



CITY OF SURPRISE
Tourism Fund Subcommittee Meeting
16000 N. Civic Center Plaza
Surprise, AZ 85374
Tuesday, June 16, 2026 @ 3:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

- A. Call To Order
- B. Roll Call
- C. Pledge of Allegiance
- D. Current Events and Reports
- E. Staff Reports
- F. Tourism Fund Subcommittee Agenda

CONSENT AGENDA:

REGULAR AGENDA ITEM - NON-PUBLIC HEARING:

- | | | | |
|----|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | Citywide | Consideration and action to approve the Tourism Fund Subcommittee Meeting Minutes of January 5, 2026. | Sports,
Entertainment, and
Culture |
| 2. | Citywide | Consideration and action pertaining to a recommendation to City Council to utilize a maximum of \$30,000 annually from the Tourism Fund to support the Desert Fall Festival to be hosted in City Center for up to 3 years (FY27-29). | Kendra Pettis
Sports,
Entertainment, and
Culture |

- G. Call To The Public

INSTRUCTIONS:

In order to address the City Council, you will need to fill out a Public Comment Form available at the entrance, and turn it in to the City Clerk before the meeting begins.

You may also fill out the [Public Comment Form](#) online. If submitting the online form the City Clerk must receive the request at least one hour before the meeting start time.

In accordance with A.R.S. 38-431.01(I) - During this time, members of the public may address City Council only on issues within the jurisdiction of the City Council. At the conclusion of the open call, City Council may respond to criticism, may ask staff to review the matter or may ask that the matter be put on a future agenda.

Councilmembers may not discuss or respond to matters raised during the call to the public that are not specifically identified on the agenda.

Each speaker shall be limited to three (3) minutes per item. If several speakers desire to speak regarding a single topic, the Chair may limit the number of speakers or the time given to each group. A maximum time of 30 minutes will be given per topic. However, an equal amount of time will be given to each side of an issue. **Council Chamber doors will be open at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the meeting.**

- H. Other Business and Future Agenda Items
- I. Adjournment

KRISTI PASSARELLI, CITY CLERK

SPECIAL NOTE: PERSONS WITH SPECIAL ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS, INCLUDING LARGE PRINT MATERIALS OR INTERPRETER, SHOULD CONTACT THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE @ 623.222.1200 OR CLERK@SURPRISEAZ.GOV, BY NO LATER THAN 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THE REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING TIME.



CITY OF SURPRISE
Tourism Fund Subcommittee Meeting

Council Meeting Date: June 16, 2026 Contact Person:
Submitting Department: Sports, Entertainment, and District: Citywide
Culture
Staff Recommendations: None

Consent: No Regular: Yes Public Hearing: No Report/Discussion: No

Agenda Wording:

Consideration and action to approve the Tourism Fund Subcommittee Meeting Minutes of January 5, 2026.

Motion:

I move to approve the Tourism Fund Subcommittee Meeting Minutes of January 5, 2026.

Background:

Objective Analysis:

Policy Compliant:

Financial Impact:

Budget Impact:

FTE Impact:

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 01-05-2026 Minutes Tourism Fund DRAFT
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CITY OF SURPRISE
Tourism Fund Sub-Committee Meeting
16000 North Civic Center Plaza
Surprise, AZ 85374

Monday, January 5, 2026 – 4:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Councilmember Patrick Duffy called the **Tourism Fund Sub-Committee Meeting** to order at 4:05 p.m. at Surprise City Hall, North Lobby Conference Room, 16000 North Civic Center Plaza Surprise, Arizona 85374, on Monday, January 5, 2026.

ROLL CALL

Councilmember Patrick Duffy, Chair; Vice Mayor Jack Hastings, Committee Member; Councilmember Nick Haney, Committee Member.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CURRENT EVENTS AND REPORTS

None.

STAFF REPORTS

None.

STAFF PRESENT

Kendra Pettis, Sports, Entertainment & Culture Director, Travis Ashby, Sports, Entertainment & Culture Assistant Director, Tara Combs, Sports, Entertainment & Culture Business Administrator.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

None.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEM

1. Action item: Consideration and action to approve the Tourism Fund Subcommittee meeting minutes of April 23, 2025:

Vice Mayor Hastings moved to approve the April 23, 2025, Tourism Fund Subcommittee Meeting minutes and Councilmember Haney seconded the motion. Motion carries 3-0.

