

**AGENDA ITEM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Agenda Item number: 6b

Title:

Recommendation of Approval of the Greater St. Charles Convention and Visitor's Bureau Funding Request of \$526,500 for Fiscal Year 2017/2018

Presenter:

Chris Minick, Finance Director

Meeting: Government Operations Committee

Date: June 19, 2017

Proposed Cost: \$526,500

Budgeted Amount: \$526,500

Not Budgeted: **Executive Summary** *(if not budgeted please explain):*

Representatives of the Greater St. Charles Convention and Visitors Bureau (GSCCVB) will make a presentation outlining their activities and Marketing Plan for the GSCCVB's upcoming fiscal year. They will also be requesting the annual allocation of hotel/motel tax revenue from the City.

Staff has presented the funding request amount at \$526,500 which is consistent with funding from 2016-2017 and incorporates previous direction to reduce civic groups' funding levels by 10%.

The funding level for FY 16/17 was \$526,500.

Staff has included the proposed fiscal year 2017 – 2018 service agreement as well as a recent history of hotel/motel tax revenues.

Attachments *(please list):*

1. **Proposed 2017-18 Service Agreement**
2. **Hotel/Motel Tax History STC**
3. **Information from the GSCCVB**
 - a. **Request for funding and Scarecrow 2016 survey results – 7 pages**
 - b. **GSCCVB Marketing Plan – 46 pages**

Recommendation/Suggested Action *(briefly explain):*

Recommendation of approval of the Greater St. Charles Convention and Visitor's Bureau Funding Request of \$526,500 for Fiscal Year 2017-2018

**AGREEMENT FOR SERVICES BETWEEN THE CITY OF ST. CHARLES AND
THE ST. CHARLES CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU**

WHEREAS, the City of St. Charles, hereinafter referred to as "City," is desirous of promoting and developing tourism and conventions; and,

WHEREAS, Chapter 3.32, "Municipal Hotel Operators' Occupation Tax," of the City of St. Charles, Illinois, Municipal Code (hereinafter referred to as "Hotel Tax Ordinance") provides for such activities in accordance with the limitations of the ordinance; and,

WHEREAS, the St. Charles Convention and Visitors Bureau, , (hereinafter referred to as "the Bureau") an Illinois not-for-profit organization certified by the State of Illinois to promote a designated service area including the City of St. Charles and St. Charles and Campton Townships, can provide marketing, sales, and convention servicing as required by the Illinois Bureau of Tourism to promote City.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

- I. In consideration of the promises, terms and conditions set forth, the Bureau shall devote its energies to tourism promotion of the Greater St. Charles area including, but not limited to, meetings, conventions, sports events, motorcoach visits and individual leisure visits for the purpose of increasing hotel overnight stays and day trips. Activities to include, but not limited to:
 - A. Analyze the area's major attributes with the purpose of capitalizing on those characteristics;
 - B. Serve as an information source to those inquiring about St. Charles;
 - C. Create and execute an annual marketing plan to include its mission statement, situation analysis, defined goals and objectives for all target markets, past results of promotional initiatives based on tracking of leads generated, booked business, overnight leisure stays, convention servicing endeavors, advertising responses, future advertising placements, and anticipated return on investment;
 - D. Continue to provide convention services to meeting, event, and sports planners who have chosen St. Charles as a destination and to communicate specific needs to Greater St. Charles businesses, City, and other government units when appropriate;
 - E. Maintain and enhance existing relationships with St. Charles hotels. Continue to meet with the hotel community on a quarterly basis. Serve as a

resource to Greater St. Charles merchants, restaurants, and other hospitality-related venues;

F. Seek grants on all levels to assist in the funding of planned activities;

G. Interface with other local, state and regional tourist and convention bureaus;

H. Continue to assess the results of the Bureau's work and provide annual written reports to the City Council.

II. In consideration of the foregoing services provided by the Bureau, City agrees to pay to the Bureau Five Hundred Twenty Six Thousand Five Hundred dollars and no/100 cents (\$526,500) less the amount of any operating cash balance in excess of \$200,000 on hand at June 30, 2017 for the period beginning May 1, 2017 and ending April 30, 2018. Equal payments shall be made on a monthly basis, subject to deductions by City for collection costs (including expenses of litigation to defend the imposition or collection of the tax). Any non-tourism, matching funds grants which the Bureau assists City in obtaining shall be treated as a separate matter.

III. In addition to the \$200,000 cash balance identified in Section II above, the Bureau shall be entitled to retain an additional reserve of \$30,000 for the purposes of mitigating poor financial performance of the Scarecrow Festival held in October of each year. Said reserve shall not count in the computation of the \$200,000 reserve identified in Section II above.

IV. The Bureau will not enter into any relationship, contractual or otherwise, which will subject City to any liability. The Bureau, an independent contractor, receives funding from City to provide consulting and planning services with respect to tourism development and has no authority to bind City in any matter. The Bureau further agrees to indemnify and hold harmless City from any and all liability, losses or damages, including reasonable attorneys' fees, arising from the execution or implementation of this agreement, including any action against City with respect to the collection of the special tax provided for by the Hotel Tax Ordinance.

V. The Bureau shall maintain records of all of its activities for a period of at least seven years, which records shall upon request be subject to inspection and copying by City or its designated agent at City's sole expense at any reasonable time or times during the operation of this agreement and for a period of three years thereafter.

- VI. This agreement shall terminate on April 30, 2018, and the consideration therefore may be renewed by a written instrument executed by both parties.
- VII. The Bureau shall provide City with a monthly financial report including a profit and loss statement, along with an annual balance sheet. The current profit and loss statement shall be provided to City within thirty (30) days after the end of the month for which the statement is prepared. The Bureau shall comply with the terms and conditions of City's Policy Regarding Funding for External Agencies, as it exists on May 1, 2017.
- VIII. The Bureau agrees that it will continue to identify, recruit, and appoint new and/or additional members to its Board of Directors to represent the hotel and restaurant industry of the City of St. Charles. The Bureau also agrees to maintain its by-laws so as to restrict the duration and number of terms of office members of the Board of Directors may serve.
- IX. Upon termination of this agreement, any funds paid to the Bureau and not used or otherwise subject to pending contract requirements of the Bureau shall be returned to the City.
- X. In the event of a default by either party under this agreement, the other party may elect to terminate the agreement by serving ten-day written notice upon the other party.
- XI. The foregoing is the entire agreement made by and between the parties hereto and has been examined by each of the said parties.
- XII. Any amendment to this agreement shall be effective only if evidenced by a written instrument executed by the parties hereto.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned have hereto set their hands and seals this _____ day of June, 2017.

ST. CHARLES CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

CITY OF ST. CHARLES

By _____
President

Mayor

City of St Charles
Hotel Tax Receipts Analysis
6/9/2017

<u>Year</u> <u>Ended</u> <u>April 30</u>	<u>Hotel Tax</u> <u>Receipts</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>Percentage</u> <u>Change</u>
2007	\$1,948,562	N/A	N/A
2008	\$2,047,977	\$99,415	5.10%
2009	\$1,737,237	(\$310,740)	-15.17%
2010	\$1,582,359	(\$154,878)	-8.92%
2011	\$1,612,461	\$30,102	1.90%
2012	\$1,749,895	\$137,434	8.52%
2013	\$1,778,810	\$28,915	1.65%
2014	\$1,630,810	(\$148,000)	-8.32%
2015	\$1,768,106	\$137,296	8.42%
2016	\$2,007,436	\$239,330	13.54%
2017**	\$1,931,557	(\$75,879)	-3.78%

** 2017 Amount Estimated based on April Forecast.

All other amounts from the City's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year indicated.



June 9, 2017

Chris Minick, Finance Director
City of St. Charles
2 E. Main Street
St. Charles, Illinois 60174

Re: Funding

Dear Chris:

On Monday, June 19, 2017, the GSCCVB will address the City of St. Charles' Government Operations Committee to request a local funding commitment of \$526,500, the same funding as FY 2016-17.

Enclosed please find:

FY 2017-18 Marketing Plan
FY 2017-18 Summary Budget (year-to-date) actual revenue and expenses comparison
Detailed 2016-17 Scarecrow Fest Tracking Initiatives Report
FY 2016-17 GSCCVB accomplishments

We look forward to our June 19, 2017 presentation. Should you or any St. Charles official have a question or comment you wish to share beforehand, please feel free to contact me.

Very best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Lula S. Cassidy'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Lula S. Cassidy
Executive Director

c: GSCCVB Board of Directors

GREATER ST. CHARLES CONVENTION AND
VISITORS BUREAU

SURVEY DATA RESULTS

SCARECROW FEST 2016

2 E. MAIN STREET
ST CHARLES, IL 60174

SURVEY DATA RESULTS

SCARECROW FEST 2016

TOTAL SURVEYS OVERVIEW

Surveys Completed: 750

Number of Responding Attendees: 2,851

Average# of People per party: 3.80

Number of states represented: 15

States include: AZ, CA, FL, IA, ID, IN, KY, MA, MD, MI, MO, OH, SC, TX, WI,

Number of countries outside the USA represented: 2

Countries include: England, Netherlands,

Number of Attendees OUTSIDE the Fox Valley perimeter:

379 surveys

1485 attendees

52%

Number of Attendees RESIDING in Fox Valley:

371 surveys

1362 attendees

48%

*Assumption: 3% (12 surveys, 37 attendees) of the attendees included in this portion of the survey were listed as IL residents but reported that they heard about the Fest because they were local or that it was a tradition. There we are making the assumption that they reside in the Fox Valley area.

Total Number of Illinois Attendees:

707 surveys

2,661 attendees

115 Illinois communities identified

3 unidentified communities were surveyed

Total numbered surveyed indicating a hotel stay: 30, (2.25%)

2016 Scarecrow Room Pick Up Reported provided by Hotels – 100 Room nights

ST. CHARLES POLICE DEPARTMENT ATTENDEE ESTIMATE: 138,000 People

FIRST TIME SCARECROW FEST ATTENDEES

188 were surveyed that reported that this was their first time attending the fest. This represents 702 attendees (24.6%). A breakdown of how attendees heard about the fest, and what they report as their “Favorite Thing” about the fest is indicated in the chart below:

Indicator #1: How did you hear about the Fest?

Indicator #2: What was your Favorite Thing?

Characteristic	# Surveyed	# Attendees		Characteristic	# Surveyed	# Attendees
Drive-by	4	6		Atmosphere	16	79
Family	35	171		Carnival	13	48
Friends	37	125		Craft Show	14	50
Internet	38	133		Everything	4	9
Local	7	27		Food	29	110
Mailing	2	7		Kids Activities*	18	69
Media/Paper	13	40		Music	5	15
Park District	2	28		MYOS	9	44
Signage	5	17		Paddlewheel Boats	0	0
Tour Group	4	18		Petting Zoo	6	21
Tradition	10	39		Photo Op Booth	1	3
Vendor	2	9		Scarecrow Contest	0	0
Volunteer	0	0		Scarecrows	40	146
Word of Mouth	16	56		Shopping	0	0
LEFT BLANK	7	26		Variety	4	24
				Vendors	9	29
				Volunteers	2	3
				LEFT BLANK	15	52

Other Anecdotal Details

Of the first time attendees surveyed, 29 or .4% specifically mentioned the Bubbler as a signature children’s activity that was their most enjoyable part of the Fest. The other significant mention included the car show, with 20 attendees mentioning it as a signature Fest Favorite.

Of those first time Fest attendees surveyed above:

507 or 59% were Outside the FOX VALLEY Perimeter

78 or 15% of those outside the FOX VALLEY Perimeter were from Outside Illinois and 8% of the total 1st time attendees

14 or 3% of the 1st Time Fest Attendees Outside the FOX VALLEY Perimeter stayed in hotels.

