

A photograph of two young boys in a lush green forest. They are standing in a shallow stream, surrounded by tall trees with dense foliage. The boy on the left is wearing a blue shirt and a hat, and the boy on the right is wearing a light blue shirt. Both are wearing dark waders. They appear to be fishing or playing in the water. The background is filled with vibrant green leaves and tree trunks, creating a serene natural setting.

— VISIT — HAYWOOD

WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS

HAYWOOD COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

June 25, 2025 | Board of Directors Meeting

Proposed Budget FY 25-26

Haywood County Tourism Development Authority

PROPOSED
2025-2026 Budget

TOTAL REVENUES	\$3,925,380
Total 1% Expenses	\$540,375
Total Wages & Benefits	\$553,300
Total Administration & Operations	\$292,375
Total Capital Outlay	\$180,000
Total Marketing & Sales	\$1,869,330
Total Product Development	\$490,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$3,925,380
<i>Variance</i>	<i>\$0</i>

Fiscal Year 2025-2026
Budget Ordinance

— VISIT — HAYWOOD

WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS
GATEWAY TO THE
GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS

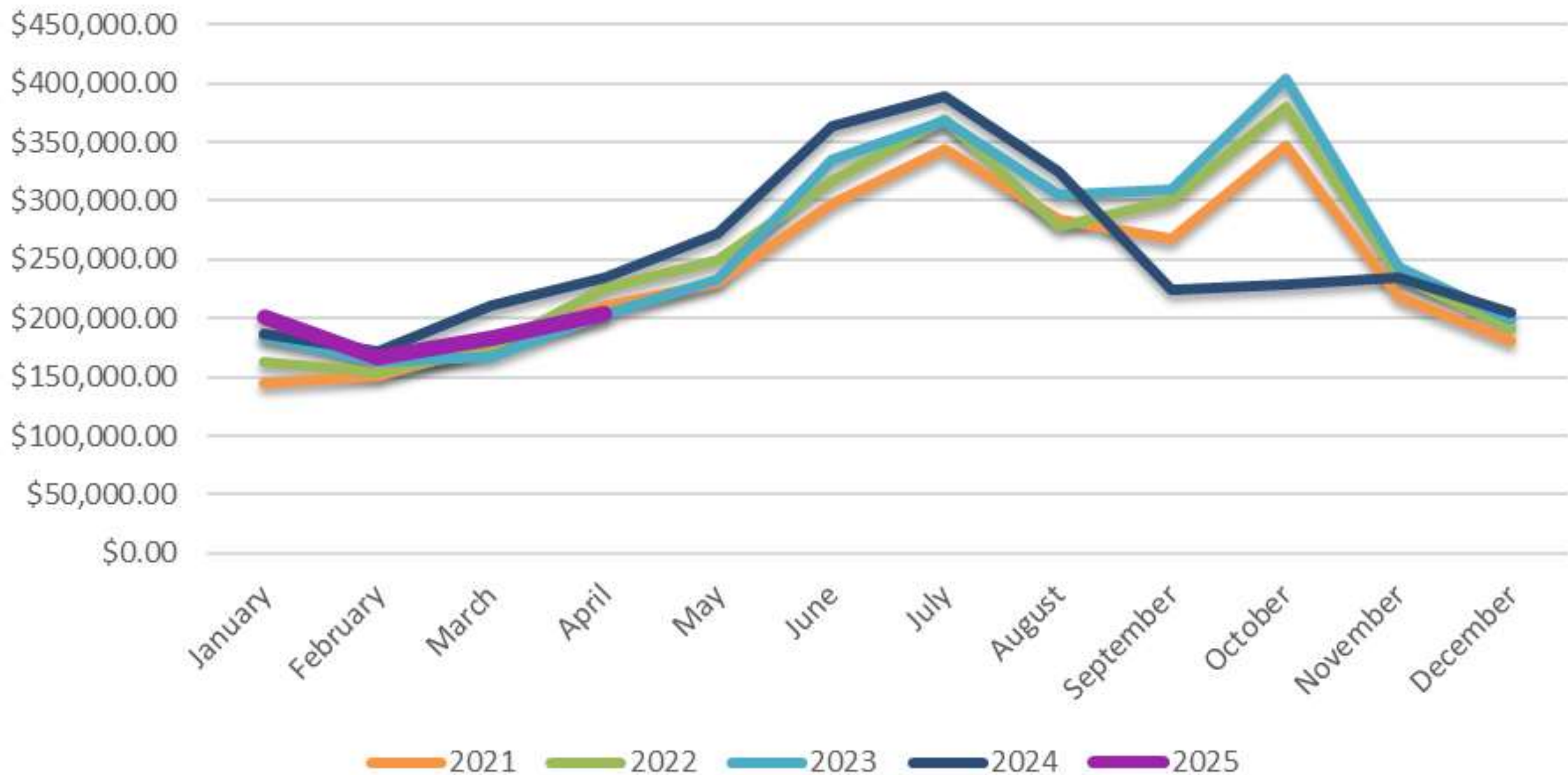
Occupancy Tax & Lodging Data



Fiscal Year Monthly Occupancy Tax Comparison (Gross)

