



CITY OF COTTAGE GROVE
12800 Ravine Parkway South
Cottage Grove, Minnesota 55016
Council Chamber - 7:30 AM

February 24, 2026

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call
4. Adoption of Agenda
5. Approval of Minutes
 - A 11/25/25 CVB Meeting Minutes
6. Presentations
 - A Convention and Visitors Bureau Events Update
 - B 2025 Q4 Lodging Tax and Revenue Collection
 - C CVB Website Redesign Update
 - D 2025 Annual Report
7. Business Items
 - A Mall of America Travel Wall Program
8. Workshop
9. Comments
10. Adjournment



COTTAGE GROVE CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU
12800 RAVINE PARKWAY SOUTH
COTTAGE GROVE, MINNESOTA 55016
COUNCIL CHAMBER - 7:30 A.M.

November 25, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m. by Chair Laurie Levine.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Levine asked everyone to please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Chair Levine asked Alexa Anderson, Communications Specialist, to please do the roll.

Members Present: Sarah Grecula, Director
Michael Haatvedt, Director
Laurie Levine, Director
Erik Olson, Director
Chris Reese, Director (Arrived after Item 5)

Members Absent: Tony Khambata, Director
Justin Olsen, Chairman

Staff Present: Jennifer Levitt, City Administrator
Jaime Mann, Assistant to the City Administrator
Alexa Anderson, Communications Specialist
Phil Jents, Communications Manager
Molly Pietruszewski, Recreation Services Manager
Courtney Pirsig, Communications Specialist/Graphic Designer

Others Present: None.

4. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Director Haatvedt made a motion to Adopt the Agenda; second by Director Olson. Motion carried: 4-0.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of August 26, 2025 CGCVB Meeting Minutes

Director Haatvedt made a motion to approve the August 26, 2025 CGCVB Meeting Minutes; second by Director Grecula. Motion carried: 4-0.

6. PRESENTATIONS

A. Holiday Events in Cottage Grove

Good Morning, Everyone, my name is Molly Pietruszewski, I am the Recreation Services Manager for the City of Cottage Grove. I have the honor of sharing with you our upcoming Holiday events as a City entity that we are hosting, as well as some other organizations around town that are helping. I have a really cool job, I get to help out and work a lot of these groups and on the event committees to bring this up in Cottage Grove:

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- **Hale to the Bird 5K Race:** This will be held at Hamlet Park this Thursday, Thanksgiving Day, and the race begins at 9:00 a.m. I do believe the online registration has closed, but they do take onsite registration on Thursday morning. Those who are already registered are able to pick up their race shirt and bibs on Wednesday night, at Hamlet Park. This is our 15th Anniversary of supporting the Hale to the Bird race, which then donates money to the Holiday Train, and then that money goes back to the Friends in Need Food Shelf. So, this is a huge part of our goal for the Holiday Train Committee supporting the food shelf. I talked with organizers yesterday, and they're on track for about 600 people signed up for this Thursday at Hamlet. So, we'd love to see more people come on out and support this great cause.
- **Holiday Lights Home Tour:** We opened early this year and the lights map is on the City's website, it opened November 12. So, if you are planning a big display, have one, or know your neighbor's address, you can go onto the City's website and feel free to add that address on there. It does create a live, interactive map so that you can go out with your family at night. As we were talking earlier, you might have to make two nights out of it, as it sounds like there's already 25 houses signed up. So, it's a great opportunity to get out this winter, as it sounds like it's coming tonight, and find something free to do in Cottage Grove for great family traditions to start.
- **Hometown Holiday:** Is scheduled for next Thursday. It sounds like we're going to have snow on the ground, hopefully, for that; in previous years, it's still been a little green out there. The event is held next Thursday, here at City Hall, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. It's a great, free family event. Everything's lit outside, a great trail full of roads to walk on, Santa & Mrs. Claus will be here on the big chair or for photos. We do offer wagon rides from the HERO Center and the Washington County Service building, up to the driveway here at City Hall. Live reindeer, games and activities for kids, and food trucks will be out there selling food. There is even a warming tent to eat in, and the Park High School Choir will be walking around, performing inside and outside. Typically, this is a great family event: We've got the bonfire pits going, free cider and cookies, and we invite all of the community to come out and kind of start your holiday season next week with us.
- **River Oaks Santa Brunch:** Is scheduled for December 21, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. I checked in with Denny, down at River Oaks, and reservations are about 70% full; so, you do have to call to make that reservation, we encourage people to do that sooner rather than later if this is something you want to get on your calendar. Once the spots are full, there's no opportunity to add more. It's a great chance to do photos with Santa, sleigh rides around the golf course, and then enjoy what they're calling a North Pole breakfast right in the banquet room at River Oaks. It's another great family tradition, I know a lot of families have done this for years. So, again, I encourage people to make reservations as soon as possible; even if you have to leave a message over the holiday week this week, be sure to do that, as they do keep track and will get you signed up in order.
- **CPKC Holiday Train:** This is kind of the big culmination and something I work on is the CPKC Holiday Train coming to town. We were fortunate enough to get a Saturday trip this year, so it's Saturday, December 13. Our goal this year is to raise \$125,000 for the Friends in Need Food Shelf, and we are well on track to make that goal happen. The road closes at 3:00 p.m., and wagons start at 3:30 p.m. So, as of 3:30 p.m., the site will be live and open. There are a couple of activities, food trucks, there's a REMAX warming tent and the REMAX hot air balloon is there. The train arrives at 5:15 p.m., and then it does take about 15 minutes for them to kind of set the stage and for the stage to open at 5:30, and then they perform a handful of songs for about a half hour. Then there's the check presentation from CPKC, and then the train kind of closes up and they pull away. I recommend staying for the whole thing, but the train coming in and then leaving are probably two of the coolest parts you're going to see. So, again, we encourage people to get there early; there's the same kind of set up, we do provide wagon rides from the Park and Ride down the road. Otherwise, there will be other ends of the town: the Armory is open, and you'll just have to walk down to the event. Our musicians this year are American Authors and Pink Beard. Some of you may know there are two trains, one goes through Canada and the other through North America, and the musicians kind of alternate out, so we've got some great ones this year for our event.
- **Get Out and Play!** We just like to remind people that although recreation is sometimes focused on the summer, we encourage you to get out and play; our Parks Department and Public Works do a great job of keeping parking lots clear, keeping trails and sidewalks clear around our parks. We're working on getting warming houses staffed and opened; the goal is, provided we have ice and snow, the day after Christmas, same thing for the skating rinks. Cross-country skiing this year, we're hoping that the trails will be groomed down at River Oaks. Also this year, we are using our snowshoes again, out in the public; for those of you who don't know, we use our kayak rental trailer and build the back of it, and then we rent snowshoes, and I believe those will once again be at Oakwood Park this winter.
- **Other Festive Happenings in Cottage Grove:**
 - Minnesota Christmas Market 2025 at The Madison, November 29, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; come enjoy a Christmas Market at The Madison wedding and event venue
 - 8th Annual Holiday Craft & Gift Market, December 6, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Cottage Grove Middle School, 7310 Lamar Avenue South, Homegrown brands and makers

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-Cottage Grove Lions Santa Breakfast, December 7, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., VFW Red Barn, 9260 East Point Douglas Road, South, \$12 Adults, \$8 Kids

Molly said I believe that is all we have, and I'll stand for any questions anyone might have about upcoming holiday events.

Chair Levine said thank you, Molly. I'm part of the Holiday Train Committee, and hopefully the weather will be really nice and we'll all be comfortable with a little bit of snow on the ground.

Director Olson said Molly, I have a question. The Holiday Train created a \$125,000 goal, that's a lofty goal; for perspective, roughly, do you know last year, for 2024, what we all raised?

Molly replied I do. The last couple years we've been over the \$200,000 mark that we've been able to donate to the Friends in Need Food Shelf. So, we like to set an achievable goal, and our goal has been \$100,000, so we upped it this year, and we are on track to make that as well. Kind of the heartwarming part of it this year, looking at it last week at our meeting, it has been a lot of personal donations this year, which we haven't seen in years past, but a few big and just medium-sized personal donations from residents in the City kind of touched all of us last week. You know, usually there's those big-name businesses, but lots of personal donations coming in this year, so far.

Director Olson said compliments to you and your staff. That's a nice amount of money.

Molly replied thank you, and I'll pass that along at our next meeting for sure.

Director Olson said and my next question is the warming house from Park and Rec, for those hours, where would someone find that? Is that on the website, I'm guessing, since that's Park and Rec?

Molly replied yes, so, on the City of Cottage Grove website, under Recreation, and then warming houses, all of the sites are listed on there. So, traditionally, we host at eight different sites so you're going to find one in your community or your neighborhood where you live. Weekdays, the buildings are open by 3:00 a.m., and staff starts shutting them at about 9:00 p.m.; weekends are about 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. as well. So, we have some pretty good, consistent hours, and we're encouraging people to get out to use the trails, the sledding hills, the skating rinks, and then bop in if you need to; you can use the restrooms or warm up or use the drinking fountains. All of those are open for use.

Director Olson asked free of charge? Molly replied free of charge, yep. Director Olson said thank you, Molly replied you're welcome.

Chair Levine said I'll make one other mention, Small Business Saturday is also on November 29, so let's make sure we're all shopping local that day.

Molly replied awesome. Thank you, everyone, happy holidays.

7. BUSINESS ITEMS

A. 2025 Food Truck Festival Recap

Jaime Mann, Assistant to the City Administrator, said thank you, Members of the Board. I'm here to talk about all the great things that happened this year at the Food Truck Festival that happened September 13 at Kingston Park.

So, we planned on 35 food trucks, and we had 35 food trucks that registered with us. Unfortunately, we did have one that broke down on the way to the event, so we ended up having 34 trucks in the parking lot, which we think is kind of about the right size for our event moving forward. On the screen in front of you, you can see the list of food trucks that participated, they offered great food throughout the day, and there were long lines at all of them so we figured it was a success. We're estimating, and obviously it's not an exact science to estimate how many people attended the event because you have so many entrances and so many people coming and going, but we're estimating between 13,000 and 15,000 people attended this year. So, we're really happy with the turnout and heard some great feedback from our food trucks.

We brought in \$14,000 in revenue from food truck registrations. We also support the event with sponsorships, and on the screen you can see the list of sponsors; we had both paid and in-kind sponsors. Our goal this year was to get about \$8,000 in sponsorships, and we came in at \$6,500 in paid sponsorships.

We also had our Marketplace for the second time this year. We had a goal of 15 vendors participating, last year we had 17 vendors in our Marketplace, and we ended up with 27 total Marketplace booths. So, we were happily surprised with the increase in Marketplace vendors this year; we heard great feedback from them as well, and we brought in about \$3,000 from the Marketplace vendors.

There were many other things going on at the Food Truck Festival:

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- Strawberry Fest Ambassadors hosted some carnival games for us for part of the event
- Bounce Houses
- Beer Tent hosted by the Cottage Grove Lions Club
- Live Music: Basic and Boring, and Revved Up! Came back, they were here for our first year and then came back for our third year
- *Discover Cottage Grove* booth, where some of you helped us hand out swag and talked with a lot of people at the event

It turned out to be a fantastic day, with fantastic numbers:

Food Truck Festival 2025 Profit and Loss Numbers

Estimated Revenue:	\$23,500.00	Actual Revenue:	\$23,744.94
Expense	<u>\$20,600.00</u>	Actual Expense:	<u>\$18,804.11</u>
Estimated Profit	\$ 2,900.00	Actual Profit:	\$ 4,940.83

Jaime said that money gets rolled back into the CVB budget to pay for additional marketing activities throughout the year. So, with that, I'll be happy to stand for any questions.

Director Haatvedt asked how many vendors do we look for, for the Marketplace vendors? I mean, how many can apply or how many can, I guess how much room do we have for that?

Jaime replied we don't have a cap on the number of vendors that we would take. We have a great big open field where we could place a bunch of Marketplace vendors, so we reach out and Becca did a great job of finding new vendors to come in this year. So, we're always hoping people will spread the word and kind of share that we're looking for Marketplace vendors, but we have no cap on what we could take at this point. Maybe as we get too big one year, then we might have to cap it, but.

Chair Levine said I'll add to that, this was fantastic, what we were able to achieve in one year; and we had a lot of Chamber members mentioning, oh, we should have known about this. So I think that's really grown, it was a fantastic day.

Director Olson said as I recall, weren't the hours tweaked this year? Maybe we hedged an hour here and there for open, close? Is that true? And then how was that accepted?

Jaime replied yes, we did; last year, we went until 7:00 p.m., and for vendors cleaning up, it was dark in the park without a whole bunch of lights for them to see. So, we did shorten the hours, we went back to our initial hours that we did our first year and we closed at 6:00 p.m. Open time was still the same, at 11:00 a.m., but we closed at 6:00 p.m. It seemed to be well received by vendors. The first year I heard a couple people ask if we could do longer, which is why we extended the hours, but I think once people realized it gets dark early in September, I heard no issues with closing at 6:00 p.m. this year.

Director Olson said okay, fair enough. Thanks.

Chair Levine asked if there were any further questions, none were asked.

B. 2026 Visitor Guide

Courtney Pirsig, Communications Specialist/Graphic Designer, said Good Morning, Members of the Board. I am excited to share the Visitor Guide, it is currently in its draft state, but you do have a copy in front of you. So, if you want to flip through it and kind of look at what we'll be talking about. So, as you know, the CVB's overall mission is to promote Cottage Grove as a premier destination for travelers, weddings, and outdoor enthusiasts. We also focus on recognizing Cottage Grove as a host city for meetings, conventions, and sporting events.

For the 2026 Visitor Guide, we kept the CVB's mission, as well as our findings with our strategic partner, Chandlerthinks, at the forefront when planning the content for the item. We are currently undergoing a lot of style rebrand, and Phil will talk a little bit more on that when I'm finished; but part of that rebrand consisted of solidifying our brand guidelines for *Discover Cottage Grove*. This ensures consistency, and it creates an identity for *Discover Cottage Grove*. As you can see, not a whole lot has changed. We have the same logo, we're using a similar color palette, similar fonts, but it more so was put in place to define what the brand is, and that helped our website designer kind of follow those guidelines when she was creating the website.

So, when thinking about what we were going to put in this year's Visitor Guide, we asked ourselves what makes Cottage Grove unique? What are our strengths? Why do people come here? And, so, the guide is thoughtfully designed in a way that people will find our strengths in the beginning of the guide; we offer top attractions, I think it is on Page 3 or 4. We have sample itineraries so when people are here, they can look at that and get ideas of what to do when they're here. We made it personal. This year it is all

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our people's faces, our places, we used photos that we took as staff, we used photos from photo contests that residents submitted, we used photos from our businesses, so that just made it a little more personal. We aren't using stock photography, these are our places and our people.

Our articles are actionable, there are ready-made itineraries for their visit, like I mentioned, a list of top attractions, and then easy to use, resourceful information. We struck down the information that they don't need to direct them straight to the source, like the businesses' websites, or if you need to contact them, you have a phone number, we included that.

Then new this year are scannable QR codes that direct readers to booking links, business directories, blog articles, and more. With our new website, we wanted to make sure that we were directing people to relevant information. The information is we update the website daily, as with a print article, you don't always get the most up-to-date information. So, we made sure that with the scannable QR codes, you can go direct to the time sensitive information.

This year, we focused on the structure and the flow of the guide. We strategically placed top attractions and itineraries at the beginning, like I had mentioned before. We also implemented the new branding guidelines and applied the new fonts and colors, this kind of unifies the website with the Visitor Guide and all of our other marketing materials. This year we do have a longer guide as well, I believe I had it at about eight pages, so a lot more content, but we chose a paper weight that is lighter, so that cost savings actually makes up for those eight pages, so we're spending about the same that we did last year. And I do want to mention we aren't losing paper quality, its just a different material, and I have a sample if you guys would like to take a look later, too. The paper type chosen closely aligns with what other Visitor Bureaus are doing, too. So, part of my process when I design it is I just take 50 to 100 printed materials, usually Visitor Guides, and I just look through them and I look at them and I kind of take it all in, like a sponge, and I just was noticing that more of the Visitor Guides were more like a magazine type of material. So, the paper we chose is in between what we did last year and the previous years and like a very thin magazine material; and, I also want to mention, its easier to roll up to stick it in your purse or your pocket when you're traveling, so that makes it more functional as well, its not as heavy.

Quotes for 2026

So, the guide is full color, 24 pages, and cover. This year we have six ad placements for a total of \$3,010. Quotes were submitted by two local print companies, Graphic Design, Inc. and Ideal Printers, Inc., and pricing is based on quantities of 6,000, 7,000, and 8,000. Last year, we ordered 7,000 booklets, and we have a handful of guides left until the 2026 edition, in case we have any Welcome Centers ordering boxes, or residents or businesses ordering guides.

So, with that, a Recommendation is in front of you, and I would be happy to stand for any questions regarding the design or the pricing of the 2026 Visitor Guide.

Chair Levine said well, Courtney, I'll start by saying once again this is just beautiful. It's a beautiful magazine and its so well thought out, I can't wait to see it in real life. So, are there any questions? I'll open it up for questions or comments.

Director Grecula said I really like the personalized photography, and I have one question. I noticed you made reference to a few attractions and events that aren't within Cottage Grove. Do we have any kind of partnership with like Afton, for example, to get featured in their guide?