Of the out of state first time visitors (78):

78% heard about the Fest from Family or Friends

12% heard about the Fest from the Internet (4% of that specifically from Facebook)

Of the out of state first time Favorites:

29% favored the scarecrows

8% favored everything about the Fest

12 % favored the food and music

13% favored the craft show

17% enjoyed the atmosphere of the Fest (including things like weather)

17% favored the Kids Activities and Petting Zoo

8% of all first time Fest attendees were from the Greater St. Charles (e.g. Campton Hills, Elburn and St. Charles) area

REPEAT VISITORS TO SCARECROW FEST

A total of 1,913 attendees represented on 495 surveys reported that they were repeat guests to Scarecrow Fest. Of this total number of responders:

- 51% (978) lived in the Fox Valley Area (Aurora to Elgin)
- 44% (841) lived OUTSIDE of the Fox Valley perimeter
- 5% (94) lived OUTSIDE of the state of Illinois
- 5% (92) stayed in hotels. Of this figure, 48 attendees stayed in hotels OTHER than St. Charles Hotels

A breakdown of how repeat visitors heard about the fest, and what they report as their “Favorite Thing” about the fest is indicated in the chart below:

Indicator #1: How did you hear about the Fest?			Indicator #2: What was your Favorite Thing?		
Characteristic	# Surveyed	# Attendees	Characteristic	# Surveyed	# Attendees
Band	3	15	Atmosphere*	57	207
Drive-by	12	32	Carnival	42	170
Family	71	296	Craft Show	53	143
Friends	54	214	Entertainment	6	29
Internet	47	166	Everything	17	69
Local	75	267	Food	73	324
Mailing	0	0	Kids Activities	16	57
Media/Paper	35	100	Music	13	36
Park District	0	0	MYOS	16	78
Signage	16	40	n/a (No answer)	23	91
Tour Group	2	62	Petting Zoo	13	74
Tradition	107	457	Photo Op Booth	0	0
Vendor	1	4	Scarecrow Contest	8	31
Volunteer	3	8	Scarecrows	129	500
Word of Mouth	50	196	Shopping	0	0
LEFT BLANK	3	4	Variety	11	54
n/a (No answer)	14	52	Vendors	14	46
			LEFT BLANK	2	3
			Volunteers	1	2

Other Anecdotal Details

Of the repeat attendees surveyed, several detailed attractions and favorites emerged from the survey including

- The Bubbler – (27) 1%**
- Dancers – (8) 0.8%**
- Family-friendly and fun aspect of the Fest Atmosphere – (31) 2%**
- Free samples and giveaways – (10) 0.5%**
- Spending time with family and friends – (24) 1%**
- The Weather – (18) 0.9%**



	FY 2017-18 Budget	FY 2016-17 YTD Unaudited Actuals as of June 9, 2017*	FY 2016-17 Budget	Fiscal Year 2015 -16 Audited Actuals	Fiscal Year 2015-16 Budget
Estimated Income					
4010-0 Hotel/Motel Tax Fund Income	526,500.00	526,500.00	526,500.00	526,500.00	526,500.00
4030-0 Interest Income	600.00	578.96	552.21	828.21	600.00
4040-0 Visitors Magazine Income	11,700.00	-	11,700.00	11,700.00	10,725.00
4060-0 Other Misc. Income	1,000.00	12,266.82	6,026.50	0.50	500.00
4065-0 Local Coop Income	-	-	-	-	-
4070-0 Marketing Partner Grant Income	-	-	-	-	-
4075-0 Fox Valley Coop MPP Income	-	20,911.40	26,625.00	14,563.50	17,188.50
4090-0 L.T.C.B State Grant Income	240,103.00	220,094.38	240,103.00	202,448.00	202,448.00
4100-0 In-Kind and Trade	540.00	495.00	540.00	540.00	540.00
4050-0 Scarecrow Fest Income	242,000.00	238,853.12	238,553.12	214,096.05	214,092.05
4150-0 Scarecrow Fest In-Kind and Trade	2,000.00	15,850.00	15,850.00	11,900.00	11,900.00
Total Income	1,024,443.00	1,035,549.68	1,066,449.83	982,576.26	984,493.55
Estimated Expenses					
Total Administrative	557,084.00	477,989.01	554,084.00	461,731.05	509,884.00
Total Meetings & Conventions	75,370.00	37,491.95	65,637.42	53,433.71	55,270.00
Total Tour and Travel	1,000.00	2,174.78	2,791.45	2,106.68	2,737.00
Total Leisure	81,000.00	83,919.92	163,591.40	114,535.06	88,338.00
Total Promotional	75,000.00	23,983.19	35,833.22	42,160.73	50,110.00
Total State	6,700.00	5,163.13	6,000.00	2,288.10	2,300.00
Total Scarecrow	244,000.00	235,763.02	232,272.86	240,447.20	242,365.40
Total Visitor Guide	46,000.00	790.89	52,216.19	49,192.12	53,500.00
Total Sports	30,820.00	9,994.32	7,996.00	12,461.09	13,920.00
Total International	1,000.00	0.00	-	-	-
Total Estimated Expense	1,117,974.00	877,270.21	1,120,422.54	978,355.74	1,018,424.40
Net Income or Loss	(93,531.00)	158,279.47	(53,972.71)	4,220.52	(33,930.85)

*Fiscal Year ends June 30th

Setting the tone for an extraordinary destination...

Creating the path to experiential travel...

Making a way to live the dream...

GREATER ST. CHARLES, ILLINOIS
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

2017 - 2018 Marketing Plan



Table of Contents

The 2017- 2018 Marketing Plan is structured to provide comprehensive information in a quick, easy to scan format. The Plan starts with an Executive Summary, which includes the Bureau's mission and key objectives, followed by a detailed plan for each specific area of concentration. Each section includes an overview, mission and/or state of the industry report, as well as related goals, strategies and tactics.

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Executive Summary



MISSION:

The Greater St. Charles Convention and Visitors Bureau (GSCCVB) leads the promotional charge in marketing and driving visitor economic spending throughout the destination and into neighboring communities the bureau is certified to represent through the State of Illinois.

The GSCCVB will focus on four (4) key destination tourism segments to harness the strengths of the destination and advance economic sustainability and growth: **Leisure, Meetings & Conventions, Sports Tournaments & Events** and **Destination Weddings**.

OBJECTIVES:

GSCCVB presents the 2017-2018 Marketing Plan to be implemented as the approved budget allows. In pursuit of its mission and goals, the GSCCVB seeks to:

- Increase the demand in the Greater St. Charles area for overnight accommodations, visits to attractions, tour packages, retail sales, restaurant receipts, local transportation and other events and activities that positively affect the economic impact of the local tourism industry.
- Boost the awareness of the Greater St. Charles, IL area as a Meetings and Conventions destination. Increase the demand for and usage of the destination's conventions, conference, meeting and expo space, that in turn will draw attendees to stay overnight in St. Charles hotels.
- Gain local, regional, national and international media exposure for the St. Charles area with our diverse attractions, natural eco-environment, rich history and unique personality to aid in education and understanding of the St. Charles tourism brand.
- Support and contribute to the enrichment of multicultural, performing and visual arts, historic, recreation, education, sports, business and entertainment communities in the GSCCVB service area.
- Welcome all visitors, regardless of age, sex, sexual orientation, race, color, national origin, religion, marital status, veteran status or disability.
- Actively participate in and contribute to the overall strategic planning for the growth and sustainability of the visitor industry in the GSCCVB service area through recognized expertise in the tourism industry and strong community outreach.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julia S. Cassidy".

Executive Director
Greater St. Charles
Convention and Visitors Bureau



Destination Summary

Even in challenging economic times, tourism is an arena that can create jobs, stimulate economic growth and the development of goods and services that help make a city thrive and prosper as a welcoming destination.

In August 2015, the Illinois Office of Tourism in Springfield, IL, reported that despite budget and financial concerns, the Illinois tourism industry's economic impact continued to grow and was topping \$37 billion in travel expenditures. Over 10,000 new jobs were reported as being created.

During that same time period of August 2015 in Kane County, travel expenditures topped \$458.73 million dollars, while revenue from tourism reached \$30.78 million in 2015. ***According to the Office of Tourism for the state of Illinois, the Greater St. Charles service area represents more than 50% of the tourism expenditures in Kane County, which translates to \$15.39 million in revenue from tourism and \$229.36 million dollars in travel expenditures.***

While our destination has been successful and done better in many areas than destinations in and around the Chicagoland, Illinois and Midwestern areas traditionally, fundamental shifts in traveling, consumers buying habits, destinations decisions and purchasing tools are in continuous and rapid change.

In 2016-2017 the GSCCVB was in constant discovery, seeking and finding new ways to uncover the leisure visitors, convention and conference planners, sporting events and tournaments, tour and travel trips and gala social events of the season.



Although during discovery we found we never lost the baby boomers top of mind memories of times shared with parents in the destination or memories of the historical festivals and parades that are the very part of our heritage, family oriented values and culture, new audiences and growing our market share in years to come would yield diminished visitor audiences, lower hotel occupancies and increase marketing and promotional challenges.

Though past year on the road of discovery, the tools to record the next roads in the journey have been put in place to bolster a vital and crucial part of bolstering a thriving tourism economy.

Proudly acknowledging first as the mission of the GSCCVB is to promote the entire destination of our services area and showcase it to the four key areas of tourism our destination naturally gravitates and thrives in:

Leisure, Sports, Weddings, Conventions and Meetings.

The GSCCVB will continue to review all strategies, tactics and programs in which we participate. With the tracking and metrics programs put into place that did not exist prior to our fiscal fourth quarter 2017, our ability to directly focus in on market segments and targeted audiences strengthens in tremendous strides. Our conservative and accountable fiscal controls are reviewed and carefully monitored by our distinguished GSCCVB Board of Directors to ensure resources are invested carefully and efficiently. Adjustments are made to the budget in marketing for changing market conditions, select marketing plan objectives and/or tactics requiring more impact or support. This is also reviewed through our Board of Directors.



Destination Summary

In summary, the new opportunities this year on our road to discovery have been many, and our successes for the team, proudly for our destination, they too have been many in 2016-2017.

As we approach our next journey, we learned that our destination is full of experiences in which we can see, experience, enjoy and fully engage.

As in the community and heritage of the GSCCVB service area, history has shown from the past, once a historical town of entrepreneurs and opportunities in economic growth and commerce. Through the growth and experiences surrounding our scenic beauty that you will see reflected in our marketing plan. We stay true to our historical roots. We are invigorated as a tourism destination to promote sight doing – experiencing the area, educating families, training corporations and providing settings for social events that a photographer will consider a work of art.

We at the GSCCVB support this thought in the destination, as we become one of the first Midwest destinations to provide the experiential travel destination experience.

GSCCVB Accomplishments – Year in Review

- July 1, 2016, St. Charles is cited [Top 13 Small Cities in Illinois](#)
- July 22, 2016, St. Charles - [10 Illinois Restaurants Right On The River That You're Guaranteed To Love](#)
- August 1, 2016 - [St. Charles Visitors Bureau Looks to Boost Tourism with New Approaches](#)
- August 27, 2016, St. Charles Nod: [Tourism Dollars In Northern Illinois: A Closer Look](#)
- September 8, 2016, Scarecrow Fest is one of [21 of The Best Fall Festivals to Celebrate the Season](#)
- September 14, 2016, Scarecrow Fest is a [Best Family Friendly Fall Fests in the Country](#)
- October 24-25 - GSCCVB hosted the Illinois Association conference market in Springfield, IL
- December 6, 2016 - Lula S. Cassidy, Executive Director proudly inducted as a new member of the Noon Kiwanis Club.
- [January 2017 - Launch of VIPER planning tool generate and deliver high-quality RFP,](#)
- [January 2017 – Launches of Scarecrow Fest and Farm Tour 2017](#)
- [February 2017 Activation of new lead generation tool for hotel partners to pursue.](#)
- [March 1, 2017 - Best 15 Free Things to Do in Illinois. Scarecrow Fest is #4!](#)
- [March 20, 2017 - Illinois Governor's Conference On Line - Best Visitor Publication](#)
- [March 24, 2017 - KC Chronicle - St. Charles is a Film Shoot Site](#)
- [April 4, 2017 - Facebook On-line -Governor Bruce Rauner's St. Charles Shout Out](#)
- [April 6, 2017 - City of St. Charles Announces CVB's Best Visitor Publication Award](#)
- [April 6, 2017 - St. Charles Patch- Greater St. Charles Convention and Visitors Bureau Awarded Best Visitor Publication](#)
- April 7, 2017 Tourism Beyond Boundaries Event where GSCCVB hosted ribbon cutting ceremony for the two neighboring visitor kiosks at the Fox Valley Ice Arena home of the Chicago Steel Hockey Team.
- [April 10, 2017 - Daily Herald, Fast Track's Section](#)
- April 13, 2017, Young filmmaker, writer and producer James Albright of Roselle, wraps up shooting for his project titled “The Lazarus Bridge” that included filming the footbridge near the police station and at a township cemetery
- [April 17, 2017 - KC Chronicle - Exciting Year for the Greater St. Charles Convention and Visitor Bureau](#)
- [April 30, 2017 Arcada Theatre, One of Illinois' 10 Best Live Theater Venues!](#)
- May 7-8, 2017 attended the **Illinois Sports Huddle** in Rock Island, Illinois for the first time in the history of the GSCCVB with goal to attract sports events for increased business and hotel overnights.
- [May 15, 2017 - Daily Herald Business Ledger - Collaborative Regional Partnership makes the area stronger and more profitable](#)
- [May 20, 2017 GSCCVB is nominated as a potential winner in the 2017 Destination awards by *Luxury Travel Guide*.](#)

Greater St. Charles CVB Service Area

Founded in 1983, the Greater St. Charles Convention and Visitors Bureau (GSCCVB) was one of the first Bureaus certified by the State of Illinois to promote the community as a destination for meetings and conventions, sporting events and leisure getaways.

