



**REGULAR TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2025
5:00 PM**

1. Call to Order

2. Approve Agenda

3. Approval of Minutes

3.1. Minutes from the Regular Tourism Committee Meeting on December 2, 2024

4. Public Input

5. Unfinished Business

5.1. Hotel Incentive Program

5.2. Event Venue

6. New Business

6.1. Schedule of Tourism Committee Meetings for 2025

6.2. FY26 Tourism Fund Concept Budget

6.3. FY26 Tourism Marketing Renewal Proposal from McDaniels Marketing

7. Any Other Business to Come Before the Committee

8. Adjourn



City of Pekin

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE TOURISM COMMITTEE OF THE CITY OF PEKIN, ILLINOIS,
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF CITY HALL
111 S. CAPITOL ST
ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2024 AT 5:00 PM**

Call to Order

Chairperson Lelonie Luft called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

A quorum was established.

Present: Amy McCoy, Mel Matthews, Cindy Galyean, and Emily Lambe.

Absent: Sean Powers and Chris Dunn

Approve Agenda

Amy McCoy moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Emily Lambe. Motion approved by voice vote.

Approval of Minutes

3.1. Minutes from the Regular Meeting on November 4, 2024

Mel Matthews moved to approve the minutes from the Tourism Committee Meeting on Monday, November 4, 2024, as presented, seconded by Amy McCoy. Motion approved by voice vote.

Public Input

None

Reports

5.1. Quarterly Fund Report

Quarterly Fund Report was distributed before the meeting.

5.2. Tourism Video Update

Discover Peoria is working on content and seeking more information. Amy McCoy volunteered to respond to their inquiries.

Old Business

6.1. Christmas on Court

Christmas on Court will take place on Friday, December 6. The committee

will need help with luminaries, tree decorating, and signage. The Tourism Committee would like to collaborate with the Winter Wonderland Committee in the future.

New Business

7.1. Tourism Spending Ideas

Randy McDaniels presented some marketing investment ideas and samples to the committee to help attract businesses and families to Pekin, due to the connection between Economic Development and Tourism. The Committee liked the samples from other communities and asked McDaniels Marketing to prepare a quote for a community guide and map.

7.2. Housing Bureau for Event Hotel Stays

Cindy Galyean suggested the committee consider options for competing with other area lodging for sporting events. Due to the use of Housing Bureaus, local hotels have a hard time competing with the rates of larger hotels. Thus, teams from local events are staying outside of Pekin. The Committee agreed to investigate some ideas. Josh Wray will draft a policy for next meeting.

7.3. Meeting / Event Venue Survey

Any Other Business to Come Before the Committee

None

Adjourn

Emily Lambe moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 p.m., seconded by Cindy Galyean. Motion approved on voice vote.



City of Pekin

HOTEL INCENTIVE POLICY

1.0 Policy Purpose

The City of Pekin (hereafter "City") recognizes the need for assistance in ensuring competitive pricing when hoteliers bid on hosting accommodations for events. Given that these events by their very nature generate overnight stays, the City Council finds it appropriate to adopt a policy allowing for use of Tourism Fund dollars to incentivize hoteliers when bidding on events.

Encouraging more events that generate overnight stays not only adds to the Tourism Fund revenues via hotel/motel tax but also often adds sales tax revenues to the City created by the visitors staying in Pekin.

2.0 Definitions

Director shall mean the City of Pekin Director of Economic Development.

Event shall mean a bona fide activity or occasion that does not break for more than one day and where the participants of which seek grouped/blocked overnight accommodations.

Hotelier shall mean any person operating a hotel with terms defined in Sec. 7-1-5(a) of the Pekin City Code.

Policy shall mean this Hotel Incentive Policy.

Room-night shall mean the number of rooms booked multiplied by the number of nights booked (e.g., 2 rooms each booked for 3 nights is equal to 6 room-nights).

3.0 Procedures

The City Council may, as part of the annual City budget or other lawful means, approve a funding amount in an appropriate category of the Tourism Fund budget to be used to fund this Policy. Throughout the fiscal year, the Director, shall utilize these funds under the procedures set forth below:

1. Before the event, the hotelier shall submit to the Director documentation of event and bid information submitted including anticipated room charges and room-nights of booking.
2. The Director shall provide the hotelier an estimated incentive amount under this Policy based on budget, remaining funding, and the documentation submitted.
3. After the event, the hotelier shall submit documentation of actual room charges paid and room-nights booked, an invoice for the incentive amount earned, and an IRS Form W-9.
4. The Director shall confirm the appropriate incentive earned and cause payment of such incentive through the City's normal payment procedures.