					\$ Change from Previous Year	% Change from Previous Year								
	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025			January	\$163,272.54	\$184,467.69	\$186,374.80	\$201,802.09	\$15,427.29	8.28%	
July		\$344,159.31	\$369,695.58	\$367,752.94	\$388,684.72	\$20,931.78	5.69%	Canton	\$13,686.65	\$15,055.47	\$20,320.83	\$15,212.14	(\$5,108.69)	-25.14%
	Canton	\$27,783.82	\$26,879.79	\$19,497.12	\$25,455.96	\$5,958.84	30.56%	Clyde	\$9,586.12	\$17,470.28	\$16,150.10	\$11,492.80	(\$4,657.30)	-28.84%
	Clyde	\$15,634.79	\$12,404.07	\$19,607.12	\$21,166.77	\$1,559.65	7.95%	Lake Junaluska	\$10,218.76	\$13,371.82	\$8,856.70	\$15,684.34	\$6,827.64	77.09%
	Lake Junaluska	\$31,226.88	\$39,626.65	\$40,797.83	\$43,022.88	\$2,225.05	5.45%	Maggie Valley	\$82,791.99	\$84,230.59	\$86,145.46	\$98,739.45	\$12,593.99	14.62%
	Maggie Valley	\$159,871.26	\$177,268.47	\$170,417.23	\$175,808.74	\$5,391.51	3.16%	Waynesville	\$46,989.02	\$54,339.53	\$54,901.71	\$60,673.36	\$5,771.65	10.51%
	Waynesville	\$109,642.56	\$113,516.60	\$117,433.64	\$123,230.37	\$5,796.73	4.94%	February	\$154,643.38	\$162,325.68	\$171,592.82	\$167,308.30	(\$4,284.52)	-2.50%
August		\$283,878.91	\$278,678.56	\$305,809.64	\$323,963.71	\$18,154.07	5.94%	Canton	\$13,652.64	\$13,852.03	\$17,963.11	\$14,973.41	(\$2,989.70)	-16.64%
	Canton	\$20,917.76	\$21,871.08	\$28,032.84	\$23,336.22	(\$4,696.62)	-16.75%	Clyde	\$8,774.38	\$15,802.06	\$13,965.94	\$10,246.79	(\$3,719.15)	-26.63%
	Clyde	\$12,035.89	\$12,041.72	\$17,010.14	\$17,041.81	\$31.67	0.19%	Lake Junaluska	\$8,861.32	\$13,240.97	\$11,140.80	\$7,753.81	(\$3,386.99)	-30.40%
	Lake Junaluska	\$30,705.85	\$23,659.93	\$26,325.12	\$27,008.34	\$683.22	2.60%	Maggie Valley	\$76,712.63	\$71,592.00	\$78,844.03	\$77,469.39	(\$1,374.64)	-1.74%
	Maggie Valley	\$126,823.64	\$126,942.01	\$126,475.88	\$143,722.74	\$17,246.86	13.64%	Waynesville	\$46,642.41	\$47,838.62	\$49,678.94	\$56,864.90	\$7,185.96	14.46%
	Waynesville	\$93,395.57	\$94,163.82	\$107,965.66	\$112,854.60	\$4,888.94	4.53%	March	\$174,740.40	\$168,067.49	\$211,448.41	\$182,523.15	(\$28,925.26)	-13.68%
September		\$268,037.41	\$300,578.84	\$309,562.65	\$225,130.03	(\$84,432.62)	-27.27%	Canton	\$18,081.04	\$19,106.54	\$20,266.92	\$16,762.40	(\$3,504.52)	-17.29%
	Canton	\$19,817.98	\$24,268.90	\$20,707.64	\$10,569.43	(\$10,138.21)	-48.96%	Clyde	\$10,966.10	\$15,154.29	\$19,672.69	\$12,889.35	(\$6,783.34)	-34.48%
	Clyde	\$11,635.76	\$19,558.11	\$16,975.34	\$11,812.43	(\$5,162.91)	-30.41%	Lake Junaluska	\$11,793.56	\$11,528.51	\$13,510.97	\$19,478.05	\$5,967.08	44.16%
	Lake Junaluska	\$26,089.09	\$29,171.45	\$28,818.89	\$24,685.05	(\$4,133.84)	-14.34%	Maggie Valley	\$78,416.17	\$69,112.76	\$84,011.37	\$63,363.34	(\$20,648.03)	-24.58%
	Maggie Valley	\$124,968.30	\$130,740.68	\$135,273.39	\$95,390.88	(\$39,882.51)	-29.48%	Waynesville	\$55,483.53	\$53,165.39	\$73,986.46	\$70,030.01	(\$3,956.45)	-5.35%
	Waynesville	\$85,526.28	\$96,839.70	\$107,787.39	\$82,672.24	(\$25,115.15)	-23.30%	April	\$226,468.81	\$203,478.94	\$235,196.31	\$204,861.17	(\$30,335.14)	-12.90%
October		\$346,441.48	\$379,422.94	\$403,324.69	\$228,808.59	(\$174,516.10)	-43.27%	Canton	\$18,361.49	\$17,209.27	\$21,361.43	\$14,873.00	(\$6,488.43)	-30.37%
	Canton	\$24,622.91	\$28,986.01	\$27,962.64	\$12,417.99	(\$15,544.65)	-55.59%	Clyde	\$11,285.55	\$12,449.39	\$14,164.16	\$11,083.69	(\$3,080.47)	-21.75%
	Clyde	\$12,496.88	\$18,567.11	\$24,050.80	\$1,011.44	(\$23,039.36)	-95.79%	Lake Junaluska	\$18,392.91	\$18,268.39	\$22,781.57	\$21,908.22	(\$873.35)	-3.83%
	Lake Junaluska	\$29,836.71	\$34,681.85	\$37,520.80	\$46,052.87	\$8,532.07	22.74%	Maggie Valley	\$102,682.92	\$85,237.87	\$91,853.89	\$80,098.71	(\$11,755.18)	-12.80%
	Maggie Valley	\$170,620.65	\$176,221.04	\$181,249.41	\$96,673.36	(\$84,576.05)	-46.66%	Waynesville	\$75,745.94	\$70,314.02	\$85,035.26	\$76,897.55	(\$8,137.71)	-9.57%
	Waynesville	\$108,864.43	\$120,966.93	\$132,541.04	\$72,652.93	(\$59,888.11)	-45.18%	May	\$249,286.59	\$233,113.46	\$272,736.36			
November		\$218,280.74	\$236,691.92	\$244,378.03	\$235,377.74	(\$9,000.29)	-3.68%	Canton	\$21,523.58	\$19,061.44	\$22,735.85			
	Canton	\$17,342.89	\$19,998.00	\$15,700.17	\$8,310.87	(\$7,389.30)	-47.07%	Clyde	\$10,764.71	\$13,387.14	\$16,655.53			
	Clyde	\$11,372.31	\$13,324.83	\$19,335.14	\$10,600.83	(\$8,734.31)	-45.17%	Lake Junaluska	\$20,841.59	\$19,947.89	\$28,182.10			
	Lake Junaluska	\$13,023.77	\$15,061.93	\$16,548.77	\$27,879.84	\$11,331.07	68.47%	Maggie Valley	\$109,621.91	\$97,101.82	\$109,128.39			
	Maggie Valley	\$107,137.19	\$104,245.28	\$101,699.89	\$102,616.10	\$916.21	0.90%	Waynesville	\$86,535.16	\$83,615.17	\$96,035.49			
	Waynesville	\$69,404.58	\$84,061.88	\$91,094.06	\$85,970.10	(\$5,123.96)	-5.62%	June	\$316,629.69	\$335,302.73	\$363,645.98			
December		\$180,840.48	\$191,659.98	\$199,043.88	\$204,924.68	\$5,880.80	2.95%	Canton	\$25,424.90	\$24,373.06	\$26,066.17			
	Canton	\$14,127.69	\$14,733.48	\$16,917.24	\$18,943.07	\$2,025.83	11.97%	Clyde	\$9,930.42	\$17,348.05	\$21,142.39			
	Clyde	\$8,399.77	\$11,658.41	\$16,880.86	\$12,415.73	(\$4,465.13)	-26.45%	Lake Junaluska	\$35,750.52	\$39,982.68	\$35,768.84			
	Lake Junaluska	\$10,636.42	\$13,268.85	\$11,442.78	\$16,663.99	\$5,221.21	45.63%	Maggie Valley	\$151,590.73	\$147,697.81	\$156,516.31			
	Maggie Valley	\$94,869.09	\$91,738.20	\$96,321.10	\$102,099.33	\$5,778.23	6.00%	Waynesville	\$93,933.12	\$105,901.13	\$124,152.27			
	Waynesville	\$52,807.51	\$60,261.04	\$57,481.90	\$54,802.56	(\$2,679.34)	-4.66%							
								\$2,926,679.74	\$3,043,483.81	\$3,270,866.51	\$2,363,384.18	(\$271,099.99)	-10.29%	

