



# WELCOME

July 31, 2024

Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority Board Meeting

EXPLORE  
ASHEVILLE

POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism  
Development Authority



# CALL TO ORDER

Chair Brenda Durden

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



POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority

## Board Meeting

Wednesday, July 31, 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 June 26, 2024 Meeting Minutes	Brenda Durden
9:10 a.m.	June 2024 Preliminary Financial Reports	Melissa Moore, Buncombe County Finance Director / BCTDA Fiscal Agent
9:20 a.m.	President & CEO Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Industry Metrics</li><li>b. Other Updates</li></ul>	Vic Isley
9:40 a.m.	Strategic Imperatives: Progress Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Fourth Quarter Review (April 2024 – June 2024 Highlights)</li></ul>	Vic Isley, Dodie Stephens, Michael Kryzaneck, Penelope Whitman, Jennifer Kass-Green
10:10 a.m.	Business Development Performance Report	Michael Kryzaneck; Colleen Swanson, Meetings Database Institute Executive Vice President
10:30 a.m.	Asheville City Council Update	Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore
10:35 a.m.	Buncombe County Commission Update	Commissioner Terri Wells
10:40 a.m.	Miscellaneous Business	Brenda Durden
10:45 a.m.	Comments from the General Public	Brenda Durden
10:50 a.m.	Adjournment	Brenda Durden

### SAVE THE DATE

The next joint BCTDA monthly meeting is **Wednesday, August 28, 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

Chair Brenda Durden

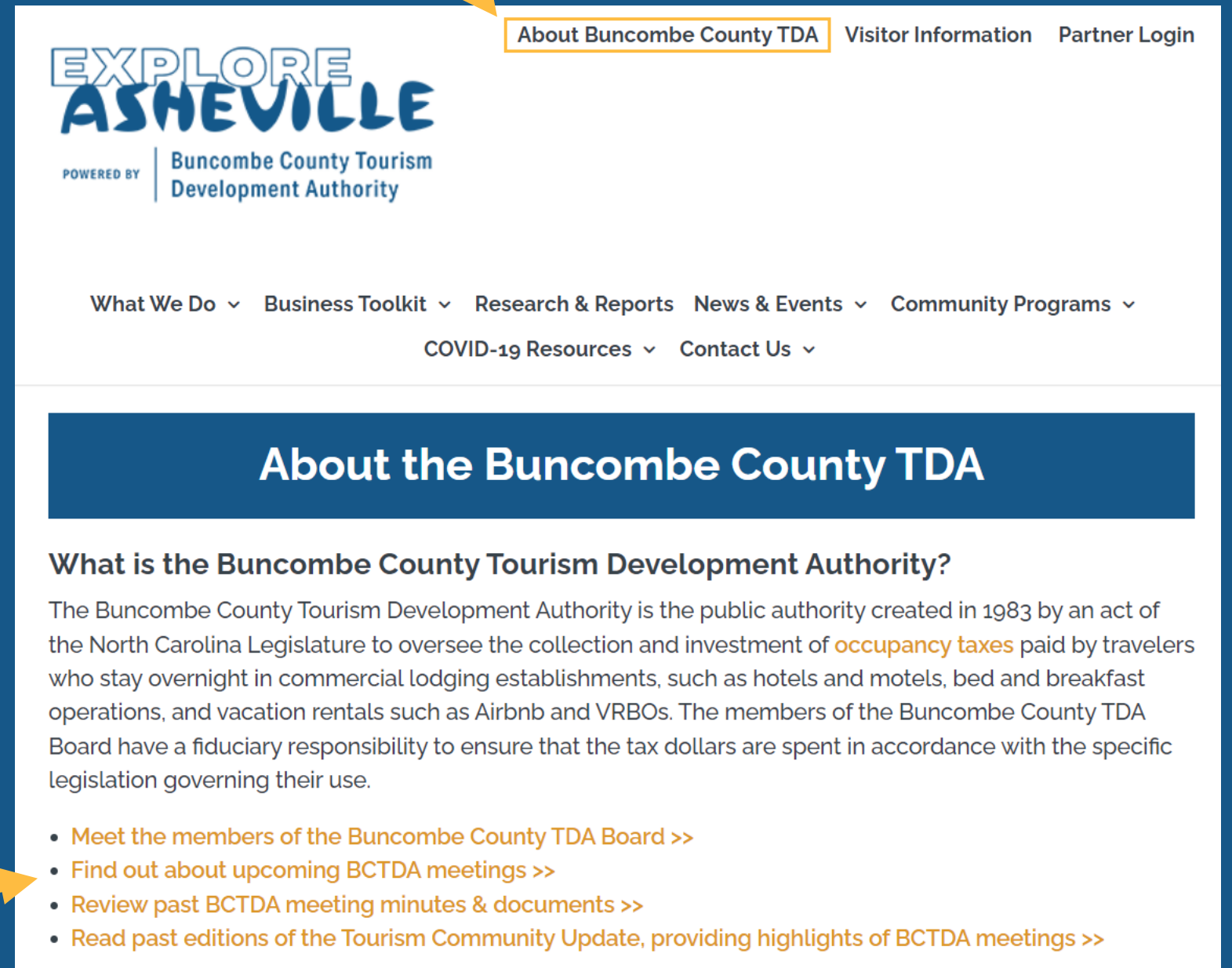
For our viewers watching remotely, documents were emailed to everyone who registered on Zoom by 8:00 this morning.

The agenda and meeting documents are also available online.

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

Go to:

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



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POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority

[About Buncombe County TDA](#) [Visitor Information](#) [Partner Login](#)

[What We Do](#) [Business Toolkit](#) [Research & Reports](#) [News & Events](#) [Community Programs](#)  
[COVID-19 Resources](#) [Contact Us](#)

## About the Buncombe County TDA

### What is the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority?

The Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority is the public authority created in 1983 by an act of the North Carolina Legislature to oversee the collection and investment of **occupancy taxes** paid by travelers who stay overnight in commercial lodging establishments, such as hotels and motels, bed and breakfast operations, and vacation rentals such as Airbnb and VRBOs. The members of the Buncombe County TDA Board have a fiduciary responsibility to ensure that the tax dollars are spent in accordance with the specific legislation governing their use.

