Lawrence
KANSAS

Unmistakable Identity
Parks, Recreation, Arts & Culture

Unmistakable Events Grant Program* FY2025

GUIDELINES OVERVIEW

As part of the 2025 budget, the City Commission approved a $150,000 grant program to encourage, promote and strengthen events and programs that benefit the Lawrence community and/or enhance the visitor experience in Lawrence.

*Formerly the TGT Grant Program

Strategic Plan
Framework

Vision
The City of Lawrence—supporting an unmistakably vibrant community with innovative, equitable, transparent, and responsible local government.

Mission
We create a community where all enjoy life and feel at home.

Values
• Character
• Competence
• Courage
• Collaboration
• Commitment

OUTCOMES

To realize our Vision for Lawrence, we endeavor to achieve these important strategic outcomes together:

• **Unmistakable Identity**

• **Strong, Welcoming Neighborhoods**

• **Safe and Secure**

• **Prosperity and Economic Security**

• **Connected City**

COMMITMENTS

The way we do our work is as important as what we do. The community we create is reflected in the decisions we make every day. These are our commitments:

• **Community Engagement**

• **Efficient and Effective Processes**

• **Equity and Inclusion**

• **Sound Fiscal Stewardship**

• **Engaged and Empowered Teams**

• **Environmental Sustainability**

https://lawrenceks.org/strategic-plan/

CITY OF LAWRENCE · KANSAS ·

Strategic Plan

Unmistakable Identity
Parks, Recreation, Arts & Culture

Lawrence is a welcoming community, synonymous with arts, diverse culture, fun, and a quintessential downtown. City parks and community events contribute to the vibrancy experienced by all people in Lawrence.
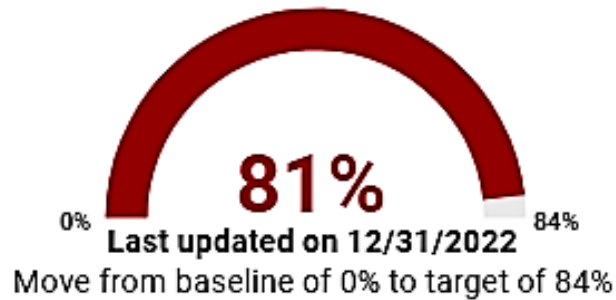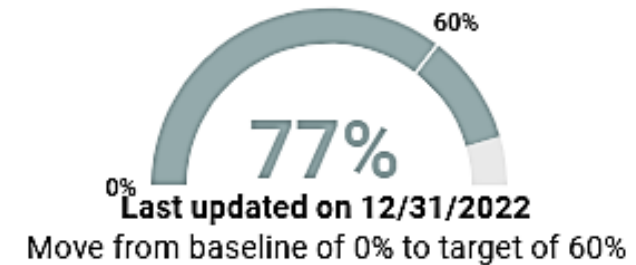
UI – PROGRESS INDICATORS

Commitment Area	Community Engagement
UI-1	Percent of residents who are satisfied or very satisfied

Commitment Area	Sound Fiscal Stewardship
UI-2	Percent of Parks & Recreation programs that meet their

UI-1: Percent of residents who are satisfied or very satisfied with the Parks & Recreation system

81%
0%   84%
Last updated on 12/31/2022
Move from baseline of 0% to target of 84%

UI-2: Percent of residents who are satisfied or very satisfied with the amount of arts, cultural opportunities and related events

60%
77%
0%
Last updated on 12/31/2022
Move from baseline of 0% to target of 60%

UI-5	Percent of Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) residents rating the community as welcoming
UI-6	Percent of residents who believe their culture is celebrated in the community (i.e. festivals, parades, events, etc.)
UI-7	Percent of scholarship need that is met for recreation programs
UI-8	Number of scholarship recipients each year

To realize our Vision for Lawrence, we endeavor to achieve this UI outcome. As such, the City Commission has identified several Progress Indicators to track progress towards this outcome.

CITY OF LAWRENCE KANSAS

TRANSIENT GUEST TAX

Transient Guest Tax (TGT) is a 6% tax levied on the rental of rooms, lodging, or other sleeping accommodations within the city. This tax applies to establishments offering more than two bedrooms for guest accommodations and is applicable to stays of 28 consecutive days or less.

The revenue generated from the TGT is allocated to support tourism-related activities and events that enhance Lawrence's cultural and economic landscape. A notable initiative funded by the Lawrence City Commission from the TGT is the Unmistakable Events Grant Program, formerly known as the Transient Guest Tax Grant Program. This program provides financial assistance to events that demonstrate a measurable economic benefit, such as boosting the cultural or travel/tourism economy and generating additional sales tax revenue. Additionally, it aims to enhance Lawrence's unique identity and reputation for tourist activities, attracting regional visitors.