YOY Monthly Occupancy Tax Comparison



Summer Travel Outlook

May 22, 2025



ZARTICO

Low Consumer Confidence

Key Indices Show Continued Decline



US Consumer Confidence Plunged Again in April

Consumers' expectations for the future are at a 13-year low

The Conference Board **Consumer Confidence Index®** fell by 7.9 points in April to 86.0 (1985=100). The **Present Situation Index**—based on consumers' assessment of current business and labor market conditions—decreased 0.9 points to 133.5. The **Expectations Index**—based on consumers' short-term outlook for income, business, and labor market conditions—dropped 12.5 points to 54.4, the lowest level since October 2011 and well below the threshold of 80 that usually signals a recession ahead. The cutoff date for preliminary results was April 21, 2025.

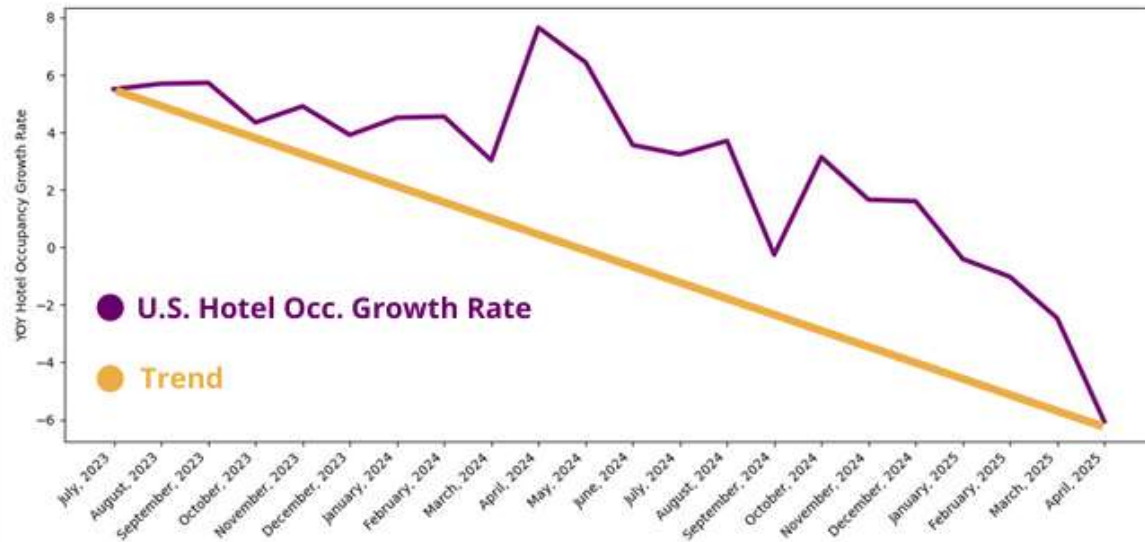
YOY Change in Consumer Confidence - Univ. of Michigan



Hotel Occupancy Pacing Behind

Pacing shows steeper declines than historicals due to late bookings

YOY Pct. Change in U.S. Hotel Occupancy



- Growth rate in April 2025 shows 6.6% decline compared to last year.
- Four consecutive months of increasing declines.

