

Subject: New submission ALBANY Arts, Culture, and Tourism Application
Date: Thursday, June 29, 2023 at 10:15:21 AM Eastern Daylight Time
From: jnytko@govsol.org
To: jnytko@govsol.org

General Information
Date of application
06/14/2023
Name of Entity
Guilderland Chamber of Commerce
Entity TIN, EIN or Social Security Number
23-7199644
Entity physical address
2050 Western Ave Guilderland, New York 12084 United States Map It
Is the physical address different from the mailing address?
No
Website (if available)
https://www.guilderlandchamber.com
Primary Contact Information
Primary contact name
Sandra Dollard
Primary contact title
Executive Director
Primary contact phone
(518) 456-6611
Primary contact email
kburbank01@gmail.com
What is the primary contacts preferred method of contact?
Email
Entity Info and Structure
Which structure best describes the entity?
Non-profit organization
What is the date of establishment?
1972

If applicable, is the entity a W/MAM (Minority or Women-Owned Business Entity)?

No

Have you or the entity ever received any form of COVID-19 relief funds or loans specific to the negative impacts of the Pandemic?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please specify the type(s) and amount(s).

PPE Funds-\$20,000, split between 2020 and 2021
Town of Guilderland IDA Funds-\$10,000

General Project Information

Describe the arts/cultural/tourism activities your organization provides in Albany County.

The Guilderland Chamber of Commerce has been in business for 50 years, and has coordinated numerous events during that time. We have also hosted large events meant to draw tourism. More recently, the chamber has conducted Souped Up on Guilderland Soup Cook off and Car Show, done annually for 8 years, that drew car show enthusiasts from Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Albany, Rensselaer, Fulton, Saratoga Counties, and 500 attendees at the height of its popularity. The chamber has also coordinated the Annual Ladies Night Out, drawing vendor businesses from the four counties, and up to 400 attendees at each event. The chamber of commerce produces an annual business directory that has morphed into a visitors guide the last 3 years. Over 2000 copies of the guide are distributed annually and available online as well. The chamber's popular bi-annual restaurant weeks started in 2008 and turned annual just after Covid-19. The chamber used to maintain a dedicated restaurant week site that got thousands of visits during the restaurant weeks. The chamber also promotes large events going on in our area for our local businesses, and has put the events in the Visitors Guide. Events like the Altamont Fair, NYS Amateurs Golf event at our local country clubs, large athletic events at our parks (Mud Mania Mud Run, Old Songs Festival, Nervosity Concert, Altamont 5K, Northeast Lacrosse Tournaments, and more).

If an award is made, describe how Albany County will benefit. Where possible, please quantify impact.

We anticipate Albany County will benefit from this project with more county residents getting involved and learning about their own resources and possibly volunteering at some of our sites, visitors from other counties coming to shop, dine, and attend events going on here, and even potentially folks deciding to move to Albany County as opposed to other counties because of the diverse resources we will be marketing during this year. The county will benefit from the chamber pulling together the many organizations who are already doing things in our area (CDTA Nature Bus and Purple Line, The Visitors Bureau, The Craft Beverage Trail, The Rail Trail and more) into one cohesive project.

If an award is made, describe how the funds will help you to sustain your operations in Albany County.

The Guilderland Chamber's main revenue sources are events and membership dues. It is the extra projects that need extra funding. A grant like this can make the chamber more visible in the community, more relevant as an organization that small businesses want to be a part of, and positions us as a community leader. Those things will carry over into multiple years as we help support the businesses in this grant and expand our area of operations. Many of the existing events will be easy to update on calendars, making the chamber continue to be the communicator of these activities as far as marketing and social media.

Describe the extent to which the COVID-19 pandemic increased or decreased demand for your services. As an option, you may attach to this application any optional information that supports you're the service increase or decrease being described below.

Covid Impact-The chamber of commerce was not able to do any networking events, groups, outreach to new members or community events during Covid shutdowns. We lost a considerable amount of income from those things, as well as members not being able to pay dues during that time. The chamber was able to educate members about the ongoing levels and changes, distribute PPE gear for businesses that stayed open, and online meetings so that members could stay in touch. The chamber became the resource on Covid-19 for businesses in the area.

