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|  <p>CITY OF ST. CHARLES ILLINOIS • 1834</p> | AGENDA ITEM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | | Agenda Item number: 5d |
| | Title: | Funding Request from the St Charles Business Alliance in the Amount of \$798,600 for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 | |
| | Presenter: | Jenna Sawicki, St. Charles Business Alliance | |
| Meeting: Government Operations Committee | | Date: February 5, 2024 | |
| Proposed Cost: \$798,600 | | Budgeted Amount: TBD | Not Budgeted: <input type="checkbox"/> |
| TIF District: None | | | |
| Executive Summary (if not budgeted, please explain): | | | |
| <p>Attached is a funding request from the St Charles Business Alliance (SCBA) for fiscal year 2024-2025. The request totals \$798,600, drawing from two funding sources. Anticipated proceeds of \$272,000 from SSA 1B would contribute to the first portion, while the remaining \$526,600 would be sourced from Hotel Motel Tax revenue contributions. The funding requested is an increase from \$698,600 that was approved for the current FY 2023-24 funding cycle. The SCBA's has not requested an increase in funding since the organization was started in 2019. The requested increase is to offset rising costs and inflation over the past five years, which is crucial to continuing to provide marketing, business development and events to the downtown area and City.</p> <p>The 2024-2025 year represents the sixth year of the SCBA's existence. The combination of the former Downtown St Charles Partnership and the Greater St Charles Convention and Visitor's Bureau was completed in the summer of 2019.</p> <p>Representatives of the SCBA will be present at the Committee meeting to highlight the activities of the SCBA over the past year as well as outline upcoming events and initiatives for the upcoming fiscal year.</p> <p>Staff will be seeking feedback and direction from the Committee as to the amount of funding to include in the proposed 2024-2025 fiscal year budget draft.</p> | | | |
| Attachments (please list): | | | |
| Funding Request Memo SCBA 2024-2025 Fiscal Year Budget SCBA PowerPoint Presentation | | | |
| Recommendation/Suggested Action (briefly explain): | | | |
| Seeking Feedback and Direction Related to a Funding Request from the St Charles Business Alliance in the Amount of \$798,600 for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. | | | |

Date: 01.30.2024
To: Heather McGuire, City Administrator & Bill Hannah, Dir of Finance to the City of St Charles
From: Jenna Sawicki, The St Charles Business Alliance Executive Director
Subject: St Charles Business Alliance Funding for FY 24-25

This communication is to request funding in the amount equal to 100% of total SSA-1b funds (projected to be \$272,000) and \$526,600 of the Hotel Motel Funds/ General Funds. The Alliance requests funding at this amount to fund the planned operations which drive our purpose which includes:

- Continuing work as the City's Destination Marketing organization (DMO)
- Event growth, expansion, and execution
- Hotel and tourism promotion
- St Charles Business community coordination and facilitation

The Alliance's total budget for fiscal year 2024-2025 is \$1,061,600 based on proposed request of all the SSA funds, projected at \$272,000 and a portion of the Hotel Motel/ General Funds tax of \$526,600.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jenna Sawicki". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jenna Sawicki
Executive Director
St Charles Business Alliance



S T . C H A R L E S
B U S I N E S S A L L I A N C E



Destination Marketing Organization (DMO)

We are an organization dedicated to promoting St. Charles with the cooperation and support of the City of St. Charles.

DMO's play a key role in the long-term development of a destination, by formulating an effective marketing and tourism strategy.

Mission

To drive economic growth to make the St. Charles community a destination where people, businesses, and tourism thrive.



Meet the Team



Jenna Sawicki
Director



Laura Purdy
Senior Manager of Tourism & Sales



Amy Curione
Events Manager



Jessica Hudec
Marketing Manager



Nate Wendt
Business Development & Tourism Specialist



Rachael Garland
Digital Marketing Strategist



Nick Lowe
Marketing Content Coordinator



Susan Stark
Events & Finance Admin

Board of Directors

Chris Woelffer
Kimberley Mercado
Holly Cabel
Joe Klein
John Hughes
Kim Lamansky
Amber Grove McKee
Steve Martin
Rowena Salas
Heather McGuire
Nick Smith
Drew Kotche
Ryan Bongard
Jill Card
Brian McNally
Sam Barakat
Doug Denz

Committee Organizations

Alliance Committees

- Board of Directors
- Marketing and Promotions
- Business Development and Sales
- Organization

Event Committees

- Fine Art Show
- Parade
 - Holiday Homecoming & St. Patrick's
- Scarecrow Weekend
- STC Live! & Jazz Weekend

