



WELCOME

January 24, 2024

Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority Board Meeting

EXPLORE
ASHEVILLE

POWERED BY

Buncombe County Tourism
Development Authority

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Brenda Durden

- Call to order the Joint Meeting of the BCTDA, Public Authority and BCTDA Nonprofit Corporation.



POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority

Board Meeting

Wednesday, January 24, 2024 | 9:00 a.m.

Explore Asheville | 27 College Place | Board Room (1st Floor)

Members of the public may attend in person or [register here](#) to view a livestream of the meeting.

AGENDA

9:00 a.m.	Call to Order the Joint Meeting of the BCTDA, Public Authority and BCTDA, Nonprofit Corporation	Brenda Durden
9:05 a.m.	Approval of November 29, 2023 Meeting Minutes	Brenda Durden
9:10 a.m.	Financial Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. November 2023 Financial Reportsb. December 2023 Financial Reports	Melissa Moore, Buncombe County Finance Director/BCTDA Fiscal Agent
9:20 a.m.	President & CEO Report <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Industry Metricsb. Lodging Performance Reportc. Other Updates	Vic Isley
9:35 a.m.	Strategic Imperatives: Progress Report <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Second Quarter Review (October 2023 – December 2023 Highlights)	Vic Isley, Dodie Stephens, Michael Kryzanek, Penelope Whitman, Jennifer Kass-Green
10:00 a.m.	Business Development Performance Report	Michael Kryzanek; Colleen Swanson, Meetings Database Institute Executive Vice President
10:20 a.m.	Marketing Update	Dodie Stephens
10:40 a.m.	Asheville City Council Update	Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore
10:45 a.m.	Buncombe County Commission Update	Commissioner Terri Wells
10:50 a.m.	Miscellaneous Business	Brenda Durden
10:55 a.m.	Comments from the General Public	Brenda Durden
11:00 a.m.	Adjournment	Brenda Durden

SAVE THE DATE

The Year Ahead | January 31, 2024, 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. | Embassy Suites, 192 Haywood Street, Asheville, NC 28801

The next joint BCTDA monthly meeting is **Wednesday, February 28, 2024**, at 9:00 a.m., in the Board Room of Explore Asheville, located at 27 College Place. Please contact Julia Simpson at jsimpson@ExploreAsheville.com or 828.333.5831 with questions.

BCTDA Mission Statement

To be a leader in the economic development of Buncombe County by attracting and servicing visitors, generating income, jobs and tax revenues which make the community a better place to live and visit.



FOR OUR REMOTE VIEWERS

Chair Brenda Durden

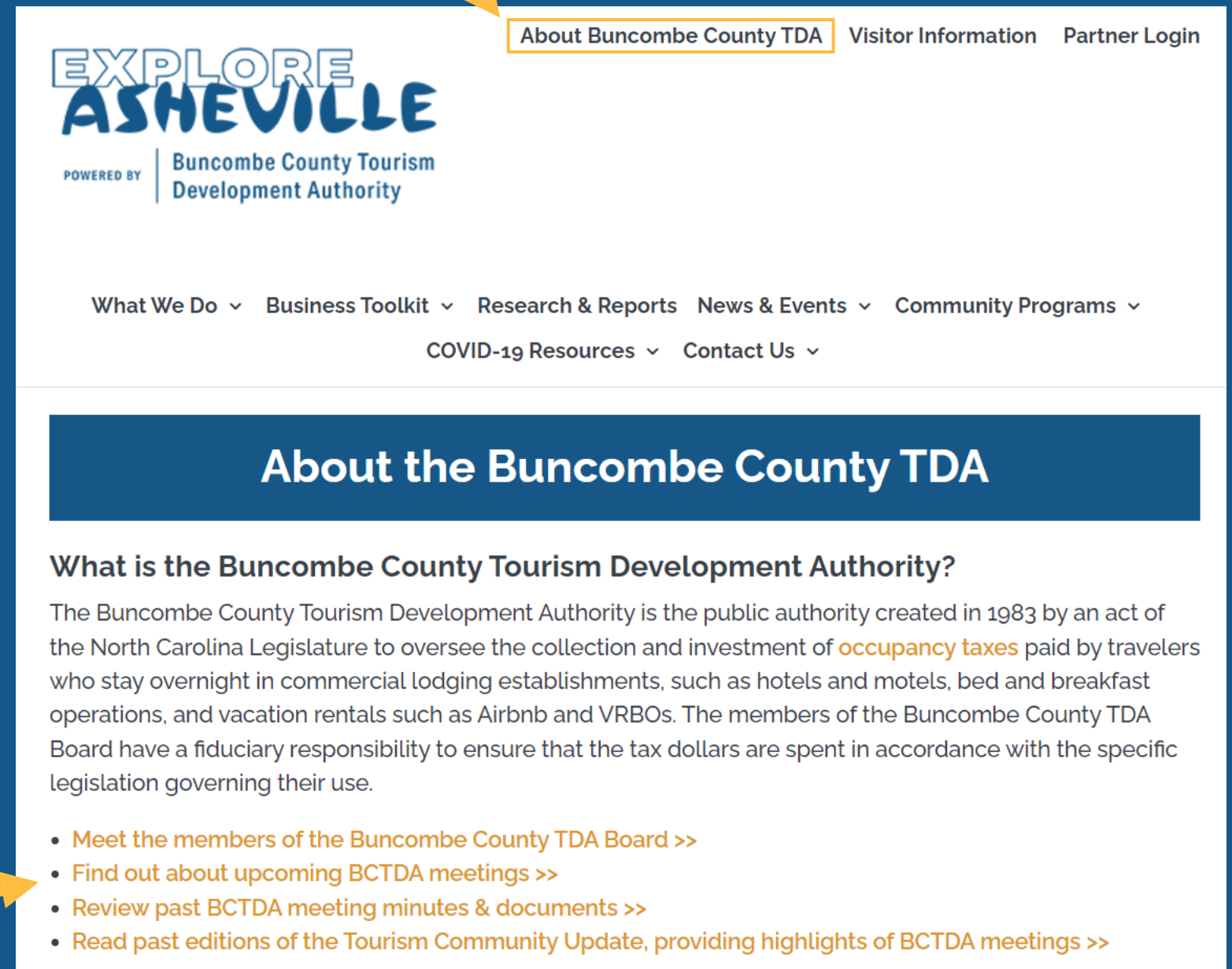
For our viewers watching remotely, documents were emailed to everyone who registered on Zoom by 8:00 this morning.

The agenda and meeting documents are also available online.

Additional materials, including the PowerPoint presentation, will be posted later today.

Go to:

- AshevilleCVB.com
- About the Buncombe County TDA
- Find out about upcoming BCTDA meetings



The screenshot shows the Explore Asheville website. At the top, the logo "EXPLORE ASHEVILLE" is displayed, with "POWERED BY Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority" below it. A navigation bar at the top right contains links: "About Buncombe County TDA" (highlighted with an orange box and an orange arrow pointing to it from the left), "Visitor Information", and "Partner Login". Below the navigation bar, a horizontal menu lists: "What We Do", "Business Toolkit", "Research & Reports", "News & Events", "Community Programs", "COVID-19 Resources", and "Contact Us". The main content area features a dark blue header with the text "About the Buncombe County TDA". Below this, the section "What is the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority?" is followed by a paragraph explaining the authority's role. At the bottom, a list of links is provided, with an orange arrow pointing to it from the left: "Meet the members of the Buncombe County TDA Board >>", "Find out about upcoming BCTDA meetings >>", "Review past BCTDA meeting minutes & documents >>", and "Read past editions of the Tourism Community Update, providing highlights of BCTDA meetings >>".

EXPLORE ASHEVILLE
POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority

About Buncombe County TDA Visitor Information Partner Login

What We Do ▾ Business Toolkit ▾ Research & Reports News & Events ▾ Community Programs ▾
COVID-19 Resources ▾ Contact Us ▾

About the Buncombe County TDA

What is the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority?

The Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority is the public authority created in 1983 by an act of the North Carolina Legislature to oversee the collection and investment of **occupancy taxes** paid by travelers who stay overnight in commercial lodging establishments, such as hotels and motels, bed and breakfast operations, and vacation rentals such as Airbnb and VRBOs. The members of the Buncombe County TDA Board have a fiduciary responsibility to ensure that the tax dollars are spent in accordance with the specific legislation governing their use.

- [Meet the members of the Buncombe County TDA Board >>](#)
- [Find out about upcoming BCTDA meetings >>](#)
- [Review past BCTDA meeting minutes & documents >>](#)
- [Read past editions of the Tourism Community Update, providing highlights of BCTDA meetings >>](#)

WELCOME BOARD & GUESTS

Chair Brenda Durden

- **Welcome board members and guests who are in attendance**
- **Introductions around the room**



NOVEMBER 29 MINUTES

Chair Brenda Durden

Questions/ Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the November 29, 2023, meeting minutes.

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote



POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism
Development Authority

Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority
A Joint Meeting of the Public Authority and Nonprofit Corporation
Explore Asheville – 27 College Place, Asheville

Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 29, 2023

Present (Voting):	Brenda Durden, Chair; Matthew Lehman, Vice Chair; Kathleen Mosher, HP Patel, Michael Lusick, Larry Crosby, Lucious Wilson, Elizabeth Putnam, Scott Patel
Absent (Voting):	None
Present (Ex-Officio):	Buncombe County Commissioner Terri Wells, Asheville Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore
Staff:	Vic Isley, Dodie Stephens, Tiffany Thacker, Julia Simpson, Ashley Greenstein, Josh Jones, Penelope Whitman, Michael Kryzanek, Marla Tambellini, Mia Brown
BC Finance:	Melissa Moore, Buncombe County/BCTDA Fiscal Agent Matt Evans, Mason Scott; Buncombe County
Legal Counsel:	Sabrina Rockoff, McGuire, Wood & Bissette/BCTDA Attorney
In-Person Attendees:	Tim Lyons, Mauldin & Jenkins Mary Standaert, Community Member Christine Smith, CSConsulting 101 Olivia Ward, OnWard Digital Media Randy Claybrook, Asheville Bed & Breakfast Association Lacy Cross, Movement Bank John Ellis, Prior Board Member Will Hoffman, Angela Wilhelm; Asheville Citizen Times Chase Davis, Mountain Xpress Matt Alan, Land of the Sky Realtors Association Zach Wallace, Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce Megan Rogers, Asheville Independent Restaurant Association Roy Harris, Community Member Madison Smith, John Wellbeloved, WLOS News 13 Felicia Sonmer, Blue Ridge Public Radio Steven Marascalco, Community Member
Online Attendees:	Carrie Gill, Megan Shields; MMGY Global Sha'Linda Pruitt, Mickey Poandl, Tina Porter, Khal Khoury, Emily Crosby, Carli Adams, Anna Harris, Emilie Soffe, Holly Watts, McKenzie Provost; Explore Asheville Timothy Love, Buncombe County Jim Muth, TPDF Committee Joseph Mickey, Lamar Advertising





FINANCIAL UPDATES

Melissa Moore
Buncombe County | Finance Director
BCTDA | Fiscal Agent

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POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism
Development Authority

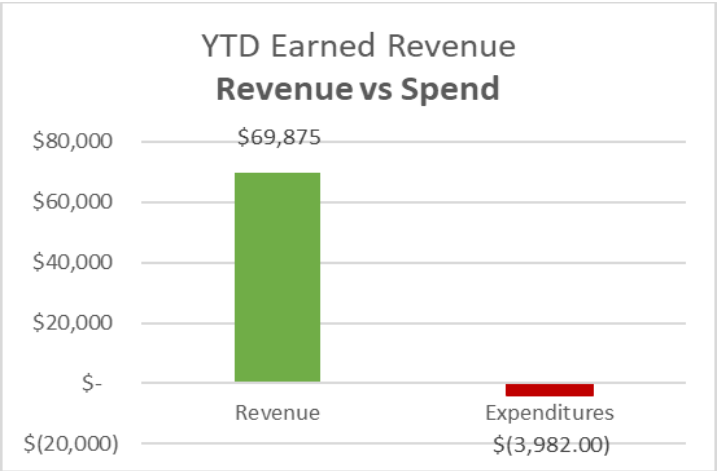
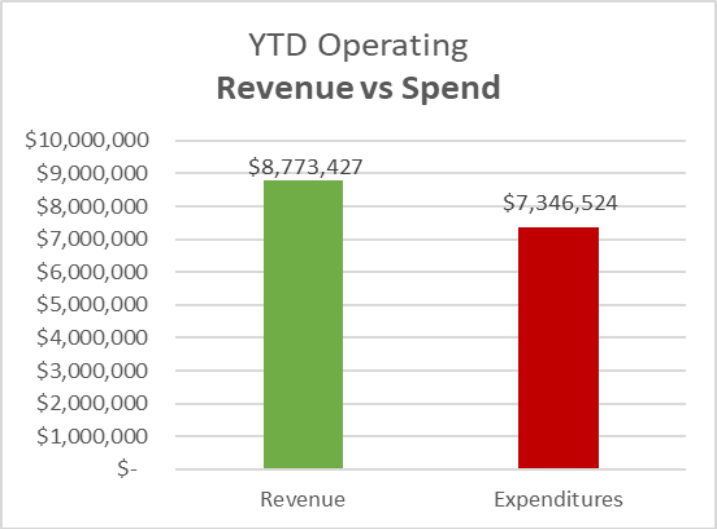
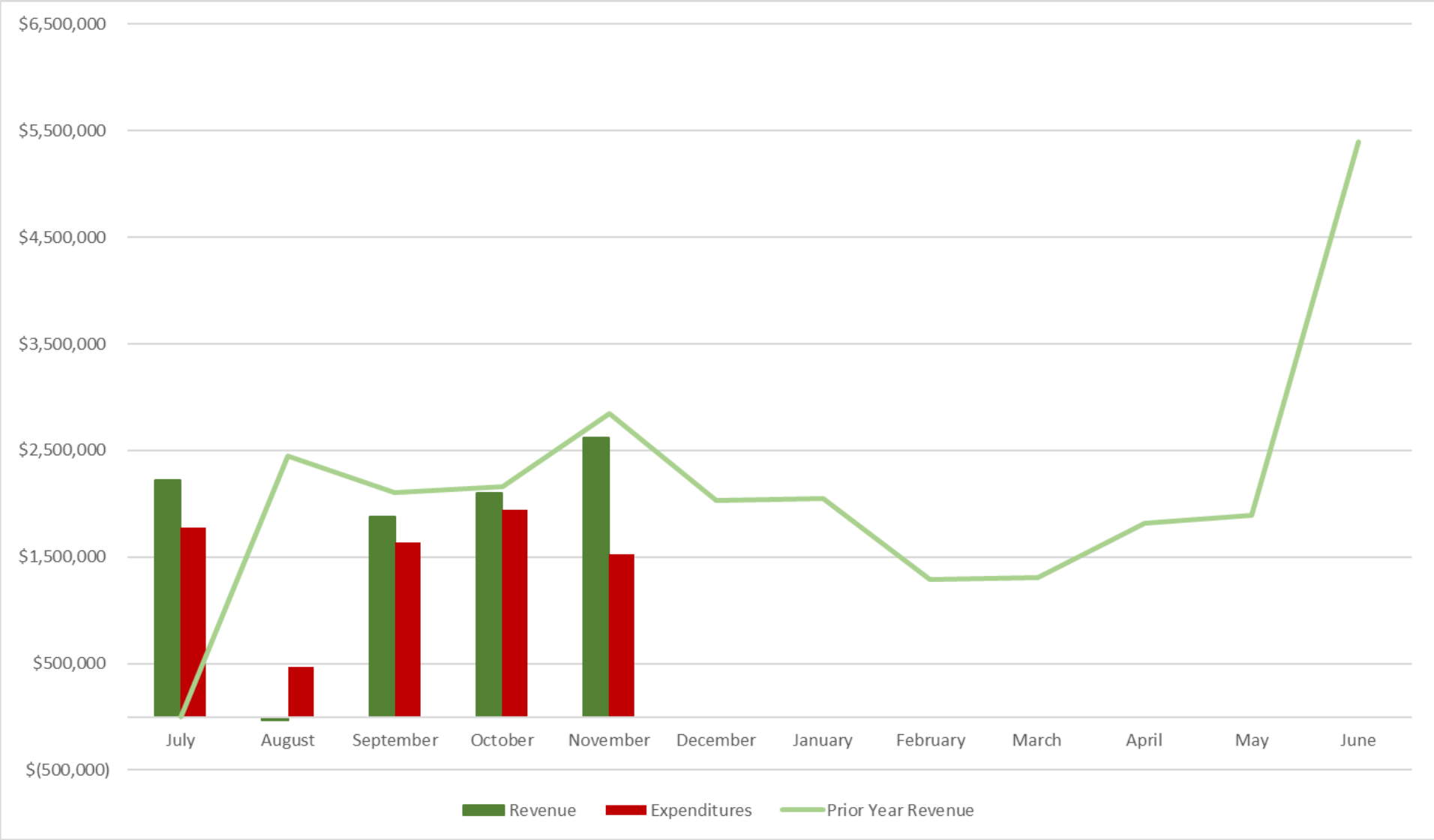


NOVEMBER 2023 FINANCIALS

Melissa Moore
Buncombe County | Finance Director
BCTDA | Fiscal Agent

OPERATING AND EARNED REVENUE FUNDS

Revenues (Current and Prior-year) vs Expenditures (current year), November 2023



For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 1, 3, and 6



OPERATING AND EARNED REVENUE FUNDS

Monthly Summary of Activities, November 2023

Operating Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 28,852,000	\$ 2,617,971	\$ 8,773,427	30%
Total expenditures		\$ 1,524,515	\$ 7,346,524	26%

Earned Revenue Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 250,000	\$ 20,122	\$ 69,875	28%
Total expenditures		\$ (3,982)	\$ (3,982)	-2%

For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 1-2



PROJECT FUNDS: TPDF AND LIFT FUNDS

Monthly Summary of Activities, November 2023

Tourism Product Development Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Life to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 32,624,185	\$ 886,148	\$ 36,811,990	>100%
Total expenditures		\$ 8,059	\$ 4,582,130	14%
Active projects		19		
Funding available for future grants		\$ 4,187,805		

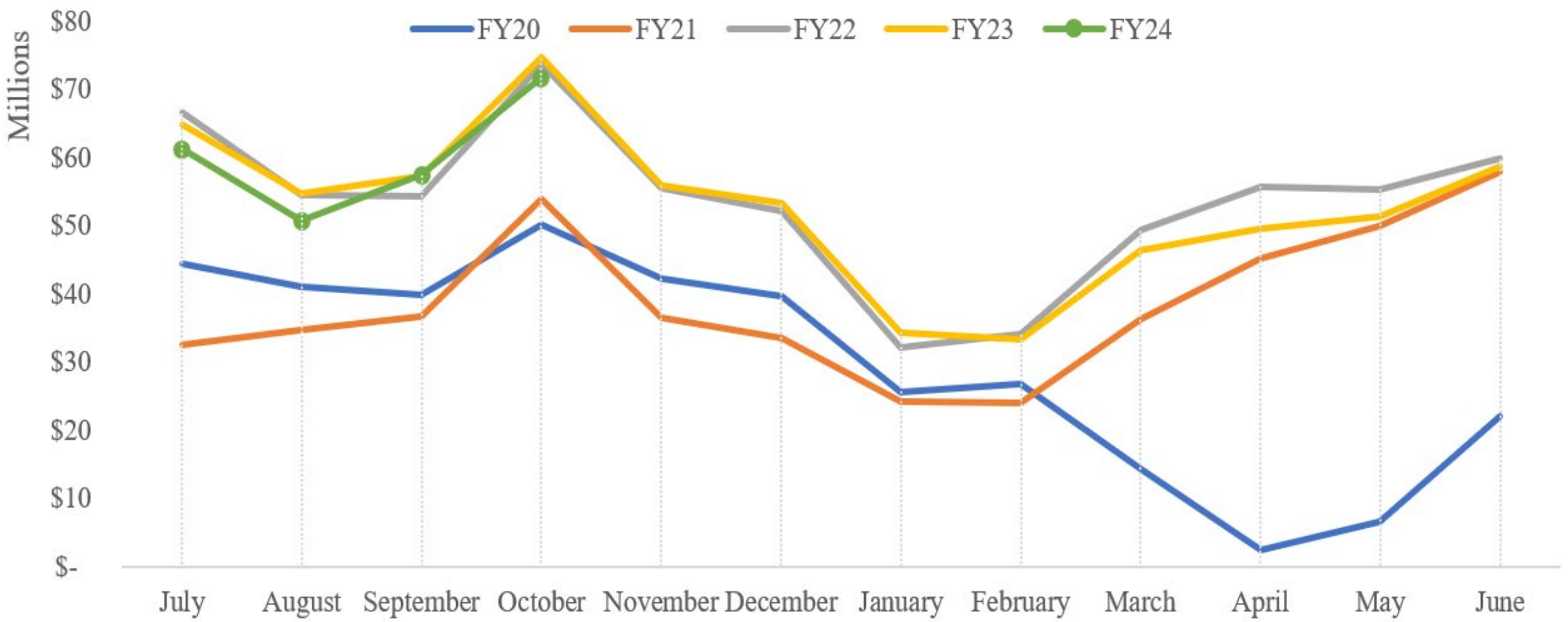
Legacy Investment From Tourism Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Life to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 339,560	\$ 639,550	\$ 8,329,672	>100%
Total expenditures		\$ -	\$ 98,621	29%
Active projects		0		
Funding available for future grants		\$ 7,990,112		

