

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Visit North Platte Grant Awards

(North Platte, Nebraska, April 26, 2024) – Local event organizers continue to work hard to create fun and exciting events in North Platte that bring in visitors and contribute to the economic vitality of our community in addition to giving locals and visitors opportunities to attend unique activities.

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.

The Visit North Platte Board of Directors approved grant funding at the monthly meeting on April 24, 2024, for the following events which will be held in July, August, and September of 2024. The applications totaled \$86,104 in requests and a total of \$63,147 was awarded.

- **Approved \$500 in promotional funding for the Sutherland Rodeo.** The Sutherland fourth of July celebration and rodeo starts on July 1st and runs through July 4th. It includes rodeo slack, an all-girls roping competition, two rodeo performances, and a Jr. Rodeo Queen contest. Year after year the Sutherland Rodeo continues to provide family entertainment for locals and visitors alike.
- **Approved \$750 in incentive funding for the Lincoln County High School Rodeo.** The Lincoln County High School Rodeo is held annually at the Wild West Arena. High school contestants from across the state compete in fourteen events to earn points that qualify them for State and National Finals Rodeos. Contestants and their families travel to North Platte from across the state of Nebraska with some even coming from Colorado and Wyoming. This year's rodeo will be on September 15th.
- **Approved \$750 in promotional funding for Brady Days.** The Village of Brady will hold their annual celebration August 2nd through the 4th. It will include a parade, BBQ, volleyball, basketball, softball, and cornhole tournaments, turtle races, a car show, and family night. Many alumni return with their families or bring friends to our area to enjoy the festivities.
- **Approved \$5,317 in promotional funding to the Lincoln County Historical Museum.** The Lincoln County Historical Museum is truly a local treasure, proven by the fact that visitation has grown to approximately 21,000 visitors annually under the curatorship of Jim Griffin. Promoting the

museum is pivotal to its continued success. The museum will be open from May 1st to September 30th and will also host the annual Heritage Festival on June 8th and 9th, Buffalo Burger Feed on July 20th, Old Fashioned Corn Feed on August 3rd, Pancake Breakfast on September 28th, and Christmas Village during the month of December.

- **Approved \$2,500 in promotional funding to Pals Brewing Company for their Western Nebraska Craft Beer Festival.** The 6th annual Western Nebraska Craft Beer Festival will be held at Pals Brewing Company on September 14th in conjunction with the National Avocado Launching Championship Presented by the U.S. Army. Attendees will sample beer, wine, and spirits from breweries around Nebraska. This event increases craft beer awareness in the western portion of the state, raises money for the Nebraska Craft Brewers Guild, and brings visitors to North Platte for the weekend.
- **Approved \$4,000 in promotional funding to the Lincoln County Ag Society for their concert during the Lincoln County Fair.** Michael Ray and Drew Phillips will be performing live at the Lincoln County Fairgrounds on July 26th. Ray is a country music singer and songwriter who is signed to Warner Music Nashville and Drew Phillips is a local favorite. This show will be fun for music lovers of all ages and will bring more attendees to the county fair.
- **Approved \$9,830 in incentive and promotional funding for North Platte Pow Wow.** The North Platte Pow Wow is a cultural dancing and singing celebration featuring Native American participants. Along with the Pow Wow, this event includes a PTSD Awareness Walk, a tipi raising, a tribute to our veterans, a Quilts of Valor presentation, a parade, a night of cornhole and sand volleyball at Pals Brewing, and a basketball tournament. This event will take place on July 18th through the 21st and will primarily take place at Buffalo Bill State Historical Park. Annually, 650-1,000 attendees and participants come to the North Platte Pow Wow. 95% of the participants are from out of state and well over half of the spectators are from outside of North Platte. Attendees and participants have grown to enjoy the North Platte Pow Wow over the past four years and the numbers are expected to grow again for the fifth annual showcase.
- **Approved \$3,000 in incentive and promotional funding for Platte River Cruise Night.** Platte River Cruise has grown from a single day event to a three-day celebration that offers not only a car show and cruise, but also a sound competition, loudest exhaust contest, burnout competition, rockabilly contest, sidewalk chalk contest, beer garden, dirt drags, street dance, car limbo, and appearances from celebrities like Ryan Evans from Counting Cars who will be attending the 2024 event. This year Platte River Cruise Night is scheduled for July 5th through the 7th. This event continues to bring car enthusiasts to our area while also providing a weekend of fun for locals.
- **Approved \$7,000 in incentive and promotional funding for Viva North Platte.** Now in its second year, this Hispanic cultural celebration will again educate on the history and celebrate the traditions of the Hispanic culture. It features a variety of performances, workshops, and activities that showcase talent and diversity, including the crowning of a Latina Queen and king. This event will help welcome newcomers by providing a space where their traditions are celebrated as well as educating existing community members and bringing in visitors and guests. Viva North Platte will be held at the D&N Event Center on September 14th.