Weekly Hotel Pacing - U.S. Hotels Next Quarter



Later Booking Windows

Travelers Showing “Wait and See” Booking Behavior



Budget travelers:
“wait and see” behaviors



Budget lodging properties:
highest vacancies



Families skipped spring trips
to save for summer travel

Gap between pacing and actuals comes from **late bookings**—travelers are waiting for deals and increased confidence.



A scenic photograph of a man and a woman hiking through a lush mountain landscape. In the foreground, there are out-of-focus pink flowers. The hikers are in the lower right, wearing hats and backpacks. The background shows dense green forests and distant mountain ranges under a cloudy sky. The text '— VISIT — HAYWOOD' is prominently displayed in the upper center, with 'WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS' written below it in a smaller font.

— VISIT — HAYWOOD

WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS

Old Business

Budget Amendment - Administration 06.25.2025

HAYWOOD COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT
FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025

BE IT ORDAINED by the Members of the Haywood County Tourism Development Authority that the following amendment be made to the budget ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

Section 1. To amend the General Fund, the expenditures are to be charged as follows:

Department	Acct. No.	Current Budget	Increase (Decrease)	Amended Budget
Hospitality, Gifts and Meals	543202	\$2,000.00	\$250.00	\$2,250.00
NonExpendable Office Supplies	529901	\$2,500.00	\$6,300.00	\$8,800.00
Postage - Office	532201	\$300.00	\$180.00	\$480.00
Purchases Resale	527001	\$25,000.00	\$2,750.00	\$27,750.00
Office/ Visitor Center Supplies	526001	\$3,500.00	(\$650.00)	\$2,850.00
Repair & Maintenance-Vehicle	535202	\$1,500.00	(\$1,200.00)	\$300.00
Staff Development & Education	537401	\$22,000.00	(\$1,200.00)	\$20,800.00
Travel Expense	531202	\$4,500.00	(\$2,000.00)	\$2,500.00
Telephone, Comm & Internet	532101	\$8,500.00	(\$1,680.00)	\$6,820.00
Vehicle Expense	532200	\$3,100.00	(\$2,750.00)	\$350.00
TOTAL			\$0.00	

BA Explanation:
Adjusting individual line items within the Administrations and Operations Budget Category at year-end.

This amendment will result in a net increase/(decrease) of \$0.00
in the expenditures in the General Fund.

Budget Amendment – Marketing 06.25.2025

Section 1. To amend the General Fund, the expenditures are to be charged as follows:

Department	Acct. No.	Current Budget	Increase (Decrease)	Amended Budget
Advertising & Marketing	537101	\$1,001,000.00	\$55,000.00	\$1,056,000.00
Media Relations & Influencers	537775	\$20,000.00	\$14,000.00	\$34,000.00
Visitor Guides	537301	\$50,000.00	(\$2,800.00)	\$47,200.00
Collateral and Other Printing	534901	\$12,000.00	(\$7,800.00)	\$4,200.00
Dues & Subscriptions	549101	\$16,000.00	(\$1,000.00)	\$15,000.00
Research	537900	\$120,000.00	(\$9,000.00)	\$111,000.00
Community Relations	537925	\$4,000.00	(\$2,200.00)	\$1,800.00
	531202	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
	532101	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Vehicle Expense	532200	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL			\$46,200.00	

BA Explanation:
Adjusting individual line items within the Marketing and Sales Budget Category at year-end, plus adding funds to cover one additional day added to the video/ photo shoot.

This amendment will result in a net increase/(decrease) of \$46,200.00 in the expenditures in the General Fund.

To provide the additional revenue for the above amendment, the following revenues will be increased/(decreased) as follows:

Revenue	Account Number	Current Budget	Increase (Decrease)	Amended Budget
Interest Earnings - 3%	483491	\$83,800.00	\$24,200.00	\$108,000.00
Fund Balance TDA	499990	\$280,950.00	\$22,000.00	\$302,950.00
TOTAL			\$46,200.00	

Capital Grant Extension Request

Recipient: Downtown Waynesville Commission

Project: Alleyway Mural

Reason: Due to recent changes in the make up of the DWC board, the new board has decided to revise the original design, without deviating from the original concept, and intends to have a new design ready to present by July 1, 2025. Once a design is approved, the board will be able to proceed with an RFQ and call for artists.

Project Amount: \$5,000

Originally Awarded: FY 22-23

Extension Granted: June 28, 2023

Original Completion Date: June 30, 2023

New Estimated Completion Date: March 31, 2026



— VISIT — HAYWOOD

WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS

Grant Guideline Improvements

Grant Guidelines Improvements - Legacy

Guidelines:

Legacy Events must meet the following criteria:

- The event must have been held in Haywood County for at least 10 consecutive years (exceptions may be granted for Covid gaps in production **due to natural disasters or states of emergency, such as COVID, Helene, etc**).

Score Sheet:

Legacy Events Sponsorship

Project Name:

Grant applicants can earn a total of 20 points. Scores between 18-20 will have a high priority for funding, scores between 15-17 will be recommended for funding, scores between 12-14 consider funding if resources allow, and scores below 12 points will not be recommended for funding. Please choose **one** score for each of the four criteria. **Average scores will round to the nearest whole number, with .5 or higher rounding up, and less than .5 rounding down.**

Grant Guidelines Improvements – Tourism Promotion

Guidelines:

The program operates annually from July 1 to June 30, offering financial support for ~~marketing~~ **advertising**, market research, and for developing new or existing festivals, events, activities, or attractions. We prioritize initiatives that **occur primarily within Haywood County and** attract overnight visitors from beyond a 50-mile radius, align with the Visit Haywood brand, extend the tourism season, provide exceptional visitor value, and enhance local quality of life.

The Tourism Promotion Grant Program is designed to enhance tourism through innovative promotion and development of tourism-related events, activities, and experiences. There are three categories of grant funding: **1. Advertising, 2. Market Research, and 3. Events. 2. Events, 3. Market Research.**

If using grant funds for advertising or promotional materials, the HCTDA must approve all advertising creative design at least **45 7** days in advance to ensure that the Visit Haywood logo is used appropriately and that the ads being placed are in alignment with Visit Haywood approved language and branding guidelines.

