

Tourism Product Development Fund

2022 Program Guide

April 27, 2022

*Enhancing the Community
through Investment in Destination Assets*

BCTDA Mission:

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



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1.0 Introduction

Dear TPDF Applicant:

The Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA) is pleased that you are interested in applying for funding from the Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF). We are excited to work with you and to play a role in the development of projects that have potential to benefit both tourism and the entire community.

The TPDF was created by the North Carolina General Assembly in 2001 to provide funding for capital projects that increase the number of overnight stays in Buncombe County lodging properties, generating tax revenue, jobs, and spending at local businesses. The TPDF is funded solely through lodging taxes paid by overnight visitors to Buncombe County.

The specific legislation and criteria by which TPDF funding decisions are made are outlined in this Program Guide. Please carefully review both the grant requirements and criteria for evaluation. The TPDF Committee may utilize a waiver to advance a project if the specifications fall outside the criteria yet represent a significant impact to overnight lodging stays and Buncombe County economic sustainability.

Please keep in mind, because the source of TPDF funding is public, all applications are subject to the requirements regarding “public records” found in Chapter 132 of the North Carolina General Statutes. Submitted applications will be disclosed upon request.

More information about the 2022 TPDF process can be found on the AshevilleCVB.com website at <https://www.ashevillecvb.com/product-development/>. Chris Cavanaugh of Magellan Strategy Group is assisting with management of the 2022 application process. If you have specific questions about the application process, contact Chris at ccavanaugh@magellanstrategy.com or at (828) 651-9320.

Thank you for your interest in the TPDF and in helping grow the economy of Buncombe County.

Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority
Tourism Product Development Fund Committee

1.1 History of the Tourism Product Development Fund

The Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF) is a funding mechanism of the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA). The creation of TPDF is the outgrowth of a business decision by the hospitality industry to generate more overnight stays, create a sustainable impact on the overall economy by attracting a bigger base of customers for local businesses, and enhance the community through investment in projects used by visitors and residents alike.

In 2001, the North Carolina General Assembly increased the Buncombe County occupancy tax from three to four percent. The additional one percent was dedicated exclusively to the fund, which offers grant, loan guarantees, and debt service opportunities for capital development projects that serve to increase patronage of lodging facilities in Buncombe County.

In 2015, HB347 was passed, increasing the occupancy tax by two percent and bringing Buncombe County's occupancy rate in line with most other municipalities in North Carolina. The bill preserved the 25% dedication of revenue for TPDF and eliminated funding of for-profit projects to focus on local government and non-profit needs. Additionally, the BCTDA adopted significant changes to the TPDF program in 2015, including the Strategic Priority List and the Major Works Pathway. These new strategic tools enable the BCTDA to take a more proactive approach to filling strategic gaps in the market and encourages collaboration between staff and applicants.

An investment in tourism can mean big dividends for the community – a stronger, diverse economy; an influx of substantial tax revenue; and an improved quality of life for the residents who enjoy the mix of small businesses, cultural and recreational amenities, and entertainment that result in a better place to live, work, and visit

Since the fund's inception in 2001, a total of \$44 million has been awarded to 39 community projects, including:

- John B. Lewis Soccer Complex at Azalea Park
- Grove Arcade
- The Bonsai Garden at the North Carolina Arboretum
- Asheville Visitor Center
- Western North Carolina Veterans' Memorial at Pack Square Park
- Buncombe County Civil War Trails
- Asheville Area Wayfinding
- Pack Square Park & Pavilion
- Asheville Art Museum
- The Orange Peel
- U.S. Cellular Center
- Smoky Mountain Adventure Center
- Montford Park Players
- Navitat Canopy Adventures
- Lighting for UNC Asheville Sports Fields
- Pack Square Park & Canopy
- Highland Brewing Company
- The Collider
- River Access at Pearson Bridge
- Enka Center Ballfields
- City of Asheville's Riverfront Destination Development
- Asheville Museum of Science
- WNC Nature Center

- Asheville Community Theatre
- WNC Farmers Market
- The Wortham Center
- Montreat College
- Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center
- Woodfin Greenway & Blueway
- Enka Recreation Destination
- LEAF Global Arts Center
- African American Heritage & Cultural District & Interactive Museum
- YMI Cultural Center
- Center for Craft, Creativity & Design
- North Carolina Arboretum Lighting and Parking Enhancements

1.2 Enabling Legislation

As per legislation, there are two essential requirements to be considered for funding:

- The funding must be for capital expenses (“bricks and mortar”) and, project must demonstrate that it will significantly increase patronage of lodging facilities in Buncombe County.
- Other core criteria are detailed in sections 3.2 and 3.3 of this program guide.