Courtney replied that's an excellent question, Director Grecula. Afton Apple did purchase an ad placement; so, anywhere that you do see kind of a logo and contact information or a bold content for that business, it is an ad placement. So, they did purchase one this year, and they have been in previous editions in the past. I know in the back of the guide I have recommendations for people to kind of travel outside of Cottage Grove, but still come back to us of course, and those are not paid; but it's more so like a recommendation, like hey, we're only 20 minutes from the Mall of America. You could stay here and then pop over to the Mall of America, but we're very much a commerce-based city, so that's just like to give examples of like what they can do when they're here.

Director Grecula said that makes sense, thank you.

Director Olson said I'll make a comment. I've noticed and I like this, the print quotes, you obtained two quotes, they're local. I see a Cottage Grove internet address, which I like, and also the physical printing of it looks like this is in the southeast metro, which is also I think important to know. Thanks for doing that.

Courtney replied, yeah, thank you for your comments.

Chair Levine said thank you, and with that, I'll ask for a motion to approve the quote for the printing of 7,000 copies of the 2026 Visitor Guide through Graphic Design, Inc. for \$6,286.

Director Haatvedt made a motion to approve the quote for the printing of 7,000 copies of the 2026 Visitor Guide through Graphic Design, Inc. for \$6,286; second by Director Olson. Motion carried: 5-0.

C. CVB Website Redesign Update

Good Morning, Members of the Board, my name is Phil Jents, Communications Manager. I'm happy to stand before you to give you a brief update about the website rebrand. As you all certainly know and recall, we have talked about the website a couple of times before, over the summer, and its need to undergo a design refresh. Courtney helpfully mentioned the branding guidelines that we had established. And, so, the website redesign, in addition to giving it a refresh, will hopefully also achieve kind of branding consistencies across products that we create, social media, the Visitor Guide, and the website, all kind of living as one branded ecosystem, if you will.

So, we're excited about the website rebrand. I want to kind of give you just a quick kind of background of where we've been and where we're at. So, that website rebrand is currently in progress. Staff received an early draft of that website redesign on about October 22; staff met and comprised a lengthy list of edits and revisions that we wanted made, which is not unusual, I mean, we want to get this right. When the City enterprise main, cottagesgovernm.gov, went through a recent rebrand and redesign, the same thing happened. You get a bunch of different versions, and staff kind of goes to the drawing board and creates a long list of edits and revisions; because, again, if you're going to do it, you want to do it well and get it right. And, so, we added a list of edits, as well as what we're calling a "Wire Frame," so basically a visual representation of all of those edits, so that both in language and in visual, our web designer can see what it is that we're looking for. So, it's easier to kind of just drag and drop images into what we are hoping to get done, which is exciting. Those images were provided on about October 30, and they're being worked through kind of as we speak. So, we're waiting on that next round of revisions to be incorporated into the new design.

As we have planned all along, and I'm sure I have mentioned, before anything goes live, we would of course seek final Board feedback and blessing on that substantially complete, if not fully completed, website redesign. So, that can be done in a few ways, either at a future workshop at a regularly-scheduled Board Meeting, a Special Meeting that maybe we can schedule, either virtually or in person, or it could even be over email, if that is sufficient. Either way, we would not want to go live on a new website before you all have a chance to see it and approve it and provide feedback. The same with the Visitor Guide, right, we wouldn't print it and send it out without you all seeing and approving it. So, we are looking forward to that future date where you see the full completed redesign and provide us your feedback before we go live on that.

Phil said with that, I'm happy to stand for any questions on that.

Chair Levine asked the directors if there were any questions, and they had none. She asked do we have an idea of when that date will be? Is it something that's weeks or months away?

Phil replied that's a good question. I think initially we had hoped to have the website done and ready to go live by the end of the year, I do still think that is achievable. Having said that, it all kind of depends on what we all decide is the best way to get your final feedback from the Board. Our next regularly-scheduled Board Meeting is in February, and so, again, you want to do this and do it right, and perhaps the cleanest, easiest way to get your feedback is in a workshop setting at that meeting, but I also recognize that's in February. If we do want something sooner than that, I think that's achievable, at which point we have to just kind of figure out if we want to schedule a Special Virtual Meeting, which is something that we could possibly do and get your feedback before then. I'm open to suggestions, I think all of us would love to have it go live sooner, rather than later, but also recognizing that we want your meaningful feedback as a part of that process, too.

Chair Levine said all right, any suggestions on that? None were offered. She stated all right, thank you.

D. Minnesota Department of Revenue Lodging Tax Collections and Rentalscape Software Update

Phil said thank you, and that title is a mouthful, I recognize. It is still interesting information, and I thought it would be good for the Board to hear an update. You've heard me mention before that the Minnesota Department of Revenue was going to be conducting Lodging Tax Collections on behalf of this City, and you've also heard me mention before that we have engaged with Deckard Technologies, utilizing the Rentalscape software, both of which are in place now. So, the Department of Revenue is collecting Lodging Tax collections on behalf of the City of Cottage Grove, and the Rentalscape software is up and running, and our staff has been using it. So, again, we thought it would be prudent to provide you all with an update on how that's going.

So, as a background, the Department of Revenue Lodging Tax Collections began in July, 2025, and we are monitoring that closely; we want to make sure that Lodging Tax collections are coming in as we would expect them to be, that they are meeting projections and not exceeding them, and so far, that is the case. The Lodging Tax Collections are coming in as expected, if not maybe a touch higher than we would have thought, which is, of course, a good sign.

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It's also important to note that the collections do lag a little bit, which was expected. When we explored this scenario, we worked with other communities who have also done Department of Revenue Lodging Tax Collections, and they reported that they experienced about a 40-day lag, which does kind of follow some logic, right? So, the property submits their Lodging Tax Collections to the State, the State then receives them, and then the State disburses them to the City, and all of that takes a little bit of time. So, that's not unexpected, that's what we expected going in, but nevertheless, as future Lodging Tax Collections updates happen at the Board level, know that that's the case, it does fall behind about 40 days.

In 2025, Q3, which is on the agenda this morning, you'll get an update from me on those Collections, and we're seeing that that two-month average does appear to be coming in slightly higher than a two-month average from 2024. So, again, staff wanted to monitor very closely how these Lodging Tax Collections are going. We didn't have any reason to believe they wouldn't come in "normally," but you know, trust but verify. So, we're seeing that Lodging Tax Collections are coming in as we would expect and maybe even a touch higher, which is good to see.

Rentalscape Software Update

This is the software that goes out and identifies short-term rental, long-term rental properties out in the world, making sure that the City is aware of our rental properties out in the community. As you probably know, many communities experience short-term rentals that exist out in the community, they're being advertised on Airbnb, VRBO, and other such websites, and sometimes cities aren't aware that those properties exist. Sometimes those properties aren't licensed properly, and so the City thought it a good idea to make sure that we have a good understanding of what exists out in our community, to ensure that those are inspected properly, that they're held to safety and Code requirements and licensure requirements.

So, to date, staff is finding that Rentalscape has identified 11 licensed short-term rental properties in Cottage Grove, 10 unlicensed short-term rental properties, and 22 total unlicensed properties, which could include long-term rental properties.

As a result, the City's Code Compliance Officer is going to soon be sending compliance letters to those properties that are unlicensed, to ensure that they're coming into compliance. Just one note on that: Ideally you would see everyone compliant and licensed properly, and of course we're getting Lodging Tax Collections. It's yet to be clear how moving forward this might or might not impact Lodging Tax Collections; just because a property is not licensed doesn't necessarily mean they're avoiding Lodging Tax Collections to the State. So, it's good to have an early understanding of what Rentalscape is finding out there and good that our Code Compliance Officer will be getting folks into compliance. We'll also then be looking at does that have any impact on our Lodging Tax Collections; i.e., does it go up, because people are now coming into compliance? So, that's kind of the next step in this software.

Phil said with that, I'll stand for any questions you may have.

Director Reese asked regarding that last slide you had with the 10 unlicensed and the 22 total unlicensed, what's the difference between those numbers?

Phil replied Chair Levine, Director Reese, that's a good question. So, the 10 unlicensed short-term rental properties, those would be what I would consider like your Airbnb or VRBO. The 22 total unlicensed properties could include like long-term rentals, so we'll call it a traditional landlord renting out their property to somebody under a lease agreement for month-to-month or year-to-year, whatever that might be. That doesn't necessarily have much, if any, impact to the Lodging Tax Collections, but it's still important for our staff to know that so that they are licensed and inspected and held to the same standards as everyone else.

Director Grecula said asked what defines a short-term rental that would make it eligible for Lodging Tax vs. a long-term rental?

Phil replied Chair Levine, Director Grecula, that is an excellent question, and I don't know that I'm going to be able to come up with the exact, correct answer off the top of my head. I'll look to maybe City Administrator Levitt, if she knows, but it's the determination of how long the stay is, and I don't want to speak out of turn of what that cutoff is, like 30 days, 45 days, whatever it is, but that is a good question.

Administrator Levitt replied Madam Chair, Members of the Board, I believe the Code reads 30 days. So, if it's over 30 days contiguous stay, you're then into a long term. If it's less than 30 days, it's a short-term rental.

Director Grecula said thank you.

E. 2025 Q3 Lodging Tax and Revenue Collection

Phil Jents said Chair Levine, Members of the Board, again thank you, you're hearing a lot from me this morning, so for better or worse, here I am.

The Quarter 3 Lodging Tax and Revenue Collection update we have before you. And, so, the Minnesota Department of Revenue is collecting our Lodging Taxes on behalf of the City. So, for Quarter 3, we're seeing those coming in at \$15,392, which, as I stated earlier, is about what we would expect to see in Quarter 3 Lodging Tax Collections and perhaps even a touch higher than a two-

Cottage Grove Convention and Visitors Bureau Meeting

November 25, 2025

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month average when compared to 2024. So, that was a pretty key important thing for us to look at again are those collections coming in as we would expect.

Before I move on to questions, I did want to note the projected Quarter 3 Lodging Tax Collections in the previously-approved budget was \$18,000. So, that Quarter 3 number that you see before you, I mentioned that lag time that we experience, and the City has not yet received September's Lodging Tax Collections because of that lag time. So, we would expect that collection come in before the end of this year yet, which of course then the number that you see before you will go up once we get those. And, so, we are confident that the Quarter 3 Lodging Tax Collections will meet or exceed our projected amount that we would have expected to see. Year to date, we're sitting at about \$62,955 in Lodging Tax Collections, and I thought both numbers were important for you to know.

Chair Levine replied thank you for explaining that, it totally makes sense. She asked if there were any questions or comments on this item.

Director Reese asked do you have a year-over-year for comparison?

Phil replied Chair Levine, Director Reese, I do not have that information immediately in front of me, but I would be happy to follow up.

F. 2026 Final Budget Approval

Phil Jents said Chair Levine, Members of the Board, thank you again. Last, and certainly not least, is the Budget Approval for 2026. So, the 2026 Final Budget is before you, in your packet, as is the full 2026 Budget Worksheet. So, I'll not bore you with reading that entire spreadsheet, but I would happily do so if you wish; I'm sure maybe you have other things to consider as you move on for the rest of your day.

At any rate, as you also just heard, the Lodging Tax Projections for 2026 are similar to other years. We based that on a 63% occupancy rate, which gets us in at around \$71,500 a year for our Lodging Tax Projections. Projected Visitor Guide Ad Sales come in at \$4,500. As you heard earlier this morning, the Food Truck Festival is a pretty big premier event for the City of Cottage Grove and the CVB, and that's coming in at \$15,900 in food truck and Marketplace vendor payments, and \$8,000 from sponsorships. And then you've heard me discuss before, but new this year is the Explore Minnesota Tourism Grant; so, *Discover Cottage Grove* was successful in getting a \$2,000 Grant from Explore Minnesota, which we will use towards advertising on social media and online for things like the Food Truck Festival and other kind of summertime food things to market.

Also, similar to other years, we have our expenses broken out in Marketing categories and Operational categories. So, again, I won't bore you by reading all of the numbers on the screen before you, but you have them before you and in your packet. The Total Marketing Expenses in the 2026 budget come in at \$56,369.36 for things like, as you see, Website Hosting, Printing, Marketing, etc. Under Operations, for things such as portions of the Communication Specialists' salary, Postage, Dues and Subscriptions, etc., Operating Expenses come in at \$52,680.63.

Finally, the 2026 Final Budget Total Revenue Projections come in at \$101,950, Expenses come in at \$109,449.99, which shows a \$7,499.98 Loss. A quick note on that and an important note on that final number, that will be reconciled with either the remaining Fund balance, which currently is at \$65,440 and/or expenditure reductions.

So, with that, there is a Recommendation before you, and I'd be happy to stand for any questions; there were no questions or comments.

Director Grecula made a motion to approve the Cottage Grove Convention and Visitors Bureau 2026 Final Budget; second by Director Olson. Motion carried: 5-0.

8. WORKSHOP - None.

9. CVB COMMENTS

Director Reese said I like the idea of doing a virtual workshop to be able to go through the website. It may take an hour to do so, but I think it would be good for us to know the functionality and if there's anything we, as a Board, could look at and say, that works great, that doesn't work great, I'd love to do that.

Chair Levine said thank you, I'm also open to that. Everybody else as well? The other Board Members agreed. She said great, thank you so much.

Chair Levine said our next meeting is Tuesday, February 24, 2026.

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10. ADJOURNMENT

Director Haatvedt made a motion to adjourn; second by Director Grecula. Motion carried: 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Phil Jents, Communications Manager

/jag



TO: Board of Directors, Cottage Grove Convention and Visitors Bureau

FROM: Alexa Anderson, Communications Specialist
Courtney Pirsig, Communications Specialist
Phil Jents, Communications Manager

DATE: February 24, 2026

RE: Convention and Visitors Bureau Events Update

Background/Discussion

June 18-21: Strawberry Fest, Strawberry Fields Marketplace

Details: Discover Cottage Grove, along with other organizations and businesses, will be at Cottage Grove's Strawberry Festival Marketplace from 4-9 p.m. on Friday, June 19 and 10 a.m.- 6 p.m. on Saturday, June 20.

Marketing: Advertising, including but not limited to, social media posts including general event postings and individual event postings, social media paid ad campaign, Explore MN events calendar, Discover Cottage Grove events calendar and monthly e-newsletter, Cottage Grove Reports insert in May edition (including Strawberry Fest coloring contest).

Giveaway Items: Backpacks filled with a Visitor Guide, DCG beachball, a DCG cup, DCG luggage tag, and Food Truck Festival information. We will be there answering questions about Cottage Grove. There will be DCG bendy pencils on hand to giveaway.

September 19: Cottage Grove Food Truck Festival Hosted by DCG

Details: Discover Cottage Grove will have a booth set-up at the Food Truck Festival from 11 a.m.- 6 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 19 talking with people about the upcoming fall events.

Marketing: Social media posts, social media event creation, social media paid ad campaign, City of Cottage Grove website, Discover Cottage Grove website, City of Cottage Grove Reports monthly newsletter to homes, Discover Cottage Grove monthly e-newsletter to subscribers, Explore MN events calendar, Discover Cottage Grove events calendar.

Giveaway Items: There will be giveaways at the booth of DCG beachballs, DCG cups, and DCG luggage tags, along with Visitor Guides.

Recommendation

Receive the Cottage Grove Convention and Visitors Bureau events information.



TO: Board of Directors, Cottage Grove Convention and Visitors Bureau

FROM: Phil Jents, Communications Manager

DATE: February 24, 2026

RE: 2025 Q4 Lodging Tax and Revenue Collection

Discussion

2025 Q4 Lodging Tax Collections

The 2025 budget used a 63% occupancy rate when calculating our 2025 lodging tax projections. The Minnesota Department of Revenue (DOR), on behalf of the City of Cottage Grove, has collected Q4 lodging tax and received the following amounts:

2025 Q4 Lodging Tax Collections for the City of Cottage Grove

Rental Month	Gross Revenue Amount	Start-up Costs (One-time only)	Administrative Cost	Net Amount Paid
October	7,121.00		(64.09)	7,056.91
November	7,504.00		(67.54)	7,436.46
December	5,691.00		(51.22)	5,639.78

The net total of the 2025 Q4 lodging tax collections received from the DOR is \$20,133.15. The ongoing administrative cost of the DOR lodging tax collections for Q4 was \$182.85 (or roughly 1% of the lodging tax collections).

At the previous board meeting in November 2025, it was noted the DOR lodging tax collections lag roughly about 40 days. Due to that lag, at the time of that board meeting, the CVB had not yet seen collections from September 2025. Those collections did come in and totaled \$8,564.00. To compare, September 2024's lodging tax collections were \$6,518.00.

Comparing Q4 lodging tax collections between 2024 and 2025:

- Q4 Lodging Tax Collections in 2024: \$15,865.00
- Q4 Lodging Tax Collections in 2025: \$20,133.15
- % change from 2024 to 2025: 26.90%
- Growth of \$4,268.15 year over year

Recommendation:

Receive 2025 Q4 lodging tax collection information.



TO: Board of Directors, Cottage Grove Convention and Visitors Bureau

FROM: Phil Jents, Communications Manager

DATE: February 19, 2026

RE: CVB Website Redesign

Background

As part of the CVB's strategic plan, the Discover Cottage Grove website, hosting service, and design has been under review by staff.

The current website's hosting service makes it difficult to make quick, easy edits to web content, and the overall design is ripe for an update in order to keep the Discover Cottage Grove image and branding fresh and competitive with surrounding / similar communities.

At a CVB meeting on June 3, 2025, the CVB board expressed interest in a redesign of the Discover Cottage Grove website. At that time, it was estimated that a full website redesign could cost in the range of \$7,000-12,000. After that time, staff obtained two quotes from local vendors: Anselment Innovations and Dapper Dog Marketing.

Also at that time, an agreement with Dapper Dog Marketing was approved. Due to unforeseen circumstances, and for reasons beyond the control of the City of Cottage Grove, that agreement has since been terminated.