Strategic Plan

Experiential → Immersive

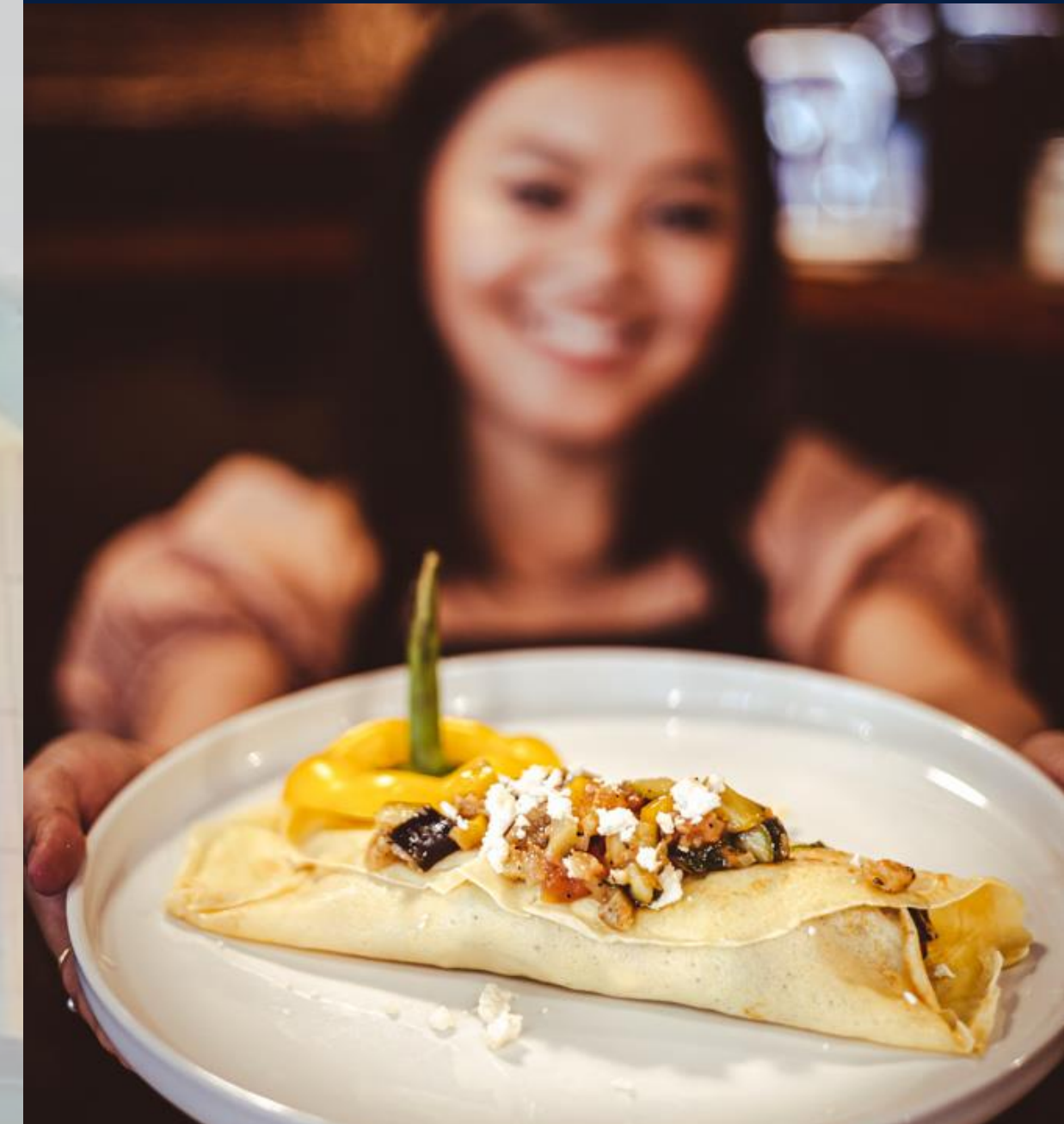
Ecotourism



Wellness Tourism



Immersion Tourism



Marketing and Promotions Achievements



Social Media

- Since the start of the year, we have reached 2,154,102 people organically
- 19% increase in engagements across all platformers
 - Connecting with our target audience
 - Exceeded Goal of 15%

Influencers

- Hosted 11 influencers in 2023
 - Exceeded Goal of 10
- Focused on hyper-local creators whose followers engage with content to drive tourism to St. Charles
- Prioritized influencers who exemplify our tourism initiatives: Ecotourism, Wellness Tourism, Immersion Tourism



Marketing and Promotions Achievements

Newsletter

- 101,198 emails sent this year
 - Open rate of 41% which is about 20% higher than the average
- 764 new subscribers this year

Blog

- 33 blogs posts, highlighting 158 businesses
- Reached 5,985 people
- 30% increase in reads per blog post

Podcast

- 2,746+ listens
- Reached 54,900+ people on social media
- Saw a 974% increase in Spotify users, 95% of listeners discovered the podcast this past year.