- [Meet the members of the Buncombe County TDA Board >>](#)
- [Find out about upcoming BCTDA meetings >>](#)
- [Review past BCTDA meeting minutes & documents >>](#)
- [Read past editions of the Tourism Community Update, providing highlights of BCTDA meetings >>](#)



# WELCOME BOARD & GUESTS

Chair Brenda Durden

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





# JUNE 26 MINUTES

Chair Brenda Durden

## Questions/ Comments

## Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the June 26, 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  
Wednesday, June 26, 2024

- Present (Voting):** Brenda Durden, Chair; Matthew Lehman, Vice Chair; HP Patel, Elizabeth Putnam, Larry Crosby, Scott Patel, Michael Lusick, Lucious Wilson
- Absent (Voting):** Kathleen Mosher
- Present (Ex-Officio):** Asheville Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore, Buncombe County Commissioner Terri Wells
- Absent (Ex-Officio):** None.
- Staff:** Vic Isley, Jennifer Kass-Green, Julia Simpson, Ashley Greenstein, Josh Jones, Glenn Ramey, Penelope Whitman, Tiffany Thacker, Mike Kryzaneck
- BC Finance:** Melissa Moore
- Legal Counsel:** Sabrina Rockoff, McGuire, Wood & Bissette/BCTDA Attorney
- In-Person Attendees:** Tina Kinsey, Lew Bleiweis; Asheville Regional Airport Authority  
John Ellis, Prior TDA Board Member  
Randy Claybrook, Asheville Bed & Breakfast Association  
Olivia Ward, OnWard Digital Media  
Megan Rogers, Asheville Independent Restaurant Association  
Caleb Johnson, Brooke Randle, Pat Moran; Mountain X  
Will Hoffman, Asheville Citizen Times
- Online Attendees:** Sha'Linda Pruitt, Mickey Poandl, Anna Harris, Carli Adams, Khal Khoury, Sarajane Case, Kimberly Puryear, Kathryn Dewey; Explore Asheville  
Megan Thorp, Miranda Bowman; Tanger Outlets  
Jim Muth, TPDF Committee  
Sherree Lucas, Go Local Asheville  
Chris Smith, Madison Davis; Asheville Buncombe Regional Sports Commission  
Lacy Cross, Movement Bank  
Kit Cramer, Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce  
Diane Rogers, Pinecrest Bed & Breakfast  
Chip Craig, Greybeard Rentals  
Susan Gaddis  
Rick Bell, Asheville Buncombe Hotel Association  
Brad Durden, Asheville Hotel Group  
Kevin Beattie, WLOS  
Felicia Sonmez, Blue Ridge Public Radio







# JUNE 2024 PRELIMINARY FINANCIAL REPORTS

Melissa Moore  
Buncombe County | Director of Finance  
BCTDA | Fiscal Agent

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Development Authority



# OPERATING AND EARNED REVENUE FUNDS

## Monthly Summary of Activities, June 2024 - Preliminary

Operating Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 28,852,000	\$ 2,197,474	\$ 20,885,606	83.5%
Total expenditures		\$ 4,838,527	\$ 24,333,778	84.3%

Earned Revenue Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 250,000	\$ 16,829	\$ 203,686	94.1%
Total expenditures		\$ 2,078	\$ 2,078	0.8%

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





# PROJECT FUNDS: TPDF AND LIFT FUNDS

Monthly Summary of Activities, June 2024 - Preliminary

<b>Tourism Product Development Fund</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Current Month Actual</b>	<b>Life to Date Actual</b>	<b>(%) Budget Collected/Used</b>
<b>Total revenues</b>	\$32,624,185	\$718,505	\$41,060,216	>100%
<b>Total expenditures</b>		\$2,137	\$5,980,265	18%
Active projects		19		
Funding available for future grants		\$8,436,032		

<b>Legacy Investment From Tourism Fund</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Current Month Actual</b>	<b>Life to Date Actual</b>	<b>(%) Budget Collected/Used</b>
<b>Total revenues</b>	\$10,328,463	\$575,180	\$11,880,269	>100%
<b>Total expenditures</b>		\$66,482	\$305,237	3%
Active projects		12		
Funding available for future grants		\$1,551,807		

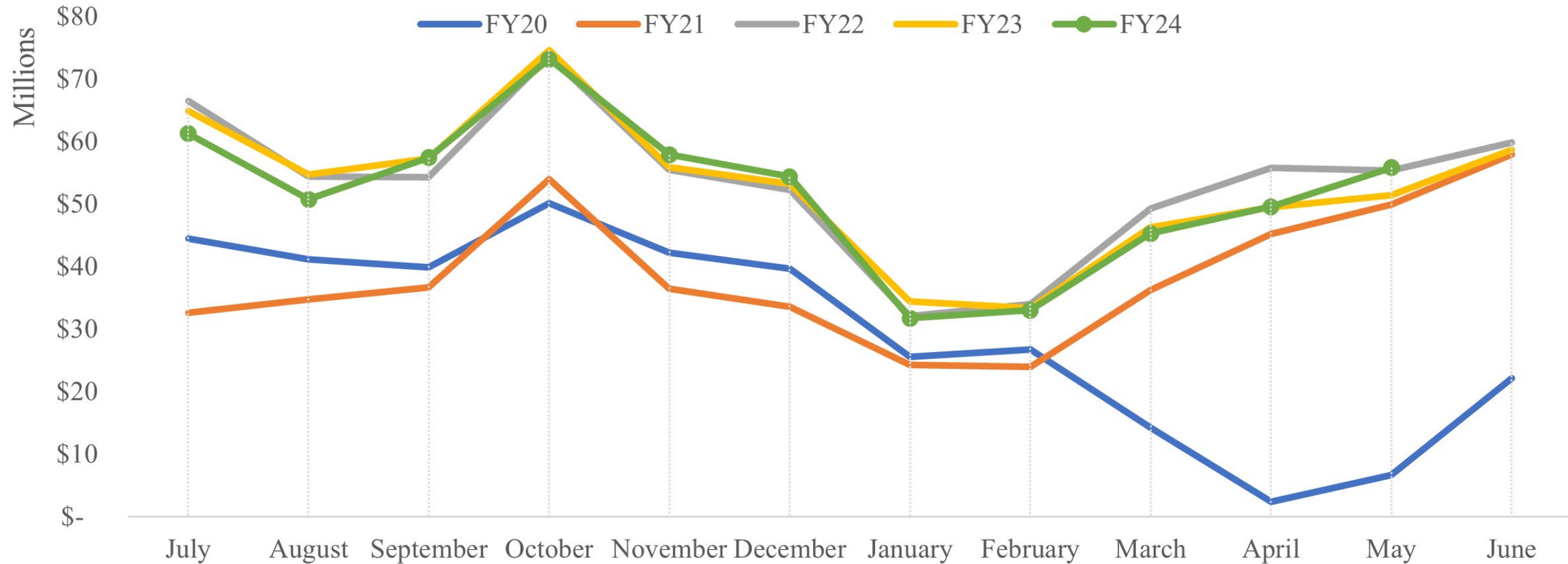
For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 3, 5, & 6