Grant Guidelines Improvements – Tourism Promotion

Guidelines:

3. MARKET RESEARCH

- **Insights Gathering:** Conduct research to understand market trends, visitor preferences, effective promotional strategies, and economic impact. This applies to one-time research and data tool membership for up to one year. The applicant must provide HCTDA access to the research and studies.
- **Master Plans:** Develop long-term strategic plans that guide tourism development and destination management. This applies to downtown or district revitalization plans, heritage or trail system master planning, recreation master planning, etc. The applicant must provide the research and final documents with HCTDA.
- **Feasibility Studies:** Conduct research to assess the viability of proposed tourism projects, events, or capital improvements. This applies to outdoor recreation infrastructure planning, cultural site activation studies, lodging demand analysis, and event venue feasibility.

Score Sheet:

Tourism Promotion	Project Name:
Grant applicants can earn a total of 20 points. Scores between 18-20 will have a high priority for funding, scores between 15-17 will be recommended for funding, scores between 12-14 consider funding if resources allow, and scores below 12 points will not be recommended for funding. Please choose <u>one</u> score for each of the four criteria. Average scores will round to the nearest whole number, with .5 or higher rounding up, and less than .5 rounding down.	



— VISIT — HAYWOOD

WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS

New Business

Elevating Visit Haywood's Image

Continuing the momentum with a strategic digital advertising campaign to raise awareness of Visit Haywood as a premier tourism destination

Budget

Requesting a motion approving this scope of work, noting that the funding is included in the budget, and authorizing the Executive Director to sign.

Visit Haywood Digital Advertising Marketing Budget July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026	
Paid Advertising Program (Main Program)	
Digital Advertising & Publisher Program Strategic Planning, Implementation & Management	\$85,800
Paid Media 10% Commission Fee	\$48,700
Data Analytics, Tracking & Reporting	\$20,100
Creative Direction/Production	\$108,000
Professional Fees (Main Program) Subtotal	\$262,600
Expenses (Main Program)	
Ad Spend- Google Suite & Meta (Static)	\$312,000
Ad Spend - Publisher Programs	\$100,000
Ad Spend - Video Ads (YouTube and TBD CTV Vendor)	\$75,000
Program Technology/Communication Expense	
Digital & Analytics Tools, Phone, Stock Imagery, Software, Databases, Other Misc. Expenses \$350/month x 12 months	\$4,200
Expenses (Main Program) Subtotal	\$491,200
MAIN PROGRAM TOTAL BUDGET	\$753,800
Special Event Advertising (Ice Fest, FBM and Gift of Haywood)	
Digital Advertising Strategic Planning, Implementation & Management	\$11,200
Creative Direction/Production <i>(Including all advertising, swag development, brochures/rack cards, billboard, posters, collateral, etc.)</i>	\$19,500
Professional Fees Subtotal (Special Events)	\$30,700
Expenses (Special Events)	
Media Spend	\$29,500
Expenses Subtotal (Special Events)	\$29,500
SPECIAL EVENTS TOTAL BUDGET	\$60,200
COMBINED PROFESSIONAL FEES SUBTOTAL	\$293,300
COMBINED EXPENSES SUBTOTAL	\$520,700
ADVERTISING PROGRAM GRAND TOTAL	\$814,000

Our State Contract

Publication	Issue	Ad Size	Ad Material Deadline	Rate	Amount
Our State	Sep 2025	Full Page	6/30/2025	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00
Our State	Oct 2025	Full Page	7/28/2025	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00
Our State	Nov 2025	Full Page	9/2/2025	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00
Our State	Jan 2026	Full Page	10/27/2025	\$5,930.00	\$5,930.00
Our State	Mar 2026	Full Page	1/5/2026	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00
Our State	May 2026	Full Page	3/2/2026	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00
Total					\$48,430.00

Digital	Issue	Start Date	Position	Digital Material Deadline	Rate	Amount
Tar Heel Reels		1/5/2026	Sponsorship		\$3,995.00	\$3,995.00
Tar Heel Reels		3/9/2026	Sponsorship		\$3,995.00	\$3,995.00
Newsletter -Travel & Events	Jan 8 - 2026	1/8/2026	Email Listing	12/18/2025	\$1,395.00	\$1,395.00
Newsletter -Dining Out	Mar 25 - 2026	3/25/2026	Email Listing	3/4/2026	\$1,395.00	\$1,395.00
Newsletter -Let's Explore		4/6/2026	Email Sponsorship		\$3,495.00	\$3,495.00
Total						\$14,275.00
Total:				\$62,705.00		

Requesting a motion approving this contract, noting that the funding is included in the budget, and authorizing the Executive Director to sign.

A photograph of a forest with tall, thin trees and a path covered in fallen leaves. Two hikers are walking away from the camera on the path. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. The text '— VISIT — HAYWOOD' is prominently displayed in the upper center, with 'WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS' written below it in a smaller font. Below that, the words 'Staff Reports' are written in a large, white, sans-serif font.