PODCAST RECAP VIDEO

Podcast Recap 2023



2023



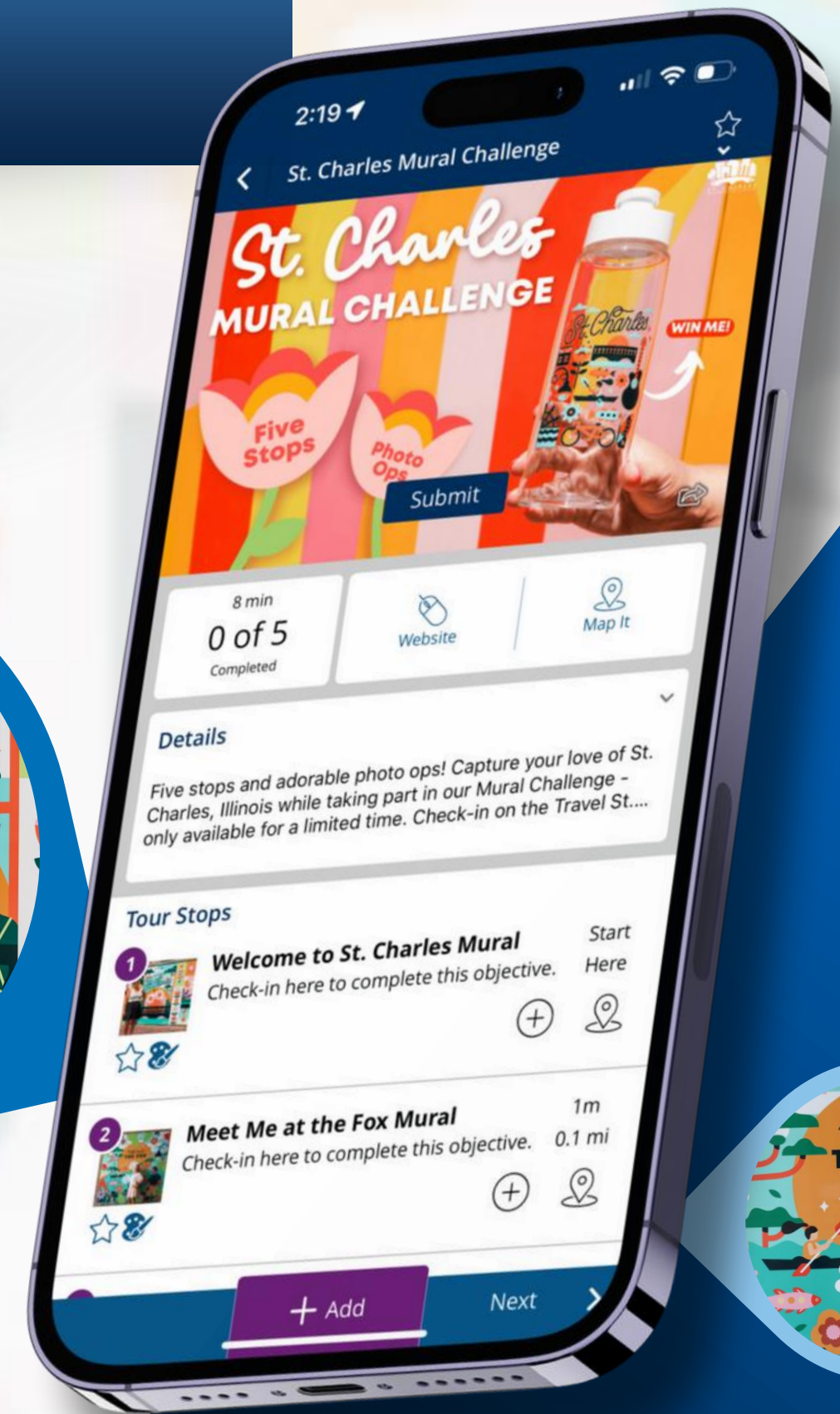
PODCAST



Marketing and Promotions Achievements

Travel St. Charles App/Widget

- The App has reached over 6,500 downloads
 - A 50% increase in downloads from last year
 - Exceeded our yearly goal of 6,000
- Integrated App for events and marketing campaigns including:
 - Restaurant Week Challenge
 - St. Patrick's Scavenger Hunt
 - Mural Challenge
 - Two new mural installations
 - Jazz Weekend Check-In Challenge
 - Scarecrow Weekend Online Voting
 - St. Charles Shop Crawl Raffle



Marketing and Promotions Achievements

Print Materials

- New Destination Guide:
 - 10,000 distributed through CTM over 270 hotels and attractions monthly
 - Digital version accessible on website with interactive hyperlinks to all businesses
- St. Charles Getaway Guide
 - Request from Hospitality businesses and retail
 - Highlights top attractions and dining options in the area along with a map
- Redesigned STC Brew Tour Rack Card



Marketing and Promotions Achievements

Website: stcalliance.org

- 58,700+ site sessions
 - 48% increase compared to this time last year
 - 94% of these users are new
 - Yearly goal reached of 10% increase
- 20 pages were updated and/or created
- Top 3 most visited pages:
 - Live Music
 - Happy Hour Hub
 - Restaurants



