



# WELCOME

April 24, 2024

**Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority Board Meeting**

EXPLORE  
**ASHEVILLE**

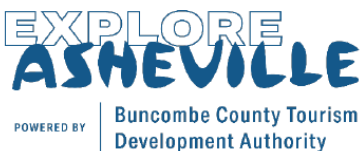
POWERED BY

Buncombe County Tourism  
Development Authority

# CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Matthew Lehman

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



## Board Meeting

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

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

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

### AGENDA

9:00 a.m.	Call to Order the Joint Meeting of the BCTDA, Public Authority and BCTDA, Nonprofit Corporation	Brenda Durden
9:05 a.m.	Approval of Meeting Minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. March 21, 2024 Meeting Minutes</li><li>b. March 22, 2024 BCTDA Annual Planning Session Minutes</li></ul>	Brenda Durden
9:10 a.m.	Financial Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. March 2024 Financial Reports</li><li>b. FY24 Audit Contract</li></ul>	Mason Scott, Buncombe County
9:20 a.m.	2024 Legacy Investment from Tourism (LIFT) Fund Grant Cycle Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. LIFT Committee's Capital Project Investment Recommendations</li></ul>	Tiffany Thacker
10:00 a.m.	President & CEO Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Industry Metrics</li><li>b. Other Updates</li></ul>	Vic Isley
10:10 a.m.	Strategic Imperatives: Progress Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Third Quarter Review (January 2024 – March 2024 Highlights)</li></ul>	Vic Isley, Dodie Stephens, Michael Kryzanek, Penelope Whitman, Jennifer Kass-Green
10:35 a.m.	Asheville City Council Update	Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore
10:40 a.m.	Buncombe County Commission Update	Commissioner Terri Wells
10:45 a.m.	Miscellaneous Business	Brenda Durden
10:50 a.m.	Comments from the General Public	Brenda Durden
10:55 a.m.	Adjournment	Brenda Durden

### SAVE THE DATE

The next joint BCTDA monthly meeting is **Wednesday, May 29, 2024**, at 9:00 a.m., in the Board Room of Explore Asheville, located at 27 College Place. Please contact Julia Simpson at [jsimpson@ExploreAsheville.com](mailto: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

Vice Chair Matthew Lehman

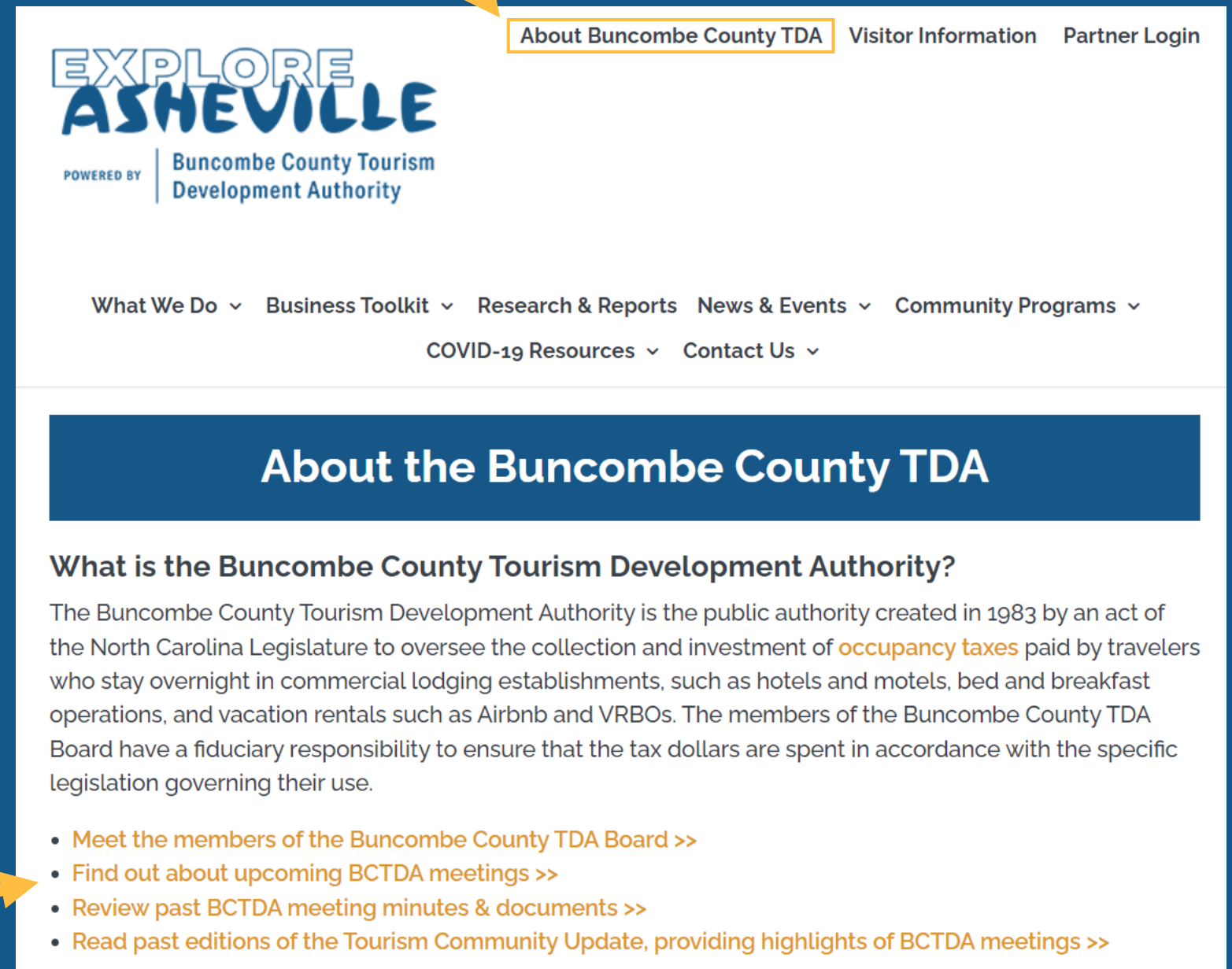
For our viewers watching remotely, documents were emailed to everyone who registered on Zoom by 8:00 this morning.

The agenda and meeting documents are also available online.

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

Go to:

- [AshevilleCVB.com](https://AshevilleCVB.com)
- About the Buncombe County TDA
- Find out about upcoming BCTDA meetings



The screenshot shows the Explore Asheville website. At the top, the logo reads 'EXPLORE ASHEVILLE' with 'POWERED BY Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority' below it. A navigation bar includes links for 'About Buncombe County TDA' (highlighted with an orange box and an arrow), 'Visitor Information', and 'Partner Login'. A secondary navigation bar lists 'What We Do', 'Business Toolkit', 'Research & Reports', 'News & Events', 'Community Programs', 'COVID-19 Resources', and 'Contact Us'. Below this is a large blue header for 'About the Buncombe County TDA'. The main content area is titled 'What is the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority?' and contains a paragraph explaining the authority's role. Below the paragraph 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 >>'. An orange arrow points from the 'Find out about upcoming BCTDA meetings' bullet point in the left sidebar to the corresponding link in the 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 >>](#)

# WELCOME BOARD & GUESTS

Vice Chair Matthew Lehman

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



# MARCH 21 MINUTES

Vice Chair Matthew Lehman

Questions/ Comments

## Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the March 21, 2024, 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  
Thursday, March 21, 2024

- Present (Voting):** Brenda Durden, Chair; Matthew Lehman, Vice Chair; Kathleen Mosher, Lucious Wilson, Elizabeth Putnam, Scott Patel, Michael Lusick, Larry Crosby
- Absent (Voting):** HP Patel (attended online)
- Absent (Ex-Officio):** Asheville Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore, Buncombe County Commissioner Terri Wells
- Staff:** Vic Isley, Jennifer Kass-Green, Michael Kryzanek, Julia Simpson, Ashley Greenstein, Josh Jones, Sha'Linda Pruitt, Dodie Stephens, Penelope Whitman, Tina Porter
- BC Finance:** Mason Scott
- Legal Counsel:** Sabrina Rockoff, McGuire, Wood & Bissette/BCTDA Attorney
- In-Person Attendees:** Randy Claybrook, Bent Creek Lodge/Asheville Bed & Breakfast Association  
John Ellis, Prior BCTDA Board Member  
Rick Bell, Asheville Buncombe Hotel Association  
Robert Sponder, Parks Hospitality  
Megan Thorp, Summer Casiano, Miranda Bowman; Tanger Outlets
- Online Attendees:** Mickey Poandl, Luisa Yen, Anna Harris, McKenzie Provost, Emily Crosby, Tiffany Thacker; Explore Asheville  
Jim Muth, TPDF Committee  
Chris Smith, Madison Davis; Asheville Buncombe Regional Sports Commission  
Zach Wallace, Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce  
Andrew Celwyn, Herbiary  
Felicia Sonmez, Blue Ridge Public Radio  
Will Hofmann, Asheville Citizen Times



# PLANNING SESSION MINUTES

Vice Chair Matthew Lehman

Questions/ Comments

## Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the March 22, 2024,  
annual planning session minutes.

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote



**Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority**  
**A Joint Meeting of the Public Authority and Nonprofit Corporation**  
Highland Brewing – Barrel Room | 12 Old Charlotte Highway

**BCTDA FY25 Annual Planning Session Minutes**  
Friday, March 22, 2024

<b>Present (Voting):</b>	Brenda Durden, Chair; Matthew Lehman, Vice Chair; HP Patel, Kathleen Mosher, Lucious Wilson, Larry Crosby, Matthew Lehman, Elizabeth Putnam, Michael Lusick, Scott Patel
<b>Absent (Voting):</b>	None
<b>Absent (Ex-Officio):</b>	Asheville Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore Buncombe County Commissioner Terri Wells
<b>Staff:</b>	Vic Isley, Dodie Stephens, Mike Kryzanek, Penelope Whitman, Jennifer Kass-Green, Connie Holliday, Tiffany Thacker, Luisa Yen, Emilie Soffe, Nick Kepley, Ashley Greenstein, Josh Jones, Julia Simpson
<b>Legal Counsel:</b>	Sabrina Rockoff, McGuire, Wood & Bissette/BCTDA Attorney
<b>Facilitator:</b>	Chris Cavanaugh, Magellan Strategy Group
<b>Presenters:</b>	Travis Napper, Tourism Economics Scott Dedman, Retired Housing Executive Chris Davidson, MMGY Global
<b>Panelists:</b>	Christy Greer, A-B Tech Student Alucia Noonan, Grand Bohemian Hotel Dawson Winchester, Hampton Inn & Suites
<b>TPDF Committee:</b> <i>(Partial session noted)</i>	Ken Stamps <i>(partial)</i> , Jim Muth, Michael Andry, Randy Claybrook, Scott Kerchner, David McCartney, Stephanie Moore
<b>LIFT Committee:</b> <i>(Partial session noted)</i>	Himanshu Karvir <i>(partial)</i> , Laura Webb <i>(partial)</i> , Barbara Benisch, Dr. Joseph Fox, Kyle Highberg, Amy Kelly
<b>In-Person Attendees:</b> <i>(Partial session noted)</i>	Felicia Sonmez, Blue Ridge Public Radio John Ellis, Prior BCTDA Boar Member <i>(partial)</i> Aboubacar Saibou, Cindy Weeks; Community Members <i>(partial)</i> Zach Wallace, Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce <i>(partial)</i>
<b>Online Attendees:</b> <i>(Partial session noted)</i>	Jay Curwen, Nantahala Outdoor Center/TPDF Committee <i>(partial)</i> Kyle Highberg, Biltmore Farms/LIFT Committee <i>(partial)</i> Rick Bell, Asheville Buncombe Hotel Association Brad Durden, Asheville Hotel Group <i>(partial)</i> Andrew Celwyn, Herbiary <i>(partial)</i>



# FINANCIAL UPDATES

Mason Scott  
Buncombe County

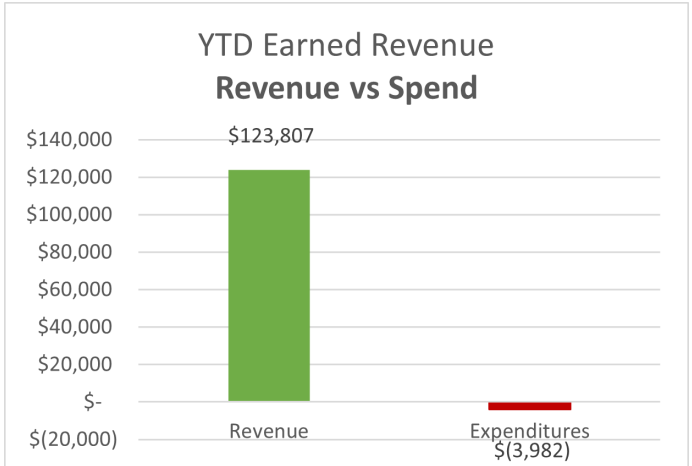
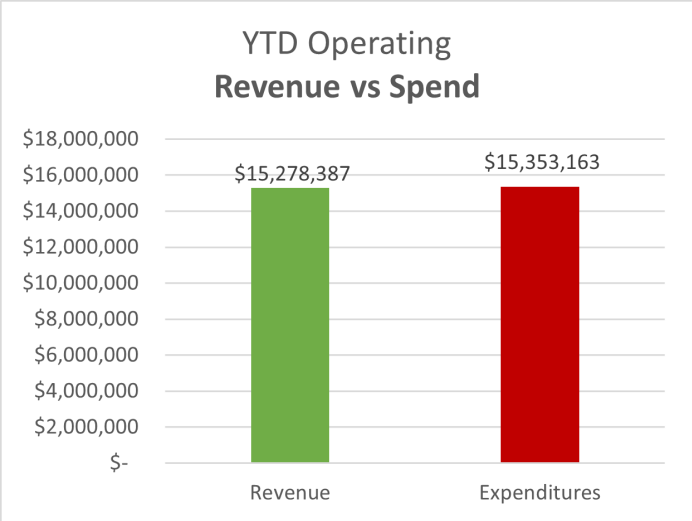
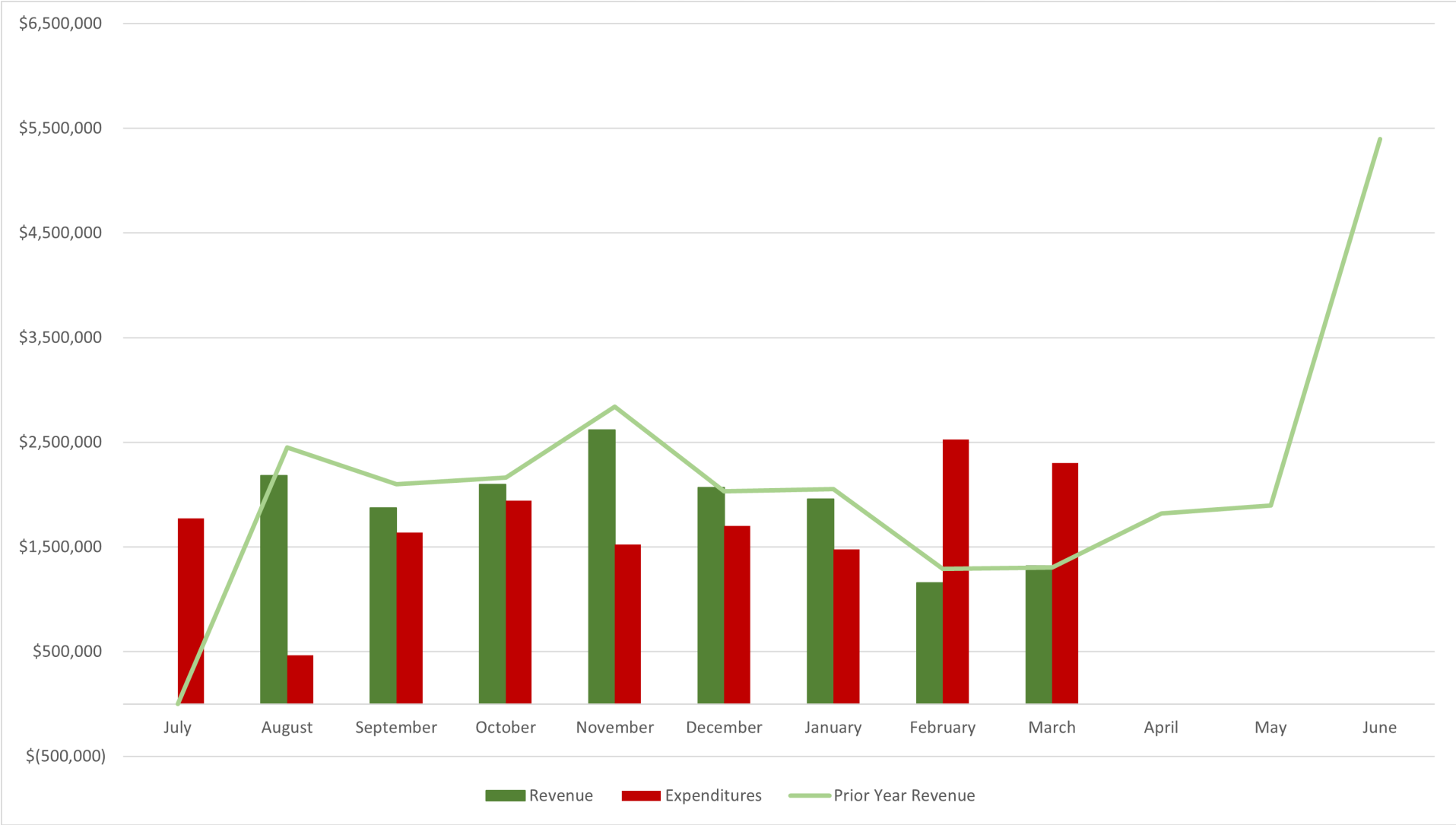
EXPLORE  
**ASHEVILLE**  
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Development Authority