At the direction of City and CVB Board leadership, staff have pursued a Request for Proposals (RFP) from multiple destination marketing organization (DMO) website developers.

Quote #1: CyberSprout -- \$13,584

- Annual hosting fee for website hosting service is approximately \$59-109/month
- A custom-designed WordPress website built to reflect your brand and purpose
- Simple tools that give your team control without needing to call a developer
- A responsive, reliable team who answers your questions and has your back
- Optimized content structure and setup to support visibility on search engines
- Training, launch support, and ongoing care if you need it

Quote #2: W.A. Fisher -- \$17,000

- Annual website hosting is approximately \$350/year
- Team has collectively 60 years' experience combined in web and marketing experience
- In the tourism industry specifically, they have worked with:
 - Twin Cities Gateway
 - Visit Detroit Lakes

- Discover Shakopee
- Discover the Range

Quote #3: Evolve Creative -- \$18,750

- Annual website hosting is approximately \$95/month
- Content Audit & Sitemap Restructure
- Dynamic Experience Landing Pages
- Robust Events Calendar
- Mobile-First, Accessible & SEO-Optimized

Quote #4: The Cultural North -- \$27,500

- Annual website hosting is either \$175, \$275, or \$450/month
- Modern Visual Design
- Intuitive User Function
- CMS Integration
- SEO and Analytics

Budget Implication

If approved, the website redesign could be pulled from the CVB printing and social media advertising budgets. The printing budget contains a savings from the visitor guide, and unspent marketing dollars could be used from the social media advertising budget.

Recommendation

Approve moving forward with a professional services agreement with W.A. Fisher to redesign the Discover Cottage Grove website for an amount not to exceed \$17,000.

Attachments

Quotes from all responsive vendors.
2026 CVB Final Budget.



CYBERSPROUT

Discover Cottage Grove

WEBSITE PROPOSAL

FEBRUARY 13, 2026

PREPARED FOR
Courtney Pirsig

PREPARED BY
Brad Chancellor



1. Quick Snapshot

What You'll Get

You need a website that's not just "live" — but actually works for your business or organization. One that looks modern, is easy to manage, and helps you reach your goals online. This proposal outlines how CYBERSprout will partner with you to bring that to life.

Here's what we'll deliver:

- A custom-designed WordPress website built to reflect your brand and purpose
- Simple tools that give your team control without needing to call a developer
- A responsive, reliable team who answers your questions and has your back
- Optimized content structure and setup to support visibility on search engines
- Training, launch support, and ongoing care if you need it

We specialize in making websites that feel like a relief — not another frustration.

2. Project Goals

What We Heard from You

Based on what we see in your request, here's what you're hoping to accomplish with your new website:

- Create a modern, **mobile-first** tourism website that better reflects Discover Cottage Grove's brand and showcases the city's natural beauty.
- Deliver a more **seamless, traveler-friendly user experience** that inspires visitors and makes trip planning easier.
- Build an **intuitive site structure** with clear, easy-to-browse categories like **Eat, Stay, Play, and Events**.
- Implement a **user-friendly CMS** (we use WordPress) so your team can quickly update and manage listings internally.
- Ensure the site is set up for SEO readiness and gives your team **direct access to website analytics** for tracking performance.
- Integrate key **social media feeds** to keep the website fresh and connected to your ongoing content.

These goals guide everything we do — from strategy and design to development and support.

We believe a great website starts with clear goals, thoughtful planning, and a shared vision. That's how we'll make sure your final site not only looks great but works hard for your organization.

3. Company Profile & Relevant Work

Who We Are

CYBERSprout is a close-knit web team that helps busy organizations get a website they're proud of — and one that visitors actually enjoy using. We're known for being nimble, responsive, and easy to work with. No hand-offs to mystery people — you'll know everyone who touches your project.

Why This Project Is a Great Fit

Tourism websites have a unique job: they need to look beautiful *and* work hard behind the scenes. That means intuitive navigation, a smart listings structure, and a backend your team can update without needing to “call a developer.” We build with that reality in mind, so your site is both inspiring for travelers and practical for staff.

Tourism & Destination Marketing Experience

- **Explore Alexandria** (*a peer example you referenced*)
(<https://explorealex.com/>)

We redesigned Explore Alexandria's website to be easier for staff to manage and faster for visitors to plan trips — with a streamlined listings system, clearer navigation, stronger calls-to-action, and a refreshed look that better showcases the destination (plus a new “Alexandria Experiences” feature powered by real visitor stories).

- **Otter Tail Lakes Country Association**
(<https://ottertailakescountry.com/>)

We built OTCLA a lively, easy-to-explore “go-to guide” that spotlights their members and makes it simple for visitors (and locals) to discover everything Otter Tail County has to offer — with their fun Otter personality baked into the design. OTCLA said they liked working with us for our technical expertise and standout responsiveness, calling our team intelligent, diligent, creative, and hard working.

How We Like to Work

Clear communication, clean process, and steady progress. We'll guide you through discovery, design, and launch in a way that keeps decisions simple

and momentum strong — so the end result isn't just a new website, but a smoother day-to-day experience for your team too.

4. Our Approach

At CYBERSprout, we don't just build websites — we build partnerships. Our process is rooted in strategy, simplicity, and support. The result? A site that looks professional, is easy to manage, and actually helps you reach your goals.

Here's what our typical process looks like:

Discovery

Planning, strategy, and project setup
Estimated duration: 1-2 weeks

Design

Mockups, and collaborative feedback
Estimated duration: 1-2 weeks

Development

Full website build, integrations, and CMS setup
Estimated duration: 4-8 weeks

Testing & Launch

Review, collaborative feedback, quality assurance, and go-live support
Estimated duration: 1-2 weeks

Note: *These timelines reflect a typical project. We're flexible based on your needs — especially if you'd like more time for internal review, content prep, or feedback along the way.*

5. Investment

We get it — investing in a website is a big decision. That’s why we’ve designed this to do more than just “look good.” The setup and services below are built to make your life easier, save you time, and give you something you're proud to share.

You’ll see everything clearly laid out, from the one-time setup to any ongoing support you choose. No surprises. Just a solid plan built to work for you.

One-Time Setup Items

Core Website Design & Development

12,825

We’ll handle everything needed to plan, design, build, and launch a website that looks great, functions smoothly, and is easy for your team to manage. This includes:

- Sitemap and content structure planning (including primary visitor categories like Eat, Stay, Play, and Events)
- Wireframes and interactive prototypes to map functionality
- Mobile-first custom design tailored to your brand and audience
- Fully responsive development for desktop, tablet, and mobile
- WordPress integration with an easy-to-use content dashboard
- Listings-friendly content setup so your team can easily add and update listings over time
- Custom templates for consistent styling across pages
- SEO-friendly setup to support visibility on search engines
- Google Analytics integration for tracking performance
- Social media feed integration to keep the site connected to your ongoing content
- Comprehensive pre-launch testing and debugging
- Launch support and go-live assistance
- Personalized training so you feel confident managing your site

ADA Compliance Review (optional)

760

Our ADA Compliance Review service helps ensure your website is usable for visitors of all abilities and aligned with WCAG AA accessibility best practices—reducing risk as accessibility expectations and regulations continue to evolve.

- WCAG AA audit + initial fixes on key templates and common usability barriers (ex: headings, contrast, keyboard navigation, forms, and screen reader flow).
- Accessibility enhancements installed, including UserWay for visitor accessibility tools and an AI alt-text generator to help keep images consistently described.
- Accessibility Intent Statement added to the site so visitors have a clear way to report accessibility issues and your organization can address them promptly.

Payment Schedule

The payment schedule below outlines how your investment will be split across the project timeline. Each installment is aligned with key project milestones:

- **25% — Initial Project Deposit**
Due at the start of the project, following acceptance of the partnership agreement
- **50% — Development Installment**
Requested after initial design exploration and before full website development begins
- **25% — Final Balance**
Due before the website is launched

Total Setup Investment

\$13,585

Monthly Services

Hosting & Software Update Plans

As part of your project, you'll select one of the monthly plans below to support your site post-launch.

EssentialPlus

59/month

A dependable foundation for hosting and maintaining your website.

- Managed hosting + content database
- Up to 10 GB of file and database storage
- Up to 20,000 unique visitors per month
- File caching for faster page loading
- SSL certificate for secure data transfer
- Daily backups with recovery plan
- Security and malware scanning + Uptime monitoring
- Routine software updates
- Local SEO schema markup to boost search visibility
- Complimentary technical support for WordPress/plugin issues
- Global Content Delivery Network (CDN)
- Access to 1 Premium Plugin of your choice (included)

Premium

109/month

Our most robust plan — perfect for teams who want more insight and hands-on help.

- Everything in EssentialPlus
- 1 hour/month of CYBERSprout development support (95 value)

Need help choosing? We're happy to walk through what each plan means for your goals and team needs.

+ Software Licences

License	Details	Cost (per month)
EventsCalendar Pro	Enhances your event calendar with advanced features like recurring events, map views, and easy display of organizer and contact details—making it easier for visitors to find and engage with your events.	\$9
Advanced Search & Filtering	A customizable on-site search engine with analytics-driven automatic optimizations, plus dynamic visitor-controlled filters for search results and content grids—ideal for content-rich websites to help users find what they need faster.	\$18
Automated Social Media Feed	Combine feeds from Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, X (Twitter), and YouTube into a single, fast-loading, responsive, and highly customizable social wall with built-in content curation to keep your site fresh and engaging.	\$15
Alternative Text Generator	Automates alt text creation across your website helping ensure accessible content and stronger image SEO without manual effort.	\$7

+ Optional Premium Add-Ons

Add-On	Details	Cost (per month)
ConvertPro	Software geared towards turning visitors into newsletter subscribers and potential leads based on	\$5

	targeting, opt-in message, and integrated forms.	
Retainer Hour(s)	Need some extra help maintaining or adding to your website? Get a \$10/hour discount on as many retainer hours you'd like each month.	\$85/hour

You can modify or cancel add-ons at any time. Your base monthly plan ensures ongoing performance and peace of mind.

6. Why CYBERsprout?

You're not just looking for a website. You're looking for a partner — someone who listens, communicates clearly, and helps you build something that actually works.

Here's why clients choose CYBERsprout:

- **We've helped 300+ clients grow online**
From nonprofits and small businesses to tourism and community organizations, our team has built websites that do more than just "look nice." They make life easier.
- **We build with purpose, not templates**
Every site we create is tailored to your content, goals, and users. No cookie-cutter themes. Just thoughtful design backed by proven strategy.
- **We're here when you need us**
We're a responsive, Midwest-based team who sticks with you. Need a quick update? Have a question months later? You'll get a real person, not a support ticket black hole.



"I appreciated the entire workflow...kudos for making the daunting web rebuild process a great experience."

– Angie, Stevens Community Medical Center

7. Next Steps

We're here to make this process smooth from the start. If you have any questions or want help choosing the right plan or add-ons, just reach out — we're happy to walk through anything with you.

When you're ready to move forward:

1. **Let us know you're ready**
Reply or give us a call. We're excited to get started!
2. **We'll send over the partnership agreement**
This gives us formal permission to begin and includes your initial deposit request.
3. **We'll reserve your development spot**
Once the agreement is signed and deposit is received, we'll lock in your spot and prep for kickoff.
4. **Discovery begins**
We'll start gathering content, refining strategy, and laying the groundwork for your project.

Appendix

Frequently Asked Questions

What is information architecture — and why does it matter?

It's how your website's pages are organized and connected behind the scenes. A clear structure helps both visitors and search engines find what they're looking for. We create a sitemap to guide this process and improve visibility in search results.

Why do you use WordPress?

WordPress powers over 40% of the internet for good reason. It's flexible, customizable, and backed by a huge global community of developers. We use WordPress because it gives you long-term freedom, easy editing tools, and room to grow without starting from scratch.

Where will my website be hosted?

We host your website on fast, secure servers that are fully optimized for WordPress. That means better performance, more uptime, and less worry on your end.

What if something breaks — or I need help later on?

You won't be on your own. As part of your monthly service plan, we're your go-to support team. If something isn't working, or you're not sure how to do something, just reach out. If it's a third-party issue, we'll coordinate with their support too.

How long will it take to show up on Google?

SEO is a long game, and results vary depending on your content, competition, and search terms. While no one can guarantee a spot on page one (not even Google employees), we build your site with SEO best practices in mind and are happy to talk strategy if boosting visibility is a priority for you.

How will I know if anyone is visiting my site?

We install Google Analytics and show you how to use it. You'll be able to track visits, page views, traffic sources, and more — so you know what's working and where there's room to grow.

What if I want to add something new during the project?

No problem! If your needs change during the build, we'll talk it through. Small tweaks are usually no issue, but if it's a larger change outside the original

scope, we'll work with you to adjust the timeline, budget, or deliverables accordingly. If it's not a fit for this phase, we can plan it as a future add-on.

Can I edit my website myself after it launches?

Yes! We build everything in WordPress with an easy-to-use dashboard customized for your site. You'll get training from us so you feel confident making updates on your own — but we're here if you ever need help.

What happens after launch?

Once your site goes live, you'll transition to your chosen monthly plan for ongoing hosting, updates, and support. You'll also receive training and access to key tools like Google Analytics so you can monitor performance.

Do I need to supply all the content?

We'll guide you on what's needed and help structure things, but yes — you'll provide the final copy, images, and other assets unless we've agreed to additional content support. If writing or photography help is needed, let us know — we have great partners for that.

Website Development Proposal



Discover Cottage Grove

February 18th, 2026

Presented by **W.A. Fisher Co**



We're excited to work with you.

Thank you for considering W.A. Fisher - we're excited about the opportunity to work with you on your website development project.

We understand what Discover Cottage Grove is looking for: a website that actually feels like the destination it represents. Your current site isn't working for you, and we're here to change that.

We'll design and develop a fresh, mobile-first tourism website that captures the spirit of Cottage Grove and makes it easy for visitors to plan their trip from the moment they land on the page. The site will be organized around the way travelers naturally think: where to eat, where to stay, what to do, and what's happening.

On the backend, we'll set you up with a user-friendly Wordpress CMS your team can actually use, so updating listings and keeping content fresh won't require a call to us every time (although we're always here to help). We'll also build a solid SEO base with an easy to use plugin to optimize pages, connect your social media feeds, and make sure your analytics are accessible so you can see what's working.

We don't just build websites and move on - we build partnerships. W.A. Fisher Co. has deep roots in Minnesota, and we bring a genuine appreciation for communities like Cottage Grove to every project we take on. We're excited about what this city has to offer, and that enthusiasm will show in every page we develop.

Why work with W.A. Fisher?

We're from small towns in northern Minnesota, so we're not only some of the nicest people you'll ever meet - we answer the phone when you call. We respond to emails usually within an hour, and we'll go out of our way to make sure you're satisfied with our work. Whether a brand refresh, a new website, or you are looking to grow your business with an integrated marketing plan, we promise to do our best work for you – always.

Our Experience

Your W.A. Fisher team collectively has more than 60 years' combined web and marketing experience. Our agency has developed numerous websites for both large and small organizations. No matter your business's size, we can craft the right website to meet your budget and business objectives.

Our professionals possess specific digital project management expertise, user experience, search engine optimization (SEO), content strategy, interactive design, and coding. We carefully listen to your needs, take the time to understand your customers, and help you create a plan to help you reach your goals.

In the tourism industry specifically, we've worked with the following DMOs:

- Twin Cities Gateway (tcgateway.com)
- Visit Detroit Lakes (visitdetroitlakes.com - We did not build the current site but built previous sites and currently manage this one. We are working on a new site for them at this time)
- Discover Shakopee (discovershakopee.org)
- Discover the Range (ironrange.org)
- Visit Little Falls (littlefallsmn.com - Currently working on a new site)
- Red Wing CVB (redwing.org - Currently working on a home page refresh)
- MNTA (tourismmn.com)

Our Methodology

There are several webshops or online website builders that offer “instant websites” or templates cheaply. However, these quick and cheap fixes can often lead to frustration, bad coding, slow websites, and poor user experience.

We understand that your website achieves success when your business goals align with your audience’s needs. We take that information and develop a strategy. We then use that strategy to help you build content, create a custom design, and code your website using today’s best practices.

WAF develops websites using responsive development, meaning we program your website to look great and offer a positive user experience on every device, from mobile to tablet to desktop. Our code is valid, clean, and will load quickly on web browsers.

We also seamlessly integrate Wordpress as a content management system; creating a custom theme designed expressly for the project, utilizing custom post types to organize information, and installing only necessary plugins.

Our Web Team

Kimberly Kladivo

Vice President | Lead Developer

Kimberly, originally from the Lake Vermilion area, brings well over a decade of experience and a passion for web design and development that started back in high school. Today, she specializes in creating custom WordPress websites that not only look great but function flawlessly. A graduate of the College of St. Catherine with a Bachelor of Science in Communication Studies, she combines creative design with clear, effective communication to deliver results that align with your business goals.

With a strong background as a specialized project coordinator, Kimberly knows how to keep complex web projects on track—and stress-free. Her sharp problem-solving skills,

attention to detail, and commitment to exceptional customer service make her an invaluable partner for clients looking to elevate their online presence.

John Kohlhase

Creative Director | Account Executive

With over 35 years of experience in advertising, John brings seasoned expertise and forward-thinking strategy to every project. His background spans creative direction, copywriting, design, digital media management, account leadership, and agency operations—making him a true full-spectrum marketing professional.

Since joining W.A. Fisher Advertising & Printing in 1999, John has been instrumental in growing the agency's capabilities, launching its web design, programming, and digital marketing services. Today, he leads the web department, overseeing both the strategic vision and day-to-day operations, including staff recruitment and management.

