



WELCOME

October 25, 2023

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.



Board Meeting

Wednesday, October 25, 2023 | 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 September 27, 2023 Meeting Minutes	Brenda Durden
9:10 a.m.	September 2023 Financial Reports	Melissa Moore, Buncombe County Finance Director/BCTDA Fiscal Agent
9:15 a.m.	2023 Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF) Grant Cycle Update a. TPDF Committee's Capital Project Investment Recommendations	Tiffany Thacker
9:45 a.m.	President & CEO Report a. Industry Metrics b. Other Updates	Vic Isley
9:55 a.m.	Strategic Imperatives: Progress Report a. First Quarter Review (July 2023 – September 2023 Highlights)	Vic Isley, Michael Kryzanek, Penelope Whitman, Dodie Stephens
10:20 a.m.	Asheville City Council Update	Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore
10:25 a.m.	Buncombe County Commission Update	Commissioner Terri Wells
10:30 a.m.	Miscellaneous Business	Brenda Durden
10:35 a.m.	Comments from the General Public	Brenda Durden
10:40 a.m.	Adjournment	Brenda Durden

The next joint BCTDA monthly meeting is **Wednesday, November 29, 2023**, 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

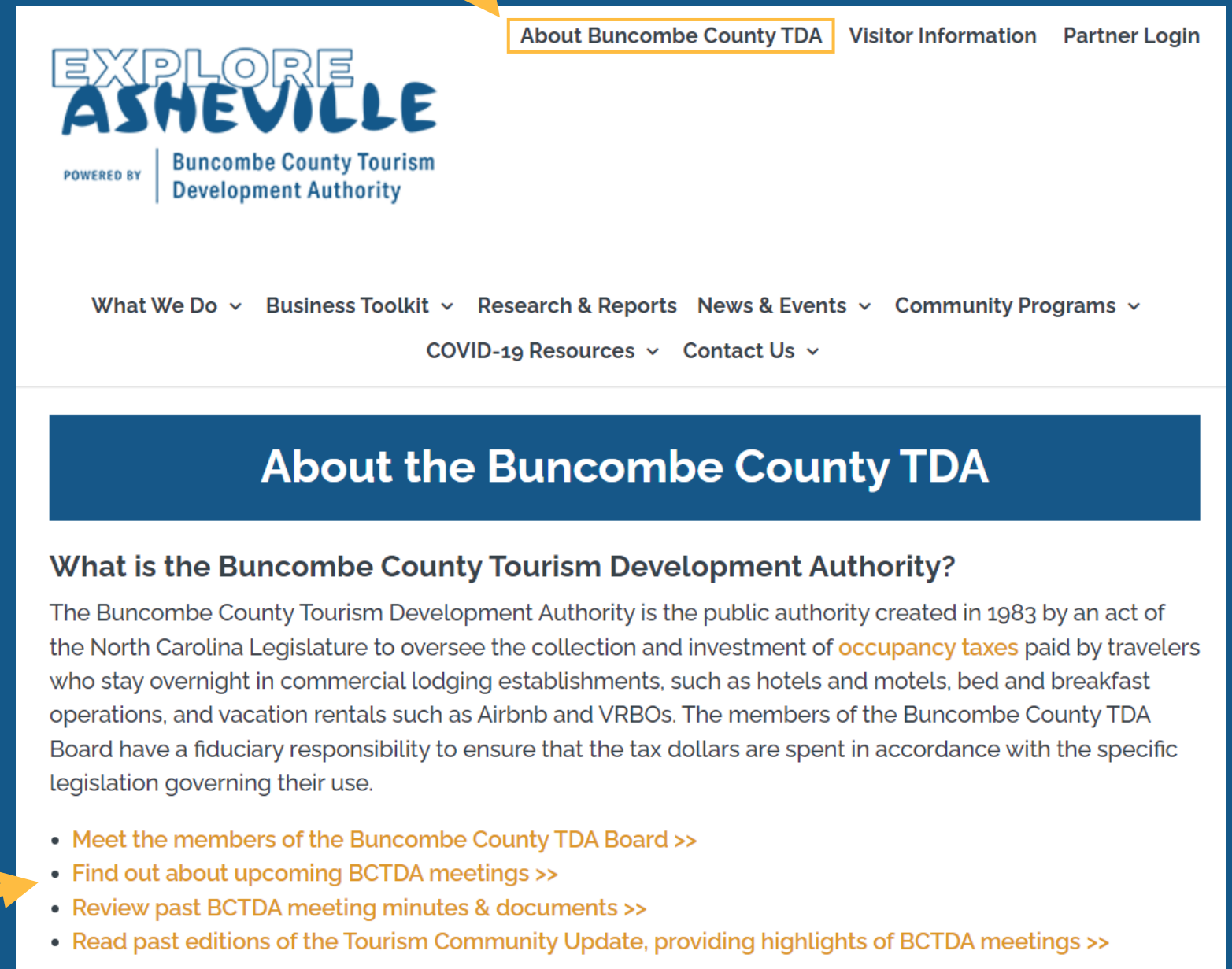
For our viewers watching remotely, documents were emailed to everyone who registered on Zoom by 8:00 this morning.

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 header. The navigation bar includes links for 'About Buncombe County TDA', 'Visitor Information', and 'Partner Login'. Below the header, a secondary navigation bar 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 banner with the text 'About the Buncombe County TDA'. Below this banner, the section 'What is the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority?' is displayed, followed by a paragraph explaining the authority's role. A list of links is provided at the bottom of the section, including '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 >>'. An orange arrow points from the 'Find out about upcoming BCTDA meetings' link in the left sidebar to the corresponding link in the website screenshot.

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**



SEPTEMBER 27 MINUTES

Chair Brenda Durden

Questions/ Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the September 27, 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, September 27, 2023

Present (Voting):	Brenda Durden, Chair; Kathleen Mosher, HP Patel, Michael Lusick, Larry Crosby, Lucious Wilson, Elizabeth Putnam, Scott Patel
Absent (Voting):	Matthew Lehman, Vice Chair
Present (Ex-Officio):	Asheville Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore, Buncombe County Commissioner Terri Wells
Staff:	Vic Isley, Tiffany Thacker, Marla Tambellini, Mike Kryzanek, Julia Simpson, Ashley Greenstein, Josh Jones, Connie Holliday, Tina Porter
BC Finance:	Melissa Moore, Buncombe County/BCTDA Fiscal Agent Matt Evans, Buncombe County
Legal Counsel:	Sabrina Rockoff, McGuire, Wood & Bissette/BCTDA Attorney
In-Person Attendees:	Randy Claybrook, Asheville Bed & Breakfast Association Rick Bell, Asheville Buncombe Hotel Association Jason Burk, Black Mountain-Swannanoa Chamber of Commerce Chris Smith, Asheville Buncombe Regional Sports Commission Meghan Rogers, Asheville Independent Restaurant Association Himanshu Karvir, Virtelle Hospitality John Ellis, Prior TDA Board Member Dave Nutter, Nutter Associates Will Hoffman, Asheville Citizen Times Jason Sanford, Ashevillegas.com Chase Davis, Mountain Xpress
Online Attendees:	Mickey Poandl, Emily Crosby, Kathryn Dewey, Carli Adams, ShaLinda Pruitt, McKenzie Provost, Holly Oakley, Emilie Soffe, Khal Khoury; Explore Asheville Rebecca Lynch, ArtsAVL Timothy Love, Buncombe County Lacy Cross, Movement Bank Megan Shields, MMGY Global Madison Davis, Asheville Buncombe Regional Sports Commission Jaime Matthews, City of Asheville Tina Kinsey, Asheville Regional Airport Jim Muth, TPDF Committee Chris Hardy, Jack Benton; Parks Hospitality Group Lydia Carrington, Brucemont Communications Scott Kerchner, Element Asheville Downtown Tanya Frisch, Virtelle Hospitality Ben Williamson, Tourism Taxes for Affordable Housing Coalition Erin Miller, LocalIQ Grey Hallock, WLOS Andrew Jones, Keith Campbell; Asheville Watchdog