Please select the grant opportunity you wish to apply to

Arts, Culture, and Tourism (ACT) Promotion Grants (Up to \$100,000)

Project Information – Promotion Grants

Please select whether the proposed project is new or existing

Creates a new initiative or project

Please provide a short summary of your proposed project including a project name, general description, total cost, reason(s) why you are pursuing the project and anticipated impact:

“Four Seasons of Guilderland and the Hilltowns Beyond”

The Guilderland Chamber of Commerce proposes the following project that will cost \$100,000.

The project highlights 4 seasons of activities in Guilderland, Altamont, Voorheesville, and the Hilltowns, comprised of Berne, Knox, Westerlo and Rensselaerville. The grant projects will be distributed through the seasons, and the publicity campaign will also focus on seasons.

During the four seasons, the chamber will promote and market existing activities by other groups (such as Altamont PTAs vendor fair or the Hilltowns 5K runs, etc.) through social media and advertising.

During the four seasons, the chamber will also conduct its own events in the areas (such as a brewery/winery tour or summer farmers market tour) partnering with local businesses and nonprofits, also using heavy social media, associations and groups and the chamber member businesses.

The Chamber wants to do this because it is a great opportunity to pull together so many rich resources existing in our area, in one cohesive campaign. We anticipate all of the events and resources will be utilized by people beyond our areas. We also want to focus on outdoor recreation and low cost or free events to promote a budget friendly, healthy lifestyle one can have throughout western Albany County. In preparing for this project, we have reviewed several prominent websites/guides to see what is listed regarding the Hilltowns. The Discover Albany guide, I Love NY website, Albany.com, and town websites each have one or a few places or activities listed, but none have everything in one place and none are comprehensive. There are 750,000 people in the capital region, and as you will see from this grant, our proposal will definitely get the attention of many of them.

The anticipated impact will be more events, more support for smaller local groups that do events and activities or have locations beyond Guilderland, more marketing all of the resources together and overall more people coming to things and staying longer to do another activity.

What amount of funding is being requested?

\$100,000.00

Please describe the entity’s capabilities to implement the project you propose including organizational structure, staff members involved, a summary of similar initiatives you have undertaken and the date they were completed:

Katherine Burbank, the event consultant, was director of the Guilderland chamber of commerce for almost 7 years and has consulted with the chamber on numerous events and as interim director since she left in 2013. Katherine has also served as development director and successfully wrote and administered grants since 1997. Her experience not only with the chamber of commerce but with the NY Council on Nonprofits and The United Way gives her the community building and planning experience needed to make this project successful. Katherine has conducted large community events such as Souped Up on Guilderland (2007 through 2014) for the time she was at the chamber, and also has written, obtained and managed the first Earned Income Tax Credit grant for United Way in 2003, The NYS Navigator Grant for Health Insurance in 2012 and many more successful projects.

Katherine also oversaw a 40th anniversary project in 2012 with the chamber that involved a town wide Adirondack Chair display, sponsored by businesses, painted by artists and displayed at large events through the spring, summer, and fall.

Sydney Smarro of SS Creative will be the social media consultant on the grant. Sydney has accounts with multi-site places such as The Bunker Indoor Golf centers, Jacob and Anthony’s/Bellini’s, as well as other successful endeavors. She has owned and operated her business since 2021 after several years working in the field.

The Chamber’s Executive Director, Sandra Dollard, owned 2 businesses before the chamber of commerce, both operated successfully for a number of years in Guilderland. She owned Evoke Styles in Stuyvesant Plaza for 12 years, and Albany Home Staging prior to that. She has been with the chamber since fall of 2022 and has increased membership by 80 new members and revived programs. She works with the Guilderland and Altamont Community and has a great working knowledge of the entities throughout this area. Sandra managed the 2023 Winter Restaurant week grant the chamber received from Albany County legislative grants.

Please describe, in detail, the impact your proposed project will have on Arts, Culture and/or Tourism in Albany County. Describe how your project will attract new visitors to Albany County. Where possible use metrics/estimates of impact (i.e. increased visitation etc.).