John works hands-on with clients in travel, tourism, recreation, and government, delivering smart, effective solutions that move brands forward. His depth of experience and big-picture thinking ensure that clients not only meet their goals—but exceed them.

Brayden Peliska

Advertising Account Executive

Born in Duluth and raised on the Iron Range, Brayden brings hometown heart and professional drive to every project. With a Bachelor's Degree in Media & Communications from Full Sail University, he blends creativity with strategy to deliver meaningful marketing solutions.

Backed by 5 years of hands-on experience, Brayden is committed to helping local businesses grow, connect, and thrive. His passion for self-improvement fuels his work, and

his long-term mission is clear: to strengthen the Iron Range and its surrounding communities—one successful campaign at a time.

Execution

Our Process

We've learned a lot over the past 20 years working with clients and developing hundreds of websites, both large and small. Through our experience, we've created a process that works for both our clients and us. Our approach will ensure clear communication and efficiently manage tasks through each phase of the project.

Project Milestones

We manage your project in phases. Once a stage has been completed and signed off on, we will move to the next step. If you request revisions to a previously approved phase, WAF will provide a change order.

Phase I: Discovery, Site Structure, and Content Gathering

We gather information about your business objectives, your audience, your industry, and any other relevant information crucial to your website through discovery. Once we have this information, we create a strategy that defines your users, what they need, your goals, and how we will meet your business objectives.

Next, we decide on site structure, or sitemap. The sitemap lays out your website's entire organization based on three equally important factors: context, content, and users. It considers your strategy and outlines the navigation, sub-navigation, pages, and notes specific functionality, like search, forms, content and product categories, etc. A preliminary sitemap is attached.

After we have an approved sitemap, we gather content. Depending on your project's scope, this gets completed by various people in your organization or our staff's help. Often, this is the most time-consuming phase of the project. Content includes written copy, photos, videos, documents, product information — all components that we will integrate into your website's design and development.

Once all the final content is gathered and organized, we move to the design phase.

Phase II: Design

After the sitemap is approved and content is gathered, we design the website. We implement content, branding, photos, icons, and all other elements that will live on the site. Depending on the agreed-upon scope, your organization will be allowed to submit one round of revisions before moving into development. Should you need additional modifications, WAF will provide a revised estimate.

Phase III: Development

In the development phase, approved designs are prepared for the developer to start coding the website, taking anywhere from a few to several weeks, depending on its size and functionality. The project manager will keep you updated on progress throughout the process. After an internal review, the site will be ready for testing.

We add all remaining content to the website during this phase. Depending on the project's scope, your team, our team, or a combination of efforts will work on populating the website.

Phase IV: Quality Assurance, Testing, Training & Launch

Before we present the developed website for review, our team internally tests the site to ensure proper functionality and compliance. We make sure the site works well on all devices and a variety of web browsers.

Once we complete testing, our team will present the website for review and schedule training. The one-hour training session will teach you how to use the WordPress CMS to update content, add new pages, create blog posts, etc. We can record training for future reference.

When the site is approved and complete, our team will prepare for launch. Once we launch the website, we monitor it closely for a couple of days to ensure there are no problems.

Note: We don't launch websites after 3:00 pm or on Fridays.

Assumptions

- This estimate includes best-guess time estimates and may need to change due to unforeseen issues, scope changes, false expectations, or requested services that may arise during the Discovery Phase or at any point within the project.
- **Discover Cottage Grove** will provide content. If content development services are needed, WAF can give an estimate. This estimate allows for one round of minor revisions for each deliverable. Should additional modifications be requested, we will provide a revised estimate.
- Static designs will be provided for pages as stated in the design portion of the estimate. These designs will match the existing brand, print, or visual experience based on approved sitemaps and will be used as a basis for programming. If additional designs are requested, we will provide a revised estimate. The developer will make other design decisions during development.
- WAF designs and develops websites in compliance with the current web standards set by the WWW Consortium.
- Keyword research / implementation is not included in this estimate but the site will be built for SEO.
- WAF assumes access to the current site will be provided to export blog posts and events.
- WAF has not included photography in this estimate; should stock photography be needed, we will bill **Discover Cottage Grove** accordingly.
- WAF will build the website with a WordPress CMS, without any block editors and program the site for mobile responsiveness.
- WAF will provide one training session to demonstrate the management of the website.
- Any work or requests that fall outside the scope defined in this proposal or the needed time to complete items will require a separate estimate and approval from **Discover Cottage Grove** before proceeding.

Sitemap

We've based the following sitemap off your current site and information provided. This is preliminary and subject to change.

Primary Nav

- Stay
- Play
 - Farms + Orchards
 - Parks + Trails
 - Sports + Fitness
 - Shopping
 - Nearby Attractions
- Eat + Drink
 - Coffee Shops
 - Quick Bites
 - Pizza
 - Sit Down Restaurants
- Meet
 - Meetings + Events
 - Weddings
- Events
 - Community Events
 - Event Calendar
 - Food Truck Festival
- Blog (Maybe change to Explore)

Secondary Nav

- Home
- About
- Maps
- Guide
- Contact

Website Development Proposal

Estimate

We've based the following estimate on the sitemap in this document. Should the sitemap change, we will provide you with a revised estimate.

Project Coordination	\$3,000
Design Includes time for designing the home page, a listing page and the main blog page.	\$3,000
Programming Includes the development of the site according to designs, responsive programming, Wordpress CMS, and Google Maps integration for listings.	\$6,000
Data Entry Includes entering all content for pages, listings and the transfer of post and event content	\$4,500
Launch / Debugging	\$400
Training One hour of training is included and can be scheduled before or after launch.	\$100
Project Total	\$17,000

Additional Potential Costs

The following are recurring costs associated with hosting, domain renewal and any maintenance done on the website post launch.

- Hosting: \$325 / year
- Domain: \$25/year
- Website Maintenance: \$75/hour

There are no minimums or maintenance plans - you simply pay for the time we spend on your website at your request. We bill this time to the tenth of an hour.

Website Development Proposal

Timeline

The following timeline is a general estimate to complete each phase. Dependencies such as content, approvals, etc., will affect the schedule. When the project begins, we will devise a more detailed plan.

Phase	Timeline
Discovery, Sitemap & Content Gathering	3-4 weeks
Design	2-4 weeks
Development & Content Entry	6-8 weeks
QA, Testing & Launch	1-2 weeks
Total Time	12-18 weeks

Additional Website Work

Ride the Range: ridetherange.com

Mesabi Trail: mesabitrail.com

Boundary Waters Outfitters: boundarywatersoutfitters.com

Burnsville Festival: burnsvillefestival.org

Lake County Chamber: lakecounty-chamber.com

Lodge at Giants Ridge: lodgeatgiantsridge.com

Iron Mining Association: taconite.org

Website Development Proposal

Next Steps

Before we can begin your project, you must sign and date this estimate and provide the first payment. Below highlights the payment schedule:

- One-third payment at the start of the project
- One-third payment after the design phase
- One-third before launch

Once we receive the signed estimate and first payment, we will schedule a Discovery meeting and kickoff your project!

Thank you again for considering W.A. Fisher to create your new website! If you have any questions regarding this estimate, please don't hesitate to call.

Estimate Approval

By signing this document, you, the client, agree to this agreement's terms, including the project scope, estimate, and payment schedule.

Discover Cottage Grove Representative

Date

W.A. Fisher Account Manager

Date

Discover Cottage Grove

Website Proposal - February 17th, 2026



 **EVOLVE CREATIVE**



Your vision brought to life™

www.evolvecreative.com | 218.444.8327

819 Paul Bunyan Drive S, Suite 5, Bemidji, MN 56601

Prepared by **Briana Serbus**, Account Manager
briana@evolvecreative.com

Dear Cottage Grove Team,

As an agency based in Bemidji, Minnesota, we understand the importance and intricacies of local tourism. Our town and the surrounding area is full of resorts and attractions to bring people to the beautiful Northwoods, and we've had the pleasure of working with dozens of tourism bureaus, development authorities, resorts, cities, and outdoors brands across the country. Evolve Creative is excited for the opportunity to help bring travelers to Cottage Grove, MN.

Our passion for tourism combined with the team's comprehensive skill set and experience with similar initiatives makes us the ideal partner for your project. With in-house designers, developers, and marketing specialists, we have the power to give you a fully optimized website — both for users and for search engines — on an open-source platform so you can engage partners and the public while giving your team a scalable solution to serve you for years to come.

Though we've worked with many tourism agencies, we know that each one is unique, and we'd be honored to create a website specific to the people and places of Cottage Grove. Thank you for your consideration. We would love to discuss our proposal more with you and answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Glenn Martin, Managing Director

About Us



Founded in 2004, Evolve Creative is a full-service digital agency that exists to help brands connect deeply and perform reliably online. From our base in Bemidji, Minnesota, we've grown into a team of strategists, designers, and technologists who are passionate about crafting experiences that not only look great, but drive real results.

We believe that every brand has a story worth telling—and in the crowded digital landscape, the difference between being seen and being remembered comes down to intention. Our “human approach” means we take the time to understand your mission, your audience, and what makes your brand unique.

Our Services

Since 2004, Evolve Creative has helped businesses and organizations elevate their web presence by creating modern websites that convert, new brands and logos that capture attention, designs that help communicate strong messaging, and marketing campaigns that convert and have strong, proven ROI. Through these services, we help clients turn visitors into engaged supporters, users, guests, or donors.



Web Design & Development

Custom, strategy-led websites built for usability, performance, and conversion.



Graphic Design & Branding

Visual identities and collateral that reflect your mission and speak to your audience.



Digital Marketing & Advertising

Integrated campaigns (social media, display, search) built around your goals.



SEO & Content Strategy

Long-term growth through optimized content, keyword strategy, and organic traffic building.

Your Project Team

We have a full range of skills to give you the complete package of services.
Meet YOUR team at Evolve Creative!



Glenn Martin
MANAGING DIRECTOR

Client Relationship
Content & Marketing
Leadership



Briana Serbus
ACCOUNT MANAGER

Client Relations
Business Development
Operations



Rachel Harris
PROJECT MANAGER

Project Coordinator
Content Specialist
Client Relations



Alexis Lien
SENIOR DESIGNER

UX Specialist
Campaign Development
Web Design



Aric McGriff
LEAD DEVELOPER

Web Development
WordPress Expert
Beaver Builder Developer

Why Evolve Creative?



1. Tourism & Outdoor Expertise

We understand the power of place. From seasonal patterns to traveler motivations, we know how to craft visuals and messaging that authentically represent destinations and inspire visitors to explore.

2. Hands-On, Transparent Partnership

Your community matters to us. You'll collaborate with a responsive team that values communication, sets clear expectations, and works closely with your stakeholders to keep projects aligned and moving smoothly.

3. Scalable, Experience-Driven Solutions

We build digital ecosystems that adapt as your destination grows, supporting changing campaigns, evolving itineraries, partner listings, and future integrations like booking engines or CRM tools.

4. Metrics & Visitor-Driven Results

We design with outcomes in mind. From improving visitor guide downloads to lifting organic traffic and supporting partner engagement, our work focuses on measurable growth that supports your tourism economy.

Project Overview

Discover Cottage Grove is looking to refresh the design and development of their official tourism website, discovercottagegrove.com. Their website serves as the primary destination hub for their local area, promoting outdoor recreation, nearby attractions, places to stay and eat, events, and special occasion venues. Due to the dated age of the website it no longer reflects their current brand identity, modern functionalities, or seamless user experience for their travelers.

The current site still holds strong and relative content, but the design, navigation, and mobile experience are ready for a modern update that makes it easier for visitors to explore, plan, and engage. The site is missing best practice standards for destination marketing tactics, on-page SEO, and an easy-to-manage content management system for their directory listings.

The client's primary goal for this project is to redesign the website to reflect their latest brand style, while also elevating the visual experience to inspire travel. Needing a website that simplifies trip planning with easy to navigate categories and supports their local partners through conversational content. Just as important, they need a platform with a user-friendly backend, like WordPress, so the staff can manage directory listings and day to day updates.

Our Solution



Evolve Creative loves partnering with tourism organizations as it allows us to tap into our own outdoor, adventurous mindset when thinking through content strategy, imagery, and user flow. For Discover Cottage Grove, we will design and develop a modern Wordpress website with a fully responsive layout that makes it easy for visitors to discover all the important *Eat, Stay, and Play* locations. We will work primarily with existing content, thoughtfully reorganizing and editing it to improve clarity, navigation, and flow while letting Cottage Grove's visuals take center stage.

While redesigning your website, we will keep a mobile-first approach to ensure your website will present seamlessly across all devices. We will implement an easy to manage events calendar, custom post types for listing partners, and simple online forms for visitor inquiries and newsletter signups. Behind the scenes, we will apply current on page SEO best practices, including considerations for emerging AI driven search and discovery, along with Google Analytics 4 integration to support future insights and reporting.

Evolve Creative will be your strategic partner in redesigning and developing a website that feels inviting, intuitive, and built for the future. Cottage Grove has incredible stories, places, and experiences to share, and we are excited to help bring them to life online.

Key Deliverables

Content Audit & Sitemap Restructure:

Rather than rewriting content from scratch, we'll take a content-first approach by auditing, editing, and restructuring current content to improve clarity, flow, and engagement. Content will be organized around visitor intent, helping users quickly find inspiration and then explore related experiences, events, and destinations. Clear calls to action, cross-linking between pages, and visual storytelling will encourage users to continue exploring and begin building a travel plan.

Dynamic Experience Landing Pages:

We will build flexible, experience-driven page templates within WordPress that allow staff to easily manage and update content. Each landing page will bring together relevant information such as descriptive content, directory listings, featured attractions, related events, photo galleries, and maps. These pages will also be optimized for marketing efforts, making it easier to promote specific experiences and attractions while targeting visitors based on their interests.

Robust Events Calendar:

Using The Events Calendar Pro plugin, we will implement a robust events system that allows for manual event entry and event submissions from community partners. Submissions will flow through an administrative approval process to ensure accuracy and quality before publishing. Events can be categorized, tagged, and displayed across the site, including on relevant experience pages, helping visitors discover what is happening during their stay and encouraging longer visits.

Mobile-First, Accessible & SEO-Optimized:

We will design and develop the site with a mobile-first approach, ensuring layouts, navigation, and content perform seamlessly across phones, tablets, and desktops. Accessibility best practices such as proper heading structure, color contrast, readable typography, and keyboard-friendly navigation will be incorporated throughout the site. From an SEO standpoint, we'll implement on-page best practices including optimized page titles, meta descriptions, structured headings, internal linking, image alt text, and schema considerations that support both traditional search engines and emerging AI-driven discovery tools.

Our Approach

At Evolve Creative, we specialize in building custom WordPress websites designed specifically for organizations like yours. We take the time to understand your goals, target audience, and organizational identity, then create a strategic plan that brings your vision to life. Our focus is on user-intelligent design, ensuring your website is responsive across all devices and built with your visitors' experience in mind. We understand that your staff needs tools that are intuitive and easy to manage, which is why we incorporate features like front-facing page editors, drag-and-drop capabilities, site-wide search functionality, and filterable fields into every website we build. **What you can expect for the duration of the project:**

Phase 1: Discovery & Strategy

A kickoff call to learn about you, your brand, your business and your offerings, while also laying down the foundational goals for the site.

Phase 2: Sitemap & Wireframes

We analyze your current content and website navigation to figure out what's working and what's not—providing us with a content blueprint to follow.

Phase 3: Design & Branding

Your brand comes to life through a design that authentically represents your organization while thoughtfully incorporating ADA accessibility best practices.

Phase 4: Development

All the pieces come together as our team constructs every area of your website. You now have a beautiful and functional website that is easy to use on all devices.

Phase 5: Testing & Launch

Your new website will go through several rounds of rigorous testing to ensure no details were left behind and the website is responsive on all screen sizes.

Phase 6: Training & Support

You'll receive a comprehensive training post launch. Hosting your website with us, you'll receive ongoing support to keep your website secure and fully operational.

Project Timeline

Estimated 14 - 16 weeks

Outlined on the next page is a proposed timeline for your project. This timeline allows for thorough planning, thoughtful design, comprehensive testing, and proper staff training to ensure your new website serves Discover Cottage Grove effectively for years to come.

Project Timeline

Disclaimer: Duration is subject to change due to client response time and review time. Content and design deadlines overlap to keep things moving. The project will not move forward into development until ALL content is finalized.

Milestones	Duration
Discovery & Strategy	1 Week
Sitemap & Content	3-4 Weeks
Design & Branding	2-4 Weeks
Development	5-8 Weeks
Pre-Launch Testing & QA	2-3 Weeks
Launch	1 Week (<i>predicting June 2026*</i>)
Training & Support	PRE & POST LAUNCH

**Predicted launch date may vary based on kickoff date.*



Project Scope

Website Design & Development

We have selected WordPress for your web platform because of the ability to utilize various plugins and features available for all your needs, such as forms, easy editing, photo and video galleries, and any custom integrations needed in the future.