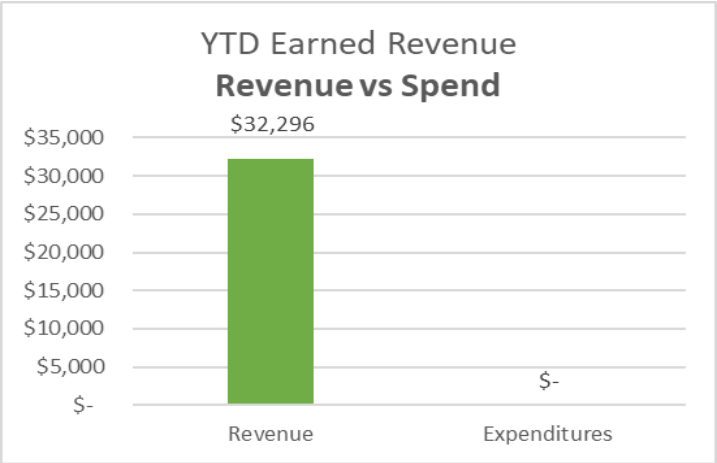
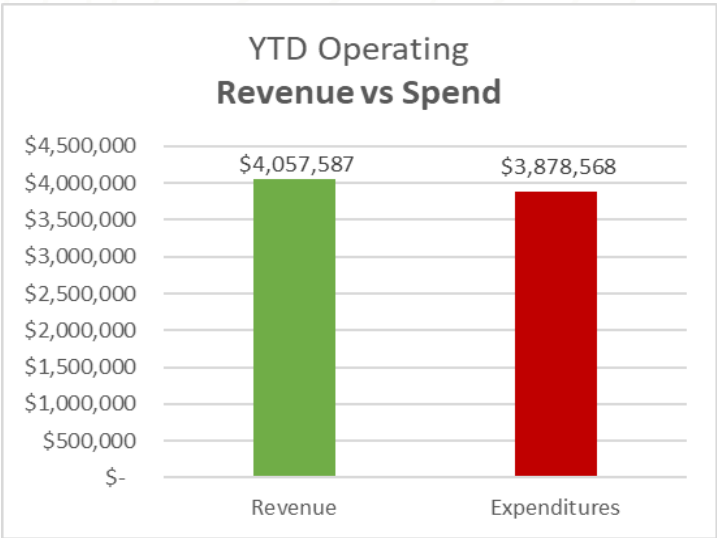
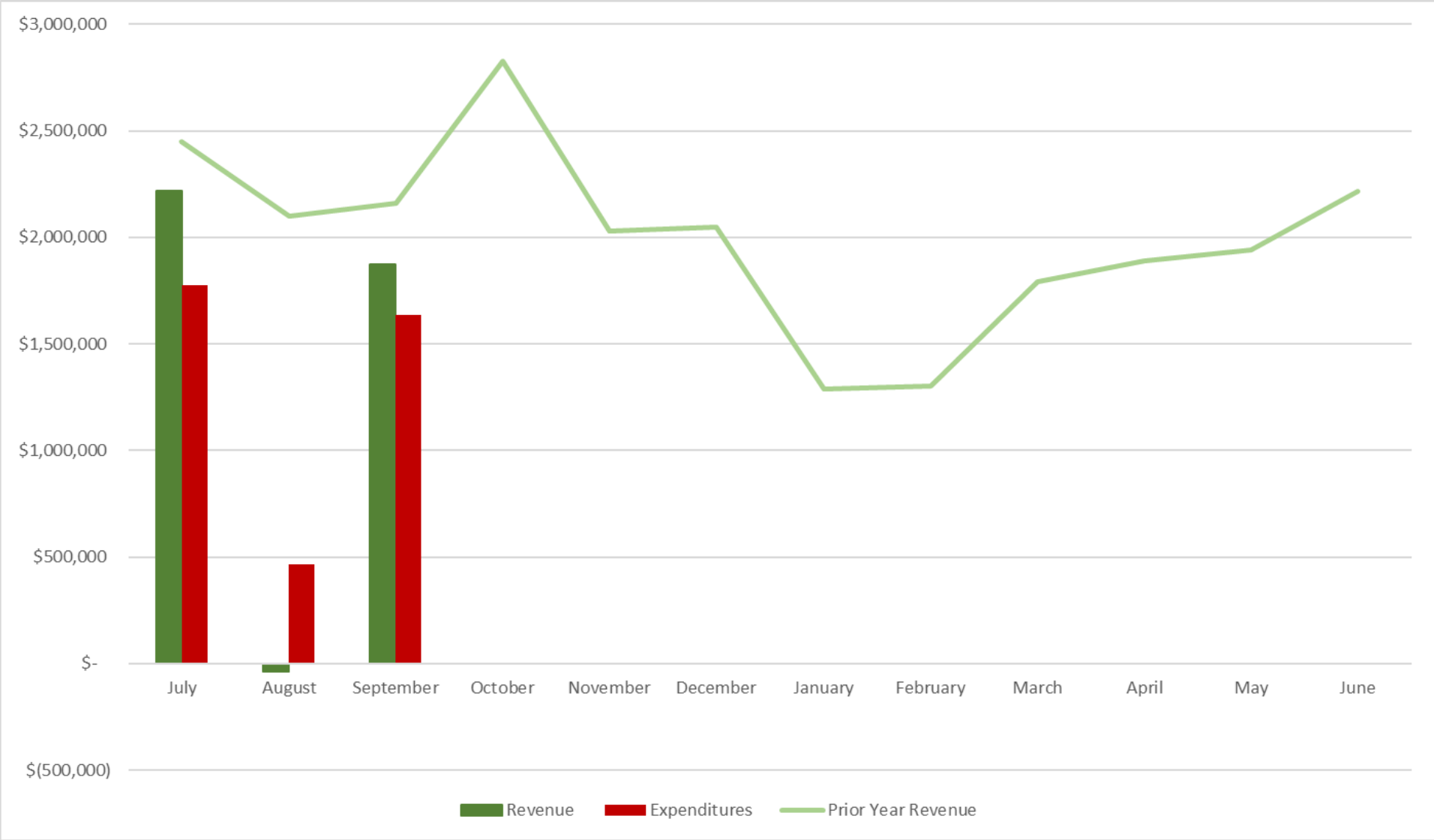
FINANCIAL UPDATES

Melissa Moore
Buncombe County | Finance Director
BCTDA | Fiscal Agent

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POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism
Development Authority

OPERATING AND EARNED REVENUE FUNDS

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



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

OPERATING AND EARNED REVENUE FUNDS

Monthly Summary of Activities, September 2023

Operating Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 27,500,000	\$ 1,874,716	\$ 4,057,587	15%
Total expenditures		\$ 1,636,451	\$ 3,878,568	14%

Earned Revenue Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 250,000	\$ 15,118	\$ 32,296	13%
Total expenditures		\$ -	\$ -	0%

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



PROJECT FUNDS: TPDF AND LIFT FUNDS

Monthly Summary of Activities, September 2023

Tourism Product Development Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Life to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 26,483,770	\$ 696,584	\$ 35,161,239	>100%
Total expenditures		\$ 56,278	\$ 2,391,920	9%
Active projects		16		
Funding available for future grants		\$ 8,677,469		

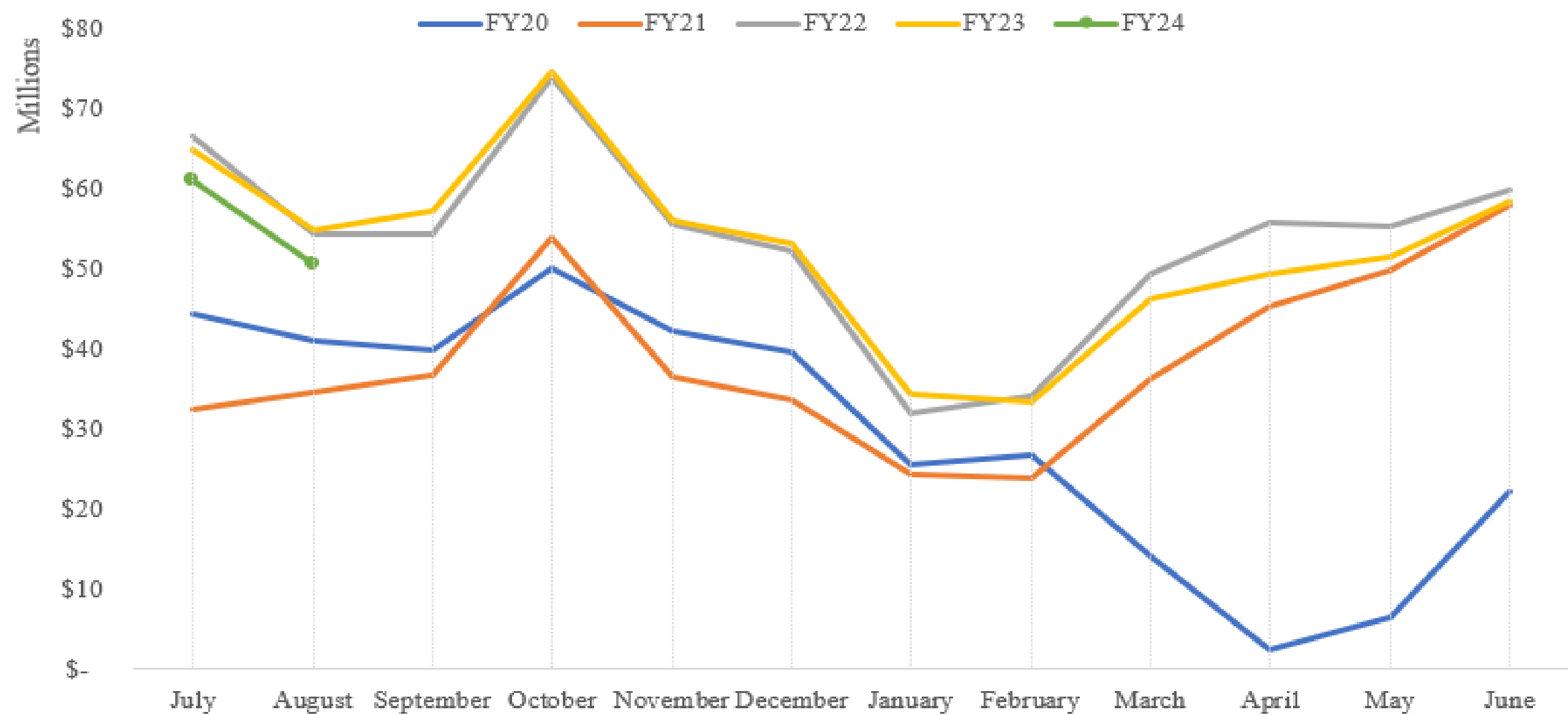
Legacy Investment From Tourism Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Life to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 339,560	\$ 461,180	\$ 7,174,083	>100%
Total expenditures		\$ 3	\$ 98,621	29%
Active projects		0		
Funding available for future grants		\$ 6,834,523		