# MARCH 2024 FINANCIAL REPORTS

# OPERATING AND EARNED REVENUE FUNDS

Revenues (Current and Prior-year) vs Expenditures (current year), March 2024



For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 1-3, and 7



# OPERATING AND EARNED REVENUE FUNDS

Monthly Summary of Activities, March 2024

Operating Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 28,852,000	\$ 1,319,114	\$ 15,278,386	61.1%
Total expenditures		\$ 2,301,701	\$ 15,353,164	53.2%

Earned Revenue Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 250,000	\$ 297	\$ 123,807	57.2%
Total expenditures		\$ -	\$ (3,982)	-1.6%

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



# PROJECT FUNDS: TPDF AND LIFT FUNDS

Monthly Summary of Activities, March 2024

Tourism Product Development Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Life to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 32,624,185	\$ 200,708	\$ 39,069,310	>100%
Total expenditures		\$ -	\$ 4,907,965	15.3%
Active projects		20		
Funding available for future grants		\$ 6,445,125		

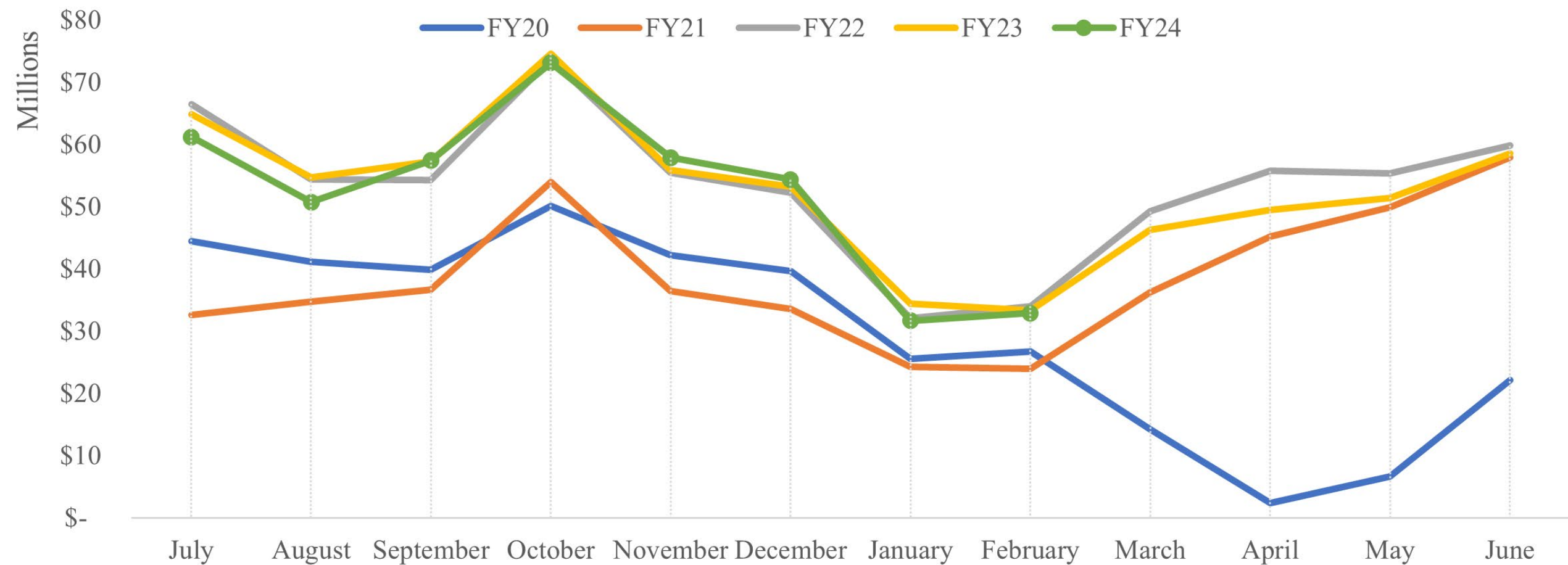
Legacy Investment From Tourism Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Life to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 339,560	\$ 723,780	\$ 10,328,463	>100%
Total expenditures		\$ 488	\$ 142,608	42%
Active projects		0		
Funding available for future grants		\$ 9,988,903		

For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 3, 5, & 6



# LODGING SALES

Shown by Month of Sales, Year-to-Date (5 years), March 2024

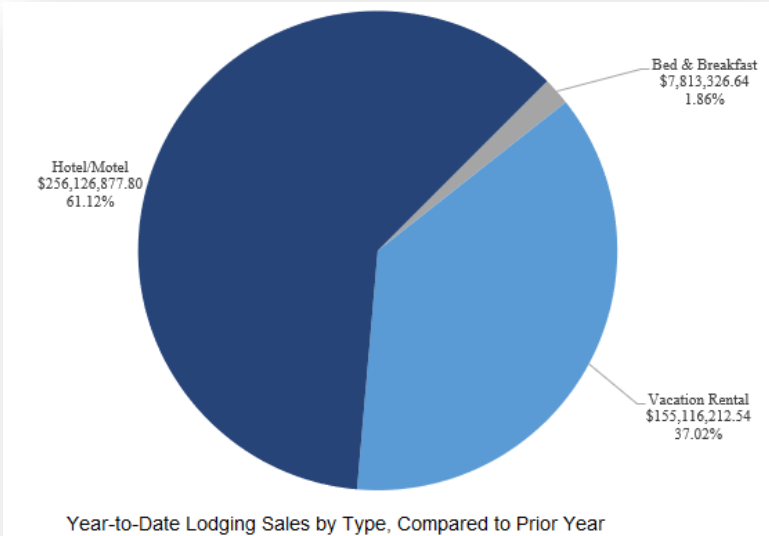
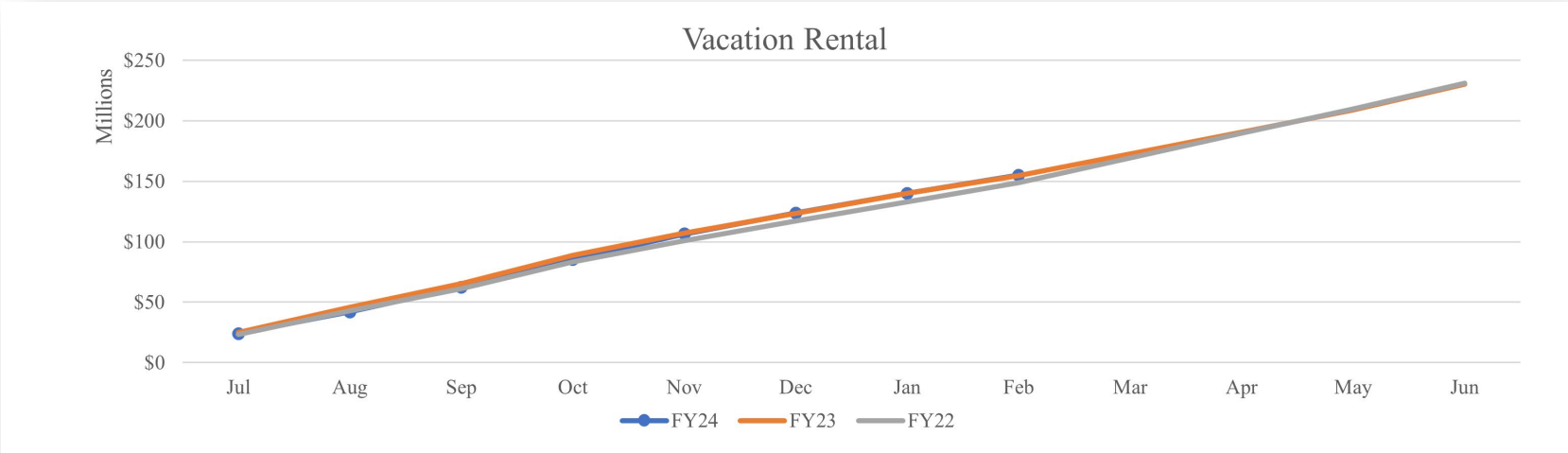
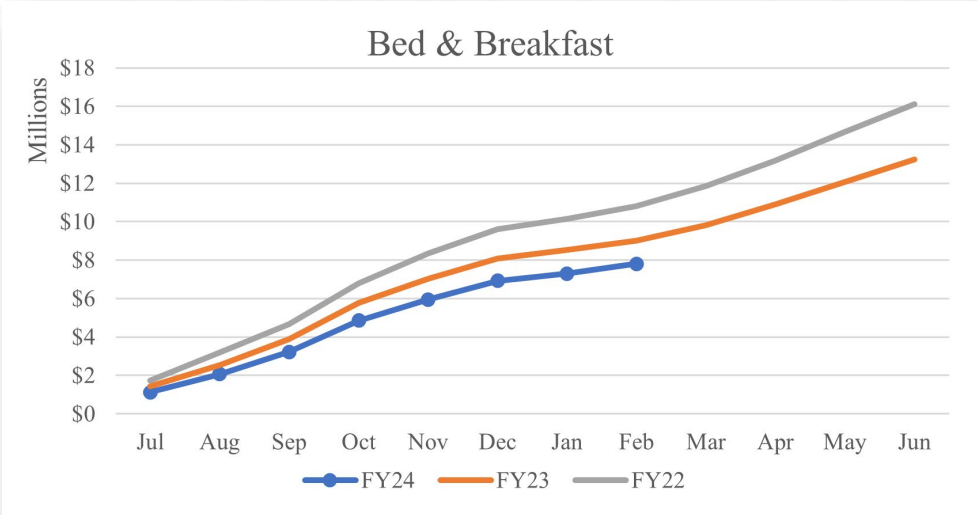
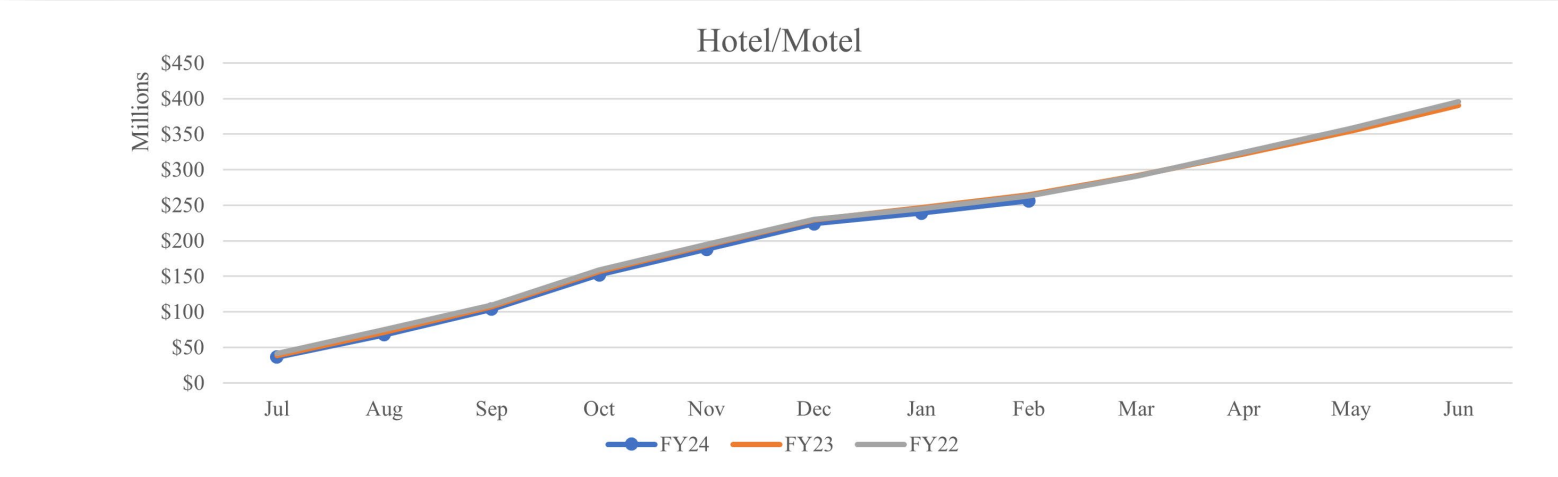


For more information, see financial and sales statements page 9



# LODGING SALES

Activity by type and month, shown for 3 years, March 2024



For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 10 - 11

# MARCH 2024 FINANCIAL REPORTS

Vice Chair Matthew Lehman

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Questions/Comments

**Suggested Motion:**

**Motion to approve the March 2024 Financial Reports as presented.**

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote





# FY24 AUDIT CONTRACT

Mason Scott  
Buncombe County

# FY24 AUDIT CONTRACT

## Audit background and timeline

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### Background

- NC General Statutes require independent financial audit each year
- Mauldin & Jenkins was selected in 2023 for a 3-year contract
  - Proposed pricing:
    - 1st year (FY23): \$11,000
    - 2nd year (FY24): \$12,000
    - 3rd year (FY25): \$13,000

### Timeline

- April 24, 2024: BCTDA Board considers FY24 contract (provided for review in advance)
- May – October 2024: FY24 audit underway
- October 31, 2024: FY24 audit completion
- January 2025: Audit presentation to BCTDA Board