Scope of Work

- Evolve will design & develop a website using UX strategy to drive audience engagement.
- Site architecture and navigation strategy provided by Evolve.
- Evolve will write suggested content for Homepage.
- Content organization and optimization, Evolve will prepare content wireframe documents for any interior pages that need updating.
 - Client to provide final approval of all content.
- Migration and transfer of any existing content, blogs, documents, images, and videos.
- Migration of all directory listings (approx. 150) into custom post types.
- Mockup of homepage (desktop & mobile) + 2 interior pages, demonstrating a static visual design that aligns with your organization's brand & identity.
 - Additional mockups available for \$750 / page.
- Approved design will be applied to the site theme and implemented across any other pages of the site during development.
- Custom WordPress theme applied to website environment & Beaver Builder (front-end builder) theme.
- Responsive website built for all devices (Desktop, Tablet & Mobile).
- Site-wide search capabilities and filterable fields for posts & directory listings.
- Intuitive intake forms for Visitor Guide, general inquiries, and newsletter sign up.
- Installation & setup of Event Calendar Pro for event highlights on your website.
- Social Media feed via Instagram
- Initial Search Engine Optimization (SEO) - best practice of coding, page meta data, and image optimization.
- Website launch with Google Analytics installation and submission to Google Search Console.
 - GTM, social pixel and Google Ads integration.
- Quality assurance testing across all devices and browsers.
- 1 hour of training in WordPress and Beaver Builder.
 - Complete with guides & video resources.

Project Cost

Description	Cost
Website Design and Development	\$18,000
Event Calendar Pro Installation & Setup	\$750
Software plugin licenses <ul style="list-style-type: none">Event Calendar Pro - Showcase upcoming events (\$12 / month)	\$12 / month
Hosting + Monthly Maintenance <ul style="list-style-type: none">Covers monthly plugin updates, maintenance, and security.Standard website edits will be completed at our hourly rate of \$160/hr.	\$95 / month.
PROJECT INVESTMENT	\$18,750

Payment Schedule:

Upon approval of this proposal, an electronic contract will be sent over and a non-refundable deposit of 30% of the estimate is required before work can begin. The next 30% of the project will be billed after the homepage design is approved, and the final 40% will be due before launch.

[Proposal estimate valid for 90 days – projects beyond 90 days will require a new quote]

Hosting Plans

Standard Hosting - \$95 / month

We recommend hosting your site with Evolve. As part of our hosting plan, you'll continue to be able to use Evolve's software licenses for our theme and plugins, and we will keep the software plugins up-to-date and monitor the website. There are also daily backups in your account. Benefits of Hosting With Evolve Creative, the following items are included in your monthly hosting package at no additional cost:

- Use of our software licenses and plugins
- Daily backups
- Brute force protection with a built-in web application firewall (WAF)
- Automatic server security updates
- Free SSL Certificate
- Monthly updates to your website, to ensure you're always running the latest versions and your site is secure
- Free & Priority restoration in the unlikely event that your site gets hacked.

Premium Hosting - \$500 / month

With our premium hosting, you will receive all the same benefits of the regular hosting, as well as monthly website traffic reports, and up to 3 hours of support and updates per month on your website (a \$480 value). These updates can cover anything from new images uploaded, changes to the website, contact form exports, small edits and technology support, including website, email, and domain questions.

An aerial photograph of a city at dusk, featuring a large body of water on the right and a multi-story building complex with a parking lot in the foreground. The image is overlaid with a dark teal gradient and a vertical orange line on the left side.

Portfolio

View our full portfolio at
evolvecreative.com/work



Company Expertise

Our clients choose to work with us for the simple fact we just get them — their industry, their audience, and their creative needs. Living in the northwoods, we have that small town vibe but big time talent—specializing in branding, website design and development, product packaging and digital marketing. Our passion is fueled by the pursuit to handcraft the most daring, innovative and resilient brands. We've got the creative spark to ignite your vision.

Preview similar sites we've built that match your needs and industry, you can also explore our portfolio further at

<https://www.evolvecreative.com/work>

Visit Winona

[visitwinona.com](https://www.visitwinona.com) | Launched May 2025

Winona is a town that's packed with unique entertainment offerings, leaving their visitors excited to return. They needed a website that could keep up! Before working with Evolve Creative, their site struggled to load properly (or even at all), integrate with their event calendar, perform organically in Google searches, and utilize a user-friendly navigation. The new website needed to showcase the wide range of entertainment offerings to each of its audience types, and we were excited to bring that to life together.

Services Utilized

- Strategy
- Content
- Design
- Web Development

Industry Focus

- Tourism
- Destination Marketing Organization



VISIT
WINONA
MINNESOTA



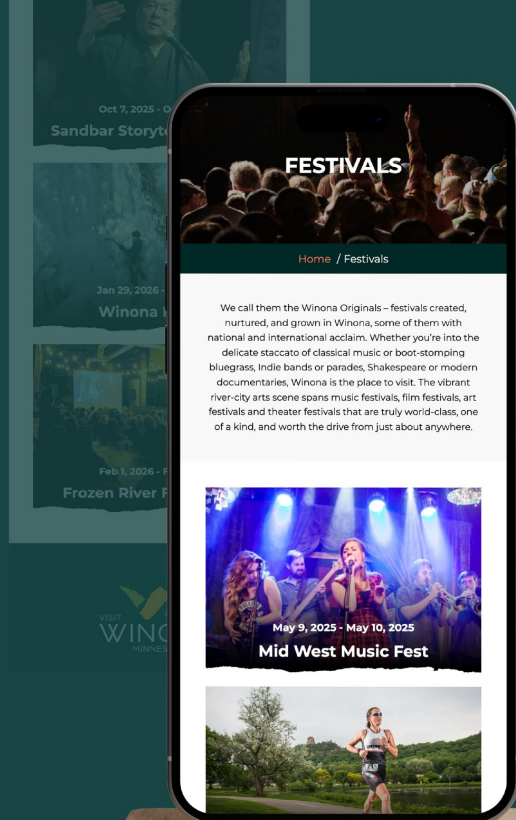
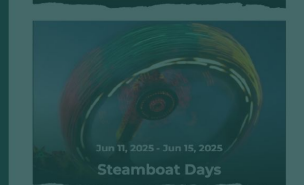
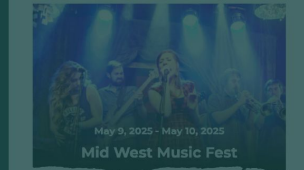
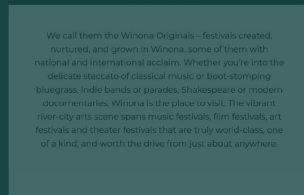
Visit Winona (cont.)

Notable Features

- Local business directory
- Filterable categories for "things to do"
- Seasonal pages to highlight featured attractions
- Events Calendar
- Filterable blogs
- Newsletter Sign-up Integration
- Comprehensive FAQ area

Outcomes

- We created a significantly faster website than their previous one, which decreased the bounce rate by 12%
- Page views increased year-over-year
- The average engagement time on the website increased by 11% year over year



Visit Bemidji

visitbemidji.com | Launched May 2024

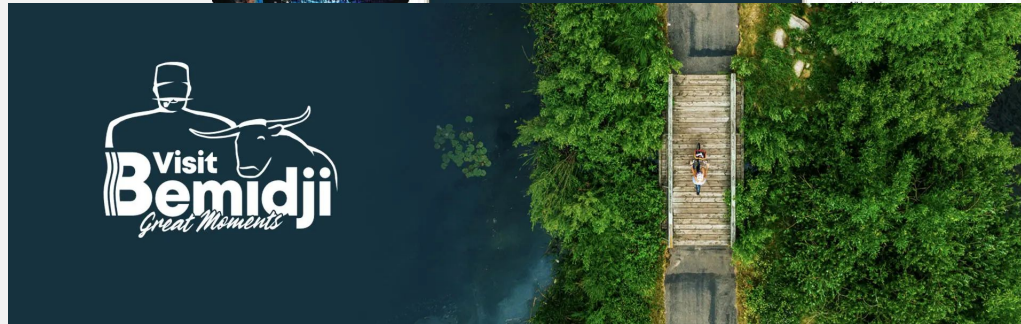
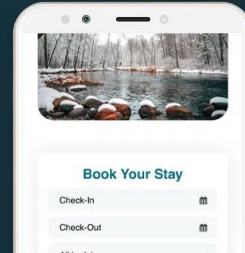
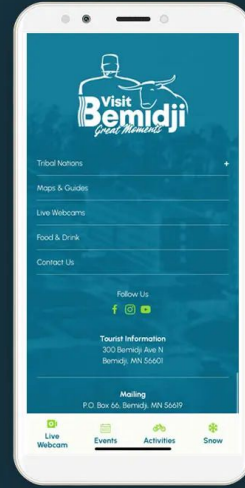
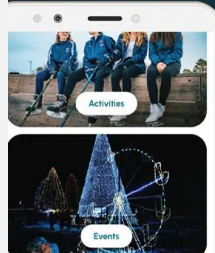
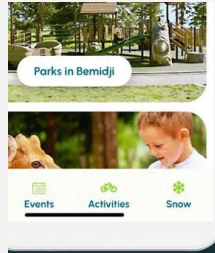
As the tourist marketing team of our community, Visit Bemidji's mission is to strengthen our region's economy through the promotion of travel and tourism.

Visit Bemidji came to us to improve their visual marketing through videography and photography. In addition, we partnered to create them a brand new, custom website design!

This website is a comprehensive example of our team's full-rounded skill set. Starting with elaborate design and detailed development, we were able to bring the site to the next level with show-stopping photos and video content. The website is also fully optimized for a mobile user experience. We are excited to partner with Visit Bemidji and show off our agency's hometown in its full up north glory!

Services Utilized

- Design
- Development
- Video
- Photography
- Social Media



02

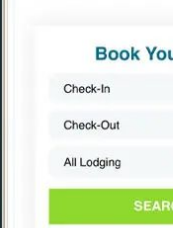
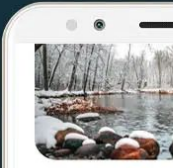
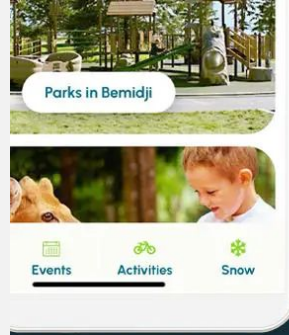
Visit Bemidji (cont.)

Notable Features

- Highly customized website with an emphasis on finding lodging
- Design changes by season
- Event calendar with the ability for people to submit events
- Heavy improvements in SEO
- Social media integration for their weekly 'Things To Do' reels
- Podcast integration

Outcomes

- Organic traffic increased 57% year-over-year, looking at May 2024-Apr 2025 compared to May 2023-Apr 2024
- Overall site traffic increased 45% year-over-year
- General increase in engagement on the site with new website features, such as the events calendar and Things To Do section



Discover Jamestown

discoverjamestownnd.com | Launched May 2025

Discover Jamestown's previous website was outdated, off brand, difficult to navigate, and didn't showcase relative events and attractions. They came to Evolve Creative to develop a strategic approach to attracting online visitors to their local town, needing a website that could speak directly to their audience of families, history seekers, and adventure enthusiasts. The result? A playful, easy-to-use website that radiates North Dakota hospitality.

Services Utilized

- Strategy
- Content
- Design
- Web Development

Industry Focus

- Tourism
- Destination Marketing Organization

03



Discover Jamestown (cont.)

Notable Features

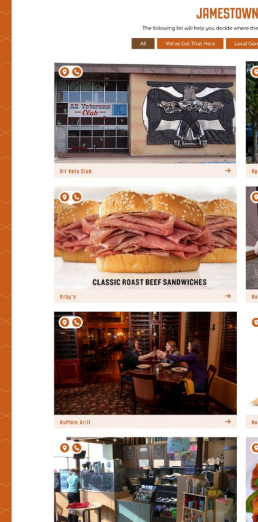
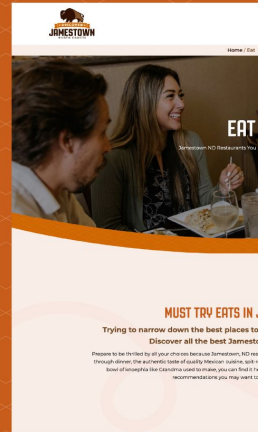
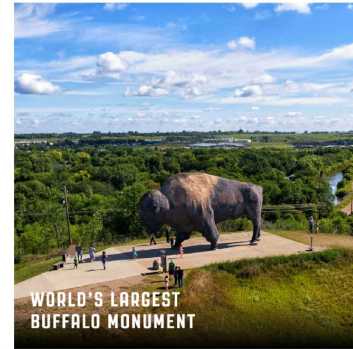
- Local business directory
- Conversion tracking integration for SEO, social media, and ad campaigns, tracking clicks from campaigns to partner sites
- Strong emphasis on SEO

Outcomes

- Reflects their modern rebrand
- Supports the legacy of Jamestown, ND
- Demonstrates personality, excitement, and experience through design
- Restructured the architecture of the navigation to easily guide their viewers through the town like a true experience
- Strategically showcased events and attractions to draw engagement
- Highlighted the activities that makes Jamestown more than a "Pit-Stop" but as a place to stay

THE BUFFALO HAS PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN AMERICAN HISTORY.

Towering over the prairie stands a 26' buffalo monument welcoming visitors from around the world. Snap a selfie with this big guy named "Dakota Thunder". Learn more about the role of buffalo in American history while you tour the North American Bison Discovery Center and look out over the live herd roaming nearby.



References

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Rolando Felizola

Executive Director
Visit Fergus Falls

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218-446-0002
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Out-of-Scope Addendum

The following items are **not included** in the base project scope and will require separate approval and pricing if requested:

- **Third-Party Integrations** – Any integrations not listed in the project scope (e.g., new booking systems, CRMs).
- **Additional Pages or Content** – Extra website pages, blogs, photography, or video beyond the agreed content plan.
- **Post-Launch Feature Requests** – New functionality or redesign of completed components after project sign-off.
 - Up to 30 Days post launch we will handle anything that may have been missed.
- **Ongoing Marketing Services** – Monthly SEO, advertising campaigns, or analytics reporting beyond initial setup.
- **Emergency or Rush Changes** – Work requested outside the agreed timeline or resources.


Any out-of-scope work will be documented via a **Project Change Order / Out-of-Scope Addendum**, including revised pricing, timeline, and approvals.



Thanks

Contact Us

 evolvecreative.com

 briana@evolvecreative.com

 EVOLVE CREATIVE

Discover Cottage Grove Website

02/17/2026

The
Cultural
North

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Executive Summary

The most effective tourism websites combine strong visual storytelling with clear, intuitive trip-planning tools.

As visitor expectations continue to evolve, destination websites must do more than showcase attractions—they must actively support trip planning and contribute to the visibility of the region.

Our proposal outlines the development of a modern, mobile-first tourism platform designed to inspire travel while simplifying the path from discovery to decision. We plan to combine impactful visuals with a structured, searchable content system. This will allow the new website to serve as both a digital gateway and a practical planning tool for visitors exploring Cottage Grove.

At the core of our approach is a scalable content architecture built around organized listings, events, dining, lodging, and “things to do.” This framework ensures the site is intuitive for users while strengthening long-term search visibility through structured categorization and technical SEO best practices. Rather than functioning as a static brochure, the platform becomes a living resource that grows in value as new content is added.

Equally important, the site will be built with your team in mind. A user-friendly CMS and structured editing system will allow Discover Cottage Grove to manage listings, publish updates, and monitor analytics without relying on technical support for day-to-day changes.

The result will be a website that serves as a digital partner to Cottage Grove’s goal of inspiring travel.

Our experience in the tourism industry

While we’ve partnered with organizations across a range of industries, our work within the tourism sector has uniquely shaped how we approach destination websites. We understand that a tourism site must function as more than a promotional platform — it must actively support trip planning, showcase local partners equitably, and guide visitors from discovery to decision.

This experience has refined our approach around balancing inspiration with utility: compelling visuals that spark interest, paired with structured content systems that make exploring, filtering, and planning seamless.

Company Profile

What is “The Cultural North?”



On the surface, The Cultural North is a design agency based in Duluth, MN, specializing in creating world-class websites, branding, graphic design, and video production.

But it's in the name “The Cultural North” that our deeper calling comes from and is applied every day. It comes from asking ourselves the question “What is north on the compass of culture?” Nowhere does that apply more than the city that we live in and love. Which leads to the vision that we have for Duluth—where the most people possible, both within and visiting, are thriving.

All of that requires great storytelling backed by a great strategy.

We believe culture emanates from the organizations within a community and we desire to help display that culture to the world through amazing design and creative digital tools.

Throughout this proposal you'll see not just how we execute powerful campaigns, but how the very heart of Duluth is at the center of our ambitions with it.

Our primary teammates



Beau Walsh

Creative Director & Founder

Passionate about all things creative, Beau Walsh is always in search of the most memorable and effective ways of communicating ideas—from aligning people's visions, to crafting board games and writing music.



Ethan Gibbs

Director of Web Development & Multimedia Specialist

Ethan Gibbs is a master at taking on new challenges, grasping the essentials, and synthesizing them into a bigger picture in web development and filmmaking along with his personal pursuit of music in his own recording studio.