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



LODGING SALES

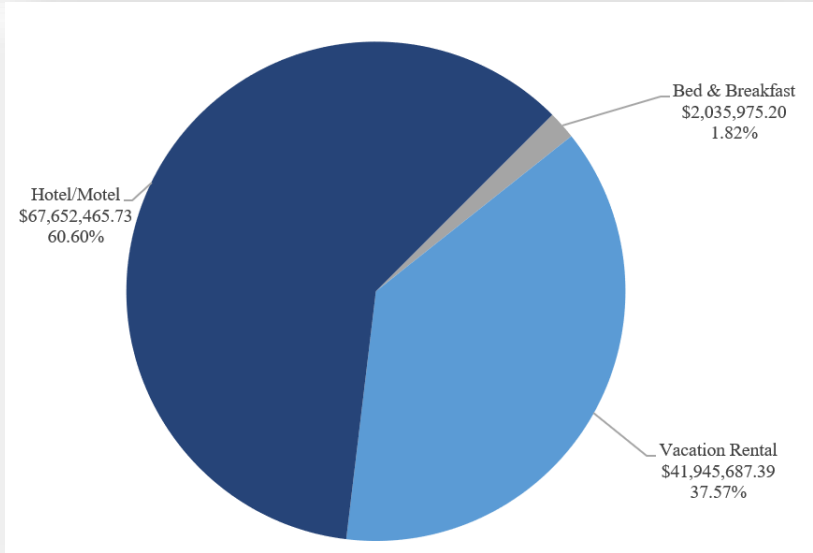
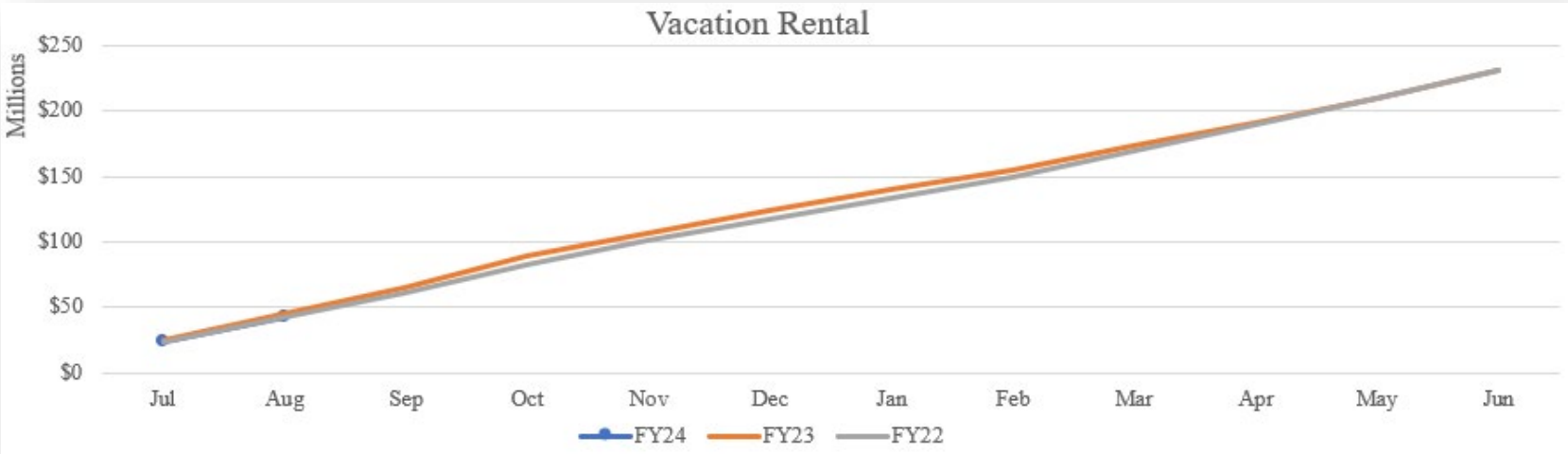
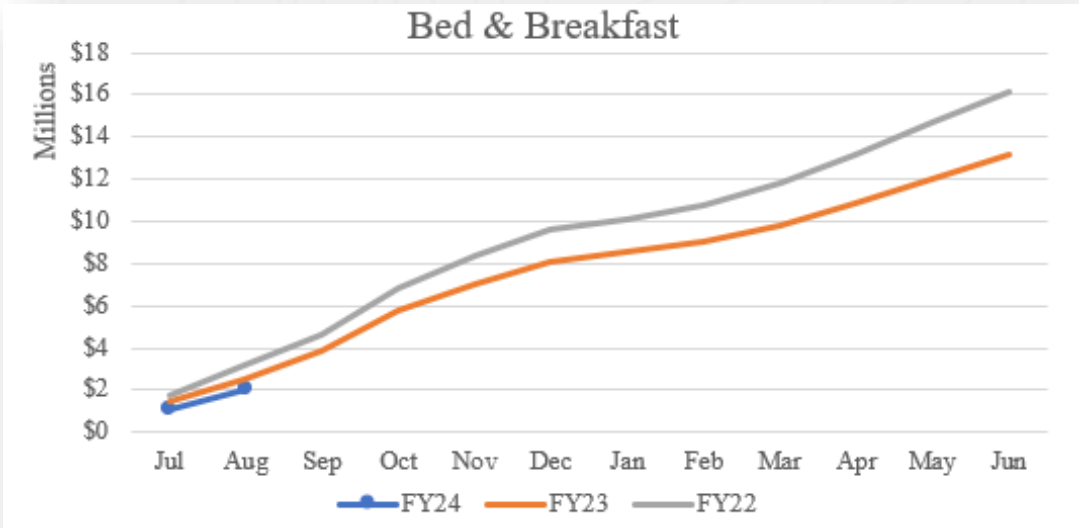
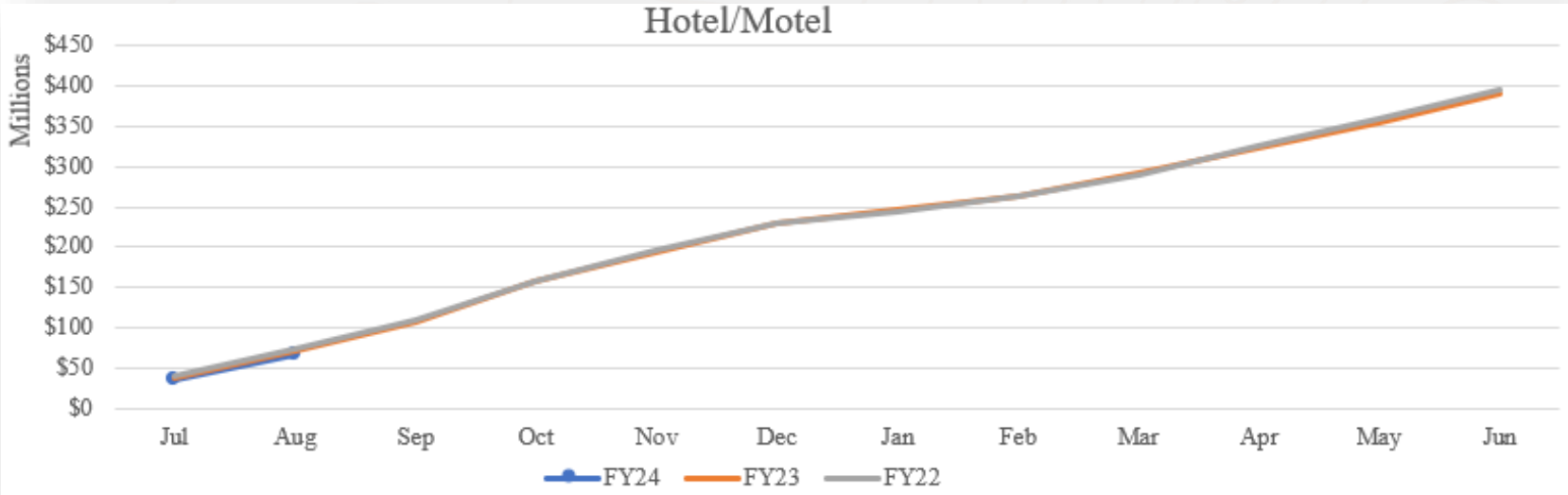
Shown by Month of Sales, Year-to-Date (5 years), September 2023



For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 8

LODGING SALES

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



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

SEPTEMBER 2023 FINANCIAL REPORTS

Chair Brenda Durden

Questions/Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the September 2023 Financial Reports as presented.

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote





TPDF GRANT CYCLE

INVESTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Tiffany Thacker
Explore Asheville | Director of Grants

TPDF 2023 GRANT CYCLE

Summary

Available Funding: \$7,980,884

Phase I

- Applications opened on April 12, 2023 and closed on May 17, 2023
- 10 applications were received with a combined total request of \$18,432,500

Phase II

- 7 applications advanced to Phase II of the application process
- 6 applications submitted Phase II applications with a combined total request of \$18,004,302
- One applicant that advanced to Phase II, withdrew their project for consideration before submitting a completed Phase II application

TPDF COMMITTEE

Nine volunteer members reviewed applications/presentations, conducted site visits, and made recommendations

Jim Muth, Chair

Muth Management Inc. Consulting
Tourism Appointment

Ken Stamps, Vice Chair

Navitat Canopy Adventures & Adventure Pisgah
Lodging & Tourism Appointment

Jay Curwen

Nantahala Outdoor Center
Tourism Appointment

Gary Froeba

The Omni Grove Park Inn
Lodging Appointment

Brenda Durden | Matthew Lehman

Asheville Hotel Group | Grand Bohemian Hotel
Lodging Appointment & BCTDA Liaisons

Scott Kerchner

Element Asheville Downtown
Lodging Appointment

Fielding Lowe

Park National Bank
Finance Appointment

David McCartney

Hotel Arras
Lodging Appointment

Stephanie Moore

Center for Craft
Tourism Appointment

BUNCOMBE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION

Enka Recreation Destination - Phase II

- This project includes the following components:
 - Turfing and lighting of Fields 3, 4, 5; and turfing only of Field 9
 - New inclusive and ADA-accessible playground
 - Replacement of outdated picnic shelter with a new lighted structure that will better serve the park for tournament gatherings and family events
 - Renovation of facilities that will include restrooms, contact/first aid station, park ranger office, and storage area.
- Buncombe County Sports Park currently attracts nearly 850,000 guests per year, which is expected to increase to 1.18 million by Year 3
- Project Start Date - January 2025 | Project Completion Date - June 2027
- Total Project Budget: \$21,430,830



Requested: \$6,000,000

Investment Recommendation: \$4,054,415



BUNCOMBE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION

Enka Recreation Destination Long-Term Plan

Phase II

1



4

2



3



Completed

Future Phase:
Multi-Use Sport Court

CITY OF ASHEVILLE

Harrah's Cherokee Center - Asheville Upgrades

This project includes improvements to the Harrah's Cherokee Center – Asheville facility to facilitate both the retention and growth of significant annual events and the types of concerts, performing arts and sporting events that the venue is able to solicit on the national and regional levels.

The project components include:

- New multi-use sport court
- Rigging enhancements
- Audio/visual and network improvements
- Concert & facility lighting upgrades
- Harrah's Cherokee Center – Asheville currently attracts 168,000 guests annually, with an expected increase to 222,000 by Year 3
- Project Start Date - June 2023; Project Completion Date - May 2025
- Total Project Budget: \$4,751,829

Requested: \$2,000,000

Investment Recommendation: \$1,586,000



WESTERN NC AGRICULTURAL CENTER

Equine Facility Modernization

- Project includes the addition of a 32,500-square-foot outdoor covered arena to meet the growing demand and compliance requirements for equestrian events in North Carolina.
- The arena will include restrooms, showers, a storage area, and rooms for event organizers, along with outdoor fans, PA system, and LED lighting to meet the needs of events.
- Currently attracts over 350,000 guests per year, with over 80% of those guests staying overnight. With an upgraded facility, the Center will be in a more competitive position to attract additional events throughout the year, resulting in significantly more overnight lodging demand.
- The Ag Center currently attracts 350,000 guests annually, with an expected increase of an additional 100,000 guests per year by Year 3.
- Project Start Date - June 2024; Project Completion Date - January 2026
- Total Project Budget: \$1,959,637

Requested: \$500,000

Investment Recommendation: \$500,000



TPDF 2023 GRANT CYCLE

Estimated Project Timelines for Recommended Investments

2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
<div>Harrah's Cherokee Center - Asheville Upgrades June 2023 – May 2025</div>				
<div>Equine Facility Modernization June 2024 – January 2026</div>				
<div>Enka Recreation Destination - Phase II January 2025 – June 2027</div>				



TPDF 2023 GRANT CYCLE

Investment Recommendations

Applicant	Project	Amount Requested	Investment Recommendation
Buncombe County Parks & Recreation	Enka Recreation Destination - Phase II	\$6,000,000	\$4,054,415
City of Asheville	Harrah's Cherokee Center - Asheville Upgrades	\$2,000,000	\$1,586,000
Western NC Agricultural Center	Equine Facility Modernization	\$500,000	\$500,000
TOTAL		\$8,500,000	\$6,140,415



TPDF CAPITAL PROJECT INVESTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Chair Brenda Durden

Questions/Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the grant investment funding for each project as recommended by the Product Development Committee.