Other provisions as stated in the legislation:

- Projects must provide a feasibility study demonstrating the project's economic value to the area and the number of estimated new room nights it will generate.
- BCTDA is not required to exhaust all the funds generated each year and may accumulate money in order to create a revolving fund.
- BCTDA may not commit for purposes of debt service in excess of thirty-three percent (33%) of net funds received in any one year for a period of time in excess of 10 years. The Authority may not commit for purposes of debt service in excess of ten percent (10%) of net funds received in any one year for any single project.
- For-profit entities are not eligible for TPDF funding.
- Projects must be located in Buncombe County unless Buncombe County Commissioners grants specific approval to projects outside the county.

Review the legislation here:

HB105: <http://www.ncqa.state.nc.us/Sessions/2001/Bills/House/HTML/H105v3.html>

HB347: <http://www.ncleg.net/Sessions/2015/Bills/House/HTML/H347v4.html>

1.3 Funding Pathways

There are a number of ways that the BCTDA can work with applicants interested in TPDF funding:

Grant, Loan Guarantee, or Debt Service: TPDF applicants may submit funding requests during the standard grant cycle for a grant, loan guarantee, or debt service. The TPDF Committee must review and evaluate project applications during the cycle and make recommendations to the BCTDA for funding.

Strategic Priority List: During the standard grant cycle, the TPDF Committee may wish to recommend funding for a project but not yet have the funds available. As per legislation, the BCTDA cannot make a binding commitment to fund projects using future year revenues. In this case, the TPDF Committee may recommend the BCTDA place a project on the Strategic Priority List, to be considered when funding is available. Selected projects would receive priority for funding in future years. While the applicant will be required to provide an update to the BCTDA ensuring there have been no substantive changes to the project as presented, the applicant will not be required to resubmit an application in the grant cycle again.

Major Works Pathway: This approach enables a funding pathway outside the annual TPDF funding cycle for significant projects representing a minimum \$5 million capital investment and requiring multi-year funding. Outside the grant cycle, applicants may present a project to the BCTDA for funding consideration of projects meeting this description. All potential major projects must conform to TPDF requirements and are subject to evaluation by the TPDF Committee. Applicants interested in pursuing the Major Works Pathway are encouraged to consult with CVB staff in early stages of project planning.

1.4 Asheville Destination Brand Promise

Our brand promise is grounded in Asheville's history – all that has contributed to what the destination is today. The community has a long history of hospitality and acceptance, welcoming visitors to the area dating back to the late 18th- and early 19th- centuries when it became known as a health and wellness destination. As it became more well-known, it attracted and inspired people from all walks of life, including wealthy socialites and even the famous.

As a unique element of sophistication formed in this part of the Blue Ridge Mountains, greater opportunities became available to enrich the experience. And as George Vanderbilt's home, Biltmore, transformed itself into one of the early tourist attractions in the country, the Grove Park Inn began attracting celebrities, and the area's rich heritage was discovered, the arms reached even wider to welcome an increasing number of visitors.

The net result of this genuine, organic evolution is an area unsurpassed by the variety and quality of arts and crafts, restaurants, music, attractions, and outdoor opportunities available to experience. It remains today, an area that welcomes and inspires visitors, artists, adventure seekers and entrepreneurs – all who seek to enrich their lives in a real and personal way.

If you are awarded TPDF funding, your organization will be required to work with the CVB to ensure your employees and/or volunteers deliver the Asheville Area Destination Brand Promise to visitors, including the following marketing activities:

- Promoting the Grantor's digital marketing assets, including ExploreAsheville.com, and distributing the Grantor-supplied Official Asheville Visitor Guides at your location.
- Display a reciprocal web link to ExploreAsheville.com on your website.
- Ensure your staff knows and understands the Asheville Area Destination Brand Promise.

- Source in-bound groups requiring 10 rooms or more per night for meetings, conventions, and events through the Explore Asheville CVB Group Sales Department.