2. Action item: Consideration and action pertaining to a recommendation to City Council to utilize a maximum of \$100,000 annually from the Tourism Fund to support the NCAA Big 12 Conference Baseball Championship to be hosted in Surprise for up to 3 years (FY26-FY28).

Kendra Pettis presented to the sub-committee a power point that explained the background of the Big 12 Championship which is a 5-day, single elimination tournament showcasing the top twelve baseball programs from the conference. The event will be in partnership with the Big 12 Conference, REV Entertainment and the City. The event will showcase Surprise on a national stage, driving tourism -related economic activity and build a foundation for future collegiate & professional events.

Kendra Pettis explained how this event partnership aligns with the Council and Tourism Strategic Plans. From the Council Strategic Plan: Strategy 3.2 – which is providing sports tourism programming; Strategy 3.3 - cultivating an environment for residents and visitors to enjoy arts, culture, and entertainment within the City of Surprise and Strategy 3.5 – identifying opportunities for public-private partnerships to continually improve the quality of life for Surprise residents. From a Tourism Strategic Plan: Focus Area 1: Events and Entertainment – The goal has always been to utilize the Tourism Fund to attract professional event partners, to work with third parties to add event and entertainment opportunities to build and promote year-round tourism activity and increase tourism related room nights. Focus Area 2: Marketing – To increase strategic collaboration with key partners to expand our ability to identify and target demographics for tourism.

Kendra Pettis discussed the Big 12 Tourism Fund Application and how the event would support the strategic goals. Big 12 estimates that the tournament will attract approximately 40,000 attendees across the five-day tournament, with an estimated 50% that will be outside the Phoenix metro area, an estimated 3,500 room nights with the 12 teams, coaches, officials, family and friends, and a total estimated economic impact of \$3.5 million.

Kendra Pettis explained that when we look at the Tourism Strategic Goals for Marketing and Media Exposure, the event will have National coverage on ESPN platforms; Big 12 Conference will also execute a comprehensive marketing campaign with regional and national reach, with over one million combined followers on social accounts. From Community Impact, the Big 12 will engage local baseball/youth programs, offer military discounts, outreach to Luke Air Force Base and local businesses which will benefit from increased visitor traffic.

With all of the Tourism Fund Applications that are received, Kendra Pettis looks at what the Tourism Fund Guidelines are that were approved by the Tourism Sub-committee and Council which are hotel room nights, attendance, seasonality and the operating budget. Then, she looks to see how the application fits within those guidelines. In this case, the NCAA has asked for up to \$100,000 from the Tourism Fund for support. The way that this could be met is by the following:

- Category 1 (Hotel Nights) - \$2,500 for every 100 Surprise hotel room nights verified (maximum of \$25,000)
- Category 2 (Attendance) - \$2,500 for every 2000 in total attendance verified (maximum of \$25,000)
- Category 3 (Event Days) - \$2,500 for each event day (5 days total = \$12,500)
- Category 4 (Seasonality – events between May-September) - \$2,500 for each event day (5 days total = \$12,500)
- Category 5 (Operational Costs) – maximum of \$25,000 in operational support (marketing, facility rental costs, etc).

The NCAA is requesting from the Tourism Fund not to exceed \$100,000 total in each fiscal year (available for 3 years maximum if the tournament returns to Surprise, FY26-FY28). The funds can be used to reimburse facility use fees and event marketing (which must include “Surprise, Arizona” in any form of marketing) to be considered for reimbursement.

Kendra Pettis stated that the overall NCAA budget is \$800,000 and the Tourism Fund sub-committee has agreed not to ever pay over 50% of the total operational budget of an event/project.

Vice Mayor Hastings asked how big the event is from an economic standpoint. Kendra Pettis answered that the City has never hosted an NCAA National Baseball Championship. The baseball tournament that the City currently hosts in February does not get this big of national media attention. The tournament in February is comprised of 4 teams while this one is 12 teams.