A hotelier may inquire the remaining budgeted funding amount prior to submitting a bid for an event to ensure funding is available at that point in time. Payment of incentives shall be on a first-come, first-served basis where the first hotelier to initiate the procedures above shall have first right to incentives.

4.0 Limits on Incentives

Incentives available under this policy shall be limited to the following:

- The incentive shall be \$15.00 per room per night subject to annual budget approval.
- Incentives may not be used for events blocking less than 10 room-nights.
- No single hotelier may receive more than 50% of the budgeted funding amount in a given fiscal year.
- No incentive shall be paid to any hotelier that is delinquent in payment of taxes or fees or is otherwise not in good standing with the City.

5.0 Disclaimers

This Policy does not affect any requirements for payment of applicable taxes.

This Policy does not guarantee availability of funds.

Incentives received may be considered taxable income under Illinois and/or federal law, and the City will issue a 1099 for all incentive payments.

**City of Pekin
Tourism Committee
2025 Regular Meeting Schedule**

Regular meetings will be held at 5:00 PM
in the Council Chambers at City Hall,
111 S. Capitol St. Pekin, IL 61554

Monday, January 6	Monday, February 3
Monday, March 3	Monday, April 7
Monday, May 5	Monday, June 2
Monday, July 7	Monday, August 4
Tuesday, September 2	Monday, October 6
Monday, November 3	Monday, December 1



Tourism Fund Conceptual Budget

Prepared for the City Council meeting on
January 13, 2025

Revenue Overview

Hotel Tax (6%)

- FY25 Budget = \$375,000
- FY25 Projected = \$325,000
- FY26 Proposed = \$325,000