Asheville Destination Brand Promise

We guarantee you a life enriching experience each and every time you visit Asheville. It's personal, personal to you. And it is also personal to us. We live that same genuine experience and want to share it with you. We empower you to discover a collection of experiences that is as unique and varied as each individual who visits us, and allows you to do so in a warm, embracing and creative environment.

Asheville Destination Brand Core Values

Welcoming: Warm and engaging; friendly and accessible; we are excited that you came to visit; we want to share our Asheville with you.

Natural: Genuine, original and real, not staged; we respect your individualism and originality; our natural lifestyle is only enhanced by the natural beauty that surrounds us; come and be amazed and rejuvenated.

Vibrant: Colorful, bright, engaging, and delightful; be delighted by the opportunities around you; we are creative, diverse, and alive; come and be energized by our colorful and exciting lifestyle.

Recipients of grant funding will also be required to recognize the support of the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority via specific public recognition of that support.

1.5 Strategic Imperatives

The Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority is charting a new course for tourism aligned with broader community priorities. This includes the adoption of strategic imperatives that are informing and guiding the direction of Explore Asheville’s program of work and community investments going forward.

Deliver Balanced Recovery & Sustainable Growth

Balance resident and visitor needs, recognizing the necessary role that sustainable, long-term growth of travel has in achieving a healthy, collective economy. Focus on the quality of each visit to our community – balancing growth across the seasons, business and leisure travel, and throughout Asheville and Buncombe County.

Encourage Safe & Responsible Travel

Engage residents and visitors with shared values to care for and respect natural, cultural and human resources vital in delivering quality guest experiences. Collaborate with community

organizations, local businesses, and environmentally focused partners to support the sustainability and growth of our outdoor economy

Engage & Invite More Diverse Audiences

Extend 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. Support product development, place making and community connections, enabling new experiences and business opportunities throughout our community.

Promote & Support Asheville’s Creative Spirit

Share stories of creators and makers who help differentiate our destination through food and drink, visual and performing arts, experiences and more. Support product development, place making and community connections, enabling new experiences and business opportunities throughout our community.

2.0 People Behind the Process

Established by legislation in 1983, the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority is a quasi-governmental entity charged with marketing Buncombe County as a tourism destination and administering its tourism product development fund.

The legislation gives the BCTDA ultimate authority over the awarding of the tourism product development funds, following recommendations from a TPDF Committee. The TPDF Committee is charged with ensuring TPDF dollars are used to enhance the community through product development leading to significant new and repeat room nights in Buncombe County and providing recommendations to the BCTDA board.

2.1 BCTDA Board Members

The Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority is a board of eleven volunteers appointed to oversee the use of occupancy tax revenues as directed by North Carolina law. Four members are appointed by Asheville City Council, four by the Buncombe County Commission, and one by the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce. Six members represent accommodations who collect the tax and three are from non-lodging, tourism-related businesses. A Buncombe County Commissioner and an Asheville City Council Member serve as non-voting, ex-officio board members. The current members of the BCTDA are:

Kathleen Mosher, Chair
The Biltmore Company
Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce
Appointment

Brenda Durden, Vice Chair
Asheville Hotel Group
County Appointment

Leah Ashburn
Highland Brewing Company
County Appointment

Andrew Celwyn
Herbiary
City Appointment

Larry Crosby
The Foundry Hotel
City Appointment

Councilwoman Sandra Kilgore
Asheville City Council Ex-Officio Member

Matthew Lehman
The Grand Bohemian Asheville
City Appointment

Michael Lusick
FIRC Group, Inc.
City Appointment

HP Patel
BCA Hotels
County Appointment

Scott Patel
Pure Hospitality
County Appointment

Commissioner Robert Pressley
Buncombe County Commission Ex-Officio
Member

2.2 TPDF Committee

As per the legislation, the TPDF Committee is appointed by the BCTDA, and need not be comprised solely of members of the Authority. A majority of positions must be held by lodging representatives. Committee members can serve one partial and two full terms.

Jay Curwen
Nantahala Outdoor Center
Tourism Appointment

Brenda Durden
Asheville Hotel Group
Lodging Appointment & BCTDA Liaison

Gary Froeba
Lodging Appointment
The Omni Grove Park Inn

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

Ken Stamps

Navitat Canopy Adventures & Adventure
Pisgah
Lodging Appointment

Jim Muth

Muth Management, Inc. Consulting
Tourism Appointment

2.3 TPDF Staff

The Explore Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) provides support for the TPDF process on behalf of the BCTDA.