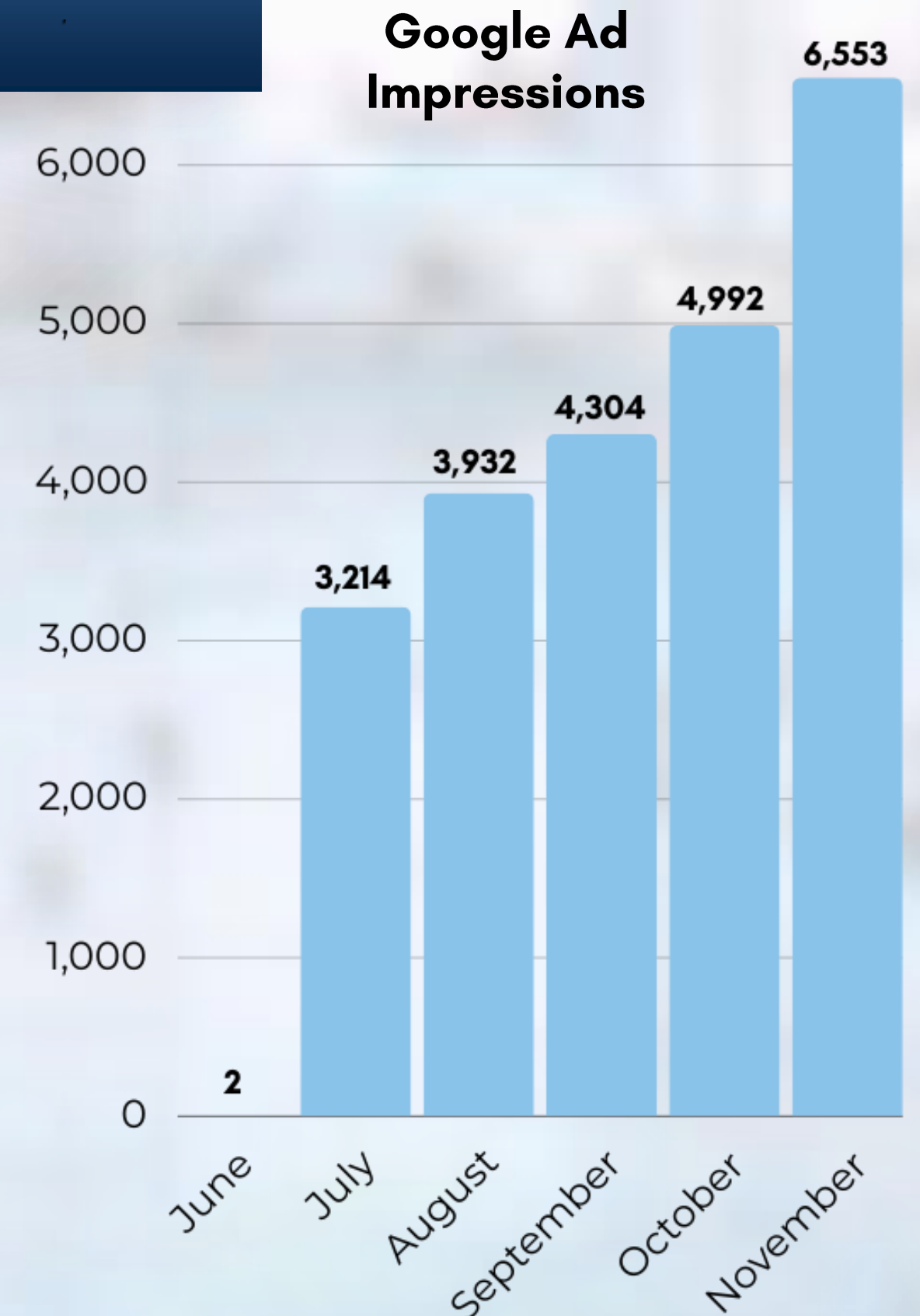
Marketing and Promotions Achievements

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

- 15 keywords were improved and now land us on page one of Google
- Website went under a site-wide speed optimization to improve the experience of users and boost google rankings

Google Ads

- Since July – generated over 3,000 clicks and over 23,000 impressions with a click through rate of 12.8%
 - Hitting intended audience
 - 13 Facebook campaigns received:
 - Over 480,000 impressions
 - 12,015 direct link clicks
 - 27,400 click on our ads



Marketing and Promotions Achievements

Outdoor Activities Campaign Launch

- Launched in June of 2023
 - Collaborated with the St. Charles Park District
 - Three new website pages featuring local outdoor activities
- Gained 3,800 page views
- Generated over 114,900 impressions.
- On social media...
 - We had an 11.4% engagement rate
 - Ads were clicked on 810+ times



2024 OUTDOOR COMMERCIAL

St. Charles, IL Fox River Commercial





Marketing Goals for 2024/2025

- Promote the new 1st Street Plaza
 - Videos, ads, influencers, & more
- Launch Fox River Commercial and maintain focus on outdoor promotions
 - Broadcasting and streaming
- Organize the Shop Crawl event in Spring
- Advertise the new Digital Kiosks
- Travel St. Charles App
 - Introduce new challenges and tours
 - Increase app downloads
- Create and distribute new Dining Guide

Organization Committee

Programming:

- Volunteer Recruitment
- Volunteer Retention
- Business Engagement
- Sponsorship
- Employee Handbook
- Staff onboarding