— VISIT — HAYWOOD

WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS

Staff Reports

Ice Fest Weekend Economic Impact



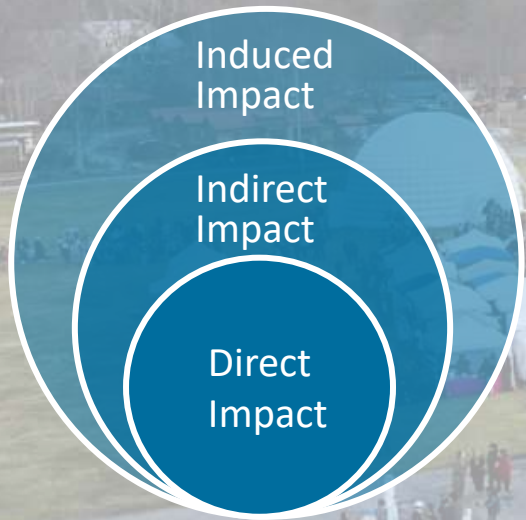
January 30 – February 2, 2025

Event Impact Calculator (EIC)

- The EIC measures the economic value of an event and calculates its return on investment to local taxes.
- The Event Impact Calculator is utilized by over 300 DMOs worldwide.
- The calculator is updated annually and draws on ten different data sources to provide an industry-wide standard.



Types of Impact

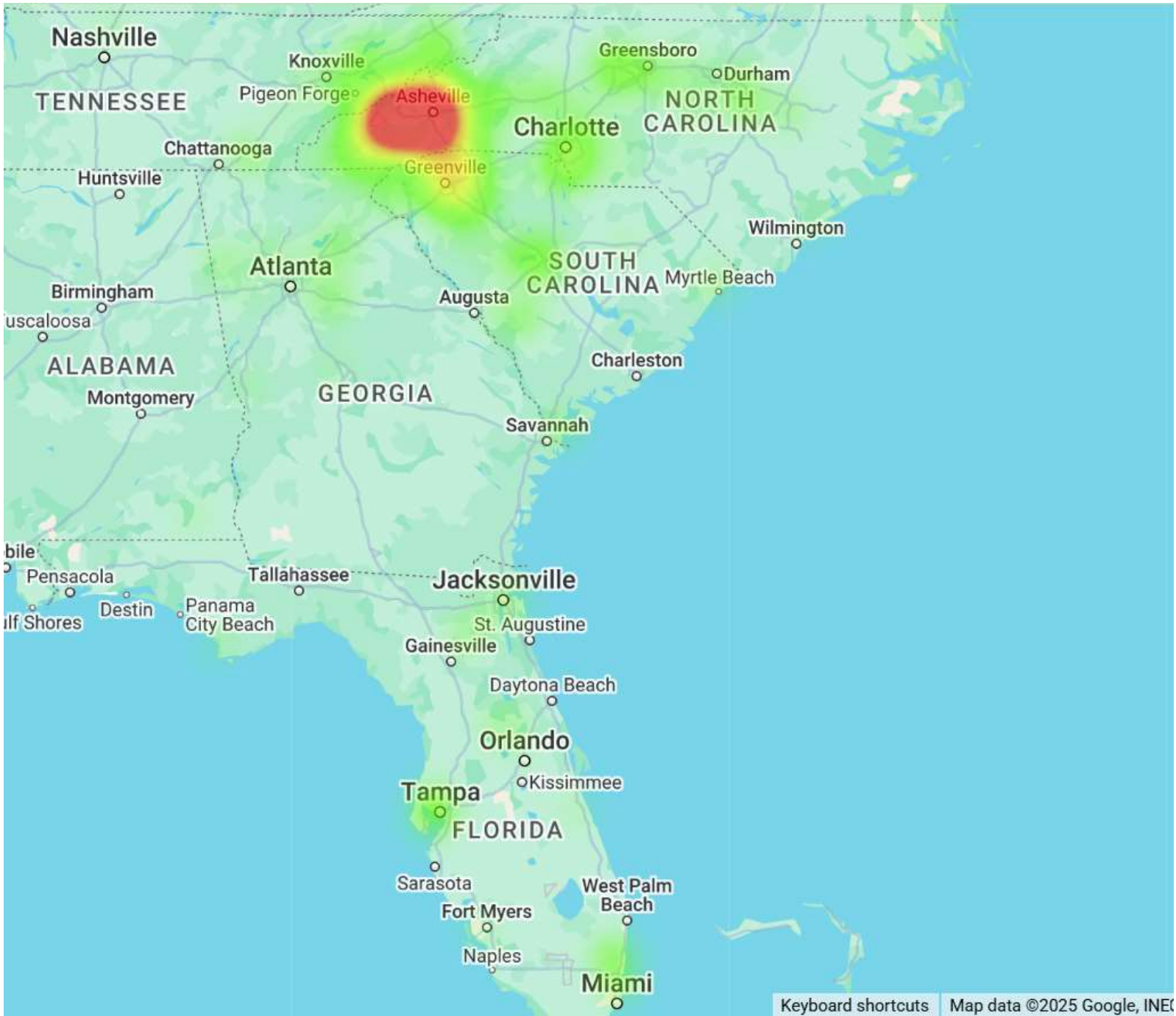


DIRECT Impact: Initial, immediate changes in economic activity resulting from a specific event or project.

Indirect Impact: Business to business impacts from the initial activity.

Induced Impact: Household spending impacts from the increased income generated by the direct and indirect effects.

TOTAL Economic Impacts: Total changes to the economy as the result of the production of an event.