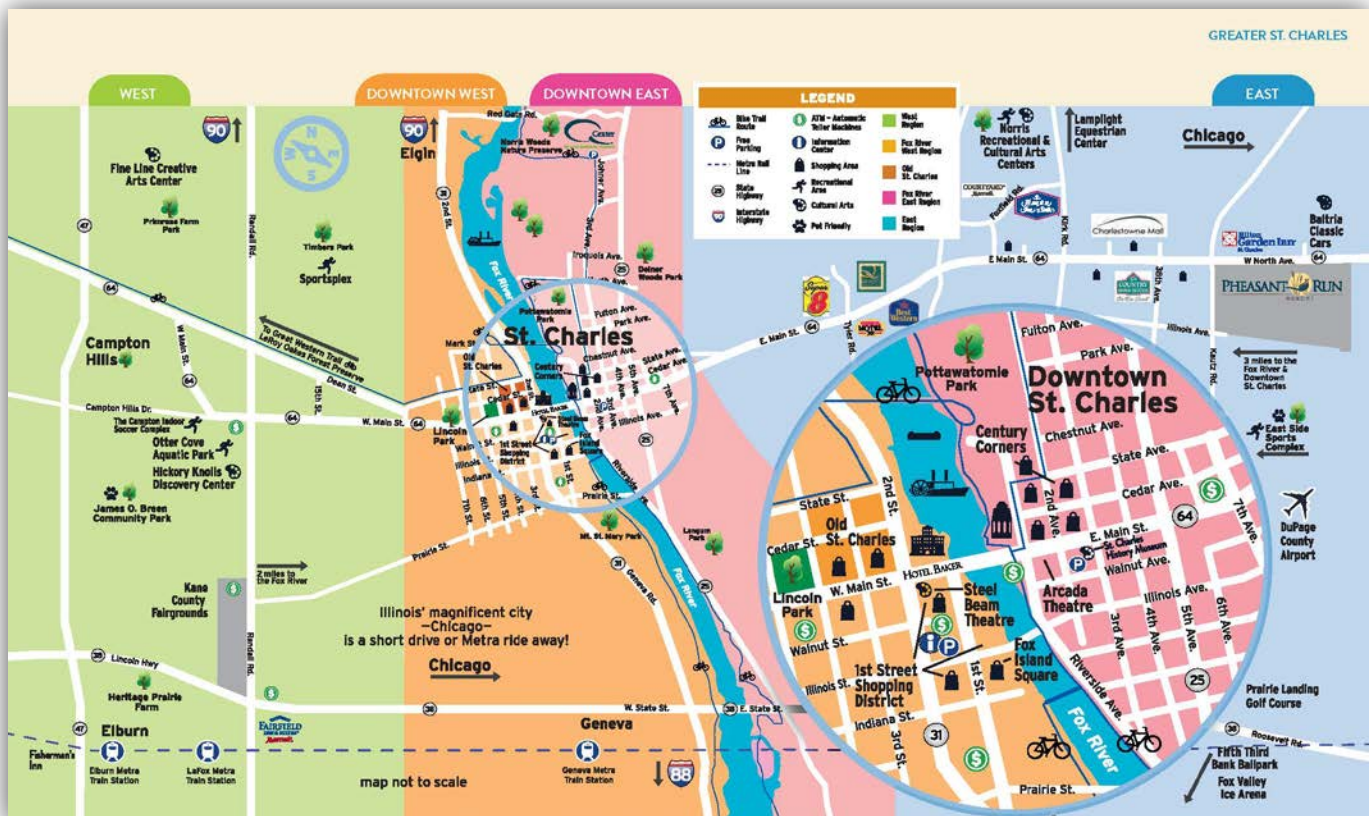
The GSCCVB is funded by a portion of the hotel/motel tax collected by St. Charles area hotels and through the Illinois Office of Tourism to promote the Greater St. Charles area as a destination for leisure tourists, conventions, sports events, and meetings.

Along with being funded by local hotel tax receipts, annually the Greater St. Charles Convention and Visitors Bureau applies for LTCB Grant funding from the State of Illinois. The LTCB Grant funds are provided strictly to **certified** Convention and Visitors Bureaus. Certified Convention and Visitors Bureaus represent more than one municipality or contiguous counties in the applicant's proposed service area. LTCB Grant funding is based on the population of the territory that we serve.

Benefits of being an Illinois certified Bureau include: promotion on www.enjoyillinois.com, a listing in the Travel Illinois (Illinois Visitor Guide), a voting membership in the IL Council of CVBs and promotion of the GSCCVB Visitors Guide in Welcome Centers and Tourism Offices.

The GSCCVB service area includes: the City of St. Charles, the Villages of Campton Hills and Elburn, the Townships of Campton and St. Charles and the State of Illinois.

Greater St. Charles, Illinois Local Service Area Map



Board of Directors

2017-2018 Executive Board

President
Tom Donahue
General Manager
Q Center

VP/Treasurer
Holly Cabel
Director
St. Charles Park District

Secretary
France Langan
General Manager
Pheasant Run Resort

2017-2018 Board Members

Art Lemke
Director Ex Officio
City of St. Charles

Sue Henry
Owner
Mixology

Darius Grigaliunas
President
Baltria Vintage Auto Gallery

Joseph J. Klein
Attorney at Law
Klein, Daday, Aretos & O'Donoghue

Ron Onesti
President and CEO
Onesti Entertainment

Rowena Salas
Owner
Hotel Baker



Economic Impact

TOURISM, EMBRACING & UNDERSTANDING ECONOMIC IMPACT

Throughout every community, business, organization and municipality has risen an increase of interest in the economic impact of tourism.

Whether this is on a local, regional, state or national level, it is now common to hear that tourism supports jobs in the city, region or state and it is equally common to hear about an annual event in a community that provides revenue and income to a community year after year.



“Multiplier effects” are often cited to capture secondary effects of tourism spending and show the wide range of sectors in a community that may benefit from tourism. Tourism’s economic benefits are predicted by the industry for a variety of reasons.

Tourism businesses depend extensively on each other as well as on other businesses, government and residents of the local community. Economic benefits and costs of tourism reach virtually everyone in a region in one way or another. Economic impact estimates interdependencies and a better understanding of the role and importance of tourism in a local or regional economy.

Tourism activity also involves economic costs, including the direct costs incurred by tourism businesses, government costs for infrastructure to better serve tourists, as well as congestion and related costs borne by individuals in the community. Community decisions over tourism often involve debates between industry proponents predicating tourism’s economic impacts (benefits) and detractors emphasizing tourism’s costs.

At the GSCCVB, we recognize sound decisions rest on a balanced and objective assessment of both benefits and costs and an understanding of who benefits from tourism and who pays for it. Tourism’s economic impacts are therefore an important consideration in city, state, regional and community planning; economic development and tourism development.

Economic impacts are important factors in marketing and management decisions. Our service area needs to understand and be continually educated about the relative importance of tourism to their city, region and the contribution tourism has made to the economic activity in their area.

A variety of methods, ranging from pure guesswork to complex mathematical models, are used to estimate tourism’s economic impact. Studies vary extensively in quality and accuracy, as well as which aspects of tourism should be included. Technical reports are often filled with economic terms and methods that non-economists do not even understand.

Economic Impact



On the other hand, media coverage of these studies tends to oversimplify and frequently misinterpret the results, leaving decision makers and the general public with a sometimes distorted and incomplete understanding of tourism's true economic effects.

So the question then must be asked, how can the average person understand these studies sufficiently to separate good studies from bad ones and make informed choices? The purpose of this information in the 2017-2018 Greater St. Charles Convention and Visitors Bureau Marketing Plan is to acknowledge that ***the economic impact of tourism is great and it is vast in its depth of understanding all facets of which it touches inside a community.***

Many assessments must be included, including agreeing upon the mathematical metrics that set the systematic approach for the true calculation of a perfected tourism economic impact method. Within the State of Illinois and within the Fox Valley Region, economic impact calculators have not been updated since 2003.

In the past year, the GSCCVB began the transition from following the tourism trends of our region and state to being the trailblazers and leaders in our region. So for economic impact in 2017-2018 we again make a transition in reporting the GSCCVB destination progress.

In the next pages of our marketing plan, you will review meetings, conventions of our past and the growth of the future we have in the pipeline. We report the dates of our groups, the attendance that will impact the destination and the total room nights in overnight accommodation.

Why the change? Because we are reporting the facts on what is to transpire in tourism as a destination. This simple destination review will tell you when the group will arrive, when the group is to depart, how many visitors as a destination we will serve while they are here and the total room nights that will be used during their stay in our area. This model takes the whole destination into consideration, as we will serve them with our outstanding accommodations and with the support of our many tourism partners throughout the service area, providing the number of attendees with nothing more than an outstanding city by the river experience.



Destination Progress Review

GROUP, CONFERENCES AND CONVENTIONS - PAST

July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016

*TRN = Total Room Nights

<u>GROUP NAME</u>	<u>DATES</u>	<u>PEAK</u>	<u>NIGHTS</u>	<u>TRN*</u>	<u>ATTENDANCE</u>
Sports Girls Baseball	7/21/15 - 7/25/15	150	5	750	3500
Sports Tournament	9/17/15 - 9/18/15	27	2	27	52
Farming Meeting	10/10/15 - 10/11/15	20	1	20	50
Animal Show	12/3/15 - 12/5/15	125	3	325	500
Family Meeting	5/28/16 - 5/30/16	5	3	10	30
Health Information Convention	6/01/16 - 6/02/16	10	2	20	400
Family Reunion	6/16/16 - 6/19/16	25	4	75	75
TOTAL		362	20	1227	4607

***To preserve our highly competitive edge, sensitive details regarding our past, present and future business have been omitted from the public version of this report. A full reporting has been submitted to the City of St. Charles Administrator and Director of Finance.

Destination Progress Review

GROUP, CONFERENCES AND CONVENTIONS

July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

*TRN = Total Room Nights

GROUP NAME	DATES	PEAK	NIGHTS	TRN	ATTENDANCE
Motor Cycle Convention	8/17/16 - 8/21/16	150	5	450	1200
Political Cnvention	9/17/16 - 9/18/16	1	2	1	200
Community Meeeting	10/5/16 - 10/9/16	6	5	23	10
Family Meeting	10/14/16 - 10/15/16	90	2	120	300
Travel Convention	1/20/17 - 1/22/17	25	3	50	300
Religious Convention	2/3/17 - 2/5/17	27	3	54	55
Religious Convention	2/10/17- 2/12/17	44	3	88	88
Animal Convention	2/24/17 - 2/27/17	50	4	70	1000
Industry Convention	2/25/17 - 3/3/17	252	7	886	252
Health Information Convention	4/7/17 - 4/8/17	40	2	40	175
Industry Convention	4/21/17 - 4/23/17	30	3	100	30
Industry Convention	5/1/17 - 5/5/17	625	5	2525	625
Religious Convention	5/5/17 - 5/7/17	148	3	300	148
IMHA Spring Conference 2017	5/16/17 - 5/18/17	20	3	35	20
Industry Convention	5/24/17 - 5/25/17	270	2	540	270
Exhibition Expo	5/26/17 - 5/28/17	15	3	15	100
Sports Tournament	5/26/17 - 5/29/17	200	4	600	1200
Legal Industry Convention	6/1/17 - 6/2/17	30	2	38	30
Family Meeting	6/2/17 - 6/4/17	10	3	15	100
Industry Convention	6/5/17 - 6/6/17	20	2	40	20
Health Industry Expo	6/12/2017 - 6/16/17	180	4	563	180
Health Industry Expo	6/16/2017 - 6/20/2017	1000	5	55	1,000
Religious Convention	6/28/17 - 6/30/17	500	3	1000	2500
TOTAL		3733	78	7608	9803

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Destination Progress Review

GROUP, CONFERENCES AND CONVENTIONS

Pipeline July 1, 2017 and Beyond

*TRN = Total Room Nights

GROUP NAME	DATES	PEAK	NIGHTS	TRN	ATTENDANCE
Industry Convention	7/10/17 - 7/14/17	150	5	600	150
Community Volunteerism Informational Convention	7/12/17 - 7/16/17	59	5	182	59
China Sports Tournament	7/15/17 - 9/7/17	60	84	4000	60
Health Information Convention	7/17/17 - 7/21/17	182	5	563	182
Educational Exposition	7/21/17 - 7/23/17	100	3	200	750
Sports Tournament	8/9/17 - 8/13/17	200	5	700	3000
Special Interest Convention	9/7/17 - 9/9/17	120	3	240	2500
Industry Expo	9/26/17 - 9/28/17	20	3	60	20
Fraternity Conference	10/5/17 - 10/8/17	183	4	549	183
Industry Conference	10/7/17 - 10/8/17	21	2	32	21
Family Meetin	10/10/17 - 10/13/17	39	4	88	39
Industry Meeting	11/5/17 - 11/11/17	122	7	420	122
Industry Convention	3/8/18 - 3/10/18	179	3	491	179
Sports Tournament	4/8/18 - 4/11/18	212	4	533	212
Developers Conference	5/7/18 - 5/9/18	400	3	1,325	400
Animal Expo	5/13/18 - 5/19/18	100	7	500	300
Business Industry Conference	6/12/18 - 6/15/18	114	4	469	114
Youth Retreat	6/18/18 - 6/21/18	254	4	770	1200
Youth Sports Tournament	6/28/2018 - 7/1/2018	1400	4	1200	1,400
Health Industry Conference	7/29/18 - 8/5/18	250	8	995	250
Family Meeting	9/6/18 - 9/10/18	100	5	300	325
Technical Industry Conference	10/21/18 - 10/25/18	75	5	280	75
Sports Tournament	10/30/18 - 11/04/18	300	6	1400	1200
Special Interest Convention	1/21/19 - 1/27/19	138	7	665	138
Human Resource Convention	4/27/19 - 5/3/19	70	7	350	75
Religious Convention	6/9/19 - 6/15/19	331	7	1,384	331
Religious Convention	6/15/19 - 6/21/19	165	7	626	165
Youth Sports Tournament	6/27/19 - 6/30/19	1400	4	1200	1,400
Industry Convention	7/6/19 - 7/11/19	65	6	268	65
Softball Sports Tournament	8/29/2019 - 9/2/2019	1900	5	550	1,900
Industry Conference	9/9/2019 - 9/15/2019	215	7	430	215
Softball Tournament	8/27/20 - 8/30/20	1900	4	550	1900
TOTAL		10824	237	21920	18930

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Conventions, Training Conferences, Trade Shows & Expos

GSCCVB Goal

The Tourism Development team will promote the Greater St. Charles area as a high tech, high quality destination in hosting conventions, training conferences, team building experiences, meetings, trade shows and expos. Driving our positioning as the Western Suburbs, Fox Valley Region, Illinois and Midwest destination connection and place of technology team building and collaboration.



Tourism Development Team Overview

GSCCVB team members are responsible for and being deployed to carry out this Bureau's mission by utilizing direct sales and marketing efforts.