Chair Councilmember Duffy asked if we know where the teams will be staying. Kendra Pettis stated that it is the teams’ responsibility to book the rooms, but NCAA is only promoting the Surprise hotels to the teams. The room nights that are being requested for reimbursement are for Surprise hotel room nights only, so NCAA is incentivizing the teams to stay in Surprise. Travis Ashby commented that Perfect Game baseball tournaments, Division II Tennis Championships and the Big 12 Championship are all going on at the same time making a huge economic impact to the City of Surprise that week.

Kendra Pettis also stated that by hosting these types of events, the City of Surprise will be awarded more similar events since they know the City can host events of this caliber.

Chair Councilmember Duffy made a call to the public. A meeting attendee, Alex, had some questions. Alex stated that the Big 12 was already advertising the event for the City of Surprise and asked if we are or will be getting any help from the state. Kendra Pettis answered that we are not getting any help with this event. Alex asked Kendra

Pettis if she had reached out to Legislator Nick Kupper. Alex suggested that we should because he is interested in this type of tourism out here. Another question Alex asked was how much outreach we were doing to our community. For example, players that are coming out here for the tournament, they should be going to schools letting the kids know that we are going to be having this tournament here. Kendra Pettis stated that NCAA is responsible for all of the paid marketing, but we will go through our normal routes with our marketing and communications team with our social media. The Big 12 is looking at doing ticket deals with our youth sports programs and possibly doing youth clinics. Alex asked if there are ticket discounts for the citizens of the City of Surprise. Kendra Pettis stated that we do for spring training but the ticket pricing for this event has not been put together yet, but it is something that we can ask them to do a resident discount. They have already mentioned giving a youth and military discount. Travis Ashby pointed out that on their Tourism Fund Application, NCAA did attach their marketing plan which included their outreach program. Alex also asked if there will be any social media users who are interested in this helping to promote the event. Kendra Pettis stated that we usually reach out to the local ones for spring training and other events, and she knows NCAA has theirs as well so a lot of it will be a collaboration with all groups involved on the social media side. Alex asked how many beds the City of Surprise has. Kendra Pettis answered that we are under 1000- 900 and something.

Vice Mayor Hastings made a motion to recommend to City Council a budget amendment to utilize up to \$100,000 annually from the Tourism Fund to support the NCAA Big 12 Conference Baseball Championship to be hosted in Surprise for up to three years (FY26-FY28). Councilmember Haney seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

OTHER BUSINESS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

ATTEST:

Councilmember Patrick Duffy, Chair

DRAFT



CITY OF SURPRISE
Tourism Fund Subcommittee Meeting

Council Meeting Date: June 16, 2026

Contact Person: Kendra Pettis, DIR -
SPORTS/TOURISM

Submitting Department: Sports, Entertainment, and Culture
District: Citywide

Staff Recommendations: None

Consent: No Regular: Yes Public Hearing: No Report/Discussion: No

Agenda Wording:

Consideration and action pertaining to a recommendation to City Council to utilize a maximum of \$30,000 annually from the Tourism Fund to support the Desert Fall Festival to be hosted in City Center for up to 3 years (FY27-29).

Motion:

I move to recommend to City Council a budget amendment to utilize up to \$30,000 annually from the Tourism Fund to support the Desert Fall Festival to be hosted in City Center for up to 3 years (FY27-29).

Background:

Desert Fall Festival is a large-scale seasonal event held in City Center, designed to attract families and visitors from across the Phoenix area and surrounding regions. The event creates a unique, Western-inspired fall experience in Surprise City Center, transforming a multi-acre outdoor dirt lot into an immersive destination featuring entertainment, unique attractions, food vendors, live performances, and more.

Desert Fall Festival is produced by West Valley Events and Marketing LLC, who also produces Desert Farm Lights. They rent the City land on Tierra Buena and Civic Center through the Economic Development department. The FY27 event is scheduled for September 25 - November 1, 2026 and West Valley Events and Marketing is estimating an attendance of 50,000 - 60,000 and 1,100 room nights. They also estimate a \$3 - \$5 Million economic impact for the community.

Objective Analysis:

The objective is to provide quality entertainment opportunities for residents and to attract visitors to City Center, driving tourism-related economic activity for the City and local businesses.

Policy Compliant:

This item is compliant with City policies.