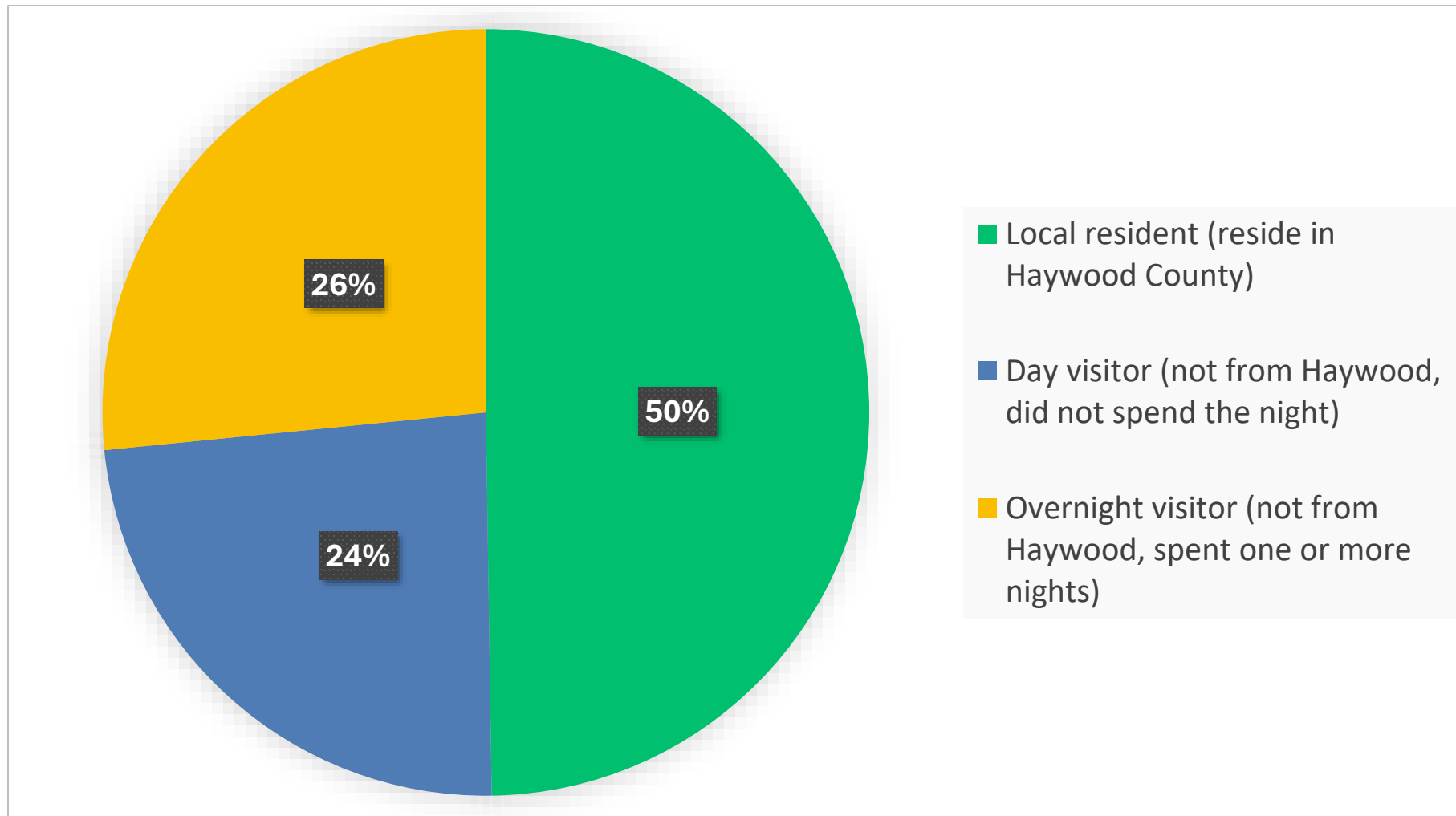


Total Ticket Sales

	2024	2025
Adult	1946	2552
Child (est)*	541	805
Total	2487	3327

** Child tickets conservatively estimated based on presale percentage.*

Sale Type	2024	2025
Presales	1932	1131
Day-of	555	2196



Are you a local resident, a day visitor, or did you stay overnight for the Visit Haywood Ice Fest Weekend?

VISITOR Survey – 207 Responses



Attendees



Direct Impact

Business Sales

\$434,384

110

Jobs Supported

Local Taxes

\$17,063

Total Impact

138

Jobs Supported

Local Taxes

\$18,286

Business Sales

\$566,086

Ice Fest Weekend 2025

T-Shirt Design Contest Winner

Light of the Mountains by AJ James

A Haywood County native, AJ is an award-winning tattoo artist based in Waynesville. His design draws inspiration from the mountains' natural beauty to honor Haywood's resilience: mushrooms to represent our hardworking community, fall foliage bursting with color in the face of winter, and dogwood flowers in memory of AJ's father and local botanist, Danny James—all wrapped around a lantern shining through the dark.

- 17 designs submitted
- Over 1,000 votes* (limited to 1x pp)
- 199 votes for *Light of the Mountains*.



HAYWOOD
- NORTH CAROLINA -

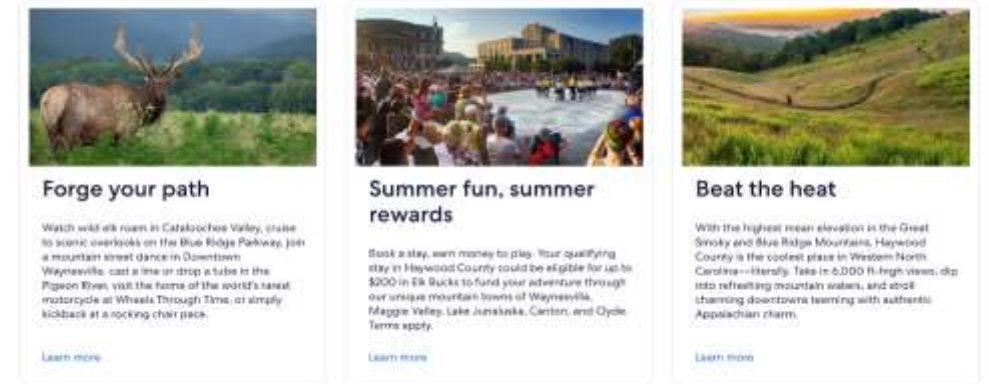
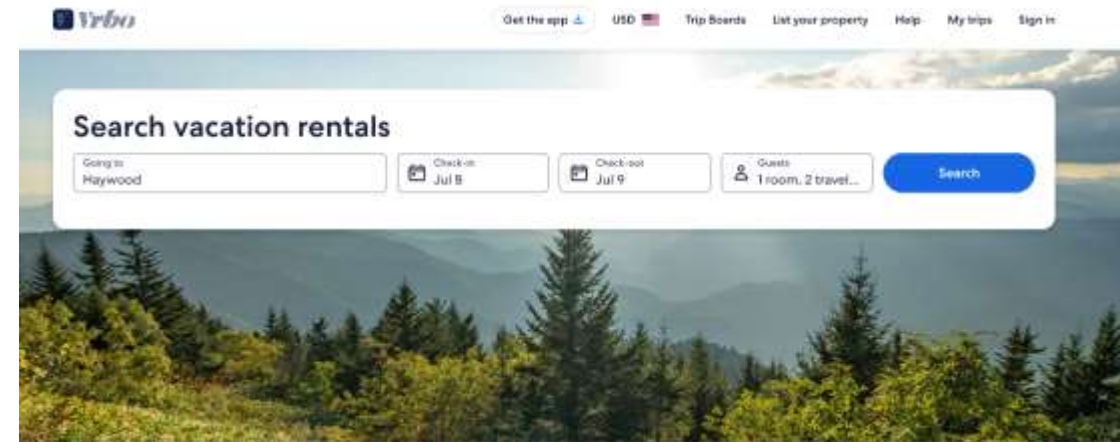