Business Development and Sales Achievements

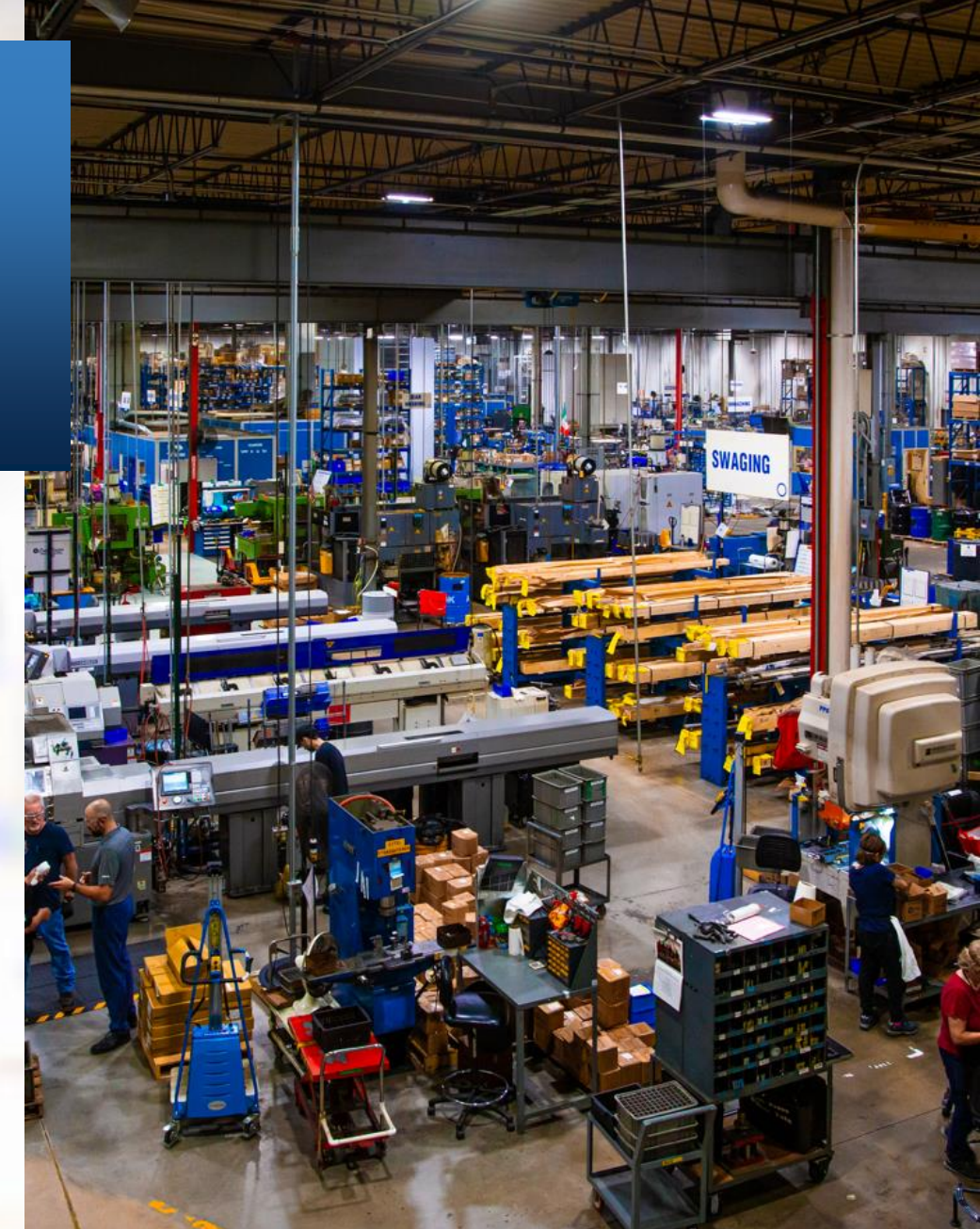
- Broker Coffee and Spring Broker program
- Gave out 6 Store Front Improvement Grants
- Outreach to major St. Charles employers/sales meeting planners
- Focus on Industrials and Manufacturing reach out/ retention visits
- New businesses engagement
- Nominations for Enjoy Illinois's "Illinois Made"



Business Development and Sales Achievements

Made in St. Charles Program

- Industrial and Manufacturing focus
- 2023 Award Winners:
 - Bison Gear & Engineering Corporation
 - Clarke Mosquito Control and Management
 - I.C.T. Power USA
 - Lighting Innovations
 - United Laboratories, Inc.
 - Warwick Publishing Company



Business Development and Sales Achievements

Local Work

- Solidified 438+ reservations and 250+ hotel reservations
- Hosted a Broker Breakfast and a Broker Tour
 - 40+ in attendance
- 187 retention visits to local businesses
- Collaborated with local groups on events:
 - Chicago Winter Bike swap
 - Chicagoland Tour De Cure
 - Fox River Kayaking and Canoeing events
 - Shamrockin' on the River 8K
 - Hops for Hope 5K & Brew Fest
 - Fox Valley Marathon



Business Development and Sales Achievements

National Hospitality Industry Shows

- Attended Connect Marketplace, Minneapolis, MN
 - Worked with Q center sales team to meet over 25 meeting planners
- Travel & Adventure Show, Rosemont, IL
 - Over 16,000 attendees
 - Showcased St Charles as a destination and collaborate with 93 Octane
- Wedding & Bridal Show, Rosemont, IL
 - Over 4,500 attendees
 - Collaborated with Hotel Baker
 - Showcased St Charles products for wedding favor ideas
 - Spotlighted hotels and event spaces



Marketplace

Connect Sports Marketplace Connect RTO Ma

Aug. 22-24, 2023 • Minneapolis

Business Development and Sales Achievements

Request for Proposals (RFPS)

- 203 total RFPs were sent out to local hotels
 - 43% increase
 - RFP Goal Achieved

Conference Servicing/Site Visits

- Hosted lunch/coffee meetings with each hotel using a face-to-face format
 - Stay in front of hotels
 - Meet new staff
 - Be a resource for staff
- Met with Q Center monthly to collaborate with their incoming groups.