Team members from the Bureau assigned to this mission in 2017-18 include one Tourism Development team member and the Executive Director for the GSCCVB.

Methods by the development team to advance and capture market gain in this segment will include: Face-to-face meetings with clients, an expanded RFP system (exclusively developed for the destination 4th quarter, FY 2016-17), FAM tours, tradeshow attendance, sales strategies and tactics, advertising, marketing, social media and visual media.

Focus on this segment directive is to never lose sight that securing city wide conventions and conferences and long term multi-year agreements supports the destination as a whole.

Working closely with our stakeholders/tourism partners and the extended community secures greater economic impact for all.

Our position in Fox Valley Illinois reinforces the destination in Chicagoland, Illinois and the Midwest and drives our focus for conventions, training conferences, team building and collaboration in the industries and agricultures supported in our state and bordering states.

By making meeting professionals aware of all that Greater St. Charles has to offer as a destination and by maintaining a strong working knowledge of industry trends, the department promotes our service area as an outstanding choice in the conventions and meetings arena.

Conventions, Training Conferences, Trade Shows & Expos

Challenges Faced in 2016-17 and Impact on Segment:

- Country Inn and Suites, St. Charles IL closed during renovation and the brand changed to the Holiday Inn Express and Suites, reducing room night inventory in the marketplace.
- Pheasant Run resort, room inventory was reduced to 293 guest rooms in 2016.
- Hilton Garden Inn, Conference Center will close in July, 2017.
- Discovery in 2016-17 found additional promotional and advertising funds dedicated to leisure marketing in past years, better allocated in the future to stimulate growth in Conventions and Conference segment.

Highlights in 2016-17 and Impact on Segment:

- An expanded request for proposal system (RFP) allows the destination to capitalize on the regional, state and domestic requests for groups and conferences. Developed, created and implemented by the GSCCVB Executive Director and Lexyl Travel Group. Activated in January, 2017.
- Discovery in 2016/17 found additional promotional and advertising funds dedicated to leisure marketing in past years, better allocated in the future to stimulate growth in Conventions and Conference segment.

Nationally, increased hotel inventory and convention center renovation/expansion have created more options than ever for the customer. This, along with aggressive sales tactics by CVBs surrounding Chicagoland and Illinois and nationwide, has created a highly competitive selling environment for the GSCCVB.

In order to remain competitive, the department is focused on an aggressive and targeted sales approach in method. We will form close relationships with our hotel stakeholders to be strategic in filling slower occupancy times and pushing revenue and room rate opportunities in times of strength!

We continue to be aggressive in our sales and marketing efforts. We must maintain our presence among each market segment, continue to drive our marketing messages and sell the St. Charles advantage. The keys to selling in the current environment are face-to-face meetings, creating strong client relationships, and delivering exceptional event, site visit and convention experiences that secure future business.

Conventions, Training Conferences, Trade Shows & Expos

Strategies/FY 2017-2018

Strategy 1: Continue to develop the Illinois Association, National Association and Specialty markets

Deploy the Tourism Development Tourism team key areas to secure new business for future meetings in the Illinois Associations, National Association, religious, government, fraternal, social, multicultural and sports markets.

Create a stronger impact of Illinois Association business that is underutilizing the meetings and conventions facilities of the GSCCVB service area. Implementing a targeted approach to capture more Associations within the State and those who operate on a regional and national level. Capitalize on the larger amount of conference space available in the region while showcasing the hotel, restaurants, entertainment and historical downtown stakeholders/tourism partners that will play a key role in attracting this segment to us.

Strategy 2: Protect, maintain and increase business opportunities from the Illinois meetings and convention market.

The Illinois corporate market continues to be one of our strongest producing market segments accounting for over 50 percent of our annual bookings. This business is aggressively being targeted and solicited by other Illinois CVBs and hotels.

Strategy 3: Focus on Special Interests Groups and Meetings in need of group rooms, meeting, convention and expo space. Continue to increase visibility of the destination with groups that support the need of larger trade shows to support their special interest of advanced hobby of choice. The GSCCVB will continue to perfect the match and focus of the opportunities in our build strong relationships with group planners looking for the ambiance of a historical, entrepreneurial destination and spirit, sight-doing experiences, training, scenic, river, equestrian, agriculture, agritourism, health and wellness, ecology, flea market and antique place of origin. Offer annual returns to our destination with multi-year agreements.

Strategy 4: Political and Government Meetings and Conferences

As the Political segment was developed in 2016-2017 to support the election in the US. The GSCCVB will continue to develop this segment as it leads to Illinois (State) Government, Regional (Multi State) Shared Government and Federal Government opportunities in meetings and conventions. In addition, as a destination and the facilities supported in our market with security and technology. In 2017-2018 due to the paths opened in the previous year, defense contractor meetings and conventions can now be opened to request for proposal and government meeting planners targeted for opportunities of growth and destination tourism economic impact.

Conventions, Training Conferences, Trade Shows & Expos

Strategies/FY 2017-2018

Strategy 5: Focus on segment relations, alliances and community engagement to strengthen alliances with pertinent associations, hospitality partners, stakeholder and customers.

Increase visibility of the GSCCVB as a known high standards meetings and convention destination as well as developer of new tourism business opportunities by building strong end-user relationships.

Strategy 6: Promote the GSCCVB destination for corporations that thrive in environments with entrepreneur spirit, seek high tech surroundings and are dedicated to training in team building and collaborating environments.

Within the GSCCVB service area, we are fortunate to support the Q-Center at over 1,000 rooms for overnight accommodations and a high tech training facility that is geared to conventions and meetings of groups that are looking for an atmosphere of team building in a secure environment. The Q-Center property is IACC certified, which stands for the highest quality domestic and international conventions and meetings service. In 2017-2018 the GSCCVB will focus on the IACC meeting planners, high quality accommodations, technology and services they seek that the GSCCVB can deliver on.

Strategy 7: Convention Services

The GSCCVB will discontinue providing welcome and visitor center booths at city wide conventions and expos in an attempt to have the staff hours mandated at the GSCCVB in more active destination and sales and marketing activities. This helps to reduce unproductive payroll hours by monitoring booths in conventions and conference facilities that have not been requested or demanded by group planners. As an alternative, the GSCCVB will embark on a digital information integration by effectively using technology in and around our destination and our convention and expo facilities that shows the experiences in our destination, and tells the stories of our stakeholders and tourism partners.

The GSCCVB thinks the use of modern communication resources and giving visitors more information in the moment enhances the visitor experience and is a better use of funding. Although in-room distribution of Visitor Guides will continue, including monitors at our hotels, convention and expo centers and providing data for in-room televisions programmed with visitor information will be explored through our hotel stakeholders and tourism partners with their technology.

Conventions, Training Conferences, Trade Shows & Expos

Tactics:

- Attend selected industry tradeshows to meet and generate leads from clients, strengthening these relationships.
- Conduct targeted sales missions and client events in major markets including Springfield, Bloomington, Chicago, and Washington D.C.
- Continue to provide value-driven tradeshow, sales missions and client event co-op opportunities to our strategic St. Charles stakeholders/tourism partners partners.
- Maintain brand awareness by advertising, marketing and online media in appropriate meeting publications in the GSCCVB social media, as well as other media channels.
- Expand upon the established relationships with third party meeting planners.
- Utilize CVENT to generate leads with an increased focus on energy, technology, associations, green meetings and agriculture.
- Create video, social media engagement and other resources to enhance blog posts and e-blasts and capture email addresses.
- Execute continued press releases on corporate events that have chosen the GSCCVB service area for future meetings. Celebrating our wins through the media and constantly expressing why our area is the best conferencing and meeting location choice in the Midwest.
- Assist in the development and execution of an Open House for local/regional trade press, local customers and residents to see the GSCCVB service area convention and meeting Space.
- Gain momentum with regular press releases targeted to trade publications and trade writers that cover meetings and conference publications.
- Leverage advertising partnerships for added-value editorial in trade publications. If we are advertising or spending money with a vendor, ask for increased editorial coverage.
- Attend hotel and attraction openings in order to promote progress on a quarterly basis to trade press within the GSCCVB service area.
- As funds allow create a visual walk through of meeting and conference facilities to be explored by conference planners within the meetings market. Allowing the GSCCVB to host online FAM trips virtually. Lowering travel costs and increasing FAM trips to weekly events. Include images of hotels, restaurants and entertainment facilities to capitalize on the communities tourism offerings.
- Leverage partnerships with third-party meeting planners to further gain exposure for the GSCCVB service area .
- Focus on corporations and associations related to the agriculture products of corn, soybeans, hogs, cattle, dairy products and wheat, seeking small and large conventions.
- Focus on corporations and associations related to the industries of machinery, food processing, electric equipment, chemical products, printing and publishing, fabricated metal products, transportation equipment, petroleum and coal.
- Focus on corporations that share a common industry or agriculture in the bordering states of Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri and Iowa for national conferences and conventions.
- Review all past conferences of our competitors from 2012 to 2016. As a GSCCVB goal retain and rebook 70% of past bookings for upcoming years that are associated with the GSCCVB service area

Conventions, Training Conferences, Trade Shows & Expos

Tactics (continued):

- Grow business from companies that have booked smaller programs in the past.
- Work closely with our branded properties and their list of national accounts. Determine in RFP season what accounts can be pursued for national conferences and conventions.
- Determine accounts that have met in primary and secondary markets to determine interest in the GSCCVB service area.
- As budget will allow, secure online media placement: *Associations Now*, *Associations Forum*, *Tradeshow Executive*, *Midwest Meetings*, *Meetings Focus* and *Meeting Professionals International (MPI)* publications.
- Target meeting planners with specific initiatives in a three-to five-hour drive range in major metropolitan cities.
- Encourage all GSCCVB to put “need dates” on Lexyl Travel portal, the RFP (Request for Proposal) to encourage filling the destination during slow occupancy times.
- Encourage the use of citywide housing systems from A-Res so larger groups and events can be tracked for destination pick up.. So groups can be monitored from lead to actual room pickup at the end of the function. Improving the economic impact number from estimated to accurate.
- Introduce LinkedIn as a social marketing selling tool to GSCCVB sales team through Madden Media campaigns.
- Hold a Fam Tour for third party planners (as budget allows). Go virtual should funds not be available.
- Work with core hotel management companies within the GSCCVB service area and determine if priority accounts can be targeted.
- Increase the number of leads to hotel partners throughout the region. Work with hotel partners to convert leads to actual closed sales accounts.
- Attend meetings on a local, state, regional and national basis with key industry organizations.
- Attend trade shows and conduct monthly sales trips as budget will allow.
- Increase emphasis on suburban PR initiatives that spotlight the GSCCVB service area viability and attractiveness as a meetings destination. Increase media coverage is needed to bring national events to the Greater St. Charles area. (increased podium coverage)
- Meet with Director of Sales/Sales Team of the hotels quarterly to determine accounts they may be working on and new trends in our market that may be emerging. Matching marketing plans and initiatives to reduce area spending.
- Focus on securing multi-year agreements for conferences and meetings rather than one booking at a time.

Conventions, Training Conferences, Trade Shows & Expos

Tactics (continued):

- Maintain a strong relationship with Illinois based meeting planners by dedicating one sales department staff member in order to maintain and increase business from this market.
- Participate in local industry chapter meetings and events (MPI Illinois and Illinois Society of Association Executives).
- Conduct sales missions and client events for prospective clients in Springfield, Chicago and St. Charles.
- Host ISAE luncheon in Springfield as a sign of our appreciation.
- Call Greater St. Charles to the attention of Chicagoland's and Midwestern's meeting planners (third party). Leverage the power of partnerships to include clients found in partnership with Lexyl travel and CVENT.
- Focus on corporations and associations related to the agriculture products of corn, soybeans, hogs, cattle, dairy products and wheat seeking small and large conventions.
- Focus on corporations and associations related to the industries of machinery, food processing, electric equipment, chemical products, printing and publishing, fabricated metal products, transportation equipment, petroleum and coal.
- Focus on corporations and associations that share a common industry or agriculture in the bordering states of Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri and Iowa for national conferences and conventions.
- Educate local hotels to fully engage and utilize the hot dates and need dates calendar provided in the GSCCVB tool of Lexyl Travel, introduced in late January 2017.
- Continue focus on multi-year agreements for conferences and meetings rather than one booking at a time.
- Engage in monthly meetings with larger meetings and expo centers to produce a destination calendar of incoming events. Calendar will be one that is open for use in the tourism destination and closed for the privacy of the hotel stakeholders and tourism partners. List will be released on a bi-weekly "What's happening in the marketplace newsletter" to all tourism related business for more awareness in tourism and incoming visiting groups. (Destination and Community Manager).
- Improve visibility of the new RFP process on the GSCCVB website.
- Qualify opportunities in the Non-Profit sector of Government meeting planners and potential for the St. Charles area.
- Discover opportunity to offer virtual walk through on destination and convention and meeting space. Allowing virtual FAM trips online. Include in all VIPER proposals outgoing.
- Work with McDaniels Marketing to form a targeted online media campaign, dropping magazine publications and high priced advertising.
- Meet with hotel partners/stakeholders individually for six months. Drive engagement and switch back to hotel committee meetings thereafter.
- Activate citywide housing system through Ares and call center. Provide accommodation link to all corporate events that are taking place in the GSCCVB service area.
- Change system on website to capture email addresses of visitors to include RFP's of corporate meeting planners. Ask them if they would like a list of alternative need dates.
- Utilize the established car shows of Baltria as a base to host more special interest groups related to vintage car enthusiasts.
- Focus sales efforts on special interest groups related to those who want to be active and adventurous. Example: team building, biking trails & equestrian.
- Direct sales efforts to focus on ecology, agriculture, hobbies and toys that are classic and historical in nature. Example: historical trains, toy soldiers & coins.

