



January 30, 2019

To: Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority  
From: Stephanie Pace Brown  
Subject: President's Report of December Activities

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The final month of a great year started with the Explore Asheville Holiday Party on December 6 generously hosted by the Renaissance Asheville Hotel. US Foods contributed \$1,500 of sponsorship support, wine was provided by Biltmore and The Omni Grove Park Inn, and beer was provided by Asheville Brewing. The popular event drew attendance of 251.

The sixth Annual CVB SuperStar Awards honoring partners for outstanding contributions and support throughout the year were awarded to John Almageur of Asheville Art Studio Tours, Ruth Summers of the Grove Arcade and member of the TPDF Committee, June Vengoechea of Visions of Creation in Black Mountain, and Kevan Frazier of Asheville By Foot Walking History Tours and Well Played Café.

The holiday party also supports the Renaissance's Toys for Tots toy drive – this year raising \$1,200 in cash and 155 toys. Everyone who contributed was entered to win a \$500 travel voucher provided by Spirit Airlines.

Destination performance for 2018 was strong, posting a total increase in hotel demand of 5.7 percent (compared to 3.7% in 2017), just under a 6.0 percent increase in supply. Average daily rate (ADR) was up 2.8 percent (compared to 2.5% in 2017), and Revenue per available room (RevPAR) was up 2.5 percent.

With 11 calendar months posted, total lodging revenue is up 11.53 percent in 2018.

### **DECEMBER METRICS: BY THE NUMBERS**

- During December, the sales team posted 1,138 personal contacts (up 20%). December sales activities generated 58 sales leads (down 5%) and 29 convention bookings (up 16%), representing 5,106 rooms (down 24%). Six months into the fiscal year, year-to-date bookings are up 37 percent and room nights represented are down 11 percent.
- CVB sales leads generated 17 group events in December (up 6%), with revenue of \$172,743 (down 27%). The services team assisted 13 groups (flat).
- The PR team landed 65 significant placements in December (down 37%), with 56 media touchpoints (up 60%). The publicity value of print and broadcast placements totaled \$13,250,721 with reach of over 4 million. Online placements added \$117,488 in value and reach of over 196 million.

- ExploreAsheville.com attracted 268,117 visits (down 1%), including 187,485 to the mobile site (up 5%). Our Facebook fan base grew by 1,569 (down 29%) and video views totaled 14,205 (down 93%).
- Online hotel reservations totaled 39 room nights (down 33%) with total room revenue of \$6,258 (down 35%).
- The Asheville Visitor Center welcomed 10,812 visitors (down 11%), and the Pack Square Park Visitor Pavilion is closed for the winter.

## **HOTEL & AIRPORT RESULTS**

- Buncombe County Finance reported lodging sales totaling \$37,177,865 in November, an increase of 12 percent.
- Smith Travel Research reported hotel occupancy of 75.8 percent during November (up 2%). The average daily room rate was \$172.26 (up 5%), and RevPAR (revenue per available room) was \$130.63 (up 7%). Room demand increased 6.5 percent with 180,749 rooms sold.
- Passengers at the Asheville Regional Airport increased 24 percent to total 113,348 in November.

## **IN THE COMMUNITY**

- Stephanie participated in AIR's annual board retreat.
- Dodie represented Explore Asheville on the branding/marketing committee for Chow Chow, an Asheville culinary event. Dodie provided destination insight and creative feedback on the festival landmark and reviewed potential media sponsor agreements. Elizabeth worked with Dodie to update the ExploreAsheville.com hosted splash page to ensure brand alignment and function.
- Dodie attended a PRSA Travel & Tourism Site visit to Charlotte in her role as section secretary with duties to support conference planning and site selection for 2020.
- Marla attended the Asheville Downtown Association meeting in December.
- Marla attended the Southeast Travel Society board meeting in Atlanta. Key objectives for the year, including the federal legislative agenda, were discussed.
- The sales team held the quarterly DOS meeting on December 13.
- Dianna and Tina attended ABRSA's Annual Meeting.
- The sales team held a Citywide Task Force meeting on December 12.
- Dianna attended the Civic Center Commission Meeting where Stephanie presented an overview of tourism in Buncombe County.
- Sales staff toured Holiday Inn Airport, The Foundry and met with local industry partners on a variety of topics.
- Glenn and Pat attended the Asheville Buncombe County Sports Commission's annual meeting.
- Glenn attended Goodwill Industry's Business Advisory Council at The Collider, Piney Grove Historic Cemetery Board Meeting in Swannanoa, and the NCDOT Public Hearing for the Blue Ridge Road / I-40 Interchange Project.
- Pat attended the Bike Share Study Steering Committee Meeting at City Hall and a meeting to learn about the Community Remembrance Coalition hosted by Dr. Darin Waters and Kimberlee Archie.
- Pat attended a follow-up planning meeting hosted by the Asheville Area Arts Council focused on the 2019 Creative Sector Summit. The theme of the event to be held in May will be equity and inclusion.