Sales Goals for 2024/2025

- 12 visits and communication with hotels and stakeholders
- Meet with Q Center 12-15 times to stay in the know about upcoming groups
- Attend trade shows where appropriate and applicable
- Attend Wedding & Bridal Shows
- Create Water Bottle Program
 - Promote Wellness Tourism and Eco Tourism in hotels
- Add 6 new businesses to the Made in St. Charles program
- 10 engagement meetings with local commercial brokers
- Send out 4-6 communications with event planner database
- Continue with retention visits 3/week
- Meet with 5-10 industrial business community in St. Charles



Events

- Fine Art Show
- STC Live!
- Jazz Weekend
- Scarecrow Weekend
- Holiday Homecoming
- Restaurant Week, Feb. 5th–9th
- Still to come...
 - St. Patrick's Parade, March 9th



2023 Fine Art Show

- 30,000+ Attendees
- 100+ Artists – 10% more than previous year
- 60+ Volunteers
- 100+ took part in the Patron Program
- Added a Green Team
- New live muralist
- Enhanced eco-friendly elements
- Goals Achieved:
 - Grew Patron Program
 - Increased sponsorship by 10%
 - Included more local artists



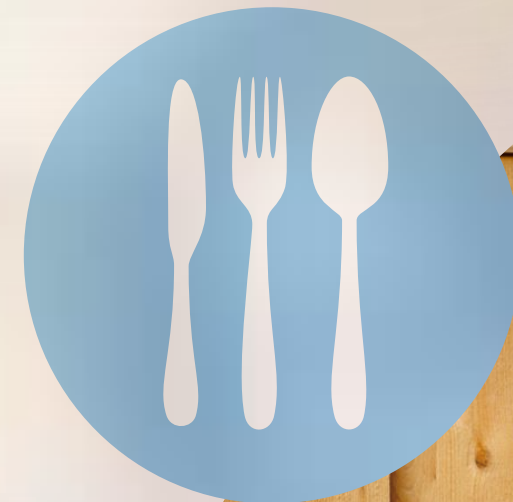
2024 Fine Art Show Goals

- Expand marketing efforts by 10%
- Increase Business participation in promotion efforts highlighting local businesses events
- Work 1st street plaza into the flow of the event
- Work with social media art influencers
- Enhance eco-friendly elements



2023 STC Live!

- 28 total performances at 17 different St. Charles Venues.
- 2 new venues, 10 new musicians
 - Achieved goal
- Increase local business and community participation
 - Achieved goal
- Reached 59,000+ people through digital marketing efforts



2024 STC Live! Goals

- Keep sponsorship relationships
- Continue to collaborate with local businesses
- Expand footprint and participation event
- Continue to attract high quality performances that attract people to venues



2023 Jazz Weekend

- 36 total performances at 21 different St Charles Venues
 - 33% increase
- Reached 165,000+ people through digital ads
- Had 10,000+ Jazz Weekend website sessions



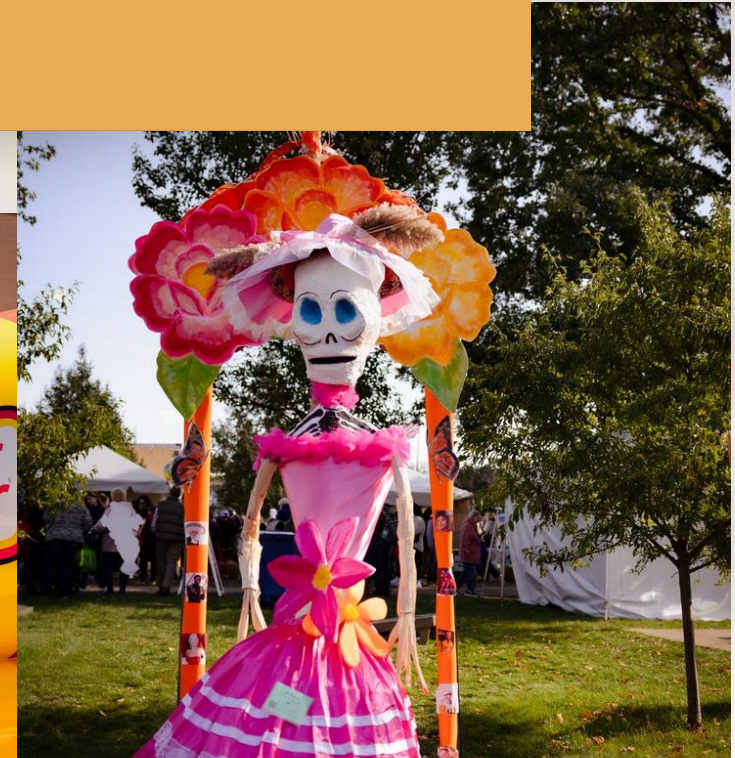
2024 Jazz Weekend Goals

- 1st Street plaza inclusion
- Collaborate with WDCB
- 23 venues
- 37 performances
- Promote event at all hotels with marketing materials



