



College Station, TX

Meeting Agenda Tourism Committee

1101 Texas Ave, College Station, TX 77840

Internet: www.microsoft.com/microsoft-teams/join-a-meeting

Meeting ID: 241 406 718 727 3 / Passcode: jM3dF3bn

Phone: 979-431-4880 / Phone Conference ID 833 345 516#

The City Council may or may not attend this meeting.

April 1, 2026

3:00 PM

City Hall Bush 4141 Community
Room

1. Call to order and introductions.

2. Hear Visitors.

At this time, the Chairperson will open the floor to citizens wishing to address issues not already scheduled on today's agenda. Each citizen's presentation will be limited to three minutes in order to allow adequate time for the completion of the agenda items. Comments will be received and city staff may be asked to look into the matter, or the matter may be placed on a future agenda for discussion. A recording may be made of the meeting; please give your name and address for the record.

3. Consent Agenda.

Presentation, discussion, and possible action on consent items which consist of ministerial or "housekeeping" items as allowed by law. A member may request additional information at this time. Any member may remove an item from Consent for discussion or a separate vote.

3.1. Presentation, discussion, and possible action on the minutes of the previous meeting.

3.2. Presentation, discussion, and possible action on a Hotel Occupancy Tax Grant with the Adidas 3SSB Tournament.

Sponsors: Alex Aguero

Attachments: 1. HOT Grants Summary 4.1.26
2. Adidas 3SSB Packet

3.3. Presentation, discussion, and possible action on a Hotel Occupancy Tax Grant with the Texas Club Championships Tournament.

Sponsors: Alex Aguero

Attachments: 1. EVAL Texas Club Championships Packet

3.4. Presentation, discussion, and possible action on a Hotel Occupancy Tax Grant with the 2026-2028 Texas Travel & Tourism College.

Sponsors: Jo Beth Wolfe

Attachments: 1. Travel & Tourism College Packet

4. Agenda Items.

4.1. Presentation, discussion, and possible action on the Visit College Station Partner Engagement Plan.

4.2. Presentation, discussion, and possible action on the Visit College Station Sales Plan.

4.3. Presentation and discussion on an update on the Northgate Entertainment District.

4.4. Presentation, discussion, and possible action on data reports from the previous month.

5. Discussion and possible action on future agenda items.

A member may inquire about a subject for which notice has not been given. A statement of specific factual information or the recitation of existing policy may be given. Any deliberation shall be limited to a proposal to place the subject on an agenda for a subsequent meeting.

6. Adjourn.

Adjournment into Executive Session may occur in order to consider any item listed on the agenda if a matter is raised that is appropriate for Executive Session discussion.

I certify that the above Notice of Meeting was posted on the website and at College Station City Hall, 1101 Texas Avenue, College Station, Texas, March 26, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.



Deputy City Secretary

This building is wheelchair accessible. Persons with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who may need accommodations, auxiliary aids, or services such as interpreters, readers, or large print are asked to contact the City Secretary's Office at (979) 764-3541, TDD at 1-800-735-2989, or email adaassistance@cstx.gov at least two business days prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If the City does not receive notification at least two business days prior to the meeting, the City will make a reasonable attempt to provide the necessary accommodations.

**Minutes Of The Tourism Committee - Special (Amended)
City Of College Station
February 25, 2026**



1. Call to order and introductions.

With a quorum present, the meeting of the Tourism Committee was called to order by Cortney Phillips, Chairperson, via In-Person and Teleconference at 3:03 pm on Wednesday, February 25, 2026 in the City of College Station Heart of Aggieland Community Room, 1101 Texas Avenue, College Station, Texas 77840.

Present:

Chairperson Cortney Phillips
Vice Chairperson Greg Stafford
Committee Member Hunter Goodwin
Committee Member Rhianon Elizabeth Whitney
Committee Member Costa Dallis
Committee Member Paul Allen Loy
Committee Member Connor Clark
Committee Member Kevin Davis
Committee Member Erin Jones

Absent:

Committee Member William L. Peel, Jr. - Unexcused
Committee Member Scott Logan - Excused

City Staff:

Bryan Woods, City Manager
Jeremiah Cook, Assistant Director Tourism
Kelsey Heiden, Director Parks and Recreation
Jo Beth Wolfe, Convention Sales Manager
Alex Aguero, Sports Sales Manager
Angie Bertinot, Marketing Manager
Casey Barone, Visitor Engagement Manager
Lisa McCracken, Administrative Support Specialist

2. Hear Visitors.

At this time, the Chairperson will open the floor to citizens wishing to address issues not already scheduled on today's agenda. Each citizen's presentation will be limited to three minutes in order to allow adequate time for the completion of the agenda items. Comments will be received and city staff may be asked to look into the matter, or the matter may be placed on a future agenda for discussion. A recording may be made of the meeting; please give your name and address for the record.

No Visitors present

3. Consent Agenda.

Presentation, discussion, and possible action on consent items which consist of ministerial or "housekeeping" items as allowed by law. A member may request additional information at this time. Any member may remove an item from Consent for discussion or a separate vote.

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Committee Member Paul Allen Loy and a second by Committee Member Hunter Goodwin, the Committee voted 8 for and 0 opposed, to Approve Consent Agenda.

3.1. Presentation, discussion, and possible action on the minutes of the previous meeting.

4. Agenda Items.

4.1. Presentation, discussion, and possible action on the steering of the Tourism Strategic Plan.

Consultants with Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL), Dan Fenton and Shirin Jafari presented a detailed discussion on the direction of the Tourism Strategic Plan. Key topics included academic conference development, staffing structure, Texas A&M partnerships, KPI-driven growth, and challenges related to accessing university facilities. Members emphasized the need to focus on academic partnerships first, noting that this area is the city's strongest differentiator. The Committee recommended that staff and the consultants continue to engage with Texas A&M.

4.2. Presentation, discussion, and possible action on a resolution authorizing the City Manager to approve expenditures over \$100,000 for major tourism events that will stimulate the local economy.

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Committee Member Hunter Goodwin and a second by Committee Member Greg Stafford, the Committee voted 8 for and 0 opposed, for recommending adoption of the resolution to City Council.

5. Discussion and possible action on future agenda items.

A member may inquire about a subject for which notice has not been given. A statement of specific factual information or the recitation of existing policy may be given. Any deliberation shall be limited to a proposal to place the subject on an agenda for a subsequent meeting.

No additional items were proposed.

6. Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 pm.

**Minutes Of The Tourism Committee
City Of College Station
March 4, 2026**



1. Call to order and introductions.

With a quorum present, the meeting of the Tourism Committee was called to order by Chairperson Cortney Phillips via In-Person and Teleconference at 3:01 pm on Wednesday, March 4, 2026 in College Station City Hall Bush 4141 Community Room, 1101 Texas Avenue, College Station, Texas 77840.

Present:

Chairperson Cortney Phillips
Vice Chairperson Greg Stafford
Committee Member Rhianon Elizabeth Whitney
Committee Member Costa Dallis
Committee Member Connor Clark
Committee Member Kevin Davis
Committee Member William L. Peel, Jr.
Committee Member Brandy Tuck

Absent:

Committee Member Hunter Goodwin - Excused
Committee Member Paul Allen Loy - Excused
Committee Member Scott Logan - Excused
Committee Member Erin Jones - Unexcused

City Staff:

Michael Ostrowski, Chief Development Officer
Jeremiah Cook, Assistant Director Tourism
Brian Pisaceck, Assistant Director Economic Development
Kelsey Heiden, Director Parks and Recreation
Jo Beth Wolfe, Convention Sales Manager
Alex Aguero, Sports Sales Manager
Lisa McCracken, Administrative Support Specialist

2. Hear Visitors.

At this time, the Chairperson will open the floor to citizens wishing to address issues not already scheduled on today's agenda. Each citizen's presentation will be limited to three minutes in order to allow adequate time for the completion of the agenda items. Comments will be received and city staff may be asked to look into the matter, or the matter may be placed on a future agenda for discussion. A recording may be made of the meeting; please give your name and address for the record.

Eric Capps addressed the committee regarding a competitive pinball initiative proposing the use of HOT funds to support 20–30 pinball machines and monthly tournaments. He discussed estimated

economic impacts, existing models in major Texas cities, and potential venues such as Grand Station, the MSC, and Legends Event Center.

3. Consent Agenda.

Presentation, discussion, and possible action on consent items which consist of ministerial or "housekeeping" items as allowed by law. A member may request additional information at this time. Any member may remove an item from Consent for discussion or a separate vote.

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Committee Member Greg Stafford and a second by Committee Member Kevin Davis, the Committee voted 7 for and 0 opposed, to Approve Consent Agenda.

