




Discover Dixon 2025
CHAMBER • MAINSTREET • TOURISM



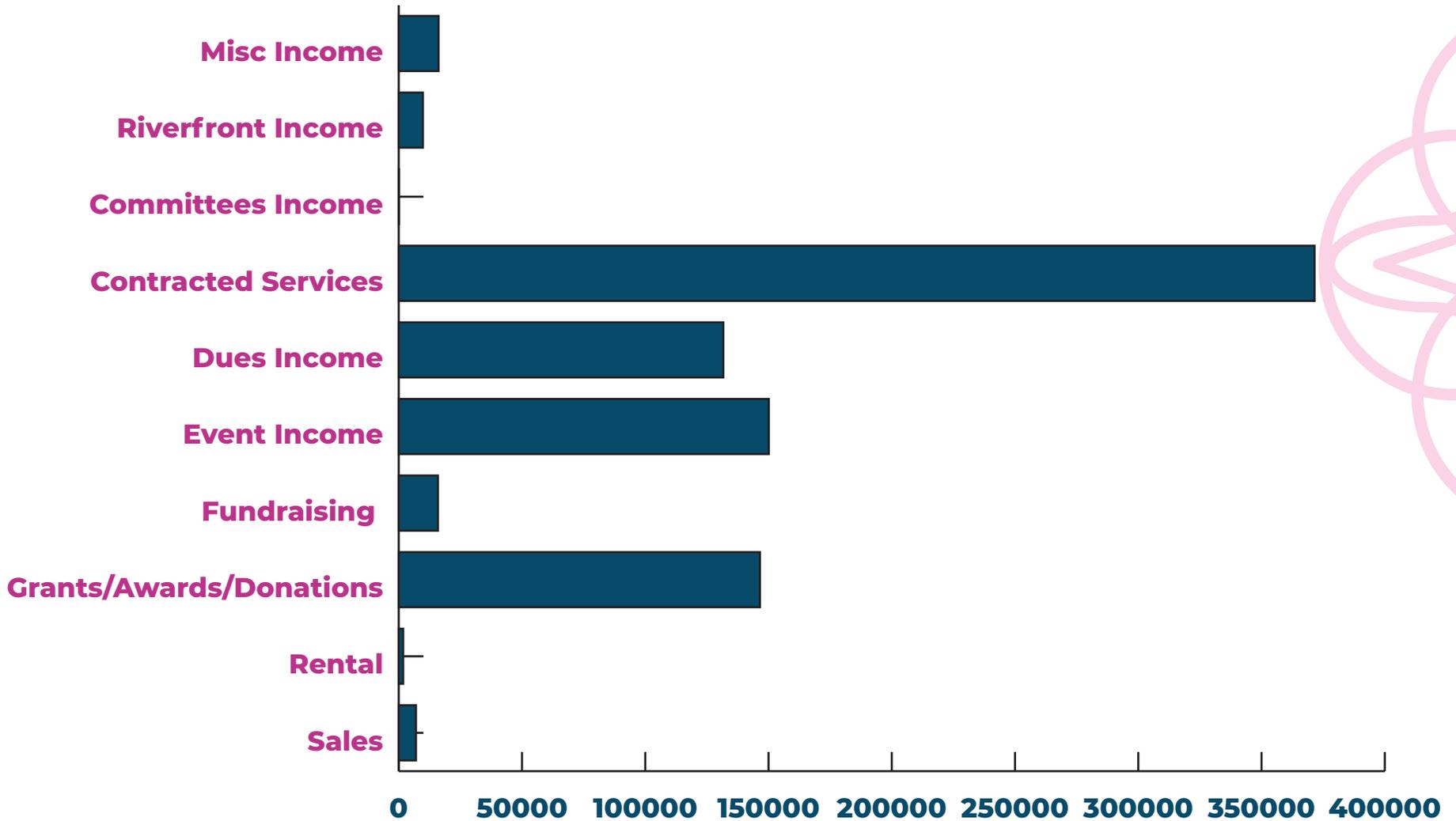
ANNUAL REPORT

Purpose of the annual report

The annual report is a summary of Discover Dixon's activities and accomplishments over the past year, as well as a financial report of the organization's revenue and expenses. It is intended to provide stakeholders with transparent information about the organization and its operations.

