

Submission Date

Oct 25, 2022 11:13 AM

Name of Initiative

Cashiers Village Lights

Contact Person

Ashlie Mitchell

Title

Executive Director

Address

PO Box 2201

City

Cashiers

State

NC

Zip Code

28717

Cashiers Village Lights

Primary Phone Number

404-980-9361

Ashlie Mitchell

Email

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Organization Type

Non-Profit

Organization Tax ID

90-0947131

Time of Year of Initiative

Off Peak (Dec - March) preferred

Describe the timing of the initiative in as much detail as possible (please list key project dates, milestones, timeframes, etc.)

Christmas on The Green, and specifically for this grant, Cashiers' Village Lights will officially begin on November 25th, 2022.

Between 5:30 & 6:30 p.m. the 65-ft. Cashiers' Christmas tree, located inside The Village Green near the Crossroads in Cashiers, will be lit up in all its glory along with tens of thousands of Christmas lights throughout the park at The Village Green.

To prepare for this event, The Village Green contracts with Brite Lites out of Greenville, SC to install beautiful Christmas lights from The Crossroads to our Village Playground. We, at The Village Green, work with Brite Lites beginning in August to map out the Christmas light displays.

Every evening, at sunset, The Village Lights come alive. The Village Green continues the light display through February to help stave off the darkest and dreariest days of the winter. There is nothing like driving through the Crossroads at 5:45 at the end of January and still seeing the beautiful glow within the park.

Our community has come to cherish this display, and people from all over WNC come to take photographs, photo shoots, special occasions, and to take in the warmth that the lights offer through the coldest days of winter.

Describe your initiative

Cashiers' Village Lights began three years ago as a way to lift everyone's spirits during the depths of COVID-19 stay-at-home orders. It was the brain child of Cashiers' community member, Drew English.

Drew wanted to light up the park so people could have a visually uplifting and warm location to retreat to during the pandemic. The first year, the lights were kept up until mid-January. In 2021, leadership at The Village Green decided to extend the display through February, which helped to lift our community's spirits.

Describe what previous experience applicant has in successful execution of similar endeavors

The Jackson County Tourism & Development Authority have long been supporters of free community events held at The Village Green. The TDA has supported our fall event - Cashiers Valley Leaf Festival, our summer concert series - Groovin' on The Green, and our inaugural Cashiers' Village Lights in 2020.

Website

www.villagegreencashiersnc.com/

Social Media Channels - paste URLs below

<https://www.facebook.com/CashiersGreen>

Amount of Funds Requested?

5,000

Date Funds Needed

Nov 23, 2022

Give a narrative description of how this project will increase tourism and visitation in Jackson County
Cashiers' Village Lights is an extension of Christmas on The Green, which follow on the heels of our annual Gobble on The Green Thanksgiving Day 5-k.

Last year, we tallied 827 visitors that came to the Cashiers' Christmas Tree Lighting and witnessed the lighting up of the park.

Through February 2022 there were over 30 social media tags, shares, and posts from visitors that came solely to see the lights at The Village Green. While this may seem like a small number, this number far exceeds other organizations, businesses, and nonprofits in the Cashiers' area that also have holiday-themed displays.

If this initiative has occurred before, what is new that differentiates it from prior years?

This year we will have hot cocoa, hot cider, smores, holiday music, a special visit from Santa, and holiday music.

This year we have also extended the light display and will be incorporating more lights around the Village Playground.

What is your advertising and marketing plan for your initiative?

We are in the midst of heavily marketing Christmas on The Green. Elements of the light display will be featured in the November, December, and January issues of The Laurel Magazine, we will be in the November/December issue of The Plateau Magazine, the November/December issue of NC Living Magazine, Village lights is scheduled to appear twice in The Crossroads' Chronicle, and twice in The Highlander Newspaper. The Village Lights display will also make an appearance in the Romantic Asheville - Most Romantic Christmas Destinations 2022 article. Inevitably, as the holiday season gets closer and closer we get contacted by many more entities that want to feature our beautiful lights display.

Internally - The Village Green staff post weekly about Cashiers' Village Lights and Christmas on The Green. We share, repost, and tag those that have taken photos of the lights from within.

We have a detailed Corporate Sponsor Marketing Package as well that guarantees their featured logo on all internal marketing materials from November 1 - February 28.

Do you agree to acknowledge the 'Jackson County TDA' in materials as required? Any releases or ad placements should have a statement that "the event was made possible, in part, by the Jackson County TDA." Print ad placements, where/when possible should include the JCTDA logo.

Yes

Total anticipated cost of initiative

33,500

Total funds your organization will provide toward total cost?

3,000

Detail funds requested from other sources and note commitments or anticipated receipt of funds from other sources

Currently, we have raised \$26,000 towards the cost of Cashiers' Village Lights.

\$30,000 goes to Brite Lites for the design and installation of the display. The remaining \$3,500 is budgeted for printing and shipping banner displays and yard signs, Christmas ornaments and additional lights throughout the park, hospitality supplies, photography during and after the event, & Decorative Christmas boxes.

Please upload your detailed budget, including event or initiative expenses and revenue. You can attach a spreadsheet (Excel), PDF, or Word Document.



2022 Cashiers' Village Lights Budget.pdf

20.66 KB

Anticipated Attendees from Jackson County:

300

Anticipated Attendees from outside Jackson County:

500

Anticipated overnight stays generated:

30+

How did you determine audience/attendance numbers and where do they come from?

Last year we tallied (visually) 800+/- people at the Cashiers Village Lights kick-off. With a small full-time population here in Cashiers, we know that many attend from outside the area.

This number is also based off our data we gather from our Gobble on The Green 5k. When a person registers to run in the 5k, we gather their demographic data.

We think that there is a lot of overlap between those who come to run the 5k and stay to watch the Village Lights display.

How will you measure success of your initiative?

We will measure the success of Village Lights through another annual tally of individuals in attendance on the kick-off, through social media engagement and tracking, and through independent/external articles and engagement.

Upload any supporting documentation for your application here:



Christmas I.jpg

260.35 KB



Christmas II.jpg

286.17 KB

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

The Village Green wants to thank everyone at the JCTDA for all you do for Jackson County, and for our Cashiers' community! We so greatly appreciate the tourism you have developed for our area!

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large loop on the left and a long, horizontal, slightly curved stroke extending to the right. There are three small dots placed along the bottom curve of the long stroke.