# FY24 AUDIT CONTRACT

Vice Chair Matthew Lehman

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Questions/ Comments

**Suggested Motion:**

**Motion to approve the Mauldin & Jenkins FY24 audit letter and contract as presented.**

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote

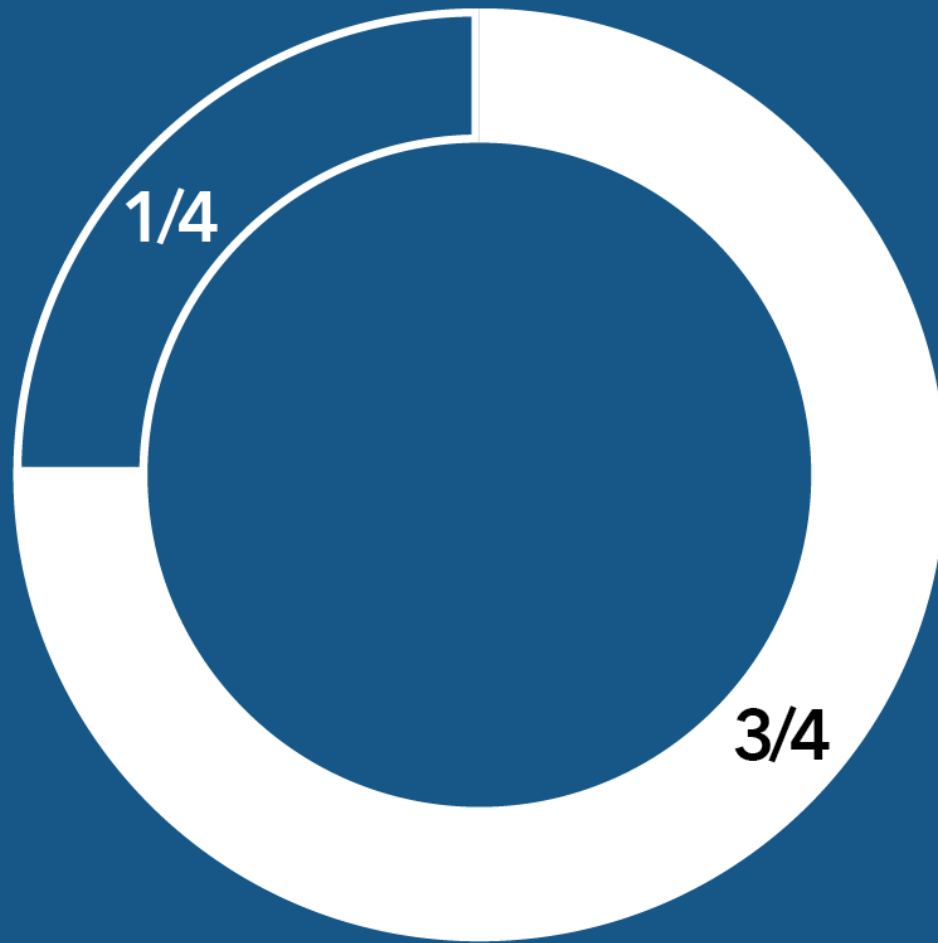




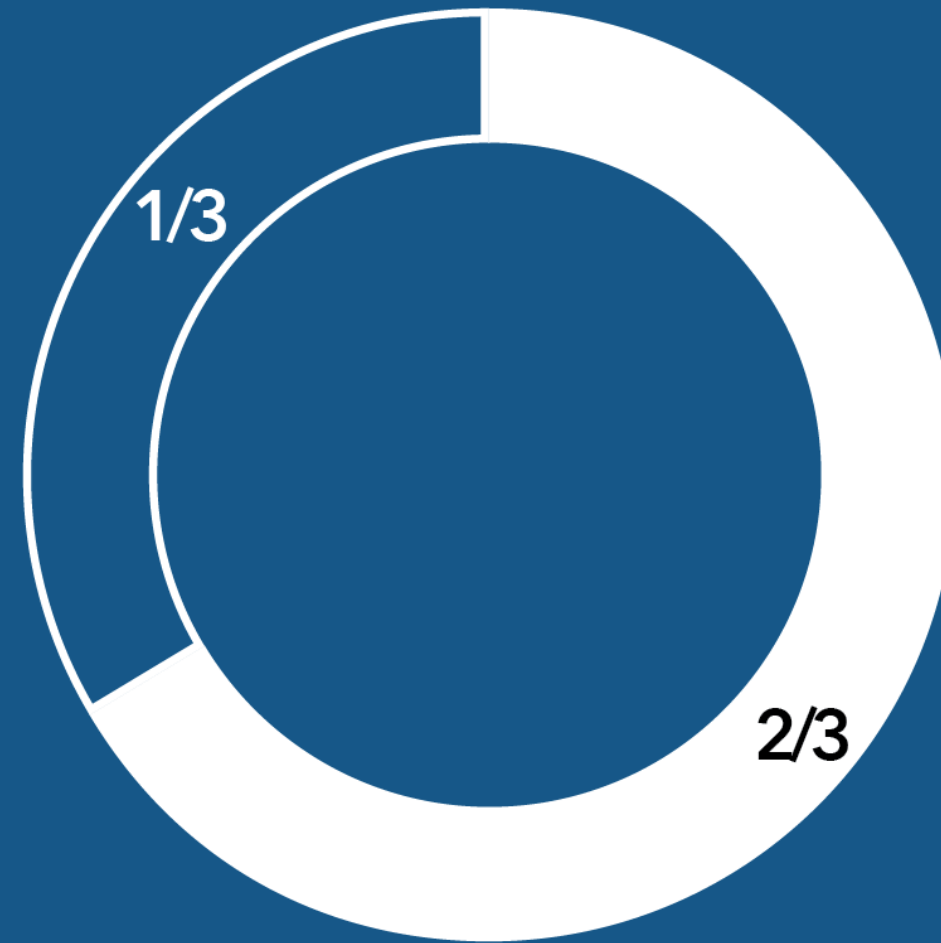
# LIFT FUND INVESTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Tiffany Thacker  
Director of Grants

# ALLOCATION OF BUNCOMBE COUNTY LODGING TAX PAID BY VISITORS IN HOTELS, VACATION RENTALS, BED & BREAKFAST INNS

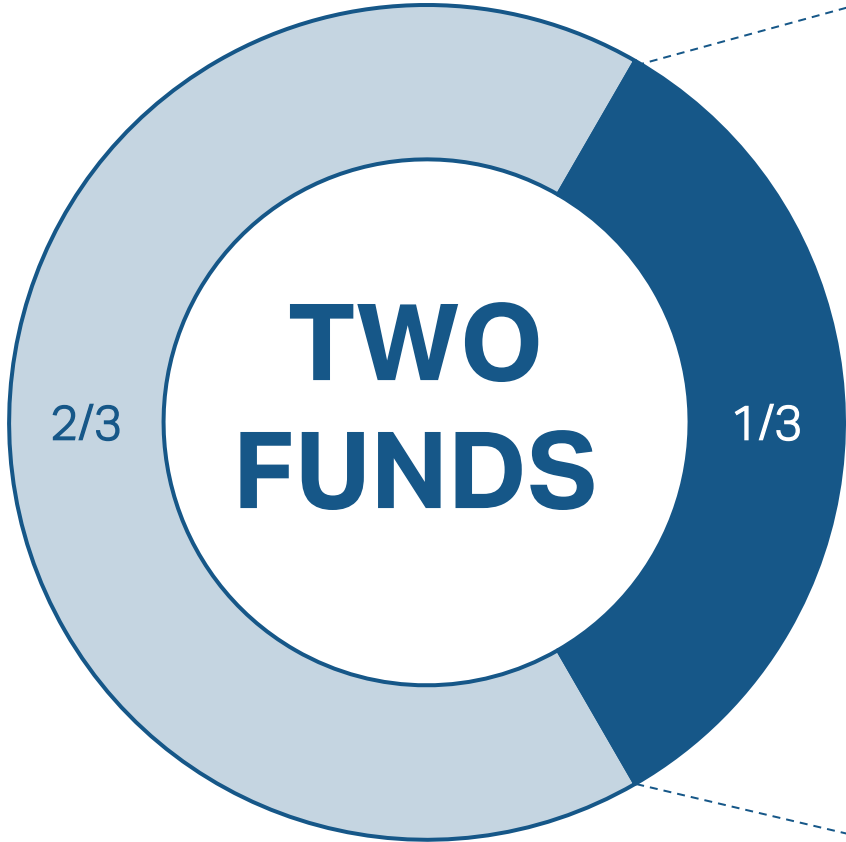


Previous legislation



New legislation

# COMMUNITY CAPITAL PROJECT INVESTMENT



**\$9.9M**  
**THIS CYCLE**

**Legacy Investment From Tourism (LIFT) Fund**

Provides financial investment for **tourism-related capital projects** in order to increase patronage of lodging facilities and **benefit the community at large in Buncombe County, including maintenance, design, project administration, restoration, rehabilitation, enhancement of natural resources, or expansion of necessary infrastructure.**

**\$9.4M**  
**THIS FALL**

**Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF)**

Provides financial investment for **major tourism capital projects** in order to increase patronage of lodging facilities in, and **further economic development in Buncombe County.**

Per legislation, cannot include operational expenses

# LIFT FUND COMMITTEE

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

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## **Himanshu Karvir**

President & CEO, Virtelle Hospitality, LLC  
*Lodging Appointment*

## **Amy Kelly**

Managing Principal, Hatteras Sky  
*Lodging Appointment*

## **Kyle Highberg**

Senior Director Of Operations – Hospitality, Biltmore Farms, LLC  
*Lodging Appointment*

## **Laura Webb**

Founder and President, Webb Investment Services, Inc.  
*Non-Lodging Appointment*

## **Mike McCarty**

Restaurant Owner, The Lobster Trap  
*Non-Lodging Appointment*

## **Shelton Steele**

Co-owner, Wrong Way River Lodge and Cabins  
*Lodging Appointment*

## **Kathleen Mosher**

VP Of Communications, Biltmore  
*Lodging Appointment*

## **Dr. Joseph Fox**

Founder & Owner, Fox Management Consulting Enterprises, LLC  
*Non-Lodging Appointment*

## **Barbara Benisch**

Non-Profit & Community Development Consultant  
*Non-Lodging Appointment*

## **HP Patel**

BCA Hotels; Treasurer of the Nonprofit  
*BCTDA Liaison (Non-Voting)*

# LIFT FUND 2024 GRANT CYCLE

## Summary

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**Available Funding:** \$9,988,903

### Phase I

- Applications opened on October 31, 2023 and closed on December 1, 2023
- 21 applications with a total combined request of \$23,765,092

### Phase II

- 17 applications progressed to Phase II of the application process
- 15 Phase II applications submitted, with one withdrawing their application before the site visits.
- The combined total request of the 14 remaining applications was \$13,615,012

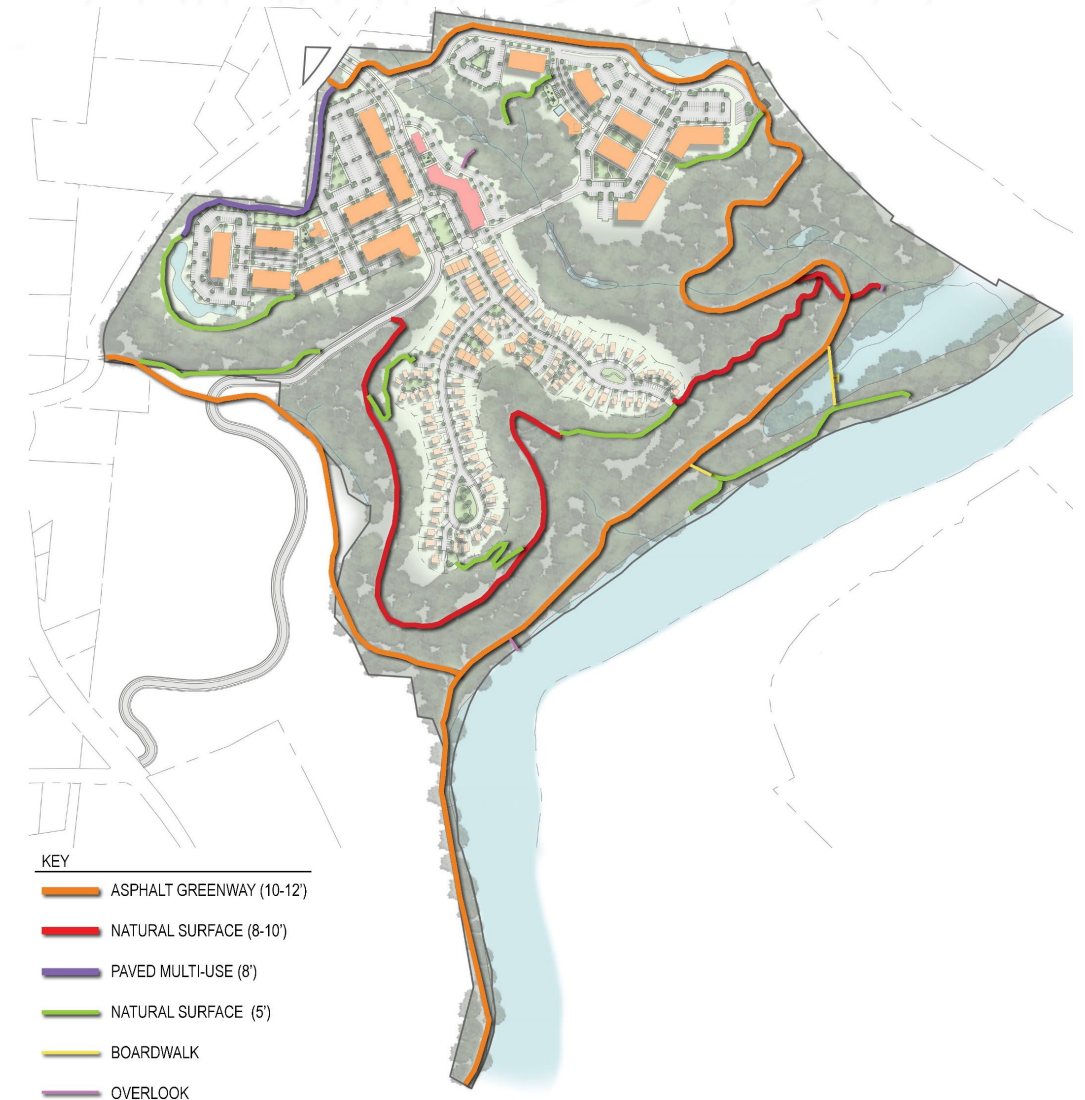
# BUNCOMBE COUNTY

## Ferry Road Community: Affordable Housing, Conservation and Public Recreation

- Community-focused sustainable mixed-use project on 137-acre Buncombe County-owned tract of land along the French Broad River off of Brevard Road
- Project will conserve 60% of the site (70+ acres) while delivering 645 units of housing with 55% at affordable rates, community services (e.g. childcare, health clinic) and approximately 4 miles of public greenways and trails with public parking
- Greenways and trails will connect key locations in the area, including Bent Creek River Park (the most visited county park), Biltmore Park West, the Arboretum
- Buncombe County will maintain ownership of the recreation and conservation components, while other parts of the Ferry Road project will ultimately be owned by private developers or individuals.
- Committee recommends investing in public recreation and conservation components, including 1.9 miles of greenway, 1.7 miles of trails, public parking access, greenway and trail signage, and wetland access and signage.
- Total budget for these components is \$7 million; the Committee agreed to waive the 1-to-1 funding match and invest \$4 million in this project due to overall project's impact on the community-at-large of Buncombe County.
- **Timeline:** October 2024 – December 2026
- **Project Budget:** \$210,000,000

**Request:** \$6,000,000

**Recommendation:** \$4,000,000



# CITY OF ASHEVILLE

## Aston Park Tennis Center Court Rebuild Design

- Aston Park Tennis Center is a City-owned facility that features 12 clay courts and hosts more than 14,000 people annually as players or spectators at tournaments and league play.
- Aston Park has hosted the Asheville Open Tennis Championships for 91 years, which was demoted from a Level 2 tournament to a Level 3 tournament due to the condition of the facilities.
- To reclaim a Level 2 status, the City has requested support for design, finishing construction documents, and cost estimation for all twelve courts at the facility.
- **Timeline:** June 2024 – December 2024
- **Project Budget:** \$103,948