T-Shirt Design Contest Winner

- T-Shirts will be printed by Old North Prints (Waynesville).
- Printed in 2 colors: Natural, Light Blue
- Available for purchase at the Visit Haywood Welcome Center, online, and at Mast General Store (\$24.95 – \$29.95).

Open Skies. Open Roads. Open Haywood

- Live as of June 23
- [Expedia.com - Haywood](https://www.expedia.com/Haywood)
- [VRBO.com – Haywood](https://www.vrbo.com/Haywood)
- [OpenHaywood.com](https://www.openhaywood.com)



Select offers in Haywood, NC



Open Skies. Open Roads. Open Haywood

- Google Display
- Meta (Video & Static Ads)
- YouTube
- Expedia/VRBO
- Datafy

Key Markets



Georgia:

Augusta

Atlanta

North Carolina

Raleigh-Durham (Fayetteville)

Greensboro-High Point-Winston Salem

Charlotte

South Carolina:

Greenville-Spartanburg-Asheville-Anderson

Columbia SC

Tennessee:

Tri-Cities (Including Virginia)

Chattanooga

Nashville

Open Haywood/Elk Bucks

Visitors who book qualifying overnight stays can earn Elk Bucks (digital gift card) to spend at local participating businesses.

Length of Stay	Eligible Nights	Elk Bucks Value
2 nights	Sunday-Thursday only	\$50
3 nights	Sunday-Thursday only	\$100
4+ nights	Must include 3+ midweek nights (Sun-Thurs) One Fri/Sat is allowed	\$200



- 110 Participating Businesses to Accept Elk Bucks
- 24 Lodging Properties to Receive Marketing Materials

OpenHaywood.com



Open Haywood/Elk Bucks

Video Ads



Retargeting
Ads



Visit NC Mountains Campaign

Campaign will run June 27 through the anniversary of Helene.

- Digital Video
- Paid Social
- Display & Paid Search
- Rich Media
- Native Ads
- Audio Ads
- Print Ads
- Landing Page
- Partner Toolkit



SATW 2026 Annual Conference Bid

- Society of American Travel Writers' Annual Conference
- Proposed dates: Sept 27 – 30, 2026 or Oct 4 – 8, 2026
- Average attendance: 250 members
 - Stories & exposure for years after event
- **Proposal due date: June 30, 2025**
 - Collaborative effort with Lake Junaluska & MMGY
 - "Better Together" with our neighboring destinations



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

JOSH STEIN
GOVERNOR

June 20, 2025

To the Selection Committee of the Society of American Travel Writers,

On behalf of the State of North Carolina, I am proud to extend my support for Visit Haywood's proposal to host the 2026 SATW Annual Convention. As Governor, I recognize the powerful role that travel media plays in shaping the visibility, economic vitality, and long-term resilience of our communities. Haywood County and the Visit Haywood team are ideally suited to serve as hosts for your prestigious gathering of North America's leading travel communicators.

Located in the heart of western North Carolina, Haywood County exemplifies the type of immersive, story-rich destination that SATW members value. From the stunning ridgelines of the Great Smoky and Blue Ridge Mountains to vibrant small towns like Canton, Waynesville, and Maggie Valley, this region offers a compelling blend of natural beauty, authentic Appalachian culture, and heartfelt hospitality.

This opportunity carries added meaning in the context of the region's ongoing recovery from Hurricane Helene, which struck in 2024 and tested the resilience of communities across western North Carolina. Through statewide initiatives and partnerships with organizations like Visit NC, we have worked to restore and reimagine this region's tourism economy. Hosting the SATW convention would not only affirm Haywood County's progress—it would provide a national platform to inspire travelers and rebuild momentum.

Haywood County's proposal is supported by a strong local coalition that includes the Lake Junaluska Conference Center, local governments, tourism partners, and business leaders. The convention will be enriched by diverse pre- and post-tour options that explore cultural and natural landscapes and by a host community that is deeply committed to making this a meaningful and memorable experience for your delegates.

We hope you will choose to bring the 2026 convention to North Carolina. By doing so, you will elevate one of our most iconic regions while advancing our shared mission of inspiring travel through responsible storytelling.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Josh Stein".

Josh Stein
Governor

Behind The Scenes - Photo/Video Shoot



Behind The Scenes - Photo/Video Shoot



Behind The Scenes - Photo/Video Shoot



Haywood Chamber Annual Dinner

Congrats
to our
fearless
leader
Corrina!



— VISIT —
HAYWOOD

WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS

Next Board Meeting

August 27, 2025

9 AM

HCC Hemlock #1509