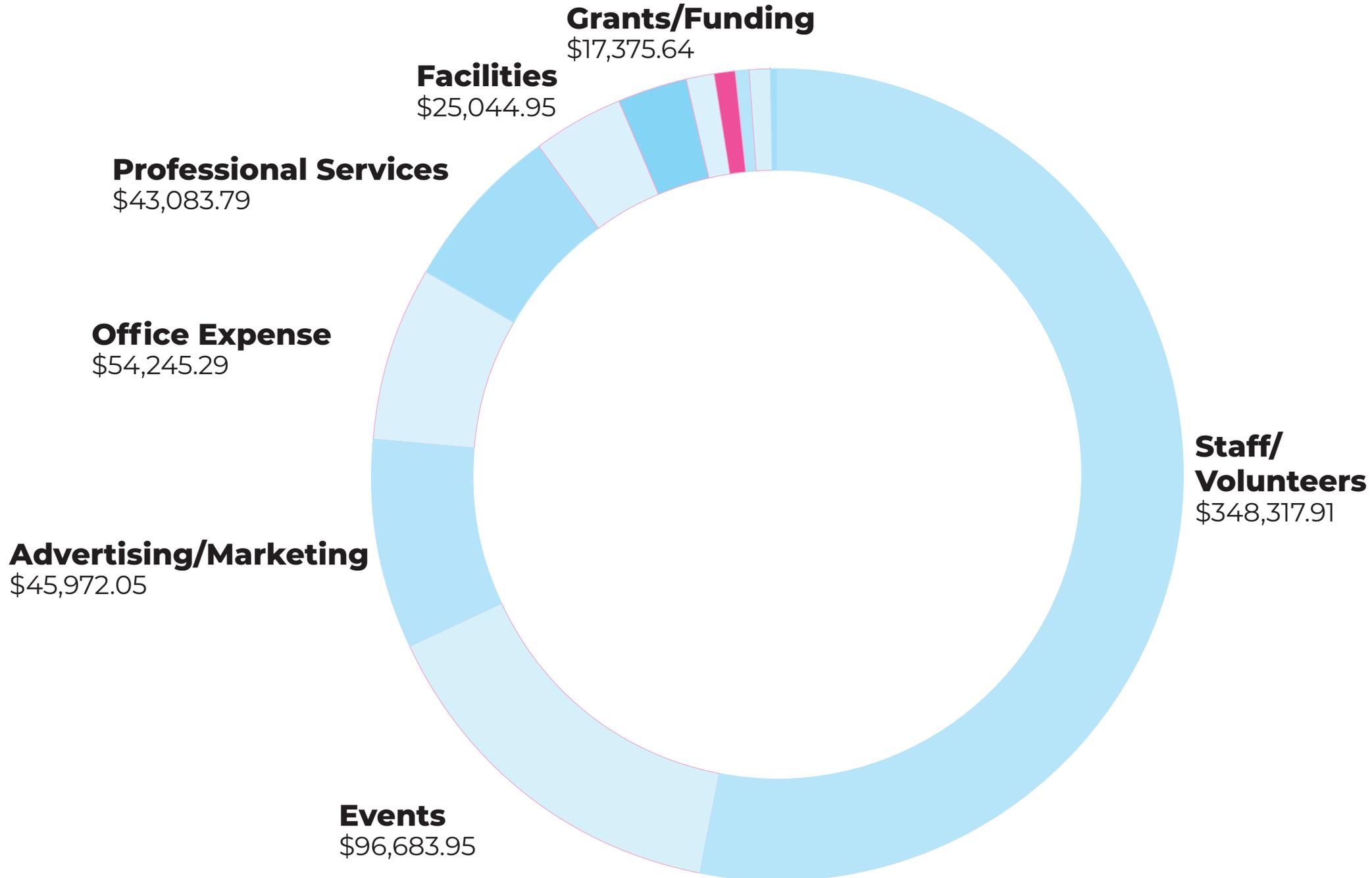
2025

Financial Report: Income



2025

Financial Report: Expenses



2025

Event Highlights

Major Initiatives and Impact

In 2025, Discover Dixon served the community proudly with another impressive lineup of events, welcoming more than 25,000 visitors to town during the season! The organization also was awarded the honor of hosting Illinois Main Street Conference in November, welcoming leaders from across the state to Dixon, showcasing all the great people, businesses, and organizations Dixon has to offer.

Numerous events saw increases in attendance, including the family favorite Venetian Night, which also brought the first drone show in the area to the Dixon Riverfront, delighting the nearly 2,000 people in attendance.