## **MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS**

**Advertising:** The small Falliday/Holiday campaign closed out on December 23. Tactics for this campaign included digital display, sponsored content, retargeting, and paid social. The campaign drove 31k sessions to ExploreAsheville.com with an average of 2.5 pages/session.

The agency selection process drew to a close in December with the three finalists making presentations to the selection team and holding meetings with staff. After further vetting of fee proposals and references, a selection was made, and detailed contract arrangements began with an announcement made at the January 10 board meeting.

With the transition underway, the marketing team modified its approach to the Winter campaign and executed on a paid social effort that used existing “Cozy Winter” assets, building on last year’s winter positioning and media relations pitches and early media coverage of Asheville as a winter destination. The campaign will run through early March. Preliminary results as of mid-January:

- Campaign has generated 7,466 sessions to ExploreAsheville.com.
- Campaign traffic is seeing an average bounce rate of 50 percent and 2.11 pages per session.
- 7,403 sessions were generated by two traffic campaigns, which have spent \$2,414 to date, or an average of \$0.33 per session.
- The third campaign is the leads ad, which has generated 821 travel guide requests to date. That campaign has spent \$728, or an average of \$0.89 per lead.
- Total ad impressions to date are 515,145.

**Paid Search:** Paid search in December generated over 39,095 site visits from Google and Bing combined. Paid search also netted 2 hotel bookings this month for nearly \$2,800. Other highlights:

- Click through rate has increased by 15 percent year over year
- Pages per visit was at 2.98 for December
- Avg. time on site was 2:30 in December
- 289 Visitor Guide Requests were generated by paid search in December

**TripAdvisor PDP:** The TripAdvisor Premium Destination Page for Asheville and Black Mountain has received a total of 1.58 million page views since the launch in May (through December 2018). Top performing articles include: 5 Things You Need to Know About Fall and 7 Great Places to View Wildflowers. Top performing collections include: Fan Favorite Breweries and Eats & Beats. Top performing events include: Christmas at Biltmore, Chihuly Nights at Biltmore, Summer of Glass and Winter Lights at the Arboretum.

**General Media Relations:** The PR team logged 56 media touchpoints and initiated 197 targeted pitches in December. The pitch number was especially high due to “What’s New in 2019” targeted content pitching and the holiday media gift. The team did not host any media on the ground in Asheville this month. One site visit was planned but had to be rescheduled for January due to a snowstorm. Story support included *Matador*, *Red Bulletin*, *Robb Report*, *USA Today*, and *CincinnatiRefined.com*. Asheville imagery and assistance were also provided to *Outside Online*, *Lonely Planet* and *PureWow*, among others.

This year, the PR team sent a holiday media gift with a “cozy winter” themed pitch to 66 media contacts. The gift included a tumbler from East Fork and drinking chocolate from French Broad Chocolates. The card included the “5 Reasons Asheville is the Coziest City in the U.S.”

What You Can't Miss in Asheville in 2019 Release: The Explore Asheville PR team crafted a "What's New in 2019" press release in late November/early December. The release was distributed via PR Newswire and picked up 211 times with a potential audience of 8.2 million. It was also distributed via MailChimp to 559 subscribers and media friends of Explore Asheville. Work was then performed using TrendKite to pinpoint outlets and writers who have previously covered "top destinations" and the best destinations for food, beverage, outdoor adventure, etc. This targeted outreach totaled 119 pitches.

M&C/Group PR Support: December saw a few requests from M&C media, with Sarah Lowery and Carli Adams assisting with insight for writers from both *Meetings Today* and *Cvent / Elite Meetings*.