“Four Seasons of Guilderland and the Hilltowns Beyond”

The project highlights 4 seasons of activities in Guilderland, Altamont, Voorheesville, and the Hilltowns, comprised of Berne, Knox, Westerlo and Rensselaerville. The chamber of commerce will be the master coordinator, planner and disseminator of information for events, activities and resources/assets in the areas covered by our proposal. The grant projects will be distributed through the seasons, and the publicity campaign will also focus on seasons. The kickoff event, in fall 2023, will be with Altamont Orchards Farm Store, Brewery, Apple Orchard and restaurant, located in Western Albany County.

During the four seasons, the chamber will promote and market existing activities (see spreadsheet at end of narrative) by other groups (such as Altamont PTAs vendor fair or the Hilltowns 5K Triple Crown runs) through social media and advertising. A spreadsheet of existing assets and the season they should be highlighted is at the end of the narrative.

During the four seasons, the chamber will also conduct its OWN events in the areas (such as a brewery/winery tour or summer farmers market tour) partnering with local businesses and nonprofits, associations, and groups in the Hilltowns. We will kick off in the fall as mentioned, at a farm. We will coordinate a "shopping night" at any businesses that want to participate in December.

The chamber will conduct a restaurant week in Guilderland in the winter of 2024, and summer of 2024.

The chamber will put banners throughout Guilderland, giving the town a more cohesive look for shoppers, diners, and visitors. The chamber will contract with the Town of Guilderland Highway Dept. to hang the banners.

The chamber will also contract with a landscaper to add barrels to selected areas throughout Guilderland and at the town limits where we have Welcome to Guilderland signs, or banners, as well as in Berne, Knox and Westerlo. The barrels will hold all season plantings and have a sign with the "4 seasons of Guilderland and Hilltowns" graphic and the website.

Metrics on the whole project will be measured in 1. New business to existing businesses, farms, stores, restaurants, and 2. New or more attendees and participants at events and places like the Bike Trails, 5K runs, parks and nature areas (based on average visitors for that time).

The chamber will produce a visitors guide as part of its annual member directory, that also highlights natural and agricultural assets of Western Albany County. The Visitors Guide will have a map insert, and 2500 will be available for the Fall 2023 through end of Summer 2024 year at many public and/or busy places and partners. We will monitor how many get distributed and where as part of the grant. The chamber will also recommend several AirBnBs that serve Berne, Knox, Westerlo, including some farms and lakeside cottages.

Impact will also be measured by the success of the following new events to be conducted between 2023-2024.

New Events/Activities coordinated by the chamber-

Guilderland/Altamont/Voorheesville/Hilltowns Brewery/Winery Tours fall 2023

Kick off event at Altamont Orchards Fall 2023

Guilderland/Altamont/Voorheesville/Hilltowns Restaurant Week Winter 2024

Enhanced Town-wide "Ladies Night Out" shopping event with Hardware stores-December 2023

Spring Golf Around Guilderland event partnering with existing golf courses to get new golfers from outside the area

Guilderland/Altamont/Voorheesville/Hilltowns Summer Hiking and Outdoors Themed Campaign

Guilderland/Altamont/Voorheesville/Hilltowns Summer Farmers markets Campaign with Hilltowns, Voorheesville, Altamont and Guilderland markets.

Enhanced websites and other social media support for groups participating in the event so that it continues into the future.

How will you track performance goals and define success? Include at least two key performance indicators and expected annual outcomes/impact during the reporting period (September 2023 - December 2026).

Tracking success:

The indicators used to track the success of the overall grant programs will vary from project to project but will for the most part be attendees, new customers, and new/revived projects. The chamber will begin this project with a calendar of events/activities by season, and use staff and volunteers or partners to monitor success. The chamber will use data from the partners of this grant if it an existing activity or event to conduct pre and post-event success. The Guilderland Chamber will have volunteers at each event to talk to staff of the local businesses about the increases. Anecdotal exit polls will be done to ascertain home zip codes of attendees.

Website visits, Visitors Guides, and downloadable maps will also be tracked.