Dement Town Music Fest again rocked Depot Avenue, marking 3 years of investment into that neighborhood. Families enjoyed local food, local music, and visiting with local artisans.

Families also enjoyed Summer Block Party, in another year of growth, welcoming 1,000 to Plaza North Shopping Center for games, activities, and more.



RIGHT: Venetian Night
BELOW: Scarecrow Festival

Though weather significantly affected City Market's season, an average of 1,500 came down each week to the riverfront to enjoy the Dixon weeknight staple.

One of the Dixon City Market season's best nights was its last, with the inaugural City Market Jr. showcasing the ingenuity of 22 local entrepreneurs from age 6 to 16. Nearly 2,000 people attended, showing incredible community support for this new program.

Fitness Fridays was also introduced in

2025, bolstering the Riverfront fitness opportunities through cooperation with local fitness centers and specialty studios.

Scarecrow Festival and Dixon's Christmas Walk again welcomed thousands, with other highlights including Founder's Day, the Best of Dixon Annual Gala, Brush and Bloom, Ultimate Tailgate, Fourth Grade Tours, Shop Small Saturday, and more.

Celebrating local culture and heritage, and supporting local businesses, these events made a lasting impact on the community.

2025

Community Engagement

Overview of community outreach and engagement efforts in 2025

In 2025, Discover Dixon utilized tools such as social media, print advertising, TV and radio ads, and outdoor advertisements to help spread the word about community events and initiatives.

Throughout the year, team members were featured on news programming on both television and radio, as well as digital media outlets.

Our amazing team of community ambassadors also continued to do a fantastic job of representing Discover Dixon at various events, visiting current and prospective members, all while building relationships with local organizations and businesses.

Partnerships and collaborations with other organizations

In 2025, Discover Dixon continued to build upon its community relationships and partnerships with the City of Dixon, the County of Lee, Dixon Park District, Dixon Public Schools, The Dixon: Historic Theatre, The Next Picture Show, The Dixon Petunia Festival, LCIDA, SVCC, Reagan Mass Transit District, Blackhawk Hills, Visit NW Illinois, Sterling Main Street, the WACC CEO Program, and the Sauk Valley Chamber of Commerce.

These partnerships play a vital role in our community's growth, driving stronger programs and initiatives that benefit everyone involved.



Career Fair & Hiring Expo at Dixon High School



Fourth Grade Tours at The Dixon: Historic Theatre

2025

Board of Directors & Staff

Role of the board of directors

The board of directors is responsible for overseeing the direction and activities of Discover Dixon. This includes setting strategic goals, approving budgets and policies, and ensuring the organization is operating effectively and efficiently. The board works closely with the staff to ensure that the organization is fulfilling its mission and making a positive impact in the community.

2025 Board of Directors

Scott Brown, Matt Cole, Britni Dvorak, Drew Fenner, Eric Fiessinger, Mandy Hinkey, Nikki Lovett, Kaitlyn Nease, Jared Shaner, Brittany Shannon, Kelly Shroyer, and Kent Sorenson

Staff

Chloe Coil (Marketing & Events Intern)
Jennifer Lang (Director of Events & Sponsorship)
Dani Lovett (Marketing & Events Intern)
Gillian Pattermann (Office Manager)
Lucas Pauley (Marketing Director)
Amber Schmidt (Outreach Director)
Amanda Wike (Executive Director)



Discover Dixon Board of Directors



Discover Dixon Staff

Visitor Trend & Impact

The data provided by Placer.ai can provide valuable insights for government entities in making decisions on economic development.

By understanding the patterns and trends of visitors, government entities can make data-driven decisions on where to invest resources, what initiatives to prioritize, and what areas are seeing the most growth and engagement. This data can also be useful for business owners, real estate developers, and investors.