### **Significant Placements**

1. *Bon Appetit* | "The 22 Restaurants that Turned Us into Dedicated Regulars in 2018"
2. *Budget Travel* | "5 Perfect U.S. Road Trips"
3. *Business Insider India* | "The 3 best places to travel every month of 2019"
4. *Garden & Gun* | "The Year in Southern Restaurants"
5. *Groups Today* | "2018 Reader's Choice Awards - Emerging Destinations"
6. *Luxury Travel Magazine* | "Top Destinations Across the World for a Nature Immersion Getaway in 2019"
7. *Marriott Traveler* | "Small Cities that Do It BIG for the Holidays"
8. *Only In Your State* | "America's Largest House Has Been Transformed into a Glittering Christmas Wonderland"
9. *Outside Online* | "5 Perfect Winter Road Trips"
10. *Smart Asset* | "The Best Cities for Beer Drinkers - 2018 Edition"
11. *Smarter Travel* | "The 10 Best U.S. Cities to Visit in 2019"
12. *The Points Guy* | "The 12 Destinations You Should Visit in 2019"
13. *Thrillist* | "The 24 Best Indian Restaurants in the Country"
14. *U.S. News and World Report* | "Welcome to 'Climate City'"
15. *USA Today* | "North Carolina is for Christmas Tree Lovers"

**Content Development Projects:** The content team's projects during the month of December focused on covering the holiday season and preparing for the upcoming winter season. Content creation and planning covered subjects such as the new Biltmore Village lights display, holiday downtown storefronts, Steep Canyon Rangers, and Black Mountain.

### ExploreAsheville.com Editorial Content:

- During the month of December, 6 new pieces of editorial content were added to the website: A round-up of restaurants open on Christmas and New Year's, a round-up of New Year's Eve events, and four "things to do this weekend" posts.
- The most popular blog and story content this month was 50 Things to Do in Asheville, which received 21,030 new pageviews, followed by 8 Places to See Holiday Lights in Asheville, which received 10,329 pageviews.

### Social Media Stats:

Facebook:

*Visit Asheville* page

- December saw 1,568 daily new likes to Facebook for a total of 281,808.
- There were 23 new Facebook posts added to the *Visit Asheville* page in the month of December.
- The most popular unpaid Facebook post during the month was the share of the "What You Can't Miss in Asheville in 2019" blog post. It has reached 40,890 people organically,

generating 1,127 total reactions, including 70 comments. This was also the month's most engaging post, engaging 5.3 percent of users reached.

#### *Foodtopia page*

- December saw 31 daily new likes to the Foodtopia page for a total of 25,079 likes.

#### *Video:*

- There were 6,767 new, organic YouTube views in December. The most popular video by organic views this month was the fall time lapse, which received 837 non-paid views. O Little Town of Christmas Cats came in second with 608 new views.
- Across all our video platforms, there were 14,205 non-advertising views, with the majority coming from Facebook. There have been 553,404 views of Explore Asheville content YTD (since July 1, 2018).

#### *Pinterest:*

- The combined fan total for our two accounts now totals 5,136. Foodtopia accounts for 1,418 of those. Visit Asheville – 3,718.

#### *Instagram:*

- Our VisitAsheville account has 53,450 followers.
- There were 9 new posts in December. The most popular was an evening photo of the Asheville skyline. It received 1,983 engagements (likes and comments).

#### *Twitter:*

- Across all three accounts we have a total of 30,693 followers. The most popular account continues to be Foodtopia, which has 14,687 followers. We continue to provide a mix of proactive response to travel inquiries and pushes of website and Instagram content.

#### *Asheville Traveler E-newsletter:*

- Subscribers: We have 121,366 active subscribers.
- Opens/Click-throughs: In December, our monthly Asheville Traveler e-newsletter went out to 122,260 subscribers. It had an overall open rate of 15.2 percent and a click-through rate of 2 percent.

**ExploreAsheville.com:** Website user sessions in December decreased 1.15 percent compared to last year. Organic traffic was up 3.03 percent year-over-year in December. Social media traffic was up 81.32 percent year-over-year in December. Referral traffic was up 5.53 percent YOY, and traffic from enewsletter clicks were up 1.65 percent YOY in December. Display ad traffic was down 10.28 percent, and paid search traffic was down 31.23 percent YOY in December.

ExploreAsheville.com continues to outperform industry averages with 28 percent more total pages per visit, 35 percent longer visit duration, 28 percent more organic pages per visit, and 37 percent longer organic visit duration as compared to industry average in the month of December.

Website Improvements – SEO and CRO: In December, Simpleview and Explore Asheville staff continue to work on efforts to improve site conversion rates based on established goals and KPIs. Several pages continue to perform particularly well in driving organic traffic, including Things to Do in Asheville This Weekend and 50 Things to Do in Asheville.