Victoria “Vic” Isley

President & CEO, Explore Asheville CVB

3.0 Application Process

The enabling legislation mandates that a TPDF Committee review all applications and make funding recommendations to the BCTDA. Projects must pass a Phase I and Phase II approval by the TPDF Committee prior to consideration by the BCTDA board.

Potential applicants should review both Phase I and Phase II applications at the commencement of the process to ensure that they can provide all of the information requested in both phases. It is also recommended that applicants review the standard funding contract to ensure they can comply with the terms should their project be awarded funding.

Phase I consists of a short application form which requests important preliminary information and is designed to assess the viability of the application and its conformity to the goals of the fund without requiring significant effort from the applicant. Successful Phase I applicants will be invited to participate in Phase II. **The deadline for submission of the Phase I application is June 1, 2022 at 5:00 PM ET, and applicants will be notified on June 29, 2022.**

Phase II consists of a more comprehensive application requesting additional information from applicants such as financials, business plans and feasibility studies among other requirements. Applicants invited to participate in Phase II will have the opportunity to present projects in person to the TPDF Committee on September 29 or 30, 2022 as part of the review process. Phase II may also include site visits, as per the TPDF Committee’s request. **The deadline for submission of the Phase II application is August 31, 2022 at 5:00 PM ET, and applicants will be notified of funding decisions on or before October 31, 2022.**

3.1 Applicant Agreement

Applicants will be asked to acknowledge and certify the following statements as part of the application process:

DISCLOSURE FOR PUBLIC RECORD

As a quasi-governmental agency, the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority is subject to Chapter 132 of the North Carolina General Assembly Statutes. Therefore, any and all aspects of this application must be made available by the BCTDA to any party, public or private, upon request without exception. If you are concerned that the distribution of any of your application materials may do irreparable damage to you, your organization, or associated parties, the BCTDA highly recommends that you seek alternative funding in lieu of TPDF funds.

PROJECT MONITORING

I hereby acknowledge that if I am awarded TPDF funding, I will be required to submit an annual report by January 15 of each year during the term of the agreement, with the term commencing on the effective date and continuing for four years after the completion date. Reports include marketing plans and methodologies for capturing annual and out-of-market visitation, up-to-date room night projections, and copies of survey instruments used for data among other requirements.

BCTDA MARKETING

I hereby acknowledge that certain information from my application, such as the project description, timeline, and leadership, may be used by the BCTDA at its sole discretion for the promotion and marketing of the TPDF program and the region as a tourism destination.

TERMS OF AGREEMENT

I hereby acknowledge that I have reviewed and understand the terms of the contract agreement.

COMPLETED APPLICATION

I hereby acknowledge that I have completed this application in good faith, confidence, and counsel, and have done so in full compliance with the law. I have made no attempt to falsify or misconstrue facts or data anywhere in this application.

3.2 Application Timeline

Information Session (Virtual)	Wednesday, May 4, 2022, 3 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Phase I Applications Due	Wednesday, June 1, 2022, 5 p.m.
Phase I Applicants Notified	Wednesday, June 29, 2022
Phase II Applications Due	Wednesday, August 31, 2022, 5 p.m.
Project Presentations	September 29 & 30, 2022*
Site Visits	October 10 & 11, 2022*
Grantees Announced	On or before Wednesday, October 26, 2022

**Applicant must be available on one of these dates.*

3.3 TPDF Grant Policies and Requirements

Applications are assessed based on the following policies and requirements. The TPDF Committee may utilize a waiver to advance a project if the specifications fall outside the requirements yet represent a significant impact upon lodging demand and Buncombe County economic sustainability.