**Request:** \$40,000

**Recommendation:** \$40,000



# CITY OF ASHEVILLE

## Coxe Avenue Complete Street

- Street improvement project that will includes the demolition and reconstruction of just over one-half mile of urban streetscape on Coxe Avenue between Patton Avenue and Southside to create a more pedestrian-friendly destination.
- The following improvements will enhance the customer experience and provide a more engaging and welcoming connection between Downtown and the Southside neighborhood
  - **Reducing flood impacts through stormwater improvements:** Water, stormwater, and sewer improvements to reduce flood impacts in the Southside
  - **Increasing safety for all modes of transportation:** by slowing vehicles, managing vehicle curb cuts, and improving bike and transit facilities
  - **Streetscape improvements and activating the street edge for pedestrians:** Roadway rebuild and resurfacing, wider sidewalks with gathering spaces, streetscape amenities, street trees and landscaping, street lighting, and public art
- LIFT Fund Committee recommends requiring the City present the design plans and more detailed construction budget to the board once the design phase is complete.
- **Timeline:** May 2025 – August 2026
- **Project Budget:** \$11,825,481

**Request:** \$3,000,000

**Recommendation:** \$2,983,890



# CITY OF ASHEVILLE

## ExploreAsheville.com Arena Capital Maintenance

- Capital maintenance projects at Harrah's Cherokee Center - Asheville that will help facilitate the retention and growth of important annual events
  - **HVAC Improvements:** Continue work towards full replacement and upgrade of HVAC system - 2 additional air handlers & associated equipment will be replaced
  - **Service/Freight Elevator Replacement:** Current elevator is 50 years old with parts and materials becoming increasingly difficult to find
  - **Loading Dock Repairs:** Decrease stress and increase weight capacities on concrete slabs in loading dock area
- **Timeline:** July 2024 – November 2025
- **Project Budget:** \$1,350,000



**Request:** \$675,000

**Recommendation:** \$675,000



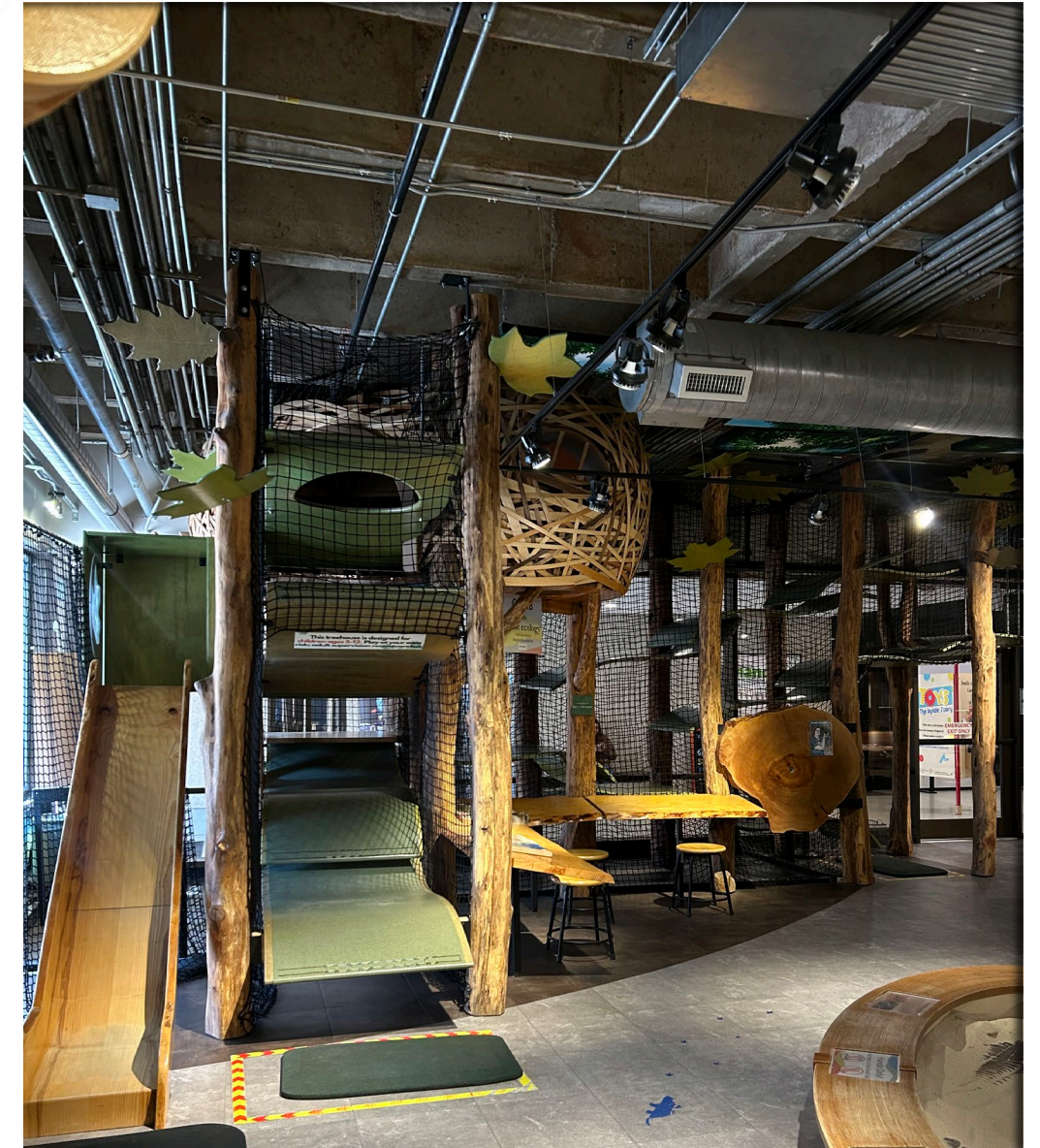
# ASHEVILLE MUSEUM OF SCIENCE

## Growing Together – Museum Repair & Expansion Plan

- AMOS has served more than 50,000 people at its downtown location over the past year, often reaching capacity and turning guests away
- Wells Fargo vacating the 10,000 square-foot space adjacent to AMOS provides AMOS the opportunity to expand their existing footprint.
- The Museum Repair and Expansion Plan request, includes the following:
  - Feasibility study & design of additional 10,000-square-foot space
  - Repair & Maintenance of existing exhibits
  - Additional safety features throughout existing space
- LIFT Fund Committee recommends adding a requirement in the contract that if the design of the additional space impacts any incomplete work outlined in the 2022 TPDF grant agreement, then AMOS should request a contract modification of the 2022 grant through the TPDF Committee
- **Timeline:** January 2024 – December 2024
- **Project Budget:** \$500,000

**Request:** \$250,000

**Recommendation:** \$250,000



# BLACK WALL STREET AVL

## Black Wall Street AVL Visitor Experience Upgrade

- Through a competitive process, Black Wall Street AVL was awarded an eight-year lease on 8 River Arts Place from the City of Asheville, which they have activated as an event venue, hosting a variety of events serving the community
- Facility has limitations with its current level of amenities that hinders the attractiveness of facility and usage in the warmer months or during inclement weather.
- Project components include:
  - **Air-Conditioning System:** Installation of air conditioning system (Building does not have AC system which is a detriment to the organization's ability to host events during warmer months)
  - **Patio Awnings:** Installation of patio awnings (offer protection from sun and weather to expand capacity of venue for events)
- **Timeline:** June 2024 – May 2025
- **Project Budget:** \$165,000



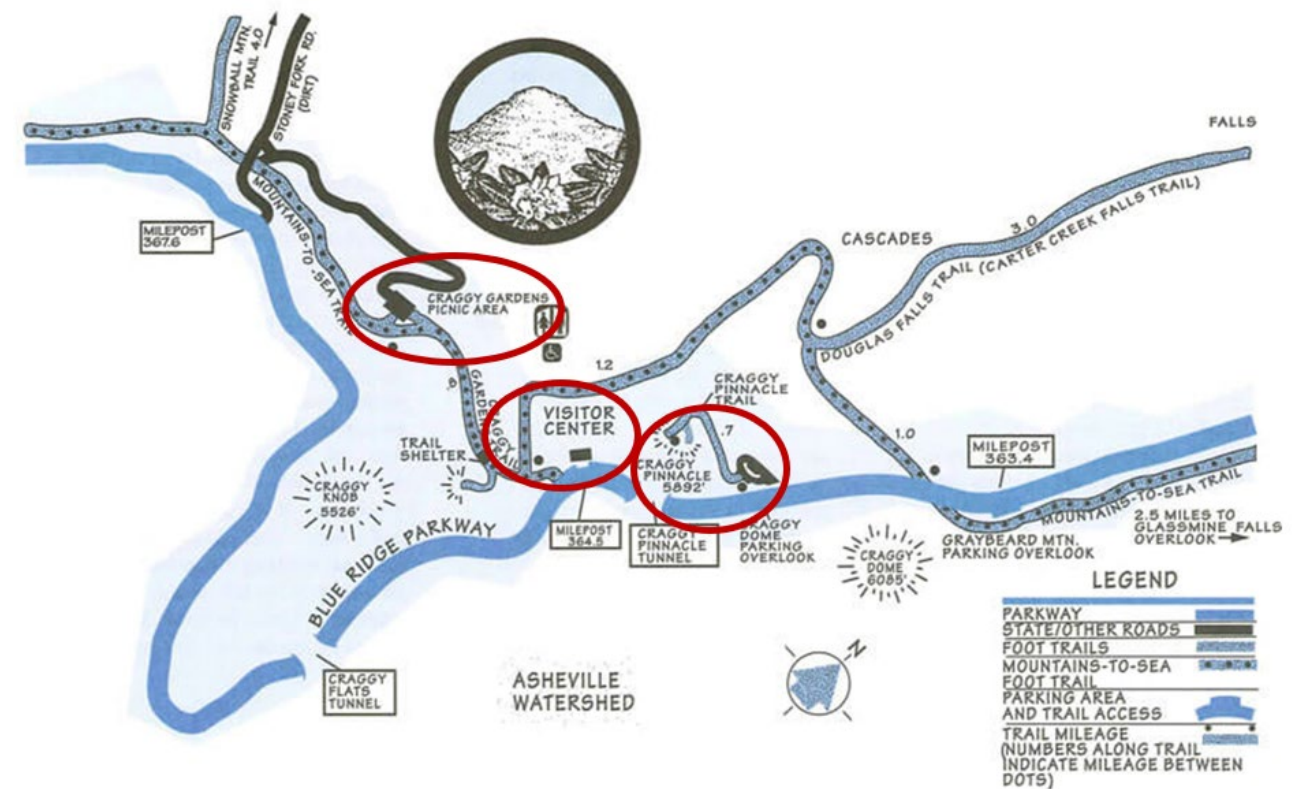
**Request:** \$82,500

**Recommendation:** \$77,500

# BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY FOUNDATION

## Blue Ridge Parkway: Improving Visitor Experiences at Craggy Gardens Year-Round

- Craggy Gardens ranks as one of the most popular locations in America's most visited national park unit.
- Blue Ridge Parkway does not charge an entrance fee, which makes the Parkway more accessible to people with limited economic means, but also leaves the Parkway with less resources to manage its visitation.
- Craggy Gardens lacks accessible restrooms and has aging facilities that were built in 1953
- Project includes:
  - **Restroom Facilities:** Permanent, accessible, year-round restroom facilities at the Craggy Gardens Visitor Center and the Craggy Pinnacle Trail parking lot (June 2025 – May 2026)
  - **Trailhead & wayfinding improvements:** Update trailhead and wayfinding signage for visitor center (Fall 2025 – April 2026)
  - **Planning & Design:** Planning and design for future visitor service improvements at the Craggy Gardens Visitor Center and Picnic Area (December 2024 – May 2026)
- **Timeline:** December 2024 – May 2026
- **Project Budget:** \$1,575,000



**Request:** \$750,000

**Recommendation:** \$750,000



# HOOD HUGGERS FOUNDATION

## Blue Note Junction (Phase 1 Construction)

- Hood Huggers Foundation and Asheville Creative Arts aim to create a one-of-a-kind health and business incubator within one of Asheville's oldest African American communities.
- Project is less than a block from Haywood Road in the heart of walkable West Asheville and will serve as a bridge between the historic Burton Street neighborhood and the busy Haywood Road Corridor
- Project aims to celebrate and uplift the cultural contributions of African American artists, writers, and musicians in the Appalachian region
- Phase I of Blue Note Junction project includes:
  - 9,000sf outdoor event venue with capacity of 500 guests
  - 2,100sf open-air market featuring 20 local BIPOC makers, artists, and growers
  - 1.5 acres of accessible gardens and 1,400sf greenhouse
- **Timeline:** October 2024 – March 2025
- **Project Budget:** \$7,145,000



**Request:** \$500,000

**Recommendation:** \$500,000

# MEDIA ARTS PROJECT (MAP)

## Supernova Immersive Experience Project Design

- Media Arts Project's Supernova project is a 26,000sf family-friendly immersive art experience planned in Weaverville, that will encourage visitors of all ages to experience art in a new way
- Immersive art experiences are a growing trend in entertainment across the country. (e.g. Meow Wolf, Factory Obscura and Otherworld)
- Supernova project will engage world-class artists alongside local creatives, craftsmen, fabricators, multimedia artists, and sculptors
- Property owner, Dewey Properties, is exploring a larger entertainment destination with Supernova as the anchor tenant
- Request is to support the design and engineering plans of Supernova including the design of permanent individual art experiences
- Committee recommends adding the following contingencies to the contract:
  - Requiring MAP to provide copy of lease prior to execution of grant agreement,
  - Lease cannot be sub-leased or transferred to a for-profit organization, and
  - Design contract must specify specific milestones that LIFT Fund disbursements will align with
- **Timeline:** May 2024 – August 2024
- **Project Budget:** \$600,000



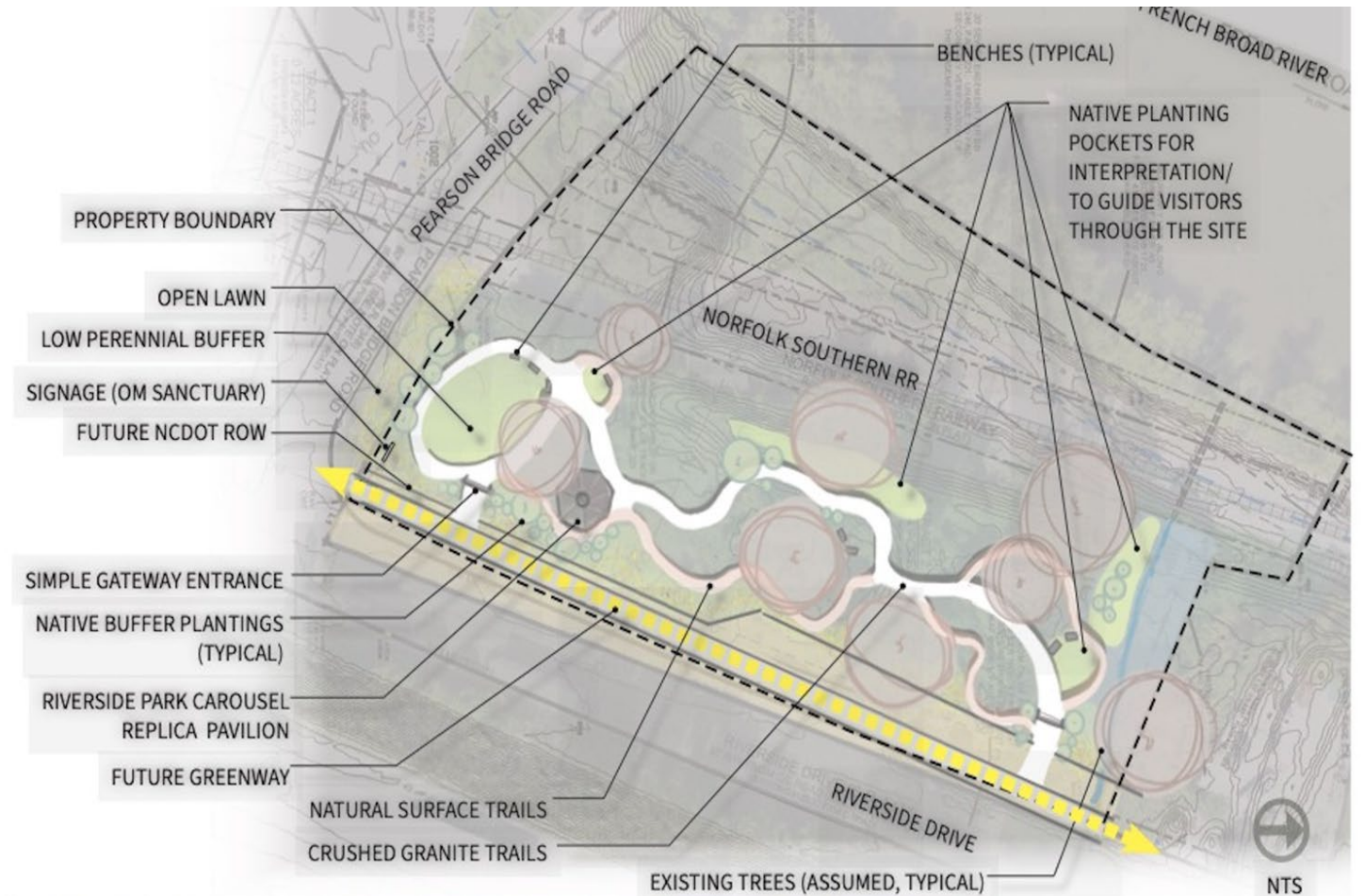
**Request:** \$300,000

**Recommendation:** \$200,000

# RIVERLINK

## Gateway Park: Resurrecting a public park on Riverside Drive

- Gateway Park project is a natural, partly wooded 1.3-acre public parklet designed for bike and pedestrian users halfway between the River Arts District and Woodfin on the bank of the French Broad River.
- Park features meandering pathways and native plantings, arched gateways at both entrances and a carousel-inspired pavilion, the proposed project will resurrect a smaller version of a historic park
- Three major bike and pedestrian projects leading to the site are in development now - one each planned by NC Department of Transportation, Buncombe County and the City of Asheville
- Park will improve connectivity and safe bike and pedestrian transit along the river by expanding the existing greenway network
- Park will be the only public greenspace in the busy 2.5-mile corridor between the River Arts District (RAD) and Woodfin's Silver-Line Park.
- **Timeline:** December 2024 – June 2025
- **Project Budget:** \$615,037