For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 3 - 6



LODGING SALES

Shown by Month of Sales, Year-to-Date (5 years), November 2023

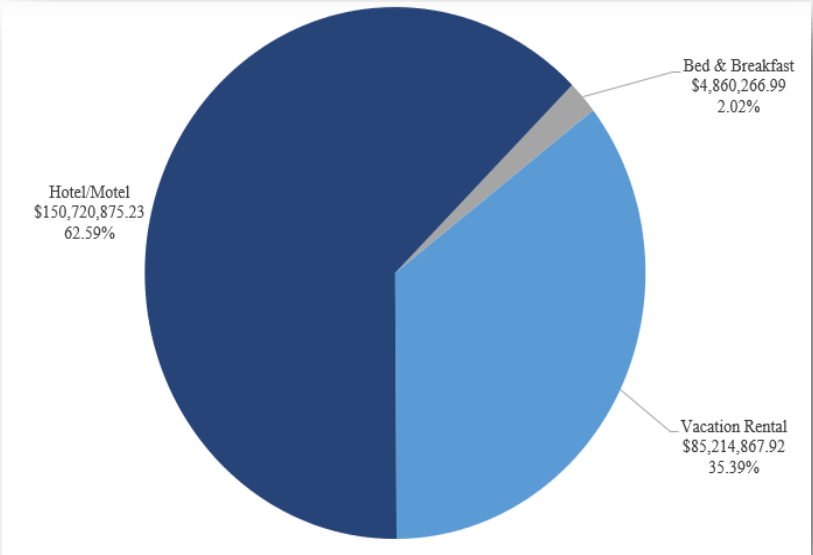
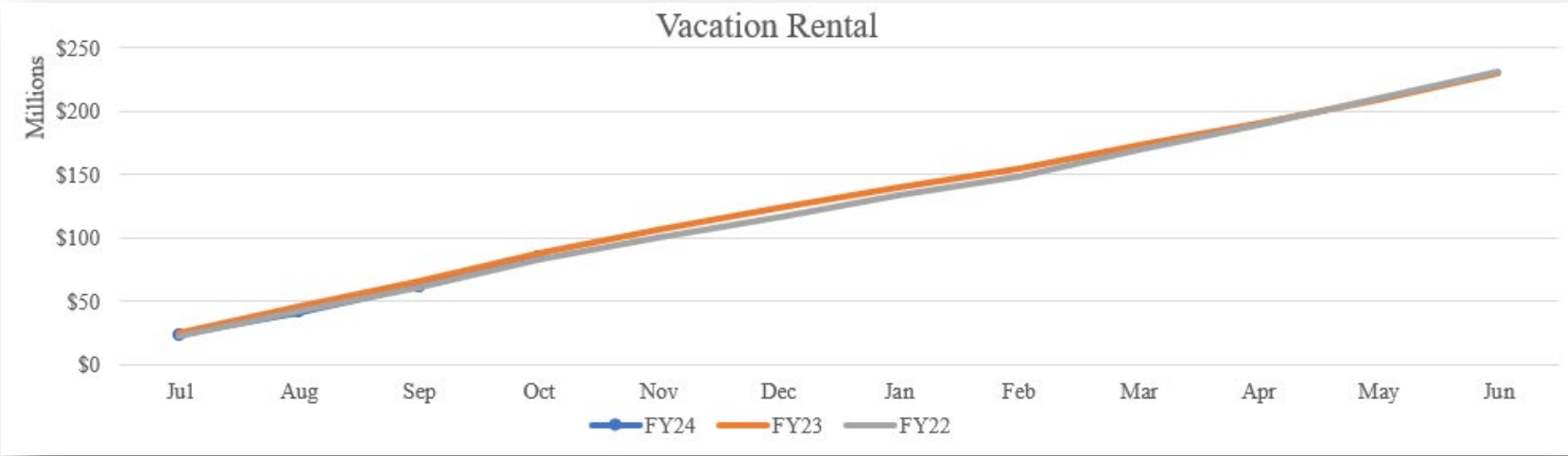
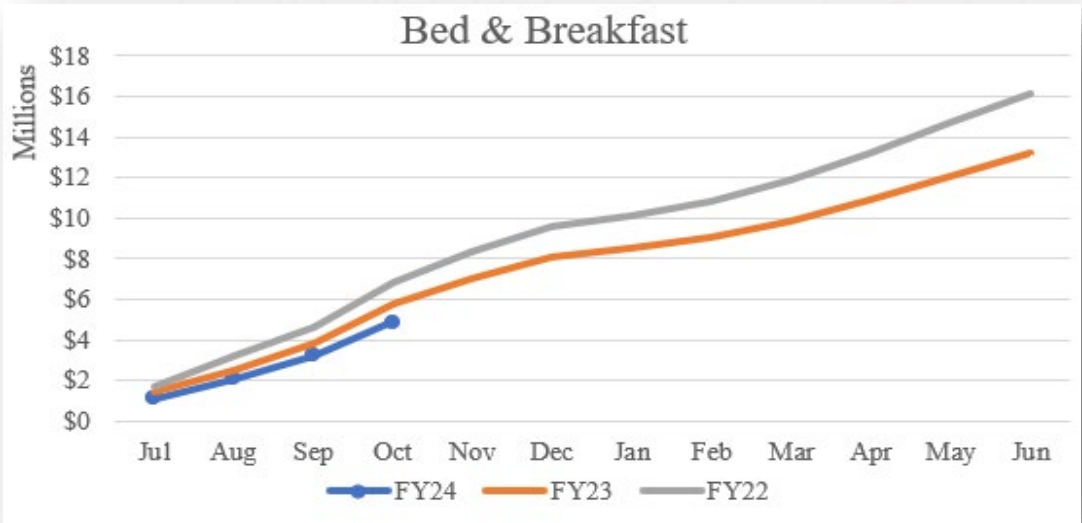
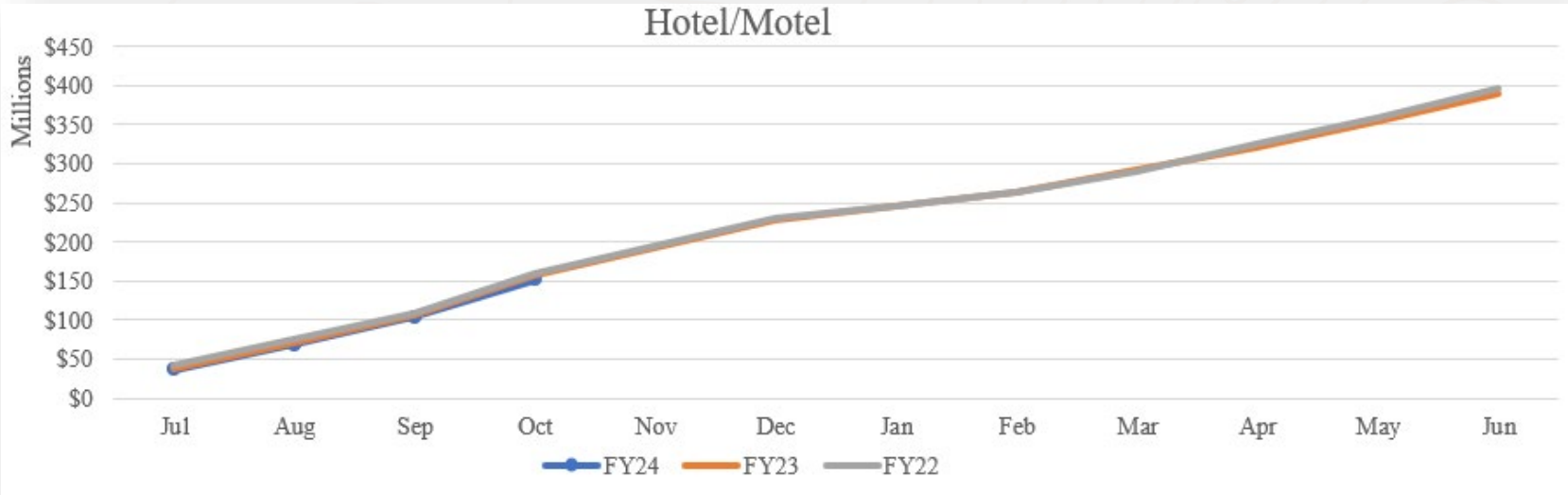


For more information, see financial and sales statements page 8



LODGING SALES

Activity by type and month, shown for 3 years, November 2023



For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 9 - 10

NOVEMBER 2023 FINANCIAL REPORTS

Chair Brenda Durden

Questions/Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the November 2023 Financial Reports as presented.

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote



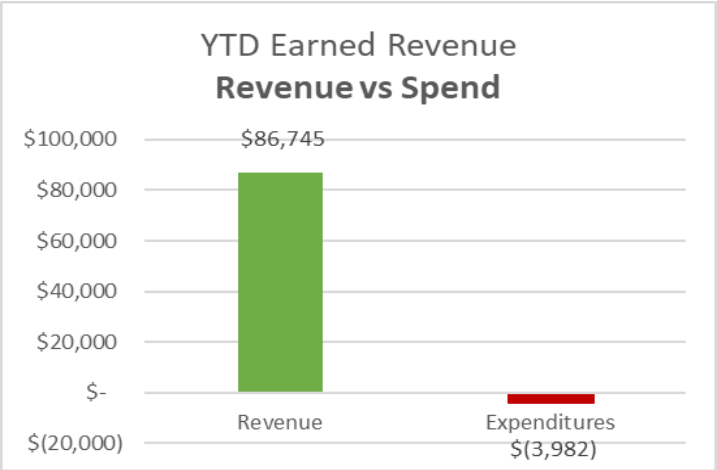
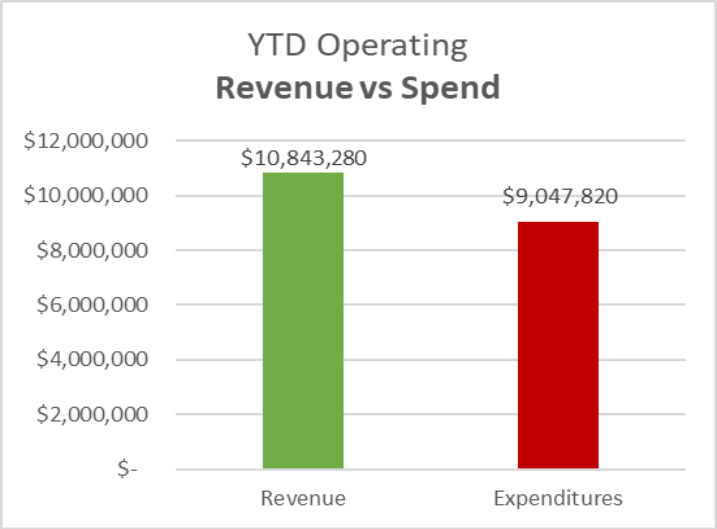
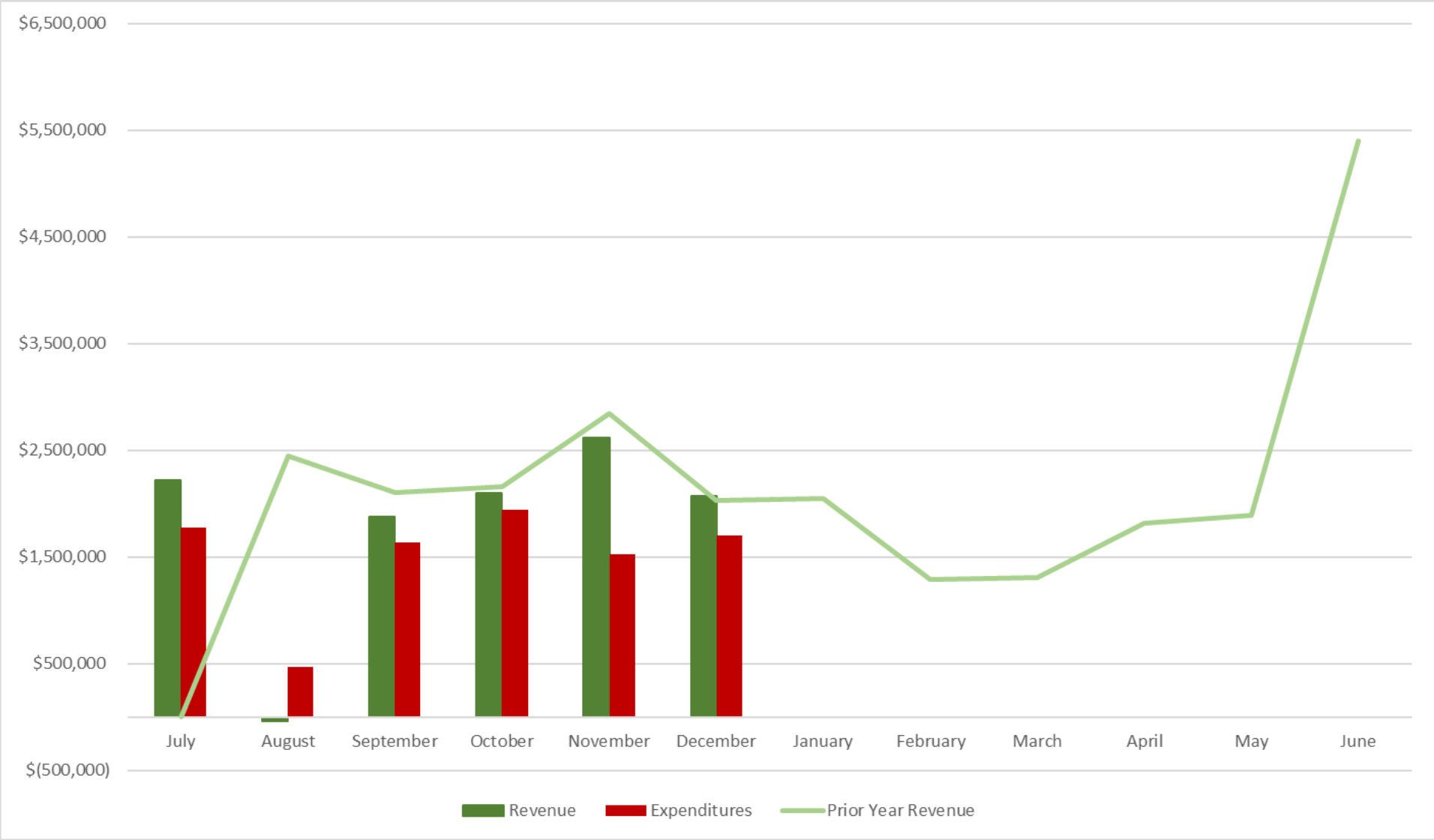


DECEMBER 2023 FINANCIALS

Melissa Moore
Buncombe County | Finance Director
BCTDA | Fiscal Agent

OPERATING AND EARNED REVENUE FUNDS

Revenues (Current and Prior-year) vs Expenditures (current year), December 2023



For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 1, 3, and 6



OPERATING AND EARNED REVENUE FUNDS

Monthly Summary of Activities, December 2023

Operating Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 28,852,000	\$ 2,069,853	\$ 10,843,280	38%
Total expenditures		\$ 1,701,296	\$ 9,047,820	31%

Earned Revenue Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 250,000	\$ 16,869	\$ 86,745	35%
Total expenditures		\$ -	\$ (3,982)	-2%

For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 1-2



PROJECT FUNDS: TPDF AND LIFT FUNDS

Monthly Summary of Activities, December 2023

Tourism Product Development Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Life to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 32,624,185	\$ 770,047	\$ 37,582,038	>100%
Total expenditures		\$ 259,951	\$ 4,842,080	15%
Active projects		19		
Funding available for future grants		\$ 4,957,853		

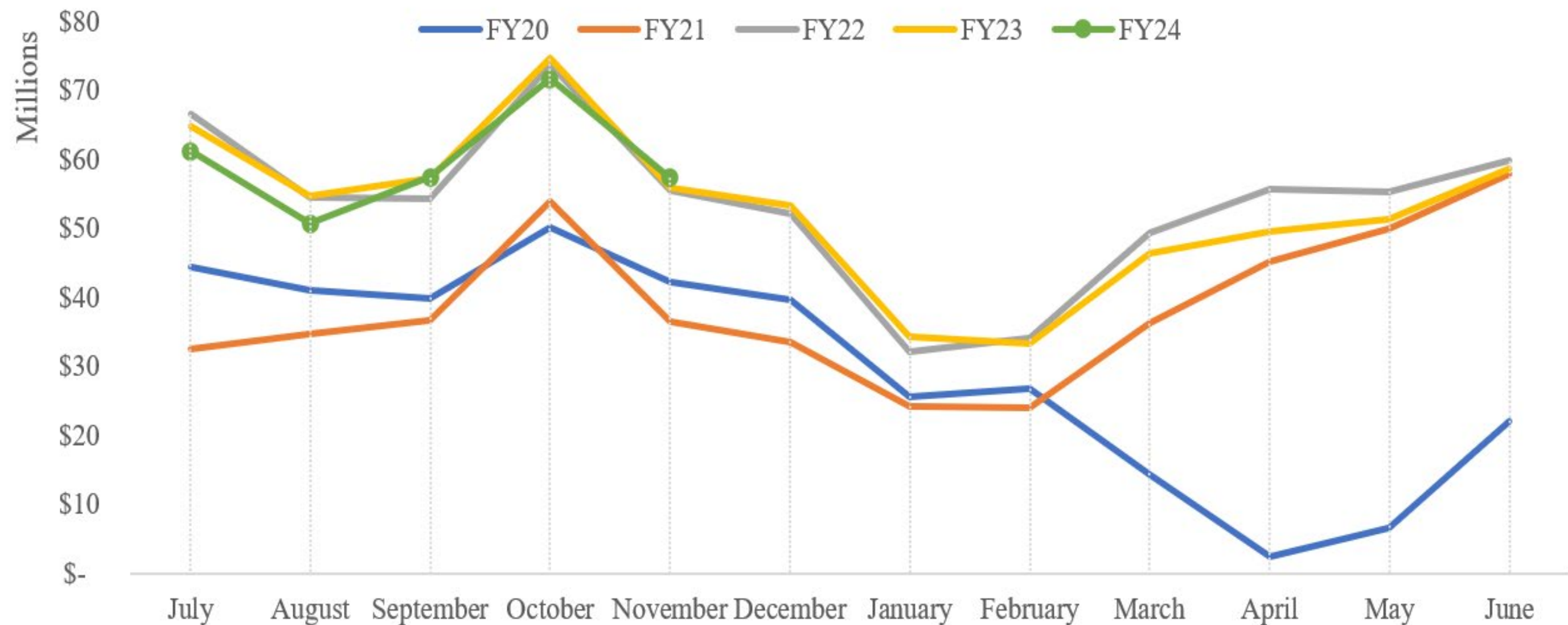
Legacy Investment From Tourism Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Life to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 339,560	\$ 509,217	\$ 8,838,889	>100%
Total expenditures		\$ 43,485	\$ 142,106	42%
Active projects		0		
Funding available for future grants		\$ 8,499,329		