Financial Impact:

If Council were to approve this recommendation, it will allow for the expenditure of up to \$30,000 from the Tourism Fund annually, which will be paid on a reimbursement basis, for tourism activity associated with the Desert Fall Festival event for up to three years through June 30, 2029.

Budget Impact:

If Council were to approve this recommendation, it will allow for the movement of budget authority in the amount of \$30,000 from General Contingency to services within the Tourism Fund. This action would represent a transfer of spending authority and would not increase or decrease the total adopted citywide expenditure limit. The expenses for the FY28 and FY29 budget would be requested through the formal budget process.

FTE Impact:

There is no FTE impact associated with this item.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Desert Fall Festival Tourism Fund Application Submittal
 2. Desert Fall Festival Tourism Fund Request_June 16 2026
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CITY OF SURPRISE TOURISM FUND APPLICATION

III. Organization Information

West Valley Events and Marketing
Organization Name

Jordan Kunz
Organization Contact Name

Owner
Organization Contact Title

801-319-9664
Contact Phone

info@desertfarmlights.com
Contact Email

11020 N Hershey St
Street Address

Surprise
City

AZ
State

85388
Zip Code

Applicant Status (Check one): Non-Profit For-Profit Public Agency

IV. Event / Project Information

Desert Fall Festival
Event Name

Fall Festival
Event Type (Ex. Sport tournament, conference, arts / music)

9/25/26 - 11/1/26
Event Date(s)

14360 W Tierra Buena LN, Surprise AZ 85374
Event Location / Address

60,000
Estimated Event Attendance

1,100
Estimated Hotel Stays (Total Nights)

\$250,000.00
Amount Requested (\$) – Max 50% of Budget

1,159,000.00
Total Project Budget (\$)

Which Surprise Tourism Strategic Plan focus area does the event or project support? (Check one or more)

- Events and entertainment
- Marketing that would promote Surprise tourism
- Tourism based partnership and facility development

Application continued on next page.

CITY OF SURPRISE

TOURISM FUND APPLICATION

V. Narrative Proposal of Project and Economic Impact

In no more than three pages (single spaced, 1" margins, 12 pt font), address the following items. NOTE: The numbered header below must be included in the narrative proposal, but not the description and instructions following the header. For example, please include "A. Project Description" above the relevant section.

A. Project Description

- Describe the event including purpose, activities, vendors used, target audience, market origin of attendees, locations / venues for advertising, source of matching funds, etc.
- Explain how tourism funding is critical to the success of your event / project.

B. Support for Surprise's Tourism Strategic Goals

- Identify one or more of Surprise's tourism strategic goals – (1) events and entertainment; (2) marketing to support Surprise tourism; or (3) tourism-based partnership and facility development – supported by the event / project.
- Describe how the event / project supports the selected tourism strategic goal(s).

C. Estimated Attendance and Hotel Stays / Accommodations

- Outline total attendance estimates including how many attendees fall into the following categories – (1) staying overnight in paid accommodations; (2) staying overnight in unpaid (e.g. family / friends) accommodations; (3) Staying only for the day and traveling 50+ miles
- Outline how many estimated hotel nights are generated including if there is any minimum room nights guaranteed, or recommendation / requirements for participants to stay in Surprise accommodations.
- Explain why the date was chosen for the event. If the event is to be held when the City's occupancy is already high, describe how the event will extend visitor stays or explain why a move to a lower occupancy date is not feasible.

D. Economic Impact and Community Benefit

- Discuss two or more of the following items to demonstrate that the project helps build Surprise as a tourist destination or provide benefits to the community.
 - o Provide an estimated economic impact projection and discuss any forecasted increase in sales tax revenue.
 - o Discuss how the event or marketing plan will attract regional or national media.
 - o Describe how your project impacts the community's efforts to increase visual or performing arts, host regional sporting and outdoor recreation activities, and / or heighten awareness of area's natural amenities.
 - o Discuss any long-term impacts on the community

Desert Fall Festival Narrative

A. Project Description

Desert Fall Festival is a large-scale seasonal event held in Surprise, Arizona, designed to attract families and visitors from across the Phoenix area and surrounding regions. The event creates a unique, Western-inspired fall experience in the Surprise City Center, transforming a multi-acre outdoor dirt lot into an immersive destination featuring entertainment, unique attractions, food vendors, live performances, and more.