Some clients we've worked with



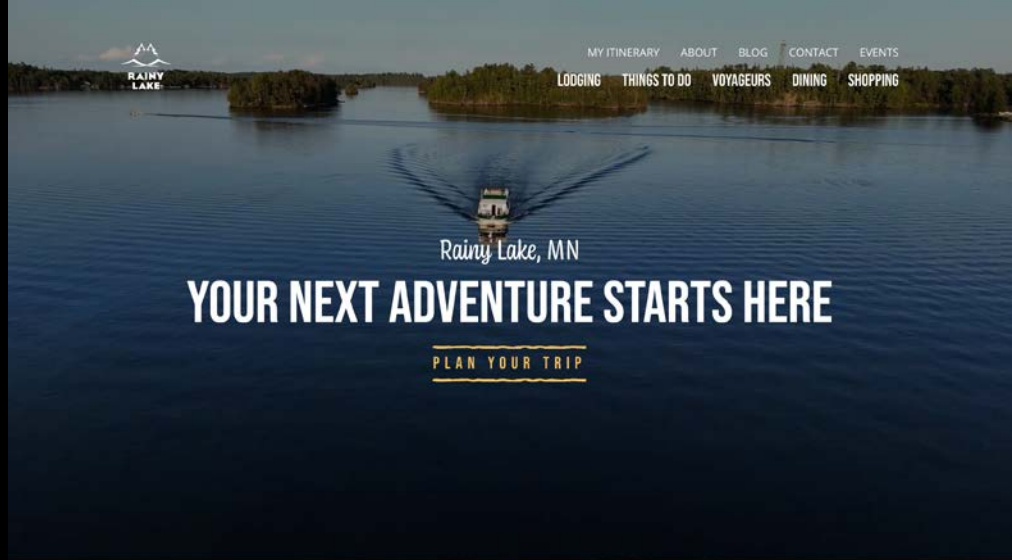
CEDAR AND STONE

Example 1

International Falls, Rainy Lake and Ranier Convention and Visitors Bureau

Built for impact

A new site launching in Q1 of 2026, the Rainy Lake website will be our strongest example of a project that directly relates to the tourism industry. Working with their team has been a true delight as we've come to understand the nature of their region and how to translate that into a combination of features and design.



Everything categorized

Our solution for Rainy Lake involved building a database of all experiences in the region. Its purpose is to serve as a utility for visitors as well as provide a landing page for every listing and an opportunity for search engines to find the site.


The system appears robust from the outside—but on the inside it is a simple collection of posts with custom fields and taxonomies. This allows for easy updating over time, and a framework that can easily expand as things change.

Browse all activities


KEYWORD

CATEGORIES


LOCATIONS




Outdoorsman Headquarters




Haven Co.




No Place Like Home




Modern Relic




Flowerchild Florals




Hometown Hobby



Cottage Hideaway




NorthWild Books



Rainy Lake Pharmacy

SHOPPING + ADD TO ITINERARY



FLOWERCHILD FLORALS

Flowerchild Florals offers beautiful, thoughtfully designed floral arrangements and gifts.

Shop Hours
 Monday - Friday 9:00am-7:00pm
 Saturday 10:00am-2:00pm

📍 532 4th St, International Falls, MN, United States, 56649


📞 (218) 283-1970

[VISIT SITE](#)

MY ITINERARY

Build out your perfect trip to the area by adding things to do.

📄 Download PDF



Chocolate Moose

📍 2nd Ave W, International Falls, MN 56649

[VISIT SITE](#)

➖ REMOVE FROM ITINERARY

Example 2

Destination Duluth

Building community

The goal of the Destination Duluth website was fully centered around their mission: To create and curate content that inspires, educates, and connects people to Duluth, showcasing it's unique quality of place.

The screenshot shows the top section of the Destination Duluth website. At the top left is the logo for "DESTINATION Duluth" with a blue and yellow circular icon. To the right are social media icons for Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. Below the logo is a featured article titled "Climbers Take to the Ice at Quarry Park" with an image of two people ice climbing. Next to it is another article titled "20+ Years in the Making, Korey Dropkin is Gold Medal Game Bound" featuring a photo of a man and a woman. Below these is a third article titled "TINA - The Tina Turner Musical Brings Legend to Life" with a photo of a woman in a musical costume. On the right side of the page, there is a navigation menu with links for "Discover Life Up North", "Our Stories", "Merch", "About", "2027 Calendar", "Donate", "Events", and "Contact". At the bottom right, there is a newsletter sign-up form with an "Email" input field and a "Send" button, and a small advertisement for Essentia Health.

A large banner image showing a ship in a lock, with the text "Discover Life UP NORTH" overlaid in a stylized font. Below the text is a blue button that says "See what our region has to offer".

A section titled "Meet the people" with a yellow button labeled "Meet others". It features two photos: one of a man and a woman smiling, and another of a road sign that says "LAKESIDE" next to a road with yellow flowers.

Destined for Duluth - Essentia's Tonya Loken is an Extrovert with a Capital E

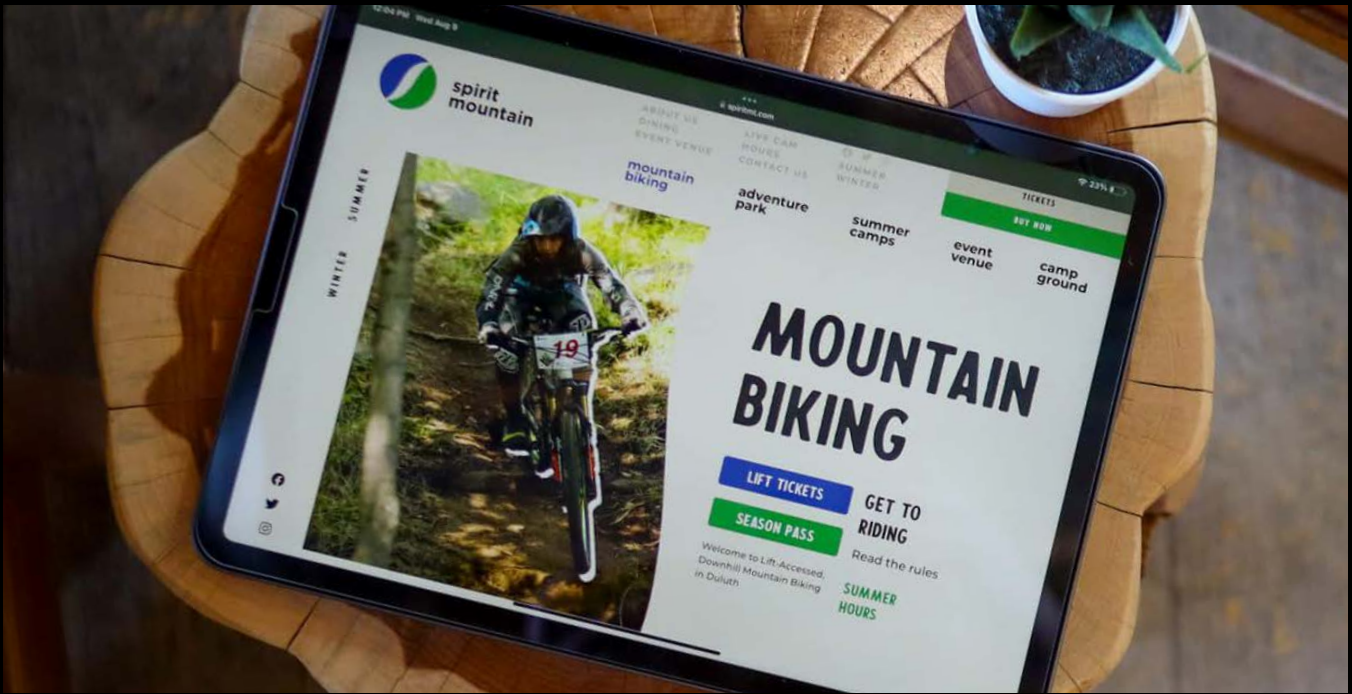
LOVL Series - Lakeside/Lester Park Blends Recreation and Community

A section titled "About Destination Duluth" with a large yellow circular graphic behind the text. Below the title is a button that says "Learn more about us" with a right-pointing arrow. At the bottom, there are three links: "Our story", "Board", and "Partners". The background of this section is a sunset over the Duluth cityscape and water.

Our purpose is to foster a connected, vibrant, and growing community.

Other Examples

Spirit Mountain



Bent Paddle Brewing Company

Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra



Our Approach

Given our experience in a very similar project, we believe we have a refined approach that focuses on building a scalable tourism platform that inspires visitors, simplifies trip planning, and empowers your team to manage content with confidence. Every phase – from design to development – is structured to support long-term visibility, partner representation, and seasonal marketing initiatives.

Modern Visual Design

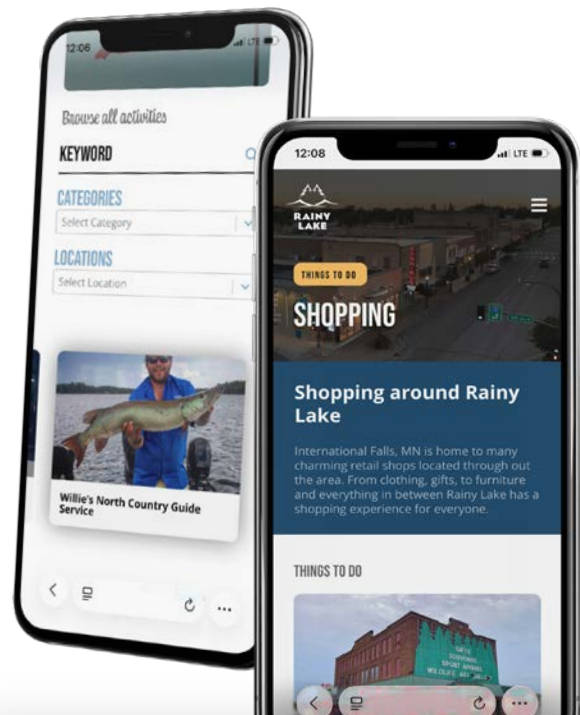
We design mobile-first experiences tailored specifically to tourism audiences. With the majority of visitors discovering destinations through search and social on their phones, the site will prioritize immersive imagery, intuitive browsing, and clear calls to action that guide users from inspiration to itinerary.

Intuitive User Function

The website will be structured around clear visitor pathways – Eat, Stay, Play, and Events – supported by a robust “Things To Do” directory system. Custom taxonomies and filters will allow users to quickly discover attractions, build personalized plans, and explore the region with ease.

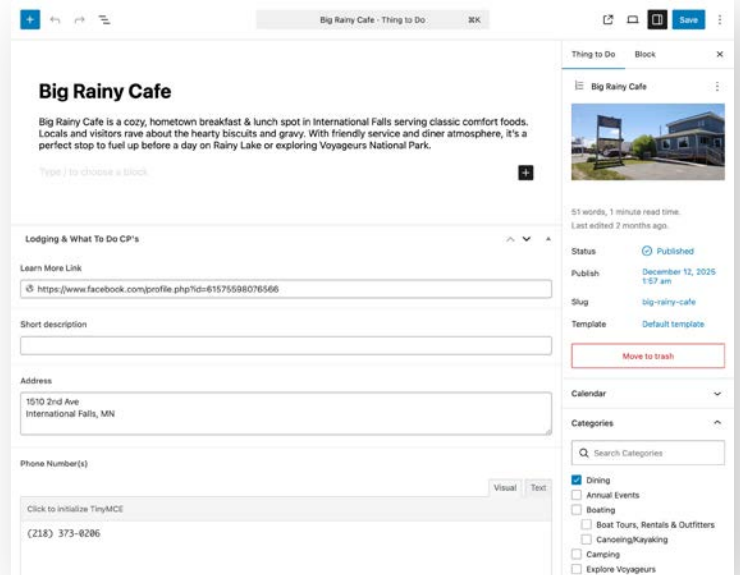
Accessibility & Performance

The website will be developed following accessibility best practices and optimized for performance to ensure fast load times across devices – critical for mobile-first tourism audiences.



CMS Integration

Every listing is built in Wordpress through custom fields which serve two primary purposes: 1) keeping content unified and conforming to a consistent template, and 2) making it very simple for your team to edit. This allows people without a technical or design background to have everything they need to edit the content of the website by simply filling out basic form fields.



SEO & Analytics

Content Strategy & Search Visibility

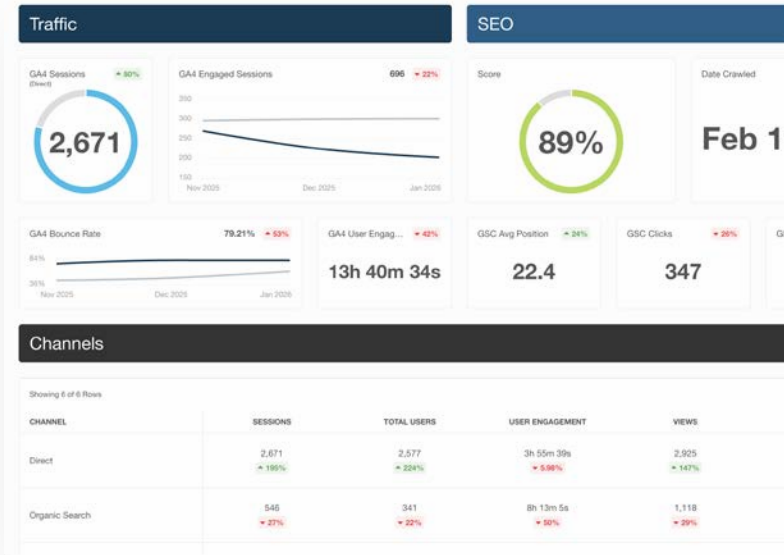
A successful tourism website is built on structured, discoverable content. Rather than treating listings as simple pages, we design a content architecture using custom post types and taxonomies that allow attractions, events, dining, and lodging to be categorized, filtered, and cross-referenced throughout the platform.

This structure improves internal linking, supports searches tied to location and categories, and allows the site to grow stronger as new content is added over time.

Combined with on-page SEO best practices and schema implementation for events and listings, this strategy positions the site as a long-term organic visibility engine – not just a brochure website.

Dashboard Access

The site will be built with a strong technical SEO foundation, including optimized page structure, schema for events and listings, and sitemap configuration. Integrated analytics dashboards will provide visibility into traffic sources, seasonal trends, and visitor behavior – empowering data-informed marketing decisions.



Integration

Seamless integration with social media platforms allows your digital presence to remain cohesive and dynamic. Live feeds and embedded content reinforce brand activity while encouraging cross-channel engagement.

BENT PADDLE BREWING CO. KEEP UP WITH US

Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter

Sign up for our Email Newsletter!

First Name: LastName:

Email:

Sign Up!

BEERY MUCH

218 DAYS PARTY
THE 4th ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF THE GOLD NORTH
SATURDAY FEB 21 | 6-10pm
LIVE MUSIC @ 7pm
IAN HOPPS ONE-NIGHT-ONLY
EXTRA SAUCY FUNK BAND
MENTION 218 DAYS RECEIVING \$1 OFF
BUY 2 PACKS GET 1 FREE

Collage images include: Bent Paddle beer cans, a sunset, a man with a beer, a beer glass, a snow-covered scene with boots, a beer menu, a dog with a beer, and a snowy beach.

Budget

Recommended Scope & Investment

Base website cost	Every project begins with our platform foundation, which includes discovery meetings, content strategy, project management, structured check-ins, staging environment setup, required software licensing, and custom training materials for your team.
Custom Page Designs	Custom-designed landing pages built around your brand and the content that will have the greatest impact on visitors. Each design includes a full mockup and structured feedback process prior to development to ensure alignment. (Includes: Home Page, About Page)
Curated Page Designs	Strategically assembled page layouts using our design system to create engaging, content-forward category experiences. (Includes: Lodging Page, Dining Page)
Blog	Custom-built templates for blog posts, archives, and category feeds fully integrated throughout the site to support storytelling and SEO growth.
Events	A fully integrated events calendar with options to sync external calendars, manage custom events, and filter listings for improved visitor discovery.
“Things To Do” System	The custom posts, custom fields, and categorization needed to create a large-scale directory of organized listings. This includes the implementation of around the first 20-30 listings if we are given the information for those.
Itinerary Functionality	Interactive itinerary functionality allowing users to save listings, build personalized trip plans, and generate printable summaries of their selections.
Social Feed Package	Live social media feed integration, displaying the latest posts in a responsive format across all devices.
Custom Map Illustration	Design and development of a custom illustrated, interactive map highlighting regional landmarks, attractions, and key destinations to enhance trip planning and visual storytelling.
On-Page SEO	Technical SEO framework including optimized page structure, metadata configuration, sitemap submission, and schema setup for events and listings.

\$27,500
Project Total

This recommended investment aligns with the objectives and functionality outlined in this RFP. We can scale features up or down as needed to meet evolving priorities.

Ongoing Support & Maintenance

Our ongoing support and maintenance plans ensure your website remains secure, up-to-date, and performing at its best long after launch. Each tier is designed to provide the appropriate level of oversight and strategic involvement based on your team's needs – from foundational hosting and security to ongoing performance insights and search optimization. All plans are month-to-month and can be adjusted as needs evolve.

Essential \$175/month

- Hosting
- Core updates
- Security monitoring
- Backups
- Uptime monitoring
- Software licenses

Growth \$275/month

- Everything in Essential
- Analytics & SEO Dashboard
- Monthly emailed reports
- 1 hour per month of Support Tickets

Strategic \$450/month

- Everything in Essential & Growth
- Ongoing on-page SEO refinement
- Monthly performance insights & recommendations

Payment Schedule

Payments are structured to align with key project milestones, ensuring clarity and accountability throughout the process. The initial deposit secures scheduling and begins the discovery phase, with subsequent payments tied to design approval and final launch.

50%
deposit upon
agreement

25%
Upon design
approval

25%
Upon project
launch

Additional Project Assumptions

- Content and imagery will be provided by Discover Cottage Grove unless otherwise agreed.
- Initial directory population includes approximately 20–30 listings.
- Timeline assumes timely feedback (within the given business days).
- Third-party integrations may require separate subscription fees.
- Upon final payment, Discover Cottage Grove retains full ownership of the website and content.

Timeline

The timeline below outlines the structured phases required to deliver a complete tourism platform. Dates may adjust based on feedback cycles, but our team will remain aligned with agreed-upon milestones throughout the project.