For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 3 - 6



LODGING SALES

Shown by Month of Sales, Year-to-Date (5 years), December 2023

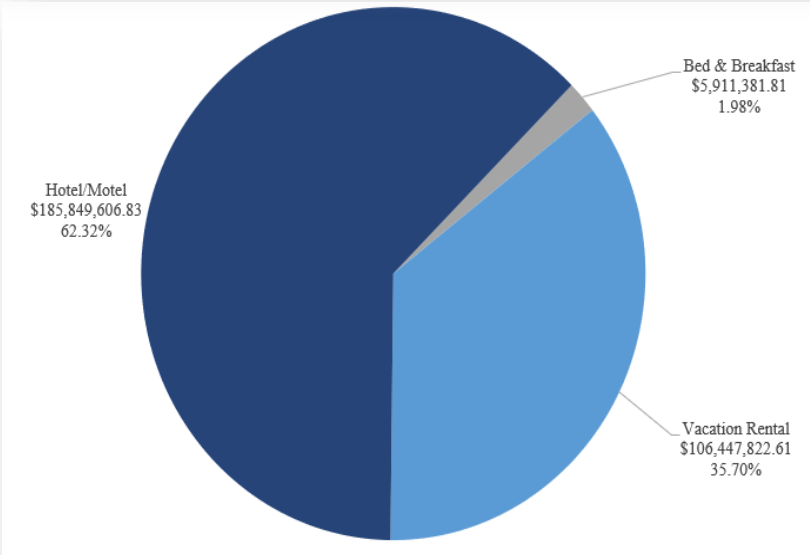
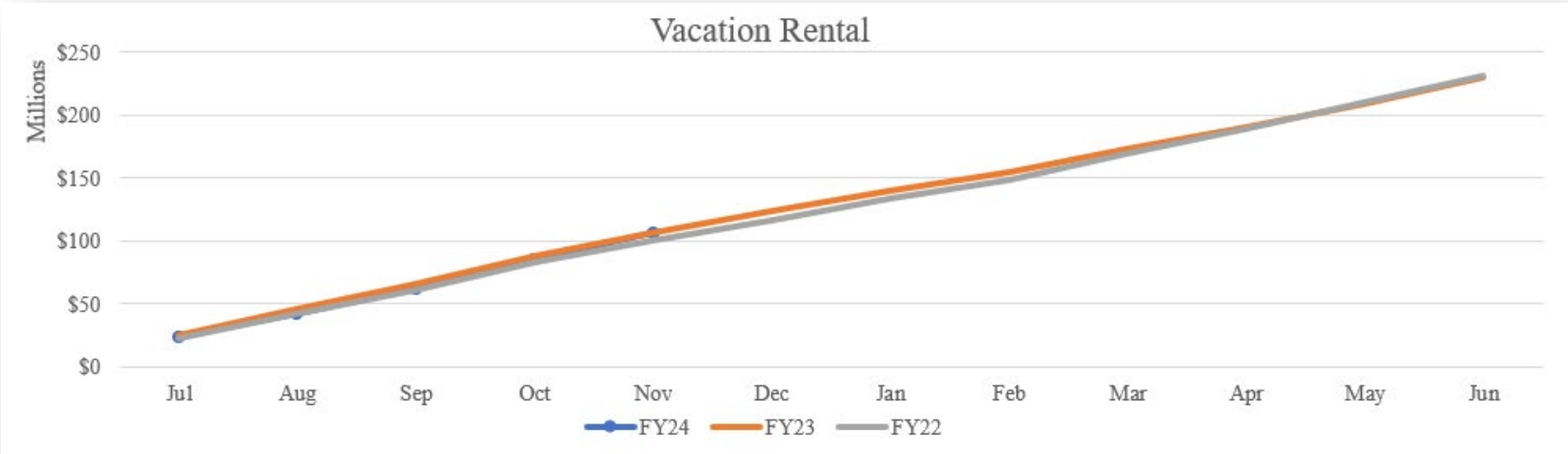
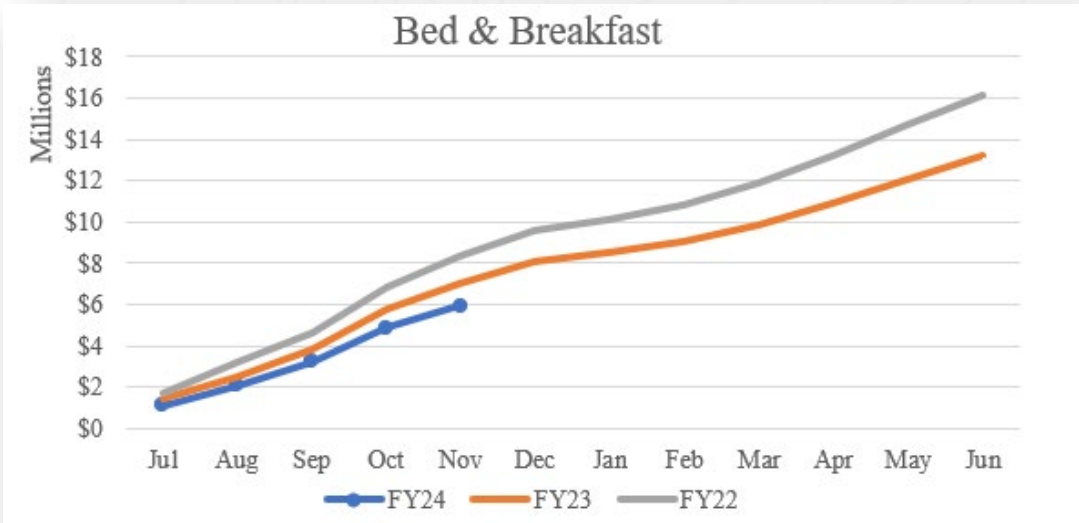
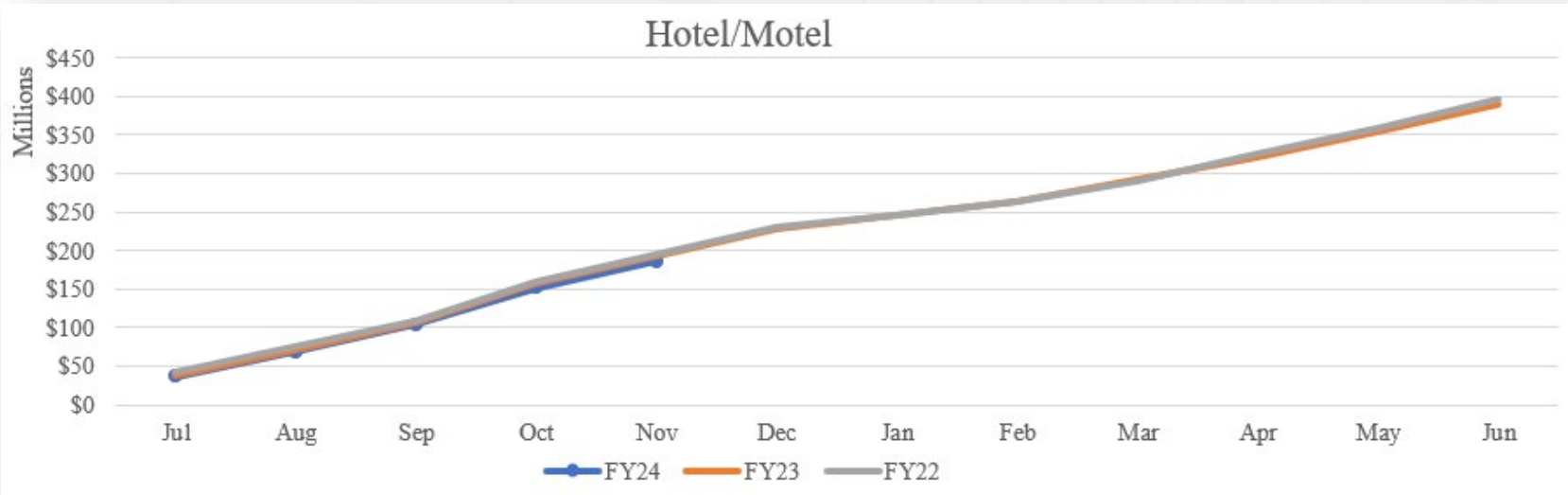


For more information, see financial and sales statements page 8



LODGING SALES

Activity by type and month, shown for 3 years, December 2023



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DECEMBER 2023 FINANCIAL REPORTS

Chair Brenda Durden

Questions/Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the December 2023 Financial Reports as presented.

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote





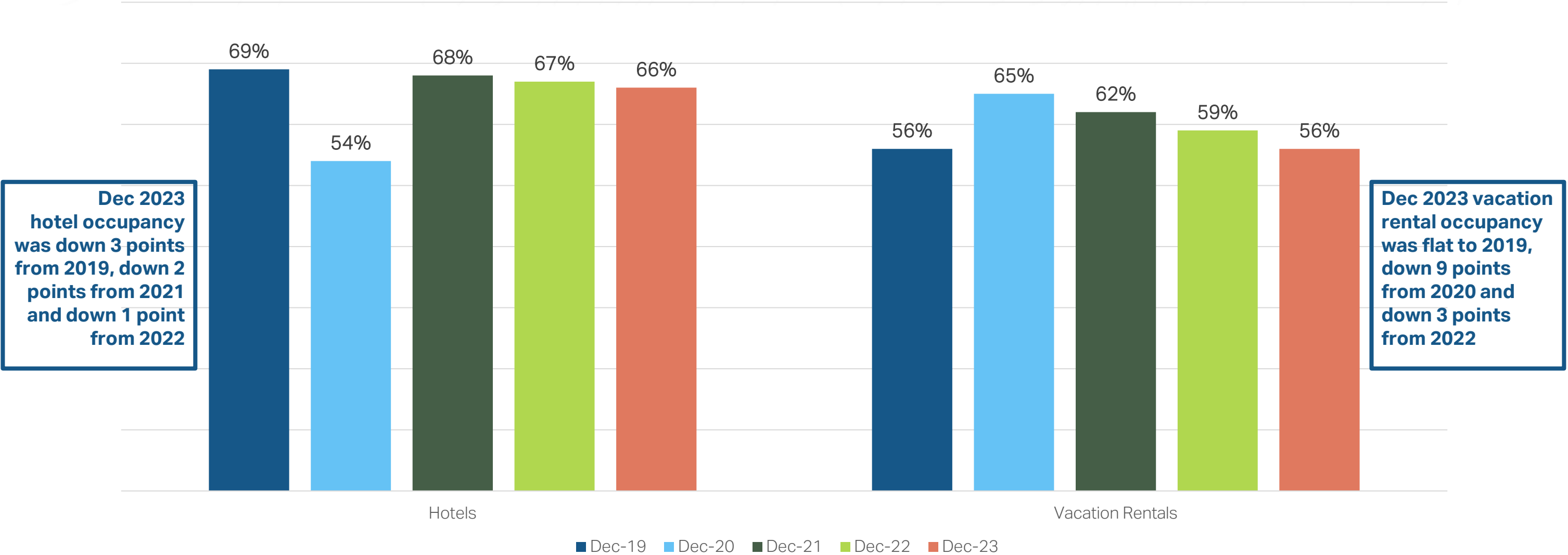
PRESIDENT & CEO REPORT

Vic Isley

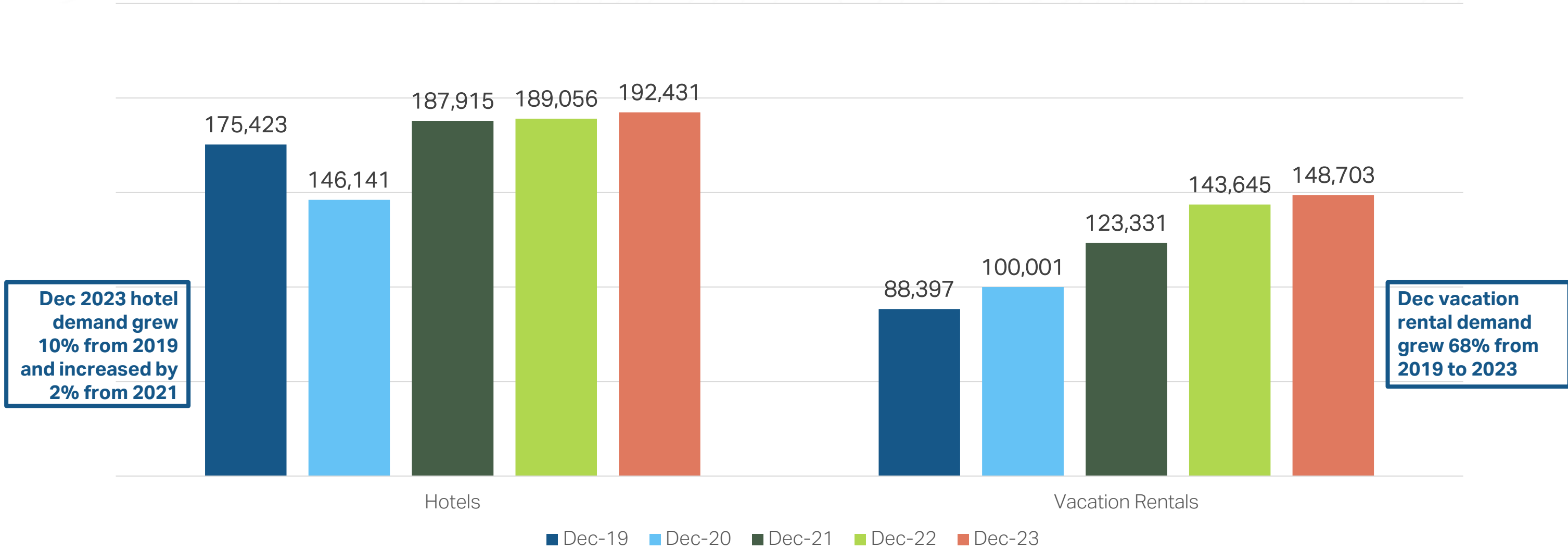
Explore Asheville | President & CEO

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Development Authority

DECEMBER LODGING OCCUPANCY



DECEMBER LODGING DEMAND





2023 PRELIMINARY TAKEAWAYS

2023 YEAR-END TAKEAWAYS

- Preliminary figures from Asheville Regional Airport Authority show air passengers reached 2.2 million, up 20% year over year. Air passengers typically stay longer and spend more throughout the community.
- Asheville/Buncombe County (ABC) hotel occupancy has not recovered to 2019 levels (73%) and is relatively on par (69%) with comparative communities like Savannah, Charleston and Greenville.
- ABC hotels ended 2023 ahead of comparative communities in average daily rate (ADR) and revenue per available room (RevPAR). This is an indicator of price, not profit, as the costs of doing business have increased exponentially.
- Lodging occupancy is a leading indicator for what other local business categories will experience. It's also a leading indicator for sales tax collections that ultimately go to help fund City and County government revenues.
- Vacation rental supply and demand grew faster than hotels through 2023, continuing the trend from City Council's hotel moratorium from September 2019 – October 2021 and Covid travel behaviors.



LOOKING AHEAD

Latest forecast from US Travel & Tourism Economics for 2024

93%

of Asheville/BC
visitors are leisure

3%

of Asheville/BC
visitors are business

4%

of Asheville/BC
visitors are business

- **Domestic leisure trips have fully recovered but economic headwinds pose challenges in 2024.** Domestic leisure trips officially achieved a full recovery to pre-pandemic levels in 2022. Domestic leisure growth has decelerated through three quarters of 2023, as consumer spending has slowed amidst higher borrowing costs, tighter credit conditions, and the restarting of student loan repayments.
- **Domestic business is impacted by slowdown.** Domestic business visitation was expected to register 89% of 2019 levels by end of 2023, and business travel is still expected to grow in 2024, albeit at a slower rate. Full recovery in domestic business trips is not expected until 2026.
- **International travel to the United States still shy of a full recovery.** International inbound arrivals concluded 2022 at 64% of 2019 levels, and at 84% of its 2019 level in 2023. International visitation is projected to reach 98% of 2019 volumes in 2024 and surpass 2019 in 2025.
- **Asheville/Buncombe County specific forecast is underway for delivery late March.** Explore Asheville is working with Tourism Economics.





OTHER UPDATES

THE YEAR AHEAD | PARTNER EVENT

We hope you can join us the afternoon of January 31!



LOCAL FESTIVALS & CULTURAL EVENTS

Supported by Explore Asheville and the BCTDA

December Events

- Winter Lights at The NC Arboretum

January Events

- ALT ASO at the Orange Peel

February Events

- Taste of Asheville
- Asheville Mardi Gras Parade and Queen's Ball
- Asheville Celtic Festival
- ASAP Business of Farming Conference

The Festival & Cultural Event Support Fund was designed to provide financial support to local nonprofits for events that serve both the residents of Buncombe County and the visitors who travel to the Asheville area.

Event sponsorships are also accepted on a rolling basis. More information is available at AshevilleCVB.com.



BOARD DISCUSSION

QUESTIONS
INPUT
COMMENTS





STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES PROGRESS UPDATE

Vic Isley
President & CEO

Dodie Stephens
Vice President of Marketing

Michael Kryzanek
Vice President Business Development

Penelope Whitman
Vice President of Partnership & Destination Management

Jennifer Kass-Green
Vice President of Culture & Business Affairs

EXPLORE
ASHEVILLE
POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism
Development Authority

EXPLORE ASHEVILLE & BCTDA'S STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

The Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority and Explore Asheville adopted strategic imperatives that are informing and guiding the direction of Explore Asheville’s program of work and community investments going forward.

DELIVERING BALANCED & SUSTAINABLE GROWTH	ENCOURAGING SAFE & RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL	ENGAGING & INVITING MORE DIVERSE AUDIENCES	PROMOTING & SUPPORTING ASHEVILLE'S CREATIVE SPIRIT	RUNNING A HEALTHY & EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION
<p>Balancing resident and visitor needs, recognizing the necessary role that sustainable, long-term growth of travel has in achieving a healthy, collective economy.</p> <p>Focusing on the quality of each visit to our community – balancing growth across the seasons, business and leisure travel, and throughout Asheville and Buncombe County.</p>	<p>Engaging residents and visitors with shared values to care for and respect natural, cultural and human resources vital in delivering quality guest experiences.</p> <p>Collaborating with community organizations, local businesses and environmentally focused partners to support the sustainability and growth of our outdoor economy.</p>	<p>Extending a genuine invitation to Black travelers and other diverse audiences including LGBTQ visitors – connecting them with local neighborhoods, businesses, and entrepreneurs – creating more opportunities for all to win.</p> <p>Supporting product development, place making and community connections, enabling new experiences and business opportunities throughout our community.</p>	<p>Sharing stories of creators and makers who help differentiate our destination through food and drink, visual and performing arts, experiences and more.</p> <p>Supporting product development, place making and community connections, enabling new experiences and business opportunities throughout our community.</p>	<p>Investing in people, policies, and practices to serve our community with integrity within the organization’s legislative requirements.</p>

Explore Asheville staff generates quarterly reports on progress made toward these strategic imperatives and relevant initiatives that support them.

QUARTERLY HIGHLIGHTS

OCTOBER 2023 – DECEMBER 2023



MARKETING, CONTENT, & PR

Q2 INITIATIVES

Dodie Stephens
Vice President of Marketing

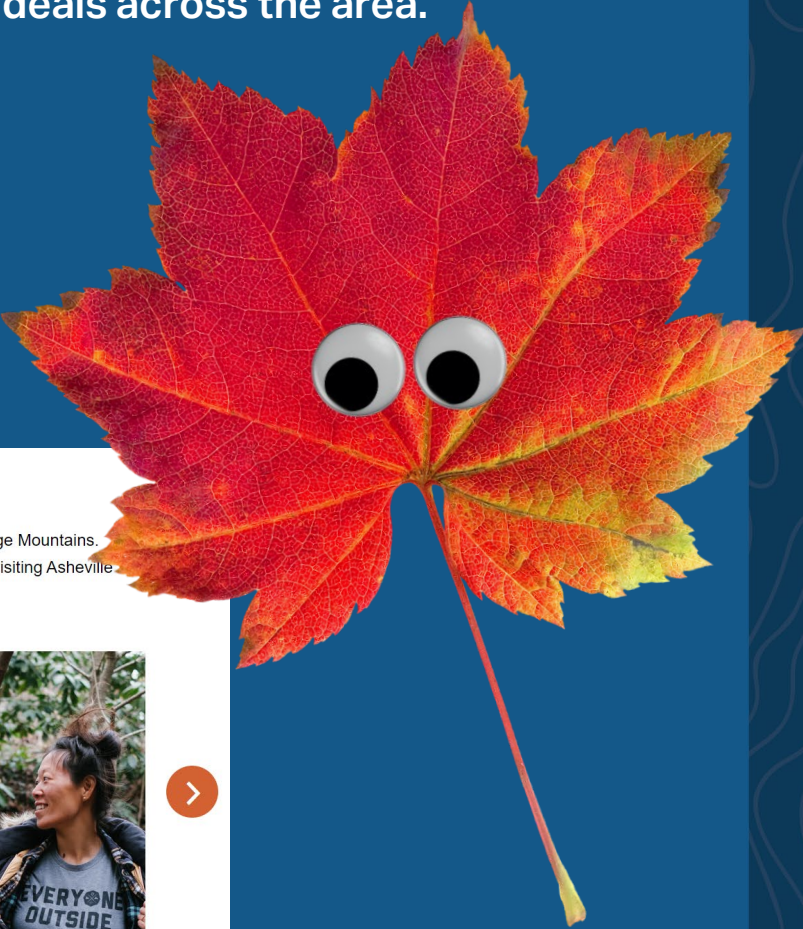
EXPLORE
ASHEVILLE
POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism
Development Authority

HIGHLY ENGAGING FALL COLOR CONTENT

Refreshed content plan pushes visitor dispersal through local insiders (+LEAFY!)

Each week during the fall 2023, Explore Asheville sent out a fall color report—an email digest featuring dispatches from Fall Color Hunters—*our ambassador crew of local content creators*—plus the week's best hikes, drives, events and travel deals across the area.

- ↑ List Growth: 65% increase YOY (14k → 24k)
- ↑ Email Opens: 64% increase YOY (94k → 154k)
- ↑ Clicks: 90% increase YOY (9k → 17k)
- ↓ Opt-outs: 17% decrease YOY (1.5k → 1.2k)



Meet Asheville's 2023 Fall Color Hunters

Meet Asheville's 2023 Fall Color Hunters -- a group of talented local photographers who have a passion for capturing the natural beauty of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Each week, they'll share updates on when and where to catch the best and brightest fall color in the region, plus local insights on what to expect when visiting Asheville during the fall.