Investment Interest

- FY25 Budget = \$350
- FY25 Projected = \$23,000
- FY26 Proposed = \$10,000

does not include 1% BDD Hotel Tax

Expense Overview

Past Usage

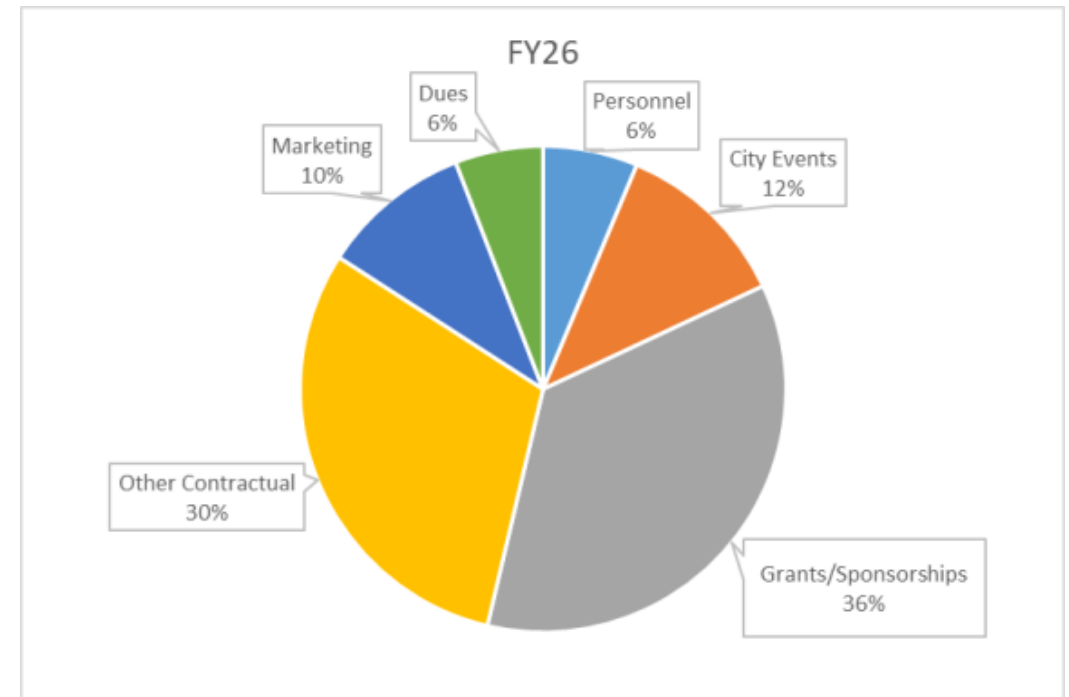
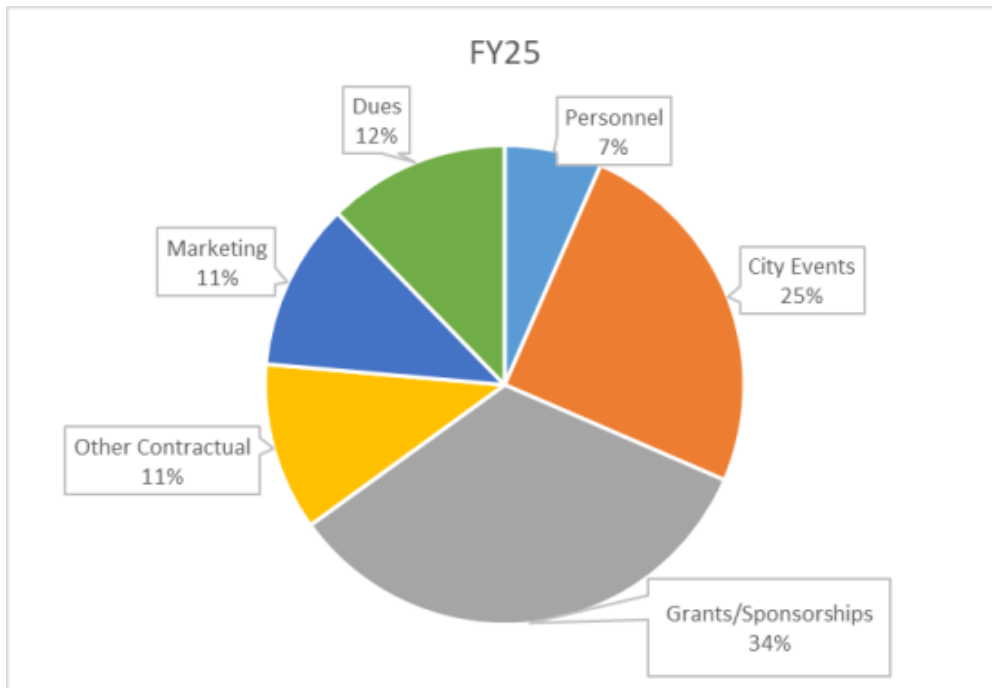
- City Events
- Event grants/sponsorships
- Event management
- Marketing & DiscoverPekin.com
- Dues to Peoria Area CVB
- Dues to Pekin Area Chamber

Proposed Usage

- City Events*
- Event Grants/Sponsorships
- Event management*
- Marketing & DiscoverPekin.com
- Dues to Peoria Area CVB*
- **Hotel Incentive Rebates**
- **Landscaping services**
- **Event Center Feasibility Study**
- **Capital Projects**

*tentatively reduced from FY25 to FY26

FY25 vs FY26 Expenses



Does not included any capital projects

Capital Project Ideas

Ballpark of \$400,000 available

- Riverfront Improvements
- Hampton Inn Access Road
- City Entrance Signs
- Downtown Speaker System
- Public Art

Event Center Feasibility Study

- Can Pekin support one?
- How big should it be?
- What events should it serve?
- What amenities should it have?
- How much will it cost to build?
- Who should run it?
- How should it be staffed?

Questions?