The Social media consultant will also track the additional likes, shares and comments/engagement that the advertisement and social media work will bring.

Lastly, the ability of the groups to continue these initiatives will be tracked as that is the overall goal of the grant. For example, the Helderberg Brewery may open for more hours, or more days and continue this into next year. The

Helderberg Hilltowns Association is reviving their self-guided tour with the help of this grant and should be able to update their website with our support and continue this tour. The landscaped areas of the towns will continue to be maintained.

At the end of the “year” the chamber will be able to produce an impact report using the increase in attendance at existing assets and new projects, numbers of extra events held, outreach to community groups and businesses, and future plans to sustain the grant.

What is the proposed project start date?

Fall of 2023, target month October, or end of September if we can get funds earlier.

What is the anticipated date of completion?

End of Summer 2024/Back to School

Please provide key performance indicator(s) demonstrating anticipated results

Indicator	2024	2025	2026
NEW Visitors to events	25% more to existing events, total numbers for new events	20% more to any events	
Social media/website traffic	Engagement-posts, likes, shares, comments		
Event partners improvements	100% of partners will conduct event/promotion/activity	50% of 2023-2024 partners will continue promotion or event	

Please provide key project milestones inclusive of the anticipated timelines and descriptions

Milestone	Anticipated Timeline	Task Description
KickOff event Planned/Executed	Fall 2023 (October)	Secure site, incorporate golf course, apple picking, brewery, restaurant, farm store, and fall activities
Marketing plan developed and secured	September 2023	Contact media partners and secure contracts for social media, tv advertising, develop map and other items to be distributed/printed, contact local TV features such as "Off the Beaten Path," or Upstate of Business or Trip on a Tankful, existing media specials that are always looking for stories.
Coordinate Community and Business partners and Volunteers	September 2023	Grant committee secures volunteers, chamber secures sites for events, and other community groups who want to partner, such as the Helderberg Hilltowns Association. Chamber has consultants in place
Plan Timeline of Fall/Winter/Spring/Summer events	Beginning as soon as grant is secured-September 2023	Develop list of existing resources/activities, divide into 4 seasons, decide on chamber sponsored event for that season
Banners put on poles in Guilderland	Fall 2023	Decide how many, Fill out town forms, order banners and hardware, contract with town Highway Dept to hang banners
Landscaped areas in Guilderland and Hilltowns	ASAP, Fall through Spring, weather permitting	Identify areas throughout grant geographic area, with grant themed sign (explore Guilderland and Hilltowns) and landscaping

Winter Restaurant Week	Jan/Feb 2024	Guilderland and the Hilltowns Restaurants contacted, secured, social media and advertising for event
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At the top of this page is a downloadable project budget. Please download the budget form and upload it here.

- [GCC-ARPA-BUDGET.pdf](#)

If you are funding a multi-year initiative, please provide a breakdown of funding level per year below*:

2023	2024	2025	2026
\$40,000	\$60,000		

Is any upfront funding needed to successfully implement your proposed project?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please specify below.

Money will be needed to secure events, advertising and marketing, obtain supplies and contractors for the ramp-up of this grant, hopefully starting in September, if not before.

Describe how the funding will support a sustainable Arts/Culture/Tourism initiative that will continue to serve Albany County residents after ARPA funds have been exhausted .

The funding for this project provides a unique opportunity for the chamber to support our small businesses and farms and promote our agriculture and natural resources. The support in advertising, social media and website help, and with existing events and activities can give many entities the boost they need to make their activities better, thus drawing bigger attendance and enabling continuity for the years to come. So many of our natural resources, especially, need better marketing to residents of the capital region. The chamber can pull all of these places together in one comprehensive website and marketing plan, the first of its kind. The information we gather can easily be updated every year after this funding ends.

In addition, if we can leverage these funds to bring activities such as the Lights in The Park, The Helderberg Hilltowns Barn tour revival, and Brewery and Winery Tours to our area, we will do so, enthusiastically.

Explain why ARPA Funds Are Needed to Complete the proposed program/project. Would the proposal be Possible Without ARPA Assistance? Describe how your proposal would be impacted if you are awarded a smaller grant than requested?