ASHEVILLE



See Asheville's Fall Color Progression

As November welcomes fall color to lower elevation areas like downtown Asheville, Biltmore Estate, and the North Carolina Arboretum, it's time to enjoy the final glorious weeks of autumn. From the peaks of the Blue Ridge Mountains to the banks of the French Broad River, our Asheville Fall Color Hunters explored the full spectrum of autumn's beauty across the region. Discover the latest Fall Color Report for a look at some of the best and brightest the 2023 fall season had to offer—plus tips on where to find color now.

THE BEST OF FALL



Leafy Report

"It's not goodbye, it's leaf you later!"

Leafy, our 2023 fall foliage mascot, is still clinging on to his branch for another week in hopes he'll get to pose for a few more pictures. Yes, autumn fame has really gone to his stem. Leafy is also thankful for everyone who traveled to Asheville this fall, and for those who enjoyed his many color changes.

Final Weeks of Fall + Holiday Look Ahead



Fall Color Map

Track the best times and locations for beautiful fall foliage with our interactive color map.

TRACK FALL COLOR



Holiday in Asheville

Here is a perfect five-day itinerary for your holiday trip to Asheville. 'Tis the season!

HOLIDAY ITINERARY



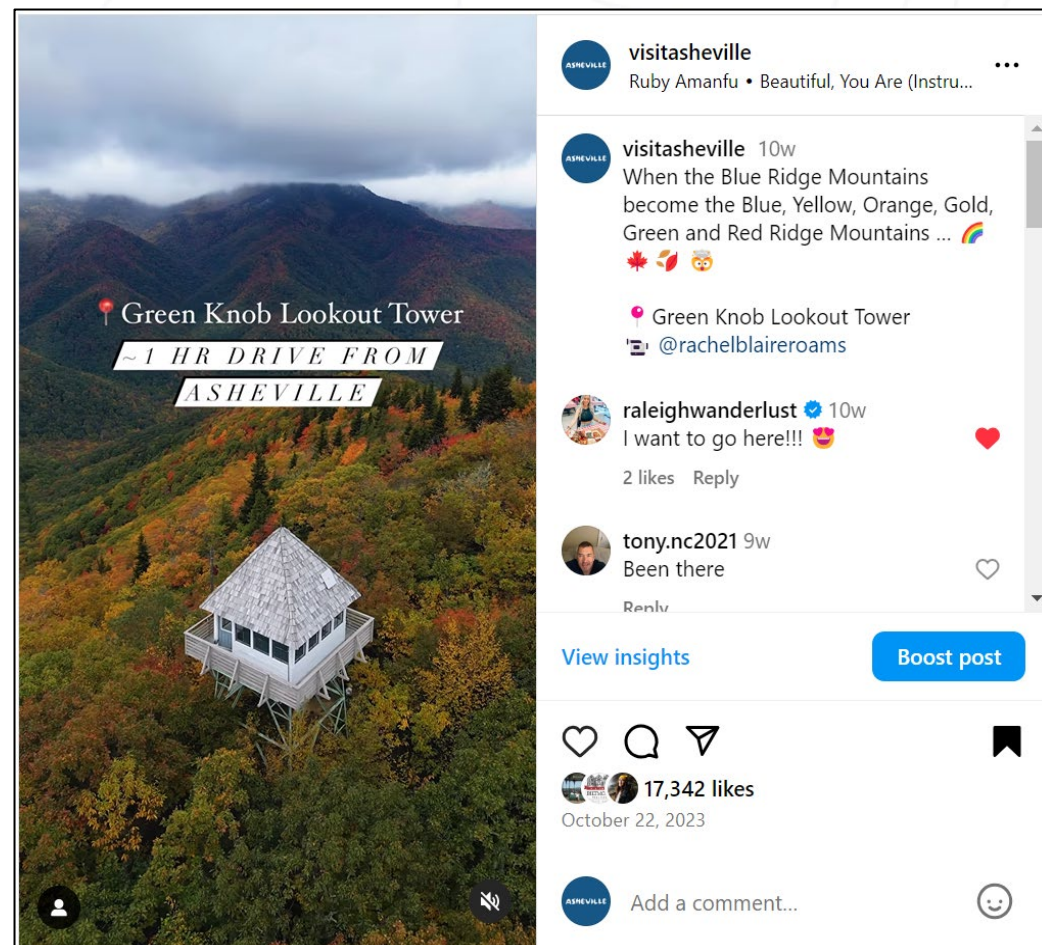
Filmed in Asheville

Hallmark Channel's upcoming holiday movie, "A Biltmore Christmas" will premier Sunday, Nov. 26

LEARN MORE HERE

TOP PERFORMING POSTS

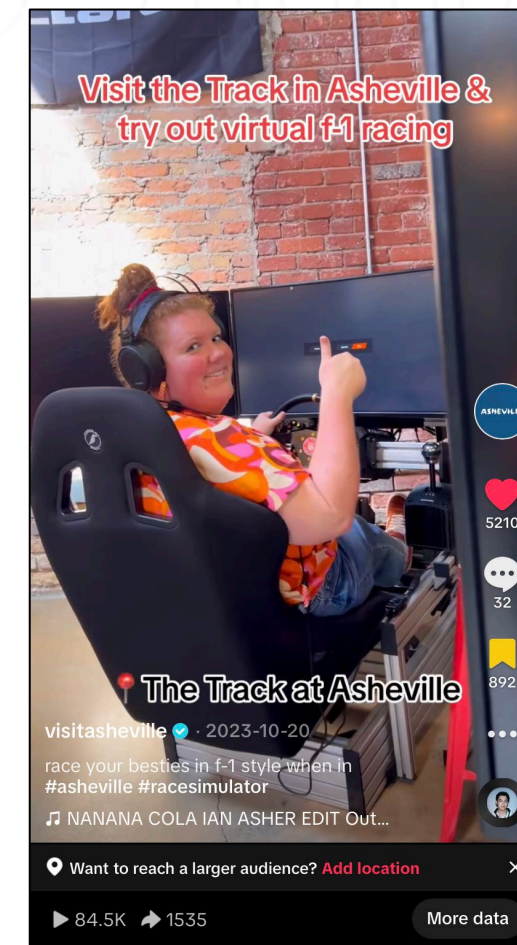
Most engaging content and format varies by social channel



INSTAGRAM
VIDEOS WITH VIEWS
Green Knob Lookout Tower Drone
(Reel)
30,168 Engagements



FACEBOOK
NATURE & BEAUTY
Blue Ridge Parkway
(Photo)
52,356 Engagements



TIKTOK
NEW & NOTABLE
F1 Racing Simulator
(Reel)
6,847 Engagements

NOTEWORTHY SOCIAL STAT

In Oct 2023, we gained a record-breaking 7,338 new Facebook followers, exceeding the total growth from October to December of 2022 (6,402 followers).

DIGITAL FOOTPRINT INNOVATION

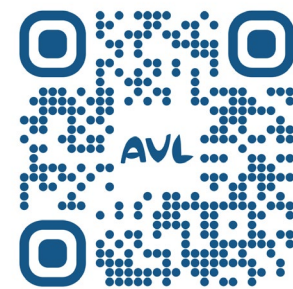
Tech Advancements Delivering Immersive User Experiences

EXPLORE ASHEVILLE APP LAUNCH

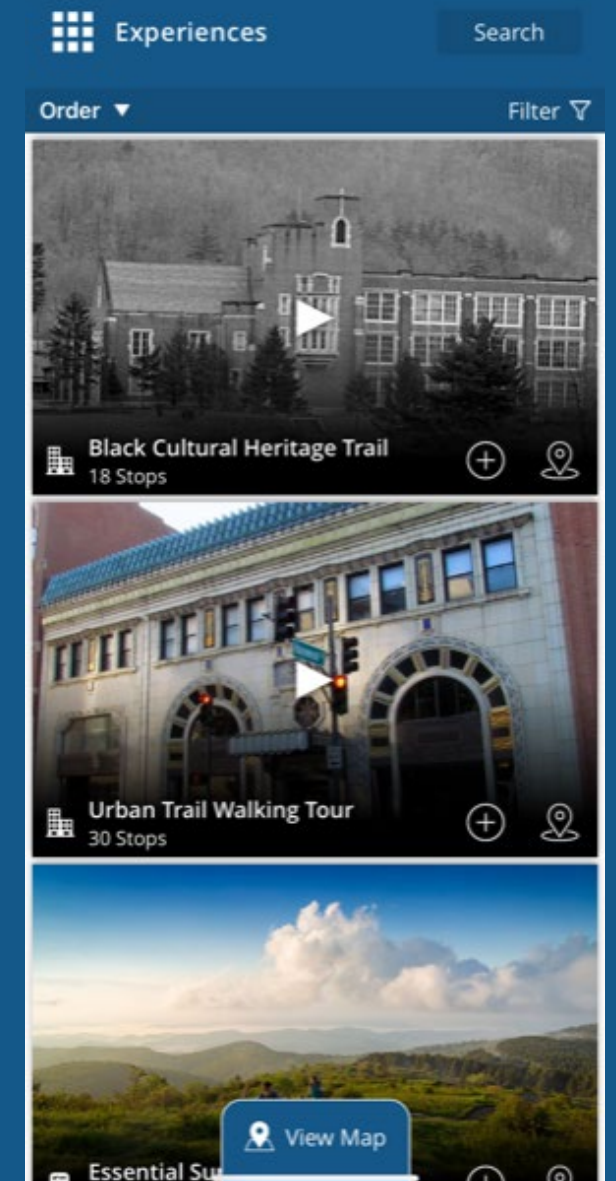
- Soft launched the new Explore Asheville app in October
- Designed with our partners at Visit Widget, this tool provides an exciting new way to digitally explore what our area has to offer. The app seamlessly compiles all pre-existing partner listings on ExploreAsheville.com across food & bev, lodging, events, walking tours and more
- **Up next:** Hard launch in January 2024 (New Year, new app) with promotion across social, web, newsletter and editorial
Early success: 500+ app downloads already with only one newsletter promotion!

KICKOFF: WEBSITE REDESIGN PROCESS

- Selected Miles Partnership LLC as our website redesign vendor after an extensive RFP process
- Kicked off discovery process with Miles, including in-depth site analysis, content and data audits, and design inspiration
- **Key date:** New website is estimated to go live late Summer 2024



SCAN TO
DOWNLOAD



LATINX AND LGBTQIA+ LANDING PAGES

Published new pages centered on welcoming and inviting new audiences

Latinx Landing Page

The new ExploreAsheville.com [Latinx landing page](#) was created to connect with our Spanish-speaking audiences in a way that is relevant and makes them feel valued, while also showcasing and honoring Asheville's vibrant Latinx businesses and creatives.

The page includes:

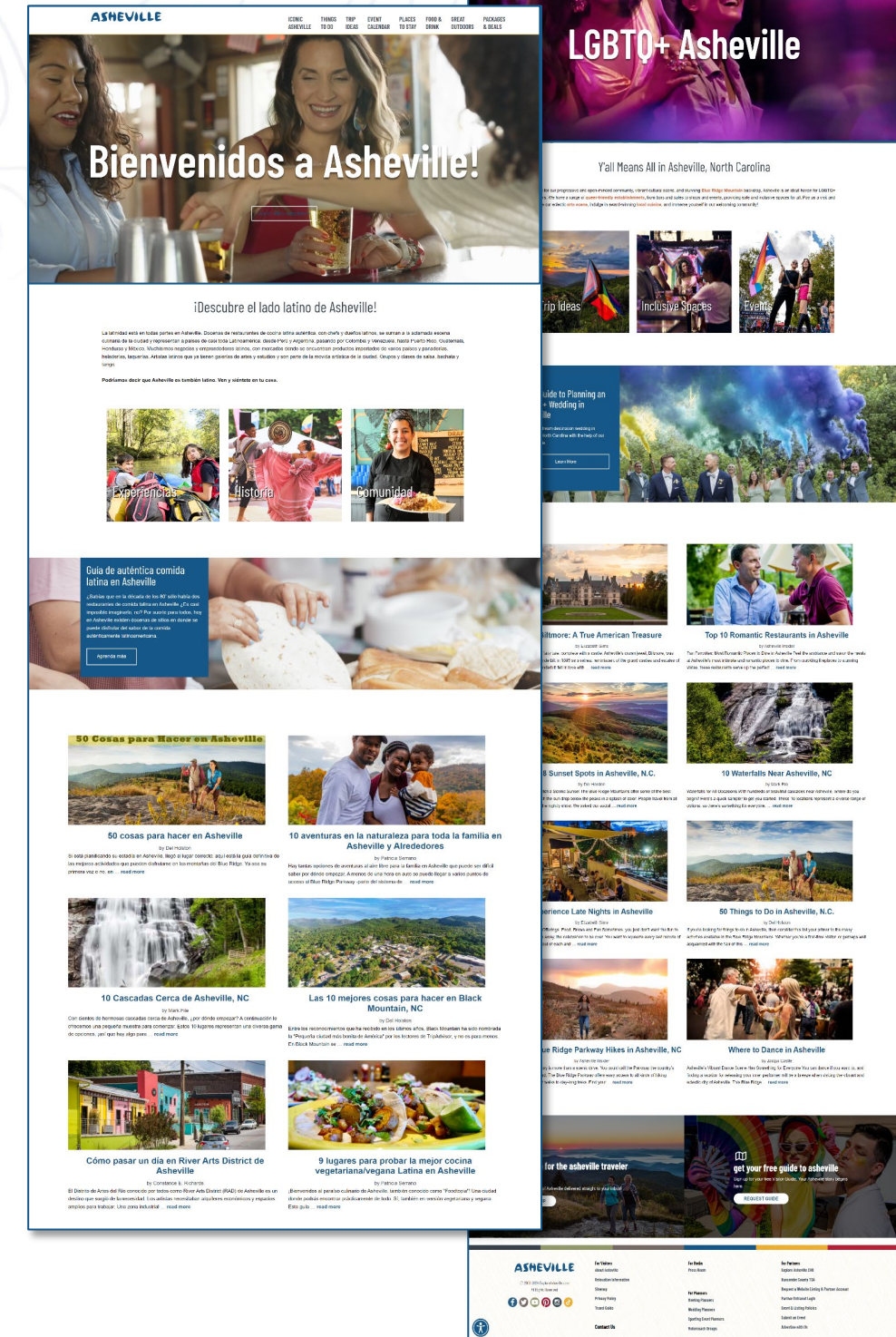
- [An introductory video](#) created by local Latinx production company Ground Level Media.
- 10 translated stories and blogs (all in Spanish) that speak to the local Latinx experience and/or offer a helpful guide to exploring the outdoors, surrounding towns, food and family adventures.

LGBTQIA+ Landing Page

The [LGBTQIA+ landing page](#) on ExploreAsheville.com was given a refresh with updated photo/video assets, articles, and more.

Alignment Across Marketing

- **PR:** These landing pages dovetail with efforts to pitch Spanish-language, Latinx, and LGBTQIA+ writers and outlets
- **PAID:** Driving to these landing pages via aligned paid advertising in Mitu, Edge, and Equal Pride



DELIVERING BALANCED & SUSTAINBLE GROWTH

ENGAGING AND INVITING MORE DIVERSE AUDIENCES

STRATEGIC MEDIA PARTNERSHIPS

Spotlighting Sustainability, Diversity & Creativity

MITÚ, ESSENCE, EDGE & EQUAL PRIDE

These partnerships allow us to meet new audiences where they are, highlighting partners within Asheville's vibrant Black, Latinx, and LGBTQIA+ communities through editorial, social and email content.

MONOCLE 168,000+ Global readership

16-page editorial in the *Fall Forecast* issue. Featured interviews include Ashleigh Shanti, Charles Frazier, and Cody Smith of American Miso Company, alongside highlighted lodging and experiences.

AFAR

"Always Asheville" workshop provided 100 area partners with a learning and networking opportunity led by members of AFAR Media's editorial team.

A cascade of digital and print content pieces also launched this fall and will continue throughout FY24 with an estimated **23,535,000 impressions worldwide.**

Always Asheville Workshop Attendees:

93% felt more inspired to craft their brand in new ways with tangible action items from AFAR to improve their marketing initiatives.



Total Impressions:

Mitú : 10,598,864
Essence: 8,072,232
Edge: 52,900,000
Equal Pride: 5,856,666



"All of the presenters did a wonderful job of keeping me engaged, and I left the workshop full of exciting ideas I feel confident in trying."

- Quote from a workshop attendee



EXPLOREASHEVILLE.COM

HALLMARK PARTNERSHIP

Cinematic momentum with a focus on historic and iconic Blue Ridge holiday experiences

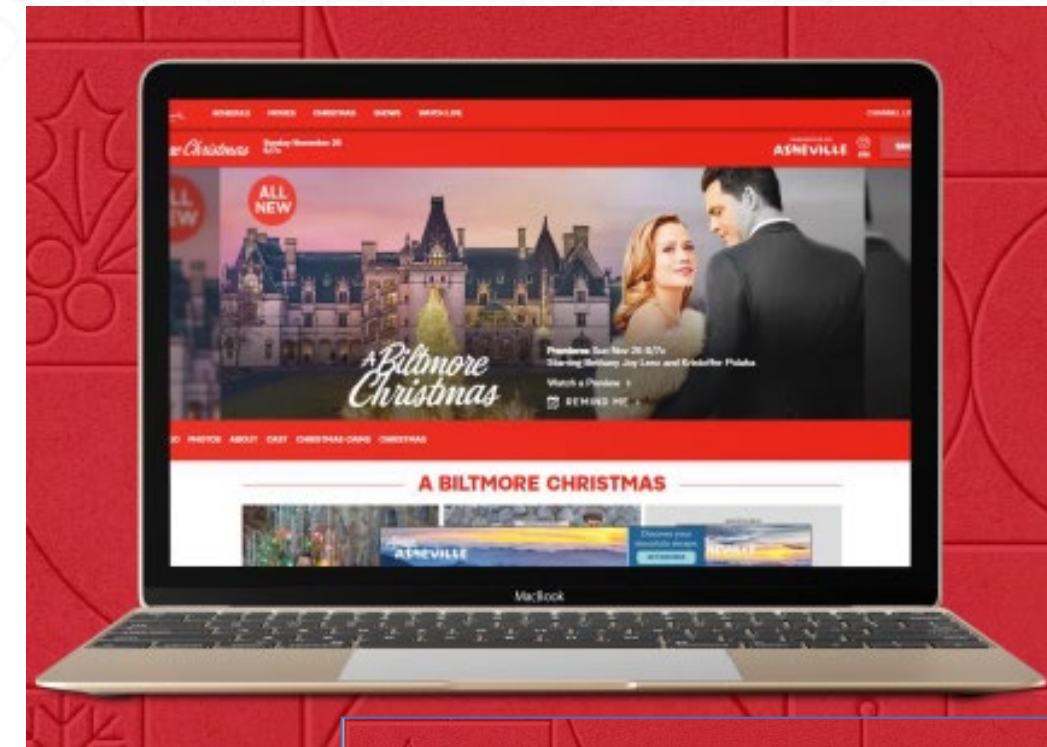
Explore Asheville & Hallmark partnered to amplify A Biltmore Christmas movie and create a strong association for the Blue Ridge Mountain region and Asheville.

Building on the "Christmas in July" teaser, the core campaign included a layered and engaging rich media leading up to and during the premiere event.

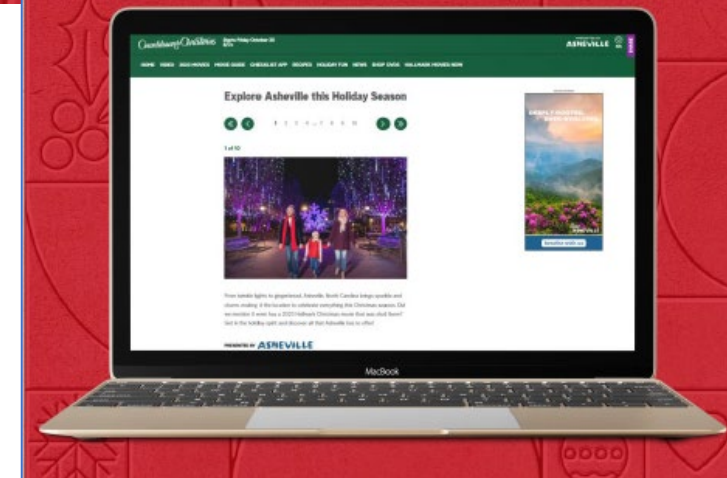
- Movie Premiere & Adjacency Promotional Schedule
- Movie Linear/TV Campaign
- Custom Trivia Podbuster
- Hallmark Homepage Takeover Impressions
- Destination Experiences Article
- Banner Ads 1.75% clickthrough

CAMPAIGN TOTAL:
51M impressions

Most successful Hallmark homepage takeover of 2023!



PODBUSTER:
Trivia format
drove audiences to
tune-in to Asheville
spots during the
movie breaks.