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote





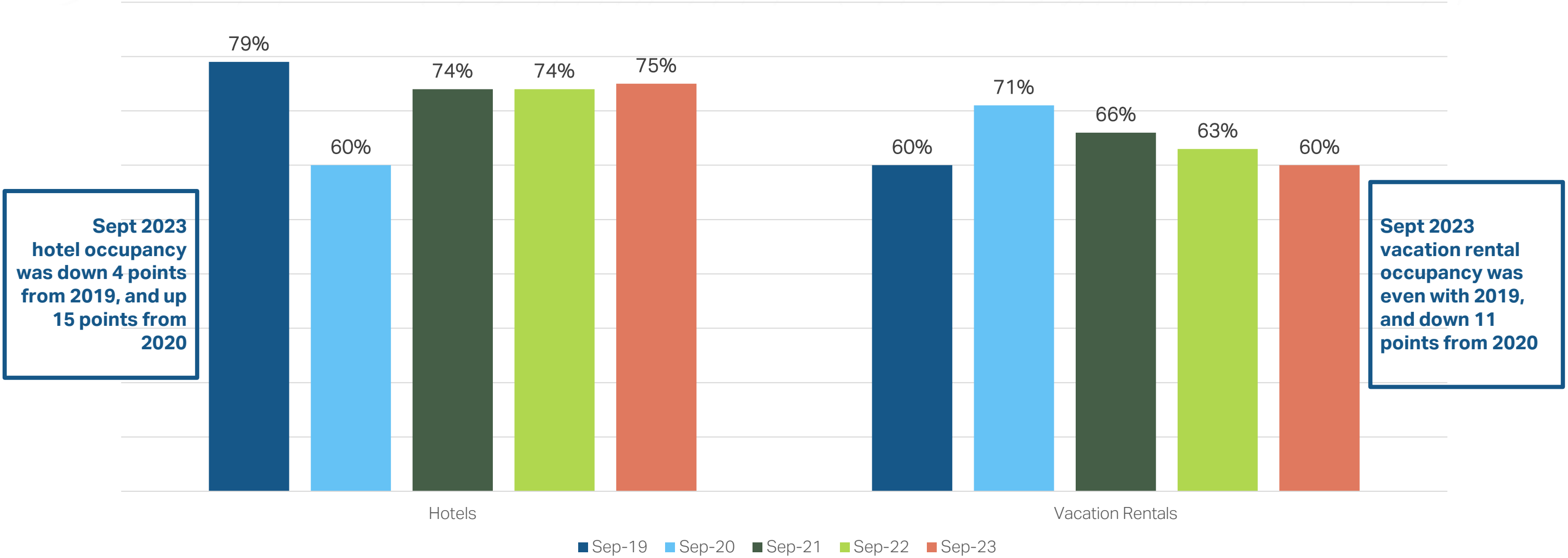
PRESIDENT & CEO REPORT

Vic Isley

Explore Asheville | President & CEO

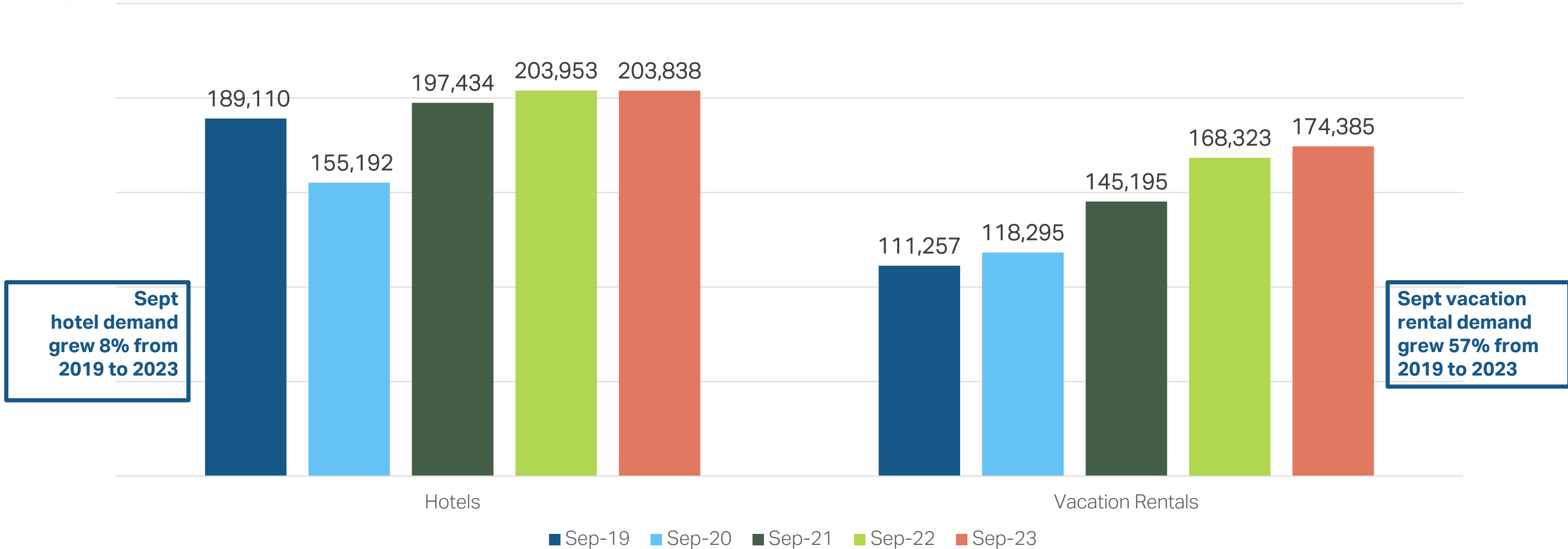
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SEPTEMBER LODGING OCCUPANCY



Source: Smith Travel Research, AirDNA

SEPTEMBER LODGING DEMAND



Source: Smith Travel Research, AirDNA

LOCAL FESTIVALS & CULTURAL EVENTS

Supported by Explore Asheville and the BCTDA

October Events

- Beer City Comic Con
- Krafthaus
- A-B Tech Foundation's Autumn in Asheville
- Lovely Asheville Fall Festival
- LEAF Fall Festival

November Events

- Asheville Design Weekend
- Asheville Symphony's ALT ASO Series
- Winter Lights at The North Carolina Arboretum
- Asheville Holiday Parade

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.

We opened applications for the 2024 grant program on Tuesday, September 26. **REMINDER: The deadline for application submissions is this Friday, October 27, 2023.**

Event sponsorships are now 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

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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

JULY 2023 – SEPTEMBER 2023



MARKETING, CONTENT, & PR

Q1 INITIATIVES

Dodie Stephens
Vice President of Marketing

BLACK MOUNTAIN FEATURE

Filmed new video and updated landing page

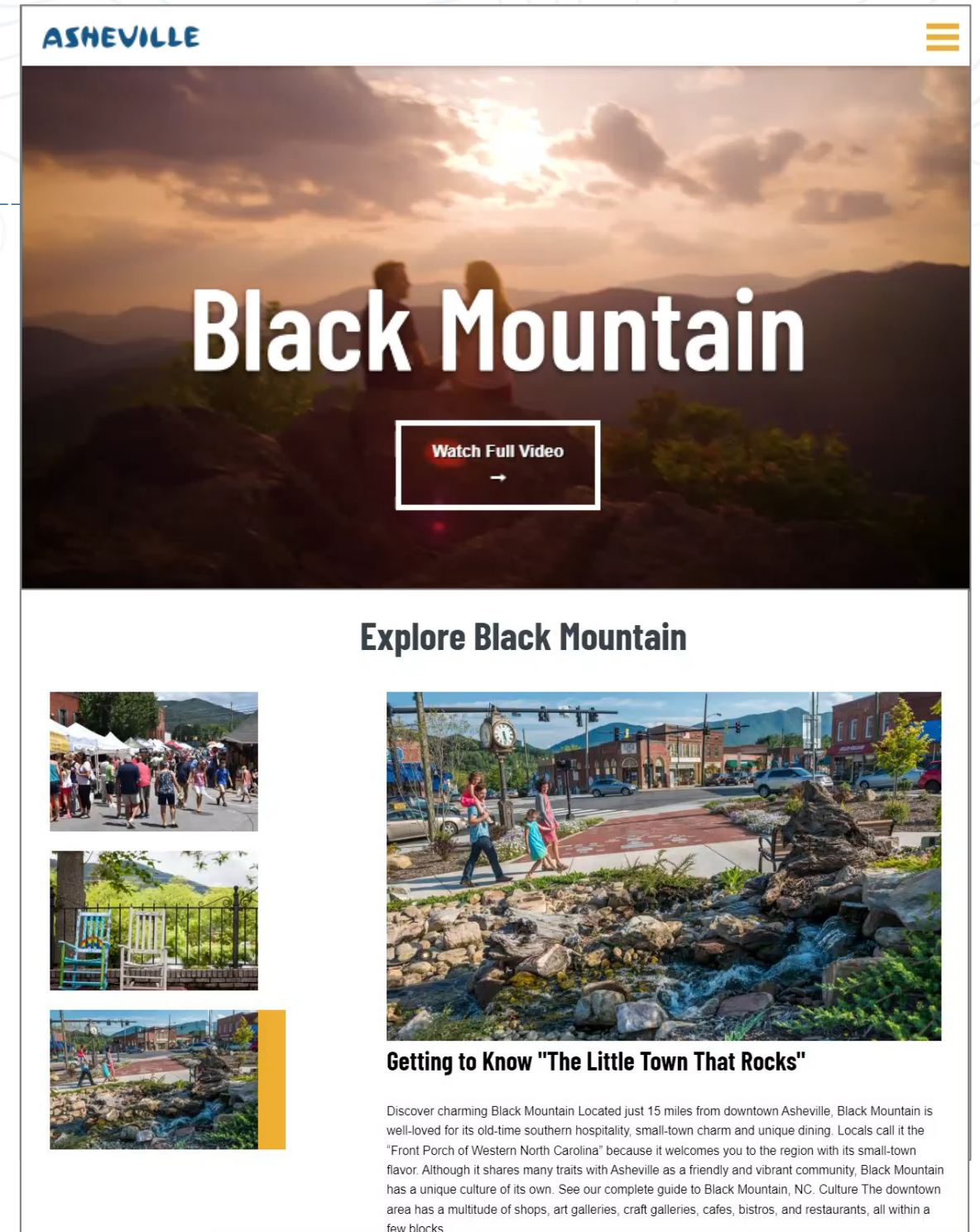
Spotlighted Black Mountain as part of our neighborhood and nearby town content initiative, which aims to disperse visitors and spending throughout the county

Background:

- First refresh for Black Mountain landing page since 2019
- Local talent Fiasco Pictures produced quality video and photos assets
- Interest in Black Mountain is high; in 2022, Black Mountain content generated nearly 210k page views on ExploreAsheville.com
 - Our “Top 10 Things to Do in Black Mountain, NC” blog post was our second most viewed blog post in 2022 with 85k page views
 - Our “Experience Black Mountain, NC” video on YouTube was our most watched video in 2022 with 102k views

Next steps:

- Promoting Black Mountain on social / newsletter / web
- Recruiting additional partners in Black Mountain area
- Monitoring engagement through the campaign