The purpose of Desert Fall Festival is to provide a high-quality event for the Westside—specifically Surprise residents—while encouraging community gathering and bringing elevated entertainment to a space not typically known for events. Our goal and objective is to create a memorable outdoor experience for families, residents, and visitors alike.

Historically, fall attractions in the Valley required residents to travel outside of the Surprise area. Now, guests are coming into Surprise from other cities to experience the unique attractions our festival offers.

Desert Fall Festival features standout experiences such as a real-life excavator dig where guests can hop inside and operate heavy equipment, shoot apple cannons, zip down a zipline, enjoy dozens of unique photo ops, explore large pumpkin displays, and this year, skate on a skating rink. Several of these attractions are experiences that nowhere else in the Valley offers. The event also incorporates local food vendors, shopping and live entertainment.

The event employs over 200 part-time employees, with approximately 80% being Surprise residents.

Our target audience truly spans all ages. We see elderly guests who come to grab food and people-watch, families enjoying fall activities close to home, date nights, and special celebrations such as baby announcements taking place in front of our unique photo ops and birthday celebration congregations.

Marketing efforts target audiences throughout Arizona. Visitor data from previous events shows attendees traveling from across the Phoenix Valley, as well as from neighboring states like California, Nevada, New Mexico, and even Mexico.

We promote the event through an advertising campaign that includes social media, influencers, local radio, billboards, and news outlets, along with partnerships with 50+ local schools and businesses.

Desert Fall Festival is a grassroots, self-funded project by the owners, with total operational and marketing investments exceeding \$1,000,000. Tourism funding support is critical to expanding

our reach, attracting visitors from outside the immediate area, increasing regional advertising, elevating entertainment quality, and enhancing the overall guest experience—positioning Surprise City Center as a true destination.

B. Support for Surprise’s Tourism Strategic Goals

Desert Fall Festival directly supports several of the City of Surprise’s Tourism Strategic Plan focus areas, particularly Events & Entertainment and Marketing. The event brings guests from across the region into Surprise City Center and the newly developed Prasada areas.

Based on Placer.ai data, 20% of attendees visited Surprise restaurants after attending the event, and 15% went shopping. With increased funding, we aim to grow attendance even further from 2025 into the 2026 season.

The event also strongly supports marketing that promotes Surprise tourism. We invest over \$100,000 in advertising, and every piece of marketing—from print to social media to news—intentionally highlights Surprise, Arizona as the event location.

That’s over \$100,000 in direct exposure for the city itself, reaching not just nearby residents but visitors from across the Valley (Scottsdale, Prescott, Mesa) and beyond—including California, New Mexico, Nevada and Mexico.

C. Estimated Attendance and Hotel Stays / Accommodations

Desert Fall Festival is projected to attract between 50,000 and 60,000 total visits during the event period, based on prior attendance and expanded marketing efforts.

Based on visitor data and travel patterns:

- Approximately 1,100 visitors are expected to stay overnight in paid accommodations such as hotels within Surprise or nearby West Valley communities. We actively support this by providing lodging links on our event websites: <https://www.thedesertfallfestival.com/lodging> & <https://www.desertfarmlights.com/lodging>
- Approximately 1,300 visitors are expected to stay in unpaid accommodations, such as with friends or family in the area.

The timing of Desert Fall Festival aligns with fall break schedules for many schools nationwide, making it a highly attractive seasonal travel experience—now available right in Surprise City Center.

D. Economic Impact and Community Benefit

Desert Fall Festival generates significant economic activity within the City of Surprise. Based on available Placer.AI data and outside projections, the event is expected to generate between \$3 million and \$5 million in total economic impact through taxes, event revenue, and guest spending at local businesses.

The event also drives media exposure for not only Surprise City Center but also Ottawa University. Since the event takes place directly in front of the university, it is often referenced in marketing as a key landmark for guests navigating to the location.

Beyond economics, the festival enhances the cultural and recreational landscape of the city. It features live music, seasonal displays, family entertainment, and creative installations that elevate the visual and artistic environment during the fall season.

These experiences foster strong community engagement and naturally drive word-of-mouth marketing, especially in today's social media environment where guests love sharing visually engaging moments and unique experiences.