# LODGING SALES

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

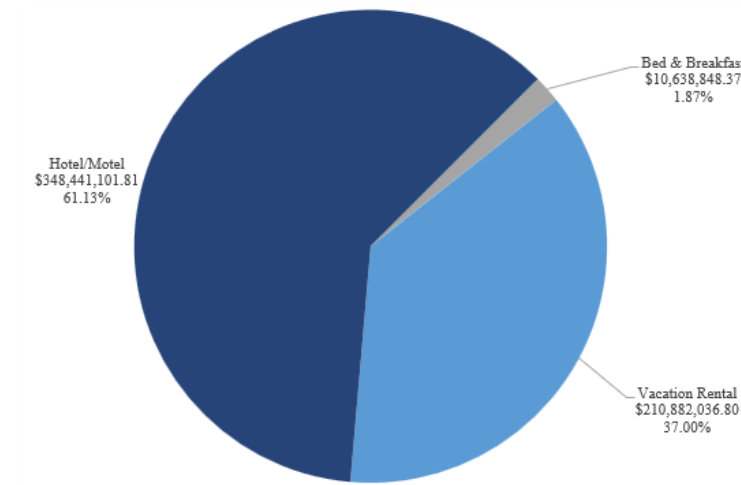
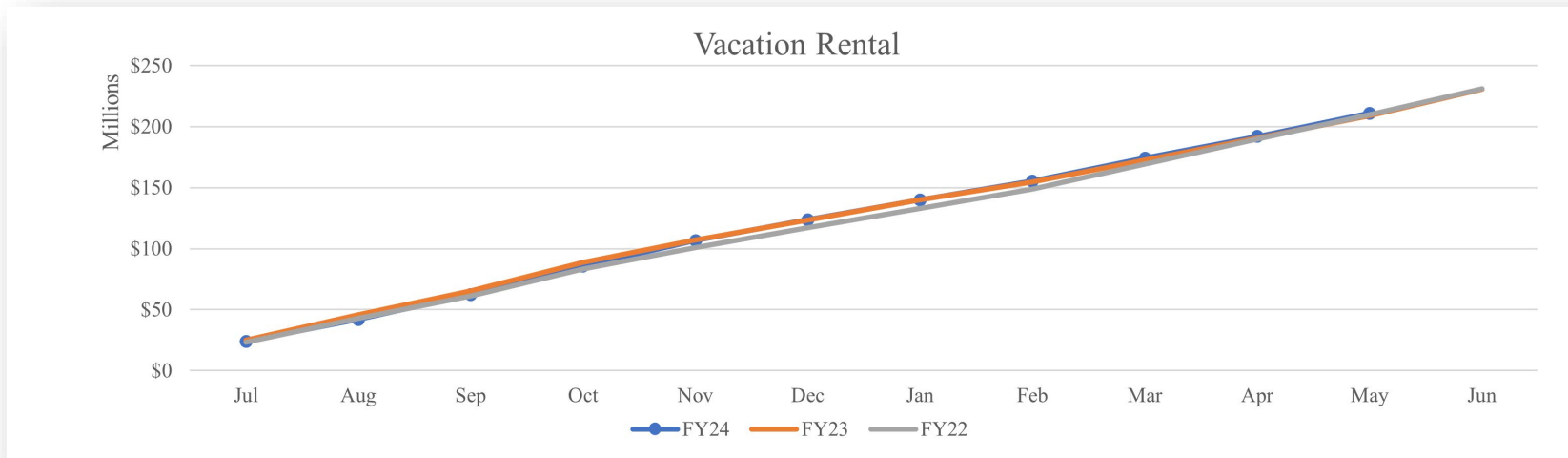
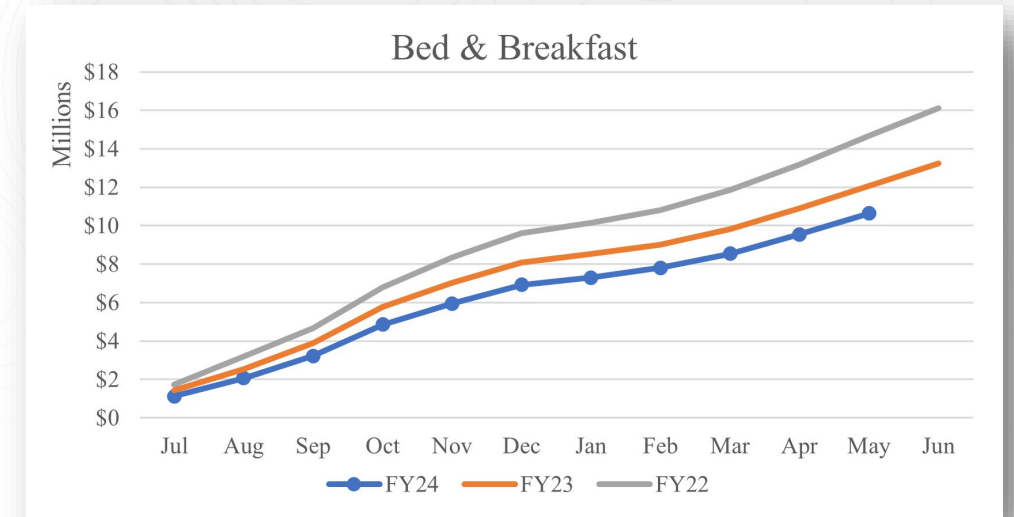
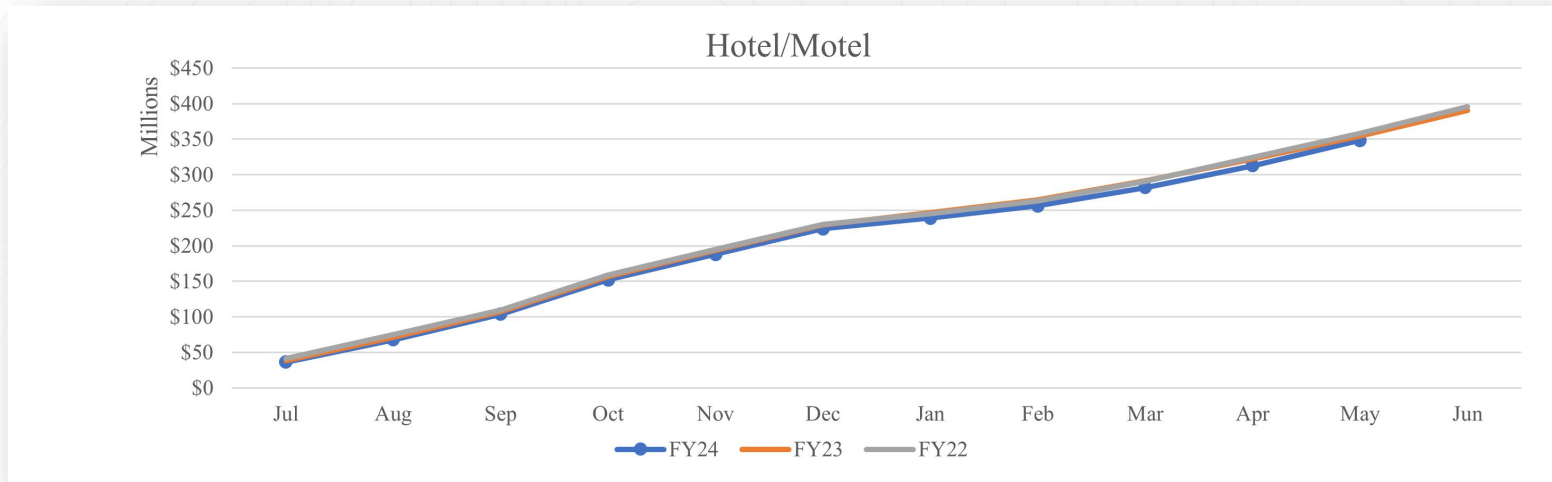


For more information, see financial and sales statements page 9



# LODGING SALES

Activity by type and month, shown for 3 years, June 2024 - Preliminary



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





# JUNE 2024 PRELIMINARY FINANCIAL REPORTS

Chair Brenda Durden

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## Questions/Comments

### Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the June 2024 preliminary financial reports as presented.