Conventions, Training Conferences, Trade Shows & Expos

Tactics (continued):

- Review all unique and distinct venues and attractions within the GSCCVB service area cross match the hobby or special interest group that follows it. Promote and sell overnight accommodations based on the groups' interests. Example: 80's music at the Arcada Theatre. Promote and sell overnight accommodations to groups who follow this genre.
- Promote more social platforms to reach special interest groups quickly and to engage with the travel planner and buyer.
- Capitalize on the 50th anniversary of the Kane County Flea Market in the destination. Reaching out to Antique and Flea Market publications for content mentions and promotional free opportunities.
- Highlight our superior technology, venues with dock access for loading and unloading.
- Highlight historical hotel, river view settings and historical setting for a downtown meetings package
- Tie in the unique area of the destination to themed breakouts for additional revenue generation within the destinations including classic cars and culinary experiences.
- Promote ambiance of our location tied to the past history of corporations who have operated here. i.e.: Texaco Oil and John W. Gates barbed wire empire.
- Load and include all convention, meeting and expo spaces into VIPER for RFP bidding to sell the destination. Discover a RFP bid support for Kane County Fairgrounds during the time the space sits empty.
- Include Kane County Fair Grounds on Destination Occupancy Report Calendar.

Tactics:

- Research Flight Based Operators (FBO) website and work with Destination Marketing and Community Relations Manager to get the Accommodation Listing posted for the GSCCVB.
- Develop relationship with the DuPage County Airport for opportunities with private commuter planes and helicopter passengers; typically elite cliental.
- More engagement and interaction on about what Tourism Development via FB, Twitter, etc.

Conventions, Training Conferences, Trade Shows and Expos Development Activities

- Connect via CVENT.
- Engage in bi-monthly communication with the destination tourism partners and stakeholders on incoming conventions to the marketplace, driving tourism awareness.
- Weekly newspaper press releases on Bureau activity are expected (Destination Marketing and Community Relations Manager)
- Promote the Greater St. Charles tourism partners/stakeholders experiences like [The Painted Vine Cellar](#) to gain exposure in team building websites.
- Promote team building and collaboration in the Greater St. Charles area on behalf of our hotels, Park District programs and tourism experiential travel programs being held at facilities within our destination like: Fine Line Creative Arts Center.

Conventions, Training Conferences, Trade Shows & Expos

Corp & Assoc. Conv 2017-18 Potential Regional Net

ILLINOIS	WISCONSIN	INDIANA	IOWA	MICHIGAN	KENTUCKY	MISSOURI
Corn	Corn	Corn	Corn	Corn	Corn	Corn
Soy Beans		Soy Beans	Soy Beans	Soy Beans	Soy Beans	Soy Beans
Hogs	Hogs	Hogs	Hogs	Hogs	Hogs	Hogs
Cattle	Cattle	Cattle	Cattle	Cattle	Cattle	
Dairy	Dairy-Cheese	Dairy-Eggs	Dairy	Dairy	Dairy	Dairy-Eggs
Wheat						
Machinery	Machinery		Machinery	Machinery	Machinery	
Food Processing	Food Processing		Food Processing	Food Processing	Food Processing	Food Processing
Electric Equipment	Electric Equipment	Electric Equipment	Electric Equipment		Electric Equipment	Electric Equipment
Transp Equipment		Transp Equipment			Transp Equipment	Transp Equipment
Petroleum		Petroleum				
Coal		Coal			Coal	
					Horses-City Nat	

Sports, Health and Wellness –Conferences, Tournaments and Events,

GSCCVB Bureau Goal

The mission of the GSCCVB is to attract sporting events and tournaments that stimulate the tourism economic impact throughout our service area. The GSCCVB will position itself as a clearinghouse to local, national and international sports entities to target our area as a host site. In cooperation and engagement with the area sporting venues, accommodation facilities, area Park Districts and other sports dedicated facilities that exist in our area.



Tourism Development Team Overview

We set the course for the Sports segment in 2017-18 by retaining the groups and events we have in order to not find them being persuaded by aggressive competition in this segment. We recognize and identify that part of our growing and strong appeal is the health and wellness established lifestyle and general appearance of our community.

Recruiting sporting events to our area requires exceptional community fields, accommodations and services. All of which is provided in our service area. Continued efforts in inventorying our market for all available space to provide quicker response to incoming proposals has begun, with a new CRM system to properly get information on the stakeholders and tourism partners immediately. Relationships within the community in the Sports, Health and Wellness community shall continue to be engaged within our service area community to foster and engage strength in sports, health and wellness experiences of our visitors as return visitors in this segment are found to be loyal to a destination.

One full time employee with support from one employee in social media, marketing and advertising support this market segment. Additional assistance by the Executive Director is providing as needed in high profile accounts requiring negotiation. In addition, an administrative employee assists in providing with assistance is provided by an Executive Assistance for administrative support on destination inventory, proposals and the coordination of complex site inspections of all sports, accommodations and mega complex facilities.

State of the Industry

Since the establishment of the Sports division within the GSCCVB and the addition of a Tourism Development Sales Manager with 4 years of background and experience, this destination's sports market is gaining a reputation among athletic planners as a potential host for large destination-wide events. With an average lead time for National Rights Holders events being eight months to one year prior to arrival, The GSCCVB is encouraged as 2017-18 begins to be established as a mega host city with interest from actual National Right Holders events in the pipeline. This destination's resume is being firmly established with high profile Sports, Health and Wellness events.

Sports, Health and Wellness-Conferences, Tournaments and Events



State of the Industry (continued)

Amateur sports in our marketplace also continues to see growth and the GSCCVB sees this benefit as a direct response of the dedication and participation of our Park District in working with the GSCCVB on available space for tournaments to expand and build. Word of mouth marketing in amateur sports in this circle of decision makers proves to be beneficial.

Strategy 1: Increase visibility and branding of sports marketing for GSCCVB brand as a premier hosting sports events destination.

Strategy 2: Gain continual legislative support and destination awareness for the GSCCVB service area from support of sports.

Strategy 3: Utilize the Sports Tourism Development team to target high-profile sporting events to contribute to the sales team's overall annual room night and venue rental production for the destination.

Strategy 4: Create a network of local volunteers that can be called upon to assist with logistic-heavy events.

Tactics

- Educate our citizens regarding the value of sporting events in our community. Encourage citizens to keep tournaments for all sporting events at home in the GSCCVB service area.
- Establish quarterly property visits to the GSCCVB service area sports venues within the public and private sectors to determine new opportunities for sport tourism.
- Increase awareness of sporting events in the GSCCVB service area to our tourism partners by communicating upcoming events so outlets are prepared and staffed for visitor enhancement (monthly newsletter).
- Consistently create new methods to market our area as a potential host site for events on all levels of sports tourism.
- Create alliances with surrounding counties to bundle the attractiveness of our area with sporting events.
- Increase the visibility of GSCCVB service area as a potentially new territory for the location of professional sports franchises to host events and train.
- Work with local sports groups to create synergy and a network for targeting events that are currently available in our own back yard.
- Create constant clear communication with venue owners, both public and private, that will allow GSCCVB service area to have a team approach to maximize the direct economic impact of sports in our area.

Sports, Health and Wellness –Conferences, Tournaments and Events,

Tactics (continued):

- Establish signature sporting events and tournaments that will be associated with the GSCCVB service area and our community annually.
- To attract event owners, promoters and national governing bodies to place their specific sports events or meetings in the GSCCVB service area.
- A major emphasis will be placed on standard procedure and follow up for past and current relationships with local, state, national and international sports tourism markets in order to nurture and expand growth.
- Vacation destination ideas will be offered to all amateur and youth sports groups to encourage length of stay within our tourism region. The “While You are Here” program.
- Continued development of international opportunities.
- Continue to strengthen relationships with local associations, clubs and facilities that are partner in our efforts.
- Continue to increase visibility and equity of the GSCCVB brand and its mission/successes in the local community.
- Market the region as a premier sports event destination through GSCCVB e-newsletter, website and social media
- Promote GSCCVB hotels at all trade shows and events.
- Include GSCCVB hotels on sales calls if appropriate.
- Attend shows and solicit group markets.
- Continue to grow sports strategically in each sports discipline .
- Develop marketing plan that will increase awareness of GSCCVB on local, state and national level and better serve clients and industry partners.
- Conduct site visits as needed with clients.
- Recruit, grow and retain sporting events in the GSCCVB service area.
- Continually educate our citizens, stakeholders and governments on the power of economic impact with sporting events and tournaments in our destinations. Seek and continue to research grants and support for expanded growth in sports facilities and complexes.
- Work with City officials to help them recognize that the official contribution from St. Charles benefits our local economy.
- Continue to secure long-term and multi-year deals with events that have recently capitalized on the funding.
- Become a valuable resource for legacy events like the annual marathon and events in the GSCCVB service area that continually work with City officials to produce their events.
- Facilitate collaboration meetings with local sports entities to obtain information on venue inventory and venue needs. Ideas on obtaining this information could include roundtable meetings and informational surveys. This collaboration will help measure the feasibility of ASC spearheading the development of new and/or renovated sporting venues.
- Enhance current online venue guide and make it more robust. Create a more user friendly database for event organizers to use.
- Capture local volunteer information and input to a database managed by the St. Charles Sports Commission. Consider purchasing software that manages the influx of volunteer information and can mobilize these individuals when needed for sporting events.
- Reach out to the community to increase the number of candidates in the volunteer database; work with local non-profits to obtain lists of potential participants.

Leisure and the Destination Experience

The Greater St. Charles Convention and Visitors Bureau will strengthen our tourism brand and align with our destination.

Strategy 1:

The Greater St. Charles Convention and Visitors Bureau heading into 2017-18 fiscal year after ten years of being identified along with branding statement of “Natural Charm” and a lamppost in our logo, it is crucial to realign to the needs of the traveling consumer base in our marketplace. In addition, with many municipals, stakeholders and tourism partners and area events counting on us to drive tourists and brand strength and a brand alignment is long overdue.



Strategy 2:

The GSCCVB will focus on our strongest four key areas of interest: building tourism and revenue growth in FY 2017-18: Leisure, Meetings and Conferences Sports Tournaments and Events and Destination Weddings.

Strategy 3: We Sight-Do! Not Sight-See.

As a destination our marketing and promotion in 2017-18 will reflect a model of sight-doing rather than just sight-seeing experiences. Our community is active.

Strategy 4: Sell, promote and further the GSCCVB service area awareness.

The sales, marketing and promotional model set forth by the executive leadership of the bureau in 2017-18 for leisure marketing is as follows:

- The destination and its experiences.
- The types of accommodations and uniqueness of their experiences.
- Our divine culinary and incorporating “Farm to Fork” to our destination.
- Our history in the arts, culture, entertainment and theatre tell a story about the destination we promote this past and present.

Strategy 5:

We believe in family values and education and will seek to incorporate new ways of bringing tourism and education together in our destination as we start with Agritourism. Incorporating farm tour experiences the GSCCVB knows history tours and heritage tourism also have appeal to leisure audiences.

Strategy 6:

Health and Wellness events continue to grow in the GSCCVB service area; such as cycling, biking, hiking and other sight-doing experiences. The destination and its offerings begin to appeal to those who train for cycling, marathons and other sporting events.

Leisure and the Destination Experience

Strategy 7:

Live the Dream promotion. A promotion designed destination engagement around the destination and its experiences engaging visitors to come and live out their dreams with us. Whether it is painting the scenery on the brick streets of St. Charles or learning how to be a kid again and playing hockey with the Chicago Steel on ice, senses will be renewed as our adult get-away and packages are formed around things everyone want to cross off their bucket lists.

Strategy 8:

“Wheel In” Destination Leisure and Promotion. From the open Lincoln Highway to the Great Western or Fox River Trail, to Main Street downtown! It’s “All Wheel Drive” by bike, motorcycle, classic car or smokin’ sedan to the destination where you Sight-Do! *Wheel in* to Greater St. Charles!!

Strategy 9:

Free Ride – Destination Promotion. Push cycling in the GSCCVB service area to be supported on the St. Charles website and through stakeholder and service area stakeholder/tourism partners engagement.

Tactics:

- Hire industry leaders McDaniel’s Marketing to assist in aligning the bureau’s marketing messages. Providing a unified and consistent message that pride exists in the Fox River Valley.
- Consistent marketing messages with sight-doing experience utilizing brand voice and language.
- During the months of August – September 2017, when the destination slows down the GSCCVB will see destination engagement and support for *Wheel In* and *Sight-Do* to promote and accommodate destination hot deal offers.
- The promotion driven home is that all roads lead to and through St. Charles. Supporting our cycling “Free Ride” promotion and scenic drives being rated within the Top 5 in Illinois.
- Work with partners to suggest historical weekends in time to package and promote. Example: Halloween or historical moments in time.
- Focus on artist groups by special interests, such as photographers.

DISTRIBUTION CENTERS*

The GSCCVB has 18 distribution centers throughout the State of Illinois that are supplied with visitor guides and various pamphlets for businesses in the destination region. More than 60,000 visitor guides are printed and distributed to serve our patrons. *See page 46 for a complete list of distribution centers that feature the GSCCVB Visitors Guide.