DISCOVER PEKIN MARKETING PLAN RENEWAL 2025/2026

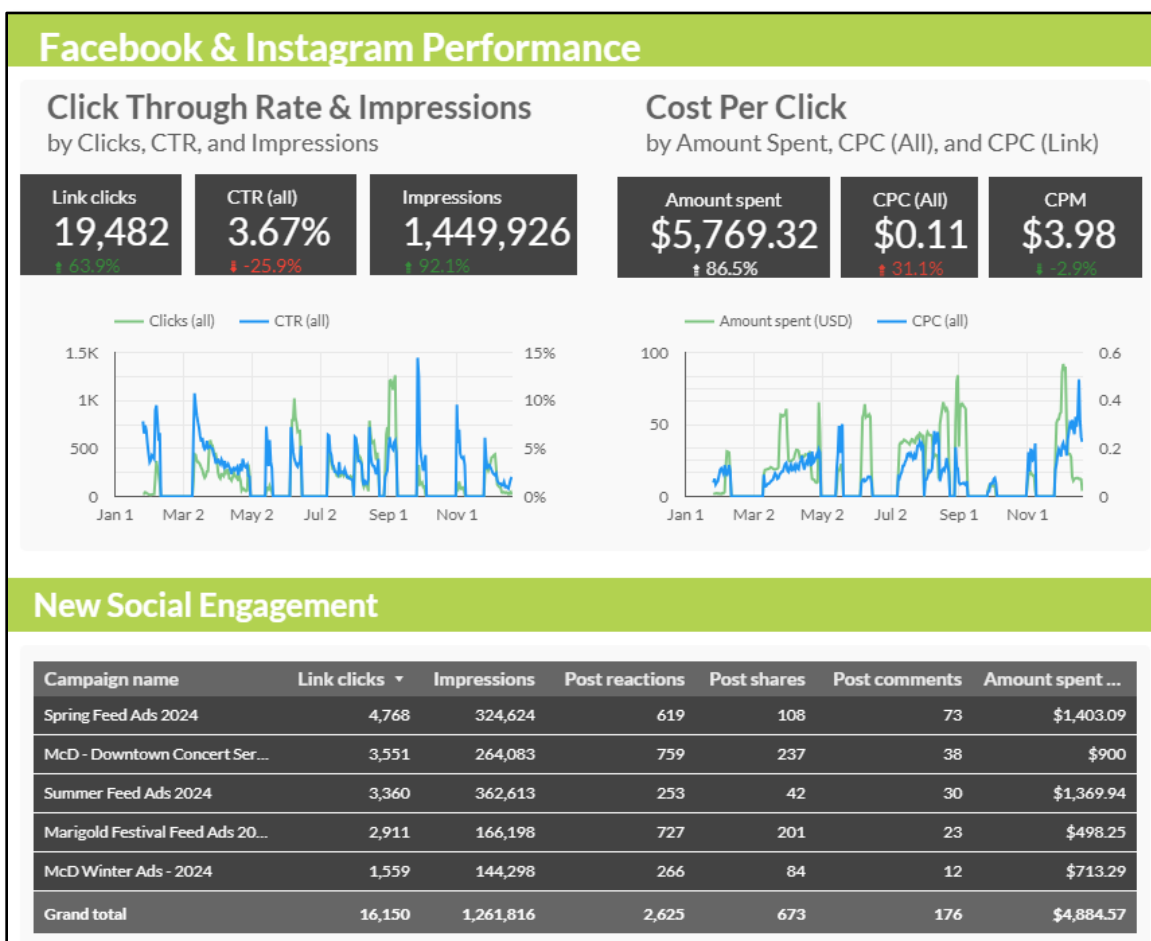


Prepared by
McD
DIGITAL

Digital Success

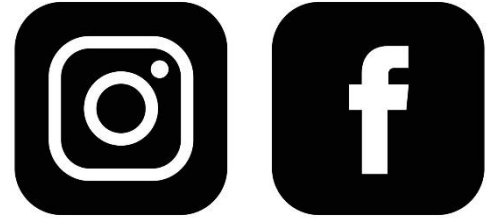
Over the last year, we have seen favorable numbers when it comes to Discover Pekin's Facebook/Instagram advertising performance! Below is the report for the current fiscal year so far broken down by the highest performing campaigns:

This year we were able to reach a larger audience overall! While the CTR is down from 2023, Discover Pekin's ads have experienced a lot of growth this year and higher impressions show more awareness of your destination with your target audience. Also, make note of the low cost-per-click at **\$0.11** and high click-through rate at **3.67%**, both signs of successful campaigns!



Who did we reach?

The Peoria-Bloomington DMA was the top region for clicks between the locations we target, followed by Chicago and Champaign-Springfield-Decatur. The most represented age group would be those 65 and over with 42.2% of clicks. This coming year we can plan to run feed ads with varied targeting to make sure we guarantee a split across all age groups! Unsurprisingly, 99.1% of clicks came from mobile devices.



Facebook/Instagram Feed Advertising Campaign

To continue the success achieved in the past year, we will utilize digital marketing to create a powerful campaign that upholds the Pekin brand, creates an impression that visitors won't forget and highlights your key attractions and community attributes that will bring more visitors, residents, and businesses.