**Request:** \$270,018

**Recommendation:** \$270,018

# SWANNANOVA VALLEY ART LEAGUE

## Expanding Visitors and Artists Experiences in Downtown Black Mountain (Red House Gallery & Studios)

- Swannanoa Valley Art League (SVAL) is the oldest, continuous art league in western North Carolina, established in 1967
- Established as a community-based organization for local artists to display their work and to offer community-based educational experiences for the Swannanoa Valley
- In late 2023, SVAL was given short notice to vacate former premises due to the transfer of ownership of the Monte Vista Hotel. SVAL then quickly relocated to 101 Cherry Street, a three-story, 1926 historic, 4,500-square-foot building in the heart of downtown Black Mountain that features a gallery, artist studios, and an education room
- Red House Gallery and Studios houses 47 permanent artists, with the gallery featuring a themed and curated bi-monthly exhibit representing 23 artists
- Funding request is to support the design and renovation of 101 Cherry Street, including façade improvements and an update to the HVAC system
- **Timeline:** February 2024 – September 2024
- **Project Budget:** \$184,988



**Request:** \$92,494

**Recommendation:** \$92,495



# UNIVERSITY BOTANICAL GARDENS AT ASHEVILLE, INC. (BGA)

## Building on Our Legacy: Uplifting BGA Facilities to Better Serve Tourists and Residents

- The project aims to increase the functionality and attractiveness of the gardens as a destination and event venue, boost its appeal to native plant enthusiasts, address safety issues, and enhance ADA compliance.
- Renovations and improvements will allow the BGA to offer a unique venue with relaxed, informal atmosphere focused on nature and natural beauty of the area.
- Project includes:
  - **Visitors Center Renovation:**
    - Remodel and upgrade of the Butler Room to provide a functional, modern, and aesthetically pleasing space for income-producing event rentals, classes, lectures, and meetings
    - Replace solarium with an outdoor seating area for guests to enjoy
  - **Garden Entrance and Gazebo Renovation:**
    - Replace and upgrade steps, handrails, and signage at the main entrance of the Gardens to improve visitor safety, accessibility, wayfinding, and aesthetics.
    - Rebuild gazebo located in the Sunshine Meadow
- **Timeline:** November 2024 – February 2025
- **Project Budget:** \$300,000



**Request:** \$150,000

**Recommendation:** \$150,000

# LIFT FUND 2024 GRANT CYCLE

## Recommended Investments

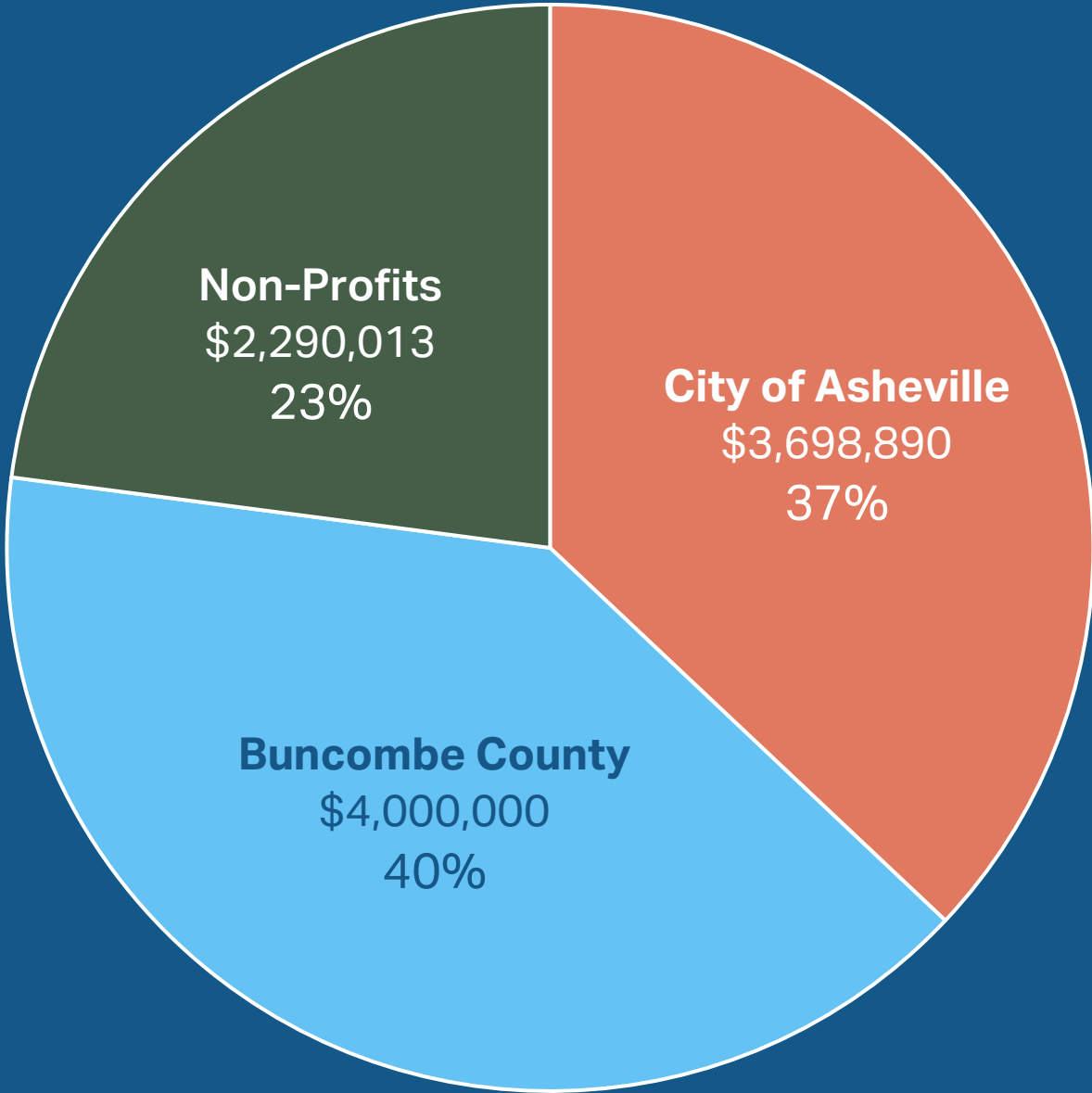
Applicant	Project	Amount Requested	Investment Recommendation
Buncombe County	Ferry Road Community: Affordable Housing, Conservation and Public Recreation	\$6,000,000	\$4,000,000
City of Asheville	Aston Park Tennis Center Court Rebuild Design	\$40,000	\$40,000
City of Asheville	Coxe Avenue Complete Street	\$3,000,000	\$2,983,890
City of Asheville	ExploreAsheville.com Arena Capital Maintenance	\$675,000	\$675,000
Asheville Museum of Science	Growing Together - Museum Repair and Expansion Plan	\$250,000	\$250,000
Black Wall Street AVL	Black Wall Street AVL Visitor Experience Upgrade	\$82,500	\$77,500
Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation	Improving Visitor Experiences at Craggy Gardens Year-Round	\$750,000	\$750,000
Hood Huggers Foundation	Blue Note Junction (Phase 1 Construction)	\$500,000	\$500,000
Media Arts Project (MAP)	Supernova Immersive Experience Project Design	\$300,000	\$200,000
RiverLink	Gateway Park: Resurrecting a public park on Riverside Drive	\$270,018	\$270,018
Swannanoa Valley Fine Arts League ( DBA Swannanoa Valley Gallery and Studios)	Expanding Visitors and Artists Experiences in Downtown Black Mountain (Red House Gallery and Studios)	\$92,494	\$92,495
University Botanical Gardens at Asheville, Inc.	Building on Our Legacy: Uplifting BGA Facilities to Better Serve Tourists and Residents	\$150,000	\$150,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$13,615,012</b>	<b>\$9,988,903</b>



# LIFT FUND INVESTMENT SUMMARY

77% of LIFT Fund recommendations going to City and County Government Partners

**77%**  
**TO CITY AND COUNTY  
GOVERNMENT PARTNERS**



# LIFT FUND PROJECT TIMELINES

City
County
Non-Profit

2024	2025	2026
<div>Supernova May '24– Aug '24</div> <div>Red House Gallery and Studios Feb '24 – Sep '24</div> <div>AMOS Museum Repair &amp; Expansion Plan Jan '24 – Dec '24</div> <div>Aston Park Tennis Center Jun '24– Dec '24</div> <div>Botanical Gardens Nov '24 – Feb '25</div> <div>Blue Note Junction (Phase 1) Oct '24 – Mar '25</div> <div>Black Wall Street AVL Visitor Experience Upgrade Jun '24 – May '25</div> <div>Gateway Park on Riverside Drive Dec '24 – Jun '25</div> <div>ExploreAsheville.com Arena Capital Maintenance Jul '24 – Nov '25</div> <div>Blue Ridge Parkway – Craggy Garden Upgrades December '24 – May '26</div> <div>Coxe Avenue Complete Street May '25 – Aug '26</div> <div>Ferry Road Community Oct '24 – Dec '26</div>		

# LIFT FUND INVESTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Matthew Lehman

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Questions/ Comments

**Suggested Motion:**

**Motion to approve the grant investment funding for each project as recommended by the Legacy Investment from Tourism Committee.**

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote





# PRESIDENT & CEO REPORT

Vic Isley

Explore Asheville | President & CEO



# THE BENEFITS OF VISITORS IN ASHEVILLE & BUNCOMBE COUNTY RUN DEEP

The visitor economy supports local businesses and contributes to local government revenues.

## \$238 MILLION

in state & local tax revenues are generated by the visitor economy

Buncombe County households would need to pay an additional \$2,261 in taxes annually to replace the visitor generated taxes received by state and local governments.

**27,000 JOBS**  
supported by the visitor economy  
(1 in 7 Jobs)

**\$131 MILLION**  
in state tax revenues

**\$74 MILLION**  
in county tax revenues

**\$33 MILLION**  
in city tax revenues

**\$2.6 BILLION**  
direct visitor spending  
(20% of GDP in Buncombe County)

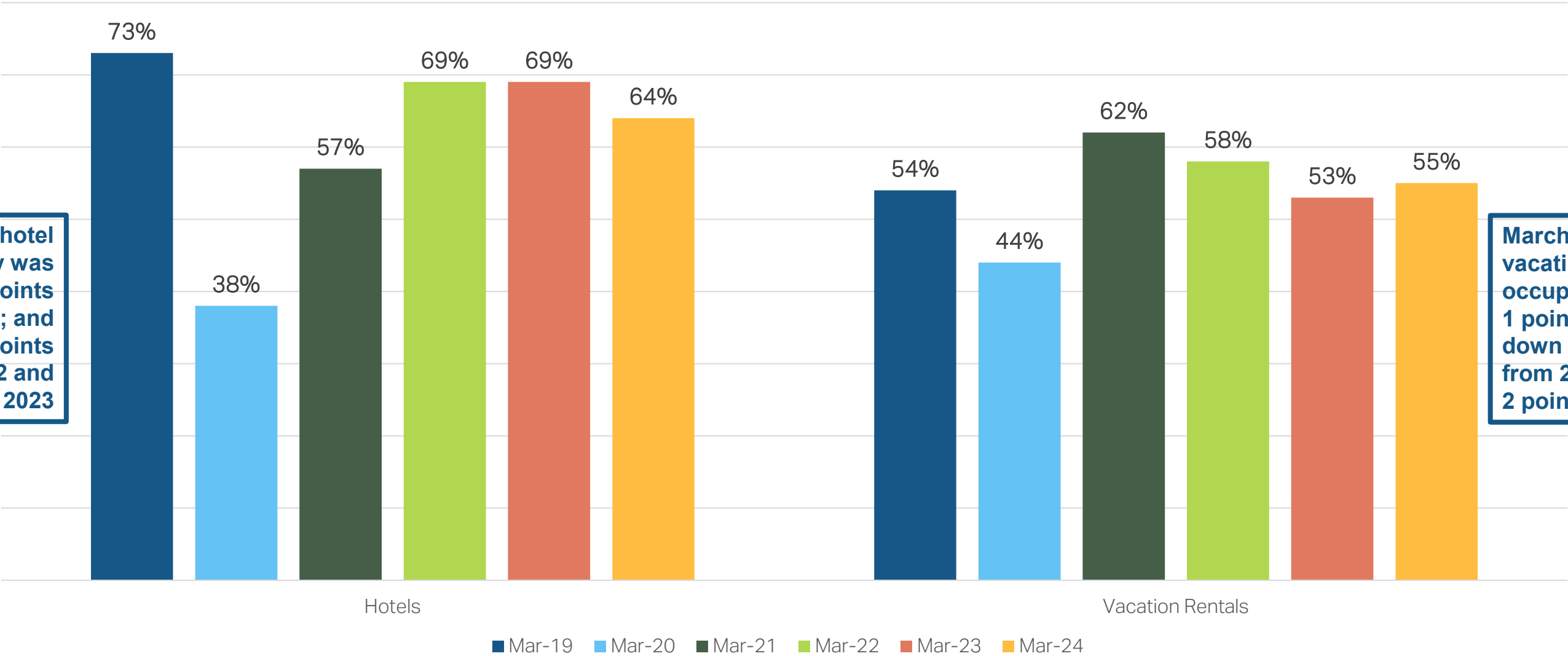
**\$915 MILLION**  
in visitor-generated income for residents  
(16% of local income)

the visitor economy supports  
**\$1 out of every \$5**  
in city and county revenues