1. Funding must be for capital investments only (“brick and mortar” projects--design not included). Operational expenses will not be considered for funding.
2. A project must demonstrate that it will create substantial new and incremental overnight lodging stays in Buncombe County.
3. The TPDF will only fund projects that have a minimum of a 1-to-1 funding match to the TPDF funding requested (excluding in-kind goods and services). Design fees already expended will be considered as counting towards the 1-to-1 funding match.
4. Projects which either directly increase overnight lodging stays by themselves or support a larger initiative that will increase room nights will be evaluated equally.
5. Projects may not solely benefit only a single lodging owner, lodging property, or be situated on a lodging property.
6. TPDF funds cannot be the first funds committed to a project.
7. For-profit entities are not eligible for TPDF funding.
8. Applicants must be registered as a federally recognized non-profit, if applicable.
9. BCTDA reserves the right to cancel the grant application cycle at any time and for any reason.
10. BCTDA reserves the right to award grant funding to any project for any reason consistent with the intent of the legislation.
11. Recognizing that its resources are limited, BCTDA may grant funding that is less than that requested by the applicant.
12. BCTDA will not make payment directly to any vendor or individual. Payment will only be made to the applicant organization.
13. If the grantee is unable to fund and/or complete the project, BCTDA may revoke all or part of the grant. The grantee may be forced to return some or all funding plus interest if the recipient is found to have used the funding inappropriately, if the project was not completed, or if the project scope or design was changed without approval of BCTDA.
14. The applicant assumes the burden of all expenses associated with this application.

3.4 Criteria by Which Projects Will Be Evaluated

Applications will be evaluated according to these criteria:

Viability of Project and Organization

- **Financial Stability of the Requesting Organization**
Each applicant organization will be evaluated for financial sustainability, and their perceived ability to raise additional funds as needed to bring the project to completion.

- **Strength of Business Planning**
If applicable, the proposed business plan for the project will be evaluated on its accuracy, completeness, and likelihood to support a successful and sustainable operation once the project has opened.
- **Strength of Sales and Marketing Plan/Investment**
If applicable, sales and marketing plans for projects will be evaluated upon the likelihood they will succeed in drawing visitation to the destination.
- **Timeliness of the Project**
Projects which are “shovel ready” may rate more highly than those which are still two or more years from beginning construction.
- **1-to-1 Funding Match Exceeded**
While it is a requirement for applying organizations to have secured a funding match equal to the amount for which they are applying from the TPDF, projects that exceed the 1-to-1 requirement may receive particular consideration.

Destination Differentiator

- **Strength of Brand Alignment**
Projects will be evaluated on whether they are consistent with the Asheville destination brand and provide additional support for the brand promise.
- **Uniqueness and Innovation of Project**
Attractions and activities which are new to the region or not available to visitors living in key feeder markets for the destination may be valued more highly than those which duplicate offerings already available to visitors.
- **Ability to Promote and Support the Local Creative Sector**
Projects which promote and support the community’s creators and makers and which enhance the destination will receive greater consideration.

Project Impact

- **Ratio of Overnight Lodging Generated to Funding Requested**
The amount of TPDF funding requested will be analyzed versus the potential return of new overnight lodging demand in Buncombe County to be generated by the project.
- **Generator of New and Incremental Room Nights**
The room night impact of a proposed project will be assessed on whether the project is drawing new visitors to the area, or simply pulling from existing visitors in Buncombe County while not increasing the number of new room nights.
- **Scope of Market to be Served**
Projects that target audiences capable of filling area lodging are valued, but projects that draw new and untapped niche markets to Buncombe County may also be worthy of consideration.
- **Scope of Impact Upon Lodging**
The impact of a project upon Buncombe County lodging will be considered not only in terms of demand generated, but also in terms of the geographic impact. Projects

capable of generating lodging demand in more than one area of the county may rate more favorably.

- **Ability to Serve as a Contributing Asset**
Projects which support an important generator of destination room nights, or which could stimulate additional activity, but which may not generate significant room nights by themselves will be considered. Applicants should demonstrate the potential for additional community benefit if their project is built.
- **Encourage Safe and Responsible Travel**
Projects which encourage care and respect for natural, cultural, and human resources, or supports the sustainability of outdoor recreation, will be given greater consideration.
- **Deliver Balanced Recovery and Sustainable Growth**
Projects will be evaluated based upon whether they lead to balanced and sustainable growth through distribution of visitors geographically across the county or seasonally throughout the year or days of the week.
- **Supports Engagement with and Appeal to More Diverse Audiences**
The committee will assess the ability of a project to diverse audiences and support of place making, community connections, and business opportunities throughout the county.
- **Project as a True Motivator of Visits**
Projects will be evaluated based upon their ability to motivate new room nights, proven through sound analysis and data.