Technology

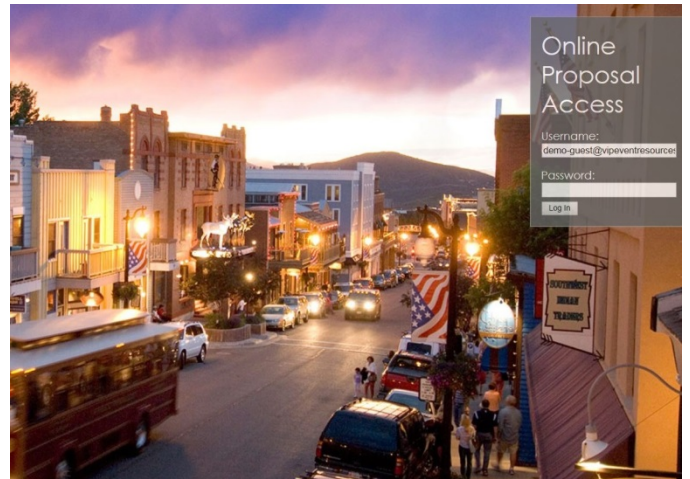
Technology Development Overview & Updates:

GSCCVB's Executive Director leads the advancement of technology and the connectivity for the destination with Global Distribution Systems in travel and tourism.

In the fourth quarter of FY 2017, many of the technology development tools came online for the GSCCVB.

Some of these development tools took up to four months in development. The technology tools implemented at the bureau include:

- A CRM (customer relationship management) system allowing the Bureau to keep improved records on clients of the destination stakeholders/tourism partners, improving our database capabilities.
- Replaced Inquire and InfoTrac the leisure database and group database that were over ten years old and no longer had technical support.
- Microsoft Word proposal responses to RFP's (Request for Proposals) were replaced by an RFP online portal that clients are able to sign into, not only seeing the destination's bid but customized proposals. **Example:** Sports bids see pictures of the fields and video of our destination embedded in the online document. (sign into a bureau proposal here to experience)
- Incoming RFPs (Requests for Proposal) to the destination. In working with a known online group travel producer, the GSCCVB was able to produce a RFP system for our hotels to sign into and review and bid on all active rates for the groups, conventions, meetings, tournaments and events the GSCCVB is working on.
- The www.VisitStCharles.com website has been updated with a new provider in the accommodations section and a new "Plan your Stay" link has been added." This provider offers direct connectivity between the GSCCVB and area accommodations so tracking is greatly improved. In addition, our new provider has built St. Charles, IL and the surrounding service areas we support as destinations on the Global Distribution Travel Systems, which will impact our destination in 2017-18 in leisure and group travel awareness.
- "New" Afterhours GSCCVB call center, (online July 1, 2017) providing accommodations and destination assistance through ARES.
- Destination Calendar Optimizer and Bi-Weekly Tourism Partner update (roll out scheduled for July 1, 2017)
- Implemented CVENT Destination improvement plan meetings and convention. Taking RFP's from seven a year in 2015-2016 to a new average per month.



International & Travel Agents

Mission:

To harness the industry strength of 100,000 agents who can suggest and influence travel buys to destinations domestic and international. Explore International markets already coming to Chicago and nearby suburbs for opportunities to visit or extend their overnight stay in the GSCCVB service area.

International & Travel Agent Overview:

One GSCCVB team member is deployed to increase the international visitors in the destination.

This team member is the Executive Director. The Executive Director is also dedicated to working with leisure and group travel agents to increase destination and overnight accommodations being utilized in the destination. This includes OTA's (online travel agents) as well as mega travel agencies and travel agent consortia.

In 2017-18 the bureau will focus on travelers and visitors from key international segments for growth. International travelers includes Canada, China, Korea, UK, Sweden, Mexico, France, Ireland, Germany and the Middle East.

Tactics

- Participate in Brand USA's co-op advertising program to drive visitation from international markets.
- Collaborate with Enjoy Illinois on international opportunities.
- Contact Great Lakes USA on co-op promotion, reduced travel buys and advertising initiatives.
- Contact International marketing cooperatives for opportunities abroad like: *America Journal* and *Essentially America* work with the Illinois Office of Tourism to be included on Travel Agent and International Fame tour stops.
- Host individual international media with customized itineraries throughout the year.
- Attend Illinois Travel office workshops that build and develop resources to support the international traveler, including seminars with stakeholder/tourism partners to educate them on the customs and the hospitality experience that should be delivered to other cultures, get converted, printed and go on line in various languages.
- Work with Brand USA to have GSCCVB information printed in different languages.
- Provide marketing materials/training on the destination to airlines who have direct international routes to Chicago airports.
- Partner with Great Lakes USA on sales efforts in the UK and Germany, including participation in two major shows: International Travel Berlin (ITB) in Germany, World Travel Market (WTM) in London to cut down on actual expense of GSCCVB attending.



International & Travel Agents

- Attend Chinese sales missions coordinated by the Illinois Travel office:
 1. Create awareness through international travel media beginning with media contacts and relationships.
 2. Grow awareness of the tourism region in countries as a standalone destination near Chicago, not just a Chicago suburb.
 3. Continue to work with airline destination travel departments thru Ares to package the GSCCVB service area as a destination to be chosen when booking Chicago travel vacations.
 4. Work with Mileage Programs for airlines so that the GSCCVB service area can be utilized as a destination to utilize as a vacation for mileage trade or mileage donation.
 5. Focus on International OTA's (online travel agents) roll groups into GSCCVB portal.

International OTA's:

- OKTOGO, Travel Link, Travel Partner, Brafofly, Inltalia, Beat the Brochure, Directline Holidays, Iglu, Just the Ticket, Key2Holidays, LastMinute.com, LateDeals.com.uk, Netflights.com, PackyourBags.com, TelmeGlobal Traveller, This isTravel, Trainbreaks.com, TravelPlanners, Zuji.com, Asiatravel.com, Traooz.com, 800Pricelt, otel.de, Wotif.com, Rakuten, Venere.Com, Booking.com, Bed & Brekfast.eu, Hostel Culture, EBAB, Atrapolo, eDreams, Your Spain Hostel, Promovacanes, Travel Republic, Opodo, Ebooker.com, Hostel Booker.com, Hostel Club, HostelWorld, LateRooms, Japantraveleronline.com, Edreamsodiego.com, Jtbusa.com, agoda.com, hotelurbando.com, crip.com, makemytrip.com, Quanar.com, Decolar.com, Jalan.net, Bookingbuddy.net
- Direct Sales Contact with the One Billion Dollar and over revenue producers in the industry as a priority hit list. Setting up virtual office presentations to secure destination.
 - Make direct contact with all Executive Leaders of the Major Travel Consortia's. Qualify the potential overnight room usage for the Greater St. Charles area. Establish ongoing relationship.
 - Confirm through travel agent industry connections that all hotel partners are being sold with a priority and that all travel agent screens within GDS connectivity reflect the proper pictures and data.
 - Confirm with GSCCVB hotel partners and supportive partners such as restaurants, entertainment venues and conference venues pictures of the area utilized for social marketing are of high quality and represent the city in the best possible light.
 - Arrange Fam Tours to the Greater St. Charles area for local leaders of Major Travel Agent Consortia (as budget allows)
 - Contact and meet with Gifted Travel Network and other IATA supporters of independent home office travel agents who reserve leisure and business trips for clientele. Discuss how the Greater St. Charles area can be a featured destination throughout their social network, including Facebook.



- Work with hotel accommodations stakeholder in obtaining a market vision and hoteligence report for the service area on a monthly basis
- Determine Top 25 Travel Agents of the destination and for our competitors.
- Begin tracking YOY (year over year) increases on production of travel agent usage.
- As a competitive strategy, entertain the top producing leisure and corporate travel agents from our competitors' market region.

International & Travel Agents

- Contact Groupon.com and Groupon Guide to arrange priority load and programs for GSCCVB partners so it is not loaded into Naperville and Schaumburg. It should appear as it's own destination.
- Contact LivingSocial.com to arrange priority load and programs for GSCCVB partners so it is not loaded into Naperville and Schaumburg. It should appear as its own destination.
- Contact directly the airline group departments for contact and assistance in price packaging for conventions and conferences offering this as a conference amenity.
- Contact and arrange weekday and weekend destination pricing with the airline flight destination departments, giving GSCCVB partners the opportunity to package with incoming flights to offer lodging, dining and entertainment.
- Confirm with the OTA's (online travel agents), Marketing Manager's assigned to the GSCCVB service area that a cross data load is set up during compression for all nearby/boarding cities and counties. To assist with compression during day or citywide events when other areas are sold out and to overcome location without direct interstate access.
- Confirm with the OTA's Marketing Manager assigned to GSCCVB that the St. Charles service area is cross data loaded for Greater St. Charles area on Social and Corporate group departments and inquires.
- Work with OTA's, Marketing Manager to enhance the online presence of the GSCCVB service area is properly represented in the brand identity of the destination. Always showing the destination, it's accommodation and tourism attributes in a positive light.
- Target List of one billion and over industry producers: Expedia, Inc., Priceline Group, Global Business Travel (American Express), Carlson Wagonlit travel, BCD Travel, HRG, ORBITZ Worldwide, FC USA, Traveling, AAA, AARP, Travel Leaders Group, Travel & Transport, Altour, Corporate Travel Management, Direct Travel, JTB, Loyalty Travel, Omega World Travel, Frosch, World Travel Inc., Ovation Travel Group, World Travel Holdings, TS Travel Solutions, ICE powered by Innovations, Travizon, Vision Voyages, Adleman, Christopherson Business Travel, Worldview Travel, CorpTravel, CORPTRAV, HIS, Valerie Wilson, Travelstore, World Travel Service, Ayoya, Travel, Professional Travel Inc., Travel Inc. , Travel Experts, Shorts Travel Management, Montrose Travel, Cruise Planners Travel, Global Crew Logistics, ADTRAVEL Service NONSTOP, Fox World Travel, Uniglobe Travel Partners, CI Azumuno, Atlas Travel & Technology Group, Balboa Travel Management, Teplis Travel, Appointment Group & Travelink, Opodo, Orbitz, The Priceline Group, Priceline.com, Redbus.in, RoomsTonight, ThinkHotels.com, Ticketgoose, TourRadar, Travelgenio, Travelocity, Travelport, Travelstart, TravelTriangle, TravelWorm, Travelzoo, Travix International B.V., Triip, Tripdelta, TripFactory, Tripoto, The Trump Organization Via.com, VisaHQ, Viva Services, Viventura, Webjet.Yatra (company) & YTB International.



Events and Tourism Partner Advancement

Mission

The GSCCVB promotes and encourages stakeholders/tourism partners throughout our service area to list events on the website of the bureau. Allowing the ability for all to promote their services to incoming groups and leisure visitors to enjoy. In tourism we also recognize the importance of connecting the destinations events with tourism information.

In 2017-18 armed with new and improved accommodations connectivity through Global Distribution, we will contact all events in the destinations to provide the connectivity and tourism information needed within our technology to provide visitors with improved access and ease to stay within our destination for expanded overnight enjoyment.



Department Overview

Events of stakeholders/tourism partners being held in the GSCCVB service area.

Strategy 1: Promote all local events, activities and promotions for the tourism partners in our service area on the GSCCVB website.

Strategy 2: Facilitate the regional promotion of events in the GSCCVB service area on the “All things Kane County” site – one of many successful outgrowths of the Tourism Beyond Boundaries movement.

Strategy 3: Collaborate with Illinois Office of Tourism to promote events, activities and promotions in the GSCCVB service area at the state level on the www.enjoyillinois.com site.

Strategy 4: Partner with the City of St. Charles Economic Development officials and other tourism partner advancements within the City to carry our accommodations link for all known events taking place within our service area.

Group Tour, Travel, Agritourism and Ecology

Mission

To open a new thought process and direction in Group Tour & Travel in order to renew the day trips and overnight groups touring the Greater St. Charles, IL service area. By reviewing the destination as a whole to provide educational sight-seeing experiences in youth group travel, the GSCCVB finds a new and exciting path to help educate and provide hands on experiences. Adventure travel is on the rise. Capturing the youth segment now, provides strength in our destination for the future. We approach this segment with sight seeing, hands on experiences, always educational in nature adventures. True to the area and community experiences of why we put the effort into our own education programs within our own school district.



Parents, teachers, community and religious leaders will plan group trips to learn from those who place value in their own educational programs. We will utilize the experiences of the destination to promote trips to our destination in : Sustainable Agriculture food production, Farm to Fork dining, Equestrian Heritage, Organized Farm Tours and Nature and Ecology of our River town.

Tourism Development Team Overview

The GSCCVB will place one tourism development manager in place to cultivate this new approach as well as the program will receive support from an additional team member in building support from stakeholders/tourism partners needed in the destination. Our heritage, our culture and our celebration in traditional family values, incorporated our strong belief in education as a community will lend to the support of this directional change in tour and travel. Visitors will experience our way of life and dedication to sustainable health, wellness, agriculture and natural ecology. It brings a segment of Group Tour and Travel not tapped in our region or approached by our competitors. It will be our quest to become the trailblazers in the Illinois region and the Midwest in education and experiential travel.

Strategy 1: State of Illinois-Universities and Colleges-In our state hands on experience is one of the three required components of an Agriculture Education.

The GSCCVB service area contains a wide variety of agriculture related businesses including organic farms, horse farms, horse training facilities, dairy farms, historic farms and the Park District's demonstration farm. The Tourism Development Manager will be deployed to Illinois Agriculture Program and promote itineraries.

Strategy 2: Youth Municipal Programs

Affordable tour and travel programs with organized trip itineraries will be promoted and offered the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H and other youth programs to be included in their online portals in order for adult leaders of the groups to make their ongoing travel plans for badge completion and group educational outings. Unique badges for scouting will be designed for the service areas we represent to encourage participation.