### Motion Second

### Additional Discussion

### Vote





# PRESIDENT & CEO REPORT

**Vic Isley**

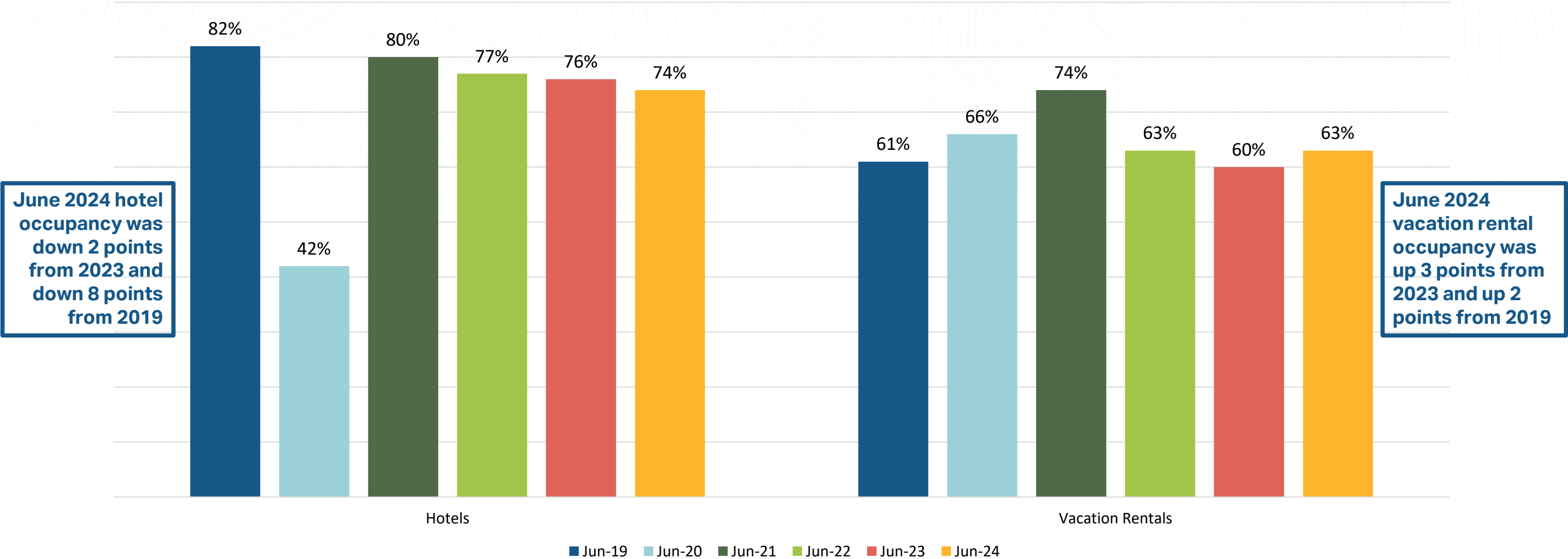
**Explore Asheville | President & CEO**

**EXPLORE  
ASHEVILLE**

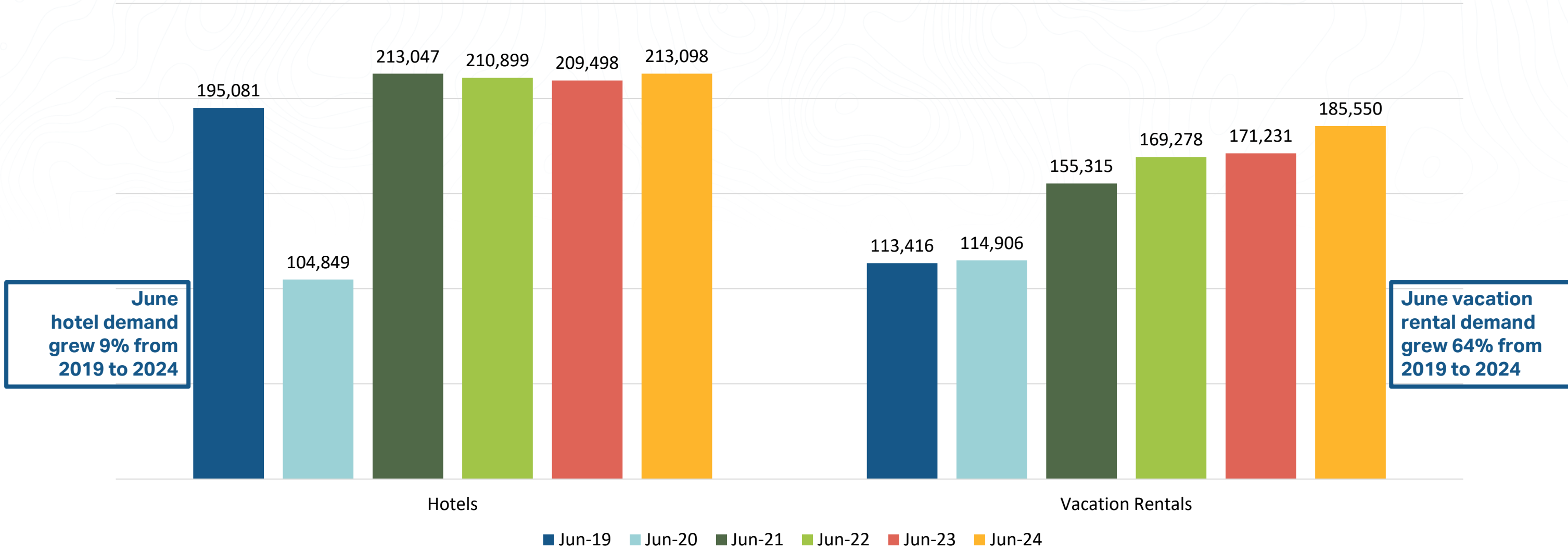
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# JUNE LODGING OCCUPANCY