4.0 Application Materials for the 2022 Grant Cycle

The application materials are available at <https://www.ashevillecvb.com/product-development/>.

4.1 Phase I Application

Phase I applications are due Wednesday, June 1, 2022, at 5:00 p.m.

Handwritten applications will not be accepted. Additional files and attachments will not be accepted in Phase I.

4.2 Phase II Application

Potential applicants should review the Phase II application to ensure that they are capable of providing all of the information requested should they be invited to participate in Phase II.

Phase II applications are due Wednesday, August 31, 2022, at 5:00 p.m.

Handwritten applications will not be accepted. There are several additional files required in Phase II as outlined in the application. Please attach the files in .doc, .xls, or .pdf formats in the email with your completed application. **Name the files as instructed in the application.**

5.0 Awardee Information

Phase II applicants will be notified on or before October 31, 2022. Grant agreement contracts will be developed for each awarded project in the weeks following the awardee announcement. A standard contract agreement will be made available for reference to Phase II applicants and should be reviewed prior to submission of the application.

5.1 Funding Timeline

The Grant will be disbursed in three payments. Subject to contractual conditions, the first disbursement will be made when the construction of Project is one-third completed; the second disbursement will be made when the Project is two-thirds completed; and the third disbursement shall be made upon the date of completion. Each disbursement shall be in the amount of one-third of the Grant. Disbursement requests require supporting documentation as outlined in the Grant Agreement.

There is also an option to receive one disbursement based on specific project needs; however, single disbursements will only be processed after construction is 100% complete.

5.2 Reporting Requirements

An annual report must be made by the Grantee to the Grantor by January 15 of each year during the term of the Agreement, with the term commencing on the effective date and continuing for four years after the completion date. Reports include marketing plans and methodologies for capturing annual and out-of-market visitation, up-to-date room night projections, and copies of survey instruments used for data among other requirements.

6.0 Support

6.1 Contact Information

For assistance, please contact the consultant supporting the management of the 2022 process:

Chris Cavanaugh
Magellan Strategy Group
ccavanaugh@magellanstrategy.com
(828) 651-9320

6.2 Information Session Workshop

An Information Session will be held to explain the process and provide assistance for interested applicants.

Date: Wednesday, May 4, 2022
Time: 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Location: Virtual (link to be provided to registrants)

Attendance is not mandatory for applicants. A recording of the webinar will be made available online at the AshevilleCVB.com website at <https://www.ashevillecvb.com/product-development/>.

6.3 Glossary

Definition of terms used in the application materials:

Average Daily Room Rate (ADR) – The average lodging room rate paid by guests over a given period of time in a given market. This rate does not include taxes and fees paid by the guest. Explore Asheville CVB receives data for hotels and motels in Buncombe County via a subscription to Smith Travel Research, an international provider of lodging market data, and for short-term rentals via a subscription to AirDNA, an international provider of short-term rental market data.

Demographics – A description of a particular audience based upon certain segmentation characteristics, including age, household income, educational level attained, gender, and the presence of children at home.

Occupancy Tax – A tax paid by guests staying in paid accommodations such as hotels, motels, vacation rentals, and bed and breakfasts. The tax is not applied to campgrounds, religious organizations, educational organizations, and summer camps. Guests in all commercial lodging properties in Buncombe County pay a total of 6% occupancy tax (in addition to applicable state sales tax). 1.5% of the 6% generates the Tourism Product Development Fund.

Out-of-Market – A term used to describe guests who reside outside of the Asheville market. This term is used to indicate different geographic areas, including guests living outside of Buncombe County; outside of the Asheville metropolitan area (Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, and Madison counties); or outside of the local Greenville/Spartanburg/Asheville television market area. (Explore Asheville CVB uses the term “out-of-market” to refer to visitors living outside of the local television market area.)

Room Nights – One room night is defined as a single night spent in one room in a lodging property or a single night in a short-term rental. If there are two or more guests staying for one night, it is considered to be one room night.

New or Incremental Room Nights — “New” room nights are defined as those which are truly new to the market—that is, attracting new visitors to Buncombe County who would not have otherwise visited and who stay overnight in paid accommodations. “Incremental” room nights are room nights generated by visitors extending their stay by at least one night directly as a result of a new project or who made a repeat overnight visit they would otherwise not have.