As the event continues to grow in scale and recognition, it has the potential to attract even more visitors each year and further establish Surprise as a destination for large-scale seasonal events.

Through its combination of entertainment, tourism promotion, and community connection, Desert Fall Festival delivers meaningful economic and cultural benefits that support the City of Surprise's broader tourism and development goals.

Desert Fall Festival – Marketing & Media Plan

Desert Fall Festival utilizes a multi-channel marketing strategy—one we also use for our highly successful Desert Farm Lights event, now heading into its 5th season of operation. We focus on maximizing reach across digital, social, broadcast, radio, and traditional media outlets. Below is a detailed breakdown of media placements, costs, impressions, and estimated audience reach, with a budget of \$100,000 set aside for marketing efforts.

Social Media Advertising

- **Meta Platforms (Facebook & Instagram)**
Spend: \$28,520
Impressions: 4,860,334
- **TikTok**
Spend: \$3,514
Impressions: 1,223,216

Social Media Influencers

- Total Spend: \$10,000
- Estimated Reach: 1M+ impressions

Influencer partnerships are selected based on their local reach within the Phoenix area. We have typically partner with Welcome to Arizona, Wild Joy and Let Them Eat This

Print & Online Media (via Agency Partnership)

Total Audience Reach: 84,496,789

Placements include a mix of earned media, digital articles, and online features:

- KTAR News
- Fabulous Arizona
- Raising Arizona Kids
- Surprise Independent
- KTAR.com
- 12News
- Fox 10 Phoenix
- Yahoo News
- ABC15 Arizona
- Axios
- MSN
- My Family Travels

Broadcast Television

Total Audience Reach: 395,204

Features and segments aired across major local stations:

- Arizona Midday
- 12News (KPNX – NBC)
- KTVK
- KSAZ-TV
- KNXV-TV
- KASW

Radio Advertising & Partnerships

Total Audience Reach: 1,816,372

- KNIX-FM
- KOOL-FM

Paid Partnership + Streaming (KNIX)

- Campaign Dates: September 1 – October 31
- Total Impressions: 1,281,400

Local Calendar Print Mentions

- Total Audience Reach: 1,053,106
- Includes 6 placements in local community calendars and print publications

Billboard Advertising (2026 Planned)

- Billboard Campaign Budget: \$5,000–\$10,000

Summary

The Desert Fall Festival marketing strategy combines high-volume digital impressions with trusted local media placements, broadcast visibility, and community-based outreach. This layered approach ensures both broad regional awareness and targeted engagement with families and event-goers, bringing tens of thousands of guests to our event each season.

Desert Fall Festival – Detailed Project Budget 2026

A. Summary Budget Overview

Category	Budget (\$)
Staffing & Labor	\$350,000
Marketing & Advertising	\$100,000
Attractions & Activities	\$360,000
Infrastructure & Setup	\$122,000
Operations & Utilities	\$108,000
Consumables & Supplies	\$44,000
Equipment & Rentals	\$30,000
Insurance & Safety	\$45,000
Total Estimated Budget	\$1,159,000

B1. Staffing & Labor

Item	Cost
Event staff	\$300,000
Management & supervisors	\$50,000
Subtotal	\$350,000

B2. Marketing & Advertising

Item	Cost
Digital advertising	\$60,000
Guerrilla Marketing	\$5,000
Radio & media	\$25,000

Print & signage	\$10,000
Subtotal	\$100,000

B3. Attractions & Activities

Item	Cost
Roller rink	\$120,000
Photo Opps	\$100,000
Apple cannon	\$30,000
Zipline	\$5,000
Axe throwing	\$15,000
Maze	\$10,000
Excavators	\$80,000
Subtotal	\$360,000

B4. Infrastructure & Setup

Item	Cost
Setup costs	\$60,000
Trusses	\$30,000
Bistro lights	\$2,000
Parking lot prep	\$10,000
Wood chips (interior ground cover)	\$20,000
Subtotal	\$122,000

B5. Operations & Utilities

Item	Cost
Water	\$5,000
Bathrooms	\$48,000
Dumpster	\$8,000
Fuel	\$10,000
Live entertainment	\$15,000
Security / Police / EMS	\$20,000
Subtotal	\$108,000

