



## Bohemia Mining Days, Inc.

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Cindy Weeldreyer, Festival Coordinator

Received

MAR 22 2016

City of Cottage Grove  
City Manager's Office

March 22, 2016

City of Cottage Grove Budget Committee  
400 E. Main Street  
Cottage Grove, OR 97424

RE: Request for a \$3,200 annual budget line item to have the City of Cottage Grove become the annual sponsor of the BMD Express train ride to explore our town's interesting and colorful past.

Dear Councilors & Budget Committee Members:

On July 14-17, BMD celebrates its 57th year of providing old-fashioned family fun and keeping Cottage Grove's unique and colorful history alive. We are now designated as an official Oregon Heritage Tradition, a unique honor bestowed upon events that are 50-years-or-older by the Oregon Heritage Commission. It's a designation that attracts history-loving tourists; among residents, BMD remains the largest annual event in Cottage Grove. The BMD Board continues its commitment to increasing the cultural heritage aspect of the festival, which now includes a cultural stage surrounded by heritage-related vendors and attractions.

A key reason for our longevity is the generosity of local businesses and foundations. Changes (in the economy, in our local family foundations, in how corporate giving is now prioritized around social services and education) make it more challenging to produce Bohemia Mining Days each year. Cottage Grove is changing too. Tourism is becoming a very important part of our local economy. As our town's signature summer event, we see 10-15,000 attendees each year.

Thanks to a unique agreement between The City and BMD in 2013, we financially saved the festival at a critical point in our history and strengthened our organization. We are nearing the end of the agreed upon five-year period to contribute \$15,000 back to improve electrical service in Coiner Park to better support community events. We've had a stable and competent board of directors for years now. However, it's been a financial challenge to retain a festival director and, unfortunately, we've had lots of turnover since Sharon Jean retired from the position.

As a BMD volunteer and former board member I have 15+ years of experience producing the festival. I agreed to become the festival coordinator to bring greater administrative stability to the organization. We are busy planning this year's festival and we're looking forward to another successful celebration. The 2016 theme is "All that Glitters... is NOT gold." A daily play highlights the unique the role a local miner played in bringing electricity to town via the 1893 Chicago World's Fair.

For the past three years we've had a popular free train connecting Coiner Park with offsite events such as the Gold Mining Museum and the carnival in Bohemia Park, with temporary stops to attend the Presbyterian Church's Friday Quilt Show & Ice Cream Social and the Lutheran Church's Saturday Chicken BBQ.

A train stop at 6th & Madison Avenue connects festival-goers to historical attractions such as the Chambers Covered Bridge and the Dr. Snapp House Museum (via the swinging bridge). The All-America City Square stop connects train riders to the Centennial Covered Bridge, the Applegate Trail Interpretive Center (River Road and Main) the Cottage Grove Historical Museum, and showcases the shops and murals in our historic downtown district.

The train route is from Coiner Park to Bohemia Park to All-America City Square and back to Coiner Park. We provide color-coded maps to train riders to help them find the attractions. We feel this feature benefits all of Cottage Grove because it's a fun, free opportunity to introduce history to both locals and visitors at the same time bringing them to our downtown businesses. We believe the train will attract more visitors to the festival and entice them to come back to experience more of what Cottage Grove has to offer. Also, we will continue the tradition of carrying senior and disabled individuals who wish to be in Saturday's Grand Miners Parade.

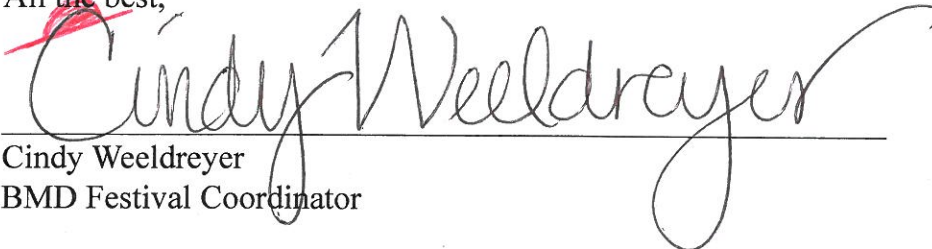
This budget request is to partner with the City to take the festival citywide and add Sunday to the train's operating hours.

Here's a fun thought...

Just as Arlo Guthrie's popular song made the *City of New Orleans* train famous, we have enough musical talent in The Grove to compose a song about *Ridin' on the City of Cottage Grove* that would be a great way to promote the annual experience. If this partnership is approved we're gonna work on that!

Thank you for your consideration of our request. We've detailed below how the money requested will be spent. We've also included two attachments: A roster of our current board and a copy of the 2015 train map

All the best,



Cindy Weeldreyer

Cindy Weeldreyer  
BMD Festival Coordinator

## **“BMD Express” Train Budget Allocation Request**

**The Bowen's Western Express Train fees are \$1,250 per day.**

### **Requested Hours of Operation:**

<b>Friday</b>	<b>1-8 p.m.</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>10 a.m. to 6 p.m.</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>11 a.m. to 3 p.m.</b>

<b>Train Rental (2.5 days)</b>	<b>\$3,125.00</b>
<b>Train Sponsorship Signs &amp; Local Attraction Train Route Maps</b>	<b><u>75.00</u></b>
	<b>\$3,200.00</b>