	Task	Business Days	Example Dates
DISCOVERY	Project Kickoff Both teams meet to go over the additional requirements for the project, and aligning on what additional tasks need to be shared to prepare for the future steps.	Day 1	03/02/26
	Content Gathering Based on the kickoff, various team members from both parties may be tasked with compiling additional information, content, and imagery.	5 Days	03/09/26
	User Experience Alignment Our team will compile examples of inspiration for both aesthetics and functionality to ensure alignment on future decisions for the website.		
DESIGN	Home Page Design Our team will provide a full mockup of the home page that incorporates all direction and content given.	10 Days	03/23/26
	Revisions Your team will tasked with compiling all feedback into one location. From there, our team will provide the required revisions.	5 Days	03/30/26
	Interior Pages We will provide a full mockup of any remaining internal custom pages as well as any templated content types—sent over in a bundle and ready for revisions.	5 Days	04/06/26
	Revisions Your team will tasked with compiling all feedback into one location. From there, our team will provide the required revisions.	5 Days	04/13/26
DEVELOPMENT	Platform Development & Integration Our team will build out the website on a development server, delivering the draft that is ready for interaction and feedback	15 Days	05/04/26
	Review Meeting & Training Prior to launch, our teams will meet to review any final needs for the website. We will also train your team to edit the site and provide a window of time for you to make any edits you need to the text and images.	1 Day	05/05/26
	Final Edits, SEO, & Quality Assurance While your team is making any tweaks to the content you would like, ours will be doing a deep review and quality check throughout the site.	5 Days	05/12/26
	Launch Our teams will coordinate to gain access to the domain and DNS settings in order to launch the website on our server.	3 Days	05/12/26
	Support /Maintenance Setup Our team will then initiate the necessary support solutions to provide all of the ongoing services to the website.	3 Days	05/20/26

Total Timeline: Roughly 10-11 Weeks



Thank you

Beau Walsh
Creative Director
Beau@CulturalNorth.us
(612) 250-6510
CulturalNorth.us

Cottage Grove Convention and Visitors Bureau
2026 Budget Worksheet

FINAL BUDGET

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	2025 Budget	Notes
Revenue															
Lodging Tax at 3%															
3840 Lodging Tax	\$ 4,250.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,600.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 5,700.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 71,550.00	\$72,276.00	Based on a 63% occupancy rate
Total Lodging Tax Revenue	\$ 4,250.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,600.00	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 5,700.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 71,550.00		
Other Revenue															
3324 Grants					\$ 2,000.00								\$ 2,000.00	\$10,000.00	
3574 Visitors Guide Ad Sales	\$ 4,500.00												\$ 4,500.00	\$5,095.00	
3575 Food Truck Fest Food Vendor Payments						\$ 3,225.00	\$ 5,225.00	\$ 5,225.00	\$ 2,225.00				\$ 15,900.00	\$8,750.00	
3812 Food Truck Fest Donations and Sponsors						\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00				\$ 8,000.00	\$2,750.00	
3816 Refunds & Reimbursements													\$ -		
Total Other Revenue	\$ 4,500.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 5,225.00	\$ 7,225.00	\$ 7,225.00	\$ 4,225.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 30,400.00		
Total Revenue	\$ 8,750.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,600.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 13,225.00	\$ 15,225.00	\$ 15,225.00	\$ 9,925.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 101,950.00		
EXPENSES															
Personal Services															
4100-4144 Salary, PERA, FICA, Health Insurance	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 24,600.00	\$87,790.00	10% of salary and benefits for 2 positions
Total Personal Services	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 24,600.00		
Commodities															
4200 Office Supplies / Equipment													\$ -	\$120.00	
4210 OP Supply - Other	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 300.00	\$240.00	
Total Commodities	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 300.00		
Contractual Services															
4300 City of Cottage Grove (5% Administration Fee)	\$ 212.50	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 280.00	\$ 350.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 285.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 3,577.50	\$3,613.80	automatically calculated based on lodging tax
4300 Contractual Services [City of Cottage Grove (25%)]	\$ 1,009.38	\$ 1,187.50	\$ 1,187.50	\$ 1,330.00	\$ 1,662.50	\$ 1,900.00	\$ 1,900.00	\$ 1,900.00	\$ 1,353.75	\$ 1,187.50	\$ 1,187.50	\$ 1,187.50	\$ 16,993.13	\$17,165.55	automatically calculated based on lodging tax
4300 Contractual Services/Professional Services		\$ 157.34			\$ 157.34			\$ 157.34			\$ 157.34		\$ 629.36	\$240.00	transcription services
4305 Website Hosting/Domain	\$ 140.00	\$ 140.00	\$ 140.00	\$ 140.00	\$ 140.00	\$ 140.00	\$ 140.00	\$ 140.00	\$ 140.00	\$ 140.00	\$ 140.00	\$ 140.00	\$ 1,680.00	\$1,380.00	
4309 Credit Card Fees									\$ 400.00				\$ 400.00	\$1,380.00	
4311 Postage	\$ 67.00	\$ 67.00	\$ 67.00	\$ 67.00	\$ 66.00	\$ 66.00	\$ 66.00	\$ 66.00	\$ 67.00	\$ 67.00	\$ 67.00	\$ 67.00	\$ 800.00	\$720.00	
4340 Collateral Development & Printing	\$ 11,000.00												\$ 11,000.00	\$8,000.00	updated based on 2025 cost
4341 Social Media Advertising/Marketing Online	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$15,504.00	
4341 Other Types of Advertising (Magazines, Billboard, etc)	\$ 2,050.00	\$ 2,580.00											\$ 4,630.00	\$300.00	brochure program \$2150, Have Fun Biking \$2580
4401 Dues / Subscriptions	\$ 1,800.00					\$ 410.00							\$ 2,210.00	\$325.00	MACVB membership
4403 Continuing Education/Classes/Seminars	\$ 1,500.00				\$ 500.00				\$ 800.00	\$ 900.00	\$ 500.00		\$ 4,200.00	\$1,750.00	
4434 Marketing at Local Events		\$ 130.00	\$ 5,000.00		\$ 1,300.00								\$ 6,430.00	\$6,625.00	Strawberry Fest, swag
4434 Food Truck Festival						\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00				\$ 20,000.00	\$13,650.00	
Total Contractual Services	\$ 18,778.88	\$ 5,511.84	\$ 7,644.50	\$ 2,817.00	\$ 5,175.84	\$ 8,916.00	\$ 8,506.00	\$ 8,663.34	\$ 9,045.75	\$ 3,544.50	\$ 3,301.84	\$ 2,644.50	\$ 84,549.99		
Total Expense	\$ 18,803.88	\$ 5,536.84	\$ 7,669.50	\$ 2,842.00	\$ 5,200.84	\$ 8,941.00	\$ 8,531.00	\$ 8,688.34	\$ 9,070.75	\$ 3,569.50	\$ 3,326.84	\$ 2,669.50	\$ 109,449.99		
Net Income	\$(10,053.88)	\$(536.84)	\$(2,669.50)	\$ 2,758.00	\$ 3,799.16	\$ 4,284.00	\$ 6,694.00	\$ 6,536.66	\$ 854.25	\$ 1,430.50	\$ 1,673.16	\$ 2,330.50	\$(7,499.98)		



TO: Board of Directors, Cottage Grove Convention and Visitors Bureau
FROM: Phil Jents, Communications Manager
DATE: February 24, 2026
RE: 2025 Annual Report

Background/Discussion

According to the bylaws for the Cottage Grove Convention and Visitor's Bureau (CVB), each year the CVB is required to submit a written Annual Report to the City Council no later than 2nd Quarter of the following year. The Annual Report provides an overview of highlights, activities, and the budget from the 2025 calendar year.

Recommendation

Receive the 2025 Cottage Grove Convention and Visitor's Bureau Annual Report.

MORE THAN YOU *Imagine*

Cottage Grove Convention & Visitors Bureau 2025 Annual Report

12800 Ravine Parkway South
Cottage Grove, MN 55016
651-458-2800 | [DiscoverCottageGrove.com](https://www.discovercottagegrove.com)





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A Message From The

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Dear Friends, Partners and Visitors,

As Chairman of the Board of the Cottage Grove Convention and Visitor Bureau (CVB), I am proud to reflect on a year marked by progress, purpose, and growing momentum. In 2025, the CVB reaffirmed its commitment to promoting Cottage Grove as a welcoming, vibrant destination that celebrates our community's natural beauty, rich amenities, and exceptional quality of life.

Our mission is to support local economic vitality by attracting visitors, encouraging exploration, and enhancing the overall experience of those who live, work, and play in Cottage Grove. This past year, we laid the foundation for long-term growth through focused planning, expanded partnerships, and strategic investments in tourism development.

Looking ahead, our efforts will continue to center on promoting Cottage Grove's unique story. We are building stronger connections with local businesses, developing compelling marketing campaigns, and supporting events and initiatives that showcase everything our city has to offer. From our scenic parks and trail systems to our family-friendly events and growing hospitality sector, the future of tourism in Cottage Grove is full of promise.

We are grateful for the collaboration of our community partners, the dedication of our board and staff, and the ongoing support of our residents. Together, we are creating lasting impact and driving Cottage Grove forward as a destination of choice in Minnesota.

Thank you for your continued trust and enthusiasm.

Sincerely,

Justin Olsen

Chairman of the Board

Cottage Grove Convention and Visitor Bureau





Live. Work. Play. Visit.

Nestled between Wisconsin and the Twin Cities Metro, Cottage Grove is a haven for those seeking an active lifestyle and a deep connection with nature. With its extensive network of parks and trails, it beckons residents and visitors alike to explore and unwind amidst lush greenery and scenic landscapes. From sprawling urban parks teeming with recreational facilities to winding trails that meander through picturesque woodlands and along tranquil rivers, there's something for every outdoor enthusiast to enjoy. Families gather for picnics, friends engage in friendly games, and fitness enthusiasts jog or cycle along the paths, invigorated by the fresh air and revitalizing surroundings. Amidst the hustle and bustle of city living, these green oases provide a sanctuary for rejuvenation, reflection, and connection with the natural world, embodying the perfect balance between urban excitement and natural tranquility.

Whether you're here for a long time or just a fun time, Cottage Grove offers ample opportunities for housing, work, and play. Not only are we a safe and prosperous community, we pride ourselves in being a warm and welcoming place for residents and visitors to live, work, play, and visit.



MEET OUR TEAM

The Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) markets and promotes Cottage Grove as a year-round visitor destination, working in partnership with industries, corporate partners, state partners, city departments, and regional destination marketing organizations. The CVB serves as the primary marketing organization responsible for executing promotional programs to ensure positive economic impact in Cottage Grove through steady growth of the travel industry.

Mission

The CVB's mission is to promote Cottage Grove as a premier destination for leisure travelers, weddings, and outdoor enthusiasts, a recognized and successful host city for meetings and conventions, and a prominent and respected venue for sporting events.

To learn more about the CVB's activities, please visit our website or sign up for our newsletter.

Board Members

Justin Olsen, Chair

Laurie Levine, Director

Tony Khambata, Director

Erik Olsen, Director

Sarah Grecula, Director

Chris Reese, Director

Michael Haatvedt, Director

Staff Members

Jennifer Levitt, City Administrator

Jaime Mann, Assistant to the City Administrator

Phil Jents, Communications Manager

Courtney Pirsig, Communications Specialist

Alexa Anderson, Communications Specialist

Key Accomplishments

2025 VISITOR GUIDE

The 20-page guide represents the opportunities for visitors and travelers alike to discover our unique city. From lodging facilities, outdoor parks and recreation, events, meeting venues and more, there's something inside for everyone. Flipping through the pages is truly a reminder of what people who live here already know: The city is a special place to live, work and play.

By the Numbers

- This is the fourth annual publication for Cottage Grove.
- This guide boasts 20 pages full of amenities, activities and information about Cottage Grove.
- There are 6 total ads in this publication.
- \$3,275 in revenue was collected from advertising dollars through this publication.

In Addition to the Numbers

- This publication was created entirely in-house, providing massive cost savings to the CVB by not hiring an outside organization.
- There is a digital flipbook of the guide hosted on DiscoverCottageGrove.com, which is an elevated version of the printed piece. This includes links and QR codes driving traffic to local businesses and advertisers.

Where Can I Find It?

- Mall of America, Welcome Centers and Visitor Centers, and mail by request.
- City Hall, Cottage Grove Ice Arena, and other local locations.
- To see the digital flipbook, visit our website: DiscoverCottageGrove.com/Visitors-Guide



7,000
Copies Printed



6
Paid Advertisers

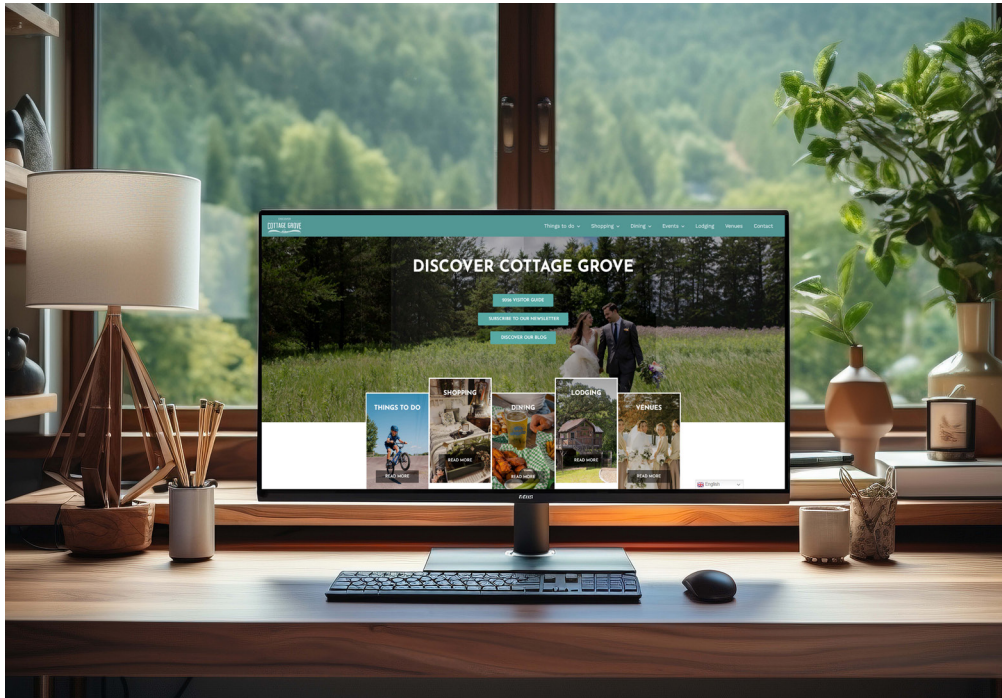


\$3,275
Revenue Collected

Key Accomplishments

WEBSITE

The CVB's most valuable marketing asset is our website, DiscoverCottageGrove.com. Here is where residents and visitors can access the Visitor Guide, our events calendar, and a list of suggestions for dining, lodging, entertainment, and more.



Users by Month

January – 1,016	↑ 23%
February – 855	↓ 50%
March – 1,286	↓ 1%
April – 1,237	↑ 48%
May – 1,558	↓ 44%
June – 2,043	↓ 79%
July – 5,833	↑ 192%
August – 7,082	↑ 343%
September – 7,852	↑ 45%
October – 1,194	↓ 34%
November – 1,411	↓ 19%
December – 1,506	↓ 40%

Most Viewed Pages

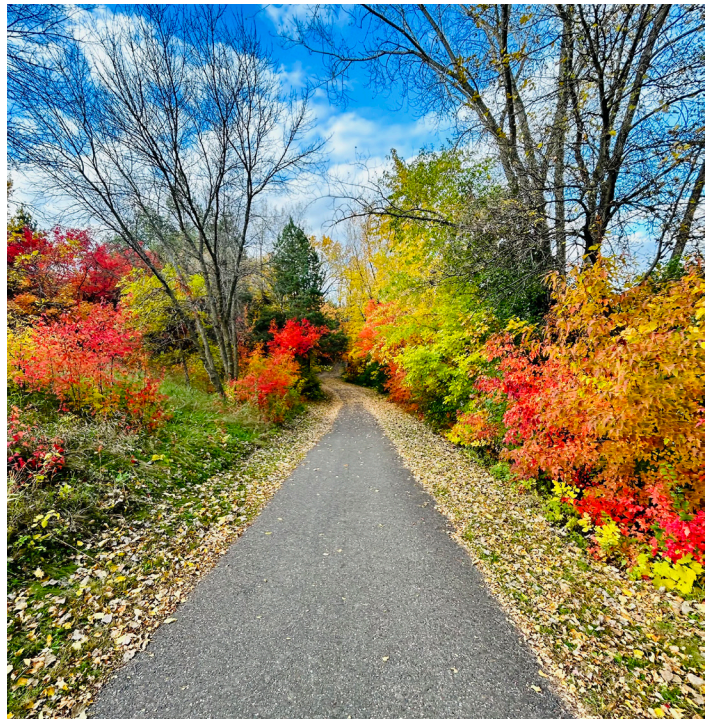
1. Food Truck Festival
2. Patio Week (calendar event)
3. Homepage
3. Fourth of July (calendar event)
4. Calendar

First user prim...Channel Group		↓ Total users	New users	Returning users	Average engagement time per active user
Total Users (YOY)					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Total	31,824 100% of total	31,240 100% of total	2,808 100% of total	21s Avg 0%
<input type="checkbox"/>	1 Organic Search	12,680 (39.84%)	12,708 (40.68%)	2,142 (76.28%)	35s
<input type="checkbox"/>	2 Paid Social	11,669 (36.67%)	11,559 (37%)	224 (7.98%)	1s
<input type="checkbox"/>	3 Direct	5,857 (18.4%)	5,369 (17.19%)	366 (13.03%)	28s
<input type="checkbox"/>	4 Organic Social	1,145 (3.6%)	1,136 (3.64%)	28 (1%)	11s
<input type="checkbox"/>	5 Referral	390 (1.23%)	386 (1.24%)	47 (1.67%)	46s
<input type="checkbox"/>	6 Unassigned	67 (0.21%)	67 (0.21%)	1 (0.04%)	10s
<input type="checkbox"/>	7 Email	11 (0.03%)	11 (0.04%)	0 (0%)	12s
<input type="checkbox"/>	8 Paid Other	4 (0.01%)	4 (0.01%)	0 (0%)	5s

Organic: Visitors landing on your website due to unpaid search results. (SEO, keywords, etc.)