3.1. Presentation, discussion, and possible action on a Hotel Occupancy Tax Grant with the 2026 Capstone Design Conference.

Committee approved in the amount of \$ 10,000.

3.2. Presentation, discussion, and possible action on a Hotel Occupancy Tax Grant with the 2026 IEEE SmartGridCom Conference.

Committee approved in the amount of \$ 5,000.

3.3. Presentation, discussion, and possible action on a Hotel Occupancy Tax Grant with the 2026 Campus Fire and Life Safety Forum.

Committee approved in the amount of \$ 5,000.

3.4. Presentation, discussion, and possible action on a Hotel Occupancy Tax Grant with the 2026 SEC Recreation Summit.

Committee approved in the amount of \$10,000.

4. Agenda Items.

4.1. Presentation, discussion, and possible action on FY27 Budget Requests.

Jeremiah Cook, Assistant Director of Tourism, presented FY27 budget requests in accordance with the Strategic Plan for the following:

Tourism Department Service Level Adjustments (HOT Fund)

- Director of TAMU Strategy - (One-Time \$2,885; Recurring \$178,115)- Total \$181,000
- Assistant Director of TAMU Sales - (One-Time \$2,885; Recurring \$169,115) - Total \$172,000
- Assistant Director of TAMU Events - (One-Time \$2,885; Recurring \$169,115) - Total \$172,000
- Large Events Sponsorship - Recurring (\$500,000)
- Leisure Events Production Company - Recurring (\$150,000)

- Leisure Event Execution - Recurring (\$225,000)
- Experiential Marketing - One-Time (\$100,000)
- Wayfinding - One-Time (\$1,500,000)
- Visitor Center - One-Time (\$30,000)
- Visitor Center Signage - One-Time (\$100,000)

Parks Department Service Level Adjustments (HOT Fund)

- Permanent Shade at Veterans Park - One-Time (\$218,500)
- Connection Improvements at Veterans Park - One-Time (\$126,500)
- Specialized Turf Grass Equipment - One-Time (\$134,500)

Tourism Department Service Level Adjustments (General Fund)

- Sports Facility Analysis - One-Time (\$80,000)

The committee requested increasing the large event sponsorship budget line to \$750,000 and increasing the Visitor Center enhancements budget request to \$50,000.

MOTION: Upon a motion made by Committee Member Greg Stafford and a second by Committee Member William L. Peel, Jr., the Committee voted 7 for and 0 opposed, to Approve FY27 Budget Requests.

4.2. Presentation and discussion on large event updates.

Jeremiah Cook, Assistant Director of Tourism, provided updates on upcoming major events including the Savannah Bananas, USATF made-for-TV meet, and a national softball championship. Sponsorship levels, anticipated attendance, and Texas Event Trust Fund strategies were discussed.

4.3. Presentation and discussion on public art in College Station.

Michael Ostrowski, Chief Development Officer, provided an update on the Lyle Lovett and Robert Earl Keen sculpture planned for Northgate. The project is currently in the foundry stage, with approval through a HOT-funded, Council budget amendment.

4.4. Presentation and discussion on data reports from the previous month.

Jeremiah Cook, Assistant Director of Tourism, reviewed the previous month's data reports, as January performance was impacted by weather-related event cancellations resulting in significant

lost room nights. Preliminary February data indicates occupancy may trend upward with stable ADR.

5. Discussion and possible action on future agenda items.

A member may inquire about a subject for which notice has not been given. A statement of specific factual information or the recitation of existing policy may be given. Any deliberation shall be limited to a proposal to place the subject on an agenda for a subsequent meeting.

The Committee requested the following:

- Northgate
- Veterans Park Tourism Impact
- Games of Texas Post Event Report.

6. Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 4:28 pm.

April 1, 2026
Item No. 3.2.
Adidas 3SSB Tournament HOT Grant

Sponsor: Alex Agüero

Reviewed By CBC: N/A

Agenda Caption: Presentation, discussion, and possible action on a Hotel Occupancy Tax Grant with the Adidas 3SSB Tournament.

Relationship to Strategic Goals:

Recommendation(s): Staff recommends the committee approve the recommended amount.

Summary: See attached applications and staff evaluations.

Budget & Financial Summary: Grant funding would be through the Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund through the Tourism budget.

Attachments:

1. HOT Grants Summary 4.1.26
2. Adidas 3SSB Packet

HOT Grants Executive Summary

Page: 6

Group name: Open Gym Premier/Adidas
3SSB

Dates: 04/17/26 – 04/19/26

Attendees: 3300

Room Nights: 750

Direct Economic Impact: \$1,327,606

HOT Economic Impact: \$28,476

Total Recommended Amount: \$10,000

Page: 15

Group name: Texas Club Championships

Dates: 06/27/26 – 06/28/26

Attendees: 3375

Room Nights: 1,125

Direct Economic Impact: \$1,096,110

HOT Economic Impact: \$24,731

Total Recommended Amount: \$10,000

Page: 25

Group name: Texas Travel Alliance 2026

Dates: 06/22/26 – 06/26/26

Attendees: 120

Room Nights: 466

Direct Economic Impact: \$168,681

HOT Economic Impact: \$5,219

Total Recommended Amount: \$10,000

Group name: Texas Travel Alliance 2027

Dates: 06/21/27 – 06/25/27

Attendees: 120

Room Nights: 466

Direct Economic Impact: \$174,021

HOT Economic Impact: \$5,219

Total Recommended Amount: \$10,000

Group name: Texas Travel Alliance 2028

Dates: 06/19/28 – 06/23/28

Attendees: 120

Room Nights: 466

Direct Economic Impact: \$176,113

HOT Economic Impact: \$5,219

Total Recommended Amount: \$10,000

	2023	2024	2025
Room Nights	456	493	432
HOT Grant	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Direct EIC	\$167,082	\$162,702	\$146,275
Local HOT EIC	\$4,948	\$5,107	\$4,596

FY26 HOT Grants	
Budget	\$943,860
Actual	\$218,100
Encumbered	\$310,650
Remaining	\$415,110

adidas 3SSB

*College Station Event Funding- Tourism
Committee Approval*

Open Gym Premier/adidas 3SSB

Michael Hill
1500 S Anaheim Blvd
Anaheim, CA 92805

O: 714-329-9422

Christine Nguyen

1500 S Anaheim Blvd
Anaheim, CA 92805

christine.nguyen@opengympremier.com
O: 7143299422

Evaluation Form

Event Name

adidas 3SSB

Number of Room Nights*

750

Number of Attendees*

3300

Max Amount of Funding per Guidelines*

\$20,000.00

Staff Recommended Amount*

\$10,000.00

Anything else that would help evaluation of this grant?

Based on the number of attendees, and College Station room nights, staff recommends \$10,000 in HOT Grant Funding for this first year event.

Application Form

Event or Expenditure Description

Event Name*

adidas 3SSB

Event Website

Website where event information (details, registration, etc.) may be found.

<https://adidas3ssb.com/girls-3ssb-events/>

Event Type*

Select the type that best fits your event.

Sports

Event Start Date*

The date the event is scheduled to begin.

04/17/2026

Event End Date*

The date the event is scheduled to end.

04/19/2026

Event Description*

Detailed description of the event.

NCAA Live event for the

Schedule of Events

Please upload the event schedule. If not available, please upload the most recent event's schedule for reference.

Host Venue/Facility*

Primary location where event will be held in College Station.

Legends Event Center

Total number of hotel room nights expected?*

Sum of all hotel rooms over the course of the event.

750

Nights Hotel Rooms are Needed*

Select the days of the week hotel rooms will be needed for attendees.

- Sunday
- Wednesday
- Thursday
- Friday
- Saturday

List host hotel or hotels that currently have a block of rooms for this event:*

List the **College Station** hotels currently holding a contracted room block for the event.

- Best Western Plus College Station Inn & Suites
- Courtyard by Marriott Bryan College Station
- Hampton Inn and Suites College Station
- Hilton College Station & Conference Center
- Holiday Inn & Suites College Station - Aggieland by IHG
- Holiday Inn Express & Suites College Station by IHG
- Hyatt Place College Station
- La Quinta Inn & Suites by Wyndham College Station North
- La Quinta Inn & Suites by Wyndham College Station South
- Microtel Inn & Suites by Wyndham College Station
- Staybridge Suites College Station by IHG
- TownePlace Suites by Marriott College Station
- Wingate by Wyndham College Station South

Tracking Out-of-town guests*

It is **required** that you determined how the event will track out-of-town guests, demonstrating that the event will attract tourists that will support the tourism and hotel industry in College Station.