This project is a huge endeavor, and the ARPA funds make it possible for the chamber to be able to direct advertising and marketing to almost half of Albany County for a year. The chamber would not be able to do this without the funds, and the smaller businesses and organizations would not be able to manage this on their own. These funds will actually multiply in impact as we partner with other organizations and tie in with other things going on in the region. For instance, the CDTA Nature Bus-it is free to ride, but many people don't know about the stops or destinations. By adding CDTA as a partner, we can also promote not only the bus but the different destinations in our area like the Pine Bush preserve and Thacher Park. Similarly, we have expressed our support to Albany PAL to get the "Lights in The Park" to Altamont Fairgrounds in the winter, letting them know we would love to promote this.

We would still do this with a smaller grant amount, but it would mean cutting down some key features that, fully funded, would make this plan excel. We would most likely cut some of the aesthetics, the landscaped barrels and banners.

Tax Information

Please upload Federal tax returns for 2019

- [2019-Client-Copy-of-Tax>Returns-Guilderland-Chamber-of-Commerce.pdf](#)

Please upload Federal tax returns for 2020

- [2020-Client-Copy-of-Tax>Returns-Guilderland-Chamber-of-Commerce.pdf](#)

Please upload Federal tax returns for 2021

- [2021-Client-Copy-of-Tax>Returns-Guilderland-Chamber-of-Commerce.pdf](#)

Risk Assessment

Has the entity adopted and/or implemented policies relating to: records retention, conflict of interest, code of ethics, and/or nondiscrimination policies?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please specify which policies have been adopted

The Guilderland Chamber of Commerce has an employee manual, a Board of Directors manual, and Financial Policy, each with appropriate policies to date.

Is the entity properly insured?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please specify which types of insurance(s) are held and the limit(s).

The chamber holds General Business Insurance and Directors and Officers Liability Insurance.

Does the entity have a financial management system?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please provide details about the financial management system.

The chamber uses both ChamberMaster and Quickbooks, employs a bookkeeper who is a CPA, and consults with TM Byxbee for annual 990 Review. The chamber also has a volunteer Treasurer on the Board of Directors who reviews the monthly financials before they are disseminated at the monthly board meeting. The board reviews and votes to accept the monthly financial statements.

Has there been any change in the entity's key staffing positions in the last 2 years?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please specify which position(s)

The chamber has a new executive director, Sandra Dollard, but has retained Kathy Burbank as a consultant to ensure continuity and transition success. kathy has led that chamber and been involved as a volunteer and consultant since 2007.

Has the entity previously done work for the Federal government (i.e. Is the entity experienced in managing Federal funds)?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please provide details on the Federal funds managed

The chamber received a Navigator Grant (Through State DOH) as part of health care reform and administered it successfully for 2 years.

The County is careful about identifying and avoiding conflicts of interest, especially with grants awarded through the County. A conflict of interest arises when a person's self-interest and professional interest or public interest intersect. In this situation, there is the potential for biased professional judgment and lack of objectivity which creates a serious conflict when one of the interests can benefit financially or personally from actions or decisions made in the official capacity. A conflict of interest exists whether or not decisions are affected by a personal interest; there only needs to be the possibility of bias for a conflict. If your organization knows of a possible conflict of interest with your application for funds please disclose that information here. Otherwise write "None."

None

Certifications

US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 1

- I Have Been Provided a Copy and Understand the U.S. Treasury's Compliance and Reporting Guidance for State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (see link or PDF included at the top of page)

US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 2

- Should the County Allocate ARPA Funds, I am Able to and Pledge to Adhere to ALL Compliance and Reporting Requirements of the U.S. Treasury as it relates to any State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 3

- I Understand the County Will Contact me if/when Additional Information is Needed and that Information will be Promptly Provided to the County to Support Reporting Requirements

US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 4

- If for Any Reason I am Unable to Comply with the U.S. Treasury's Compliance and Reporting Requirements I will Immediately Notify the County in writing by email or letter

US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 5

- All Information Submitted in this Application is True & Accurate

Electronic Signature Agreement

- I Agree

Type name

Sandra Dollard