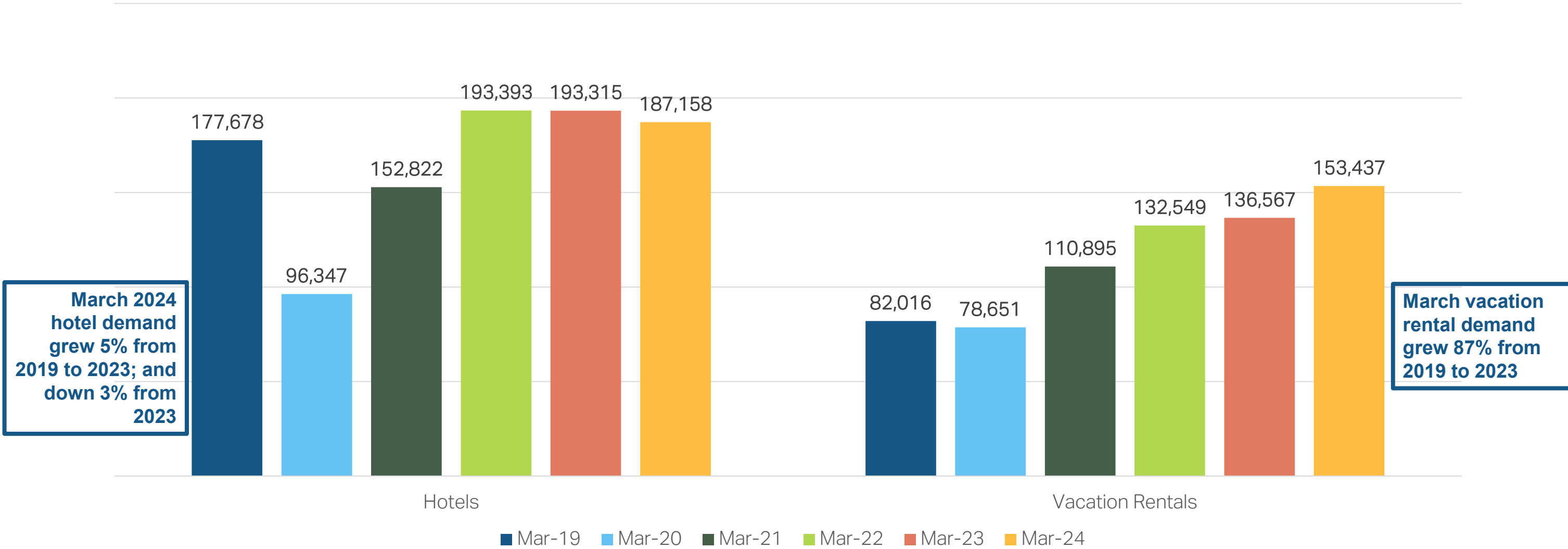
# MARCH LODGING OCCUPANCY

March 2024 hotel occupancy was down 9 points from 2019; and down 5 points from 2022 and 2023

March 2024 vacation rental occupancy was up 1 point from 2019; down 3 points from 2022 and up 2 points from 2023

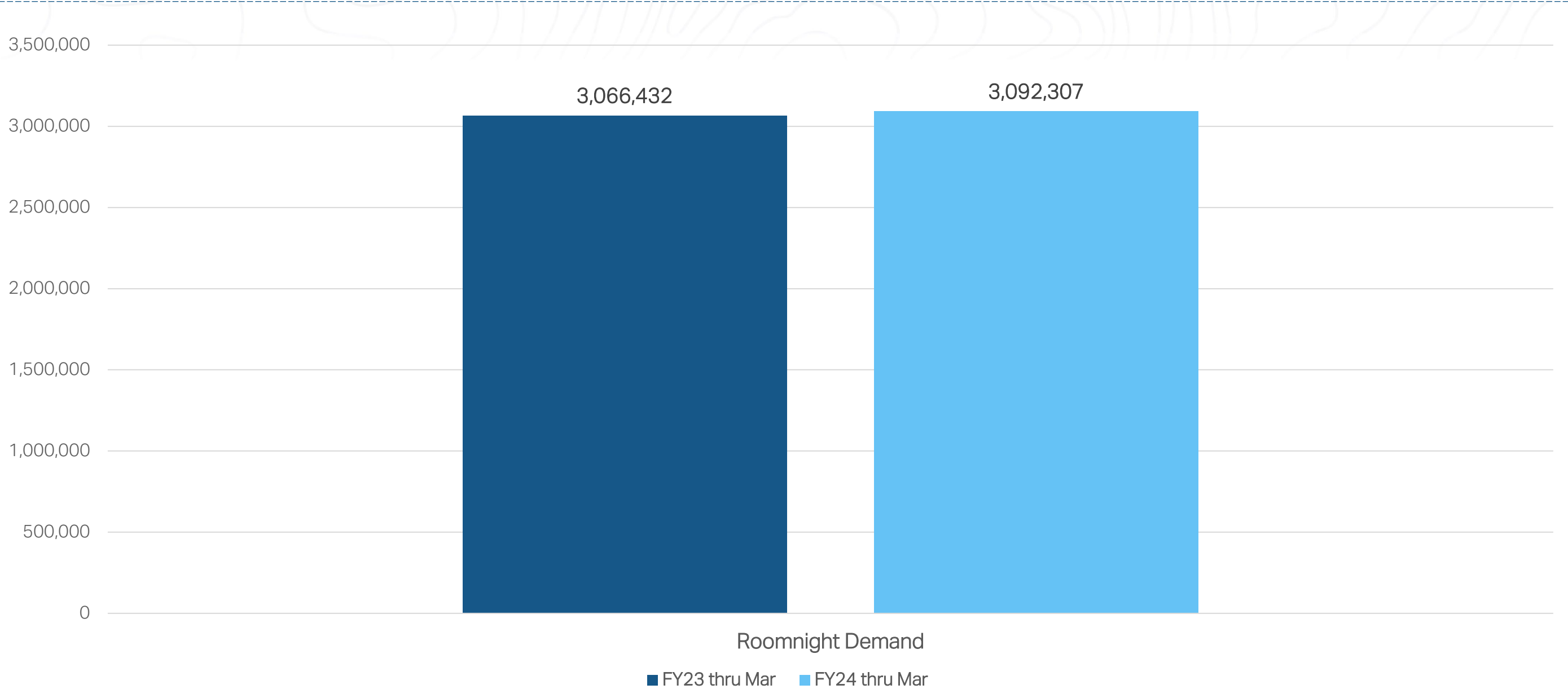


# MARCH LODGING DEMAND



# TOTAL ROOMNIGHT DEMAND FY24 YTD THROUGH MARCH

On par with FY23



# EARTH DAY CLEANUP RECAP

100 participants | 460 pounds of trash



# LOCAL FESTIVALS & CULTURAL EVENTS

Supported by Explore Asheville and the BCTDA

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## April Events

- Maker Faire
- Downtown After 5 (Series)
- {Re}HAPPENING 12
- UNCA Our Turn to Play Scholarship Dinner

## May Events

- NC Arboretum's Bloom with a View
- Pritchard Park Summer Culture and Art Series
- AVL Beer Week
- Downtown After 5 (Series)
- Swannanoa Valley Music Heritage Concert
- GRINDfest

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

Event sponsorships are also accepted on a rolling basis. More information is available at [AshevilleCVB.com](https://AshevilleCVB.com).





# STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES PROGRESS UPDATE

Vic Isley  
President & CEO

Dodie Stephens  
Vice President of Marketing

Michael Kryzanek  
Vice President Business Development

Penelope Whitman  
Vice President of Partnership & Destination Management

Jennifer Kass-Green  
Vice President of Culture & Business Affairs

EXPLORE  
**ASHEVILLE**  
POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism  
Development Authority

# EXPLORE ASHEVILLE & BCTDA'S STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

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

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

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

# QUARTERLY HIGHLIGHTS

JANUARY 2024 – MARCH 2024

EXPLORE  
ASHEVILLE

POWERED BY

Buncombe County Tourism  
Development Authority



# MARKETING, CONTENT, & PR

## Q3 INITIATIVES

Dodie Stephens  
Vice President of Marketing

# ADRIAN AWARDS 2024

Always, Asheville storytelling foundation won HSMAI Bronze Adrian Award



# EXPLORE ASHEVILLE XAFAR CONTENT & MEDIA PROGRAM

## Telling The Stories of Asheville from Those Who Know It The Best

- 350+ local POIs/experiences covered to date.
- 21 custom and editorial articles across print and digital, in addition to an in-market partner workshop.
- Interviewed and featured 10 local creators.

### AFAR READER SURVEY

**#1** most recalled ad  
in the "Where to Go in 2024 Issue"

*"Made me want to go to Asheville."*

*"After seeing this ad and other articles in regard to Asheville that your magazine had previously, I am now in the process of booking a trip to Asheville for the beginning of March."*

**Spring 2024 Custom Page content includes focus on "Innovative Asheville" with callouts of NOAA, EV charging stations, and Asheville Ideas Fest**



# STRATEGIC MEDIA PARTNERSHIPS

Illuminating the area's knowledge capital and meeting amenities with editorial case studies and video



NEWS DESTINATION GUIDES PLANNING TIPS & TRENDS INCENTIVE PLANNING TOOLS EVENTS CALENDAR CAREER DEVELOPMENT



Inspire innovation  
and meet in  
the mountains.

PLAN NOW

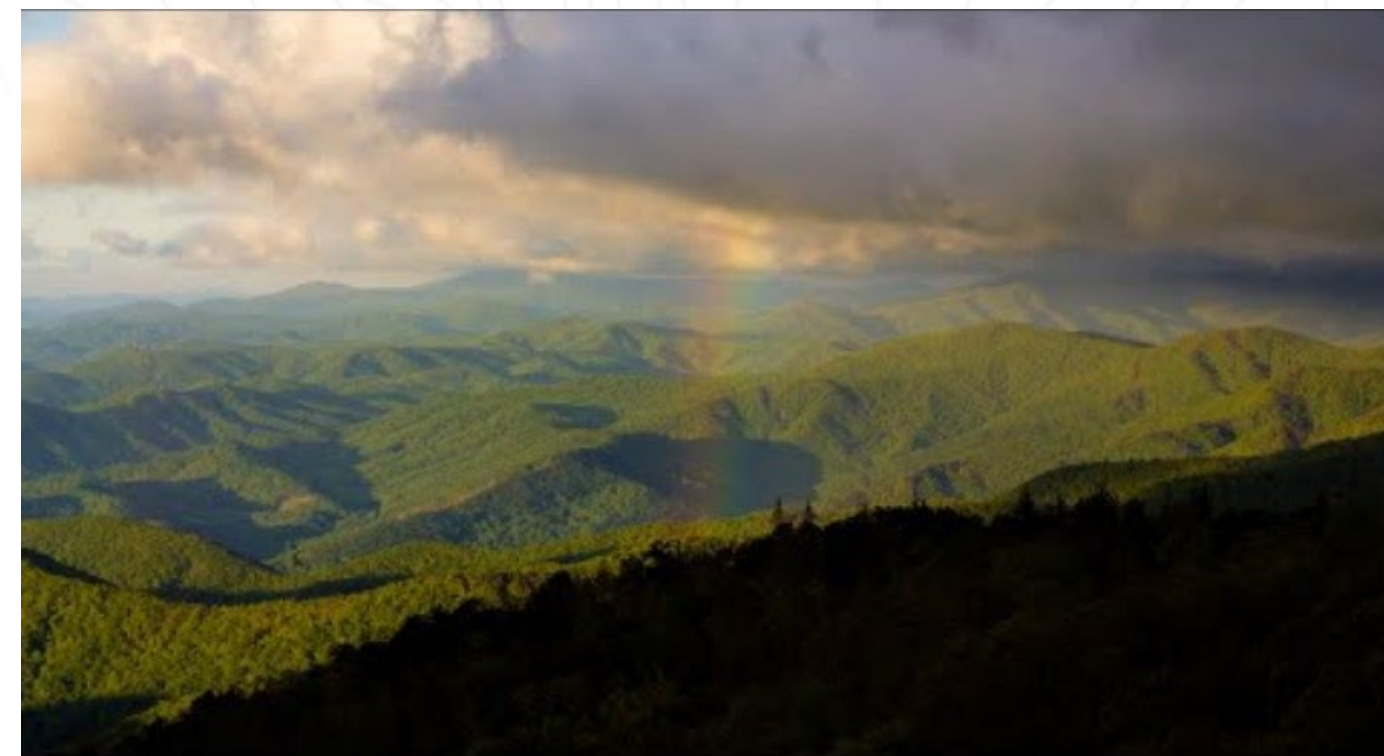
Supplied Content / Video Spotlight

## Asheville Is an International Hub for Climate-Science Events

January 8, 2024

### SPOTLIGHT ON COMMUNITY ASSETS

*Editorial case  
studies and  
videos featuring  
interviews with  
meeting planners  
and local industry  
leaders.*



### DESTINATION FILMING

*Four-day shoot in  
October 2023  
with 11 interviews  
conducted.*



### CLIMATE SCIENCE

Published January 8

FEATURING: 9th Annual Climate Adaptive  
Design Symposium

### OUTDOOR INDUSTRY

Published February 11

FEATURING: Adventure Travel Trade  
Association's AdventureELEVATE

### WELLNESS

Published April 3

FEATURING: Love Shine Play  
Yoga Festival

### AUTOMOTIVE

May launch

# LOCAL CONTENT CREATOR INITIATIVE

## Local Content Creators Increase Engagement Through Shortform Video Content

### WHAT?

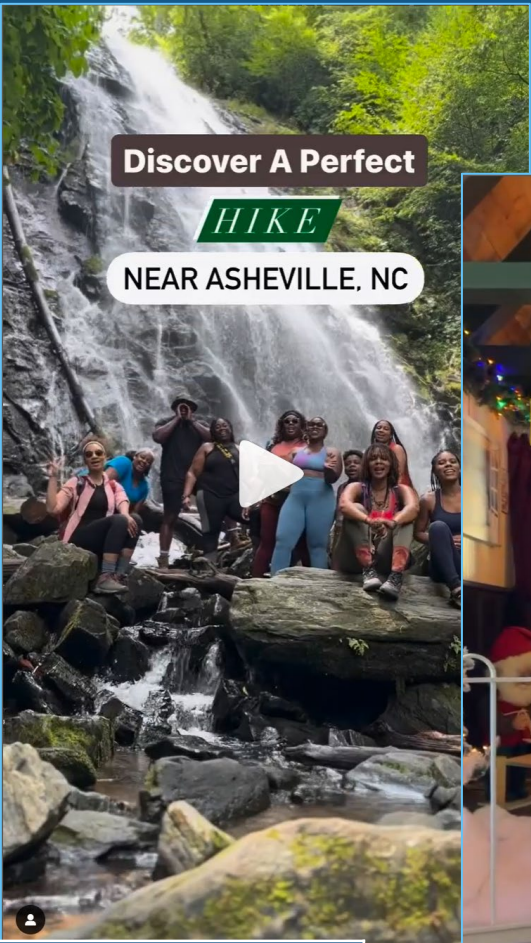
- Work with 10 local creators to produce social-first shortform video content that depicts Asheville through diverse, first-person, follow-along journeys.

### WHY?

- 66% percent of consumers say shortform video content is the most engaging content type. People watch, on average, 17 hours of online videos per week + people are 52% more likely to save and share video content than any other type.
- A diverse mix of creators means we can cover more places and showcase more perspectives.

