

Frequently Asked Questions

Question 1: I have accessibility needs and am unable to use the digital application, what should I do?

Answer: We will provide a paper application for those with accessibility needs; it should be noted the instructions on the paper application differ slightly than the online application. Please contact Kylie Diaz at kylie@visitspc.com

Question 2: I am unsure of how to acquire an Economic Impact Study; do you have any suggestions?

Answer: Below we have listed companies whose expertise is in Destination/Tourism Metrics

- Future Partners, <https://futurepartners.com/>
- Tourism Economics, <https://www.tourismeconomics.com/>
- Longwoods International, <https://longwoods-intl.com/>

Question 3: I am having issues with the digital application. What should I do?

Answer: If encountering table/form issues:

1. Save your form (through the Save & Continue button). Exit out of your form. Clear browser cache. Click on link you received to access your form again, and hopefully the table fields will have returned.
2. If the problem persists, or if encountering other issues with the application, please contact Kylie Diaz at kylie@visitspc.com

Question 4: I have other questions about the program. What should I do?

Answer: Please contact Kylie Diaz at kylie@visitspc.com

Question 5: If I submit my application early will I receive a faster decision on funding?

Answer: We welcome early applications as it will give us sufficient time to begin the review process, and while it will not result in an earlier decision it could prevent us from having to extend the funding timeline.

Question 6: What are examples of government fees & taxes in question 11 on the application?

Answer: Some examples of taxes may include but not limited to bed taxes generated by overnight visitors that can be attributed to the capital project, ticket sales, property taxes etc. Examples of government fees may include but not limited to permit fees, impact fees, water & sewer etc.

Question 7: Can you define Shovel Ready?

Answer: "Shovel-ready" means a project on which construction work can begin immediately upon approval of funding, and for which the Organization has completed all preliminary planning, engineering, architectural, design, land-use, zoning, and environmental reviews, and has obtained all necessary approvals and permits. A project may be shovel-ready if some easy-to-obtain, non-discretionary permits are lacking, as long as the Organization has begun the application process for those permits, and the permits will be granted upon compliance with certain administrative

procedures.

Question 8: My organization has already spent money towards our project; would this qualify as matching funds?

Answer: Funds already spent are not "matching funds" as those are defined as expenditures made after the application date.

Question 9: Can you clarify what is needed under the application process for Matching Funds? Can this be some type of letter from investors? Are there specific examples you can provide us with that meet this requirement?

Answer: Per the Capital Funding Guidelines, the following are options available for Matching Funds:

"Matching Funds" shall mean and include any of the following assets or expenditures by applicant incurred or available after the application date:

1. cash funds;
2. in-kind contributions to the Capital Project;
3. land acquired for the Capital Project at the purchase price, or fair market value if donated;
4. costs of infrastructure improvements to real property necessary to complete the Capital Project;
5. Capital Project design and engineering costs;
6. capital equipment.

Here are some examples of matching funds from previous applications, if you do not see something listed below and want to verify that it qualifies, please reach out to us.

- Detailed Private Donations
- Grants received (State of Florida, etc.)
- Letter from Bank verifying proof of funds, cash on hand, or bank loan.
- Proceeds from the sale of land
- In Kind donation on land
- A letter from an investor confirming committed funds would also likely qualify, but please confirm with VisitSPC

Question 10: Is the cost of the economic impact study (required to apply for CPFP funding as outlined in the capital funding guidelines) eligible to count toward the matching funds for a capital project?

Answer: No. The CPFP Guidelines define matching funds to mean "assets or expenditures by applicant incurred or available after the application date," and the economic impact study must be completed before and submitted with the application, in order for the application to be complete. Additionally, even without that limitation, matching funds are provided only for those purposes outlined in the Florida Statutes and the Tourist Development Plan, that is, to "acquire, construct, extend, enlarge, remodel, repair, improve, maintain, or provide debt service on" the capital project. The economic impact study does not fall under any of those categories.

Question 11: Can I apply again after I have been denied in a previous application?

Answer: Re-application requirements; If an applicant applies but is not granted funds in that cycle for any reason a NEW economic impact study is required. (Non-Beach Park Facility)

- There are substantial or drastic changes to the scope of the project that change the end result or could in the opinion of VisitSPC change the economic impact of the project (must be completed within a certain period of time from the date of notice of the change/or from the date requested by VisitSPC); changes to the economic impact study may be relied upon to change the grant award amount.
- An updated economic impact study is required if it has been longer than 6 months since the last application, but no substantial changes to the scope of the project.

Question 12: As per section VI E. in the program guidelines- regarding matching funds:

Would we be able to use the fair market value of the vacant land that we own as part of in-kind match category as defined in that section? This is a piece of the property that will be built on as part of the overall project.

Answer: Yes, the fair market value of vacant land currently owned by the applicant and being used as the site for the construction project can be included as matching funds. The applicant should be able to support the value claimed through evidence that could include (but need not be limited to) an independent appraisal or the property value on the tax roll.

Question 13: Are the "governmental taxes and fees" mentioned the same as "TDT revenue generated" that is in the Economic Impact Study or there are additional fees that need to be calculated and added to that?

Answer: The "other governmental taxes and fees" can include the TDT revenue, property taxes, sales tax, permit fees, impact fees, water/sewer fees, etc. An applicant should be able to demonstrate the breakdown of such estimated fees/taxes, and TDT revenue must be separately estimated in the economic impact study.

Question 14: If I receive funding, can I submit reimbursement for design fees from our architect?

Answer: No, please see the allowable expenses below, it is suggested to submit this to your accounting department when they are creating your invoices for payment. When expenses that are not allowable end up on the invoice, it delays the payment approval.

CAPITAL PROJECT FUNDING

Authorized Expenses

In accordance with Section 118-32 Pinellas County Code and Florida Statutes § 125.0104, the County is authorized to utilize tourist development tax revenues to fund the acquisition, construction, extension, enlargement, remodeling, repair, improvement, or maintenance of statutorily eligible capital projects.

The following examples of reimbursable and non-reimbursable items are provided for the benefit of applicants, but are not intended to be all-inclusive, and are not a substitute for a review of the governing statutory and code provisions, or for legal advice. **The final determination of whether an expenditure is an authorized use of Tourist Tax Revenues will be made by the County.**

EXAMPLES ONLY:

Reimbursable:	Not Reimbursable:
Construction or repair costs including labor and materials	Engineering and design costs
Fixtures or equipment that are permanently fastened or integrated into the real estate so that removal would cause material damage.	Fixtures, furniture, or equipment that are <i>not</i> permanently fastened or integrated into the real estate
Land Acquisition	Day-to-day or administrative costs
Permit costs (for permits required after the initial shovel-ready stage)	Overhead costs of the Organization
Rental of Construction-related equipment	Costs related to the operation of the capital project or associated programs/events
	Travel or training expenses or Employment benefits
	Insurance or licensing costs