2023 Scarecrow Weekend

- 115+ community made scarecrows
 - 22% increase from last year
 - Achieved Goal
- 40+ specials, promotions, and food options from local businesses
- Partnered with local community groups and restaurants for food options
- 60,000 attendees
- 345 Downloads of the Travel St Charles App
- Enhanced then Activity Zone on Riverside Ave
- Increased Sponsorship by over 20%
 - Achieved Goal



2023 Scarecrow Weekend

- ***"This was the best one in the six years we have been here."** Said their store was packed and they did really well. Said things were crazy (in a good way). Would like a brochure to point to where people can go. They also had their biggest amount of entries in their contest than they've ever had. - Ghoulish Mortals*
- *"Scarecrow Weekend 2023 ended up being our best one yet. **Saturday was the best day we've ever had.** Despite the rain on Friday, we did great. The only complaints we have about this year is that the busy-ness throughout the day varied quite a bit. In years past, we made roughly the same amount per hour from 12pm to 6pm, but this year we had some hours doubled the revenue of the previous hour, making it hard to keep up. I don't know if there is any specific reason for this, just wanted to provide feedback. Thank you." - Rocket Fizz*
- ***"We have received many positive comments from the many guests we have encouraged to go.** We have guests from all over the world this week. What a wonderful event that certainly attributes to the promotion of St Charles as a destination and **certainly assists our meetings and events** THANK YOU. I hope you get to rest this weekend, Congratulations to the team WELL DONE to them."- Q Center*

2024 Scarecrow Weekend Goals

- Increase sponsorship by 10%
 - Year over Year
- Create a zero-waste station
- Maintain the number of Scarecrow Contest entries
- Include and highlight 1st Street in the flow of the event
- Partner with more community groups and businesses



2023 Holiday Homecoming

- Lighting of the lights had over 1,000 attendees
- 65 Entries for the parade
- 33,000 parade attendees
 - Record breaking
- 100's of Santa visits on the Plaza
- Hit capacity at the Arcada for movie
 - Record breaking
- Included 1st year of the Shop Crawl
- Reached 241,550+ people on Social Media



2024 Holiday Homecoming Goals

- Inclusion of 1st street plaza
- Find more musical entries for the parade
- Continue to promote holiday sales and specials from local businesses and encourage more business to submit themed specials for the event
- Collaborate weekend getaways with hotels



2023 Restaurant Week

- 8,700+ website sessions
- 47,170+ social media impressions
 - Additional 15,390+ through Facebook Event
- 15,000+ mailers sent locally
- 71,000+ people reached through digital ads
- 3 influencers promoted the event
 - Totaled 47,740+ impressions
- Featured on...
 - 95.9 The River
 - 94.9 EDKB
 - Multi-Dimensional Mom Podcast



2024 Restaurant Week

- February 5th-9th, 2024
- 48 participating restaurants
- 20% off your entire bill of \$25 or more
 - Excluding alcohol, gratuity, and tax
- \$25 gift card giveaway
 - Check-in to the participating restaurants that you dine at on the Travel St. Charles App
 - 6 winners will be chosen

20%
OFF



**Starts
Today!**

2024 St. Patrick's Parade

- March 9th, 2024
- Opening Ceremony
- Lucky Scavenger Hunt
- Photo Opportunity
- Local business promotions
- Parade





S.T. CHARLES
BUSINESS ALLIANCE

**Thank you for
your support!**



St. Charles Business Alliance
 Profit & Loss Budget Performance
 May through November 2019

| | 2023-2024 approved budget | 2024-2025 working budget |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Ordinary Income/Expense | | |
| Income | | |
| 4000.00 - Operations Income | | |
| 4001 - Hotel | 433,600 | 526,600 |
| 4002 - SSA-1B Revenues | 265,000 | 272,000 |
| 4005 - Investor Contributions | | |
| 4005.40 - Investor Contributions-Other | | |
| Total 4005 - Investor Contributions | | |
| 4500 - Interest Revenues | 4,000 | 19,000 |
| Total 4000.00 - Operations Income | 702,600 | 817,600 |
| 4100.00 - Committee Income | | |
| 4600 - PPP | | |
| 4170 - Visitor's Guide | | |
| Total 4100.00 - Committee Income | | |
| Total Income | 702,600 | 817,600 |
| Gross Profit | 702,600 | 817,600 |
| Expense | | |
| 5000 - Operations Expense | | |
| 5005 - Accounting Services | 17,400 | 18,000 |
| 5030 - Equipment Leasing & Rental | 2,500 | 3,200 |
| 5040 - Insurance & Bonding | | |
| 5040.10 - General Liability | 17,000 | 13,000 |
| 5040.20 - Workers Compensation Insurance | | |
| 5040.30 - Auto Insurance | | |
| 5040.40 - D&O | | |
| Total 5040 - Insurance & Bonding | 17,000 | 13,000 |
| 5041 - Interest Expense | | |
| 5042 - IT Support / Web Hosting | 20,000 | 20,000 |
| 5043 - Legal and HR | 6,000 | 2,500 |
| 5050 - Office Supplies | 7,000 | 11,000 |
| 5053 - Outside Services | | |
| 5055 - Program Participation Fees | 2,500 | 2,500 |
| 5060 - Personnel | | |
| 5060.10 - Salaries and Payroll Expense | 529,033 | 553,332 |
| 5060.20 - Employee Benefits | 42,000 | 42,000 |
| 5060.25 - Payroll Processing Fees | | |
| 5060.30 - Payroll Tax Expense | 40,000 | 45,030 |
| 5060.35 - Temp Worker Expense | 3,500 | 3,500 |
| 5060.99 - Payroll Allocation - Events | (163,500) | (194,250) |
| Total 5060 - Personnel | 451,033 | 449,612 |
| 5075 - Professional Developmt/Travel | | |
| 5085 - Software/Technology Fees | 16,000 | 22,000 |
| 5110 - Annual Meeting Expense | - | - |
| 5115 - Annual Report | | |