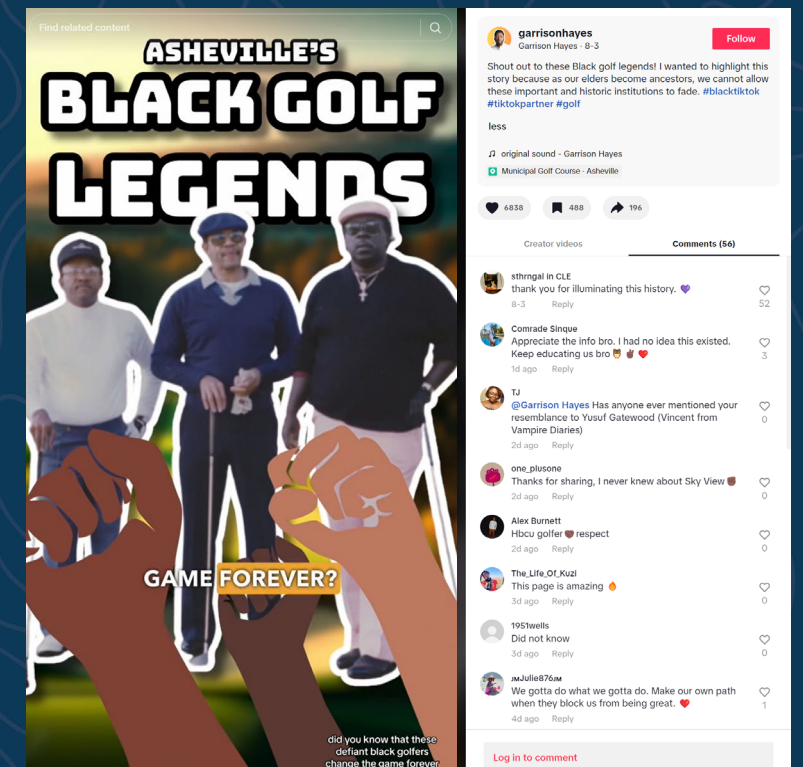


Above: ExploreAsheville.com/BlackMountain

SKYVIEW GOLF TOURNAMENT SPONSORSHIP

Honored the legacy and garnered engagement from a new generation

- Invested significant resources to promote Skyview, the nation's oldest Black golf tournament
- Integrated marketing and PR campaign resulted in national media placements, including **Golf Digest** and **Black Wall Street Times**
- Leveraged sponsor benefit securing talent from MTV's Love & Hip Hop Atlanta (a major feeder market) to play on Explore Asheville's foursome team
 - Talent pre-promoted Skyview for a total estimated reach of 57M through 32 posts with combined average engagement of 307K
- Engaged BIPOC content creators **Kimberly Barnes** and **Garrison Hayes** to create social media video posts for deeper storytelling on Black history to their 502K combined followers
- Advertised through African American Golfer's Digest, TravelDesk and Black-owned media
- Provided event support and sponsorship, including staffing and welcome bags
- **RESULTS:** All integrated efforts, including PR and social, support a collective reach of **73 Million**



Above: Love & Hip Hop Atlanta stars with Matthew Bacoate (top);
TikTok post by influencer Garrison Hayes @garrison (bottom)

CULTURAL & PERFORMING ARTS RECOVERY MARKETING

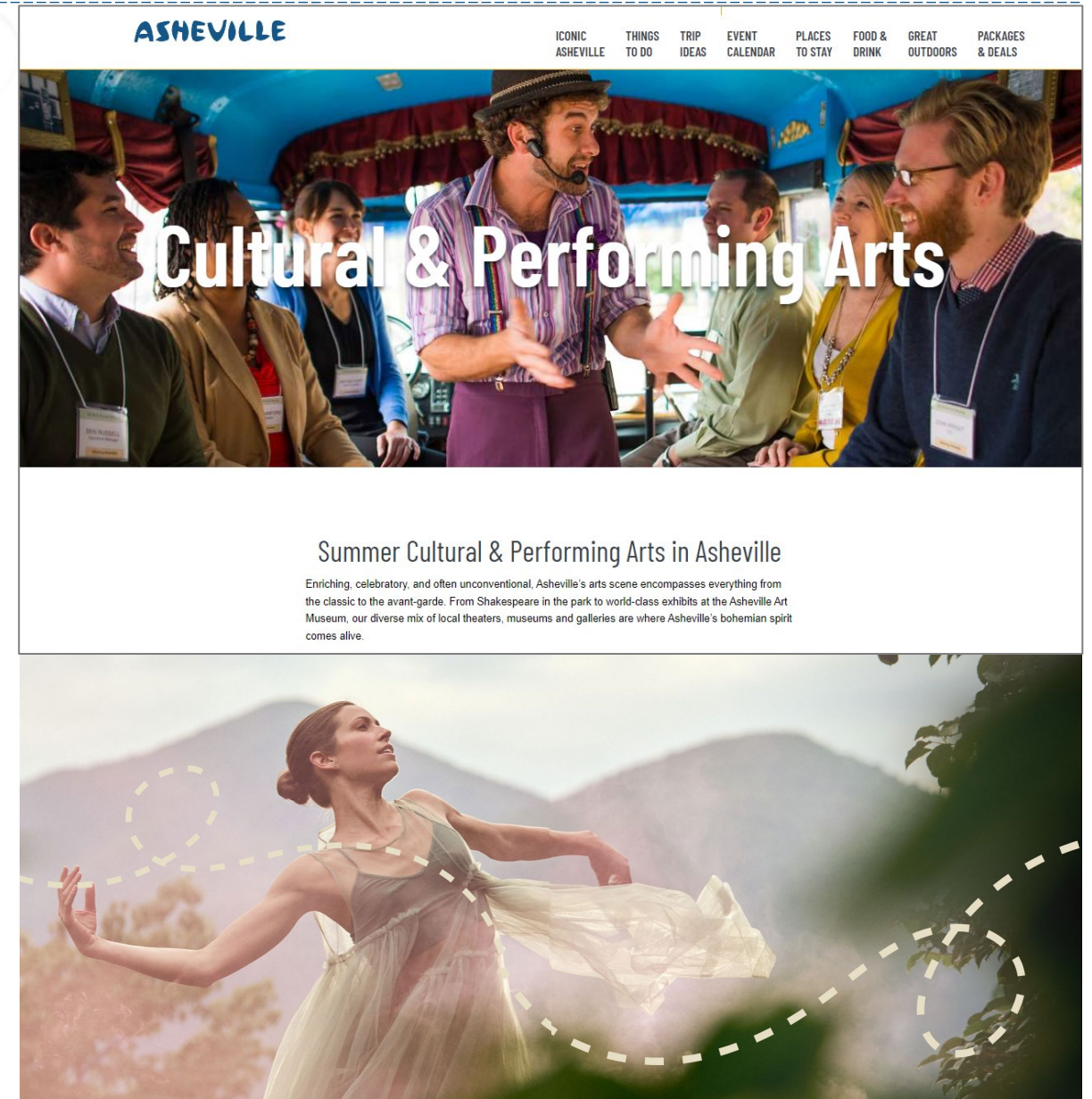
Piloted program to spotlight arts organizations and experiences

Surveyed partners to determine alignment of needs; top priority was marketing assistance for audience development

- Encouraged partners to update event information and image assets
- Created new Summer Cultural & Performing Arts landing page on ExploreAsheville.com
- Social media carousel ads
- Organic social posts & editorial content
- Email newsletters and outreach
- Paid media targeted behavioral and interest characteristics across 20 feeder markets

Landing Page Metrics (June 1 – Oct 23)

- Sessions: 25,477
- Engaged Session: 14,525
- Users: 18,818
- Engagement Rate: 57.01%



Above: ExploreAsheville.com/Summer-Cultural-Performing-Arts

CHAMPIONS OF CONSERVATION

Partnered with Garden & Gun on event to honor leaders and innovators in sustainability



Above: 2023 Champions of Conservation panel discussion at Hickory Nut Gap Farm

- Co-hosted G&G's Champions of Conservation at Hickory Nut Gap Farm in Fairview, NC
- Invited guests to the Blue Ridge Mountains for a reception featuring fresh seasonal libations and thought-provoking panel discussion led by G&G editor in chief David DiBenedetto
- Positioned as a destination that values conservation; Asheville's JJ Apodaca and Chris Smith recognized nationally
- 2023 Champions of Conservation Panelists
 - Dr. Mike Chamberlin | professor of wildlife ecology and management, University of Georgia
 - Dr. Jennie Stephens | chief executive officer, Center for Heirs' Property Preservation
 - Dr. Jacqueline Echols | president, South River Watershed Alliance
 - Mitzi Reed | invasive species coordinator, Native American Fish & Wildlife Society
 - JJ Apodaca | director, Amphibian and Reptile Conservancy
 - Julie Moore | program leader, Venus Flytrap Champion
 - Chris Smith | founder, Utopian Seed Project

Partnership results in 244M impressions via:

- In-Magazine section in October/November 2023
- Social Media on @gardenandgun
- G & G Newsletter distribution
- Custom Event + Promotion
- National Press Outreach

AMPED UP TV ADVERTISING

Focused on welcoming & why go now messaging in new content

New :60, :30 and :15 second spots produced with local talent

- Featured original music by Steep Canyon Rangers with voiceover by Graham Sharp (a member of Steep Canyon Rangers)
- Included outdoor, culinary, wellness, attractions and performing arts sectors
- Updated the :15s version to include "now is the time" messaging to drive immediate booking
- Target markets: Raleigh, Atlanta, Nashville, Cincinnati, Washington D.C. and Tampa
- TV spots resulted in **approximately 62 million impressions**



Above: Behind-the-scenes footage from commercial filming

NOTEWORTHY NEWS CLIPS

Pitched stories that shine a spotlight on Asheville

71M

Earned Media Reach

hospitalitydesign

Asheville Emerges as a New City To Watch



USA TODAY

DESTINATIONS

Family Tr

9 family vacation ideas for families with neurodivergent kids

8. Small cities and towns

Big cities are fun for some families, but neurodivergent kids may find them overwhelming. Instead, check out small towns with plenty to offer without much hustle and bustle. I recommend Asheville, North Carolina, for a smaller-scale city with a slower pace that still offers various activities. Hiking along the [Blue Ridge Parkway](#), visiting a [pinball museum](#), going on an [Asheville Wellness Tour](#) with a guide trained in working with neurodiverse people, and touring the [Citizen Vinyl](#) record factory are all good options.

The New York Times

5 Hotels Where Fall Takes Center Stage

Setting is everything when it comes to autumn getaways, and these hotels will put you in the right place at the right time.