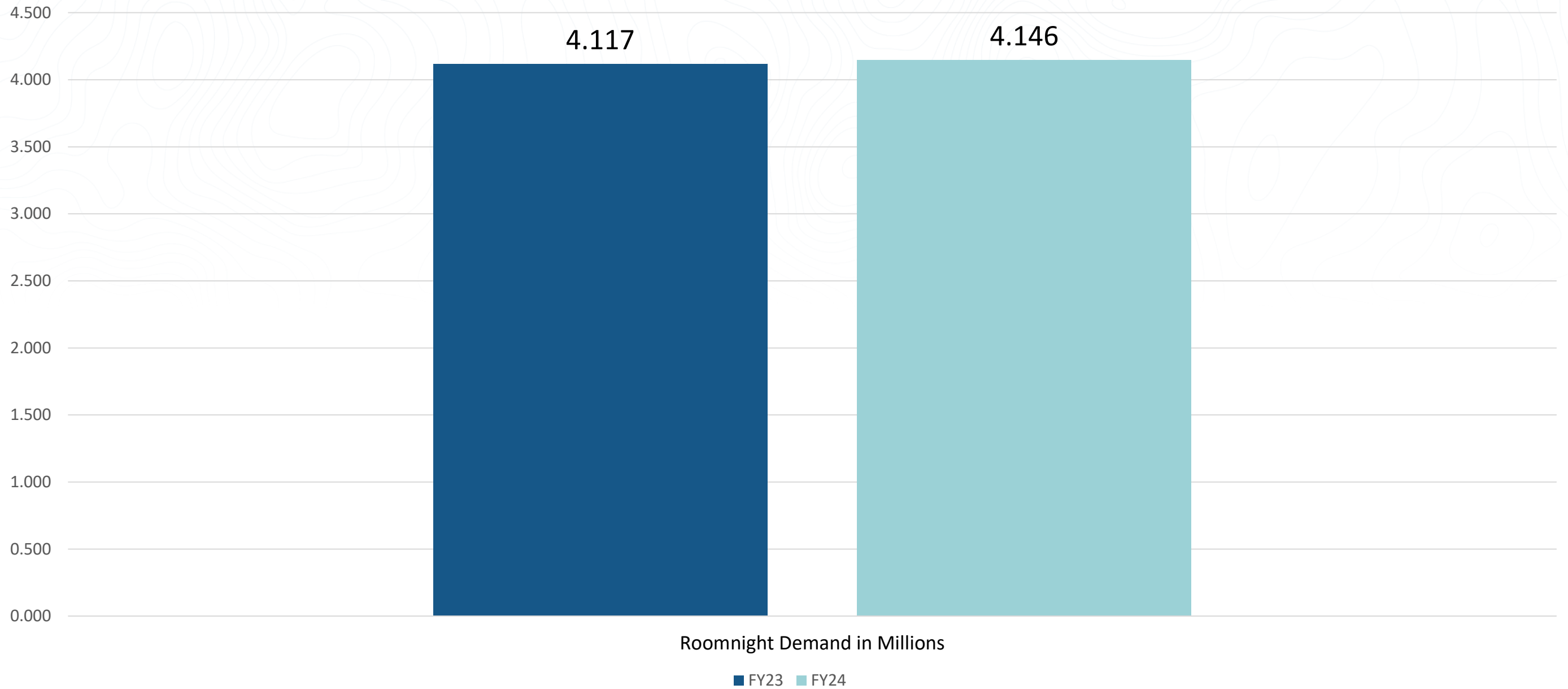
# JUNE LODGING DEMAND





# TOTAL ROOMNIGHT DEMAND FY24

Up 1% from FY23





# LOCAL FESTIVALS & CULTURAL EVENTS

Supported by Explore Asheville and the BCTDA

## July Events

- Skyview Golf Tournament
- Big Ivy's Independence Day Celebration
- Asheville Open Tennis Championship
- Black Mountain Blues
- Craft Fair of the Southern Highlands
- Shindig on the Green (Series)
- Groovin' on Grovemont (Series)
- Downtown After 5 (Series)
- Pritchard Park Summer Culture and Art Series

## August Events

- AVL Fest
- The 16th Annual Asheville Comedy Festival
- Bite Me AVL
- Come To Leicester Artists Studio Tour
- Shindig on the Green (Series)
- Groovin' on Grovemont (Series)
- Downtown After 5 (Series)
- Pritchard Park Summer Culture and Art Series

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://www.AshevilleCVB.com).



# EVENTS AT MCCORMICK FIELD

Join us for the Groundbreaking Ceremony and Travel & Hospitality Night



The Asheville Tourists & The City of Asheville  
Invite You to  
The McCormick Field Centennial Restoration and Capital Improvements

# Groundbreaking Ceremony

CELEBRATING 828 DAY!

August 28th, 2024  
Ceremony Begins at 11:15am



## GROUNDBREAKING

Wednesday, August 28




EXPLORE ASHEVILLE | POWERED BY Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority

JOIN US FOR THE SECOND ANNUAL  
TRAVEL  
&  
HOSPITALITY  
NIGHT

AT MCCORMICK FIELD

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 28



## TRAVEL & HOSPITALITY NIGHT

Wednesday, August 28



# THE SOUNDS OF ALWAYS ASHEVILLE

## New Commercial Spot

- Partnership with local film and production company History Boutique Films.
- Strategically used a “**day-to-night and beyond**” storyline to demonstrate and inspire quality visits from overnight visitors who spend more and stay longer.
- Featured area creators, artists, businesses and locals from professional dancers and musicians downtown to fiber arts in the River Arts District.
- Launching across the broader paid media program including linear, CTV/streaming and paid social.
- **HIGHLIGHT:** Spots running during the Olympics inclusive of the opening ceremony in Atlanta and D.C. **4.35 million anticipated impressions.**



*“The feeling of Asheville is hard to describe, even visually, so we thought we would score its beauty with the help of composer, Ben Lovett.*

*Inspired by the sounds of Asheville... the Blue Ridge Mountains, the French Broad River, the Biltmore, and city streets filled with music and creativity... the way these ancient mountains remind you to exhale. And the moments that take your breath away.*

*We captured the sounds of Asheville as a love song to our community, and welcoming guests to enjoy it during their stay.”*

-Director Erin Derham, History Boutique Films







**QUESTIONS**

**INPUT**

**COMMENTS**





# STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES PROGRESS UPDATE

**Vic Isley**  
President & CEO

**Dodie Stephens**  
Vice President of Marketing

**Michael Kryzanek**  
Vice President of Business Development

**Penelope Whitman**  
Vice President of Partnership & Destination Management

**Jennifer Kass-Green**  
Vice President of Culture & Business Affairs

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# EXPLORE ASHEVILLE & BCTDA'S STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

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

DELIVERING BALANCED & SUSTAINABLE GROWTH	ENCOURAGING SAFE & RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL	ENGAGING & INVITING MORE DIVERSE AUDIENCES	PROMOTING & SUPPORTING ASHEVILLE'S CREATIVE SPIRIT	RUNNING A HEALTHY & EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION
<p>Balancing resident and visitor needs, recognizing the necessary role that sustainable, long-term growth of travel has in achieving a healthy, collective economy.</p> <p>Focusing on the quality of each visit to our community – balancing growth across the seasons, business and leisure travel, and throughout Asheville and Buncombe County.</p>	<p>Engaging residents and visitors with shared values to care for and respect natural, cultural and human resources vital in delivering quality guest experiences.</p> <p>Collaborating with community organizations, local businesses and environmentally focused partners to support the sustainability and growth of our outdoor economy.</p>	<p>Extending a genuine invitation to BIPOC 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

APRIL 2024 – JUNE 2024

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Buncombe County Tourism  
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# MARKETING, CONTENT & PR Q4 INITIATIVES

**Dodie Stephens**  
Vice President of Marketing

**EXPLORE  
ASHEVILLE**  
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# MUSIC SCENE STORYTELLING PARTNERSHIP

Highlighted AVL Fest in partnership with Garden & Gun

## Back Porch Sessions

Recorded six concerts featuring Asheville-based musicians set to perform at AVL Fest and showcased three unique venues, The Outpost, Wicked Weed Funkatorium, and Orange Peel.