Group Tour, Travel, Agritourism and Ecology

Strategy 3: New Destination Beginnings:

All tour groups will start at the St. Charles History Museum and end at the St. Charles History Museum, giving the GSCCVB a centralized point in the destination for a welcome reception, souvenir shopping and established bus parking in the city. Ending here as well, always for a proper send off to the group. Educators and Group Leaders will be returns visitors and loyal to our destination.

Strategy 4: Develop a relationship with Fermilab: Sustainable Energy, Nature & Ecology

Work with established programs already in place like those at Fermilab to add on extra days of travel and overnight accommodations to our destinations. Collaborate with Fermilab on special dates and programs they have to offer tour groups.

Strategy 5: State of Illinois-Lt. Governor's Office

Establish the itinerary for the Agritourism program to be used by the State in education trips to the Chicagoland area. Middle school and High school. (Middle school trips anticipated as day trips)

Strategy 6: Senior Arts Programs

Work with organized group planners like Elderhostel and Road Scholar to develop a Seniors Program based on the Arts. Offering the destination for photography, scenic painting and other activities. Collaborate with tourism partner/stakeholders like the St. Charles Park District and Fine Line Creative Arts Center.

Strategy 7: All tour programs will have set destination itineraries for selling.

Secondary Mission: Seek out Meetings, Conferences in Agritourism, Ecology, Health, Wellness, Equestrian Heritage and Educational Youth Education Programs

Tactics:

- Make contact with National and Regional Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts offices put GSCCVB itineraries online.
- Make contact with National and Regional 4-H clubs put GSCCVB online.
- Partner with the Illinois Agriculture Program - <http://agriculturaleducation.org/Partner-Websites-1>
- List GSCCVB on the Agriculture Education website. <http://www.agriculturaleducation.org/>
- Create Networking list of potential leads for the segment. Email itineraries by season. Monthly.
- Set site inspection for Lt. Governor's office for State of Illinois Youth Program.
- Set FAM Tour for Key Youth Planners in Education Tours.
- Organize Destination Site Visits with IAVAT Conference attendees after Springfield, IL trip in Springfield, IL to St. Charles and organize site visits.
- Organize a destination site visit and collaborate programs with Dean Dittmar, Program Advisor for Facilitating Coordination in Agricultural Education (FCAE).
- Organize destination site visit with, Kay Shipman (Illinois Farm Bureau).
- Seek and Discover how Agricultural Education programs and FCAE provide a value to the Illinois school/capture in video.
- Organize a destination site visit with Mike Massie, Chair of ILCAE (Illinois Leadership Council for Agricultural Education) and other group leaders in ILCAE.
- Direct Sales contact with student leadership organizations (FFA and PAS). Promote Agritourism itineraries.
- Create and send press releases to student travel magazines and agriculture education organizations within the Fox Valley Region, Illinois and the Midwest.
- Review potential banner ads on: <http://www.agriculturaleducation.org/Ag-Ed%20Advocacy/About-FCAE> , <http://www.agmoves.com> and <http://www.fb.org>.

Group Tour, Travel, Agritourism and Ecology

Tactics (continued):

- Collaborate with St. Charles Park District on Traveling Teen program. Coordinating a program for other Park Districts to visit our Agritourism program.
- Collaborate with St. Charles Park District on a Traveling Seniors program for coordination on other Park Districts in the state and promoting incoming tours for the Arts.
- Utilize D303 to engage in the program and offer the program to visiting schools coming in for band, choir and sports events. "What to do While You're Here."
- Generate surveys to all groups at the end of the program for feedback and improvement.
- Seek surveys, feedback and help promote. Monitor progress.
- Develop a database of Agriculture Education teachers in Illinois and border states. Begin monthly newsletter of programs in education happening in the GSCCVB service area.
- Follow SYTA on social media. Engage with Agritourism pictures and ideas to visit our area.
- Research SYTA on Social or Print - Teach & Travel Magazine - @TeachAndTravelMagazine. Review ROI on advertising and promotion.
- Attend SYTA Annual Conference – August 2018
- Promotion GSCCVB in SYTA magazine and a banner ad on the website
- Targeted social media on Agritourism within Illinois and bordering states
- Direct sales and marketing campaign to SYTA Tour Operators
- Research and directly tie into the STEM program. Popular with parents and youth education.
- Contact colleges and universities within Illinois and bordering States that have an Agriculture Department. Speak directly to Dean of Department. Encourage Ecology and Agritourism trips.
- Research and Incorporate grant funding from the ISBE Agriculture Incentive, Career and Technical Education Improvement(CTEI) and Federal Perkins for student travel as it applies to group travel.
- Contact Elderhostel and Road Scholar for a site inspection of destination. Tour of Arts culture with the destination and scenic opportunities for painting and photography for senior tour programs.
- Direct contact with Elderhostel and Road Scholar competitors for Senior organized experiential travel groups.

Cooperative Partnerships

Mission

To continually improve on and expand on the notion that Tourism beyond Boundaries brings more tourism economic impact to Greater St. Charles, Illinois and the extended Fox Valley and Chicagoland regions.

Department Overview

The GSCCVB engages in two key cooperative partnerships that are used to aggressively promote our service: The first is the Fox Valley Cooperative – a partnership of four bureaus and one chamber of commerce that agree in advertising and marketing promotion to sell the Fox Valley Region as a destination.

Per the Fox Valley bi-laws, the position of Chairman must rotate amongst participating co-ops annually. In 2017-18, Executive Director Jaki Berggren with the McHenry County CVB will assume the Chairman position. However, Executive Director Lula S. Cassidy with the GSCCVB will continue her leadership in cultivating a focused planning and branding initiative for the co-op.

The second partnership is with Chicago Plus which gives the GSCCVB an opportunity to aggressively promote within the larger context of the Chicagoland area. The GSCCVB is a co-op that encompasses the suburbs of Chicagoland. The Executive Director now sits as a Board of Director for this co-op in 2017-18 giving GSCCVB a larger voice in the destination.

Strategies:

Strategy 1: Capitalize on the distinct talents and interests of each individual CVB and Chamber of Commerce making up the co-op by creating workgroups for each quarterly meeting in the departments of administration, marketing and engagement.

Strategy 2: Spearhead a marketing plan kick off for the co-op, helping to define and shape its mission and focus for future work and advertising initiatives.



Strategy 3: Leverage our position as a Chicagoland CVB to increase our social media engagement.

Strategy 4: Provide focused promotions of our attractions, events, packages and itineraries within the Chicagoland suburbs to be featured on the Chicago Plus website.

Strategy 5: “65 Miles.” Continue to brand regional cycling program “Ride 65” through Fox Valley region placing the GSCCVB in the middle for accommodations.

Strategy 6: Expand all trails in 2018 to include other outdoor activities beyond cycling.



City of St. Charles – QUADRA Participation

Overview- FY 2016-2017

The GSCCVB participates in a QUADRA meeting organized by Mark Koenen, City Administrator, that brings the City of St. Charles, GSCCVB, the St. Charles Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown St. Charles Partnership together. In 2016-17 the QUADRA successfully collaborated on many items under the City Administrator’s leadership, including the creation of an Events Hotline that can be utilized by locals and visitors needing information on area happenings. The creation of a single source with information from each of the four agencies creates unity, enhances our visitor experience and presents St. Charles as a one-stop-shop for activities. The Destination Marketing Manager for the GSCCVB serves as the voice for the hotline and will be recording outgoing messages at the beginning of each season.

Future-2017-2018 FY

We envision prosperity and success with the QUADRA partnership, and thus, for the City of St. Charles, as we seek out new ways to collaborate, measure destination growth and increase economic impact in tourism.



New Incentives and Growth

Overview

Research on two new potential growth areas for the GSCCVB make us take pause and then plan: According to reports from the Illinois Film office, film production in Chicago is on fire, bringing an amazing \$499 million dollars in spending to Illinois. If the Greater St. Charles area could lasso 0.25% of this sum for tourism, our destination could see an extra \$1.2 million dollars in a given year. Meanwhile, the exploding *voluntourism* industry is \$173 Billion dollars strong, which means creating a strategic plan for *voluntourism* as part of the fabric of Greater St. Charles an absolute must.



Strategy #1: Develop infrastructure and procedure to attract film projects.

Tactics:

- Meet with Champaign CVB who has started working this market - <http://www.visitchampaigncounty.org/film-office>
- Develop Image Gallery - Sample on Flickr <https://www.flickr.com/photos/137843812@N05/albums>
- Encourage Professionals and hotels to sign up for Illinois Production Guide - <https://www.illinois.gov/dceo/whyillinois/Film/FilmingInIllinois/Pages/Housing.aspx>
- Meet with the Illinois Film Office to discuss best practices and location sites that are in demand by the industry
- Meet with governmental officials to discuss standard permitting
- Speak to the "Jennifer Loves Donnie" production manager to see if he would speak about how to sell St. Charles as a filming destination
- Create page on the website promoting Greater St. Charles Film Office.
- Meet with Geneva contacts that negotiated "road to Perdition filming" to learn from their experience.

Strategy #2: Develop Voluntourist Program to increase leisure stays and extend group stays.

Tactics:

- Develop lists of hands-on activities with the local non-profit organizations and determine if there are any for group or individual voluntourists.
- Build presence on sites such as <http://www.voluntourism.org/dmo.html>
- Connect with Bloggers about Voluntourism, especially ecologist related ones.
- Promote specific events on social Media with #voluntourism.
- Connect with Voluntourism pages.
- Connect with Voluntourism companies on LinkedIn.
- Social media promotion of events targeted to Voluntourists.
- Include information about opportunities on www.visitstcharles.com/voluntourism.
- Provide information to hotel sales staff to provide to current and past clients as an option for extending hotel stays.
- Issue press release to student travel magazines and agriculture education organizations with educational agenda.

Scarecrow Fest

Mission

To grow a renewed interest within the youth of the GSCCVB service area community in the heritage of the Scarecrow Fest. Foster community pride in a festival that was in the running for “one of the best festivals in Illinois” at the Illinois Governors Tourism conference. Strive to strengthen relationships with festival goers by teaching people and their children and family new things.

Scarecrow Fest Team Overview

One full time team member for the bureau is assigned to this mission in 2017-18. This team member holds the role of Associate Director. In addition to the Scarecrow Fest, the Associate Director is responsible for additional responsibilities at the GSCCVB including daily accounting and active selling in a designated market segment. An events management company is retained for the Scarecrow Fest due to the popularity and population size of the event.

The Scarecrow Fest has consistently grown in popularity and visitation. With an attendance reaching 100,000 + consistently. It is perceived as a true Midwestern family oriented festival, rooted in a community with heritage, history and values. Based on a scarecrow contest that requires local participation in creating scarecrows, its reputation often receives request for editorial and media coverage. The Scarecrow Fest was nominated at the 2016 Illinois Governor’s Tourism Conference for Best Festival, presently holds the title in Illinois as the Top 5 things in Chicago to do in October and Best Free activities in Illinois.

Carnival revenue and great sunshine for three days is presently the key component to the Scarecrow Fest’s Financial Success. Costs for insurance continue to be on the rise for festivals, the “Fest” experiences the same with costs over \$9,000.00 going to insurance.

As plans are underway to improve overnights in 2017 for hotel accommodation during the Scarecrow Fest and these plans are more in align with generating income throughout the entire destination for greater tourism economic impact in the GSCCVB service area. The Scarecrow Fest is still seeking a permanent home in 2018. Planning in festival and event management is a critical component of success in any destination.



Scarecrow Fest

Strategies/FY 2017-2018

Strategy 1: Create, Develop, Deploy and Secure a plan to strengthen overnight accommodations during Scarecrow Fest weekend. Allowing Fest goers to experience the destination longer.

Organized "Farm Tours" have been developed for the three day festival. Encouraging overnight and weekend travel within the youth travel segments of tour and travel + family. "Farm Tours" during the Fest, will work in collaboration with the St. Charles Park District. It offers family sight-doing and sight engaging experiences around this year's Illinois Governor's Tourism nominee for Top Festival.

Strategy 2 : Demonstrations and Education for crowds related to our community, heritage and culture.

Secured for this year's Scarecrow Fest, the GSCCVB looks forward to sharing the "Royal Lusitano" with citizens, visitors and festival goers. Providing demonstration of their athletic ability and theatrics. This breed is a favorite in equestrian dressage events and linked to the GSCCVB service area community.

Strategy 3 : Improve stakeholder/GSCCVB service area community.

Begin 90, 60, 30 action communication calendar to encourage active ways stakeholders/tourism partners can embrace the Scarecrow Fest during the three day event. Destination marketing ideas.

Strategy 4 : Scarecrow Fest Brand Website

Create and develop a refreshed website for the www.scarecrowfest.com. Improving visitor accommodations, access to festival information and sponsorship participation.

Tactics:

- Local/Regional/National Promotion
- In-kind advertising agreements with Kane County Chronicle, Daily Herald, the Downtown St. Charles Partnership and the St. Charles Chamber of Commerce.
- Press releases to local media, travel magazines, and the Illinois Office of Tourism.
- E-blast to GSCCVB e-mail lists consisting of over 20,000 email addresses.
- Informational rack card distributed locally, at the DeKalb Oasis, and to the GSCCVB's 11,000+ member mailing list.
- Paid advertising in Chicagoland magazines such as West Suburban Living.
- Social Media posts to 7,000+ Facebook fans and to Twitter followers.
- 90-120 days prior to Fest: Begin travel writer's e-blast.
- Develop list of travel writers, bloggers and social media influencers with emails that will be a tracked segment in CRM.
- Develop a Society of Scarecrow Preservation. Include founding members.
- "Geo fence" Long Grove's Apple Fest September 22-24, 2017.
- Develop a relationship with the local library to strengthen community relationships as a children activity 30 days prior to a relationship.
- Have a 30, 60, 90 day marketing ramp up program.
- Establish a farm program itinerary that can be activated six months prior to Scarecrow Fest. This program will be sold as an overnight program and have hotel packaging for engagement.
- Follow travel writers, bloggers and social media influencers on social media with Fest accounts.