Overall, the Transient Guest Tax in Lawrence and other cities serves as an important tool for promoting tourism and supporting events that contribute to the city's cultural vibrancy and economic growth.

UNMISTAKABLE EVENTS GRANT PROGRAM

The **Unmistakable Events Grant Program** is administered through the Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture (PRAC) Department as part of the Unmistakable Identity outcome area. Grant application review will be conducted with the assistance of a diverse ad hoc volunteer committee of seven, comprising members from the Cultural Arts Commission and Parks and Recreation Advisory Boards as well as individuals with background in arts and culture, tourism, and economic development. This committee will review applications and make recommendations to the City Commission, which has final approval of grant funds.

Goals

The Parks, Recreation, Arts, and Culture (PRAC) Unmistakable Events Grant Program is a competitive funding opportunity for Lawrence-based events that are open to the public. To be eligible, events should meet most of the following goals:

UNMISTAKABLE EVENTS GRANT PROGRAM

Goals

- **Strengthening Lawrence's Unmistakable Identity**: Enhance Lawrence's unmistakable identity as a welcoming community known for vibrant arts, culture, educational and recreational events. Events should showcase Lawrence's reputation as an unmistakable hub for regional visitors and contribute to the community's diverse and inclusive atmosphere.

- **Economic Impact**: Demonstrate a measurable economic benefit by enhancing the travel/tourism economy, including the generation of additional transient guest tax and sales tax revenue.

- **Cultural Impact:** Demonstrate a measurable cultural benefit by enriching Lawrence's diverse and Unmistakable Identity through activities or initiatives that foster cultural growth and attract visitors.

- **Community Engagement and Inclusion**: Foster community engagement, with a focus on inclusivity, by hosting events that resonate with diverse audiences, including black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) residents. Events should aim to increase the percentage of residents who feel their culture is celebrated in the community.

- **Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship**: Promote events and programs that celebrate, enhance and increase awareness about environmental sustainability, contributing to Lawrence's long-term environmental goals.

UNMISTAKABLE EVENTS GRANT PROGRAM

Guidelines

A scoring matrix aligned with the goals listed above will be used to evaluate applications.

- **Eligibility**: State registered for-profit and non-profit businesses may submit one grant request for events held throughout the year in Lawrence, Kansas. Grants start at $600 and are limited to $15,000 per event.

- **Local Focus**: Only events that are held within the city limits are eligible for grant funds. Events should strive to become self-sustaining over time, although the city retains the discretion to fund events that align with the grant program goals.

- **Focus on Marketing and Promotion**: Funding can be used for overall event support, with a particular emphasis on marketing and promotional efforts. This could include advertising (print, social media, digital, radio, television), printing (flyers, posters, banners), video production, email marketing, web design, and graphic design services.

- **Impact on Tourism**: Events expected to generate overnight stays, especially during non-peak times (December through March and weekdays, Monday through Thursday night), are particularly desirable. Benefit scoring will reflect the potential for generating transient guest tax during off-peak periods.

UNMISTAKABLE EVENTS GRANT PROGRAM

Guidelines, continued

- **In-Kind and Cash Support**: Applications should note the value of in-kind services or cash support from other organizations, with required letters of commitment included as confirmation.

- **Post-Event Reporting**: Recipients of grant funds must sign an agreement with the city, including a requirement to submit post-event reports within one month of the event. Reports must include a summary, participant data, and details on the use of city funding. Failure to submit a report may disqualify the organization from future funding opportunities.

- **Recognition**: Events receiving funding must include the City of Lawrence and the Unmistakably Lawrence logos on sponsorship materials and acknowledge the city's support. City logos can be obtained from www.lawrenceks.org/identity, and the Unmistakably Lawrence logos can be obtained by contacting Allison Calvin of eXplore Lawrence at allison@explorelawrence.com.