PROMOTING & SUPPORTING ASHEVILLE'S CREATIVE SPIRIT

CBS MORNINGS IN ASHEVILLE

"Surprise Trip" for Correspondent David Begnaud Infused with Asheville's Creative Spirit



 CBS MORNINGS



EXPLOREASHEVILLE.COM

NOTEWORTHY NEWS CLIPS

Pitched stories that shine a spotlight on Asheville

@bashabroad
Influencer Site Visit
1M+views

67.8M

Earned Media
Reach

\$127K

Publicity Value

14

Hosted Media

12

Significant Team
Placements

55

Total Placements

Southern Living

35 Best Things To Do In
Asheville, North Carolina



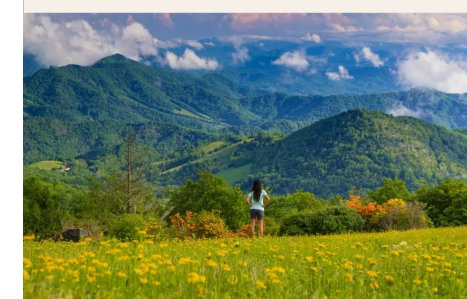
TRAVEL+LEISURE

This North Carolina City Is Called the
'Sedona of the South' — Here's Why



thrillist

Grab Your BFFs: These 8 Epic
Fall Mountain Towns Await



AFAR

Asheville, N.C.'s Best Festivals
Celebrate Yoga, Pride, Black Culture,
and Much More



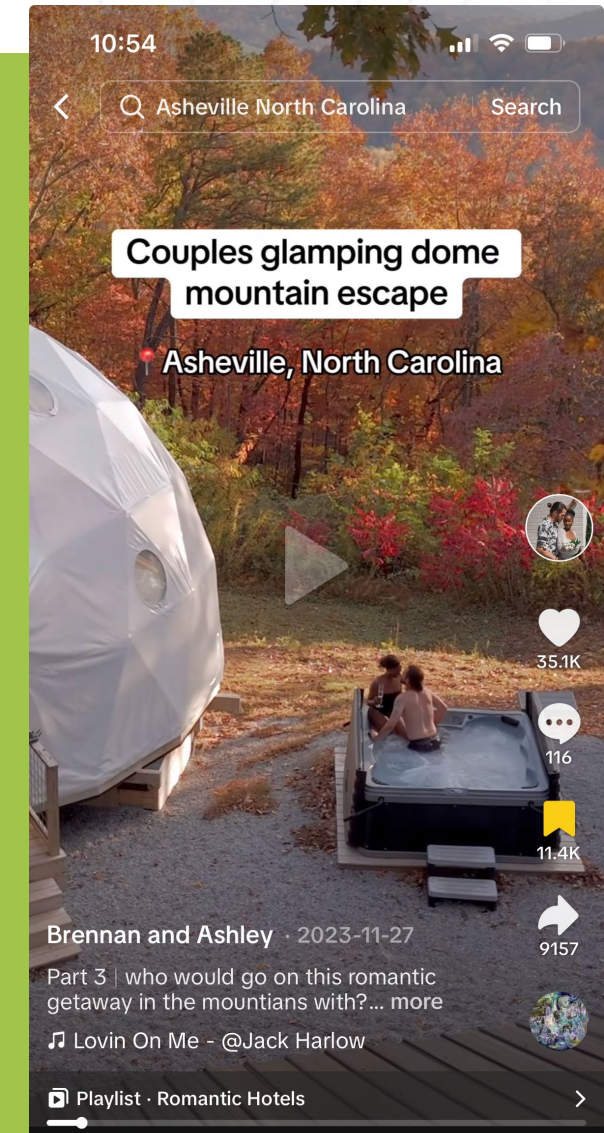
U.S. News & WORLD REPORT

The 24 Best Girls Weekend
Getaways for 2024



People

Where Was *A Biltmore Christmas*
Filmed? All About the Real Locations
Behind the Hallmark Movie



2024 OFFICIAL ASHEVILLE VISITOR GUIDE

Increasing Distribution & Broadening Dispersal

Official 2024 Asheville Visitor Guide is now in circulation

In partnership with Sagacity, Explore Asheville engaged a host of local photographers and writers to create content for the Official 2024 Asheville Visitor Guide.

- Employing a new strategy to front load orders and distribute more guides to more markets earlier in the year
- Orders received to date total 10,000+ individual guides, ahead of 6,000 guides ordered in February 2023

Highlighting Communities

5 Days 5 Ways – encouraging midweek overnight visitation through robust itineraries highlighting fun things to see, do and eat throughout the Asheville area

Lay of the Land – features on Black Mountain and Weaverville to encourage dispersal

Spotlighting BIPOC Partners – Sharing businesses and cultural institutions from Asheville's vibrant Black and Latinx communities.

PROJECTED READERSHIP: 1,100,000

Print Copy Readership: 700,000 (200,000 copies x 3.5 pass-along rate)

Digital Copy Readership: 400,000 (emails sends + targeted displays)



The guides contents align with objectives of improving the quality of visits by lengthening stay and increasing dispersal and elevating creative experiences to differentiate the destination and inspire visits.



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT Q2 INITIATIVES

Michael Kryzanek
Vice President Business Development

EXPLORE
ASHEVILLE
POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism
Development Authority

TRADE SHOW EXHIBITING

Recruited group and event business to our community

- Represented Asheville and Buncombe County at 13 trade shows and conferences from October-December
- Made efforts to present Asheville's creative community and resources; gave lodging partners opportunities to participate in prospecting efforts

Worldwide Exhibition for Incentive Travel, Meetings, and Events (IMEX)

- IMEX is the largest trade show in North America for the global meetings, events and incentive travel industry.
- Over 12,500 attendees from 65 countries.
- Appointment-based tradeshow attended by Connie Holliday, Shawn Boone, Kathryn Dewey, Michael Kryzanek, and Jamie Tudico with McKibbon Hospitality.
- Arrived in Las Vegas with 100+ pre-set appointments, met over 300 planners over the three-day conference.

FEATURED LOCAL BRANDS AT IMEX BOOTH

ADORAtherapy®



Above: Explore Asheville staff and partner at IMEX booth

48-HOUR FAMILIARIZATION TOUR

Hosted meeting professionals in a "test drive" of Asheville

- "Fams" are one of our highest ROI initiatives - Historically, 75%+ of attendees book one or multiple events in Asheville
- In November, hosted 18 qualified meeting planners from North America
- Showcased potential venues and attendee experiences:
 - **TUESDAY** - Welcome reception at Kimpton Hotel Arras, downtown historical walking tour, and evening downtown dine-around
 - **WEDNESDAY** - Sound healing with Skinny Beats Sound Shop, tours of area hotels, tour/lunch, spa experience or golf at the Omni Grove Park Inn, and cocktail dinner at Benne on Eagle
 - **THURSDAY** - AVL Art Experience at Pleb, shopping at Marquee, afternoon tour and activities at Biltmore Estate and tour and dinner at the Grand Bohemian

PARTNERS HIGHLIGHTED IN THE 48-HOUR FAM INCLUDED:

KIMPTON
HOTEL ARRAS
ASHEVILLE

OMNI
GROVE PARK INN

BILTMORE®

GRAND BOHEMIAN HOTEL
ASHEVILLE

THE
FOUNDRY
HOTEL
ASHEVILLE

AA
SHEVILLE ART
experience

BENNE
on eagle

pleb urban winery
asheville, nc

SKINNY BEATS
— SOUND SHOP —

MARQUEE

Q2 GROUP & EVENT DEVELOPMENT

Benefitted businesses in our community

104

GROUPS/EVENTS
OCCURRED
IN OUR COMMUNITY



\$9.0 M in direct spending
10,772 roomnights

79

GROUPS/EVENTS
BOOKED
FOR FUTURE VISITS



\$10.9 M in direct spending
17,817 roomnights

211

LEADS GENERATED
FOR POTENTIAL
GROUPS/EVENTS



3.8% increase in roomnights over Q2 FY23
64,639 roomnights



PARTNERSHIP & DESTINATION MANAGEMENT Q2 INITIATIVES

Penelope Whitman
Vice President of Partnership & Destination Management

BLACK CULTURAL HERITAGE TRAIL

Exploring the rich heritage of Black communities in Asheville

A long-awaited trail dedication event was held December 15, 2023

- Community members gathered at Black Wall Street to celebrate the trail's debut
- After remarks from leaders and a ribbon cutting, shuttles were available to transfer guests to trail sections (Downtown, Southside, or River Area)
- Guides for each area offered personal stories and demonstrated the interactive components of the interpretive panels to participants

Digital content and augmented experiences invite people to learn more:

- QR codes at each trail marker can be scanned to hear voiceover narration by local performer Stephanie Hinkling Beckman
- [Asheville Black Cultural Heritage Trail Website](#) with 18 articles supplements the stories on the panel
- A [video of local musician Leeda "Lyric" Jones](#) singing the "Swannanoa Tunnel Song" in remembrance of the workers who lost their lives building the tunnel
- A video about Black church life in Asheville





Opening day of Black Cultural Heritage Trail

TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT FUND (TPDF)

Granted funding support to three major tourism projects that benefit visitors and residents

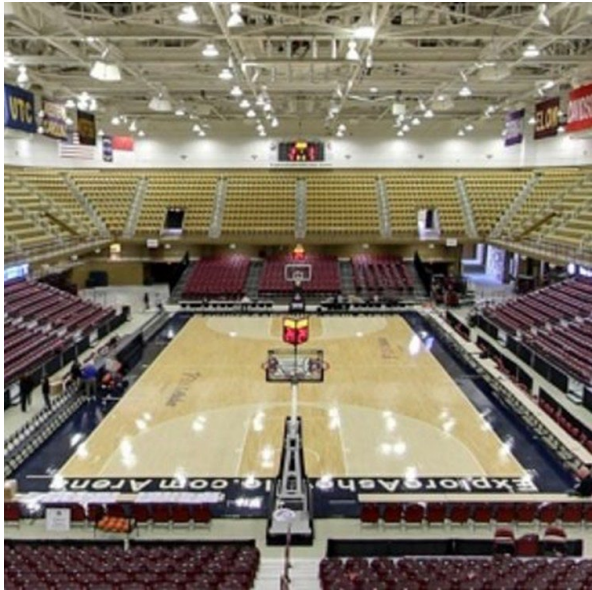
In October 2023, the BCTDA approved \$6.14 million of new investment in three major tourism projects to benefit visitors and residents.

Including the nearly \$23 million committed to McCormick Field in July, the BCTDA invested more than \$29 million in TPDF awards this year, marking the largest annual investment in the 20-year history of the fund.

With these investments, the BCTDA has invested over \$86 million in 61 projects over the lifetime of the fund.

2023 TPDF Investments

Grantee	Project	Award Amount
Buncombe County Parks & Recreation	Enka Recreation Destination - Phase II	\$4,054,415
City of Asheville	Harrah's Cherokee Center - Asheville Upgrades	\$1,586,000
Western NC Agricultural Center	Equine Facility Modernization	\$500,000
TOTAL		\$6,140,415



2024 FESTIVALS & CULTURAL EVENTS INVESTMENTS

Invested \$100,000 in 25 local festivals & cultural events

\$100,000 invested in 25 events throughout Buncombe County

Launched in 2016, the support fund contributes to the financial viability and long-term sustainability of festivals and cultural events. The fund seeks to stimulate new events and expand on existing ones that are enjoyed by residents and visitors.

This is the first year the lodging tax paid by visitors will support local festivals and events, enabled by a change in state legislation, shifting how these funds can be spent.

2024 Festival & Cultural Event Support Fund Awards

- ASAP Farm Tour | \$5,000
- AVL Beer Week | \$5,000
- Asheville Celtic Fest | \$5,000
- 3rd Lovely Asheville Annual Fall Festival | \$5,000
- Asheville Holiday Parade | \$2,500
- Downtown After 5 | \$5,000
- Pritchard Park Summer Series | \$2,500
- 5th Annual Asheville FM Record Fair | \$1,500
- Taste of Asheville | \$5,000
- Maker Faire Asheville | \$1,500
- Asheville Mardi Gras Parade & Queen's Ball | \$5,000
- Big Ivy's Independence Day Celebration | \$2,500
- {Re}HAPPENING 11 | \$3,500
- GRINDfest | \$5,000
- Blue Ridge Pride Festival | \$5,000
- Festival of Lights at Lake Julian | \$4,500
- Asheville HoneyFest | \$5,000
- Connect Beyond Festival | \$5,000
- LEAF Festival | \$5,000
- Sow & Grow Fest | \$1,500
- Craft Fair of the Southern Highlands | \$2,500
- Groovin on Grovemont | \$2,500
- "Celebrating the History and Legacy of Juneteenth" | \$5,000
- Weaverville's Music on Main | \$5,000
- Goombay | \$5,000



Q2 EVENT GRANTS & SPONSORSHIPS

Support for local festival & cultural events through grants and sponsorships

Explore Asheville/BCTDA supported the following events in FY24 Q2:

- Beer City Comic Con
- Krafthaus
- A-B Tech Foundation's Autumn in Asheville
- Lovely Asheville Fall Festival
- LEAF Fall Festival
- Asheville Design Weekend
- Asheville Symphony's ALT ASO Series
- Winter Lights at The North Carolina Arboretum
- Asheville Holiday Parade
- Harvest & Healing Music Festival

\$37K

Grants &
Sponsorships



11
Events

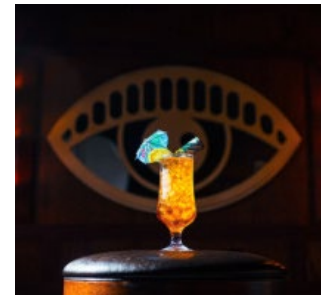
NEW PARTNERSHIPS

Onboarded 19 local businesses as partners

- Explore Asheville onboarded 19 local businesses as new partners in Q2, ranging from cabins and cottages to spas and music venues.
- Through these partnerships, Explore Asheville staff can connect incoming visitors and group travelers to the variety of experiences in Asheville and Buncombe county.

WHAT & WHERE

- Regions of new businesses:
 - River Arts District
 - Downtown
 - Fairview
 - Woodfin
 - West Asheville
 - Leicester
 - North Asheville
 - South Asheville
- Types of new businesses:
 - Wellness/Spa
 - Food & Drink
 - Retail
 - Music Venues
 - Event Facilities
 - Lodging
 - Catering
 - Outdoors
 - Transportation





CULTURE & BUSINESS AFFAIRS

Q2 INITIATIVES

Jennifer Kass-Green
Vice President of Culture & Business Affairs

EXPLORE
ASHEVILLE
POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism
Development Authority

ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATES

New/Returning Team Members

Dodie Stephens

Vice President of Marketing



Shelby Pearsall

Partnership Coordinator



Nick Kepley

Director of Marketing



GIVINGTUESDAY SERVICE PROJECT

Helping the community through staff's volunteer efforts

- Explore Asheville completed a service project in recognition of GivingTuesday for the second year in a row
- Explore Asheville worked with United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County (UWABC) on a project to serve our community
 - Team members assembled 224 snack packs containing a variety of nutritional items
 - Snack packs decorated with words of encouragement and distributed to students in need at Asheville Middle School



OFFICE SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS

Composting is the first initiative spearheaded by the organization's internal sustainability task force

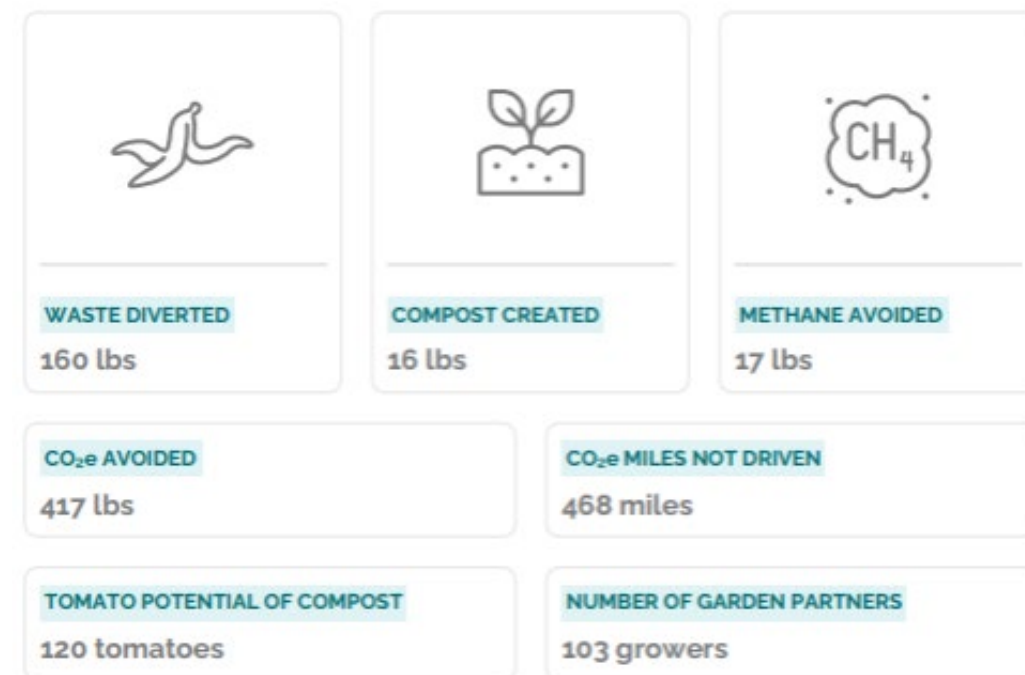


COMPOSTNOW

Explore Asheville

Impact Report

Thank you for your commitment to sustainable business practices.
This report highlights the impact from your program.



Explore Asheville began composting with Compost Now to be more sustainable and to reduce waste

- By diverting food waste and compostables from the landfill we are helping to reduce the amount of methane emissions (25x more potent than CO₂) into the air
- **After four months of composting, Explore Asheville diverted 160lbs of waste from the landfill, equating to 16lbs of nutrient rich soil, 417lbs of avoided CO₂, 468 offset miles, and 120 tomato plants**
- In the spring, Explore Asheville will be able to donate over 35lbs of nutrient rich soil to local community gardens and garden partners



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT

Michael Kryzanek
Explore Asheville | VP of Business Development

Colleen Swanson
Meetings Database Institute | Executive Vice President

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW

10 team members devoted to securing business and servicing groups once in market



Michael Kryzanek
VP of Business Development



Connie Nuckolls Holliday
Director of Sales



Shawn Boone
Senior Sales Manager



Tina Porter
Senior Sales Manager



Kathryn Dewey
Sales Manager



Khal Khoury
Sales Manager



Emily Crosby
Group Service Manager



John Dawson
Group Service Coordinator



Ali Wainright
Group Sales Coordinator



Mia Brown
Sales & Marketing Assistant

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

To be additive, balanced, and aligned in our efforts

1

ADDITIVE

Focusing on new business and the quality of the visit.

2

BALANCED

Pursuing and booking off-peak business throughout the year focusing on specific need periods.

3

ALIGNED

Attracting business aligned with our strategic pillars, economic development sectors, and community assets.



MEETINGS DATABASE INSTITUTE ANALYSIS A LOOK BACK

Colleen Swanson

Meetings Database Institute (MDI) | Executive Vice President

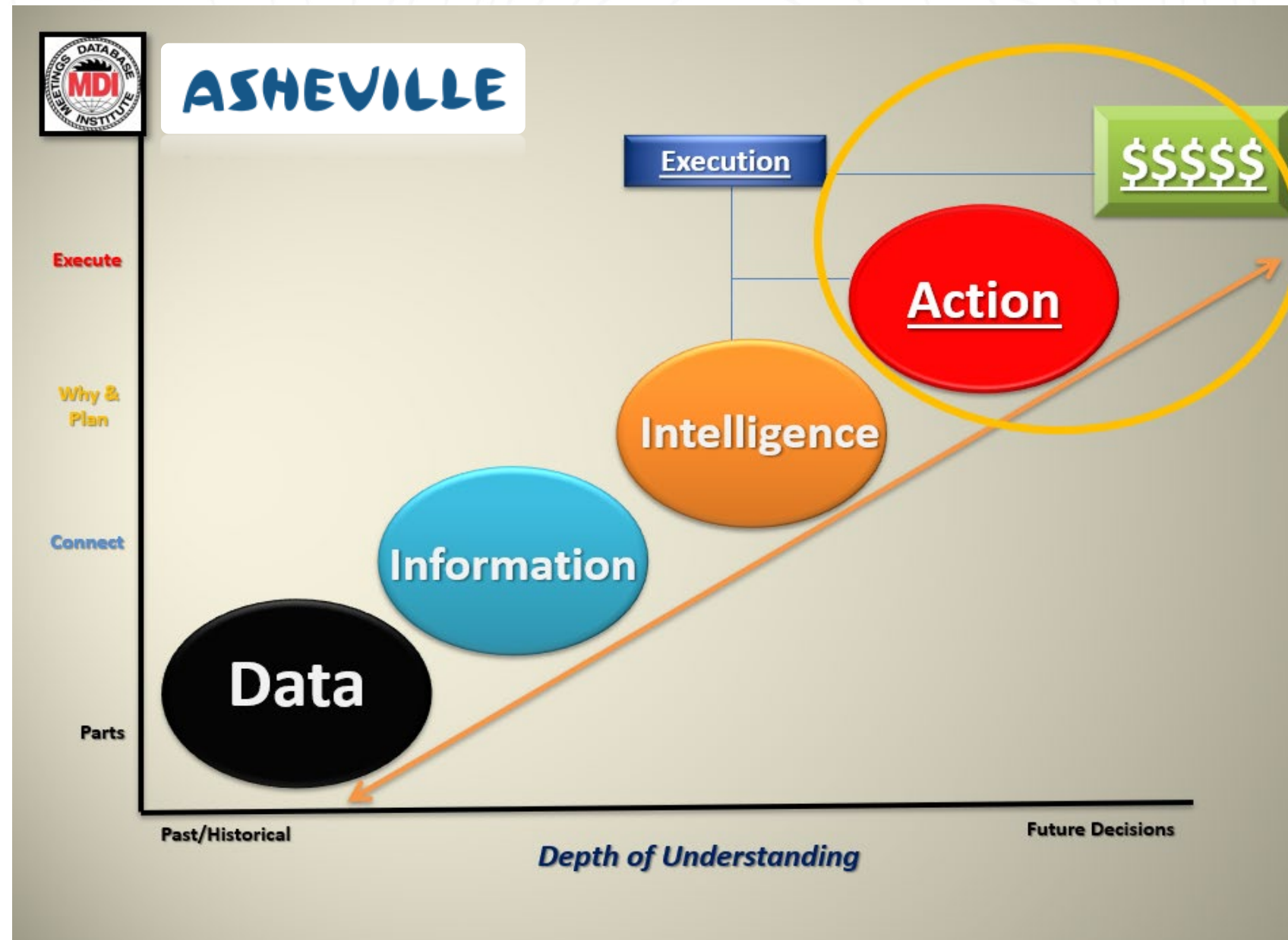


MEETINGS DATABASE INSTITUTE (MDI)

- Founded in 1994
- *A strategic* data management and solutions firm, specializing in the hospitality and meetings marketplace.
- Integrity, Intelligence and Impact
- Analyzed and Managed over 4 Million Accounts
 - \$35+ Billion Room Revenue
 - 200 Million+ Roomnights
- Provide a clear roadmap of actionable database intelligence in order to increase revenue and impact.