Describe the tracking method here:

SiteSearch (third party housing company) tracks all pickup on hotels and provides live tracking results, which we can export and provide to Visit College Station

Events with Spectators

Number of expected participants*

Participants only include those taking part in the event.

Be sure to include staff attending.

1300

Number of expected spectators*

Spectators only include those watching the event.

2000

Out-of-Town Percentage*

Estimated percentage of attendees from **outside a 50 mile radius** of College Station.

95

Number of expected teams (if applicable):

120

Funding Agreement Acknowledgement

As you continue through the review process, we may ask for additional information. This may include:

- Proposed Schedule of Activities
- Evidence of Commitment for the Event
- Tax Exempt Certificate
- Previous Year's Event Budget
- 501(c) Certificate
- Proof of Insurance

I have read the HOT Tax Stimulus Application Process including the Rules Governing the Application and the Reimbursement Process.

I fully understand the HOT Stimulus Fund Application Process, Rules Governing the Application and the process established by the City of College Station. I intend to use these funds for the aforementioned event/project to

forward the efforts of Brazos County and Visit College Station in directly enhancing and promoting tourism and the tourism and hotel industry by attracting visitors and hotel guests from outside Brazos County into the city or its vicinity.

I understand that if I am awarded funds through the HOT Stimulus Program, any deviation from the approved project or from the Rules Governing the Application may result in the partial or total withdrawal of the HOT Stimulus Fund or a requirement to refund any and all funds received.

Entity Name (As it appears on line 1 of W9 form)*

Open Gym Premier, LLC

Applicant Name*

By entering your name you are agreeing to the above statement.

Christine Nguyen

Date*

02/19/2026

Contract Signatory

Contract Signatory Name*

Please note the name of the representative that will be signing the contract on behalf of your organization, if approved.

Christine Nguyen

Contract Signatory Email*

Please note the email of the representative that will be signing the contract on behalf of your organization, if approved.

christine.nguyen@opengympremier.com

Funding Request Overview

Amount Requested*

Total amount of funds requested for the event.

\$20,000.00

Grant Dependent*

Is the event being held in College Station contingent on receiving HOT Stimulus Funds?

No

Fund Expenditures*

Provide a detailed description of how the HOT Stimulus Funds will be utilized for the event.

HOT Stimulus Funds will be utilized to cover operating expenses including but not limited to:

- tournament staff (event managers, scorekeepers, compliance/check in/hospitality)
- security/medical staff
- officials costs
- housing & travel costs
- hospitality costs (for NCAA coaches and VIPs)
- venue costs
- marketing/branding/signage costs
- staff meals

List other means of financial support/sponsorships/grants - including in-kind support

Include Name and Amount to Receive

Referral

We hope you will consider recommending College Station as a potential host for other events. Please let us know below if there are events, conferences, meetings, seminars, tournaments, festivals, etc. you believe would be a great fit for College Station.

Additional Events with Organization

Are there other events hosted **by your organization** that you would consider College Station as a host community?

If so, please list them below.

- 3SSB Boys
- 3Stripes Gold West Circuit
- 3Stripes Proving Grounds Circuit
- Jr. 3SSB Circuit

Other Organization's Events

Are there **other organizations or events** you believe would benefit from learning more about the College Station HOT Funds Stimulus Program? If so, please list them below.

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

No files were uploaded

April 1, 2026

Item No. 3.3.

Texas Club Championships Tournament HOT Grant

Sponsor: Alex Aguero

Reviewed By CBC: N/A

Agenda Caption: Presentation, discussion, and possible action on a Hotel Occupancy Tax Grant with the Texas Club Championships Tournament.

Relationship to Strategic Goals:

Recommendation(s): Staff recommends the committee approve the recommended amount.

Summary: See attached applications and staff evaluations.

Budget & Financial Summary: Grant funding would be through the Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund through the Tourism budget.

Attachments:

1. EVAL Texas Club Championships Packet

Texas Club Championships

*College Station Event Funding- Tourism
Committee Approval*

3 Step Sports dba Select Events Basketball

Andrew Gilbert
500 Unicorn Park Drive
Floor 5
Woburn, MA 01801

alex@selecteventsbasketball.com
O: 617-877-8584
F: 3 Step Sports

Alex Garfinkle

500 Unicorn Park Drive
Floor 5
Woburn, MA 01801

alex@selecteventsbasketball.com
O: 6178778584

Evaluation Form

Event Name

Texas Club Championships

Number of Room Nights*

1125

Number of Attendees*

3375

Max Amount of Funding per Guidelines*

\$20,000.00

Staff Recommended Amount*

\$10,000.00

Anything else that would help evaluation of this grant?

Staff recommends a \$10,000 HOT Grant to this new event to College Station. In the future, staff hopes to help grow the event through funding.

Application Form

Event or Expenditure Description

Event Name*

Texas Club Championships

Event Website

Website where event information (details, registration, etc.) may be found.

<https://www.premierbasketballtournaments.com/site/register/register.aspx?EventID=18240>

Event Type*

Select the type that best fits your event.

Sports

Event Start Date*

The date the event is scheduled to begin.

06/27/2026

Event End Date*

The date the event is scheduled to end.

06/28/2026

Event Description*

Detailed description of the event.

Girls youth basketball tournament hosting teams from all over Texas and bordering states. Ages 10-17. Event takes place all day Saturday and Sunday. Project to do about 1,000+ total room nights.

Schedule of Events

Please upload the event schedule. If not available, please upload the most recent event's schedule for reference.

Host Venue/Facility*

Primary location where event will be held in College Station.

Legends Event Center

Total number of hotel room nights expected?*

Sum of all hotel rooms over the course of the event.

1125

Nights Hotel Rooms are Needed*

Select the days of the week hotel rooms will be needed for attendees.

- Sunday
- Thursday
- Friday
- Saturday

List host hotel or hotels that currently have a block of rooms for this event:*

List the **College Station** hotels currently holding a contracted room block for the event.

- Best Western Bryan College Station
- Comfort Suites University Drive
- Courtyard by Marriott Bryan College Station
- Hawthorn Suites by Wyndham College Station
- Hawthorn Suites by Wyndham College Station University Dr
- Holiday Inn Express & Suites College Station, an IHG Hotel
- Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites College Station - Aggieland, an IHG Hotel
- Home2 Suites by Hilton College Station
- Hyatt Place College Station
- La Quinta Inn & Suites by Wyndham College Station South
- Microtel Inn & Suites by Wyndham College Station
- Staybridge Suites College Station, an IHG Hotel
- Texas A&M Hotel and Conference Center
- TownePlace Suites by Marriott College Station
- Wyndham Garden College Station
- voco College Station Aggieland (Previously Aggieland Boutique Hotel)

Tracking Out-of-town guests*

It is **required** that you determined how the event will track out-of-town guests, demonstrating that the event will attract tourists that will support the tourism and hotel industry in College Station.

Describe the tracking method here:

There are a number of ways that we can do this. We typically would track based on the home location for each team that is playing in the event. We have roster sizes for each team and a total number of spectators that purchase tickets.

Events with Spectators

Number of expected participants*

Participants only include those taking part in the event.

Be sure to include staff attending.

1500

Number of expected spectators*

Spectators only include those watching the event.

1875

Out-of-Town Percentage*

Estimated percentage of attendees from **outside a 50 mile radius** of College Station.

80

Number of expected teams (if applicable):

150

Funding Agreement Acknowledgement

As you continue through the review process, we may ask for additional information. This may include:

- Proposed Schedule of Activities
- Evidence of Commitment for the Event
- Tax Exempt Certificate
- Previous Year's Event Budget
- 501(c) Certificate
- Proof of Insurance

I have read the HOT Tax Stimulus Application Process including the Rules Governing the Application and the Reimbursement Process.

I fully understand the HOT Stimulus Fund Application Process, Rules Governing the Application and the process established by the City of College Station. I intend to use these funds for the aforementioned event/project to forward the efforts of Brazos County and Visit College Station in directly enhancing and promoting tourism and the tourism and hotel industry by attracting visitors and hotel guests from outside Brazos County into the city or its vicinity.

I understand that if I am awarded funds through the HOT Stimulus Program, any deviation from the approved project or from the Rules Governing the Application may result in the partial or total withdrawal of the HOT Stimulus Fund or a requirement to refund any and all funds received.

Entity Name (As it appears on line 1 of W9 form)*

3 Step Sports

Applicant Name*

By entering your name you are agreeing to the above statement.

Alex Garfinkle

Date*

03/04/2026

Contract Signatory

Contract Signatory Name*

Please note the name of the representative that will be signing the contract on behalf of your organization, if approved.