**Online Reservations:** There were 28 orders for 39 room nights in December with a total of \$6,258 in booking revenue and \$310 commission. The top 5 states for room nights booked in November were Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Ohio and North Carolina.

<b>December 2018</b>	Current Month	This Month Last Year	Variance Monthly	YTD Actual	YTD Last Year	Variance YTD
Booking Rev	\$6,258	\$9,586	-34.72%	\$94,674	\$81,238	16.54%
Commission	\$310.96	\$394.65	-21.21%	\$4,436.73	\$3,671.93	20.83%
Orders	28	39	-28.21%	374	307	21.82%
Room Nights	39	58	-32.76%	585	477	22.64%

**Visitor Guide:** The 2019 Visitor Guide was delivered in December. Improvements are being made to the distribution system for in-market guides. There were 2,733 requests for the Official Asheville Travel Guide in December, a 170 percent increase over last year. Fiscal year-to-date, there have been 17,359 travel guide requests.

<b>Top 5 DMAs for December</b>	<b># of Guides Requested</b>	<b>FY 2018-2019 Top 5 DMAs</b>	<b># of Guides Requested</b>
NEW YORK	143	NEW YORK	818
TAMPA-ST. PETE, SARASOTA	111	TAMPA-ST. PETE, SARASOTA	612
ATLANTA	89	ATLANTA	561
CHICAGO	89	PHILADELPHIA	512
PHILADELPHIA	82	Orlando	495

**BCTDA Community Relations:** In December, Explore Asheville used its remaining value-added dollars from an earlier national Gannett buy on a half-page print ad and a digital video campaign. The print ad ran in the Wednesday, Dec. 5 issue in the main section to the paper. Jason, Cat and Marla worked on a video for the digital campaign with more than 500,000 impressions on both desktop and mobile on the Citizen-Times and across the USA Today Network in the geo-targeted city of Asheville zip codes.

With oversight from Stephanie and Marla, Dodie drafted a top-ten style response to a request from Mountain Xpress for a year-end list of 2018 tourism industry accomplishments for Buncombe County. The list included TPDF awards, industry wage increases, Google Partnership, "Asheville By Design" on Nat Geo, Chow Chow, Fed Cup and the African-American heritage initiative.

## **GROUP SALES & SERVICES UPDATE**

Group sales reported 29 definite group bookings in December, up 16 percent from the prior year. Of these group bookings, 20 were for meetings & conventions, one was group tour, and eight were weddings. The combined total definite room nights were 5,106, down 23 percent over the prior December. Fifty-eight leads (46 for meeting/conventions, 10 for weddings and two for motor coach) representing 11,470 room nights were distributed to Buncombe County accommodations in December. Leads distributed were down 6.4 percent and rooms represented were down 36.3 percent over the prior year.

Estimated revenue for leads issued was \$1,239,264, a 7.6 percent decrease over the prior year. Actualized revenue was \$172,743 a 27 percent decrease over the prior year. Person-to-person outreach totaled 1,138 contacts, a 19.8 percent increase from last year. Indirect outreach totaled 11,538, a 92.4 percent decrease over the prior year. Last year's numbers included a mass-mailing to our database which explains the drop this year.

### **Sales Calls/Missions/FAMS:**

- Kathryn Dewey, Connie Holliday and Carli Adams exhibited at the Association Executives of North Carolina's Annual Trade (AENC) Show in Raleigh. Approximately 75 planners stopped by the Asheville booth. Participating industry partners included AC Hotel, Biltmore, Crowne Plaza, Grand Bohemian, Cambria, Hyatt Place, Biltmore Farms Hotels, and Renaissance Asheville Hotel. Contacts were made at two large association planning firms for future lunch and learns (approximately 50 staffers combined). One immediate RFP was received.
- A client event hosted prior to the AENC Annual Trade Show with 35 clients in attendance. Participating industry partners included AC Hotel, Biltmore, Crowne Plaza, Grand Bohemian, Biltmore Farms Hotels, Cambria and Hyatt Place.
- Shawn Boone traveled to Chicago to exhibit at Association Forum of Chicagoland's 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Showcase, partnering with The Omni Grove Park Inn and Biltmore. Approximately 75 planners came by. Sales appointments were hosted in conjunction with this event. Staff attended SITE Chicago, MPI-Chicago Area Chapter and PCMA Holiday mixers. One RFP for 875 rooms was received during the visit.
- Connie Holliday attended Tennessee Society of Association Executives Annual Tradeshow, meeting with 40 clients, with 37 indicating they could meet out-of-state. One immediate lead for 2020 was received with six soft leads pending. Sales calls with five additional organizations were made.