Direct: Visitors who arrive at your site by typing your website URL directly into their browser's address bar.

Referral: Visitors who land on your website from sites other than the major search engines. (Facebook, Google, Private Domains, etc.)



Key Accomplishments

PHOTO & VIDEO

This year, we're celebrating the authentic spirit of Cottage Grove by featuring photography sourced directly from our residents. By leveraging community programs and photo contests, we've gathered a stunning collection of local imagery at little to no cost. We also continued our partnership with TrueLens Media, (formerly known as the South Washington County Telecommunications Commission), to produce 10 videos that capture the city's most vibrant events and activities.

Key Accomplishments

SOCIAL MEDIA

Effective social media plays a key role in building our brand and bringing people to Cottage Grove. The interactive and visual nature of our social media presence provides powerful opportunities for people to engage and experience Cottage Grove through video and photos. Giving potential visitors a first-hand look at the city’s restaurants, parks, recreational opportunities, wedding venues and other offerings has been incredibly effective. We’ve reached thousands of people and shown them all the city has to offer.

Ad Campaigns

Not only does social media build our brand, but effective social media ad campaigns reach new users, target specific audiences, increases brand visibility, and helps to increase sign-ups and lead generation. An advantage of marketing through social media as opposed to “traditional” print advertising is the ability to allow for consumer interaction. Not only can people click where to go, they can also “like” and “share” without any additional cost to the producer.



*Food Truck Festival Budget

Boosted Ads

Strawberry Fest
(Facebook Post)
34.8K Impressions
\$199.96 Spent

Patio Week
(Facebook Post)
42K Impressions
\$199.78 Spent

Food Truck Festival
(Facebook Post)
395.9K Impressions
\$1,942.59 Spent



Top Performing Campaign

Food Truck Festival
Vendor Lineup Announcement
(Facebook Post)
Link Clicks: 7,386

Top Performing Video

Food Truck Festival
One Month Away Reminder
(Facebook Video)
Link Clicks: 11,397

Facebook Stats

January 1 - December 31, 2025
268 Posts ↑ 6%
543,056 Post Reach ↑ 146%
4.5% Engagement Rate ↑ 22%
971,290 Impressions N/A
4,772 Followers ↑ 14%

Instagram Stats

January 1 - December 31, 2025
194 Posts ↓ 2%
12 Reels/Videos
34,600 Post Reach ↑ 6%
2.7% Engagement Rate ↓ 3%
1,094 Followers ↑ 20%

Twitter (X) Stats

January 1 - December 31, 2025
7 Tweets ↓ 96%
81 Followers ↓ 1%

YouTube Stats

The Madison
313 views

Food Truck Festival
124 views

The Holidays Shine Bright in Cottage Grove
86 views

Halloween in Cottage Grove
54 views

Thrive in the Grove: Spring Edition
43 views

Thrive in the Grove: Summer Edition
32 views


Public Relations

OUR BRAND




In 2025, Discover Cottage Grove formalized its first comprehensive brand style guide. This wasn't a rebranding, but rather a way to codify our existing identity. By defining these visual standards, we ensure every piece of communication – both digital and print – stays consistent and true to the authentic brand our visitors recognize.

BRAND STYLE GUIDE


PRIMARY LOGO




Primary logo with background color


COLORS



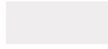
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RGB: 71 168 165
CMYK: 70 14 38 0




HEX: #ef5018
RGB: 239 80 24
CMYK: 1 83 100 0



HEX: #98d146
RGB: 152 209 70
CMYK: 45 0 93 0



HEX: #efeded
RGB: 239 237 237
CMYK: 5 4 4 0











HEX: #4c4c4c
RGB: 76 76 76
CMYK: 66 58 57 37







DESIGN ELEMENTS

Explore
THE OUTDOORS

Adventure
STARTS HERE

“ You don't just visit here, you become part of the story. ”
- MICHAEL SMITH

DISCOVER COTTAGE GROVE • CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU
© 2025

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Effectively marketing the city and showcasing it as a recreation, retail and meeting destination requires a multi-faceted approach. We use strategic practices to promote our community – such as the visitor guide, partnerships, paid media, blog posts, monthly newsletter, community engagement, sponsorships, and more.

10

Public Relations

PAID MEDIA

Minnesota Monthly – \$1,860

- Run of Site Advertising
- E-Newsletter Featured Partner

Have Fun Biking Magazine – \$2,880

- 2025 Bike/Hike Guide Ad

13 BLOG POSTS

Discover Cottage Grove Blog

- The Best Wedding Venues in Cottage Grove, MN
- Family Adventure Awaits: Top Kid-Friendly Activities in Cottage Grove!
- 2025 Food Truck Festival – Know Before You Go!
- Cozy Up: Coffee Shops and Bakeries in the Grove (and Nearby!)
- Embracing Winter in Cottage Grove: Your December Guide to Minnesota’s Best!
- ... and more!

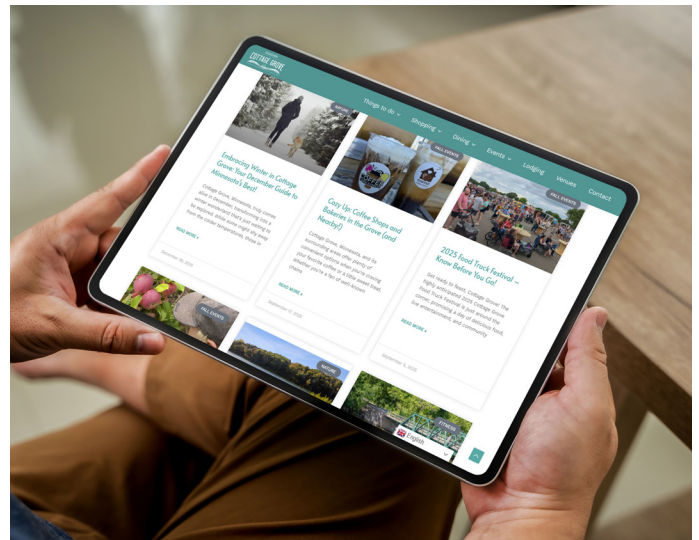
12 NEWSLETTERS

The Insider | Monthly E-Newsletter

Our monthly E-newsletter, The Insider, delivers a curated blend of local events, classes, tips, tricks, helpful links, ideas, and more. Each month is full of seasonal happenings with a direct link to our Discover Cottage Grove event calendar. You can also access our social media platforms and visitor guide. Your ultimate, digital guide to Cottage Grove. The Insider currently has 4,037 subscribers.

SWAG

In 2025, we handed out a few different swag items: branded luggage tags, cups, drawstring bags, beach balls, flex pencils, and visitor guides.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



14,000 - 16,000
Attendance



34
Food Trucks



10
Sponsors



30
Marketplace Booths



Food Truck Festival

The annual Discover Cottage Grove Food Truck Festival was a huge success! Guests enjoyed a variety of food trucks, live music, a beer garden, marketplace, free admission, kids activities, and more.

Expenses Summary

Site	\$10,625.79
Entertainment	\$3,301.88
Kids Activities	\$1,406.44
Other	\$3,470.00
Total	\$18,804.11

Income Summary

Food Trucks & Marketplace	\$17,000.00
Sponsorships	\$6,744.94
Total	\$23,744.94

Profit & Loss Summary

Total Income	\$23,744.94
Total Expenses	\$18,804.11
Profit	\$4,940.83

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Cottage Grove Strawberry Fest

We promoted the Cottage Grove Strawberry Fest to bring families together for the annual, four-day event. The festival is run completely by volunteers with no admission fee or cost to watch the main stage events. We are continuous supporters of Cottage Grove Strawberry Fest and have a DCG booth in the marketplace area.



Strawberry Fest Coloring Contest

New this year, we hosted a coloring contest – a fresh strategic initiative designed to deepen community roots and spark early excitement for Strawberry Fest. We received 112 entries, and the finalists were recognized at the event. This activity is just a small glimpse into what Discover Cottage Grove can do for future collaborations.



Patio Week

In July, Discover Cottage Grove launched a new program called “Patio Week” – designed to showcase the diverse outdoor dining scene in Cottage Grove. Throughout the week, the event featured a “Patio Lineup” highlighting local favorites. Each day focused on a different venue or theme, featuring deals, specials, and more.



Hometown Holiday

This community event has quickly become a signature winter tradition, transforming City Hall into a festive wonderland that captures the heart of our small-town charm. To ensure the success and growth of this event, Discover Cottage Grove took an active role in its promotion, targeting not only residents, but neighboring visitors as well.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

Revenue

Budgeted Revenue = \$100,300.00

Total 2025 Revenue = \$100,086.94

Revenue Breakdown

Lodging Tax = \$62,791.01

Other Revenue = \$23,961.44

Overall

- Budgeted: \$100,300.00
- Actual: \$100,086.94

Note: The DOR collected a one-time fee of \$5,578.59 and an ongoing administration fee of ~1% (\$321.38) for a total of \$5,899.97 since the beginning of DOR collections.

Expenses

Budgeted Expenses = \$104,131.25

Total 2025 Expenses = \$96,523.43

Summary

2025	Budget	Actual
Revenue	\$100,300.00	\$100,086.94
Expense	\$104,131.25	\$96,523.43



Strategic Plan

LOOKING AHEAD

As we look toward the coming year, Discover Cottage Grove is committed to evolving alongside our visitors. Our 2026 roadmap is defined by a shift toward connectivity, sustainability, and identity. We aren't just looking to increase numbers; we are looking to deepen the impact of every visit and ensure our growth benefits the entire community.

Cultivating a Modern Tourism Culture

Following our partnership with Chandlerthinks, we continue to follow our comprehensive strategic roadmap. This data-driven framework guides our decision-making and resource allocation, ensuring that every effort fulfills our mandate: promoting Cottage Grove to a wider audience while building a destination our residents are proud of.

Marketing Initiatives

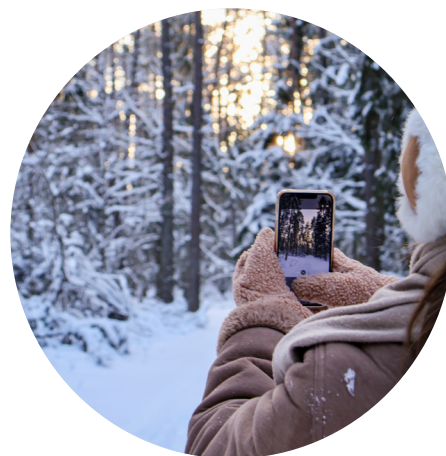
- Premier Digital Gateway: Rebuild the website experience to be an inspirational, user-friendly hub for trip planning.
- Digital Campaigns: Launch targeted ad sets to capture high-potential visitors from the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro.
- Data-Driven Engagement: Build a robust visitor database for email marketing and to measure tourism initiatives.
- Dynamic Social Presence: Maintain an engaging social media calendar with regular posts, photos, and videos.

Partnerships & Experience Development

- Package Existing Assets: Create tourism packages by partnering with local businesses and nearby communities.
- Develop New Attractions: Explore the possibility of adding a permanent photo op station or "World's Largest _____."
- Utilize Social Media Influencers: Partner with high-follower influencers to tell our story through their lens.
- Annual Wedding Fair: Organize a wedding fair to showcase Cottage Grove as a premier wedding destination.
- Sponsor or attend community events that are outside of the Cottage Grove area. (ex. Lumberjack Days, Hockey Day Minnesota, Woodbury Days, Heritage Days, etc.)

Community & Stakeholder Engagement

- Engage with Stakeholders: Gather input and ideas from tourism stakeholders to develop new programs and events.
- Tourism Summit: Host an annual tourism summit that encourages business networking and skill building.
- Local Spotlights: A new social media series focused on the faces and stories behind our favorite local attractions.





Cottage Grove Convention & Visitors Bureau

12800 Ravine Parkway South
Cottage Grove, MN 55016
651-458-2800 | DiscoverCottageGrove.com



COTTAGE GROVE



TO: Board of Directors, Cottage Grove Convention and Visitors Bureau

FROM: Phil Jents, Communications Manager

DATE: February 23, 2026

RE: Mall of America Travel Wall Program

Background

A leader in retail, entertainment and attractions, the Mall of America (MOA) is one of the top tourist destinations in the country, the #1 tourist attraction in Minnesota, and a true global icon.

The MOA Travel Wall Program leverages the Mall's 32M+ visitors a year by participating in their popular brochure advertising program.

New this year – all advertising options will receive the added-value of being listed on MOA's website.

As the CVB has done in the past, the annual Visitor Guide would be on display on walls located near busy entrances within the MOA.

Budget Implication

If approved, the Travel Wall Program would cost \$780 for one year and would come from the CVB's advertising budget.

Recommendation

Approve the Mall of America Signage agreement with the Mall of America for an amount of \$780.

Attachments

Mall of America Signage Agreement.



Mall of America® Signage Agreement

This Signage Agreement (the “Agreement”) is made and entered into as of the 16th day of February 2026 by and between **Discover Cottage Grove (“Sponsor”)** and **MOAC Mall Holdings LLC**, a Delaware limited liability company, dba Mall of America® (“MOA”).

WHEREAS, MOAC Mall Holdings LLC is the owner of an enclosed shopping and family mall located in Bloomington, Minnesota and known as “Mall of America” (“MOA”); and

WHEREAS, Sponsor desires to increase awareness of their retail location at MOA among guests visiting Mall of America through an advertising buy.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the promises herein contained, and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, the parties hereby agree as follows:

ARTICLE I

ON MALL ADVERTISING BUY

1.01 MOA Brochure Travel Wall: the MOA Travel Wall displays are located on the first floor of the North Atrium in MOA® and on the first floor of the West Entrance in MOA®. The mutually agreed upon dates for displaying Sponsor’s brochures are below (the “Term”).

- Discover Cottage Grove Visitor Guide 2/16/2026 through 12/31/2026

ARTICLE II

CREATIVE, PRODUCTION & INSTALLATION

2.01 Creative: All creative costs are the sole responsibility of Sponsor. MOA will provide creative guidelines and specifications for Sponsor. MOA must approve of all creative prior to Sponsor going into production or the same is displayed on the wall.

2.02 Production: All production costs, if applicable, are the sole responsibility and cost of Sponsor.

2.03 Installation: MOA agrees to install or post electronically, as applicable, the following signage at no cost to Sponsor: Sections 1.01.

ARTICLE III

FEE

3.01 Fee: In consideration for the services to be provided by MOA pursuant to this Agreement, Sponsor shall pay a total fee of:

- \$780 Dollars and 00/100 (\$.00), due by 3/16/2026

Payment to be made by check payable to “MOAC Mall Holdings LLC” and sent to the attention of: “Pam Poston, MOAC Mall Holdings LLC, 2131 Lindau Lane, Suite 500, Bloomington, MN 55425.”

ARTICLE IV

RELATIONSHIP OF PARTIES

4.01 Nature of Relationship: The provisions of this Agreement shall not in any respect whatsoever be deemed to create a partnership, joint venture, or other business combination between the parties. Neither party shall be obligated by any agreement, representation or warranty made by the other, nor shall either party be obligated for damages to any third party directly or indirectly arising out of the conduct of the other party’s business or caused by the other party’s negligence, willful act, or failure to act.

ARTICLE V

INDEMNIFICATION

5.01 Indemnification: Sponsor and its successors and assigns shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless MOA and its successors and assigns from and against and in respect of any and all third party claims, demands, losses, costs, damages, and expenses, including interest, penalties, reasonable attorneys’ fees and costs, that MOA may incur or suffer, which arise, result from, or relate to (i) the breach by Sponsor of any of its representations and warranties set forth in this Agreement; (ii) the failure of Sponsor to perform any of its obligations under this Agreement; (iii) the assertion of any infringement or other claims alleging that the ads and design creative violate the intellectual property rights of any third party; or (iv) damages to property or personal injury caused by the negligence or willful acts of Sponsor or any of its employees or agents. This indemnification shall survive the expiration or sooner termination of the Term.

ARTICLE VI

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

6.01 Notice Address:

MOA: MOAC MALL HOLDINGS LLC
2131 Lindau Lane, Suite 500
Bloomington, Minnesota 55425-5550

Sponsor: Discover Cottage Grove
12800 Ravine Parkway S
Cottage Grove, MN 55016

7.02 Governing Law: This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Minnesota, without giving effect to such jurisdiction’s conflicts of law principles. For the purpose of resolving conflicts related to or arising out of this Agreement, the parties expressly agree that venue shall be in the courts of the State of Minnesota and, in addition, the parties hereby expressly consent to the exclusive jurisdiction of the federal and state courts in the State of Minnesota.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned have executed and delivered this Signage Agreement as of the date first set forth above.

Discover Cottage Grove

By: _____

Name: _____ Date _____
Title: _____

MOAC Mall Holdings LLC

By: _____

Name: _____ Date _____
Title: _____