16

Significant CVB placements

61

CVB Placements

\$131K

Publicity Value

Forbes



The 8 Best Hotels In Asheville, North Carolina



TRAVEL+LEISURE

You Can Explore One of the Best Food Cities in the U.S. Like a Local at This New Boutique Hotel

Blind Tiger Asheville, Lark Hotels' newest outpost, just opened in June with 14 rooms in the city's Chestnut Hill neighborhood.
By Dobrina Zhekova | Published on August 29, 2023

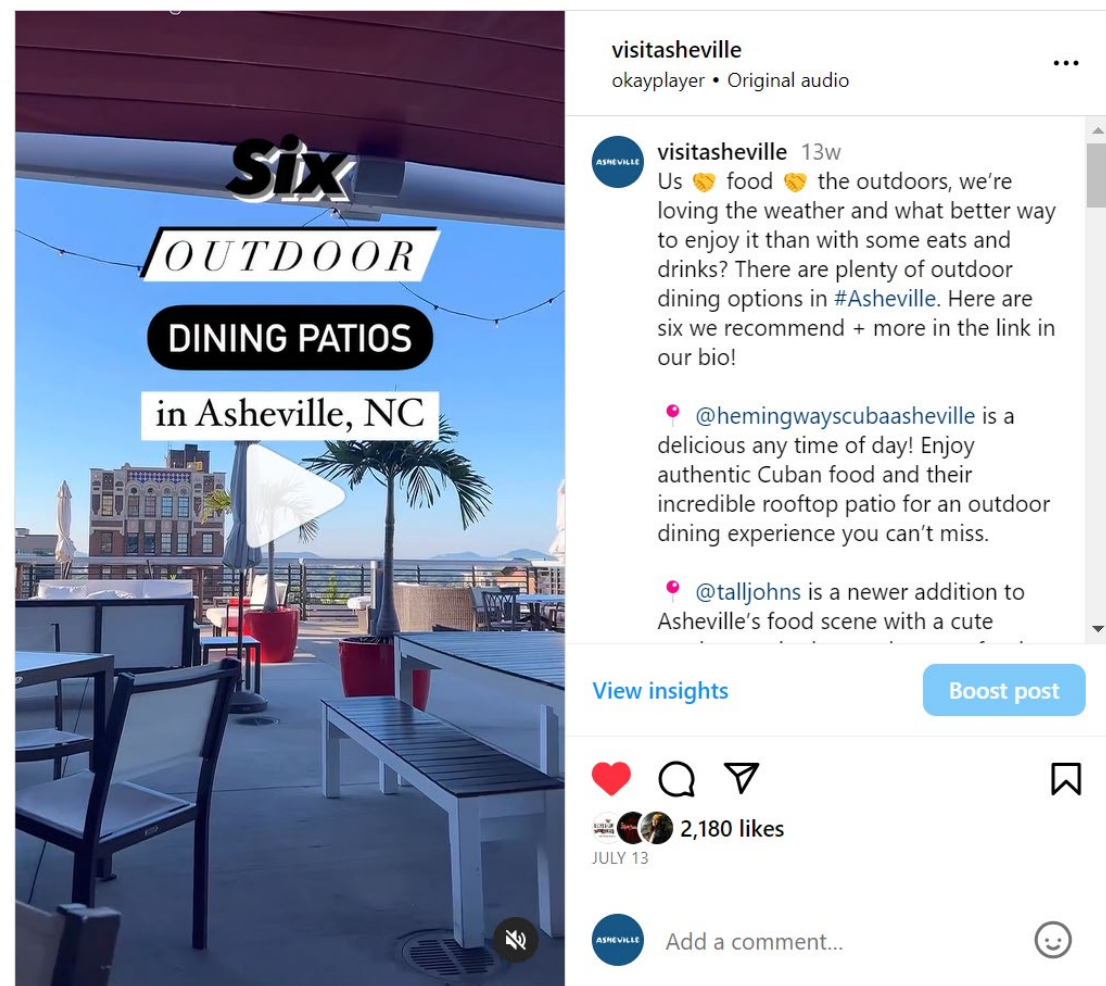


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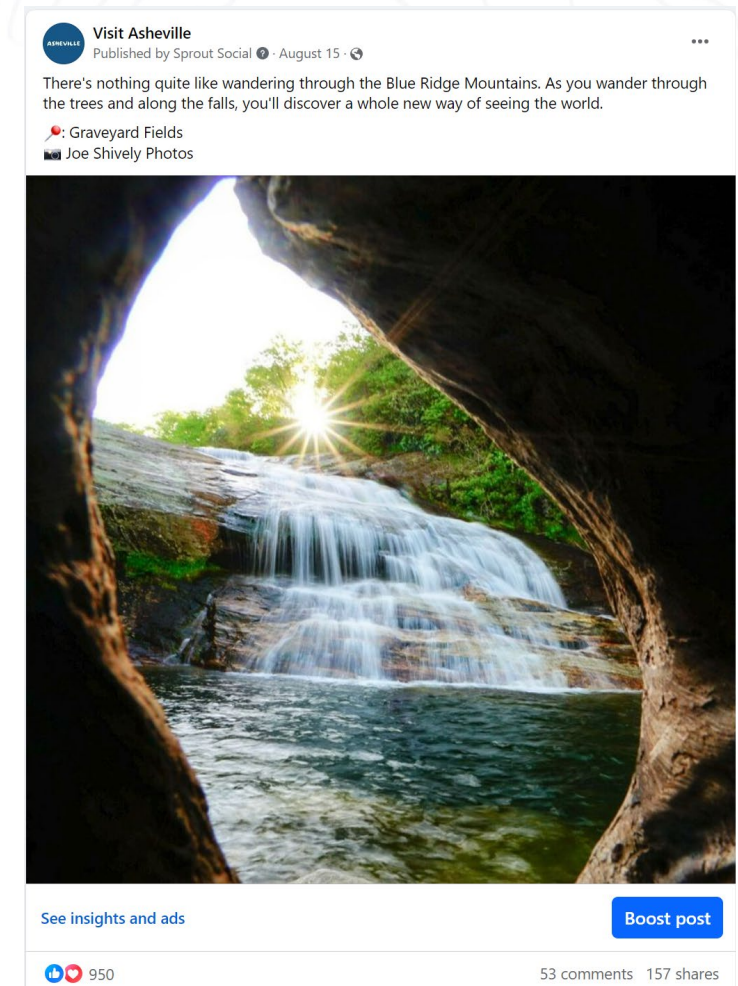
Hosted Media

TOP PERFORMING POSTS

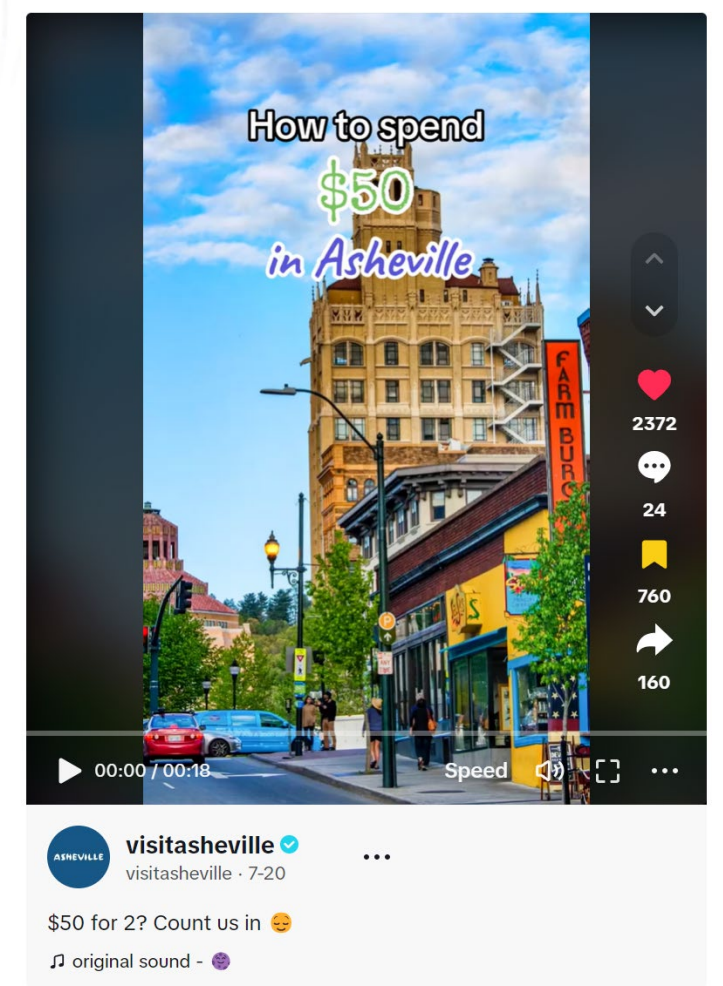
Most engaging content and format varies by channel



INSTAGRAM: FOOD & VIEWS
6 outdoor dining patios in Asheville (Reel)
4,381 Engagements



FACEBOOK: NATURE & BEAUTY
Graveyard Fields (Photo)
1,864 Engagements



TIKTOK: VALUE
A Day in Asheville for \$50 (Reel)
2,920 Engagements

Engagements = Likes, Comments, Saves, Shares



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT Q1 INITIATIVES

Michael Kryzanek
Vice President Business Development

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ASHEVILLE
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Development Authority

TRADE SHOW EXHIBITING

Recruited group and event business to our community

- Represented Asheville and Buncombe County at 11 trade shows and conferences from July – September
- Made efforts to present Asheville's creative community and resources; gave lodging partners opportunities to participate in prospecting efforts

American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) Annual Meeting & Expo

- ASAE was the largest trade show attended in Q1
- Total attendance of 5,000 with over 2,800 buyers/association meeting planners
- Secured five solid leads and more are expected to materialize in coming months from the 340 connections made at the booth
- Five industry partners participated, including the Renaissance, The Foundry Hotel, The Restoration Hotel, Doubletree and Embassy Suites, and Biltmore Farms Hotels
- Served mocktails with Devils Foot sodas in Asheville-branded Pirani souvenir cups; gave away ENO bags

FEATURED LOCAL/SUSTAINABLE BRANDS AT ASAE BOOTH



Above: Explore Asheville staff and partners at ASAE 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 August, hosted 20 qualified meeting planners from North America
- Showcased potential venues and attendee experiences:
 - **TUESDAY** - Welcome reception at The Restoration, downtown historical walking tour, and dinner at Curate
 - **WEDNESDAY** - Sunrise hike at Craggy, tours of area hotel properties, introduction to and activities in the River Arts District, cocktail preparation class at The Foundry Hotel, and evening downtown dine-around
 - **THURSDAY** - Tour, spa experience or golf at the Omni Grove Park inn, lunch and afternoon tour/activities at Biltmore Estate, and closing dinner at Haiku
- Upcoming fams in November and March



Above: August 48-Hour FAM closing dinner at Haiku

EXPEDITION ASHEVILLE

Supported air route development efforts with the airport authority

- Hosted 10 airline representatives and guests from American, Allegiant, Breeze and Southwest in July
- Provided destination exposure and data analysis to make the case for additional air service and new routes