Weddings

Mission

Within the service area of the GSCCVB, historically the destination has a reputation of weddings in a beautiful and scenic environment. In 2017-18, it is the GSCCVB desire to take our Weddings Market segment and push past the reputation of just a scenic place to have a wedding but a true destination wedding city. One that is top of mind for brides, wedding planners and the wedding industry.

Tourism Development Team Overview

GSCCVB team members will utilize one tourism development team member as a weddings market expert. This team member is not a Wedding Planner, but a destination facilitator to drive revenue in destination weddings.



We gather information from interested parties for the sales and marketing put into this segment and notify the stakeholders/tourism partners of the opportunity to return information, pricing and bids back to the brides and wedding planners. During the course of next year, databases will be continually gathered so the sophistication and grace of Weddings experiences we are targeting in the Chicagoland area, Illinois and the Midwest assists us in re-targeting weddings specialist with our frequent messages. Wedding Planners will be utilized for growth in this plan to promote and assist.

Strategy 1: “Live the Dream Wedding” a social marketing campaign of all the destination themes and experiences found in one destination.

A sample of the many dream themes the GSCCVB will promote to wedding planners and through Pinterest as we post the create weddings photos taken in the many stakeholders and partners in:

- **Field of Dreams:** The Cubs Won! (Northwestern Medical Field/Kane County Cougars)
- **Enchanted Forest:** Creek Bend and additional Forest areas within our service area
- **Down on the River:** Pottawatomie Park and St. Charles Paddlewheel Riverboat
- **Art Deco:** Fine Line Creative Arts Center
- **Country Fair:** Kane County Fair Grounds
- **Living Celebrity:** Hotel Baker
- **Eco Friendly:** Hickory Knolls Discovery Center

Strategy 2: Update the VisitStCharles.com website to include a designated Weddings Page.

More than two million couples get married every year, so adding information to the GSCCVB website on how you can get engaged in a romantic setting by the river, to planning your wedding, even how you gain a marriage license, right up to a couple’s special day needs to be included.

Strategy 3: Utilize the Sugar Crush promotion started in 2017 as a season launch for couple romance in the GSCCVB area.

Kicking off with Facebook ads targeted to reach soon to be engaged couples to entice them to come to our destination to get engaged. Also targeting engaged couples to come to our destination through Facebook targeted ads to a Bridal Show for the weekend. Collaborate with the St. Charles Park District on destination bridal show.

Weddings

- **Tactics:**
- Create a “course” that helps brides plan their destination wedding within the GSCCVB Service area.
- Promote with Facebook ads targeting local engaged couples.
- Run Facebook ads targeting “fans” of specific resorts that you would like to photograph at.
- Work on you SEO for specific resorts – plan to come up on the 1st page when a bride types in “photography” after that resort name.
- Partner with a travel agency that specializes in destination weddings – offer a special package that they can offer their couples.
- Partner with destination wedding hotels (much more difficult but still do-able with the right approach).
- Run Facebook ads targeting “fans” of high-profile destination wedding planners the GSCCVB would like to work with.
- Get involved in online communities, forums, blogs and Facebook groups that revolve around destination weddings.
- Use Pinterest and Instagram for destination wedding inspirational images and our portfolio of beautiful weddings.
- Run Facebook ads targeting “fans” of travel agencies who specialize in planning destination weddings. Utilize retargeting ads.
- Use local media to talk about destination wedding photography and become known as the “go-to” photographer for destination weddings.
- Target well known Weddings photographers in Chicagoland area, start a relationship for them to view and suggest GSCCVB service area.
- Host a FAM of Top 10 Illinois Destination Wedding Planners and Travel Agents. Themed in our destination experience.
- Run Facebook ads targeting “fans” of other destination wedding resources/magazines/guides/websites. Utilize this platform for lead resources.
- Deploy Destination and Communication Manager to engage in gathering support from Wedding related stakeholders and tourism partners.
- Kick off Sugar Crush in the winter season by targeting soon to be engaged couples and engaged couples through Facebook ads.
- Attend local Bridal Shows to connect with area Stakeholders/tourism partners and Brides.
- In the themes and in working with local wedding planners, encourage free wedding planning and an abundance of packages featuring the destination and our hotel accommodations.
- The very nature of destination weddings that require travel and a commitment to hotel stays. Encourage the use of our online GSCCVB destination accommodations link to wedding parties and planners for ease. In addition, this encouraging wedding attendees to enter their information into our data system to be retargeted for additional marketing opportunities and getaway promotion back to the destinations.



Destination Marketing, Communications & Engagement

Mission

The GSCCVB seeks to engage and unify this destination in the pursuit of tourism by developing communications, activities and events that will enhance the relationships with, and contribute to the well-being of, the stakeholders/tourism partners that impact tourism in the GSCCVB service area. Developed and planned processes with the Cities of St. Charles, Campton Hills and Elburn; the Campton and St. Charles Townships, the Downtown St. Charles Partnership and the St. Charles Chamber of Commerce will increase collaboration, reduce unnecessary duplication and maximize promotion of the area for stakeholders/tourism partners, events and attractions.



Department Overview

High level engagement from the GSCCVB produces several advantages within Greater St. Charles service area, including visibility within the community, a positive and powerful face to the surround communities and the state, increased tourism economic impact through targeted partnerships, a better information pipeline between businesses and the bureau and an increased atmosphere of trust that will permeate the destination and ultimately our visitors' experience. In order to achieve such an atmosphere a variety of communication platforms will be strategically utilized including interpersonal communication (e.g. 1 to 1, small group settings, and communication with staff), increased presence at special events, support with access to press and continued, consistent social media and direct marketing coverage.

Strategies

- **Inform** the community and press of Bureau campaigns, promotions, initiatives and events using all channels of media (newspaper, video, television, social sites).
- **Consult** the community regarding ideas, needs and opportunities for attracting visitors to the area.
- **Identify** opportunities for collaboration between businesses that can lead to increased tourism opportunity.
- **Build** awareness and understanding amongst tourism partners.
- **Connect** tourism partners with the larger community and visitor base through events that connect to our campaigns and promotions. (Tourism beyond Boundaries, Live Your Dream, Sugar Crush, Sight-Doing, etc.)
- **Coordinate** Bureau representation at community events.

Tactics

- **Develop Recurring Press Releases:** Bureau Issues Statement and Community Opportunity about tourism issues, new business openings and their effect on tourism.
- **Quadra-Connection** – Create and execute an event attendance rotation developed from the dates posted to the Marketing Calendar which will be based on the business segment being featured. For example, if a new sports equipment store is having a ribbon-cutting, then the Tourism Director for Sports would be scheduled and prepped for attendance. The size of the event will determine the number of additional employs that will be sent to represent the Bureau.
- **Schedule** monthly sip and sips with market segment contacts for informational needs assessments and seeking out events that we can partner in discovering room night opportunities.

Destination Marketing, Communications & Engagement

Tactics (Continued)

- **Tourism Beyond Boundaries 2.0** – Plan and execute special event marker with neighboring Elburn and Campton Hills at one of their special events. Facilitate growing partnerships adjacent communities with events that will add to our room night base (similar to Geneva and now with Sugar Grove with providing accommodations to their area for events beyond the NCAA golfing events). Plan anniversary mixer with Fox Valley Ice Arena, The Chicago Steel and Geneva.
- **Live your Dream** – Complete the Live your Dream interview process with merchants in targeted market segments (Restaurants, Shopping, Theaters, Cultural Centers, and Spas). Prepare media release of story campaign. Roll out multi-phased campaign with multiple media outlets.
- **Sugar Crush 2018** – Interview local businesses in the market segment (Restaurants, Shopping, Theaters, Cultural Centers, and Spas) and tourism partners. Secure added specials and promote them in the press, on the website and social media channels.
- **Free Ride 2018** – Connect with area biking and cyclist venues to coordinate press and social media to their special events.

Media Outreach Goals

GOALS	Monthly Goals 16-17	Monthly Goals 17-18	Annual Goals 16-17	Annual Goals 17-18
Media Outreach (Releases/Pitches)	0	2	0	24
# contacts reached	0	20	0	240
Press trips/media hosted	0	5	0	60

Preliminary Monthly Marketing Initiatives

Line Item	Specifications
Madden Media	LinkedIn & Facebook Meetings & Convention Targeted and Retargeted Marketing
IL Meetings and Convention Online Banner	Monthly Rotation
Leisure Newsletter	Email Marketing
Social Marketing – Fb, Twitter, Instagram	Social Calendars for Greater St. Charles, Scarecrow Fest, and Fox Valley Illinois
Meeting Professionals International (MPI)	Local Chapter Meetings
ISAE	Luncheons
Community Connections	Engagement Sit and Sips

Strategic Memberships

Line Item	Specifications
CVENT – RFP Catalyst	RFP monthly participation
Lexyl Travel (RFP)	Membership and Participation
Meeting Planners International (MPI)	Membership and Participation in local chapter
Government Bids RFP	Monthly Fee \$131.00 x 12
Small Market Meetings	Association based

Greater St. Charles Convention and Visitors Bureau

Preliminary Marketing, Advertising and Tradeshow Schedule: July 2017 –June 2018

July 2017	January 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midwest Living Summer Getaways Ad Campaign: Sight-DO in St. Charles! July/August Issue. • USA Today Summer Escapes Ad Campaign: Sight-DO in St. Charles (Launched in June) • SEM Campaign: Madden Media • Digital Marketing Content Stories Campaign for Meetings and Conventions: Madden Media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISAE Tradeshow • Weddings digital advertising roll out* • Wedding Photos and Promotions*
August 2017	February 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEM Campaign: Madden Media • Digital Marketing Content Stories Campaign for Meetings and Conventions: Madden Media • Scarecrow Fest Newspaper Ads: Daily Herald & Kane County Chronicle • Scarecrow Fest Print Ad Push: West Suburban Living, Suburban Family, Daily Herald Festival Guide • Connect Sports Show • Connect Specialty Show 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sugar Crush 2018 Social Marketing Campaign • Sugar Crush 2018 Website Promotion • International Digital Advertising* • Leisure Digital Advertising – Voluntourism*
September 2017	March 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEM Campaign: Madden Media • Digital Marketing Content Stories Campaign for Meetings and Conventions: Madden Media • Scarecrow Fest Newspaper Ads: Daily Herald & Kane County Chronicle • Scarecrow Fest Print Ad Push: West Suburban Living, Suburban Family, Daily Herald Festival Guide • ISAE Sponsored Luncheon* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISAE Sponsored Luncheon* • Visitor Guide Revision* • Bureau Profile Video* • Sports – Digital Advertising Campaign
October 2017	April 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEM Campaign: Madden Media • Digital Marketing Content Stories Campaign for Meetings and Conventions: Madden Media • Small Market Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Beyond Boundaries Promotion • NASC Sports Event Symposium • AMTRAK – Enjoy Illinois by Train Day
November 2017	May 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEM Campaign: Madden Media • Digital Marketing Content Stories Campaign for Meetings and Conventions: Madden Media • TEAMS • Promotional Brand Strengthening Campaign* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycling Ad Campaign • Sports Illinois Huddle 2018 • National Tourism Week Promotion
December 2017	June 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISAE Banner Ad* • Weddings print advertising roll out* • Connect DC (Political Market) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CVENT Tradeshow • Meetings Quest Tradeshow • IAVAT Conference - Illinois Agricultural Education

*roll out month is estimated

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Visitor Information Centers

1st Street Parking Garage

North & South Lobbies
St. Charles, IL 60174

Fox Valley Ice Arena

1996 S Kirk Rd
Geneva, IL 60134

Kane County Fairgrounds

525 Randall Rd
St Charles, IL 60174

Greater St. Charles Convention & Visitors Bureau

2 East Main Street
St. Charles, IL 60174

Cumberland Road Information Center

I-70 Rest Area-Westbound / Route 3
Marshall, IL 62441

DeKalb Oasis

2700 N. Crego Road
DeKalb, IL 60115

Fort Massac Information Center

5402 Highway 45 South
Metropolis, IL 62960

Homestead Information Center

I-55 Rest Area – Northbound
Hamel, IL 60246

Mississippi Rapids Information Center

I-80 Rest Area - Eastbound
Rapids City, IL 61278

Old State Capital Tourist Information Center

1 SW Old State Capital Plaza
Springfield, IL 62701

Prairie View North Tourist Information Center

I-57 Rest Area - Northbound / North of Peotone
Entrance
Monee, IL 60449

Prairie View South Tourist Information Center

I-57 Rest Area-Southbound / South of Monee Exit
Monee, IL 60449

Rend Lake North Information Center

80 N I-57 Rest Area Northbound
Whittington, IL 62897

Rend Lake South Information Center

I-57 Rest Area-Southbound
Whittington, IL 62897

Salt Kettle Information Center

I-74 Westbound
Oakwood, IL 61858

Silver Lake Information Center

I-70 Rest Area-Eastbound
Highland, IL 62249

Trail of Tears Information Center

32 North I-57
Anna, IL 62906

Turtle Creek Information Center

I-90 Rest Area-Southbound
South Beloit, IL 61080