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Visit North Platte Grant Awards

(North Platte, Nebraska, January 24, 2025) Local event organizers are dedicated to creating fun and exciting events in North Platte and Lincoln County that attract visitors and boost the economic vitality of our community. Visit North Platte's Promotional Grant Awards are specifically designed to promote, encourage, and draw visitors to Lincoln County, for these events. The grant funds, as well as the marketing and operating expenses for Visit North Platte, are entirely funded by lodging taxes collected from overnight stays at lodging properties within the county.

The Visit North Platte Board of Directors approved grant funding at the monthly meeting on January 22, 2025, for the following. The applications totaled \$87,981.98 in requests and a total of \$57,073.98 was awarded. Events receiving funds are estimated to generate \$2.8 million in spending in the North Platte area in the second quarter of 2025.

- **Approved \$12,100 in Grant Funds for the Buffalo Bill Fastpitch Softball Tournament.** North Platte's Express Fastpitch Softball team will host the tournament on June 6-8 in North Platte. This is a sanctioned USA fastpitch softball tournament for ages 10-18 and is open to all levels of fastpitch softball players. It is expected to bring in at least 40 teams. Continuing to host softball in North Platte keeps us on the map as a destination for future tournaments, gives visiting players and their families the chance to explore our city, and offers our residents the opportunity to enjoy watching the sport.
- **Approved \$5,100 in Grant Funds for the Gail Wicks Fastpitch Softball Tournament.** The Mid-Plains Community College Softball Team will host the tournament on June 27-29. This is a sanctioned USA fastpitch softball tournament for ages 10 and under to 18 and under and is open to all levels of fastpitch softball players. The tournament is expected to bring in 30 teams and will begin with pool play and continue with tournament play throughout the weekend.
- **Approved \$7,637.48 in Grant Funds for the Flatrock Youth Baseball Tournament.** What started as a tournament with 19 teams has grown to a tournament with 60 teams out of Nebraska, Colorado, Kansas, and Wyoming. This event continues to bring athletes and their families to North Platte to experience not only baseball but everything else our community has to offer. This tournament is scheduled for April 26-27 and will use the ball fields in Centennial Park, Cody Park, and the Dowhower Softball Complex.

- **Approved \$4,000 in Grant Funding for the Spring Bash Youth Baseball Tournament.** This new tournament will bring in 56 teams from across the state as well as from neighboring states to compete. Each team will play a minimum of four games. It will also feature a home run derby and a skills competition. This tournament is scheduled for May 17-28 and will use the ball fields in Centennial Park, Cody Park, and the Dowhower Softball Complex.
- **Approved \$6,280 in Grant Funds for the Miss Nebraska Scholarship Organization.** The Miss Nebraska Scholarship competition is one of North Platte's signature events and their committee continues to provide Nebraska contestants with an exceptional experience and many scholarship opportunities. Miss Nebraska will host a plethora of events in North Platte June 2-7, with the final two days of the event featuring a fast-paced and entertaining show at the North Platte Highschool Auditorium. This year will be the 40th consecutive year that Miss Nebraska has been held in North Platte and that will be highlighted during the event as well.
- **Approved \$2,000 in Grant Funds for Music on the Bricks.** Music on the Bricks has become a North Platte staple since it began in 2017. The event not only showcases the beautiful downtown Canteen District but also highlights area talent by giving them a chance to perform for a large crowd. There are also vendors, food, and kids' activities which make it a great time for the entire family. Visitors like to experience destinations by engaging with the locals and seeing what events they gravitate towards. The spring Music on the Bricks event will be held in May.
- **Approved \$5,000 in Grant Funds for the Ultimate Bull Riding Tour 7th Annual Bucking Battle and Bash.** This event happening on May 23-34 continues to grow each year and offers family friendly entertainment to our visitors and locals alike through bull riding. Stock contractors come from all over the Midwest, with past bull riders coming from not only the United States but also Brazil, Mexico, and New Zealand. Both riders and contractors are competing to win the UBT year end and North Platte is excited to be a stop on the tour. This event will be held at the D&N Event Center.
- **Approved \$4,000 in Grant Funds for the American Stock Dog Registry Show.** The American Stock Dog Registry (ASDR) hosts eight shows across the nation annually and will be bringing one to the D&N Event Center in North Platte on July 11-13. This will be the only ASDR Show in the state of Nebraska for 2025. This dog show is estimated to showcase 150+ dogs and will bring in dog enthusiasts as well. There will be vendors on site and spectators are welcome free of charge. All of the dogs competing will be herding breeds and the event will showcase their ability to work. The agility course trials will be on Friday. Conformation will be on Saturday and Sunday as well as a Junior Showmanship.
- **Approved \$8,284 in Grant Funds to North Platte Pickleball for their PFA Round Up Tournament & Grand Opening of the Cody Park Pickleball Courts.** The North Platte Pickleball Club is hosting a tournament June 19-22 at the newly renovated Cody Park Pickleball Courts. As the sport of pickleball continues to grow in popularity, hosting tournaments like this gives our community the opportunity to draw in competitors from surrounding communities while also offering recreational opportunities for our local residents. This will also be a great opportunity to showcase our newly expanded and updated pickleball courts.

- **Approved \$500 in Grant Funds to Deborah’s Legacy Landscape & Garden Tour.** The local non-profit group Deborah’s Legacy will be hosting their third annual Landscape & Garden Tour on June 27-28. This event features different homes and locations throughout the community that have exceptional outdoor spaces with impressive landscapes, gardens, flower beds, and more. Ticket purchasers will receive a list of the locations and be able to visit them at their own pace during the scheduled times throughout the weekend. There will also be a market event in conjunction. Locals have grown to enjoy this tour as well as attendees of NEBRASKAland Days who are visiting our community. Deborah’s Legacy will also share information about the event with garden clubs and green houses in surrounding communities to help grow tour attendance even more in 2025.
- **Approved \$2,172.50 in Grant Funds to the Lincoln County Historical Museum for their annual Heritage Festival.** The Lincoln County Historical Museum hosts a Heritage Festival each summer to celebrate history, culture, and traditions. This two-day event includes live music, food and gift vendors, and tons of demonstrations, such as, stationary hay bailing, corn shelling, blacksmithing, quilting, and more. You will also find a model train show, a tractor show, and an antique car show - as well as a parade. With hands-on activities for visitors of all ages, this event is the perfect family outing that mixes fun and education. The 2025 event will also feature Jody Ingalls of Encore History. Jody performs a one-woman show that combines multiple characters, costumes, and songs to tell the story of the WWII era which ties in perfectly with the museums North Platte Canteen exhibit.

The next round of funding is now open, with an April 1 deadline for events or projects occurring in July, August, and September of 2025. These applications will be considered at the regular monthly Board of Directors meeting scheduled for April 23, 2025. Anyone interested in submitting a grant application is encouraged to contact the Visitors Bureau at 308-532-4729 and discuss their project with a staff member.

Visit North Platte operates under an agreement with the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners to facilitate the Nebraska Visitors Development Act. Grant funds, marketing, and operating expenses for Visit North Platte are funded by lodging taxes collected and remitted by lodging properties from overnight stays in Lincoln County.

It is thanks to the efforts of the lodging property partners located within the county that funds are available to attract more visitors, which have a significant impact on the economic well-being of our Lincoln County communities.

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