Alexander Garfinkle

Contract Signatory Email*

Please note the email of the representative that will be signing the contract on behalf of your organization, if approved.

alex@selecteventsbasketball.com

Funding Request Overview

Amount Requested*

Total amount of funds requested for the event.

\$20,000.00

Grant Dependent*

Is the event being held in College Station contingent on receiving HOT Stimulus Funds?

No

Fund Expenditures*

Provide a detailed description of how the HOT Stimulus Funds will be utilized for the event.

Funds will be utilized to offset the expenses associated:

Local Staffing: \$6,000

Referees: \$12,000

Meals: \$2,000

List other means of financial support/sponsorships/grants - including in-kind support

Include Name and Amount to Receive

None currently

Referral

We hope you will consider recommending College Station as a potential host for other events. Please let us know below if there are events, conferences, meetings, seminars, tournaments, festivals, etc. you believe would be a great fit for College Station.

Additional Events with Organization

Are there other events hosted **by your organization** that you would consider College Station as a host community?

If so, please list them below.

Our parent company 3 Step Sports hosts over 1500 youth sports tournaments across the country, far too many to list. Select Events hosts 80 events throughout the year including 15 in Texas with our sub-brand Premier Basketball Tournaments. We'd be happy to consider hosting other events in College Station granted the facilities were available to do so.

Other Organization's Events

Are there **other organizations or events** you believe would benefit from learning more about the College Station HOT Funds Stimulus Program? If so, please list them below.

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

No files were uploaded

April 1, 2026
Item No. 3.4.
2026-2028 Texas Travel & Tourism College HOT Grant

Sponsor: Jo Beth Wolfe

Reviewed By CBC: N/A

Agenda Caption: Presentation, discussion, and possible action on a Hotel Occupancy Tax Grant with the 2026-2028 Texas Travel & Tourism College.

Relationship to Strategic Goals:

Recommendation(s): Staff recommends the committee approve the recommended amount.

Summary: See attached applications and staff evaluations.

Budget & Financial Summary: Grant funding would be through the Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund through the Tourism budget.

Attachments:

1. Travel & Tourism College Packet

Travel & Tourism College

*College Station Event Funding- Tourism
Committee Approval (Multi-Year Application)*

Texas Travel Alliance

9600 Escarpment Blvd.
Suite 745-40
Austin, TX 78749

jennifer@texastravelalliance.org
O: 512-328-8842
F: Texas Travel Alliance

Jennifer Roush

9600 Escarpment Blvd
Suite 745-40
Austin, TX 78749

jennifer@texastravelalliance.org
O: 512-328-8842

Evaluation Form

Event Name

Travel & Tourism College

Total number of hotel room nights expected? (Year 1)

Sum of all hotel rooms over the course of the event.

466

(Year 2) Total number of hotel room nights expected?

Sum of all hotel rooms over the course of the event.

466

(Year 3) Total number of hotel room nights expected?

Sum of all hotel room nights over the course of the event.

466

Total Number of Room Nights*

1392

Number of Attendees (Per Year)*

120

Max Amount of Funding per Guidelines (per year)*

\$15,000.00

Max Amount of Funding per Guidelines (Total)*

\$45,000.00

Staff Recommended Amount (Year 1)*

\$10,000.00

Staff Recommended Amount (Year 2)*

\$10,000.00

Staff Recommended Amount (Year 3)

\$10,000.00

Total Staff Recommended Amount*

\$30,000.00

Staff Notes

Travel and Tourism College moved to College Station in 2021 and has committed through at least 2028. During a need period, this piece of business is important to our local economy. Based on this, the staff recommends \$10,000 per year, for a total of \$30,000 for 2026-2028.

Application Form

Event or Expenditure Description

Event Name*

Travel & Tourism College

Event Website

Website where event information (details, registration, etc.) may be found.

<https://texasravelalliance.org/general/custom.asp?page=traveltourismcollege>

Event Type*

Select the type that best fits your event.

Convention

Years Applying for*

3 Year

(Year 1) Event Start Date*

The date the event is scheduled to begin.

06/22/2026

(Year 1) Event End Date*

The date the event is scheduled to end.

06/26/2026

Event Description*

Detailed description of the event.

Travel and Tourism professionals from across the West and Southwest U.S. convene for one week each summer for an intensive, industry-leading curriculum of travel and tourism marketing, management, crisis communications, and leadership courses. This three-year certification program offers returning students the chance to advance through second and third-year classes taught by top industry professionals, esteemed college professors, and visionary thought leaders. After their 3rd year, students will complete a capstone then receive their Certified Tourism Executive designation. In addition, Alumni students will join us on the Thursday of that same week for a day of classes (schedule coming soon). I have included the schedules with

course descriptions for the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd classes that we are working to confirm with this application. In addition, our TTA Executive Committee and Board of Directors will also be joining us for their meetings as well as the CTE presentation Dinner.

Schedule of Events

Please upload the event schedule. If not available, please upload the most recent event's schedule for reference.
2026 1st-2nd-3rd Year Class TTC Schedules.pdf

Host Venue/Facility*

Primary location where event will be held in College Station.
Texas A&M Hotel and Conference Center

Total number of hotel room nights expected? (Year 1)*

Sum of all hotel rooms over the course of the event.
466

Nights Hotel Rooms are Needed*

Select the days of the week hotel rooms will be needed for attendees.

- Sunday
- Monday
- Tuesday
- Wednesday
- Thursday

List host hotel or hotels that currently have a block of rooms for this event:*

List the *College Station* hotels currently holding a contracted room block for the event.
Texas A&M Hotel and Conference Center

Tracking Out-of-town guests*

It is *required* that you determine how the event will track out-of-town guests, demonstrating that the event will attract tourists who will support the tourism and hotel industry in College Station. This could include hotel pickup reports, surveys, etc...

Describe the tracking method here:

We will track hotel rooms through hotel pick up reports and track attendance with event registrations.

Events without Spectators

Number of expected attendees/participants per year:*

120

Out-of-Town Percentage

Estimated percentage of attendees from outside a 50 mile radius of College Station.

92

Year 2 Event Information

(Year 2) Event Start Date

The date the event is scheduled to begin.

06/21/2027

(Year 2) Event End Date

The date the event is scheduled to end.

06/25/2027

(Year 2) Total number of hotel room nights expected?

Sum of all hotel rooms over the course of the event.

466

Event History/ Forecast

Any other information (such as a change in size or stay pattern from the previous year or in the future) that would be helpful in the evaluation of the application.

We expect a bit of growth in attendance and may add a bit of training to one of the days.

Year 3 Event Information

(Year 3) Event Start Date

The date the event is scheduled to begin.

06/19/2028

(Year 3) Event End Date

The date the event is scheduled to end.

06/23/2028

(Year 3) Total number of hotel room nights expected?

Sum of all hotel room nights over the course of the event.

466

Event History/ Forecast

Any other information (such as a change in size or stay pattern from the previous year or in the future) that would be helpful in the evaluation of the application.

We expect a bit of growth in attendance and may add a bit of training to one of the days if we didn't already it in 2027.

Funding Agreement Acknowledgement

As you continue through the review process, we may ask for additional information. This may include:

- Proposed Schedule of Activities
- Evidence of Commitment for the Event
- Tax Exempt Certificate
- Previous Year's Event Budget
- 501(c) Certificate
- Proof of Insurance

I have read the HOT Tax Stimulus Application Process including the Rules Governing the Application and the Reimbursement Process.

I fully understand the HOT Stimulus Fund Application Process, Rules Governing the Application and the process

established by the City of College Station. I intend to use these funds for the aforementioned event/project to forward the efforts of Brazos County and Visit College Station in directly enhancing and promoting tourism and the tourism and hotel industry by attracting visitors and hotel guests from outside Brazos County into the city or its vicinity.

I understand that if I am awarded funds through the HOT Stimulus Program, any deviation from the approved project or from the Rules Governing the Application may result in the partial or total withdrawal of the HOT Stimulus Fund or a requirement to refund any and all funds received.

Entity Name (As it appears on line 1 of W9 form)*

Texas Travel Alliance

Applicant Name*

By entering your name you are agreeing to the above statement.

Jennifer Roush, VP of Operations

Date*

02/13/2026

Funding Request Overview

Amount Requested (Total)*

\$30,000.00

Amount Requested (Year 1)*

Total amount of funds requested for the event.

\$10,000.00

Amount Requested (Year 2)*

\$10,000.00

Amount Requested (Year 3)

(if applicable)

\$10,000.00

Grant Dependent*

Is the event being held in College Station contingent on receiving HOT Stimulus Funds?

Yes

Fund Expenditures*

Provide a detailed description of how the HOT Stimulus Funds will be utilized for the event.

The funds will be used for any necessary catering, audio visual, and/or transportation costs to hold the event.