DATA PATH TO SUCCESS





DATA SEGMENTATION/FOCUS:

- July 2023 – December 2023: Group Arrival Dates (NO TOUR)
- 534 leads for July-December 2023 dates, 118,048 roomnights
 - 214 Contracted Definite (40% conversion rate)
 - 27,230 Definite Roomnights (23% roomnight conversion rate)
- Deep Dive into Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Contracted Definite business with arrival dates of July 2023-December 2023 (1st half of FY 2024)

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| ▪ Market Segments | ▪ Time of Year - Arrival Months |
| ▪ Feeder States | ▪ Lead-Times: (Created to Arrival) |
| ▪ Sizes - Peak Rooms | ▪ Weekday/Weekend - Day of Week |
| ▪ New vs. Repeat | ❖ CONVERSIONS |



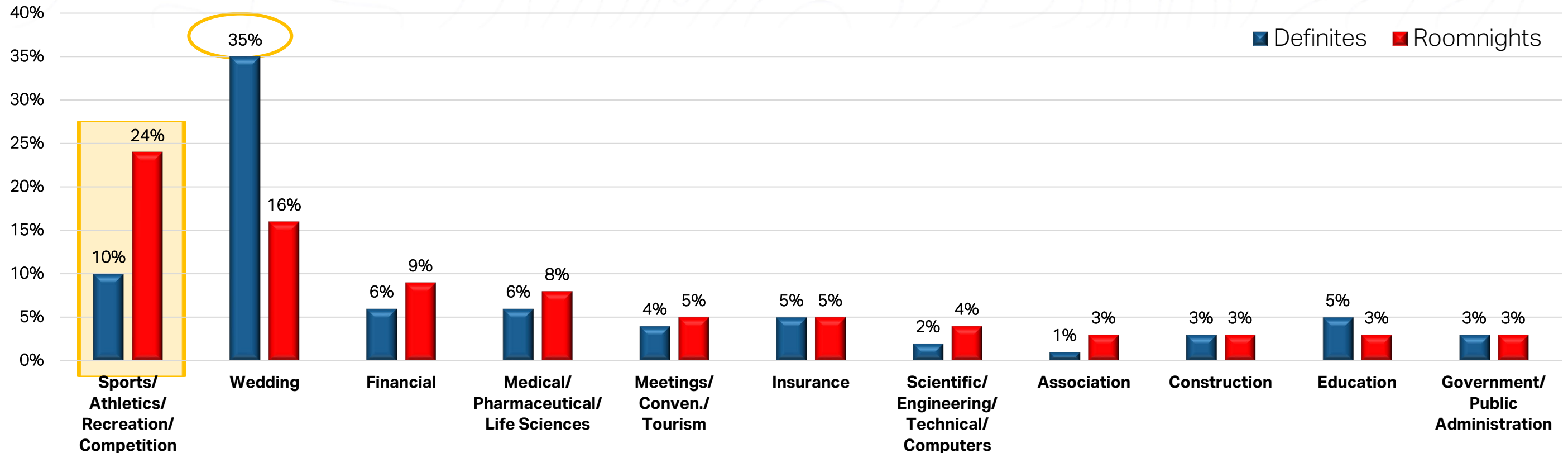
JULY 2023-DEC 2023 ARRIVALS

DEFINITES (CONTRACTED BUSINESS)



MARKET SEGMENTS

July 2023- December 2023 Arrivals
Definites (Contracted)



Sports groups booked independently by Explore Asheville and with support from the local sports commission continue to be a key definite roomnight driver followed by Weddings, which shows to be the key *quantity* of definites driver. Both segments have high conversion rates with almost 3 of every 4 groups from these segment turning definite.

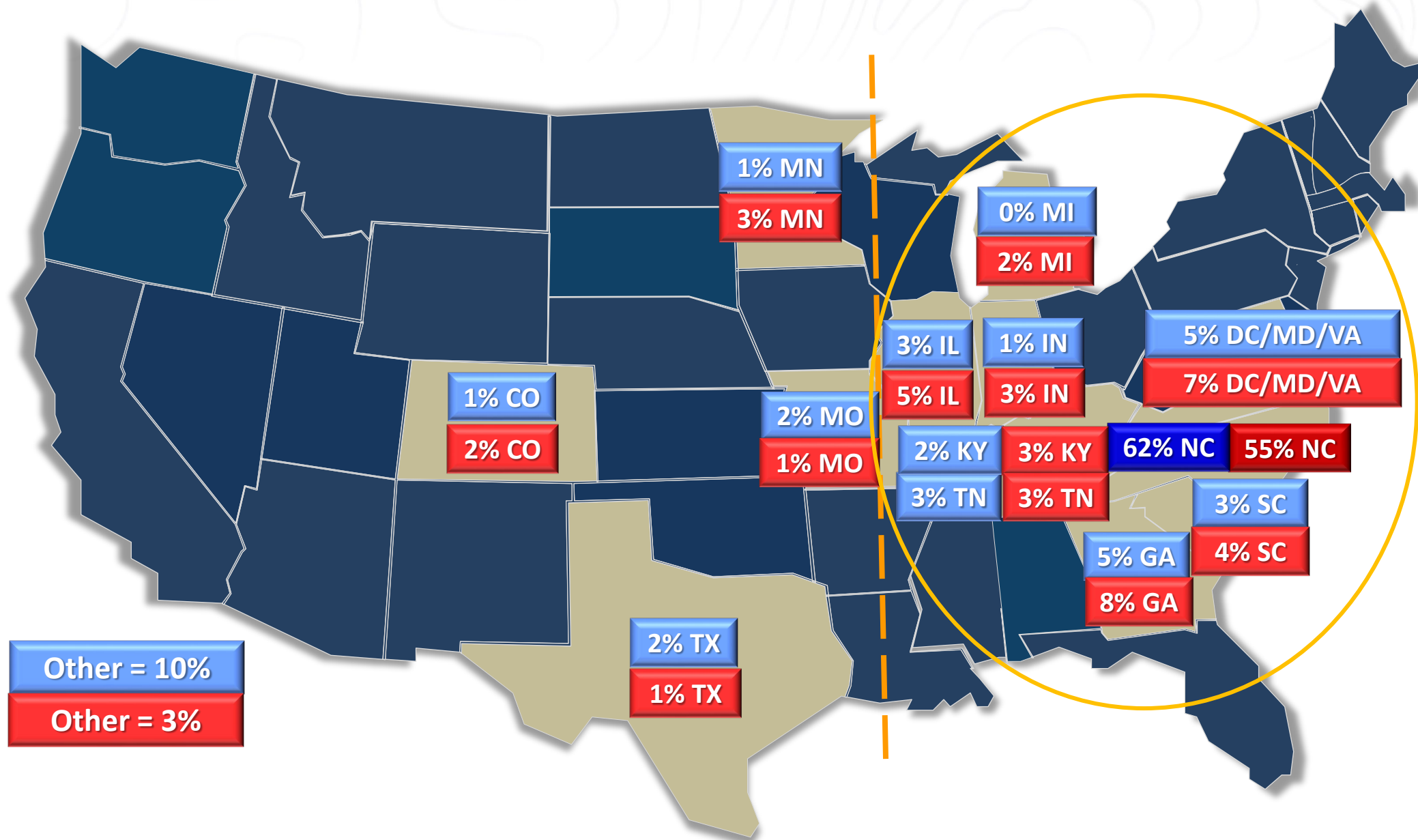
The Financial market segment showed strong along with Medical/Pharmaceutical/Life Sciences, which is one of our key economic sectors.

The Insurance market segment was a strong producer with very high conversion rates (84% of the roomnights from this sector turned definite).



ACCOUNT FEEDERS

July 2023- December 2023 Arrivals
Definites (Contracted)



Definites
Roomnights

East/Regional impact with consistent, significant impact from groups located in the state of North Carolina.

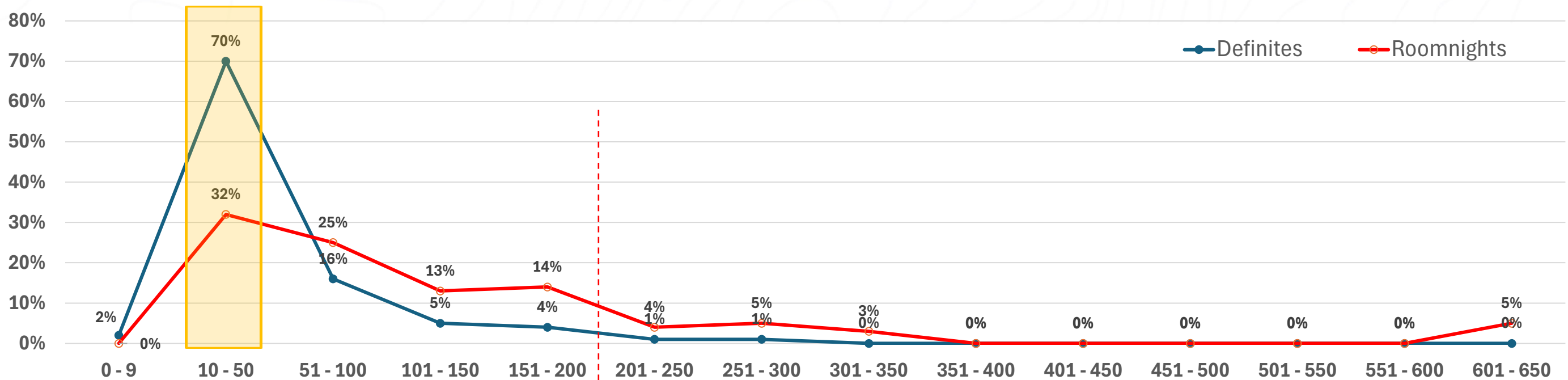
Mid-Atlantic area (DC-VA-MD) driving roomnights along with the state of Georgia.

NC has very high conversion rates as well as high rates from GA. VA/MD show healthy conversion rates, although DC is on the lower side.



PEAK ROOMS

July 2023- December 2023 Arrivals
Definites (Contracted)



Peak Rooms showing a significant quantity of business in the 50 peak or under rooms categories, driving 72% of the definite transactions and 32% of the roomnights during July to December 2023.

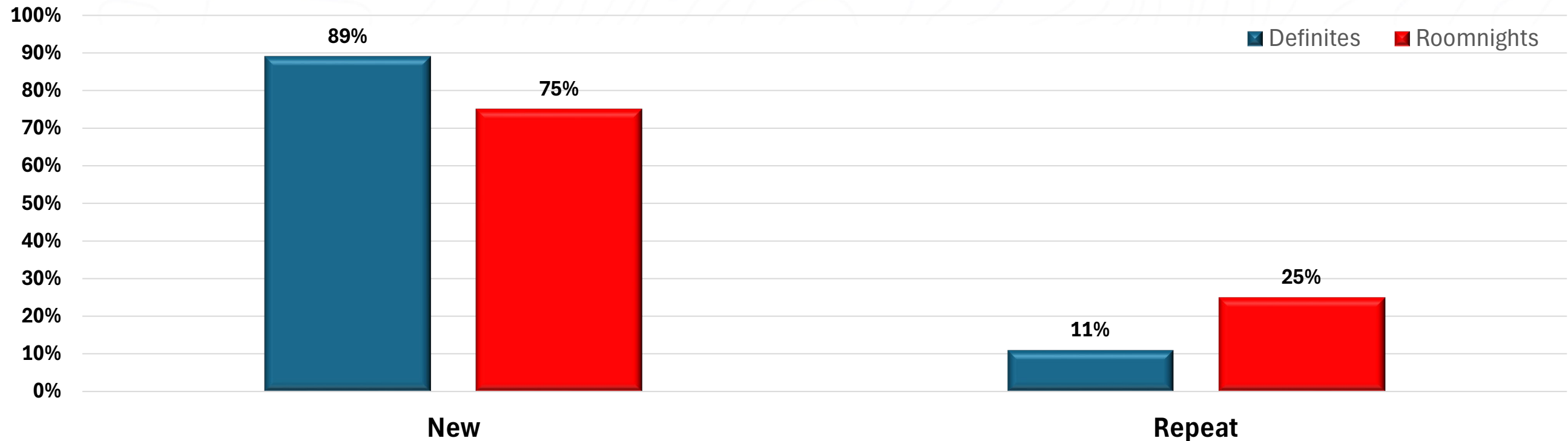
There is a healthy mix of business across various other peak room sizes as you consider the deployment of the remaining group business that was consumed in the first half of FY 2024 (July – December 2023).

Groups with under 100 rooms peak night have healthy conversion rates, as well as groups in the 151-200 rooms peak night. Groups over 200 peak are far and few between, but, drive impactful roomnights (17% from 2% of the definite transactions).



NEW VS. REPEAT

July 2023- December 2023 Arrivals
Definites (Contracted)



Vast amount of New Business came into Asheville in July to December 2023.

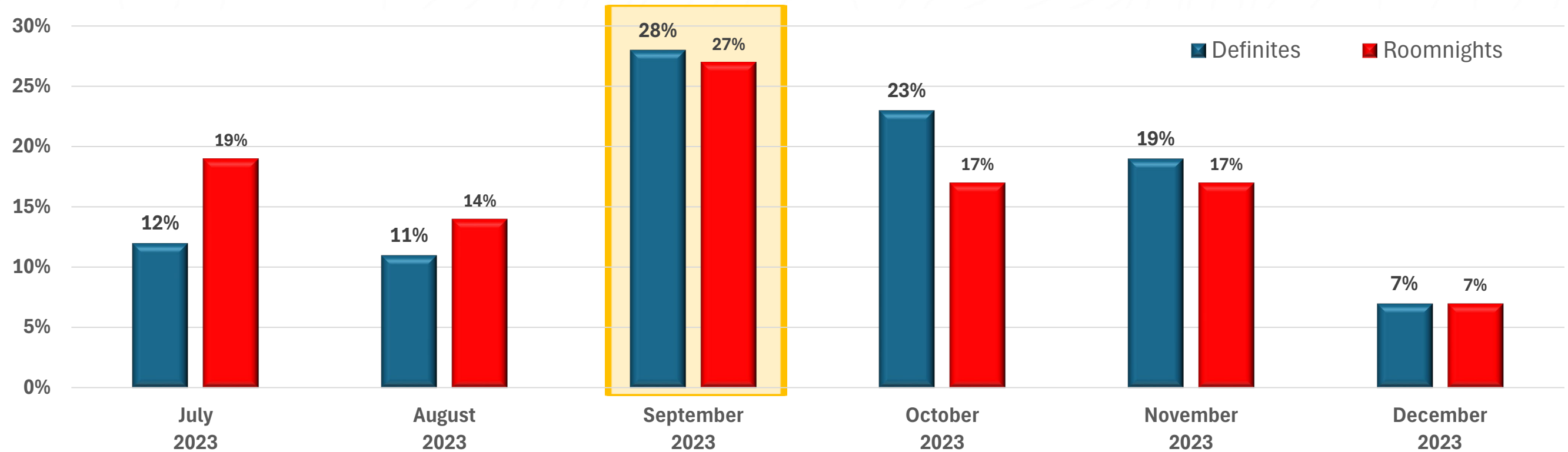
Conversion rates for Repeat Business is very high: up over 80% conversion rates for Repeat Business.

New business most always results in lower conversion rates as it usually takes more time and investment of resources to capture a new piece of business vs. repeat business. New Business calculates at a conversion rate of 39% for quantity of definites and 19% roomnights definite.



ARRIVAL MONTH

July 2023- December 2023 Arrivals
Definites (Contracted)



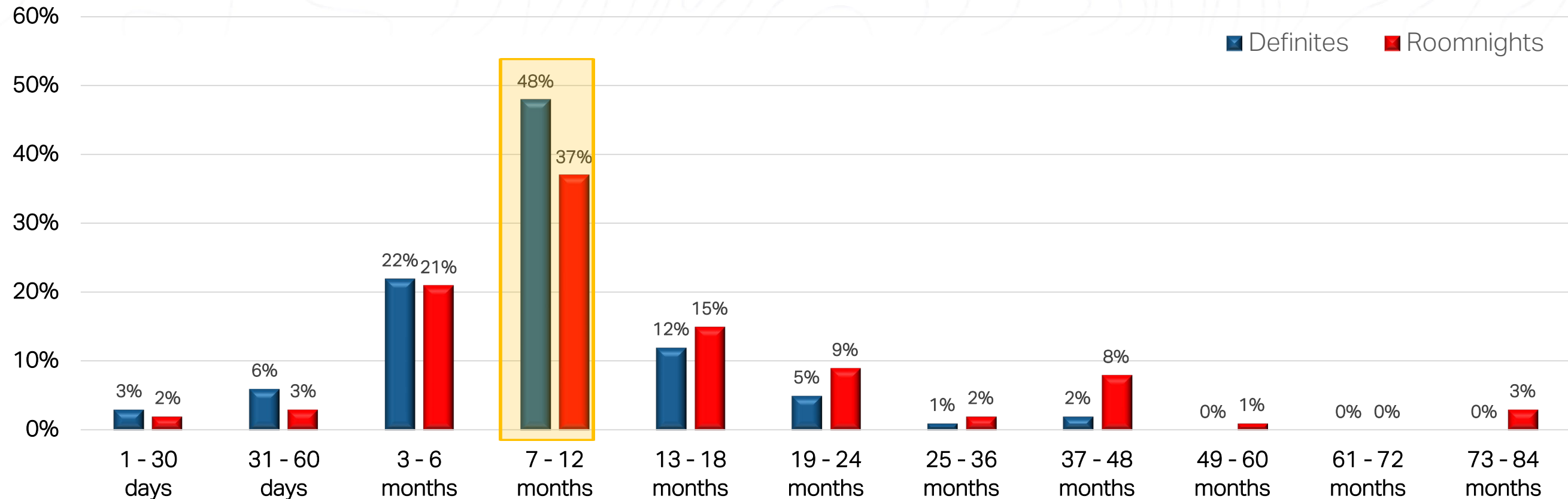
Good distribution of roomnights across all months with September being the month to consume most group roomnights during the first half of FY 2024. December was the only month that shows minimum roomnights and volume of definite transactions; this results from low demand as December is showing the highest conversion rates.

Conversions for the other 5 months (July-November) are healthy, whether regarding definite transactions or roomnight conversions, with August and September calculating as the most efficient months with higher conversion rates.



LEAD-TIME: CREATED TO ARRIVAL DATE

July 2023- December 2023 Arrivals
Definites (Contracted)



Groups with lead-times (lead created date to arrival date) in the 7-12 months timeframe represent almost half of the groups and represent more than 1/3rd of the contracted roomnights for July-December 2023 group arrivals. 3-6 months and 13-18 months also show to be strong performing lead-time categories.