St. Charles Business Alliance
Profit & Loss Budget Performance
May through November 2019

| | 2023-2024 approved budget | 2024-2025 working budget |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 5120 · Bank Service Charges | 400 | 200 |
| 5124 · Depreciation Expense | 3,200 | 3,200 |
| 5125.00 · Dues, Memberships | 300 | 150 |
| 5165 · Postage | 300 | 300 |
| 5180 · Repairs & Maintenance | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| Total 5000 · Operations Expense | 544,633 | 546,662 |
| 6000 · Committee Expenses | | |
| 6010 · Business Development/Education | | |
| 6010.10 · Booth Fees | 15,000 | 16,000 |
| 6010.20 · Marketing Materials | 11,000 | 11,000 |
| 6010.30 · Signage/Awning Program | 8,000 | 8,000 |
| 6010.35 · Professional Development | 8,000 | 8,000 |
| 6010.40 · Workshops & Training (Bus. Exc) | 2,000 | 2,000 |
| Total 6010 · Business Development/Education | 44,000 | 45,000 |
| 6020 · Marketing & Promotion | | |
| 6020.10 · Advertising | 40,000 | 43,000 |
| 6020.30 · Branding | | |
| 6020.50 · Kiosks | 2,000 | 5,000 |
| 6020.60 · Photography | 2,000 | 2,000 |
| 6020.53 · Marketing video influnecer | 10,000 | 19,500 |
| 6020.90 · Visitors Guide/ Resturant guide | 16,000 | 15,000 |
| Total 6020 · Marketing & Promotion | 70,000 | 84,500 |
| 6030 · Organization | | |
| 6030.10 · Stakeholders Engagement | 2,000 | 2,500 |
| 6030.20 · Volunteer Appreciation | 3,500 | 4,000 |
| Total 6030 · Organization | 5,500 | 6,500 |
| Total 6000 · Committee Expenses | 119,500 | 136,000 |
| Total Expense | 664,133 | 682,662 |
| Net Ordinary Income | 38,467 | 134,938 |
| Other Income/Expense | | |
| Other Income | | |
| 7000 · Event Income | | |
| 7010 · Booth Fees | 53,000 | 66,000 |
| 7020 · Parade Entry Fees | 19,000 | 20,000 |
| 7030 · Event Sponsorship | 125,000 | 158,000 |
| 7040 · Jury Fees | | |
| 7051 · Ravenswood Sponsorship | | |
| 7060 · Carnival | | |
| 7070 · Food Vendor | | |
| 7080 · Merchant | | |
| Total 7000 · Event Income | 197,000 | 244,000 |
| Total Other Income | 197,000 | 244,000 |
| Other Expense | | |
| 7500 · Event Expenses | | |

St. Charles Business Alliance
 Profit & Loss Budget Performance
 May through November 2019

| | 2023-2024 approved budget | 2024-2025 working budget |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 7505 - Advertising | 25,000 | 25,000 |
| 7510 - Artist's Awards | 9,500 | 8,300 |
| 7515 - Artist's Lunches | 3,000 | 4,500 |
| 7520 - Banners | 8,500 | 8,500 |
| 7525 - City Services | 38,000 | 52,000 |
| 7529 - Festival Fees | | |
| 7530 - Float Awards | | |
| 7535 - Judges | 700 | 600 |
| 7540 - Logistics | 4,000 | 2,000 |
| 7545 - Marketing | 11,000 | 11,000 |
| 7550 - Miscellaneous | 4,000 | 5,500 |
| 7555 - Music/Entertainment | 15,000 | 19,000 |
| 7560 - Outside Services | 18,000 | 26,000 |
| 7565 - Parade Paid Elements | 20,000 | 29,000 |
| 7570 - Purchase Award Program | | |
| 7573 - Payroll Allocation | 163,500 | 194,250 |
| 7574 - Ravenswood Management Fees | | |
| 7575 - Repairs & Maintenance | | |
| 7580 - Security | 1,500 | 1,700 |
| 7582 - Tree Trail | - | - |
| 7585 - Tents | 11,000 | 12,000 |
| 7595 - Volunteer Expenses | 1,500 | 1,400 |
| 7600 - Video/Photography | 4,000 | 3,200 |
| 8100 Capital enhancement plan | | |
| Total 7500 - Event Expenses | 338,200 | 403,950 |
| Total Other Expense | 338,200 | 403,950 |
| Net Other Income | (141,200) | (159,950) |
| Net Income | (102,733) | (25,012) |