AIRLINES THAT ATTENDED EXPEDITION ASHEVILLE



ASHEVILLE BUSINESS EVENTS COUNCIL (ABEC)

Engaging local stakeholders for networking and lead generation

- Leveraging business travel and events as the front porch of traditional economic development
- Partnering with Economic Development Coalition and local stakeholders, we are identifying conferences and events in targeted business sectors to bring to Asheville to help diversify our economy

**ADVANCED
MANUFACTURING**

LIFE SCIENCES

**CLIMATE
TECHNOLOGY**

**OUTDOOR
PRODUCTS &
INDUSTRIES**

TECHNOLOGY

- Hosting meetings, conferences, and events associated with these business sectors can strengthen industry-specific supplier/customer relationships for local businesses, attract EDC prospects, and provide exposure for Asheville and Buncombe County to business decision makers
- ABEC members, representing target sectors, are asked to provide access and/or referrals to organizations, associations, and boards with business potential for Asheville in exchange for access to data/statistics and networking/promotional opportunities

CUSTOM DIGITAL PROPOSALS

Creating market-specific proposals for key vertical markets

Applications

- Sales Presentations
- Custom Bid/Proposal Presentations

Benefits

- Consistent and positive brand experience
- Effective and quick presentation creation
- Efficient prospecting and accelerated sales efforts
- Real-time analytics and email notifications

And More

- Digideck Live
- Custom business sector and market segment presentations



Above: Sample DIGIDECK proposal

ONLINE GIFT BAG GUIDE

Showcasing local products for purchase

- Developed guide for meeting and event planners to access Buncombe County businesses and their unique goods
- 24 businesses are currently providing items for meeting or wedding attendees; the goal is to curate more local products
- Gift categories include Local Wares, Artisan Food & Beverage, Outdoors & Wellness
- Included option for gift bag assembly and delivery services



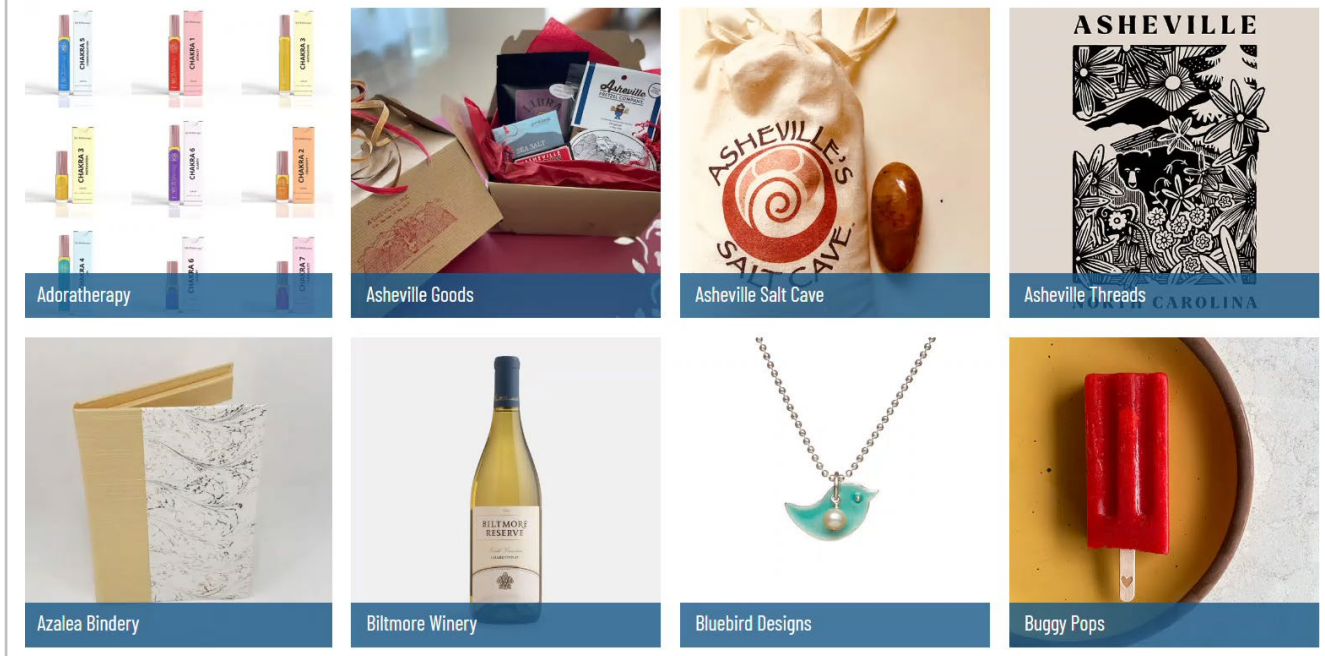
EVENTSbyKIERSA

Asheville's Welcome Bag Gift Guide

Looking for the perfect meeting attendee gift idea? We've got your shopping covered!

Purchase unique gifts from Asheville's Welcome Bag Gift Guide. Featuring products from local businesses, our Gift Guide allows you to shop one-of-a-kind gifts from some of Asheville's top creatives, makers and businesses. From wellness to specialty food and beverages, Asheville's online gift guide features treasures from across Western North Carolina.

Need help putting your Welcome Bags together? Check out [these local vendors who offer full service bag assembly](#).



Above: ExploreAsheville.com/meeting-planners/meeting-planner-gift-guide

Q1 GROUP & EVENT DEVELOPMENT

Benefitted businesses in our community

116

GROUPS/EVENTS
OCCURRED
IN OUR COMMUNITY



\$13.4M in direct spending
16,848 room nights

107

GROUPS/EVENTS
BOOKED
FOR FUTURE VISITS



\$11.5M in direct spending
20,441 room nights

272

LEADS GENERATED
FOR POTENTIAL
GROUPS/EVENTS



8.4% increase over Q1 FY23
75,323 room nights



PARTNERSHIP & DESTINATION MANAGEMENT Q1 INITIATIVES

Penelope Whitman

Vice President of Partnership & Destination Management

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SUMMER SOCIAL

Connected partners to partners at the Summer Social

- Convened 270+ community partners for an evening of networking and engagement at The Restoration Hotel
- Gathered more than \$400 worth of art supplies for Buncombe County elementary and middle schools through the generous donations made by hospitality partners

FEATURED PARTNERS

- Partners enjoyed activations, live music, local food and drinks, and an afterparty in The Draftsman Bar + Lounge.
- Talented event vendors included: Brian Konutko Photography, WilderKin Beekeeping, Buggy Pops, and DJ Captain EZ



Above: Photos of partners and staff at Summer Social event

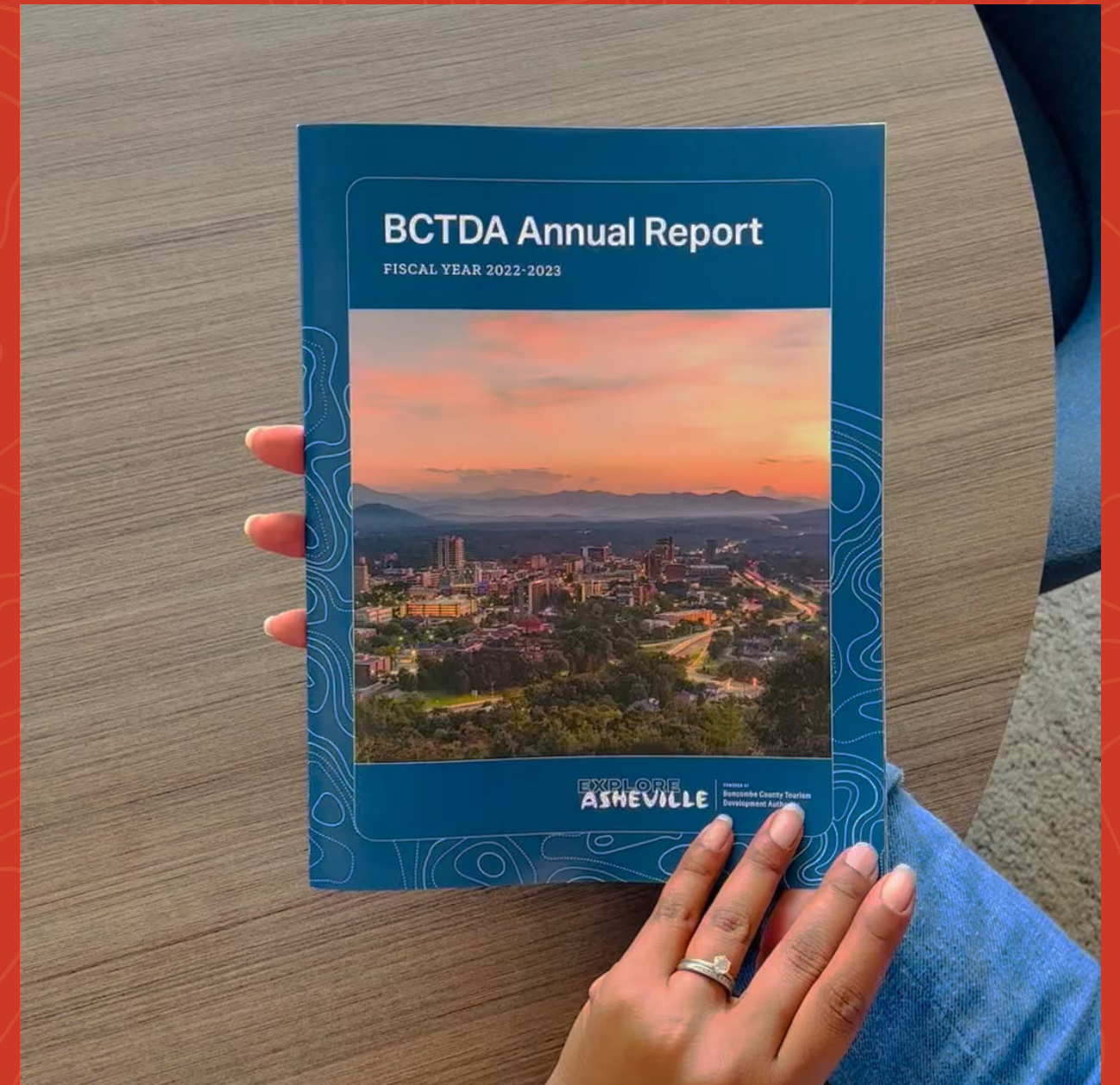
FY23 ANNUAL REPORT

Captured our Destination and Organization's Collective Achievements Last Fiscal Year

The **FY23 Annual Report** comprehensively reflects the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority and Explore Asheville's performance and achievements over the past year.