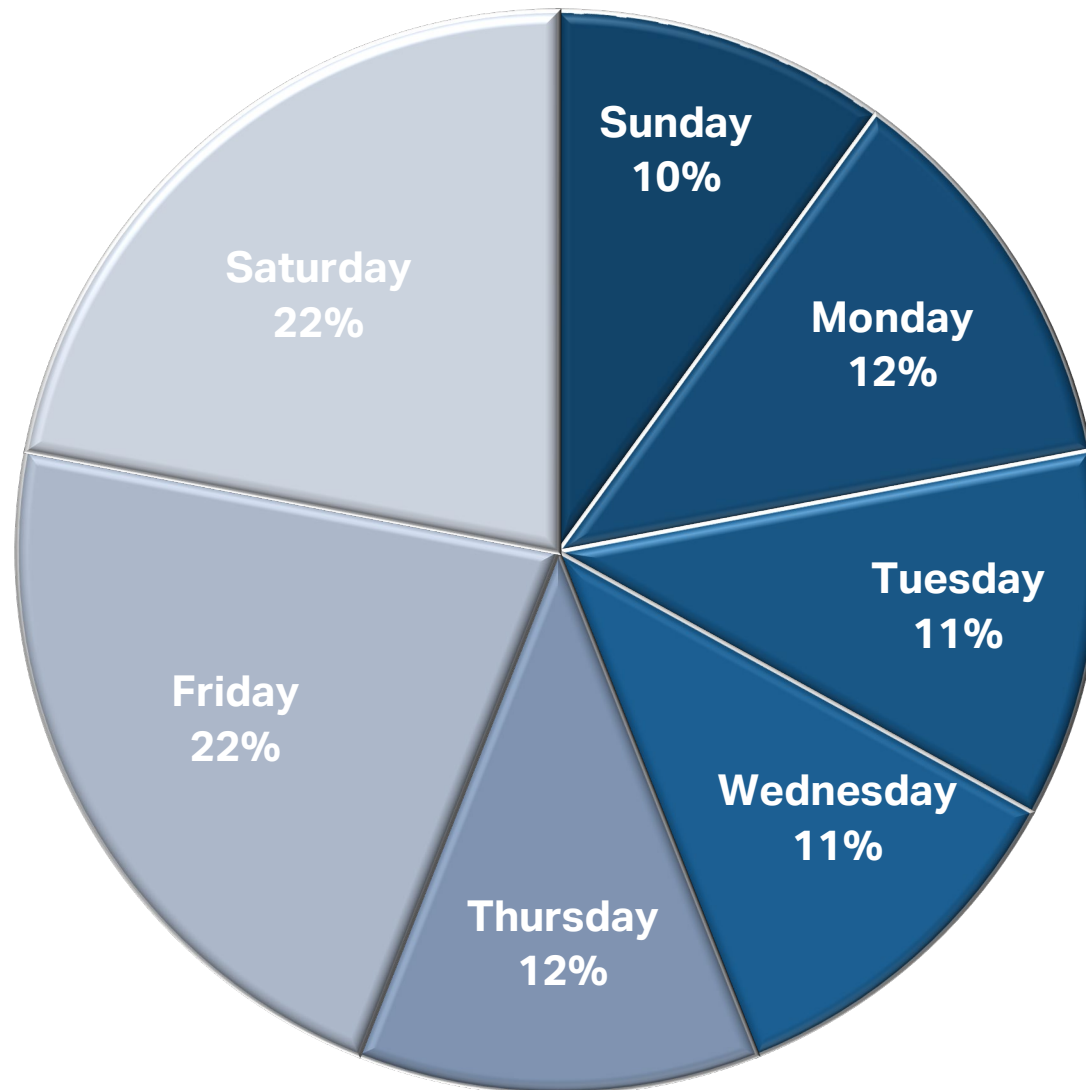
Considering the contracted groups with July-December 2023 arrival dates, we see that 27% of these groups contracted definite within the same July-December 2023 timeframe (in year for year), representing 19% of the overall contracted roomnights.



WEEKDAY VS. WEEKEND - DAY OF WEEK

July 2023- December 2023 Arrivals
Definites (Contracted)

Roomnights



Great spread of roomnights for all days of the week with double-digit percentage of roomnights contracted for each day of the week.

60% of the roomnights decided (won-lost or cancelled) with July 2023-December 2023 arrivals fell within the weekdays, and 40% within the weekend days; so substantially more roomnights shopping for weekdays than weekends.

Looking further into this data we see that roomnight conversion rates for weekdays is 17% and for weekends is 34%. Friday and Saturday specifically is 41%.

In addition, we see that 70% of this weekend business is either Weddings or Sports.

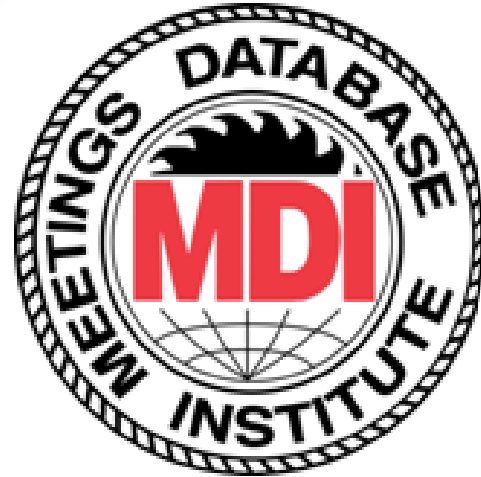


KEY SUMMARY POINTS

July 2023- December 2023 Arrivals
Definites (Contracted)

- ❑ Sports/Athletics/Recreation/Competition - strongest segment with high conversion rates booked by Explore Asheville independently and with support from ABRSC. Weddings drive volume of definites. Medical/Pharma/Life Sciences key producing focus sector. Financial and Insurance other top performing sectors.
- ❑ North Carolina strongest feeder state with very high conversion rates; strong and efficient performer. VA-MD (Mid-Atlantic) and GA also showing significant roomnights impact and high conversion rates.
- ❑ Many smaller meetings (under 50 rooms peak) came into the market in first half of FY2024 (July-December 2023). Strong conversion rates for groups with 100 rooms or less on peak night. Healthy spread of groups across many peak room sizes up to 200 rooms peak. Few groups over 200 room peak but driving impactful number of roomnights.
- ❑ Substantial amount of New Business vs. Repeat Business.
- ❑ Lead-times between 3-18 months from the lead created date to the arrival date impact the most roomnights realized (73%). Almost 1/3 of the groups consumed in July-December 2023 (27%) were contracted within the same timeframe; quick contract to arrival timeline.
- ❑ All days of week significantly impacted with roomnights for groups with July-December 2023 arrival dates. 60% of the roomnights in play for this timeframe were for weekdays and 40% for weekends. Conversion rates for weekend business is substantially higher than weekday business, with 70% weekend business resulting from Weddings or Sports market segments.

THANK YOU



Turning Data into Intelligence and Intelligence into Action

Meetings Database Institute
2800 S. River Road, Chicago, IL. 60018
(847) 803-6341





FY24 YTD PERFORMANCE

Michael Kryzanek, CHME
Explore Asheville | VP of Business Development

YEAR-OVER-YEAR PERFORMANCE

Year-to-date FY24 compared to the same period of FY23

FY24 Benchmarked YTD Roomnight Goal: 37,500+

	FY24 YTD (July – Dec 2023)	FY23 (July – Dec 2022)	% Difference ↑↓
Roomnights (Raw/Unbenchmark)	29,086	30,744	-5.4%
Events Booked	186	168	+10.7%
Average Size (roomnight)	156	183	-14.8%
Leads Issued to Hotel Partners	484	488	-0.8%
Roomnights (Benchmarked)	38,258	37,398	+2.3%



BENCHMARKING EXPLAINED

Emphasis is placed on booking new business and roomnights in specific need periods

**OFF-PEAK
GROUPS**
JANUARY – MARCH



1.5 roomnights
for every roomnight booked

**WEEKNIGHT
GROUPS**
SUNDAY – THURSDAY



1.5 roomnights
for every roomnight booked

**REPEAT
GROUPS**



0.5 roomnights
for every roomnight booked

COMPETITIVE MARKETS FOR ASHEVILLE GROUP BUSINESS

2023 Calendar Year-End Data

Market	Occupancy	ADR	RevPAR	RevPAR % Difference	RevPAR  Over 2022
Asheville, NC (Buncombe County, NC)	69%	\$181	\$125	-	-2%
Charleston, SC (Charleston County, SC)	70%	\$171	\$119	-5%	+3%
Savannah, GA (Chatham County, GA)	71%	\$148	\$105	-16%	+2%
Wilmington, NC (New Hanover County, NC)	65%	\$141	\$91	-27%	+1%
Chattanooga, TN (Hamilton County, TN)	63%	\$115	\$72	-42%	+2%
Greenville, SC (Greenville County, SC)	69%	\$120	\$82	-34%	+8%
Myrtle Beach, SC (Horry County, SC)	52%	\$130	\$68	-46%	-4%

Source: Smith Travel Research (all numbers rounded to the nearest dollar or percentage point)





UPCOMING GROUPS

Michael Kryzanek, CHME
Explore Asheville | VP of Business Development

NORTH CAROLINA ATHLETIC DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION NCADA STATE CONFERENCE

WHEN: March 16-18, 2024

DIRECT SPEND: \$172,058 (382 roomnights)

MARKET: Sports/Athletics



THE INSIDE SCOOP: *Explore Asheville has been prospecting this group since 2018. We bid on it for 2023 but could not make the required meeting space work. A follow-up site visit by the planner allowed us to secure the March 2024 event. (Extra bonus:) Tina Porter suggested the planner consider Asheville for the 2025 National Executive Director's Council Meeting, which is now booked for July 2025 (210 roomnights).*

NORTH CAROLINA NURSES ASSOCIATION 2024 NCNA NURSE PRACTITIONER SPRING SYMPOSIUM

WHEN: March 16-19, 2024

DIRECT SPEND: \$476,493 (730 roomnights)

MARKET: Medical/Pharmaceutical/Life Sciences



THE INSIDE SCOOP: *Nearly 30 years ago, Randy Fleck worked as an AV Tech at a local hotel. He complained about having to drive to the beach every year with his wife (a nurse) to attend this convention. He wanted it to be in Asheville and made introductions locally. As a result, the NC Nurses Association now rotates this event between the North*

OUTDOOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE COUNCIL OBH COUNCIL REGIONAL SYMPOSIUM

WHEN: March 18-21, 2024

DIRECT SPEND: \$225,892 (210 roomnights)

MARKET: Outdoor Industry/Medical/Pharmaceutical/Life Sciences



*Outdoor
Behavioral
Healthcare*

THE INSIDE SCOOP: *Founded in 1996 and based in Utah, the goal of the OBH Council is to gain recognition for outdoor behavioral healthcare as an effective and ethical treatment solution for people and their families. Members, including medical professionals and therapists, believe outdoor treatment is a highly effective form of treatment for most adolescent behavioral healthcare problems.*

This lead started via Zoom call in December 2022. Tina discussed that a new hotel may meet this event's meeting needs. Continued discussions ensued, and with help from hotel sales staff we booked this event in October.

SEW MAGICAL ASHEVILLE 2024 EXPO

WHEN: April 10-14, 2024

DIRECT SPEND: \$178,819 (230 roomnights)

MARKET: Social, Military, Education, Religious & Fraternal Groups



THE INSIDE SCOOP: *Sew Magical is a sewing and crafting expo that is expanding across the US. The goal of the organization is to “celebrate all things magical and host expos that teach, inspire and create great memories.” This lead was sourced from a third-party planner the sales team engaged with at several tradeshowes followed by attending one of our 48-hour site visits. Part of the Sew Magic Asheville agenda includes an off-site event and photoshoot at the Biltmore Estate.*

ADVENTURE TRAVEL TRADE ASSOCIATION

ADVENTURE ELEVATE

WHEN: June 9-13, 2024

DIRECT SPEND: \$447,394 (663 roomnights)

MARKET: Outdoor Industry



ADVENTURE TRAVEL
TRADE ASSOCIATION

THE INSIDE SCOOP: *A three-day impact event involving the largest global network of adventure travel leaders, including media, tour operators, and thought leaders in the adventure travel community.*

Explore Asheville identified this event as aligning with outdoor industries and tourism and attended in 2022 to learn more about the group and event. We subsequently bid on hosting the event in Asheville and was chosen for 2024, the first time this event has been held in the Southeastern US.

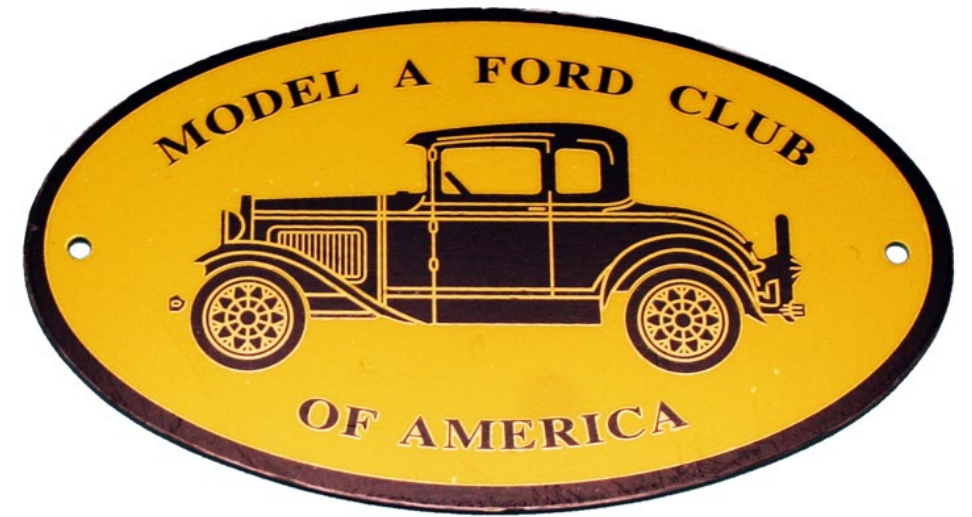
Considered one of the preeminent regionally-focused industry events, AdventureELEVATE starts with a Day of Adventure (involving 20+ partners), followed by two days of inspiring speakers, workshop sessions and networking opportunities

MODEL A FORD CLUB OF AMERICA SUMMER 2024 MEETING

WHEN: July 12-18, 2024

DIRECT SPEND: \$820,014 (1,730 roomnights)

MARKET: Automotive/Transportation/SMERF



THE INSIDE SCOOP: *The Model A Ford Club of America (MAFCA) is dedicated to the restoration, preservation and enjoyment of Ford Model A and AA cars and trucks, manufactured from 1928 to 1931. The planner for this event visited Asheville and met with Shawn Boone. The event will utilize multiple hotel properties and plans to hold an event at the Biltmore Estate. The organization, which last met in Asheville in 2013, is a recipient of MDF incentive program and plans to use the funds to offset parking for trailers at the Tanger Outlet Center.*

BASF PROFESSIONAL & SPECIALTY SOLUTIONS 2024 BUSINESS CONFERENCE

WHEN: August 10-16, 2024

DIRECT SPEND: \$201,945 (511 roomnights)

MARKET: Manufacturing



THE INSIDE SCOOP: *BASF P & SS involves sales and technical professionals in pest control, turf management, and ornamental plants. Explore Asheville received this lead through a third-party planner (approximately one-third of our total leads). Asheville made the shortlist, along with Richmond, VA and Savannah, GA. Four representatives from BASF came to Asheville for a site visit that was a team effort, resulting in the client selecting Asheville over Richmond and Savannah. The BASF head representative cited the teamwork and cooperation, both with our partners but also as a sales team, as the “tie breaker” in Asheville’s selection.*



MARKETING UPDATE

A LOOK AHEAD

Dodie Stephens
Explore Asheville | VP of Marketing

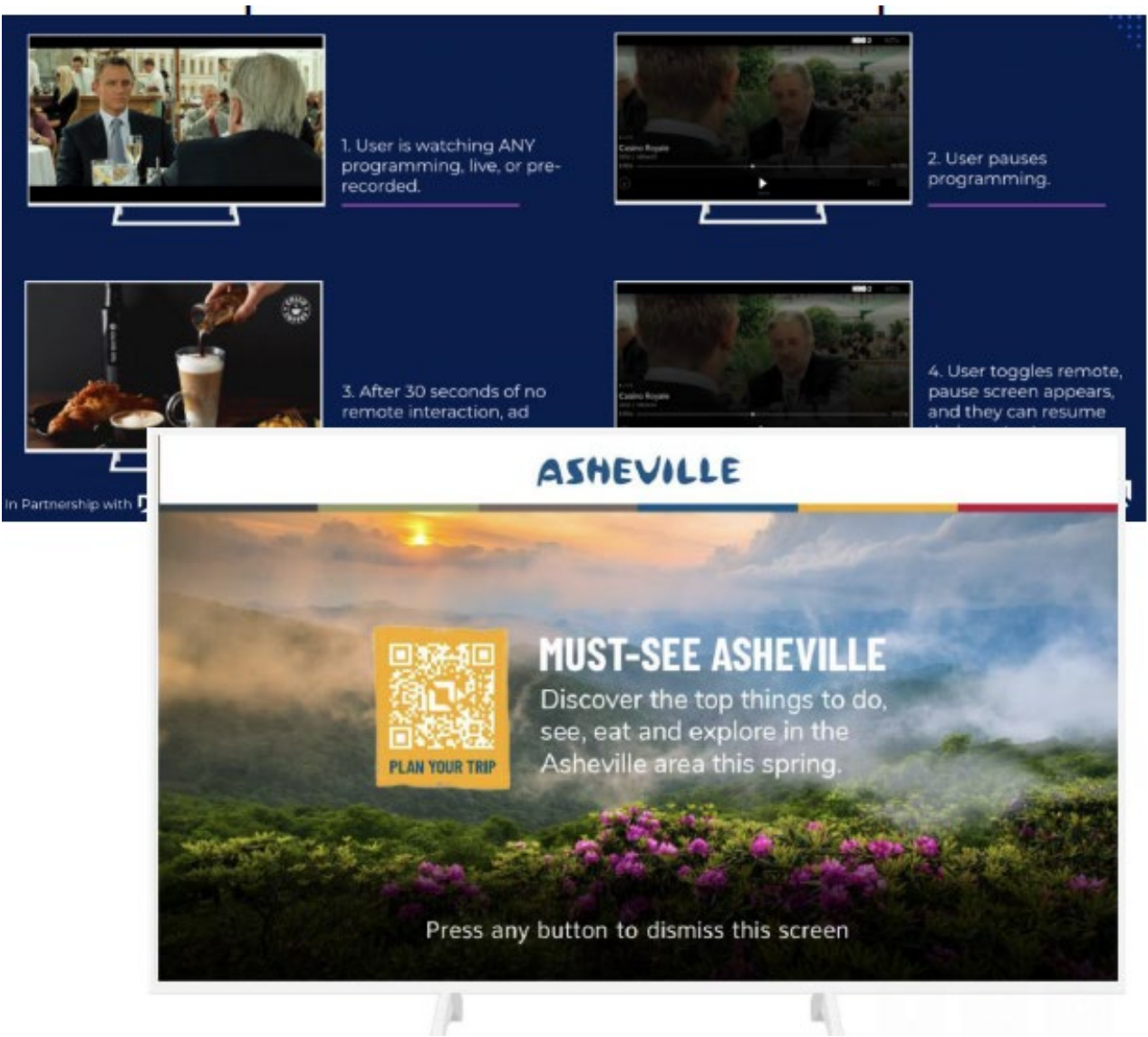
POLITICAL CLIMATE

Maintaining advertising promotional reach in the second half of FY24

Channel	Budget Increase	Percentage Increase
Linear TV	\$960,336	40%
CTV / Digital Display / Rick Media Display	\$341,250	35%
Paid Social	\$50,500	10%
TOTAL	\$1,352,000	

- Pulsing flight dates in each market based on political primaries.
- Maintained retention of our full flight schedule, shoring up market weight and delivering original strategic intent.
- **New Ad Product “Pause Ads”** New to market platform via distribution partner Undertone. Static and animated ads will run during any program pauses.

“Pause Ads” via Direct TV and Streaming Platforms



MARKET STRATEGY

Leveraging and supporting new flight routes, while keeping focus on drive markets



- Air visitors stay longer and spend more throughout the destination.
- New flight routes added to market mix for spring and beyond, including Phoenix and Orlando.
- Adding weight in Dallas, as we are starting to see more quality visits from this nonstop market.
- **Promoting Allegiant's New Route:**
Building on Asheville's relationship with the USTA, Explore Asheville will be the official destination sponsor of the Billie Jean King Cup Tie in Orlando.
 - Event signage, television exposure, digital marketing via USTA.
 - Supported by added weight of Explore Asheville brand campaign in the Orlando market.

TRAVEL + LEISURE READER TRIP

Creative culture elevated spring through fall 2024

In November 2024, in partnership with Dotdash Meredith, this unique reader trip will provide 20-25 Travel +Leisure readers with an unparalleled itinerary drawing them into the allure of Asheville through the city's creative spirit, leisure appeal, history and local roots.

On Sale March 2024: Featured partners are included in promotional plan utilizing consistent print placements and digital extensions driving travel consideration and bookings for this extraordinary experience culminating fall 2024.

TRAVEL+
LEISURE

INVITES YOU TO

Always
Asheville

A WEEKEND OF CULTURE & CUISINE IN THE
HEART OF THE BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAINS

CURATED WITH
EXPLORE ASHEVILLE

Join us for an unparalleled weekend journey to explore
Asheville's storied heritage, culinary diversity,
and magnificent natural beauty.

November 7-11, 2024

BOOK NOW BY CALLING 877-360-9020

Space is limited. See terms and conditions for additional details.