- **Pekin-Specific Topics:**

- Events: Marigold Festival, Winter Wonderland/Christmas on the Court, Summer Downtown Concert Series
- Things to Enjoy: Parks, shopping, dining, fishing and hunting, history, the fine arts, local sports.

Our writers and designers love to push the edge of creativity, but at the heart of it, they're all storytellers. They love to capture and see destinations like Pekin come to life and shine with creative assets that depict authentic stories and experiences that spread like wildfire.

Geotargeting:

Day Tripper Markets: A 30-mile radius around Pekin, along with nearby areas like Galesburg and Bloomington-Normal, which are close enough to attract day-trip visitors. The goal is to encourage local residents to attend live music shows, community events, and shop or dine at Pekin's small businesses!



Overnight Markets: We will focus on areas 2.5 to 4 hours away, such as Chicago, Dubuque, the Quad Cities, St. Louis, and Paducah, KY, to attract overnight visitors to Pekin. We will emphasize the unique experiences they can enjoy here that are unavailable elsewhere!

The Need for Digital

87% percent of travelers use the internet for the bulk of their travel planning! This statistic is why it is so critical that Pekin continue to invest in digital advertising to reach more people when they are researching, and planning weekend stays and potential new places to live or start a business.

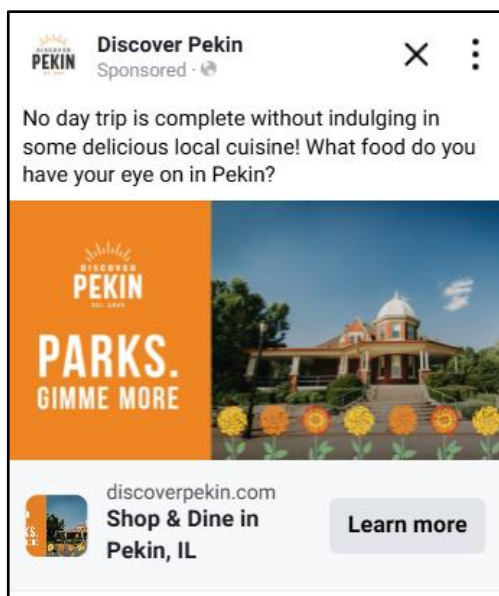
Because we are targeting the Gen X, Millennials and Gen Z age groups, we are proposing to continue use of Facebook ads to help boost visitor awareness about all the attractiveness of the Pekin Area.

We'll target the right people.

Narrowing down the right demographics for the potential visitors and new residents you want to reach is key to a successful campaign. We can target your audience using the following criteria:

- Location: Day Tripper markets OR Overnight markets in the Midwest
- Age: Gen X, Millennials and Gen Z
- Keyword topics: Focus on outdoor activities, golf, shopping, food & drink.





Facebook/Instagram Digital Marketing 2025/2026

Timeline: June 2025 – September 2025; December 2025; February (Restaurant Week); March – April 2026 (8 months)

Creative/Copy Development..... \$2,500

- 1 Ad Set Development each quarter

Digital Management..... (\$500/month) \$4,000

- Dedicated Digital Marketing Specialist
- Daily Spend Monitoring
- Performance Optimizations
- Monthly Performance Reporting