List other means of financial support/sponsorships/grants - including in-kind support

Include Name and Amount to Receive

The Texas A&M Hotel and Conference Center is confirmed to sponsor, and we expect to receive addition sponsorships.

Contract Signatory

Contract Signatory Name*

Please note the name of the representative that will be signing the contract on behalf of your organization, if approved.

Erika Boyd

Contract Signatory Email*

Please note the email of the representative that will be signing the contract on behalf of your organization, if approved.

jennifer@texastravelalliance.com

Referral

We hope you will consider recommending College Station as a potential host for other events. Please let us know below if there are events, conferences, meetings, seminars, tournaments, festivals, etc. you believe would be a great fit for College Station.

Additional Events with Organization

Are there other events hosted **by your organization** that you would consider College Station as a host community? If so, please list them below.

Not at this time, but we will definitely look at College Station as opportunities come up for this area.

Other Organization's Events

Are there **other organizations or events** you believe would benefit from learning more about the College Station HOT Funds Stimulus Program? If so, please list them below.

Not at this time but I will recommend College Station as I hear of interest from another group for that area.

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- 2026 1st-2nd-3rd Year Class TTC Schedules.pdf

2026 TTA Travel & Tourism College
Texas A&M Hotel & Conference Center – College Station
1st Year Class Schedule

**Subject to change*

Monday, June 22, 2026

*Classes and reception held in Century Ballroom I/II on 1st floor.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1:15 PM – 2:00 PM | Registration – Century Ballroom I/II Pre-function Area |
| 2:00 PM – 2:10 PM | Welcome Remarks
<u>Speaker:</u> Erika Boyd, President and CEO, Texas Travel Alliance |
| 2:10 PM - 3:00 PM | Economic Outlook & Trends
<u>Speaker:</u> TBD |
| 3:00 PM – 3:20 PM | Networking Break |
| 3:20 PM - 4:20 PM | Roundtables
<u>Facilitator:</u> Neville Bhada, Founder & CEO, Applied Strategies and Principles |
| 4:20pm – 5:20pm | You’re Already a Leader. Here’s Why.
Leadership in tourism doesn’t start with a title. It starts with showing up, learning along the way, and realizing the impact you already have.

This session begins with a personal journey into the travel industry, followed by a candid panel conversation with tourism professionals who have grown into leadership in different ways. Panelists will share how they found their path, lessons they learned the hard way, and moments that shaped how they lead today.

Attendees will hear real stories they can relate to, find inspiration in unexpected places, and leave with a clearer understanding that leadership looks different for everyone. If you have ever questioned whether you belong at the table, this session is for you.
<u>Moderator:</u> Neville Bhada, Founder & CEO, Applied Strategies and Principles
<u>Panelists:</u> Maura Gast, Executive Director, Visit Irving; Jasmyne Harris, Communications & Creative Director, AJR Media Group; and Dr. Brian King, Professor and Head of the Department of Hospitality, Hotel Management and Tourism, Texas A&M University |
| 5:25 PM – 5:30 PM | Closing Remarks
<u>Speaker:</u> Erika Boyd, President and CEO, Texas Travel Alliance |
| 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM | Networking Reception |

1/30/2026

Page 1

Tuesday, June 23, 2026

*Classes held in Century IV Room on 1st floor.

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM

Breakfast – Brazos Restaurant (Bring Breakfast Voucher)

8:30 AM – 9:45 AM

DIY Data: A User-Friendly Guide to Research

If your eyes tend to glaze over when reviewing research, this talk will clear up your view. Don't be intimidated by metrics and measurements! Free and low-cost research platforms are discussed, including easy-to-implement solutions such as Survey Monkey and Qualtrics. Attract even more visitors/customers by learning why people visit your destination or organization, a crucial element of any marketing plan. An interactive Q&A session will prepare you to dig into research on your own. But if you decide to hire help, you'll also get insights into companies that might be a good fit for your needs.

Speaker: Neville Bhada, Founder & CEO, Applied Strategies & Principles

9:45 AM – 10:00 AM

Break

10:00 AM – 11:15 AM

Advocacy Matters: Why You Need to be an Advocate

Join TTA President & CEO, Erika Boyd, for an exclusive recap of the 88th Legislative Session—what went down, what's at stake, and how it affects YOU. Discover why advocacy isn't just a buzzword—it's the lifeblood of progress. Learn how every level of your organization can make waves in the travel and tourism industry and find out how you can roll up your sleeves, amplify your voice, and champion the causes that matter most.

Speaker: Erika Boyd, President and CEO, Texas Travel Alliance

11:15 AM – 11:30 AM

Break

11:30 AM – 12:45 PM

Uncovering Destination Stories and Local Heroes to Develop Visitor Experiences

Discover how local hero stories can transform your destination's brand by creating emotional connections, showcasing cultural authenticity, and engaging both visitors and residents. This session offers practical strategies for identifying diverse local heroes and integrating their stories into digital content, tourism experiences, signage, and more. Learn from destination case studies and walk away with tools to launch your own storytelling initiatives.

Speaker: Danielle Lewis Jones, Experience Officer, Veneto Collaboratory

12:45 PM – 1:45 PM

Lunch – Block T Bar & Grill

2:00 PM – 3:15 PM

Focus on What Matters

Scott shares his secret sauce for getting things done. FOCUS and Take Daily Action on your goals and priorities. It's amazing what you can accomplish when you schedule your priorities in your high energy quadrant.... and give it your exclusive YES! Focused action ALWAYS releases the miracle of productivity!

- Power of Focus
- Clarity of roles, priorities and calendar appointments
- How to say a robust NO to distractions
- 7 Get Focused Questions

Speaker: Scott Carley, The Change Energizer

3:15 PM – 3:30 PM

Break

3:30 PM – 4:45 PM

Focus on What Matters (continued)

4:45 PM – 5:00 PM

Wrap-Up

5:00 PM

Open Night

Wednesday, June 24, 2026

*Classes held in Century IV Room on 1st floor.

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM

Breakfast – Brazos Restaurant (Bring Breakfast Voucher)

8:30 AM – 9:45 AM

Crisis Levels - When Do You Really Start Worrying - and What Do You Prepare?

Speaker: Clara Tuma, Public Information Officer, Lower Colorado River Authority

9:45 AM – 10:00 AM

Break

10:00 AM – 11:15 AM

Beyond the Brochure: Turning Destination Potential into Booked Group Business- Sales 101

In this dynamic and interactive session, we'll peel back the layers of destination sales and explore the real engine behind economic impact—DMO and CVB sales strategy. Whether you're new to the concept or looking to sharpen your tools, this session will walk you through how to identify leads, work with hotel partners, close business, and deliver unforgettable servicing experiences that drive repeat bookings. Through real-world examples, group exercises, and practical takeaways, you'll leave equipped with actionable strategies to sell your destination with confidence and clarity.

Speaker: Josie Lewis, Director of Sales, Visit The Woodlands

11:15 AM – 11:30 AM **Wrap Up**

11:30 AM **Open Afternoon and Night**

Thursday, June 25, 2026

*Classes held in Century IV Room on 1st floor.

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM **Breakfast – Brazos Restaurant (Bring Breakfast Voucher)**

8:30 AM – 9:45 AM **Marketing to All Ages: Marketing Strategy Refresher and Campaign Case Study Examples**

In revisiting marketing strategy principles and sharing case study examples of recent past campaigns, my aim is to reinvigorate the marketer in you - provoking thoughts and ideas in which you can apply to the organization(s) and/or brand(s) you work with.

Speaker: Alison Abbott, Chief Operating Officer, Freestyle Creative

9:45 AM – 10:00 AM **Break**

10:00 AM – 11:15 AM **Peer-to-Peer Discussion on Industry Issues and Capstone Project**

Speaker: Erika Boyd, President & CEO, Texas Travel Alliance

11:15 AM – 11:30 AM **Break**

11:30 AM – 12:45 PM **Hotel Occupancy Tax – Understanding HOT Funds 101**

Also known as hotel lodging tax, bed tax, or tourist tax, this will be an introductory level class on what Hotel Occupancy Tax is, why it is collected, and by whom. But more importantly, how it can be used to help CVB's and DMO's promote their cities as a tourist destination. The emphasis will be on the basic rules and regulations of how hotel occupancy tax can be collected and used, and how to implement a HOT fund program in your city.

Speaker: Jeanette Teague, Assistant Director, Visit Boerne

12:45 PM – 1:45 PM **Lunch – Block T Bar & Grill**

2:00 PM – 3:15 PM **Leveraging Your Data for Marketing Success**

In today's digital age, data has become ubiquitous, present in almost every aspect of our lives. However, utilizing this data to drive meaningful insights and actionable decision-making can be an art form in and of itself. The good news is that you don't need a Ph.D. from MIT to tap into this potential. With a little guidance, anyone can learn to locate valuable sources of data and extract relevant insights.