### Performers included:

- Town Mountain
- Tyler Ramsey
- Whitney Mongé
- Amanda Platt and the Honeycutters
- Alex Krugg Combo
- Toubab Krewe

## Musicians Dinner Editorial: *The Sounds of Asheville*

The music editor of Garden & Gun interviewed five artists about the local music community. The transcript will appear online and in the magazine's August/September issue.



Mailed vinyl with press kit to top 20 national and international journalists covering music, artists and travel, including Paste, Rolling Stone and Pitchfork.





*Delivering Balanced & Sustainable Growth*

# SPORTS DESTINATION MARKETING

## Digital asset project to enhance sales and marketing

A project to build a comprehensive library of sporting event and facility assets kicked off in Q4 and will continue through September 2024. Assets will be used in a variety of sales and marketing materials to recruit future sporting events

### Threshold360 Sport Facility Virtual Tours

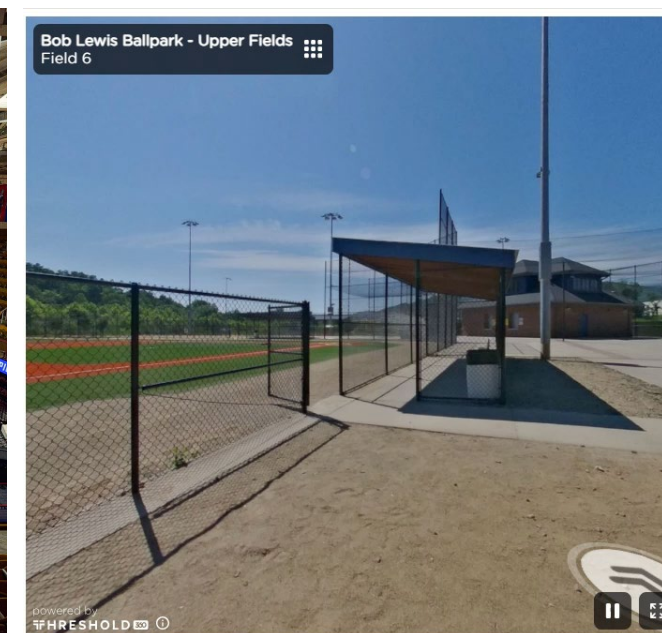
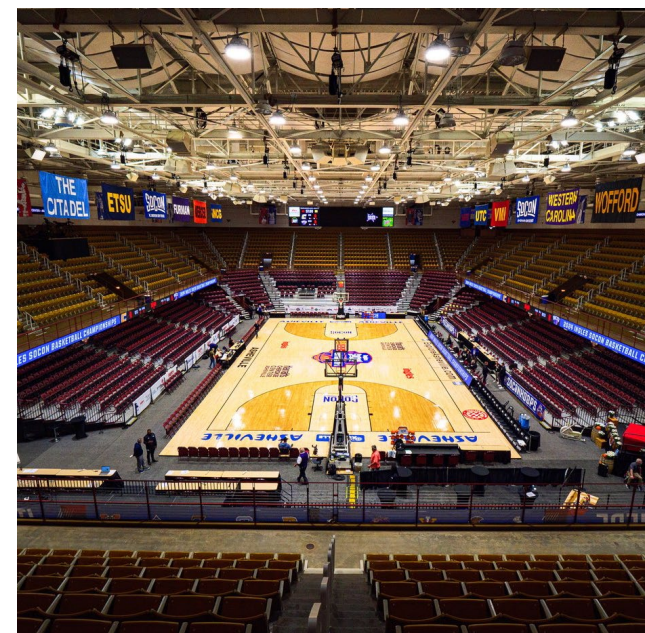
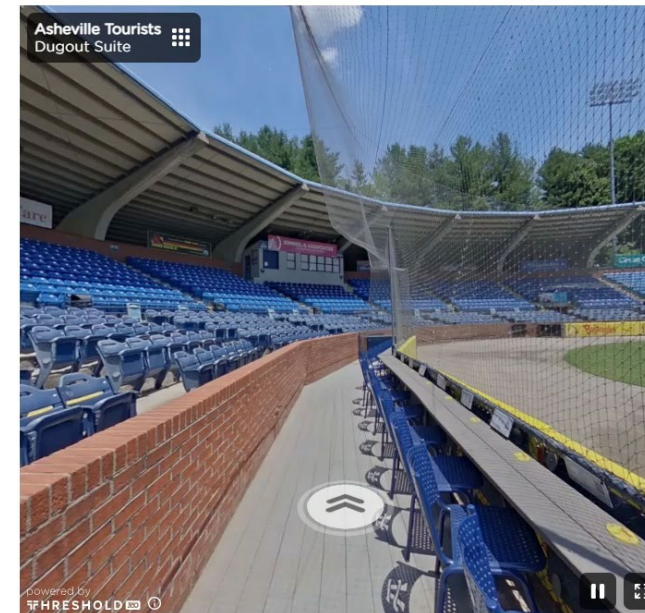
Explore Asheville has partnered with Threshold360 to capture high-quality 360° virtual tours of 10 sport facilities that will be added to ExploreAsheville.com and will enhance sales efforts and the promotion of Asheville to sport event planners

### Sport Facility and Venue Images

Capturing photos, including drone shots, of indoor and outdoor sport facilities located in Buncombe County.

### Sport Event Images and B-roll

Capturing photos and b-roll of real sporting events including lacrosse, dance, baseball, soccer and more.





## WILDSAM DIGITAL GUIDE

Covering where to go, what to eat, and what makes Asheville unique

[Asheville](#) was the third destination featured in a new digital field guide series by Wildsam.

Custom editorial covers the breadth of Asheville area offerings, a web-friendly map with dozens of locations, restaurants, historic neighborhoods, shops, itinerary inspiration and curated local insights.

Two embedded advertorials drive traffic to [ExploreAsheville.com](#).