**Sponsorships:** In our continued efforts to place Asheville in a broader consideration set, Explore Asheville was a sponsor of Meetings Today's December 12<sup>th</sup> webinar with veteran Bonnie Wallsh. A total of 459 contacts attended. Due to a webinar scheduling mix up, Smart Meetings offered us the opportunity to participate in a custom survey eblast sent to 10,000 planners. The list of respondents has not yet been received but we anticipate about 150-200 planners will respond with contact information.

**Site Visits/Bookings/Leads:** The team hosted/assisted two site visits in December, including 2023 National Watermelon Association – 1,000 rooms and 2019-2020 Road Scholar – 2,000 rooms.

December bookings for this year and future years include:

- 2020 North American Nature Photography Association – 250 rooms (48-Hour FAM participant)
- 2021 Society of Petroleum Evaluation – 503 rooms
- 2020 American Public Works Association – 370 rooms

- 2019 Spartan Race Asheville Super & Sprint Weekend – 800 rooms
- 2019 SETA Overflow – 94 rooms
- 2019 National Council for Marketing and Public Relations – 100 rooms
- 2020 FIRST Robotics Competition – 300 rooms
- 2019 NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services – 80 rooms
- 2020 Southeastern Academy of Prosthodontics – 146 rooms
- 2019 National Interstate Insurance – 200 rooms
- 2020 National Roadside Vegetation Management Association – 401 rooms
- 2019 Strong Bonds Program Support – 54 rooms
- 2019 Outdoor Summit – 105 rooms
- 2020 Virginia Automobile Dealers Association – 581 rooms

A total of 10 wedding guide requests were fulfilled this month. This is down from 24 requests in December 2017.

### **Significant Sports Activities for the Month:**

Headlock on Hunger/Theraworx Protect Great Smoky Mountain Grapple held its second annual event at the U.S. Cellular Center. In total, 36 teams comprised of approximately 514 wrestlers participated on the Junior and Varsity levels this year. Paid attendance was 1,324 as compared to 234 in 2017. A youth wrestling tournament was also a part of the event. One hundred and eight different wrestling clubs were represented with some from as far away as South Georgia.

### **AAA Initiatives:**

Leann Swims coordinated/hosted two AAA webinars for employees located throughout the southeast. Attending clubs included: AAA Auto Club Group, AAA Michigan, AAA Carolinas, AAA Mid-Atlantic, AAA Wisconsin, AAA Allied Group, AAA Oklahoma, AAA MN-IA, AAA Nebraska, AAA South, and NC Welcome Centers. Webinar partners included Biltmore, Aloft Downtown Hotel, and Asheville Museum of Science.

### **Group Sales Communications:**

December was especially busy with media inquiries, sponsorship and advertising deadlines. Work began on the 2019 Press Sheet for media planning and a new banner for the Wedding market was completed.

### **Media:**

- Staff provided information and images regarding Asheville dining scene for groups for *Cvent's* annual print magazine edition, which will include Asheville in the Food category.
- Staff provided extensive destination information and images for a writer with *Meetings Today* working on a "Drive-to Meetings" feature for the January issue.
- Staff was interviewed by *Small Market Meetings* for a story about CVB marketing assistance for meeting planners for the January issue.

### **Clips:**

- *Groups Today* reached out back in August letting us know that Asheville was voted the "Best Emerging Destination" in the magazine's 2018 Readers' Choice Awards, and staff provided information, quotes and photos for the accompanying editorial. A wonderful spread on Asheville ran in the November/December issue - [digital edition here](#).



### **Mass Communications:**

- An email was sent to 47 attendees of the TNSAE Annual Trade Show encouraging attendees to come to the Asheville booth with an open rate of 34 percent.
- An email was sent to 376 attendees of Holiday Showcase to promote Asheville's booth with an open rate of 21 percent.
- An email was sent to 204 attendees of the AENC Annual Trade Show to promote Asheville's booth with an open rate of 30 percent.
- An invitation to an Asheville hosted client event was sent to an additional 230 Raleigh-area clients. The event had more than 30 attendees.
- A promotional email about Explore Asheville's Asheville 48-Hour Experience sent by *Meetings Today* to a portion of subscribers as a part of the CVB's eMedia Campaign partnership with the publication

### **Convention Servicing Highlights:**

A planning call was conducted with The Culinary Institute of America. Planning began for promotion of VisitNC's 365 Conference that will be held in Asheville in 2020.