We will guide you through the process of identifying data sources that are significant to your organization and how to leverage that data into

actionable recommendations that align with your marketing objectives.
Speakers: Lauren Wegmann, Vice President, Digital Media Solutions,
AJR Media Group

3:15 PM – 3:30 PM

Break

3:30 PM – 4:45 PM

Delivering Effective Messages

Whether speaking to a reporter with a television camera at a special event, or to an audience of business leaders, constituents or customers, delivering effective key messages in a compelling and memorable way can be a challenge. In this session, you will get a top-line media and presentation skills training that will focus on the fundamentals of delivering an effective message, including developing memorable content, ensuring effective body language and learning techniques to stay on message no matter what. This hands-on training will be packed with real-life examples and practical tips that will help you more effectively communicate on behalf of the travel and tourism industry at large, and your organization in particular.

Speaker: Jenifer Sarver, Principal, Sarver Strategies

4:45 PM – 5:00 PM

Wrap-Up

6:00 PM

Class Photo – Century I/II Foyer, 1st floor

6:30 PM – 8:00 PM

CTE Presentation Dinner – Century I/II, 1st floor

Friday, June 26, 2026

*Classes held in Century IV Room on 1st floor.

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM

Breakfast – Brazos Restaurant (Bring Breakfast Voucher)

8:30 AM – 9:45 AM

Search Marketing: Organic, Pay-per-click, and Tracking

This class will be designed to provide a Tourism Professional with an overview of Search Marketing. Key elements of a good campaign will be defined and demonstrated so that the attendee will have a clear understanding of what makes a good campaign work and how to measure results. The emphasis will be on using tools within Google that help a marketing professional reach the most qualified consumers with the most cost-effective campaigns.

Speaker: Emilie Harris, Senior Account Director, Madden Media

9:45 AM – 10:00 AM

Break

10:00 AM – 11:15 AM

Top Moves to Make Right Now on Social Media: A Best Practices Summary

There is such a firehose of advice these days about what to do on each social platform in order to "go viral" or other nonsense. Let's break it down for busy travel and tourism professionals who don't have a huge budget or much time. We'll walk through the top three current best practices on each of the major social channels, boiling down what you really need to know to be successful. This can apply to large marketing teams, or Mighty Teams of One. Includes a handout to keep you focused.

Speaker: Sheila Scarborough, Co-Founder, Tourism Currents

11:15 AM – 11:30 AM

Closing Remarks and Certificate of Completion

2026 TTA Travel & Tourism College
Texas A&M Hotel & Conference Center – College Station
2nd Year Class Schedule

**Subject to change*

Monday, June 22, 2026

*Classes and reception held in Century Ballroom I/II on 1st floor.

1:15 PM – 2:00 PM	Registration – Century Ballroom I/II Pre-function Area
2:00 PM – 2:10 PM	Welcome Remarks <u>Speaker:</u> Erika Boyd, President and CEO, Texas Travel Alliance
2:10 PM - 3:00 PM	Economic Outlook & Trends <u>Speaker:</u> TBD
3:00 PM – 3:20 PM	Networking Break
3:20 PM - 4:20 PM	Roundtables <u>Facilitator:</u> Neville Bhada, Founder & CEO, Applied Strategies and Principles
4:20pm – 5:20pm	You’re Already a Leader. Here’s Why. Leadership in tourism doesn’t start with a title. It starts with showing up, learning along the way, and realizing the impact you already have. This session begins with a personal journey into the travel industry, followed by a candid panel conversation with tourism professionals who have grown into leadership in different ways. Panelists will share how they found their path, lessons they learned the hard way, and moments that shaped how they lead today. Attendees will hear real stories they can relate to, find inspiration in unexpected places, and leave with a clearer understanding that leadership looks different for everyone. If you have ever questioned whether you belong at the table, this session is for you. <u>Moderator:</u> Neville Bhada, Founder & CEO, Applied Strategies and Principles <u>Panelists:</u> Maura Gast, Executive Director, Visit Irving; Jasmyne Harris, Communications & Creative Director, AJR Media Group; and Dr. Brian King, Professor and Head of the Department of Hospitality, Hotel Management and Tourism, Texas A&M University
5:25 PM – 5:30 PM	Closing Remarks <u>Speaker:</u> Erika Boyd, President and CEO, Texas Travel Alliance
6:00 PM – 7:00 PM	Networking Reception

Tuesday, June 23, 2026

*Classes held in Ross Room, 2nd floor

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM

Breakfast – Brazos Restaurant (Bring Breakfast Voucher)

8:30 AM – 9:45 AM

Designing and Developing Unforgettable Experiences

Visitors select destinations, attractions, cultural components, and travel products, but what they really want are experiences. Learn what your destination and travel partners must do to create competitive advantage by engineering UFEs, Unforgettable Experiences for your visitors and locals. Discover the Experience Formula to design and develop experiences that impact customers' emotional bank accounts.

Learn the experience product types to incorporate into your destination offerings that will engage and immerse visitors. Finally, review models of successfully staged experiences created by destinations throughout North America to drive visitation and economic development. Your visitors will become destination brand ambassadors and generate marketplace buzz.

Speaker: Danielle Lewis Jones, Experience Officer, Veneto Collaboratory

9:45 AM – 10:00 AM

Break

10:00 AM – 11:15 AM

Building a Bridge - Techniques for Getting Your Critical Message Across When It Counts

In this seminar, you will be organized in teams to solve individual simulated crisis situations and learn to navigate the fluid nature of a crisis response. Each group will prepare key messages and then prep to live stream their response. Mock interviews will be videotaped and critiqued as part of the simulation.

Speaker: Clara Tuma, Public Information Officer, Lower Colorado River Authority

11:15 AM – 11:30 AM

Break

11:30 AM – 12:45 PM

Building a Bridge - Techniques for Getting Your Critical Message Across When It Counts (Continued)

12:45 PM – 1:45 PM

Lunch – Block T Bar & Grill

2:00 PM – 3:15 PM

Unlocking the Potential of Short-Term Rentals for Destination Growth

Intelligent Destination Marketing Organizations are already stepping up by anticipating what travelers in the 2020s and 2030s really want. We're diving into the evolving world of short-term rentals exploring how revenue models are shifting, collaborating effectively with short-term rental hosts and using the vast data available to plan your accommodation needs smartly. This is a discussion session where we share what's working in your community and brainstorm how to keep evolving with these exciting trends.

Speaker: Neville Bhada, Founder & CEO, Applied Strategies and Principles

3:15 PM – 3:30 PM

Break

3:30 PM – 4:45 PM

Marketing Reimagined: AI, Interactivity, and Digital Innovation in Service Industries

Disruptive technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI), Extended Reality (XR), and digital media are rapidly reshaping the hospitality, tourism, and travel industries, redefining how businesses connect with today's digitally empowered visitors. As digital media upends traditional marketing channels, the way travel content is created, shared, and experienced is evolving fast. With generative AI and smart devices now embedded in every stage of the consumer journey, the question for industry professionals is no longer if but how to harness these tools for smarter, more engaging, and more personalized marketing. This session delivers sharp insights and real-world examples to help hospitality and tourism managers unlock the power of digital media, interactivity, and AI, and stay ahead in an increasingly competitive, tech-driven marketplace.

Speaker: Dr. Babak Taheri, Professor at Texas A&M University in the Department of Hospitality, Hotel Management & Tourism

4:45 PM – 5:00 PM

Wrap-Up

5:00 PM

Open Night

Wednesday, June 24, 2026

*Classes held in Ross Room, 2nd floor.

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM

Breakfast – Brazos Restaurant (Bring Breakfast Voucher)

8:30 AM – 9:45 AM

Destination Brand Development: Visitors, Residents, and Stakeholders... Who decides?

As destinations strive for differentiation, a truly reflective brand allows a DMO to position their destination as a distinctive offering. Now, more than ever, in an effort to broaden relevancy and increase community engagement, a DMO should strive to build a brand with input from all audiences, including visitors, residents, and other community stakeholders. However, what happens when the feedback from each is diametrically opposed? In this session, we take a look at Destination Bryan's brand development process, the feedback received from various stakeholders, and how these were used to create a destination brand reflective of the spirit of the community.