Wildsam's story-driven approach has resulted in loyal followers:

- 1M+ printed guidebooks
- 1.6M digital readers
- 2.1M email subscribers
- 511K+ social followers

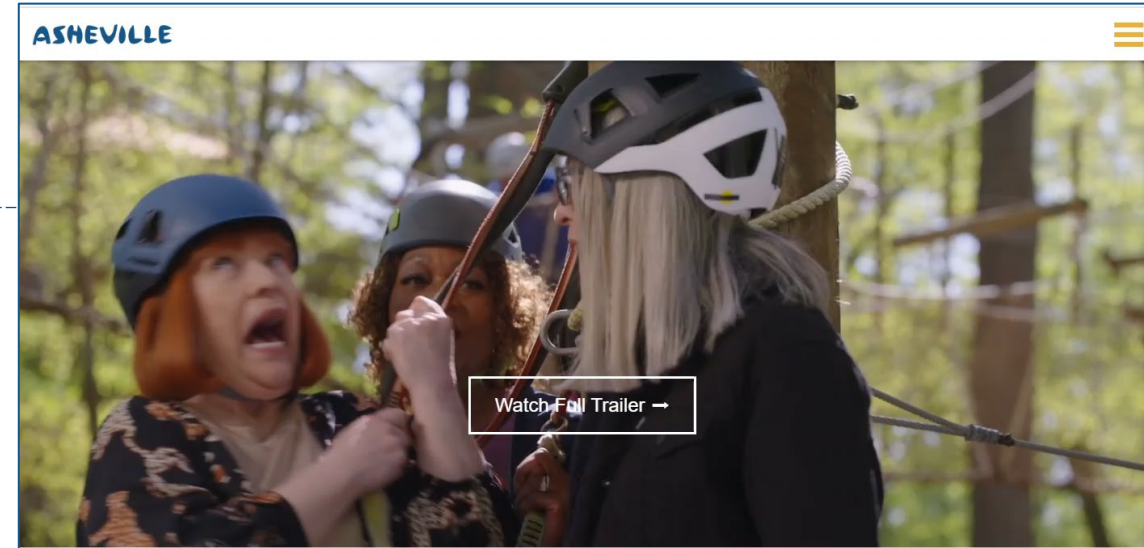




# SUMMER CAMP PROMOTION

## Cinematic momentum for seasonal travel push

- Created a strong association for the rich legacy of summer camps in the Blue Ridge Mountains to prompt summer travel by amplifying the Summer Camp movie release
- Experience Summer (Camp) Magic in Asheville landing page received **90,606 views**
- Articles and corresponding social posts were geared at inspiring visitors to Relive Your Summer Camp Experience in Asheville and to explore Overnight Summer Camps In and Around Asheville and Where the Summer Camp stars visited
- Additional campaign highlights:**
  - Movie Theatre Inventory Placement (6/3 - 6/30)
    - DC, NYC, Raleigh, Atlanta, Tampa
    - 47,376 Asheville :15s spots
    - 1,014,246 impressions
  - Earned media in key markets – 25.8M reach and \$58.6K publicity value; samples:
    - Forbes
    - FOX Access Carolina
  - Influencer partnership with @travelingblackwidow – 14,496 reach to the 50+ demographic



## Experience Summer (Camp) Magic in Asheville

The Western North Carolina region has a storied summer camp tradition, owing to its unparalleled beauty and access to numerous outdoor experiences. With **national and state parks** everywhere you turn, serene waterways like the ancient French Broad and thousands of miles of **hiking** and biking trails that start in the city and lead to unforgettable adventure, it's no wonder Hollywood comes a-calling when they need the perfect summer camp backdrop!

Now, a comedy starring Diane Keaton, Kathy Bates, and Alfre Woodard is the latest camp movie to be filmed in the Asheville area. In the movie, three childhood best friends who used to spend every summer together at camp reunite for a summer camp movie. The majestic Blue Ridge Mountains are the backdrop—and it's easy to see why.

Our advice: don't just watch the movie – live it! Head to the link in our bio and start planning your Asheville trip now to experience that summer camp magic firsthand.

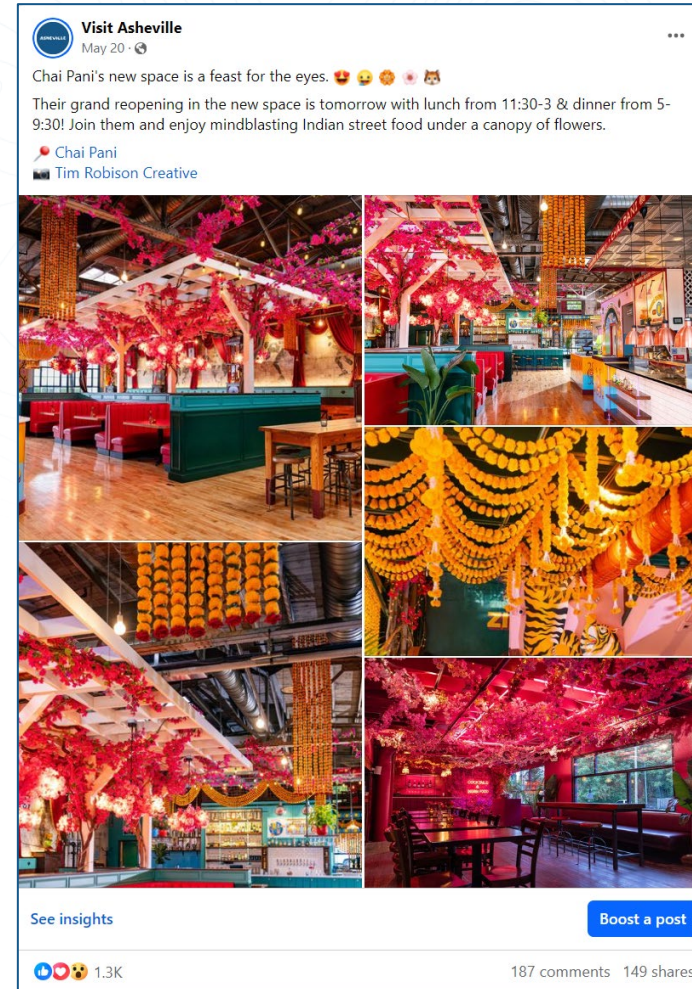


# TOP PERFORMING POSTS

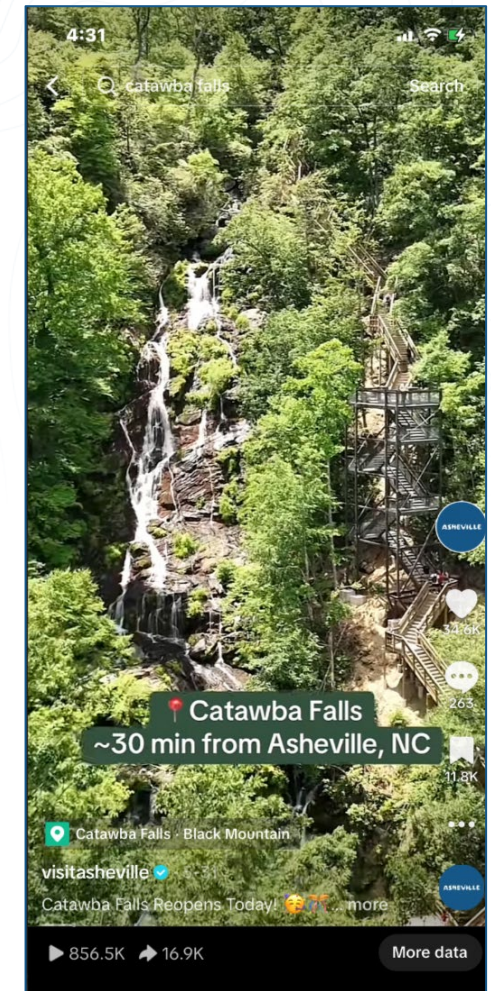
Re-opening announcements received the most engagement across all platforms in Q4