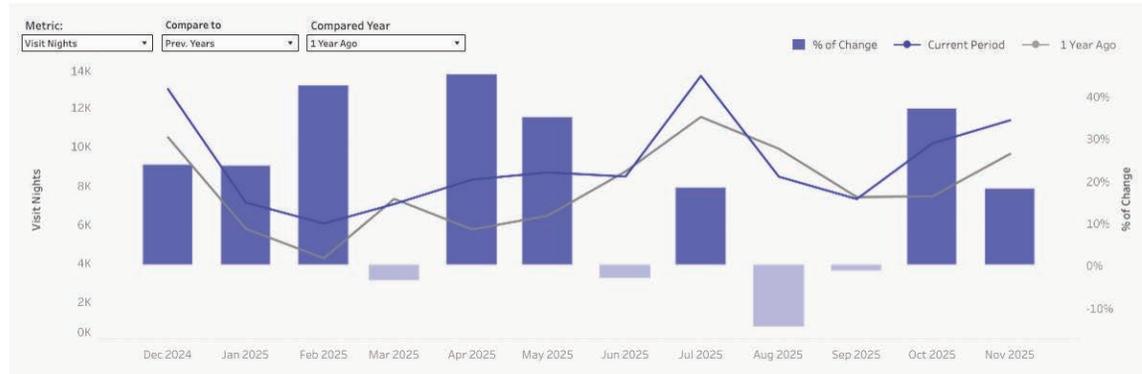
By understanding where visitors are going and what they are interested in, they can better understand where opportunities lie and make informed decisions on where to focus their resources.

Data provided by Placer.ai shows that visit nights to Dixon were up 15.9% from 2024.

Overnight trips to Dixon increased by 19.9% in 2025, when compared to 2024.

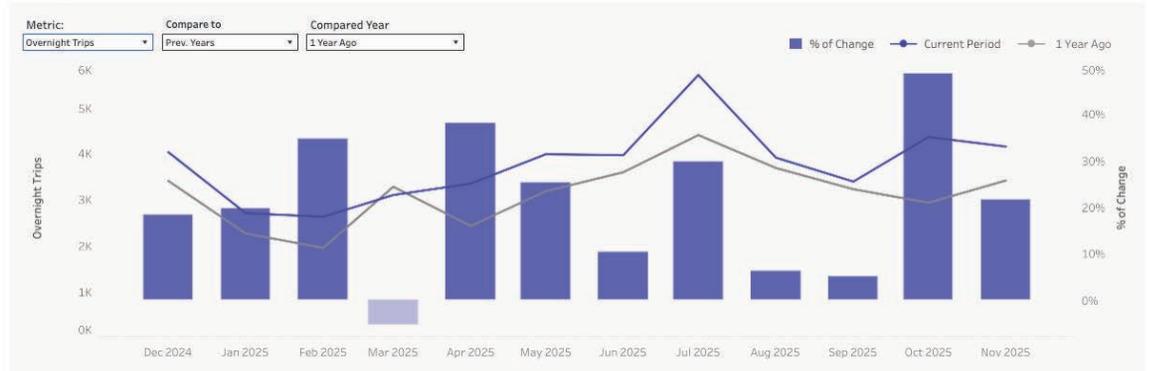
Visitor Metrics

Visits Variance



Visitor Metrics

Visits Variance



These numbers reflect remarkable stability in visitor trends, and a healthy increase year to year of individual visitors.

It's clear that in 2025, Dixon has become and remains a popular destination in the region.

Discover Dixon's robust lineup of events, creative marketing and promotional efforts, and community outreach and engagement, are contributing to this growth.

We are a part of the community puzzle that together has achieved so much in the past few years.

2025

Visitor Trend & Impact

Overall, the data provided by Placer.ai gives us an in-depth understanding of how we are impacting the community. It helps us to measure the effectiveness of our efforts, provide solid evidence of our impact, and continuously improve upon our strategies.

Scarecrow Festival continues to bring an average of 4,000 people to the area each Fall.

Unfortunately, weather caused three separate cancellations during the **Dixon City Market** season. However, the mid-week favorite still managed to attract more than 10,000 visitors to town in 2025.

Holding steady from last year, the weekend of **Dement Town Music Fest** was part of a weekend that saw 1,600 visitors to Depot Avenue, which is a 30% increase from the average weekend traffic in the area.

The **Dixon Christmas Walk** again welcomed thousands, with 3,200 visitors in attendance for this year's festivities.



Dement Town Music Fest

Summer Block Party and **Venetian Night** also saw increases in attendance and participation, with Venetian Night attendance growing again, up to 1,900 in 2025, and Summer Block Party just shy of 1,000 attendees.

We look forward to continuing to use Placer.ai to analyze factors for growth and setbacks, and utilizing the data to improve our efforts each year.

Our goal, every day: Finding exciting new ways to promote what we all know: Dixon is a great place to live, work, visit, and raise a family.

**Discover Dixon uses Placer.ai software to calculate event attendance and visitor trends. Its portfolio includes more than 4,000 customers – from commercial real estate and retail to dining, CPG, and civic organizations, and they are considered one of the top sources for location intelligence. As models improve, numbers are subject to change.*

2025

Tourism Partnerships

In 2025, Discover Dixon entered its second year of partnership with the County of Lee on a fully rebranded tourism initiative, Visit Lee County.

