



City of Denton

City Hall
215 E. McKinney Street
Denton, Texas
www.cityofdenton.com

AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Parks and Recreation

ACM: Christine Taylor, Assistant City Manager

DATE: June 4, 2026

SUBJECT

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding the Original Denton District's (ODD) support for Denton's Day of the Dead Festival's application for the Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA) Arts Respond - Cultural District Project grant program seeking \$75,000.00 to support various operational and programming expenses; and to provide a letter of support to the TCA.

BACKGROUND

David Pierce, Executive Director of Denton's Day of the Dead Festival requested a letter of support from the Original Denton District in support of his application to the Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA) for the Arts Respond - Cultural District Project grant. The Grant application is due June 15, 2026.

Pierce and Denton's Day of the Dead Foundation are seeking \$75,000 to support various areas of operational expenses including:

- General marketing support in the amount of \$10,000
- Digital content creation support in the amount of \$20,000
- Live stream coverage costs in the amount of \$7,500
- Production enhancements and digital projections for *Cirque du Horror* in the amount of \$7,500
- And \$30,000 to support hiring high-quality artistic talent to include live music and performance programming.

The Day of the Dead Festival is attuned to the Mexican American traditions of the Día de los Muertos, while giving those traditions a respectful Denton take. The festival itself began in 2011 and now incorporates Cirque du Horror and the Day of the Dead Coffin Races. Denton's Day of the Dead Festival brings around 20,000 to 25,000 attendees to the Original Denton District during October. Since 2024, Denton's Day of The Dead Festival's major elements have been included in the City of Denton's *31 Days of Halloween* Calendar of Events.

A letter of support from the Original Denton District expressing the cultural district's support of the project is required as part of the TCA Cultural District grant application.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approving a letter of support from the Original Denton District, signed by the City Manager or their designee, expressing the cultural district's support for the project.

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1- Agenda Information Sheet

Exhibit 2- Letter of Request

Exhibit 3- DOD FY25-26 Income Statement

Exhibit 4- Letter of Support

Respectfully submitted:
Allison Wing, Interim Director
Parks and Recreation

Prepared by:
Megan Thomas,
Interim Business Administration Manager
Parks and Recreation Department