Speaker: Chris Riggins, Director of Marketing & Communications, Destination Bryan

9:45 AM – 10:00 AM

Break

10:00 AM – 11:15 AM

Peer-to-Peer Discussion on Industry Issues and Capstone Project

11:15 AM – 11:30 AM Speaker: Erika Boyd, President & CEO, Texas Travel Alliance
Wrap Up

11:30 AM **Open Afternoon and Night**

Thursday, June 25, 2026

*Classes held in Ross Room, 2nd floor.

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM **Breakfast – Brazos Restaurant (Bring Breakfast Voucher)**

8:30 AM – 9:45 AM **Advocacy and Engagement: It’s all about Relationships**
Lawmakers and political leaders make decisions on a regular basis that impact your industry, your employees and your customers. To ensure they make decisions that help – not harm – your business, it is important that you engage with them and advocate on behalf of your industry on a regular basis. But how? It’s all about relationships. In this session, you will discover ways to successfully and practically engage in the public policy process by building relationships, being a resource and telling the story of the impact of travel and tourism on local economies, communities and citizens.
Speaker: Jenifer Sarver, Principal, Sarver Strategies

9:45 AM – 10:00 AM **Break**

10:00 AM – 11:15 AM **Data Driven Decision Making in Sports Tourism**
Sports industry consultant Jon Schmieder of the Phoenix-based Huddle Up Group will lead the attendees through several examples on how to best use data when making decisions within the sports tourism and events industry. Schmieder will utilize industry data from the Sports Tourism Index + Scout platform, along with benchmarks from event owner surveys, to walk through how to leverage this information to make sound decisions in marketing, facility development, and in community partnerships. This “storytelling” session will offer the attendees key strategies to take back to their communities.
Speaker: Jon Schmieder, Founder + CEO, Huddle Up Group, LLC

11:15 AM – 11:30 AM **Break**

11:30 AM – 12:45 PM **Building Strong Partnerships in the Travel and Tourism Community**
This course at Texas Travel Alliance's Travel and Tourism College is designed to equip professionals with the skills and knowledge necessary to forge and sustain strong partnerships within the travel and tourism sector. Focusing on collaboration, this course delves into the critical aspects of partnership building, marketing strategies, and event coordination.

Through interactive discussions and real-world case studies, participants will leave with a comprehensive understanding of how to build and nurture partnerships that benefit all stakeholders in the travel and tourism community. This course is essential for professionals

aiming to enhance their collaborative efforts and drive sustainable growth in their regions.

Speakers: Kashion Smith, Executive Director, Amarillo Convention & Visitor Bureau and Johnny Blevins, President/CEO, Splash Kingdom Waterparks

12:45 PM – 1:45 PM

Lunch – Block T Bar & Grill

2:00 PM – 3:15 PM

Social Media Strategies and Influencers in Marketing

We will explore effective strategies for using social media to enhance your marketing efforts and grow your brand. We'll discuss the latest trends and content formats that are engaging audiences across various industries and how you can adapt these to resonate with your own target audience.

A key focus of the session will be the power of influencer collaborations. We'll cover how to identify the right influencers for your brand, how to approach them, and how to make the most of these partnerships to increase your reach and impact. We'll also share practical tips for integrating influencer collaborations into your broader marketing strategy for maximum authenticity and effectiveness.

By the end of the session, you'll have actionable insights and clear steps to develop a social media strategy that boosts visibility, engagement, and conversions, no matter what industry you're in. Whether you're looking to grow your online presence, increase customer interaction, or drive sales, this session will provide you with the tools to succeed in today's fast-paced digital world.

Speaker: Jessica Serna, Owner, MyCurlyAdventures

3:15 PM – 3:30 PM

Break

3:30 PM – 4:45 PM

"Now Kiss": DMO Stories About Data Influencing Media Campaigns (and Driving Results)

In this session, we'll share stories from leading DMOs who discovered a nugget of truth in the data they captured and made it the basis for their media buy. This presentation is dedicated to the unsung and un-sexy heroes behind your favorite campaigns...from Google Analytics reports, to head-scratching A/B tests and migraine-inducing STR spreadsheets. This presentation is designed to inspire and equip you with the knowledge and tools needed to elevate your media planning efforts, ensuring that your campaigns are not only data-informed but also highly effective.

Speaker: Emilie Harris, Senior Account Director, Madden Media

4:45 PM – 5:00 PM

Wrap-Up

6:10 PM

Class Photo – Century I/II Foyer, 1st floor

6:30 PM – 8:00 PM

CTE Presentation Dinner – Century I/II, 1st floor

6/11/2025

Page 5

Friday, June 26, 2026

*Classes held in Ross Room, 2nd floor.

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM

Breakfast – Brazos Restaurant (Bring Breakfast Voucher)

8:30 AM – 9:45 AM

Tell Your Story Your Way: Building and Sustaining a Successful Blog

A lot of DMOs, tourism partners, and travel-related companies increasingly appreciate the importance of communicating well on digital platforms that they own and control - their email list, website, and (hello!) their blog. Are you tired of chasing after Facebook glitches, Instagram fads, and trying to figure out TikTok? A solid blog lets you tell your story YOUR way. It can certainly help you attract more visitors, guests, and customers. But... exactly how does one DO that? In this session, we'll take you to the back end of blog publishing software and into the mind of an experienced blogger to show you the critical elements of a successful blog post. Because content is only part of the package, we'll then demonstrate how to stitch all those posts (and maybe multiple authors) together into a blogging system that gets eyeballs on your work and attention for your destination, attraction, or hotel.

Speaker: Sheila Scarborough, Co-Founder, Tourism Currents

9:45 AM – 10:00 AM

Break

10:00 AM – 11:15 AM

Sharing the Love – Fredericksburg’s Stewardship Campaign

During the pandemic, the Fredericksburg Convention and Visitor Bureau began internal discussions on how to address growing strategic challenges for the destination. While many of the challenges were outside the scope of the CVB, the staff felt that doing nothing would be a mistake. This presentation will look at the seven-month journey to the launch of the Love FBGTx campaign and how it is set up to bring about changes in local and visitor behavior over time.

Speakers: Karyn Mayo, Vice President of Tourism & Strategic Alliances, Fredericksburg CVB

11:15 AM – 11:30 AM

Closing Remarks and Certificate of Completion

2026 TTA Travel & Tourism College
Texas A&M Hotel & Conference Center – College Station
3rd Year Class Schedule

**Subject to change*

Monday, June 22, 2026

*Classes and reception held in Century Ballroom I/II on 1st floor.

1:15 PM – 2:00 PM	Registration – Century Ballroom I/II Pre-function Area
2:00 PM – 2:10 PM	Welcome Remarks <u>Speaker:</u> Erika Boyd, President and CEO, Texas Travel Alliance
2:10 PM - 3:00 PM	Economic Outlook & Trends <u>Speaker:</u> TBD
3:00 PM – 3:20 PM	Networking Break
3:20 PM - 4:20 PM	Roundtables <u>Facilitator:</u> Neville Bhada, Founder & CEO, Applied Strategies and Principles
4:20pm – 5:20pm	You’re Already a Leader. Here’s Why. Leadership in tourism doesn’t start with a title. It starts with showing up, learning along the way, and realizing the impact you already have. This session begins with a personal journey into the travel industry, followed by a candid panel conversation with tourism professionals who have grown into leadership in different ways. Panelists will share how they found their path, lessons they learned the hard way, and moments that shaped how they lead today. Attendees will hear real stories they can relate to, find inspiration in unexpected places, and leave with a clearer understanding that leadership looks different for everyone. If you have ever questioned whether you belong at the table, this session is for you. <u>Moderator:</u> Neville Bhada, Founder & CEO, Applied Strategies and Principles <u>Panelists:</u> Maura Gast, Executive Director, Visit Irving; Jasmyne Harris, Communications & Creative Director, AJR Media Group; and Dr. Brian King, Professor and Head of the Department of Hospitality, Hotel Management and Tourism, Texas A&M University
5:25 PM – 5:30 PM	Closing Remarks <u>Speaker:</u> Erika Boyd, President and CEO, Texas Travel Alliance
6:00 PM – 7:00 PM	Networking Reception

6/13/2025

Page 1

Tuesday, June 23, 2026

*Classes held in Corps Room, 2nd floor.

