</sup> or Sept.  
30<sup>th</sup>

The Sales Tax Advisory Committee will make its recommendations to the Spencer City Council, by April 15<sup>th</sup> and October 15<sup>th</sup> of each year.

## **Renaissance Initiative Grant Application Guidelines:**

1. Completeness of the application and degree to which the grant criteria is addressed will be a top priority.
2. **Spencer non-profit organizations/agencies and/or 501(C)(3) and/or community-based organizations are eligible.** Churches and church related organizations, governmental agencies and political subdivisions are not eligible. Affiliated non-profit organizations **in Spencer** that support political subdivisions and government agencies falling under charitable organization guidelines may also qualify.
3. Applications denied first round funding may be deferred to second round if application requests exceed the funds available. Applications denied will not be deferred to a new cycle of funding.
4. **An itemized project budget is required. This is not the organizational budget; rather the RI Selection Committee requires an itemized budget for the proposed activity or project for which funds are requested.**
5. The selection committee reserves the right to adjust funding requests.
6. The Committee requires of all grantees, a follow-up report at the project's conclusion as to accountability of funds spent, and a report on the project's outcome. Funding requests and project outcome reports must be received from grantees within 12 months of City Council approval. Grantees may file a written request for an additional 12 months that will be considered by the RI committee if more time is needed to complete the project. After 24 months, non-distributed funds will be reverted back to the Renaissance Initiative Grant Funding Account.
7. **Eligible activities include: (1) special projects or innovative programs which are not possible within the parameters of an organization's annual budget and that benefit or serve the general public or a large segment of the population or contribute to the quality of life for Spencer residents; or (2) infrastructure projects including equipment purchases not possible within the constraints of the organization's budget but are critical to the organization's mission. In the spirit of the Renaissance Initiative program, the RI Committee will use discretion, if necessary, to further determine activity eligibility.**
8. Non-eligible activities include on-going operational expenses (salaries, **consumable** supplies, occupancy costs, etc.), staffing needs, and sustaining programs after start-up funds are provided.
9. **The Committee requires grant recipients to recognize the Renaissance Initiative Grant program in an appropriate manner when possible (for example: organizational brochure, newsletters, annual meeting recognition, media coverage, event programs etc.)**

10. In making the awards, the committee shall take into consideration the following factors:
- evidence of need
  - expected outcomes of the activity and the impact on the community.
  - sources of funding or support available to the proposed project or activity.
  - capability of the organization to manage the funds and successfully complete the project.
  - the degree to which this award will leverage existing organizational funds or **accesses support from other sources.**
- \*the degree to which this project could be accomplished without sales tax revenue.  
\*the degree to which this project will have a lasting impact on the community.

*Applicant should submit the original application and **9 copies** no later than 4:00 p.m. on September 30 (First Round) or March 30 (Second Round). For additional information contact the Spencer City Manager (712) 580-7200.*

# Renaissance Initiative Grant Application for Community Organizations

Date of Application \_\_\_\_\_ (month, day, year)

Name of Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Organization

\_\_\_\_\_ 501 (c)(3) (attach proof of status if not already on file)

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (please explain)

\_\_\_\_\_

Purpose of Organization:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Type of Request:

\_\_\_\_\_ Program/Project

\_\_\_\_\_ Infrastructure

Amount Requested: \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Organizational Budget: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Executive Officer: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please attach a descriptive summary of your proposed project including the **purpose, time line, activities, and expected outcomes.** (Maximum length – 300-500 words) Also attach a **project budget** for this proposal. For multi-year projects, provide the Year 1 budget only.*

*Keep in mind that the application will be judged by its completeness and degree to which it meets the criteria.*

**Do Not Mark**

Round #1 \_\_\_\_\_  
Grant Award \_\_\_\_\_

Round #2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Grant Award \_\_\_\_\_

Deferred from Round #1 to Round #2

Denied

## Renaissance Initiative Grant Checklist

1. Is your request for funds/ proposal considered an **eligible** activity?
2. Does your proposal meet the **criteria** established by Renaissance Committee?
3. Did you attach a **summary** which includes the **purpose**, a **timeline**, **activities** and **expected outcomes**? (Discuss the anticipated impact of your proposal.)
4. *Did you attach a **budget** for the activity/program for which you are requesting funds? (Include all costs and other sources of funds—this will help the committee see how you will maximize sales tax dollars. Match is not required but other sources show you are leveraging city dollars.)*
5. **Is your proposal clear**- with enough background information to clarify your project objectives to those who may not be familiar with your organization?

# Renaissance Initiative Grant Selection Committee Score Sheet

Applicant Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Requested \_\_\_\_\_ Points Awarded \_\_\_\_\_

## **Meets application requirements**

\_\_\_\_\_ Non-profit organization/agency 501(C) or community based organization

\_\_\_\_\_ The project will benefit or serve the general public or a large segment of the population.

\_\_\_\_\_ Summary describes purpose and expected outcomes.

\_\_\_\_\_ Summary of timeline for project included.

\_\_\_\_\_ Itemized, complete, and reasonable project budget included for the first year.

**Requirement Points Awarded** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Purpose is consistent with Renaissance Initiative guidelines**

\_\_\_\_\_ Extraordinary project that is not possible within the constraints of customary

funding sources or within the parameters of their annual budgets.

\_\_\_\_\_ The outcome of the project will strengthen the quality of life in Spencer.

\_\_\_\_\_ Either implements an innovative project or program, or supports infrastructure needs critical to the organization's mission.

**Purpose Points Awarded** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Committee shall take the following into consideration:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Expected outcomes of the activity and the impact on the community

\_\_\_\_\_ Capability of the organization to manage the funds and successfully complete the project

\_\_\_\_\_ Degree to which this award will leverage existing organizational funds

\_\_\_\_\_ Degree to which this project could be accomplished without sales tax revenue

**Guideline Points Awarded** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_