Click Budget (Direct to Meta) (Approx. \$850/month) \$6,800

Total Investment: \$13,300

Approval _____ **Date** _____

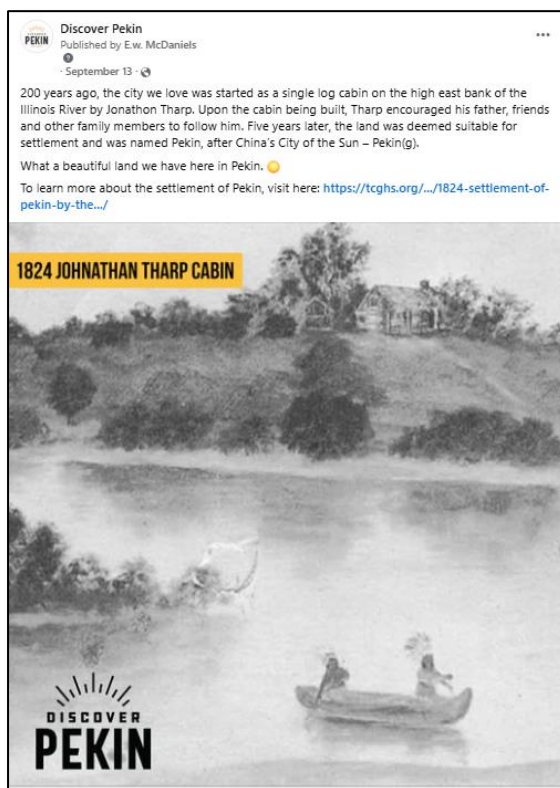
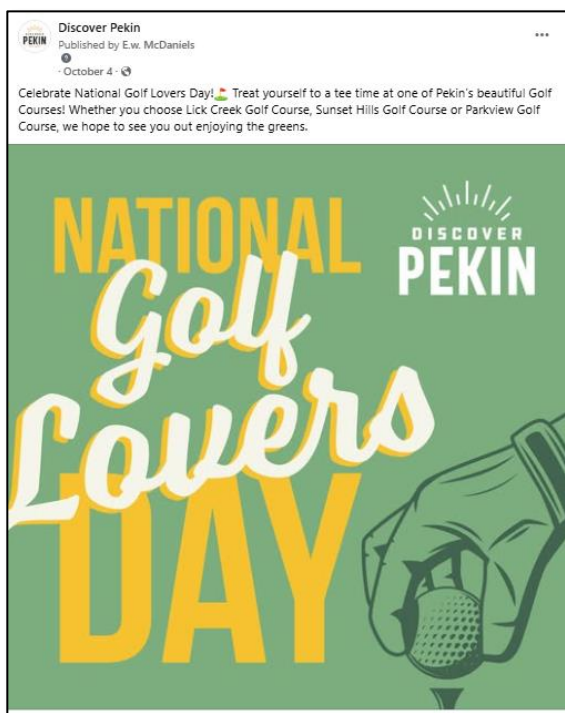
*Each activity is limited to a set number of hours. When the hours are reached, additional work will be quoted at that time. This cost estimate does NOT include costs associated with client changes made after final approval of specifications. McDaniels Marketing reserves the right to review and submit a new quote 30 days past the submittal date of the original proposal. The City of Pekin, Illinois will retain all rights to creative content developed by McDaniels Marketing.

Intern Activities/Organic Social Media and Marketing Support

McDaniels Marketing has been supporting the marketing effort of the Discover Pekin with dedicated intern level staffing to perform the following tactics:

- Creative development and management of 6-12 organic social media posts per month (based on event schedule and season)
 - Targeted boosted as needed throughout the month
- Support at events: Summer Downtown Concert Series, Marigold Fest, Christmas on Court/Winter Wonderland
- Special projects such as flyers, event cards/postcards and posters

Organic posting on the Discover Pekin Facebook and Instagram pages is essential for fostering authentic engagement with the local community and attracting visitors. By sharing regular, relevant content that highlights Pekin's unique attractions, events, and local businesses, these platforms can build stronger connections with residents and potential tourists. Organic posts help to create a sense of belonging, encourage word-of-mouth marketing, and improve brand visibility without relying on paid advertisements, making them cost-effective and a sustainable way to promote the city and its offerings.



Intern Activities Budget 2025/2026

Timeline: May 2025 – April 2026 (12 months)

Administrative Management Fee.....\$250/month \$3,000

- Fees associated with management of intern by McD staff

Intern Activities/Wages \$6,500

- Dedicated Intern for planning and development of organic social content
- Posting/scheduling of organic social content to the Discover Pekin page
- Support and promotion of Discover Pekin events
- Any special additional projects

Boosting Budget (Direct to Meta)(Approx. \$150/quarter) \$600

Total Investment: \$10,100

Approval _____ **Date** _____

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Website Maintenance

Due to the popularity and widespread use of the WordPress platform, the WordPress core system routinely pushes out version updates. Installing the updates is necessary to minimize malware infiltration. Participating in a maintenance program will ensure updates are made routinely. Should any website breaches occur, McDaniels will work to remove any malicious files.