ASHEVILLE

This Fall, join *Travel + Leisure* on an extraordinary journey in **Asheville, North Carolina.** In partnership with Explore Asheville, this four-night trip has been exclusively designed for *Travel + Leisure* readers to guide you through the city's most cherished places for culture, history, and dining with the stunning autumnal beauty of the region as your backdrop. You'll stay at the newly opened Flat Iron Hotel, a 71-room boutique property taking up residence in a historic 1927 Flat Iron building that channels the independent tree spirit of the Roaring Twenties. Conveniently situated downtown, the hotel is within easy walking distance of Grove Arcade and the city's buzziest restaurants and entertainment.

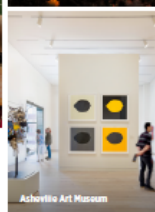
A VIP Welcome

When it comes to vibrant, inclusive, and boundary-pushing dining, few destinations can top Asheville. After touching down at Asheville Regional Airport, your driver will whisk you to your art deco-inspired accommodations at **The Flat Iron Hotel.** The evening will begin on the hotel's rooftop with a private cocktail party. You'll be treated to a taste of Asheville's innovative culinary scene, with food from **J Chong** (finalist on HBO Max's original series, "The Big Brunch") and **Good Hot Fish**, along with imaginative libations by popular local distillery **Cultivated Cocktails.** You'll then enjoy a welcome dinner in the hotel's wood-fired Italian restaurant **Luminesce** from executive chef **Graham House**, followed by nightcaps by **Sovereign Remedies** in the hotel's hidden speakeasy.

FRIDAY

By Air and By Land

Today, you'll be immersed in exclusive experiences to discover why George Vanderbilt's magnificent **Biltmore** earned the official title of America's Largest Home. But first, start the morning on a high note with an intimate sunrise hot air balloon ride. Navigated by **Asheville Balloon Company**, this unforgettable experience will have you floating high above the Pisgah National Forest where you'll witness exhilarating vistas of the Blue Ridge Mountains. In the afternoon, explore Biltmore in grand style with a three-course private luncheon, a viewing of the **Chifuy** at Biltmore exhibition, a red wine and chocolate tasting at **Biltmore Winery**, and a candid holiday tour of Biltmore House. The day concludes with a private dining experience at **Nong Jic's**, the highly acclaimed Filipino restaurant by chef-owner **Silver Ilocvozz** that was a 2023 James Beard Award nominee for Best New Restaurant.



SATURDAY

Where Culture and Culinary Converge

Following breakfast at the hotel, stroll to the **Asheville Art Museum** for a personalized viewing of its collection highlighting artists from Western North Carolina and the Southern Appalachian region. Continue on foot to **LEAF Global Arts Center**, where you'll discover the crucial role music and art play in connecting cultures around the world. For lunch, fuel up on Southern-inspired fare at **Golden Hour**, a hip eatery helmed by James Beard Award-nominated chef **Jacob Sessions**, then discover why the **River Arts District** is Asheville's most colorful and experimental neighborhood with nearly 300 working artists' studios to explore. Decompress back at The Flat Iron Hotel before venturing to the historic **Governor's Western Residence** for a lavish private dinner with celebrated James Beard Award-winning chef **Katie Bottom of Cúrate**. Earlier in the day you got up close to some of Asheville's best art; now, see it made before your eyes with a live glassblowing demonstration from the **North Carolina Glass Center**.

SUNDAY

Green Grounds and Dynamic Sounds

Embark on a morning behind-the-scenes tour of **Citizen Vinyl**, a visionary concept merging three press machines, a recording studio, and a cafe/bar where you'll dive deep into the vinyl creation process, the history of the iconic Citizen-Times building, and the legendary musicians who performed there. The day continues with an excursion to **Gaining Ground Farm**, a 70-acre, sustainable vegetable farm run by husband-wife team **Aaron and Anne Grier**—plus a private luncheon with seven-time James Beard Award-nominated chef **John Piser**, owner and chef at **Rhubarb**. Enjoy the afternoon at your leisure before being escorted to an extraordinary evening at **Lake Eden Retreat**. Learn about this iconic 90-plus acre property's colorful life, from when it was home to the legendary Black Mountain College (alumni include **Willem and Elaine de Koonings**), before delighting all your senses with a once-in-a-lifetime farewell supper and exclusive live sets by Grammy-winning bluegrass band **Steep Canyon Rangers**, and celebrated storyteller **Backy Stone**.



WE ARE ASHEVILLE.
THE HEARTBEAT OF
THE BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAINS.
WHERE EMERGING IDEAS FLOW
AND THE CHANGING SEASONS
BRING ENERGY AND INSPIRATION.
DRAWING YOU IN AND
CALLING YOU BACK AGAIN.
YOU ARE WELCOME HERE.

Always.
ASHEVILLE

ExploreAsheville.com
@VisitAsheville

ASHEVILLE



SPOTLIGHT ON ASHEVILLE'S CREATIVE SPIRIT

Extending reach through strategic brand alignment

Travel + Leisure

Print article featuring beautiful photography and robust interview highlighting Asheville-based photographer Parker J. Pfister. Estimated impressions: 5,777,202.

AFAR


Series of articles in print and digital placements with topics such as "Where to Find Asheville's Creative Scene," "Why Story Parlor is a Must-See," and "Glenis Redmond's Guide to Experiencing Asheville's Artistic Heritage." Estimated impressions: 1,000,000

Mitu

Native digital article unveiling the vibrant tapestry of Latinx creativity flourishing in the Asheville area. Included visual arts, music, architecture, photography and more. Estimated impressions: 10,598,864

ASHEVILLE

TRAVEL+LEISURE



Curtain Up on Creativity

Whether you're drawn to contemporary dance, experimental theater, cutting-edge exhibitions, or vibrant Shakespeare productions, there's always something thrilling on the stages of Asheville. Galleries and studios line the streets of the River Arts District offering hands-on, close-up experiences. Everywhere you look in Asheville there is art all around you.

Dive Into Culture

Bite Into Bliss

Embark on a delectable journey through Asheville's thriving culinary scene, where every bite is a celebration of flavor and innovation. Asheville boasts a diverse array of restaurants, from cozy farm-to-table eateries to upscale dining experiences. Award-winning chefs infuse their creations with the spirit of the region, featuring fresh, seasonal ingredients that showcase the area's agricultural richness.

Taste Asheville



Here's Where to Best Experience Asheville's Artistic Heritage

Poet laureate Glenis Redmond reveals the city's best spots for dancing—and shares her tips on how to enjoy the city's thriving literary and performing arts scenes.

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, Email icons



The Soulful Creations of Asheville's Hidden Latinx Talents

BY KARLA MONTALVAN | DECEMBER 12, 2023 AT 9:29 AM



SPOTLIGHT ON CREATIVE FESTIVALS & DIVERSE EVENTS

Raising awareness and driving visitation to upcoming Asheville signature events

Asheville Ideas Fest

Partnering with TravelDesk and NPR, as well as running paid social campaigns to boost awareness and retarget potential ticket buyers. Geo-targeting attendees of similar events, i.e. SXSW and The New Yorker Festival. Total estimated reach: +30,000,000

Skyview Golf Tournament

Partnering with TravelDesk to target key golf-focused audience on platforms such as golfchannel.com, atlantablackstar.com, and blackenterprise.com. Securing print ad in June issue of African American Golfer's Digest – a PGA of America Diverse Supplier. Total estimated reach: 785,000

AVLFest

Partnering with Garden & Gun to create a new limited-release G&G Vinyl Vol. 2 showcasing festival line-up and Asheville-based artists. Curating Back Porch Sessions featuring audio/video recording of AVLFest artists.

F&C Events Grant & Sponsorship Recipients

Each event will benefit from promotion through Explore Asheville's social channels, website and visitor guide.

STRATEGY

Increase awareness for the Skyview Golf Tournament in the June issue of African American Golfer's Digest

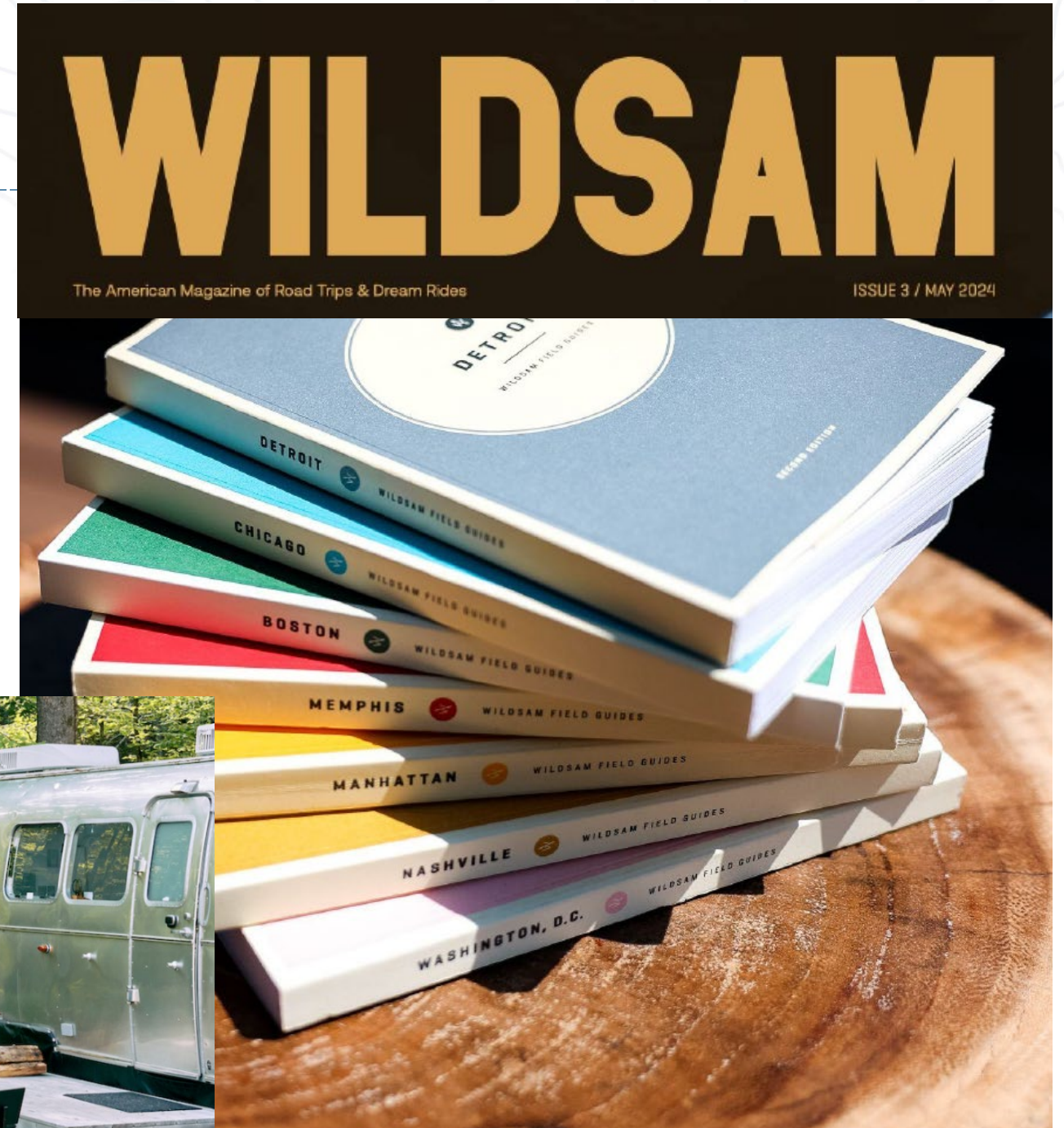


Note: Additional details to be determined based on further conversations with Explore Asheville. Program eligibility is based on a minimum media commitment of \$100k.

WILDSAM

Inspiring road trip enthusiasts

- **Asheville Guidebook (May 2024):** Launch of printed guide Asheville and WNC.
- **New! Wildsam Magazine:** Expanded and diversified media brand, new print and digital opportunities.
- **A Century on the Road:** Optimize timing of guide launch with Asheville area storylines and branded content activations
- **Alignment Opportunities:** ATTA's Elevate Asheville and the opening of new lodging Asheville's Autocamp (Spring 2024).



illuminating the area's intellectual capital with compelling content

- Climate Science – published January 8
- Outdoor Industry and Wellness – February launch
- Automotive / Car launches, Corporate meetings – March launch



NORTHSTAR
meetings group

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[DESTINATION GUIDES](#)
[PLANNING TIPS & TRENDS](#)
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Supplied Content / Video Spotlight

Asheville Is an International Hub for Climate-Science Events

January 8, 2024

ADVERTISEMENT

Inspire innovation and meet in the mountains.

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ADVERTISEMENT

Inspire innovation and meet in the mountains.


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For meeting planners looking to incorporate climate research and expertise into their programs, few destinations offer as much as Asheville, North Carolina. In addition to the stunning natural

WASHINGTON POST

Newsroom style content partnership pairs climate science and meetings in the mountains

Version B



CONTENT FROM EXPLORE ASHEVILLE

Take your meetings to the mountains

Explore group travel options in Asheville, NC.

READ THE ARTICLE

- Article #1 - February 2 launch with a focus on memorable meetings in the mountains
- Article #2 - March 8 launch, focus on climate science

CREATIVE GROUP

Content from WP Creative Group

The Washington Post

Democracy Dies in Darkness


Elevate your work trips in Asheville

Discover why meeting and event planners prefer Asheville, NC, for group travel.

By WP Creative Group

FEBRUARY 2, 2024

Every year, EMC National Life Company (EMCNL) rewards its top insurance agents with an all-expenses paid getaway.



Cameron Torstenson, EMCNL's executive vice president and chief marketing officer, says the annual incentive trip is crucial to motivating the company's independent agents. The challenge? Choosing a destination that suits varying tastes.

"We try to create experiences that are meaningful to our partners," Torstenson said. "When thinking about a group this size, you have to remember that everyone has very different things that are going to motivate them. The key is to offer an experience they can't recreate on their own."

In 2022, EMCNL leadership chose Asheville, North Carolina, treating a group of 100 agents to three days of entertainment, relaxation and connection in the backdrop of the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains. Asheville is a city that offers something for every type of traveler, balancing a small town feel with metropolitan luxuries.

CONTENT FROM

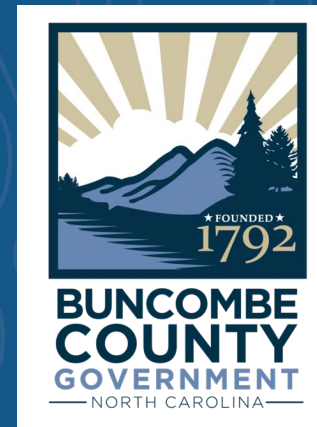
ASHEVILLE

NATIONAL PROMOTION

Media relations campaign focus on Asheville's Black Cultural Heritage Trail

- National press outreach and targeted pitching
- Spring Media FAM & Influencer Partnership effort activated by the PR team
- Promotion at media marketplace events including TravMedia's IMM and VisitNC 365
- Paid advertising storytelling support via content partnerships via Essence, AFAR and Edge Media





COUNTY UPDATES

Commissioner Terri Wells

EXPLORE
ASHEVILLE
POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism
Development Authority



MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Brenda Durden
BCTDA | Chair

EXPLORE
ASHEVILLE
POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism
Development Authority



PUBLIC COMMENTS

Brenda Durden
BCTDA | Chair

LIVE VIRTUAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Brenda Durden

Members of the Public were invited to sign-up to virtually share live comments during today's in-person BCTDA meeting.

As of the 12:00 p.m. registration deadline on Tuesday, January 23, no requests to speak had been received.



IN-PERSON PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Brenda Durden

Upon arrival to this morning's BCTDA meeting, anyone who indicated a desire to make public comments completed the Public Comment Sign-In Sheet, affirming they agree to abide by the Rules of Decorum.



A FEW REMINDERS

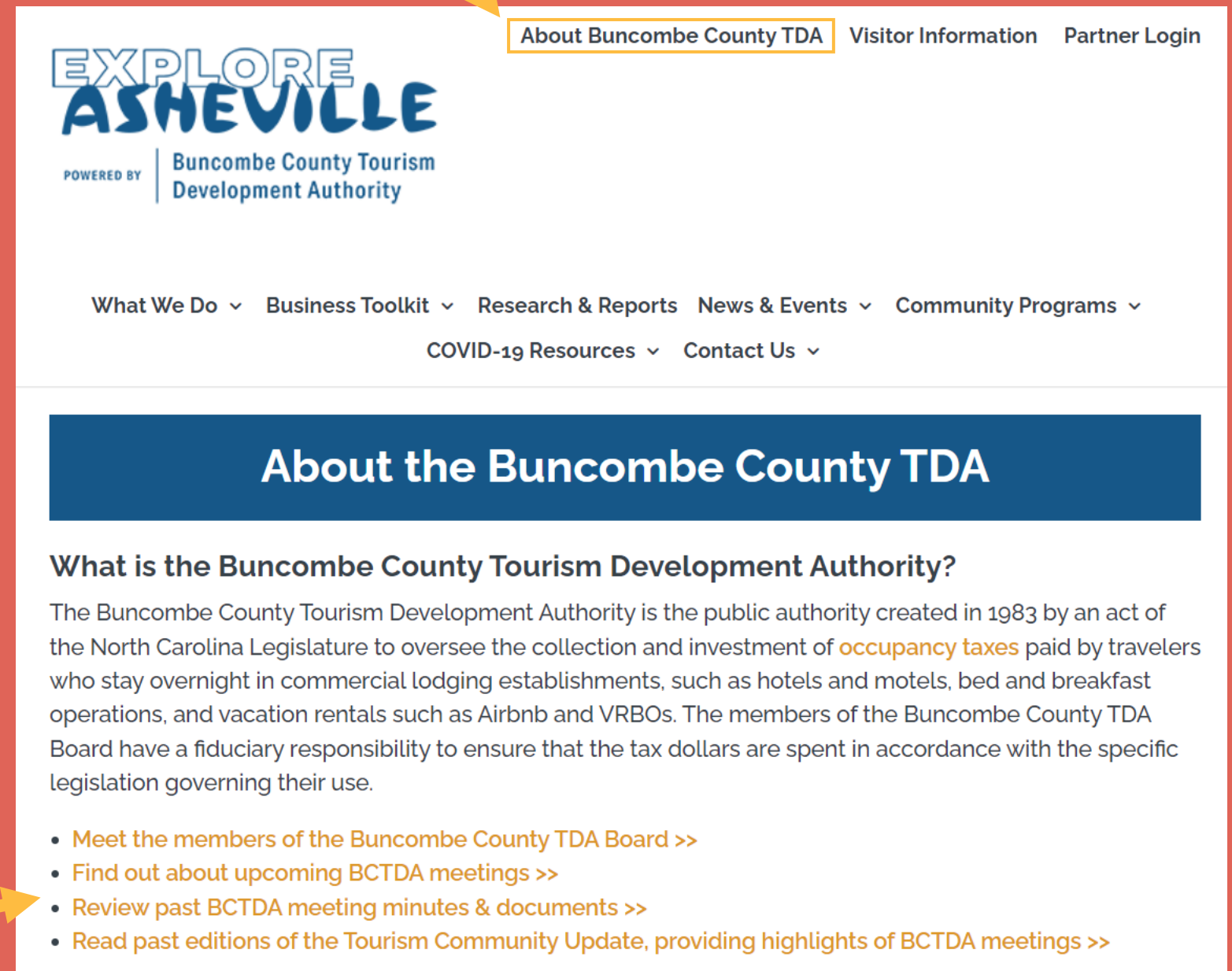
Chair Brenda Durden

Additional materials, including the PowerPoint presentation, will be posted online later today.

**The next BCTDA meeting will be held on
Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.
in the Explore Asheville Board Room**

For more information go to:

- AshevilleCVB.com
- About the Buncombe County TDA section
- Find out about upcoming BCTDA meetings or
Review past BCTDA meeting minutes &
documents



The screenshot shows the Explore Asheville website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links: "About Buncombe County TDA", "Visitor Information", and "Partner Login". Below this is the "EXPLORE ASHEVILLE" logo, with "POWERED BY Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority" underneath. A menu of links is displayed: "What We Do", "Business Toolkit", "Research & Reports", "News & Events", "Community Programs", "COVID-19 Resources", and "Contact Us". A prominent blue banner reads "About the Buncombe County TDA". Below the banner, the section "What is the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority?" is followed by a paragraph explaining its role. A list of links is provided at the bottom of the section:

- [Meet the members of the Buncombe County TDA Board >>](#)
- [Find out about upcoming BCTDA meetings >>](#)
- [Review past BCTDA meeting minutes & documents >>](#)
- [Read past editions of the Tourism Community Update, providing highlights of BCTDA meetings >>](#)

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Brenda Durden

Questions/Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to adjourn the BCTDA Meeting.

Motion Second

Discussion

Vote





THANK YOU

See you at the next BCTDA meeting!

Wednesday, February 28, 2024 | 9:00 a.m.

Explore Asheville Board Room | 27 College Place

EXPLORE
ASHEVILLE

POWERED BY

Buncombe County Tourism
Development Authority