Highlights Include:

- A record \$2.88 Billion in Visitor Spending
- 20 years of investing in community capital projects through TPDF
- A 40-year timeline depicting the BCTDA's legacy and impact
- Destination achievements organized by strategic imperative
- Media accolades collected throughout the year
- 115 new partners joining our expansive partner network
- More than 1,000 attendees at our partner events



Above: Preview of the FY23 BCTDA Annual Report

ANNUAL MEETING

Celebrated 40 years of investing in and building community

Nearly 275 local leaders, travel and hospitality partners, and community members attended the 2023 BCTDA Annual Meeting at the Wortham Center for Performing Arts on September 19

- The Annual Meeting celebrated the 40 year-long commitment to community investment, highlighting economic growth and the important role of travel & hospitality in our community's past and future.
- Richard Florida provided a thoughtful keynote on the future of city centers, cultivating community relationships, and understanding the vital roles of city centers as places of connection for residents, workers, and visitors.
- Matthew Bacoate Jr. was honored as this year's recipient of the William A.V. Cecil Leadership Award. A commemorative video directed by Paul Bonesteel shared historical and new footage of Bacoate's long legacy of building community in Asheville.

FEATURED PARTNERS

Partner activations immersed attendees in the creative spirit of Asheville including:

DJ Lil Meow Meow, Bad Drawings, J. Chong Eats, French Broad Chocolate, Ninja Spirits, Giddy Chick Catering, Blunt Pretzels, Camilla Calnan Photography, Dare Vegan Cheese, and Legally Addictive Foods.



Above: Photos of 2023 BCTDA Annual Meeting program and networking reception

MCCORMICK FIELD | TPDF INVESTMENT

Single Largest Investment in TPDF History

This investment will modernize the stadium into a multi-use public facility with the necessary infrastructure to operate year-round events. The project also includes the necessary capital improvements for McCormick Field to meet new Minor League Baseball facility standards passed in 2019. Construction is expected to begin Sept. 2024 and be completed by March 2026.

- Single largest investment in the 20-year history of the Tourism Product Development Fund - \$22.95 Million
- First debt service project investment for the Tourism Development Authority
- Including McCormick Field investment, the TDA has invested over \$80 million in tourism-related capital projects through TPDF



Asheville Tourists hosted the first annual **Travel & Hospitality Nights** - August 29 & August 31 (postponed from August 30)



Above: McCormick Field (top); ceremonial recognition of investment with Mayor Manheimer and TPDF Committee Chair Jim Muth (bottom)

LIFT FUND COMMITTEE

Inaugural LIFT Fund Committee Established



Laura Webb

Founder & President
Webb Investment Services



Dr. Joseph Fox

Founder & Owner
Fox Management Consulting Enterprises



Barbara Benisch

Non-Profit Management &
Community Development
Consultant



Mike McCarty

Restaurant Owner
The Lobster Trap



HP Patel

BCA Hotels
*TDA Ex-Officio Liaison,
Treasurer of the nonprofit*



Himanshu Karvir

President & CEO
Virtelle Hospitality
Lodging Appointment



Kyle Highberg

Sr. Director of Operations
Biltmore Farms
Lodging Appointment



Amy Kelly

Managing Principal
Hatteras Sky
Lodging Appointment



Kathleen Mosher

VP of Communications
Biltmore
Lodging Appointment



Shelton Steele

Co-Owner
Wrong Way River Lodge & Cabins
Lodging Appointment

LGBTQIA+ WORKING GROUP

First Official Meeting & Pride Festival 2023

First Official Meeting : August 22, 11 participants + staff

At the Everyone Welcome training for staff last spring, we also convened a roundtable for the LGBTQIA+ community. At that time, it was agreed that a working group would be a good way to convene and discuss areas of need and ways to collaborate. Explore Asheville is leading this initiative to bring everyone together.

- The agenda included: meeting staff, creating a quarterly meeting schedule, and brainstorming ways to engage with the Pride festival, and a discussion about creating a "You are welcome" window cling for businesses.
- In November, the working group will meet to address goals and steps for the coming year.

Pride Festival 2023

Explore Asheville's sponsor booth offered the window cling (printed by Lightning Bolt Ink), a trivia game on queer Asheville history with prizes, visitor guides, and educational info.



Above: You are Welcome Here window clings (top); Explore Asheville's sponsored booth at Blue Ridge Pride festival (bottom)

EVENT GRANTS & SPONSORSHIPS

Support for local festival & cultural events through grants and sponsorships

Explore Asheville/BCTDA supported the following events in FY24 Q1:

- Shindig on the Green
- Mountain Dance & Folk Festival
- Asheville Open Tennis Championship
- Skyview Golf Tournament
- Southern Highland Craft Guild July Fair
- AVL Fest
- Sourwood Festival
- Come To Leicester Artists Studio Tour
- 2023-24 ArtsAVL Event Series
- 4th Annual Asheville FM Record Fair
- East End/Valley Street Community Heritage Festival
- Symphony in the Park
- Asheville Art Museum's Community Day: The Art of Food
- Chow Chow Festival
- ASAP Farm Tour
- Asheville Quilt Show
- 2023 Eliada Home's Fall Festival & Corn Maze
- Blue Ridge Pride Festival
- Sow & Grow Fest

\$72k

Grants &
Sponsorships



19
Events

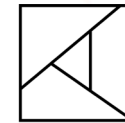
NEW PARTNERSHIPS

Onboarded 27 local businesses as partners

- Explore Asheville has partnered with 27 new local business between July and October, ranging from Bed and Breakfasts to walking tours to private chef experiences.
- 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:
 - Fairview
 - River Arts District
 - West Asheville
 - Downtown
 - Weaverville
 - South Asheville
- Types of new businesses:
 - Wellness
 - The Arts- Galleries/Studios
 - Food & Drink
 - Retail
 - Venues
 - Lodging
 - Tours & Attractions
 - Wedding Planners
 - Outfitters
 - Private Chef Experiences



KEVIN ANDREW
GALLERY + STUDIO



Jaime Byrd
Contemporary Art



ARCHETYPE
BREWING + KITCHEN



BOARD DISCUSSION

QUESTIONS
INPUT
COMMENTS





CITY UPDATES

Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore





COUNTY UPDATES

Commissioner Terri Wells

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MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Brenda Durden
BCTDA | Chair

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PUBLIC COMMENTS

Brenda Durden
BCTDA | Chair

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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, October 24, 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.





ADJOURNMENT

Brenda Durden
BCTDA | Chair

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A FEW REMINDERS

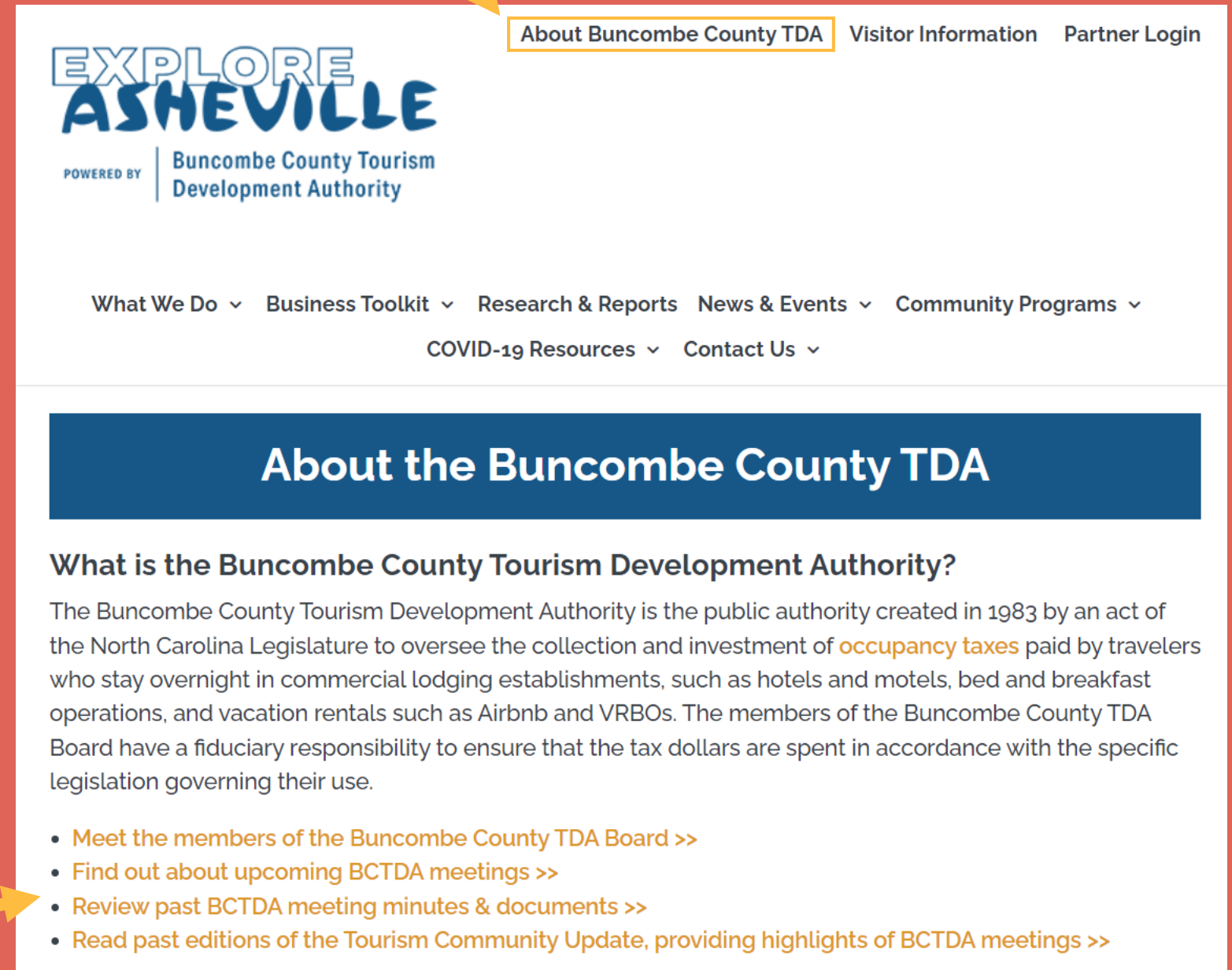
Chair Brenda Durden

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

**The next BCTDA meeting will be held on
Wednesday, November 29, 2023, 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 is a navigation bar with links: "About Buncombe County TDA" (highlighted with a yellow box and an arrow), "Visitor Information", and "Partner Login". Below this is the "EXPLORE ASHEVILLE" logo, with "POWERED BY Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority" underneath. A secondary navigation bar contains links: "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, there is a list of four links: "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 >>". A yellow arrow points from the text "Review past BCTDA meeting minutes & documents" in the left sidebar to the third link in this list.

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 >>](#)



ADJOURNMENT

Chair Brenda Durden

Questions/Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to adjourn the BCTDA Meeting.

Motion Second

Discussion

Vote





THANK YOU

See you at next month's BCTDA meeting!

Wednesday, November 29, 2023 | 9:00 a.m.

Explore Asheville Board Room | 27 College Place

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Development Authority