## **PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

Joe Phelps transferred from the sales team to fill the Data Specialist position in the public affairs department.

### **Tourism Product Development Efforts:**

Contracts for the six projects awarded funding in the 2018 cycle are in development and Pat has been meeting with the grantees to review contract terms. The grantees are Buncombe County Recreation Services, Center for Craft, Eagle Market Streets Development Corporation, LEAF Community Arts, North Carolina Arboretum Society, and River Front Development Group.

Pat has begun developing a process and timeline for the development of the African-American Heritage Trail and has started working on developing a stakeholder group.

The WNC Nature Center project is complete and funds have been disbursed. The WNC Farmers Market's first disbursement request is in review.

### **Partner Engagement:**

**Explore Asheville CVB 101 Orientation:** The public affairs team hosted the December CVB 101 orientation with five industry partners in attendance, including staff from Asheville Wellness Tours, The Spice & Tea Exchange, Holiday Inn & Suites Arden – Asheville Airport, Leap Frog Tours, The Capital Club of Asheville.

**Explore Asheville CVB Holiday Party:** The annual holiday party was held on Thursday, December 6, at the Renaissance Asheville Hotel, and 251 partners were in attendance. The sixth Annual CVB SuperStar Awards honoring partners for outstanding contributions and support throughout the year were awarded to **John Almageur** of Asheville Art Studio Tours, **Ruth Summers** of the Grove Arcade and member of the TPDF Committee, **June Vengoechea** of Visions of Creation in Black Mountain, and **Kevan Frazier** of Asheville By Foot Walking History Tours and Well Played Café.

The Swing Step Band and the TapSnap Photobooth provided entertainment for the occasion. The party was made possible with generous support from the Renaissance Asheville Hotel, US Foods, Biltmore, The Omni Grove Park Inn, and Asheville Brewing.

The public affairs team supported the marketing team in hosting a Marketing Experiences Focus Group of Lodging Partners on December 18, 2018

### **Upcoming Events:**

**Community Input Session: Wayfinding Signage in the River Arts District:** In an effort to support the expansion of the Wayfinding system to include inter-district signage in the River Arts District, MERJE has been contracted to conduct community input sessions to gather information from stakeholders in the River Arts District which will inform the design process. Two community input forums will be hosted in the morning and afternoon of January 31, 2019.

**New Partners:** Brit created eight new partner accounts in December: Leap Frog Tours, Laurel Mountain Retreat, The Enchanted Forrest, Hotel Arras, The Social, Hazel Twenty, The Spice and Tea Exchange of Asheville, and Margaret and Maxwell. The public affairs team continues to reach out to qualified partners to submit information for a listing as well as service the partners who request listings. Brit maintains regularly scheduled communications to Music Venue partners to ensure they are submitting their events to the Live Music Calendar.

**Projects & Community Outreach:** Pat and Glenn began the process of coordinating orders and installation with Geograph to implement signage maintenance and program updates based on findings from MERJE's assessment.

Pat worked with City of Asheville staff to coordinate an update meeting for downtown tourism partners about the city's upcoming Haywood Street Streetscape Project.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE INITIATIVES**

**Administration:** Coordinated Edwards Equipment to participate in a Building & Safety Training meeting with all staff. Reviewed key cards, security camera system and panic buttons. Arranged for Edwards to install camera system on staff computers that currently did not have them.

Two staff members announced their resignations in December. Justine Tullos, Operations Assistant, announced her last day would be effective December 14. Brit Martin, Public Affairs Specialist, announced her last day would be January 2. Glenn terminated both staff on their respective dates, which included closing out benefits, contacting COBRA, alerting Payroll and Workday in general.

Drew Pollick with Craft HR Solutions continued meeting with Glenn bi-weekly to strengthen the HR Department and continue recruiting the new Marketing Analyst position.

**Wayfinding Signage:** Many hours were spent in December cross-referencing the Geograph Maintenance list with the system recommendations received from MERJE. Glenn and Pat compared Geograph's maintenance list with Merje's 112-page document, page-by-page, reviewing all recommendations for adding and deleting destinations from the system, adding new destinations to existing signs and adding new signs to the system. Ultimately, a table was created with the system changes agreed to by Explore Asheville staff and submitted to Geograph for a quote. On December 17, Greg Freudiger with Geograph arrived to review the determination made by Glenn and Pat and to drive with Glenn for a first-hand review of specific signs in the system.