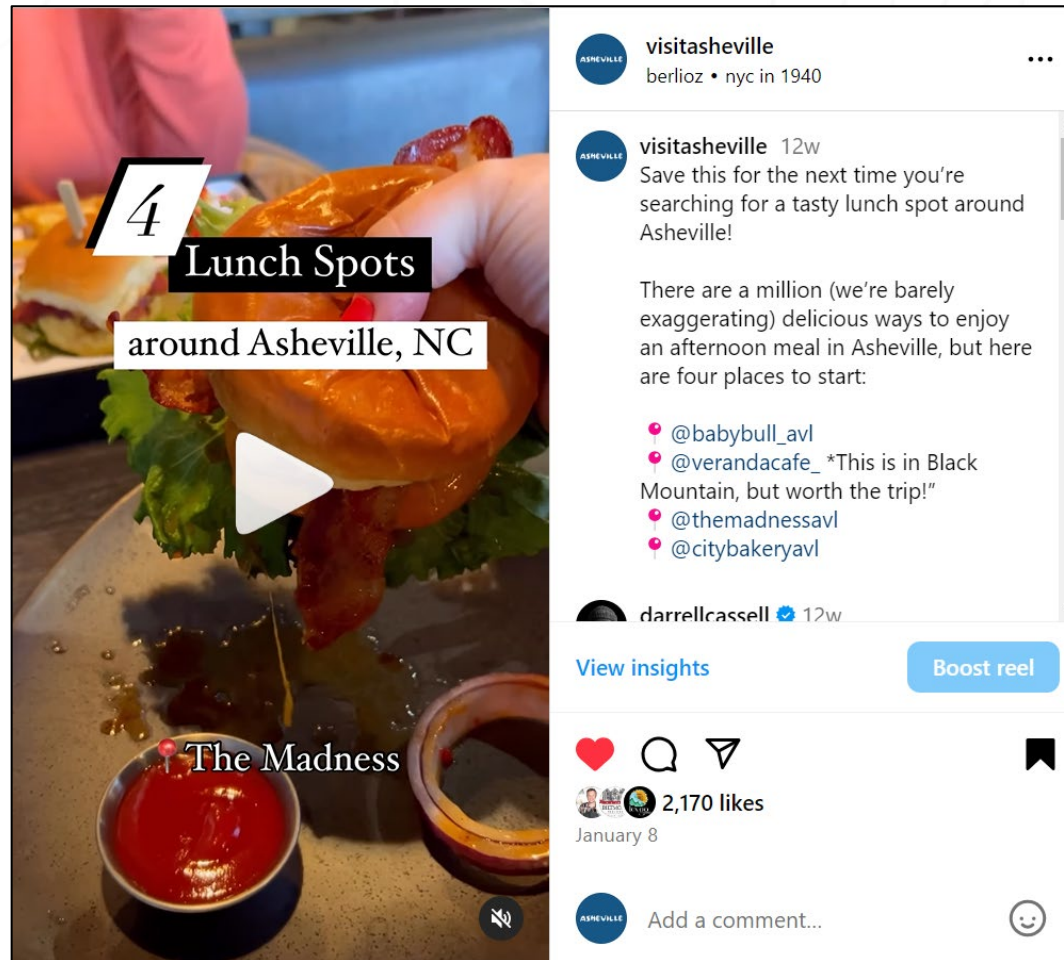
### EARLY RESULTS

	Comments	Shares	Saves
8 Creator Reels	327 +124%	4,378 +206%	4,478 +490%
Top 8 Photo Posts	146	1,432	759

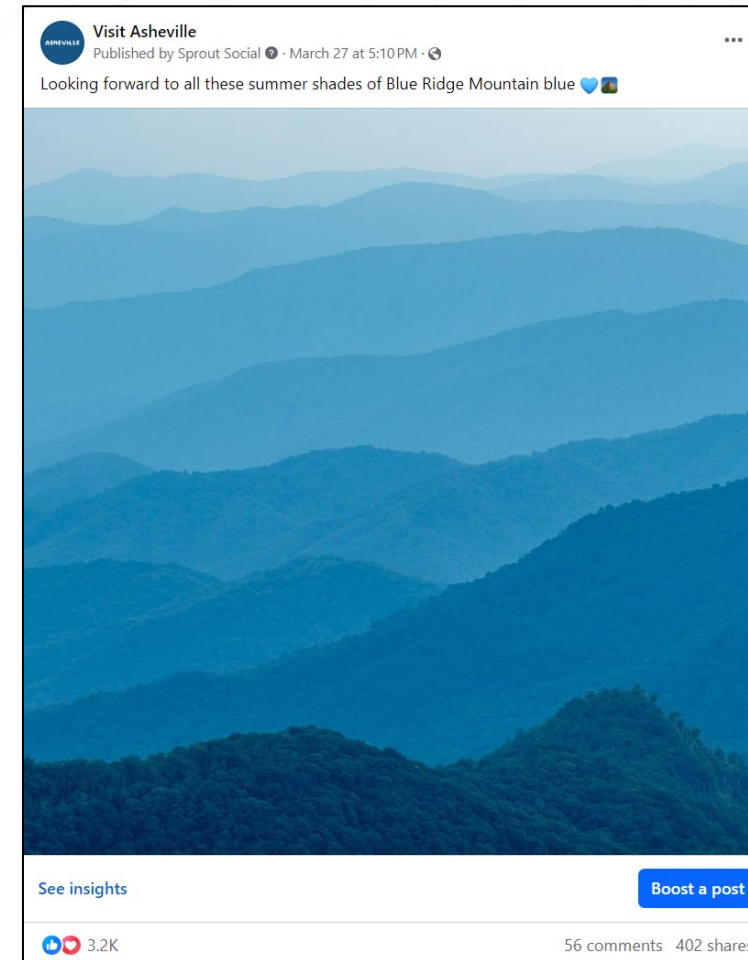


# TOP PERFORMING POSTS

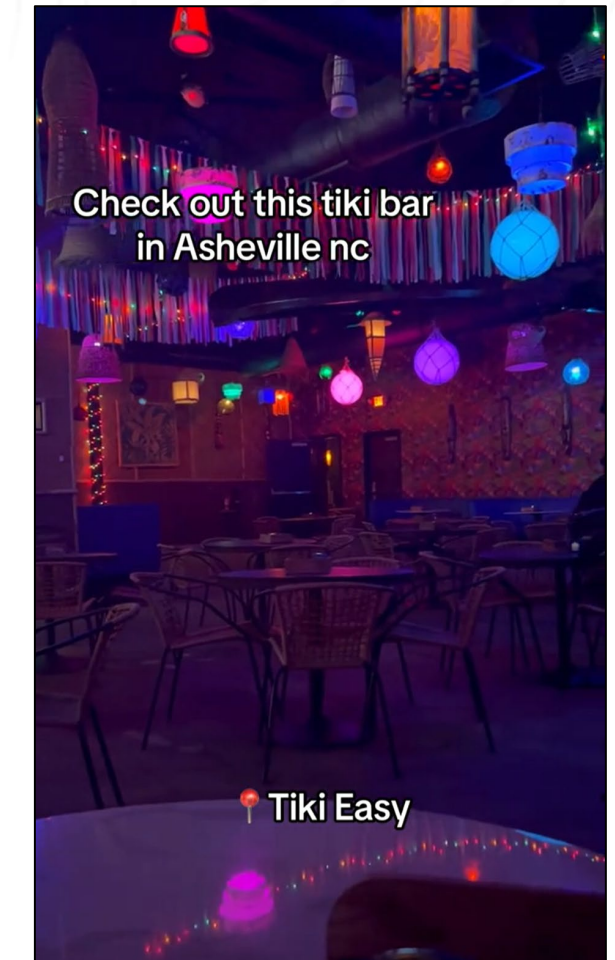
Most engaging content and format varies by social channel



**INSTAGRAM: INSIDER INFO**  
**4 Lunch Spots Around Asheville, NC (Reel)**  
5,295 Engagements



**FACEBOOK: NATURE & BEAUTY**  
**Blue Ridge Mountains (Photo)**  
5,737 Engagements



**TIKTOK: NEW & NOTABLE**  
**Tiki Easy (Reel)**  
957 Engagements

*Engagements = Likes, Comments, Saves, Shares*

# NOTEWORTHY NEWS CLIPS

Pitched stories that shine a spotlight on Asheville

**1.25B**  
Earned Media Reach  
**\$2.25M**  
Publicity Value  
**6**  
Hosted Media  
**32**  
Significant Team Placements  
**79**  
Total Placements

## Frommer's®

Asheville History: New Black Heritage Trail Honors a Rich Legacy



## The Washington Post

BY THE WAY

Where to travel in 2024, without crowds



## TRAVEL+LEISURE

This Southern U.S. City Recently Unveiled a 1-mile Black Heritage Trail That Passes Through 3 Historic Neighborhoods



Accolades:



Food Destinations



Five U.S. Destinations to Watch In 2024

## Boston MAGAZINE

A New England Traveler's Guide to Asheville, North Carolina



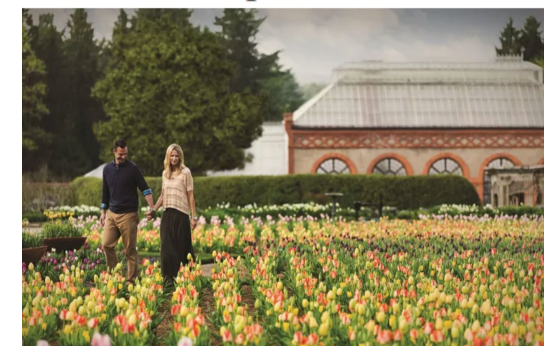
## PRIDE JOURNEYS

Asheville Black Cultural Heritage Trail Brings Focus to Black History in the Blue Ridge Mountains



## Southern Living

15 Best Places To Travel In The South This April





# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT Q3 INITIATIVES

Michael Kryzanek  
Vice President Business Development

EXPLORE  
**ASHEVILLE**  
POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism  
Development Authority

# CONFERENCE CONNECTIONS

Recruiting group and event business to our community

- Attended Religious Conference Management Association (RCMA) in January seeking connections with planners for faith-based organizations
- Met with Christian Meeting & Conferences Association (CMCA) and became a sponsor of its annual meeting at Ridgecrest in March
- Results to date include two RFPs, one of 7,000 attendees with flexible dates and one for 2,000 attendees that requires 250 room nights



# 48-HOUR FAMILIARIZATION TOURS

Hosted three separate groups in the third quarter

- “Fams” are one of our highest ROI initiatives - Historically, 75%+ of attendees book one or multiple events in Asheville
- In January, the Independent Planner Education Conference (IPEC) was held in Greenville, SC
  - Leveraging the proximity, Explore Asheville invited attending planners for familiarization tours before and after the conference
  - Of the 20 total participants, six were from the West Coast
- In March, hosted eight additional qualified meeting professionals for a “test drive” of Asheville
- These efforts brought four new leads so far, totaling nearly 1,500 room nights



# WEDDING INDUSTRY MIXER

Networked with vendors that provide group referrals

- Wedding groups are Asheville's second strongest source of business after sports groups
- Local vendors are our number one source for wedding leads
- Explore Asheville convened 67 community vendors on January 30 at The Radical Hotel to further connections in the industry



# ASHEVILLE BUSINESS EVENTS COUNCIL (ABEC)

Engaging local stakeholders for networking and lead generation

Furthered efforts with ABEC, an ongoing collaboration with the Economic Development Commission (EDC) to utilize business travel and events as the front porch of traditional economic development.

Convened 25+ business leaders in February and encouraged support with recruiting boards and associations to meet in the community.

The quarterly meeting included a panel discussion regarding the power of bringing climate-centered conferences to Asheville. Panelists included:

- Jenny Dissen, NOAA National Centers for Environmental Studies,
- Clark Duncan, EDC
- Kathryn Dewey, Explore Asheville



# SOCON BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT DIRECT SPENDING | MARCH 6 -11

Source: Explore Asheville's Event Impact Calculator

- 2024 Tournament: \$5,110,342
- 2023 Tournament: \$5,167,955
- 2022 Tournament: \$4,406,304



# TICKET SALES BY CITY

## SoCon Basketball

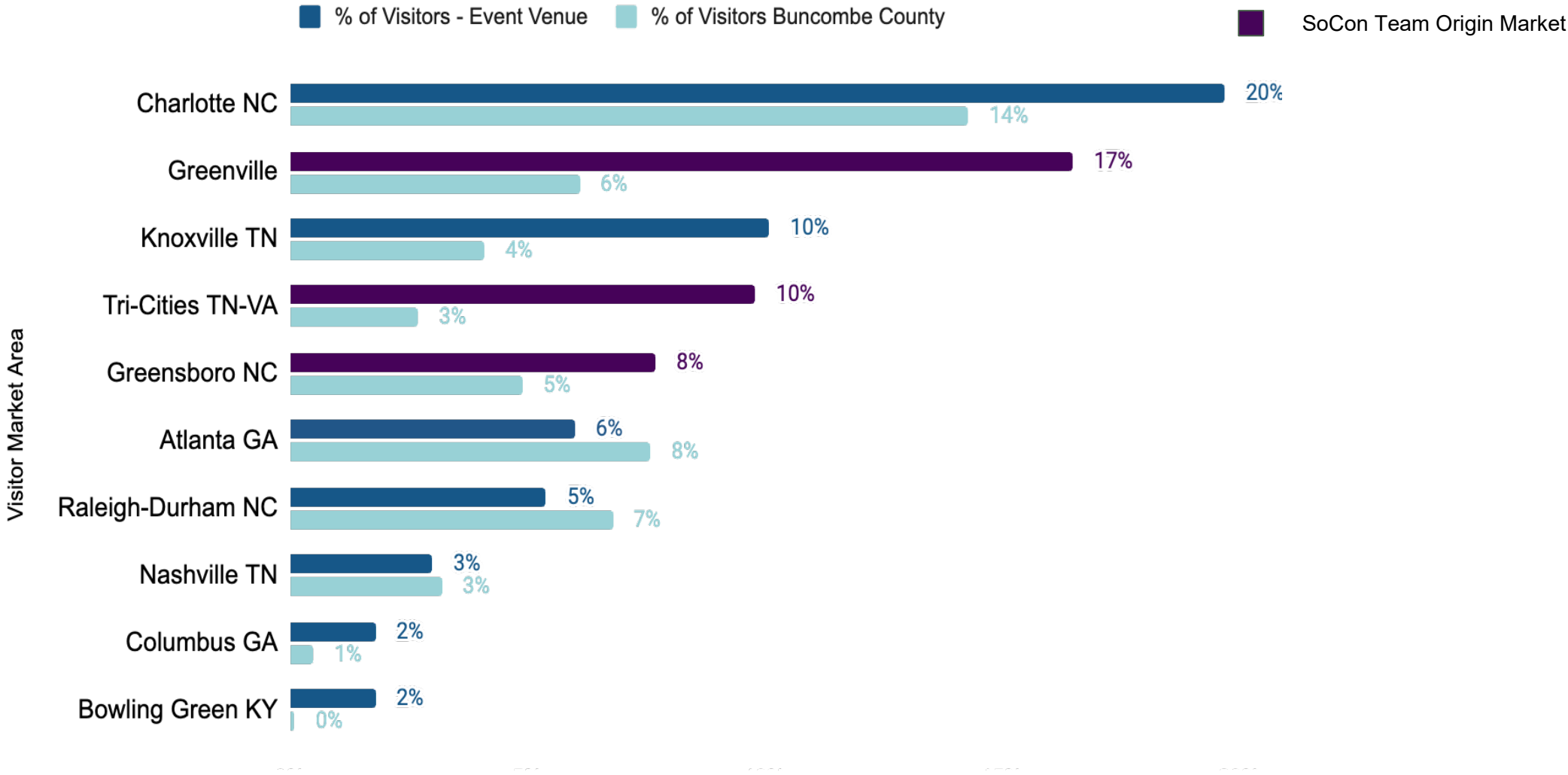
- Approximately one in three tickets sold to the SoCon Basketball Tournament is to people who live in the city of Asheville.
- Six out of ten tickets are sold to people from the same city as SoCon universities (bolded in the chart).
- Doing well in the tournament doesn't always indicate that the university will be the top city for ticket sales- in 2022 University of Tennessee at Chattanooga won the tournament however was 9th in order of ticket purchasers.
- Source: Harrah's Cherokee Center Asheville

2024	2023	2022
Asheville (33%)	Asheville (34%)	Asheville (33%)
<b>Greenville</b>	<b>Greenville</b>	<b>Greenville</b>
<b>Johnson City</b>	<b>Spartanburg</b>	<b>Spartanburg</b>
<b>Spartanburg</b>	<b>Macon</b>	<b>Macon</b>
<b>Homewood</b>	<b>Homewood</b>	<b>Johnson City</b>
<b>Charleston</b>	<b>Charleston</b>	<b>Lexington</b>
<b>Greensboro</b>	<b>Cullowhee</b>	<b>Greensboro</b>
<b>Chattanooga</b>	<b>Greensboro</b>	<b>Charleston</b>
<b>Lexington</b>	<b>Johnson City</b>	<b>Chattanooga</b>
<b>Macon</b>	<b>Chattanooga</b>	<b>Cullowhee</b>
<b>Cullowhee</b>	<b>Lexington</b>	<b>Homewood</b>
Weaverville	Arden	Weaverville
Kingsport	Hendersonville	Fletcher
Fairview	Weaverville	Greer
Jonesborough	Simpsonville	Hendersonville
<b>Tournament Winner</b>	<b>Runner Up</b>	<b>Final Four</b>



# TOP ORIGIN MARKETS - 2024

Top out of state markets included the Greenville, Tri-Cities, Atlanta, Nashville, Columbus and Bowling Green DMAs.