Through grant funding – and as part of a larger collaborative effort with the City of Dixon and the County of Lee – advertising campaigns helped reintroduce the new brand in 2024 through a variety of marketing initiatives and promotions.

These advertising efforts continued in 2025, often co-branded with Discover Dixon, allowing both organizations to expand their reach and increase opportunities for community and regional partnerships.

Based on tourism metrics, this partnership again proved successful in 2025, resulting in a 1.2% increase in overnight trips and a 4.8% increase in visit nights throughout Lee County.

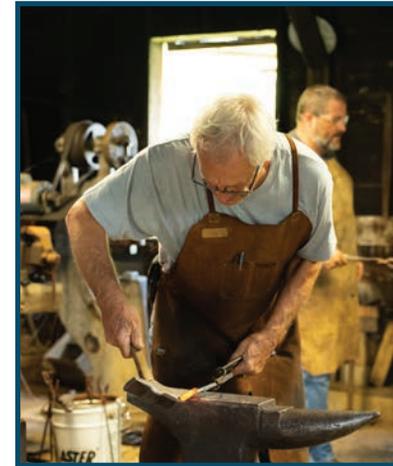
Visit Lee County partnered with Sublette 365 organizers to amplify marketing efforts for the Hops & Harmony Festival, including hosting a social media influencer to generate content at the event.

In collaboration with Visit Northwest Illinois, Visit Lee County also supported marketing efforts for the Paw Paw Festival, which welcomed approximately 3,000 visitors this year.

These are just two examples of the many joint efforts Visit Lee County undertook with local municipalities and organizations to promote the area's events and attractions. The organization looks forward to continuing this partnership and advancing tourism efforts throughout the region.



LEFT: Lee County 4-H Fair



RIGHT AND BELOW: Franklin Grove Summer Harvest Festival



2025

Chamber Initiatives

In 2025, Discover Dixon continued to poll its members to gather feedback on initiatives, marketing efforts, and overall membership value, ensuring its programs and services remained aligned with member needs.

Discover Dixon also continued to enhance its website throughout 2025, adding new pages each month to better serve the community. The site, which was completely rebuilt and rebranded in 2024, saw increased traffic and engagement year over year. This rebuild allowed Discover Dixon to implement new features, including the Chamber Directory, which to provide businesses with valuable exposure, helping them reach potential customers and visitors through the Discover Dixon website.

Discover Dixon also revived its business education programming with Breakfast Blends, offering small businesses sessions on branding, marketing, tech, AI, and more.

In 2025, 45 businesses and organizations were again highlighted through the Career Fair & Hiring Expo in partnership with LCIDA and Dixon High School, connecting local employers with students and job seekers.

A new product, Discover Dixon Dollars, launched in 2025. These gift certificates, available at the Discover Dixon office, can be used like cash at participating businesses and are designed to stimulate local commerce while showcasing the community's unique offerings. Discover Dixon looks forward to continuing this program.

While Discover Dixon has long prided itself on its event sponsorship benefits, a new sponsorship program introduced in early 2025 offered increased exposure through unique sponsorship packages. This update was met with great success and delivered increased value for sponsors.

Through ongoing evaluation and a commitment to improvement, Discover Dixon remains dedicated to being an invaluable resource for its members.



Discover Dixon Annual Golf Outing



Illinois Main Street Conference

2025

Main Street Conference

Discover Dixon was chosen by Illinois Main Street as the host city for the 2025 Illinois Main Street Conference in November.

Hosting this statewide conference was an honor, and proved to be an invaluable experience for both the organization and the City of Dixon.

Hundreds of city officials, community organizers, Main Street employees and volunteers, and others visited for networking, brainstorming, learning, and collaboration.

The Dixon: Historic Theatre, Northwest Territory Historic Center, and Dixon Elks Lodge hosted the conference's main events.

City Hall, The Gathering Place, The Next Picture Show, and Post House Ballroom served as primary sites for conference programming, while many other downtown locations were showcased during tours and trainings.

Dixon's own were also recognized for their outstanding efforts. The Dixon: Historic Theatre and Reagan Run each received awards, along with local business owner and DCCMS board member Britni Dvorak.

Connections were strengthened, and many new ideas were sparked during this invigorating week of showcasing our great community.



2025

Our Partners & Sponsors

Thank you to the following for their continued support:



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