- **Approved \$3,000 sports incentive funding for the Buffalo Bill Horseshoe Bash.** The Buffalo Bill Horseshoe Bash is a regional/national horseshoe tournament that will be held July 19th through the 21st. The event will start off with a fun tournament on Friday with the larger competition being on Saturday and Sunday. Horseshoe pitches from across Nebraska, surrounding states, and across the nation will travel to participate in this tournament at Cody Park.
- **Approved \$2,650 in incentive and promotional funding for the North Platte Canteen Festival.** The North Platte Canteen Festival celebrates and honors the North Platte World War II Canteen which served more than six million soldiers. Now in its fourth year, the Canteen Festival is becoming a local favorite, and it offers visitors a chance to learn about our rich history. The 2024 festival will include a Fall Vendor and Art Show in the downtown Canteen District on September 28th. There will also be performances by the Flatrock Irregulars as well as Jody Ingalls from Encore History, a car show, and a display of military vehicles. The North Platte Community Playhouse will also be presenting the world premiere of 'The North Platte Canteen: A Musical Miracle on September 27th, 28th, 29th, and October 4th, 5th, 6th which overlaps with the festival.
- **Approved \$6,000 in sports incentive and promotional funding for the Buffalo Bill Brawl Boxing Tournament.** This USA Boxing National Open Tournament has continued to grow each year that it has been held in North Platte. It is open to all ages and is expected to bring between 150 and 200 participants in 2024. This event is scheduled for July 26th-28th and will take place at the D&N Event Center.
- **Approved \$1,950 in sports incentive and promotional funding for the upcoming disc golf tournament, the Cody Park Train Wreck 3.** Cody Park Train Wreck is a recurring tournament that started three years ago and has been successfully growing each year. The event is run by North Platte Disc Golf Club and will occur on September 14th. They will also be making improvements to two holes on the existing course. As our disc golf courses continue to improve, drawing visitors to our area to experience these updates will help bring awareness to the disc golf opportunities in our community.
- **Approved \$9,900 in incentive funding for the North Platte Downtown Association to purchase location data software.** As the downtown Canteen District continues to grow and improve, being able to gage the number of visitors to the area will not only help them when making decisions on upcoming improvements and project, but it will also allow them to explore more grant opportunities that require this information.
- **Approved \$6,000 in sports incentive funding to Prep Lacrosse for the upcoming high school lacrosse showcase.** This event will be held at the North Platte Public High School on July 24th and 25th. Here, players will be able to showcase their talents to college coaches and recruiters from around the nation. It is anticipated that 400-500 lacrosse players as well as 50 coaches will travel to North Platte for this event. Matt Rambo, professional lacrosse player, conducts these showcases for the purpose of increasing the awareness of the growing sport of lacrosse.

The next round of funding is now open, with a July 1 deadline for events or projects occurring in October, November, and December of 2024. These applications will be considered at the regular monthly Board of Directors meeting scheduled for July 24, 2024. 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.

Grant funds, marketing, and operating expenses for Visit North Platte are funded solely through the lodging taxes that are collected and remitted for overnight stays by lodging properties 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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