

COMMUNITY BENEFITS OF TOURISM

- **\$2 billion in the cash registers of local businesses:** People who visit spend \$2 billion annually at local businesses, many of those being small, independent operations who depend on tourism to survive and thrive – and on BCTDA’s sales and marketing programs to attract those customers. By category, this includes:
 - Food & Beverage - \$544 Million (28%)
 - Lodging - \$453 Million (23%)
 - Retail - \$437 Million (23%)
 - Recreation & Entertainment - \$275 Million (14%)
 - Transport - \$230 Million (12%)
- **\$3.1 billion total economic impact:** Local businesses purchase goods and services from more local businesses, for a total economic impact of \$3.1 billion.
- **\$199 million in taxes generated:** People visiting Buncombe generate \$199 million in state and local taxes, providing revenue for services and social investments. That includes 31% of sales tax revenue and 19% of property tax revenue.
- **27,000 jobs:** People visiting Buncombe County support 18,000 jobs at tourism-related businesses and 27,000 jobs in total – that’s 15% of the employment in Buncombe County.
- **43:1 return on investment:** Every \$1 invested in tourism advertising generates \$43 in spending at local businesses, plus \$3 of sales tax. This promotion comes at no cost to these local ventures.
- **\$44 million:** The Tourism Product Development Fund has allowed BCTDA to award \$44 million to 39 projects providing parks, greenways, heritage and cultural arts, sports and recreational facilities, and more for the enjoyment of residents as well as visitors.
- **1,300+ tourism-related businesses:** There are more than 1,300 active, qualified tourism industry partners and friends in the Explore Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau database. These are businesses that benefit not just from the customers we attract, but also from the free educational networking opportunities we provide throughout the year – plus the free listings they get on ExploreAsheville.com, with more than 5 million user sessions annually.