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM	Breakfast – Brazos Restaurant (Bring Breakfast Voucher)
8:30 AM – 9:45 AM	How to Use STR Data <u>Speaker:</u> Robert Kelly, Sales Executive, STR CoStar Group and Laura Henderson, Senior Sales Executive, STR
9:45 AM – 10:00 AM	Break
10:00 AM – 11:15 AM	Practical Strategic Plans This isn't a lecture; it's a collaborative exploration. Participants are encouraged to share their own experiences, challenges, and insights, fostering a rich exchange of ideas. As diverse perspectives converge, new pathways emerge, sparking innovative approaches to strategic problem-solving. A strategic plan is not a nicety but a necessity in developing a long-range outlook for success. We tackle the fundamentals and discuss the framework of laying out successful goals for your entity. <u>Speaker:</u> Neville Bhada, Founder & CEO, Applied Strategies & Principles
11:15 AM – 11:30 AM	Break
11:30 AM – 12:45 PM	Beyond the Feed: Where Social Media Trends Meet Destination Storytelling" <u>Speaker:</u> Rossi Ramirez, Social Media Manager, Visit San Antonio
12:45 PM – 1:45 PM	Lunch – Block T Bar & Grill
2:00 PM – 3:15 PM	From Headlines to Hashtags: The Power of Influencers in Tourism PR Traditional media still matters—but influencers often have louder voices, stronger engagement, and a direct line to your target audience. In this eye-opening session, you'll explore why content creators should be a core part of every modern media strategy. We'll break down how to vet creators, build brand-safe partnerships, and measure success beyond likes. The future of PR isn't coming—it's already here. <u>Speaker:</u> Cyle Perez, Regional Manager of Public Relations at Six Flags Entertainment Corporation
3:15 PM – 3:30 PM	Break
3:30 PM – 4:45 PM	Peer-to-Peer Discussion on Industry Issues <u>Speaker:</u> Erika Boyd, President & CEO, Texas Travel Alliance
4:30 PM – 4:45 PM	Wrap-Up

6/13/2025

Page 2

5:00 PM **Open Night**

Wednesday, June 24, 2026

*Classes held in Corps Room, 2nd floor.

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM **Breakfast – Brazos Restaurant (Bring Breakfast Voucher)**

8:30 AM – 9:45 AM **The Art of Customer Service Magic: Creating Unforgettable Experiences**

Discover how to transform everyday interactions into extraordinary experiences. Led by Estevan Guerra, former Disney cast member trainer and facilitator, this engaging session explores the key elements behind world-class service: attention to detail, inclusive culture, purpose-driven leadership, and meaningful recognition.

Through real stories and actionable strategies, attendees will learn how to elevate their service approach, boost team morale, and create lasting impressions, because in every organization, everyone plays a starring role in creating the magic.

Speaker: Estevan Guerra, Founder, A.T.O.M. Training & Consulting

9:45 AM – 10:00 AM **Break**

10:00 AM – 11:15 AM **Design With Intention: Bridging Brand Identity and Practical Creativity**

Think your destination needs a big budget or a full design team to stand out? Think again. In this interactive session, we'll explore the difference between branding and marketing — and how design drives both. You'll learn how to spot common design mistakes, build a more cohesive visual identity, and create better marketing materials with the tools and time you already have. Expect real-world examples, live polls, and a creative twist or two. Whether you're a seasoned creative or just getting started, you'll walk away with practical tools and fresh inspiration to lead your brand with intention.

Speaker: Jasmyne Harris, Communications & Creative Manager, AJR Media Group

11:15 AM – 11:30 AM **Wrap Up**

11:30 AM **Open Afternoon and Night**

Thursday, June 25, 2026

*Classes held in Corps Room, 2nd floor.

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM **Breakfast – Brazos Restaurant (Bring Breakfast Voucher)**

8:30 AM – 9:45 AM	<p>Leading Sports Tourism Organizations Sports industry consultant Jon Schmieder of the Phoenix-based Huddle Up Group will lead attendees through the various structures utilized by sports tourism organizations, using real life industry examples for each. <u>Speaker:</u> Jon Schmieder, Founder + CEO, Huddle Up Group, LLC</p>
9:45 AM – 10:00 AM	<p>Break</p>
10:00 AM – 11:15 AM	<p>Building Your Personal Brand Like (We) Marketers Build a Brand: 7 Key Steps When we're working on and building brands, it's easy to forget strategy, intention and to make time for our own, personal, brand. Follow these 7 key steps to brand yourself and manifest your goals. <u>Speaker:</u> Alison Abbott, Chief Operating Officer, Freestyle Creative</p>
11:15 AM – 11:30 AM	<p>Break</p>
11:30 AM – 12:45 PM	<p>Storytelling: How to Leverage the Media to Bring in Visitors Everyone loves a good story. And good stories are usually memorable. Learning how to effectively tell your story through the media can help bring in visitors and drive interest in your organization. In this session, Jenifer Sarver will help you build upon what you've learned through earlier sessions to effectively knit together your organization's story and pitch it to the media. This session will provide you with hints and tips for building a story and creatively attracting media, and then walk you through some higher level techniques for staying on message and effectively using the media to tell your story. <u>Speaker:</u> Jenifer Sarver, Principal, Sarver Strategies</p>
12:45 PM – 1:45 PM	<p>Lunch – Block T Bar & Grill</p>
2:00 PM – 3:15 PM	<p>Protecting Your DMO As stewards of public funds, DMOs are held to a higher standard of accountability than other organizations. Learn hands on tactics to strengthen your internal processes and policies to weave accountability through every facet of your DMO. <u>Speaker:</u> Julie Hart, President & CEO, CFO by Design</p>
3:15 PM – 3:30 PM	<p>Break</p>
3:30 PM – 4:45 PM	<p>Prost to Wine & Culinary Tourism In Fredericksburg <u>Speaker:</u> Karyn Mayo, Vice President of Tourism & Strategic Alliances, Fredericksburg CVB</p>
4:45 PM – 5:00 PM	<p>Wrap-Up</p>
6/13/2025	

6:20 PM

Class Photo

6:30 PM – 8:00 PM

CTE Presentation Dinner – Century I/II, 1st floor

Friday, June 26, 2026

*Classes held in Corps Room, 2nd floor.

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM

Breakfast – Brazos Restaurant (Bring Breakfast Voucher)

8:30 AM – 9:45 AM

International Sales and Tourism Promotion

In today's globally connected world, it is imperative that all travel professionals have a clear understanding as to what it takes to sell and market their product internationally. This class will show you a few of these resources and will then take a deep dive into how travel is bought and sold in the international markets. Additionally, the course will focus on key strategic initiatives you can take on to sell your product internationally.

Speaker: Jorge Franz, Senior Vice President, Tourism and Industry Relations, Houston First Corporation

9:45 AM – 10:00 AM

Break

10:00 AM – 11:15 AM

Capstone Project Overview & Discussion

Speaker: Thomas Wilhelm, Director of Earned Revenue, Historic Sites Division for Texas Historical Commission

11:15 AM – 11:30 AM

Closing Remarks and Certificate of Completion

April 1, 2026
Item No. 4.1.
Partner Engagement Plan

Sponsor: Casey Barone

Reviewed By CBC: N/A

Agenda Caption: Presentation, discussion, and possible action on the Visit College Station Partner Engagement Plan.

Relationship to Strategic Goals:

Recommendation(s): Staff recommends the committee receive the plan and provide feedback.

Summary: Staff will send out the plan prior to the meeting.

Budget & Financial Summary: All activities within the Partner Engagement Plan will be funded through Hotel Occupancy Taxes within the tourism budget.

Attachments:

None

**April 1, 2026
Item No. 4.2.
Sales Plan**

Sponsor: Jo Beth Wolfe, Alex Aguero

Reviewed By CBC: Tourism Committee

Agenda Caption: Presentation, discussion, and possible action on the Visit College Station Sales Plan.

Relationship to Strategic Goals:

Recommendation(s): Staff recommends the committee receive the plan and provide feedback.

Summary: Staff will send out the plan prior to the meeting.

Budget & Financial Summary: All activities within the Sales Plan will be funded through Hotel Occupancy Taxes within the tourism budget.

Attachments:

None

April 1, 2026

Item No. 4.3.

Northgate Entertainment District Update

Sponsor: Jennifer Luna

Reviewed By CBC: N/A

Agenda Caption: Presentation and discussion on an update on the Northgate Entertainment District.

Relationship to Strategic Goals:

Recommendation(s): Staff recommends the committee receive the presentation and provide feedback.

Summary: Staff will present an update on the City's work within the Northgate Entertainment District. The presentation will cover ongoing construction activities, the status of the Small Area Plan process, and the anticipated impacts on tourism.

Budget & Financial Summary: N/A

Attachments:

None

**April 1, 2026
Item No. 4.4.
Data Reports**

Sponsor: Jeremiah Cook, Assistant Director - Tourism

Reviewed By CBC: N/A

Agenda Caption: Presentation, discussion, and possible action on data reports from the previous month.

Relationship to Strategic Goals:

Recommendation(s): Staff recommends the Committee receive the presentation and provide direction.

Summary: Staff will present on the data reports from the previous month.

Budget & Financial Summary: N/A

Attachments:

None