- Regular WordPress updates as required by WordPress platform
- Priority e-mail support
- Additional training and phone support post launch
- Consultation for website improvements post initial site launch
- New Content consultation and buildout
- Some limited SEO
- Website "quick fixes" – include items that can be fixed/tweaked/created in under 15 minutes

Investing in SEO

Your SEO program will operate quarterly. This is a collaborative program where we will work side by side with your team. At the start of each quarter, goals will be established for completion targets. Activities will be based on the monthly hours set for your program. Some activities take longer than others and therefore, some targets could extend into the following quarter. At the end of each quarter, a quarterly report will be submitted for your review.

Areas of Optimization an SEO program can include*:

- | | |
|---|--|
| • Enhanced content development for new or expanded topics | • Input of image alt tags |
| • Hummingbird page adjustments as needed | • Online directory submission for Google My Business |
| • Keyword phrase improvement on identified content pages with additional deeper content where necessary | • Link building (Internal and external) |
| • User experience and user interface adjustments | • Competitive Intelligence and industry benchmarking |
| • Updated custom-written Title and Meta Description tags | • Technical optimization |
| • Custom keywords | • Responsive adjustments |
| • <H> tag adjustments | • Page load times |
| | • XML sitemaps |
| | • Broken link checks |
| | • Schema Markup |
| | • Blogging |
| | • Backlinking |

- Quarterly report development and analysis with Google Analytics and Search Console

Client expectations and requirements:

- Assistance with setting quarterly goals.
- Review, edit, and approval of submitted content
- Directory verifications
- Review of and comments on quarterly reports

Completions This Past Year

1. Optimized event feed view.
2. Annual SEO report prep and presentation to Chamber.
3. Fixed broken links.
4. Fixed issues with redux plugin and flushed cache.
5. Optimized internal linking.
6. Updated link anchor text to be more descriptive.
7. Added accessibility plugin to website (accessiBe).
8. Developed quarterly reports to track SEO progress.
9. Keyword research.
10. Backlinked between the Discover Pekin site and the Pekin Park District site.
11. Fixed duplicate title tags
12. Developed and helped organize Christmas content.
13. Developed and posted golfing blog.
14. Developed, posted, and optimized new blog content.
15. Established podcast feed on Pekin Postings collection page.
16. Established styling for blog authors.
17. Optimized blog authorship for SEO.
18. Made directory updates/edits as needed.
19. Added and optimized meta descriptions.
20. Added and optimized alt-image tags.
21. Made updates/edits to the menu as needed.
22. Image selection for new blog posts.
23. Audited website to recognize the potential impact of Google's core algorithm update.
24. Set up Organic Traffic Insights in Semrush for more streamlined keyword research.

Total Maintenance & SEO

Timeline: May 2025 – April 2026 (12 months)

(6) SEO/Maintenance Hours per Month (72 total hours)\$750/month: \$9,000

*Note: The Areas of Optimization section is a comprehensive list of potential optimization activities. Items will be identified based on priority and executed. This section does not imply that every activity will occur within a month or the year contract. The City of Pekin retains full rights of all content developed by McD Digital.

Approval _____ **Date** _____

Website Hosting

By hosting with McD Digital, you'll have peace of mind knowing that your website is being maintained and kept safe. We keep your website updated, backed up in the event of a catastrophe, and secure from malware and hackers.

Our WordPress hosting plan comes standard with the following features:

- Daily Backups (web servers replicated throughout the United States)
- Daily Malware Scans & Free Removal of Malware if Site Becomes Infected
- Monthly WordPress Software, Plugin, & Theme Updates
- Monthly Report of Updates/Work Completed
- Security Configuration
- Speed Optimization

WordPress Hosting\$150/month

Approval _____ **Date** _____

*NOTE: Each activity is limited to a set number of hours. Quoted price is valid for 60 days and E.W. McDaniels, Inc. (dba McD Digital) reserves the right to submit a new estimate for any change in specifications. This estimate is based on a set number of project hours. If this allotment of time is exceeded, additional hours are available to be approved and invoiced. 60 days of notice is required for cancellation of this contract. All time and cost to date will be invoiced upon cancellation. By signing this document, persons whose signatures appear attest that the terms set forth in this agreement have been read and understood completely and that they agree to the terms and conditions of this proposal. The City of Pekin will own the rights to all art and copy produced on their behalf by McD Digital and the rights to use (but not resell) website programming or other technology developed as well. McD Digital requires payment within 30 to 45 days of invoice date.