B6. Consumables & Supplies

Item	Cost
Pumpkins	\$40,000
Concessions	\$4,000
Subtotal	\$44,000

B7. Equipment & Rentals

Item	Cost
Rental equipment	\$30,000
Subtotal	\$30,000

B8. Insurance & Safety

Item	Cost
Event insurance	\$45,000

Subtotal

\$45,000



SURPRISE
ARIZONA

DESERT FALL FESTIVAL TOURISM FUND REQUEST

**Tourism Fund Subcommittee Meeting
June 16, 2026**

BACKGROUND

- Desert Fall Festival is a large-scale seasonal event designed to attract both residents and visitors to City Center
- The event is scheduled for September 25 – November 1, 2026
- Immersive destination experience featuring western-inspired, fall themed entertainment, unique attractions, food vendors and live performances
- Marketing efforts that highlight Surprise to the greater Phoenix Metro area and other regions in Arizona

Event Partnership Alignment

COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN

- **Strategy 3.3**
 - Cultivate an environment for residents and visitors to enjoy arts, culture, and entertainment within the city of Surprise
- **Strategy 3.5**
 - Identify opportunities for public-private partnerships to continually improve the quality of life for Surprise residents

Event Partnership Alignment

TOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN

- **Focus Area 1: Events and Entertainment**
 - Utilize the Tourism Fund to attract professional event partners
 - Work with third parties to add event and entertainment opportunities to build and promote year-round tourism activity
 - Increase tourism related room nights
- **Focus Area 2: Marketing**
 - Increase strategic collaboration with key partners to expand our ability to identify and target demographics for tourism.

SUPPORT FOR STRATEGIC GOALS

- **Estimated Attendance:**

- Desert Fall Festival estimates 50,000 – 60,000 attendees over the 30+ day event. 2025 Fall Festival data showed attendees from Arizona, California, Nevada, New Mexico and Mexico

- **Estimated Hotel Nights:**

- Desert Fall Festival estimates 1,100 room nights

- **Estimated Economic Impact:**

- Desert Fall Festival estimates \$3 - \$5 Million in Economic Impact
- Desert Fall Festival to spend \$1 Million+ on event
- 2025 Fall Festival data showed 20% of attendees went to Surprise restaurants and 15% of attendees went shopping in Surprise after the event

SUPPORT FOR STRATEGIC GOALS

- **Marketing/Media Exposure:**

- Desert Fall Festival submitted a marketing plan with a \$100,000 budget including digital, social media, radio, tv and print

- **Community Impact:**

- Desert Fall Festival's goal is to deliver meaningful economic and cultural benefits that support Surprise's broader tourism and development initiatives through community engagement and tourism promotion.

TOURISM FUND GUIDELINES

Category 1: Surprise Hotel Nights Generated	
100-300 room nights	Up to \$2500
301-599 room nights	Up to \$5000
600+ room nights	\$5000+
Category 2: Attendance	
1,000-3,000	Up to \$2500
3,001-5,000	Up to \$5000
5,000+	\$5000+
Category 3: Event Days	
1 day	Up to \$2500
2 days	Up to \$5000
3 days	\$5000+
Category 4: Seasonality (bonus for events between May-September)	
1 day	Up to \$2500
2 days	Up to \$5000
3 days	\$5000+
Category 5: Operating Budget	
Based off of submitted budget	Up to 50% of total projected expenditure budget

- Subcommittee and Council approved reimbursement categories and guidelines for Tourism Fund requests



TOURISM FUND REQUEST

Reimbursement Program:

- **Category 1 (Hotel Nights)**
 - \$2,500 for every 100 Surprise hotel room nights verified (maximum of \$10,000)
- **Category 2 (Attendance):**
 - \$2,500 for every 2,000 in total attendance verified (maximum of \$20,000)



TOURISM FUND REQUEST

- Not to exceed \$30,000 total in each fiscal year (available for 3 years maximum if event continues in City Center, FY27-FY29)
- Can be used to reimburse:
 - City Land or Facility Rental Fees
 - Event Marketing (must include “Surprise, Arizona” in any form of marketing to be considered for reimbursements)



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QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

Thank You