Samford won the 2024 tournament- however their home market (Birmingham AL) was not on the top 10 origin list

Source: Zartico geolocation data. March 7-11, 2024. Top 10 origin markets for Harrah’s Cherokee Center Asheville and Buncombe County overall.

# Q3 GROUP & EVENT DEVELOPMENT

Benefitted businesses in our community

41

GROUPS/EVENTS  
OCCURRED  
IN OUR COMMUNITY



**\$11.3 million direct spending**  
9,400 room nights

138

GROUPS/EVENTS  
BOOKED  
FOR FUTURE VISITS



**\$14.0 million in direct spending**  
19,900 room nights

336

LEADS GENERATED  
FOR POTENTIAL  
GROUPS/EVENTS;  
95,100 ROOM NIGHTS



**13% increase in leads over Q3 FY23**  
33% increase in room nights over Q3  
FY23





# PARTNERSHIP & DESTINATION MANAGEMENT Q3 INITIATIVES

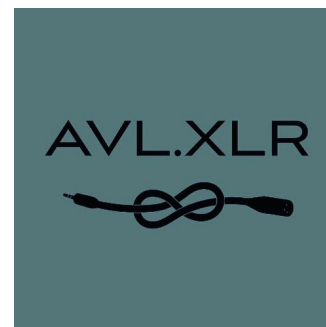
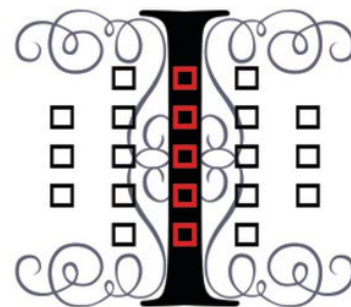
Penelope Whitman  
Vice President of Partnership & Destination Management

# THE YEAR AHEAD

## Partner event honors Superstars and TPDF Grantees, and panel gives insight on what's to come in 2024

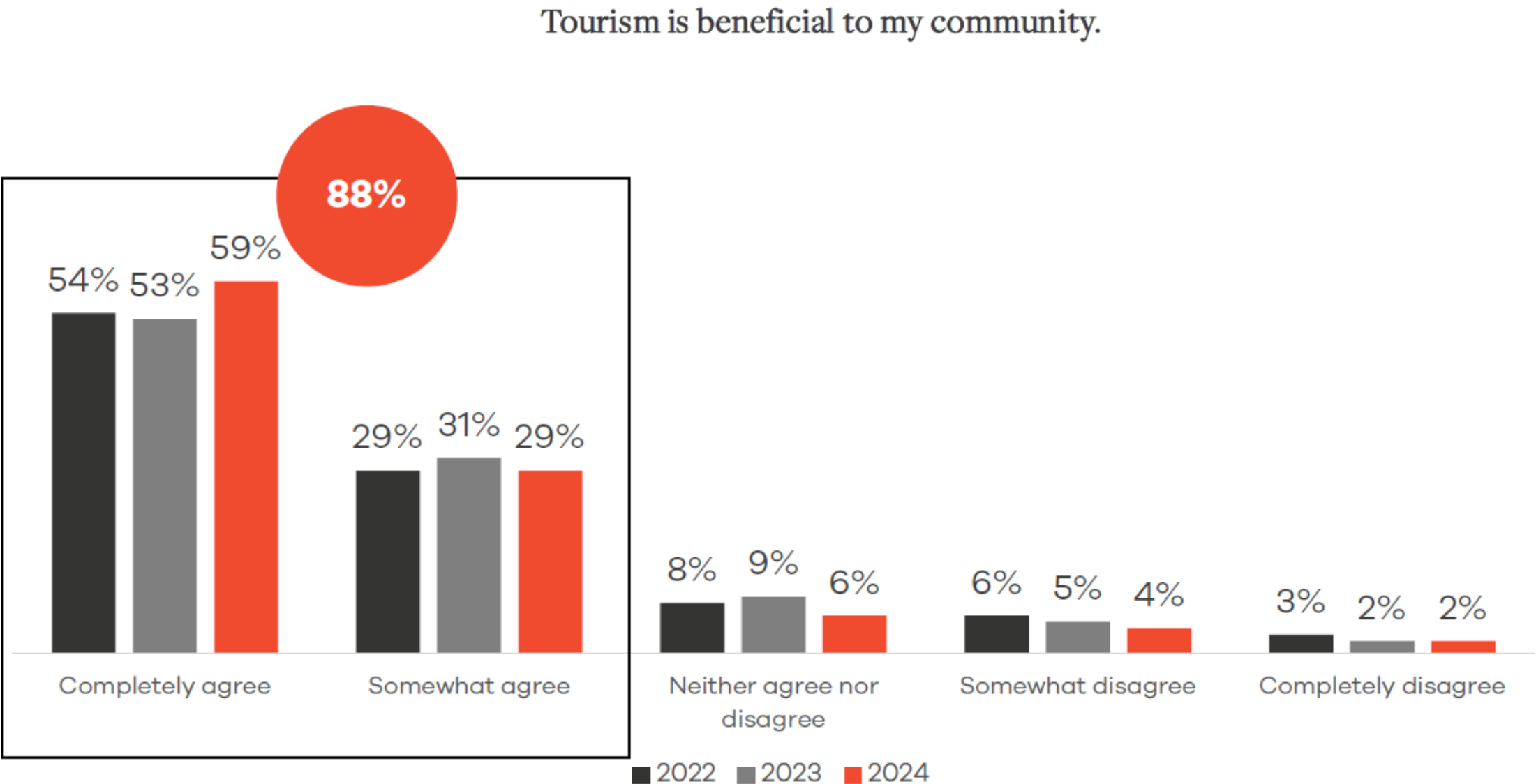
- More than 300 community and industry partners attended the first partner event of 2024 at the new Embassy Suites Hotel by Hilton Asheville Downtown
- The 11<sup>th</sup> annual Asheville Superstar Awards were presented to J Chong, Jack Benton, Reggie Tidwell, Chief Mike Lamb, and Sheriff Quinten Miller for their outstanding impact on the travel & hospitality industry.
- Attendees heard about the latest investments awarded through the Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF).
- Partners and community members provided updates on what's to come this year as part of four panel discussions.
- Partners enjoyed local music, a photobooth experience, tours of the new hotel, plus local food and craft beverages provided by Embassy Suites' E'Terie
- Talented event vendors included: Indulge Images, DJ Phantom Pantone and DJ Mereset, and the Embassy Suites Hotel.

### FEATURED PARTNERS:



# MMGY 2024 RESIDENT PERSPECTIVES ON TOURISM SURVEY

88% of Residents Believe that Tourism is Beneficial to Community



# MMGY 2024 RESIDENT PERSPECTIVES ON TOURISM SURVEY

88% of Residents Believe that Tourism is Beneficial to the Community

## Key Insight <sup>no. 1</sup>

Residents agree even more so than previous years that tourism is beneficial to community. Nearly nine in 10 residents believe tourism has a positive economic impact including creating entrepreneurial opportunities and support for independent businesses.

## Key Insight <sup>no. 2</sup>

Asheville residents take great pride in their community, emphasizing diversity and inclusion, how the community rallies together and the culture and character of Asheville.

## Key Insight <sup>no. 3</sup>

While parking and traffic congestion problems remain the primary concerns for Asheville residents, the impact of short-term rentals on housing options for year-round residents has increased.

## Key Insight <sup>no. 4</sup>

Natural greenspaces and protecting the environment are important aspects of Asheville for residents, and 8 in 10 agree the visitor economy helps supports these natural and cultural amenities.

## Key Insight <sup>no. 5</sup>

Supporting local businesses is important to Asheville residents, and most expect the same of visitors to Asheville.

## Key Insight <sup>no. 6</sup>

There is continued opportunity to educate visitors about how taxes paid by visitors are used to benefit residents.

## Key Insight <sup>no. 7</sup>

While Asheville city residents agree that tourism has an overall positive economic impact, they also are more likely to highlight the challenges that impact their day-to-day life, such as parking supply problems and traffic congestion.

## Key Insight <sup>no. 8</sup>

Length of residency has an impact on the view of tourism, with newer residents more likely to see tourism as beneficial to the community.

# HOSPITALITY OUTLOOK

Tourism Economics provides market-specific outlook on lodging and visitor spending at partner event

- 115 travel and hospitality industry partners gathered at the AC Hotel Asheville Downtown for the 2024 Hospitality Outlook.
- Travis Napper, director of destination partnerships at Tourism Economics, provided an 18-month outlook on visitor spending and a lodging forecast in the context of regional and national markets.
- Hospitality Outlook vendors included: Smash Events Catering + Floral, Juan Diego Reyes Photography, AC Hotel and Capella on 9.



## FEATURED PARTNERS:



JUAN DIEGO REYES



# EVENT GRANTS & SPONSORSHIPS

Support for local festival & cultural events through grants and sponsorships

Explore Asheville/BCTDA supported the following events in FY24 Q3:

- Arts AVL Trolley
- Taste of Asheville
- Asheville Mardi Gras Parade and Queen's Ball
- Asheville Celtic Festival
- ASAP Business of Farming Conference
- Zelda Fitzgerald Week
- Asheville Symphony's 2024 Artist Residency: A Celebration of the Violin
- TEDxAsheville

**\$38.9K**

Grants &  
Sponsorships



**8**

Events

- Explore Asheville onboarded 31 local businesses as new partners in Q3, ranging from wedding vendors and farms to galleries and food trucks.
- Through these partnerships, Explore Asheville staff can connect incoming visitors and group travelers to the variety of experiences in Asheville and Buncombe County.

- River Arts District
- Downtown
- Fairview
- East Asheville
- Biltmore Village
- Woodfin
- Weaverville
- West Asheville
- South Asheville

- Food & Drink
- Food Adventures
- Transportation
- Music Venues
- Attractions
- Arts/Cultural
- Tours
- Lodging
- Catering
- Farms
- Retail





# CULTURE & BUSINESS AFFAIRS

## Q3 INITIATIVES

Jennifer Kass-Green

Vice President of Culture & Business Affairs

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# ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATES

New Team Member

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**Sarajane Case**

Marketing Manager



# ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATES

Fired-Up! Culture

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# CITY UPDATES

Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore





# COUNTY UPDATES

Commissioner Terri Wells

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# MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Matthew Lehman  
BCTDA | Vice Chair

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# PUBLIC COMMENTS

Matthew Lehman  
BCTDA | Vice Chair

# LIVE VIRTUAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Vice Chair Matthew Lehman

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**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, April 23, no requests to speak had been received.**



# IN-PERSON PUBLIC COMMENTS

Vice Chair Matthew Lehman

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



# A FEW REMINDERS

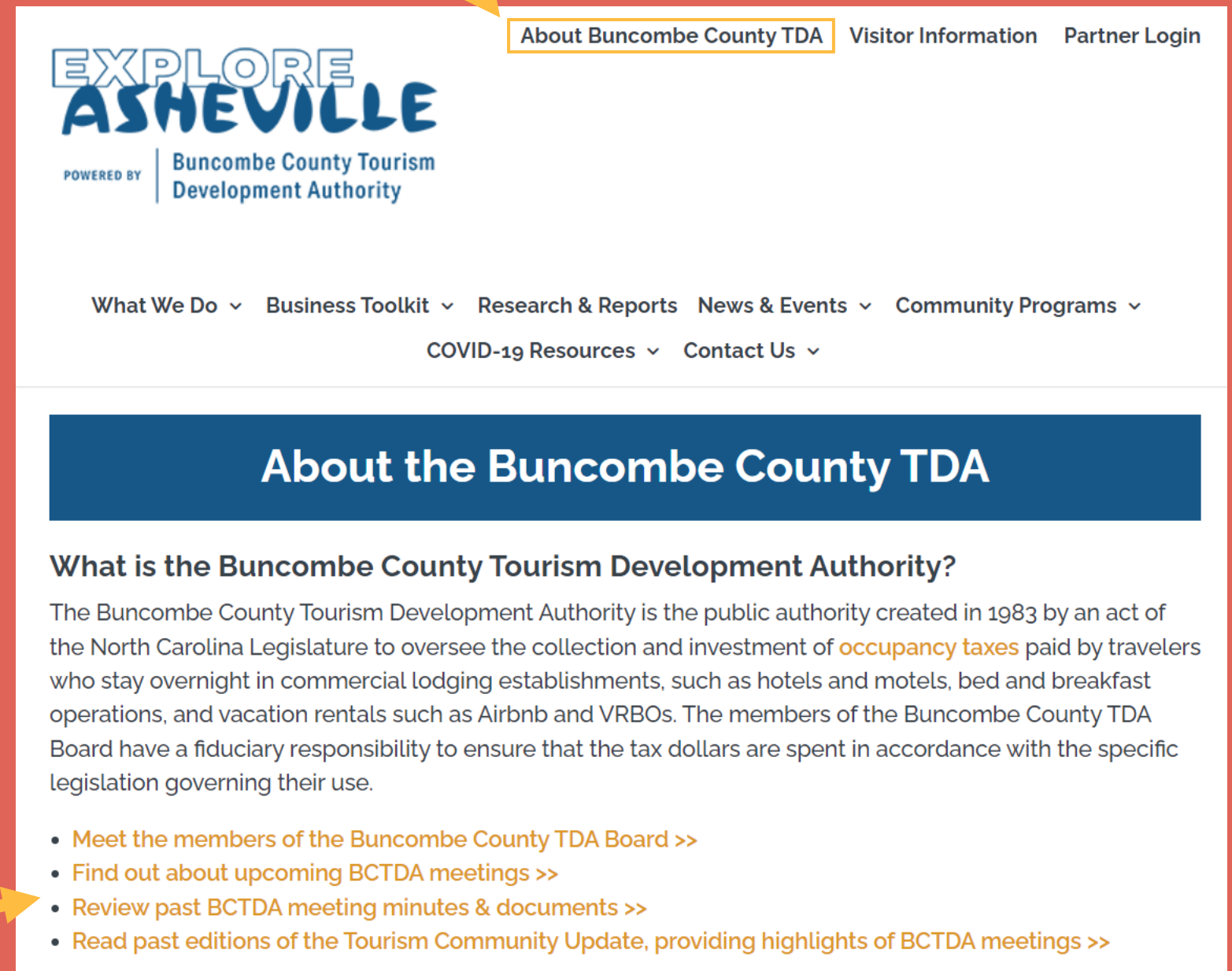
Vice Chair Matthew Lehman

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

**The next BCTDA meeting will be held on  
Wednesday, May 29, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.  
in the Explore Asheville Board Room**

For more information go to:

- [AshevilleCVB.com](https://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. A yellow arrow points from the 'About the Buncombe County TDA' link in the top navigation bar to the 'About the Buncombe County TDA' section header. Another yellow arrow points from the 'Review past BCTDA meeting minutes & documents' bullet point to the corresponding link in the list of resources.

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[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

Vice Chair Matthew Lehman

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Questions/Comments

**Suggested Motion:**

**Motion to adjourn the BCTDA Meeting.**

Motion Second

Discussion

Vote





# THANK YOU

*See you at the next BCTDA meeting!*

**Wednesday, May 29, 2024 | 9:00 a.m.**

Explore Asheville Board Room | 27 College Place

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