UNMISTAKABLE EVENTS GRANT PROGRAM

Guidelines

Unmistakable Identity Enhancement	Economic Impact			Cultural Impact	Environmental Stewardship	Application	Leverage	Merit	
UI-2 - Percent of residents who are satisfied or very satisfied with the amount of arts, cultural opportunities and related events	UI-4 & UI-10 - Number of residents and/or non-residents who have attended select events in the past year			UI-5 - Percent of Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) residents rating the community as welcoming - UI-6 - Percent of residents who believe their culture is celebrated in the community (i.e. festivals, parades, events, etc.)	UI-13 - Number of events and programs that celebrate and enhance area environmental sustainability	Quality	Outside and/or In-Kind Support	Merit of Event	
Score: Is this an Unmistakable Identity event or does it have the potential to become such an event? Does it move the progress indicator needles? (UI Progress Indicators tab is below.) Example: Is this a yearly tradition, unique to Lawrence, uniquely unmistakable, promotes diversity, etc.?	Score: Does this event enhance the artisitc and cultural vibrancy of Lawrence?	Score: Does this event generate overnight visits to Lawrence?	Score: Does this event boost tourism and create an overall economic benefit for the community?	Score: Does this event generate visits in off-peak seasons (Dec. to March)?	Score: Does this event foster community engagement, with a focus on inclusivity, by hosting events that resonate with diverse audiences, including black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) and LGBTQ+ residents?	Score: Does this event celebrate and enhance environmental sustainability and contribute to Lawrence's long-term environmental goals?	Score: Application Quality (completeness, organization, clarity of application, supporting documentation, letters of support for in-kind funding)?	Score: Does this event have other financial support and supporting resources?	Score: Added points for strong projects which align well with the program intent and in which you are confident of success.
									Total (Max 100 points)

UNMISTAKABLE EVENTS GRANT PROGRAM

PLEASE NOTE - Increased Equity for the City's Two Grant Programs

The City administers two annual grant programs which are both funded by Transient Guest Tax (TGT). These are the Unmistakable Events Grant Program, which supports public events, and the Cultural Arts Commission's Community Arts Grant Program, which is dedicated to arts and culture projects and initiatives.

- Starting in 2025, to make things more equitable, each event or arts & culture program can only receive one grant. This can be either from the **Unmistakable Events Grant Program** or the **Community Arts Grant Program**, but not both.

- However, if two separate non-profits are working together on the same event, they can each apply for their own grant. For example, if the XYZ event is awarded funds from the Unmistakable Events Grant Program, the ABC arts program, which is part of XYZ, could still get support from the Community Arts Grant Program. This setup helps encourage local event organizers and arts agencies to collaborate, creating more opportunities for everyone involved.

- Plus, the application timelines for these grant programs are organized so that applicants will know if they will receive an Unmistakable Events Grant before the deadline for the Community Arts Grant Program. This makes it easier to plan and helps provide a fair chance to receive funding.

UNMISTAKABLE EVENTS GRANT PROGRAM

Important Things to Remember

- The program will have one funding cycle each calendar year, with applications being accepted in the fall of the year preceding the funding year. A volunteer committee will review the applications and make recommendations for funding to the City Commission for final approval.

- The value of financial support or services provided by other organizations should be included in the application and noted as in-kind support. If cash or in-kind support has been received for the event, the application must include a letter of commitment as confirmation.

- Any entity receiving Unmistakable Identity Grant Program/TGT funds for an event must be registered and in good standing with the <u>State of Kansas</u> Secretary of State and will be required to sign an agreement with the city which will require post-event reporting including a summary of the event, data captured from the event including participant projections and use of city funding in the overall budget. Post-event reporting is due to the City of Lawrence within one month of the event/program. If an event report is not filed, future funding opportunities through this program may not be allowed.

UNMISTAKABLE EVENTS GRANT PROGRAM

Important Things to Remember

- Any entity receiving Unmistakable Identity Grant funding will be required to include the City of Lawrence and the Unmistakably Lawrence logos on sponsorship program materials and credit the city for sponsorship where appropriate. The city logo is available at www.lawrenceks.org/identity. For Unmistakably Lawrence logos, contact Allison Calvin of eXplore Lawrence at allison@explorelawrence.com.

- After the applications are received by the deadline, the committee will begin their review process. Applications will be posted on the city's website. The meetings of the committee are open to the public.

ANTICIPATED TIMELINE

- November 8 – December 11, 2024 – Application period for FY2025 event grants
  - Application deadline: December 11, 2024, by 11 p.m.

- Thursday, November 14 (2 to 3 p.m.) and Friday, November 22 (2 to 3 p.m.) – Informational meetings for grant applicants – Virtual and recorded on YouTube

- Friday, January 3 (1-3 p.m.) – Ad hoc committee meets to review scores and make recommendations

- Tuesday, January 7, 2025 – City Commission reviews Unmistakable Events Grant Program funding recommendations for approval at City Commission meeting

UNMISTAKABLE EVENTS GRANT PROGRAM

Unmistakable Identity Grant Program web page:

https://lawrenceks.org/lprd/tgt-grants/

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