**INSTAGRAM**  
**Catawba Falls Re-Opening (Reel)**  
75,772 Engagements



**FACEBOOK**  
**Chai Pani Re-Opening (Photo Set)**  
12,653 Engagements



**TIKTOK**  
**Catawba Falls Re-Opening (Reel)**  
51,691 Engagements

Engagements = Likes, Comments, Saves, Shares



# NOTEWORTHY NEWS CLIPS

Pitched stories that shine a spotlight on Asheville

## 848.8M

Earned Media Reach

## \$1.6M

Publicity Value

## 47

Hosted Media

## 28

Significant Team Placements

## 146

Total Placements


**TRAVEL+LEISURE**

An Iconic Asheville Building Is Now a Beautiful Boutique Hotel — and We Got a First Look



**TODAY**

5 hidden gem destinations to book for your next summer getaway



ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

**NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC**

Interested in foraging? Here are 6 places to start.



**AFAR**

7 Rooftop Bars with the Best Drinks (and Views) of Asheville



**FOX CAROLINA**

Have a "Summer Camp"-inspired adventure



**SOUTHERN FORK**

William Dissen: The Market Place



Jael Skeffington: French Broad Chocolates

### Accolades



Best New Hotels of 2024 – The Restoration



South's Best Cities of 2024 – Asheville



Engaging & Inviting More Diverse Audiences

# ASHEVILLE BLACK CULTURAL HERITAGE TRAIL

Multi-phased storytelling on Asheville's Black legacy



## 227.6M

Earned Media Reach

## 428.2K

Publicity Value

Year-long strategic PR campaign elevating Asheville's Black Cultural Heritage Trail used targeted media outreach and a press release, influencer engagements and a transformative group press trip that exceeded goals and activated 20+ BIPOC businesses.

## 12

Hosted Media

## 13.3M

Potential Social Media Impressions  
*(added value from press trip)*

## 30

Total Placements

### TRAVEL+ LEISURE

TRIP IDEAS

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

Asheville, North Carolina, is now home to one of the few Black heritage trails in Appalachia.

By [Evie Carrick](#) | Published on February 22, 2024



PHOTO: S. GREG PANOSIAN/GETTY IMAGES

### Bloomberg

#### In Asheville, a Black Heritage Trail Ushers In a Whole New Economy

For years, the western North Carolina city has been breaking tourism records. Now it's making sure that success benefits everybody.



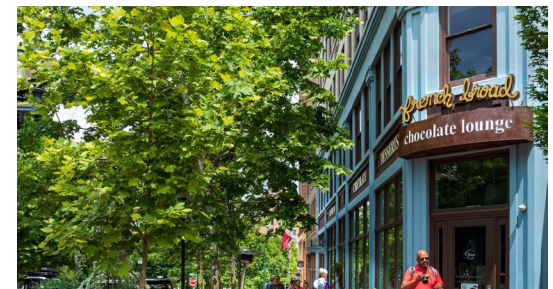
### The Washington Post

BY THE WAY

#### Where to travel in 2024, without crowds

12 destinations across Italy, Japan, Mexico and more to add to your travel wish list

**Don't miss:** The mile-long [Asheville Black Cultural Heritage Trail](#), which encompasses three neighborhoods, introduces visitors to pillars of the community, such as Alderman Newton Shepard, a formerly enslaved man who in 1882 became the [city's first Black person to win an election](#).







# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT Q4 INITIATIVES

**Michael Kryzanek**  
Vice President of Business Development

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



# ADVENTURE ELEVATE 2024

\$450,000 of direct spending in our community

- Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) hosted [AdventureELEVATE](#) for the first time in the Southeast in conjunction with Visit NC
- 350+ attendees, including travel buyers, tour operators, media, tourism boards and travel content creators, came from 40 countries
- Day of Adventure included ziplining, white water rafting, hiking adventures, and tours with Explore Asheville partners
- Opening reception at Highland Brewing
- Seminars held at the Renaissance Hotel Asheville

## DESTINATION PROMOTION DURING THE CONFERENCE

PR team engaged 20+ media delegates from outlets such as Afar, Conde Nast Traveler, AARP, Ebony, Gear Junkie, Vancouver Sun, etc. with a welcome reception, ongoing networking and pitching during the media marketplace.

Keynote speaker, influencer and Nat Geo host Jeff Jenkins engaged in a content partnership promoting the destination.





*Engaging & Inviting More Diverse Audiences*

*Delivering Balanced & Sustainable Growth*

## US TRAVEL ASSOCIATION'S IPW

- The leading inbound global travel show
- Held May 5-8 in Los Angeles
- 5,700 attendees representing 70 countries
- 42 scheduled appointments and another 10 walk-ups
- Three attendees stopped to say they were attending AdventureELEVATE
- Numerous OTAs wanting to add Asheville for their FIT & Fly/Drive clientele
- Met with a group tour company from the UK with seven departures that include two nights in Asheville





# HOTEL SECTOR MEETING

## Increasing visibility and support of outlying hotel properties

- Hosted 20+ hotel partner attendees representing properties from areas around I-26/I-40W and Tunnel Road/I-40E
- **Discussion topics included:**
  - Airstream Ventures presentation by Alan Verlander and Lane Teitlebaum
  - Hotel sector performance compared to downtown and Biltmore Village sector performance
  - Partnering to increase motorcoach, wedding, SMERF and government business





# Q4 GROUP & EVENT DEVELOPMENT

Benefitted businesses in our community

**130**  
GROUPS/EVENTS  
OCCURRED  
IN OUR COMMUNITY



**\$16.8 million direct spending**  
20,400 room nights

**91**  
GROUPS/EVENTS  
BOOKED  
FOR FUTURE VISITS



**\$12.4 million in direct spending**  
15,000 room nights

**259**  
LEADS GENERATED  
FOR POTENTIAL  
GROUPS/EVENTS;  
75,936 ROOM NIGHTS



**9.3 % increase in leads over Q4 FY23**  
7.2 % increase in room nights over Q4  
FY23





# PARTNERSHIP & DESTINATION MANAGEMENT Q4 INITIATIVES

Penelope Whitman

Vice President of Partnership & Destination Management

EXPLORE  
ASHEVILLE

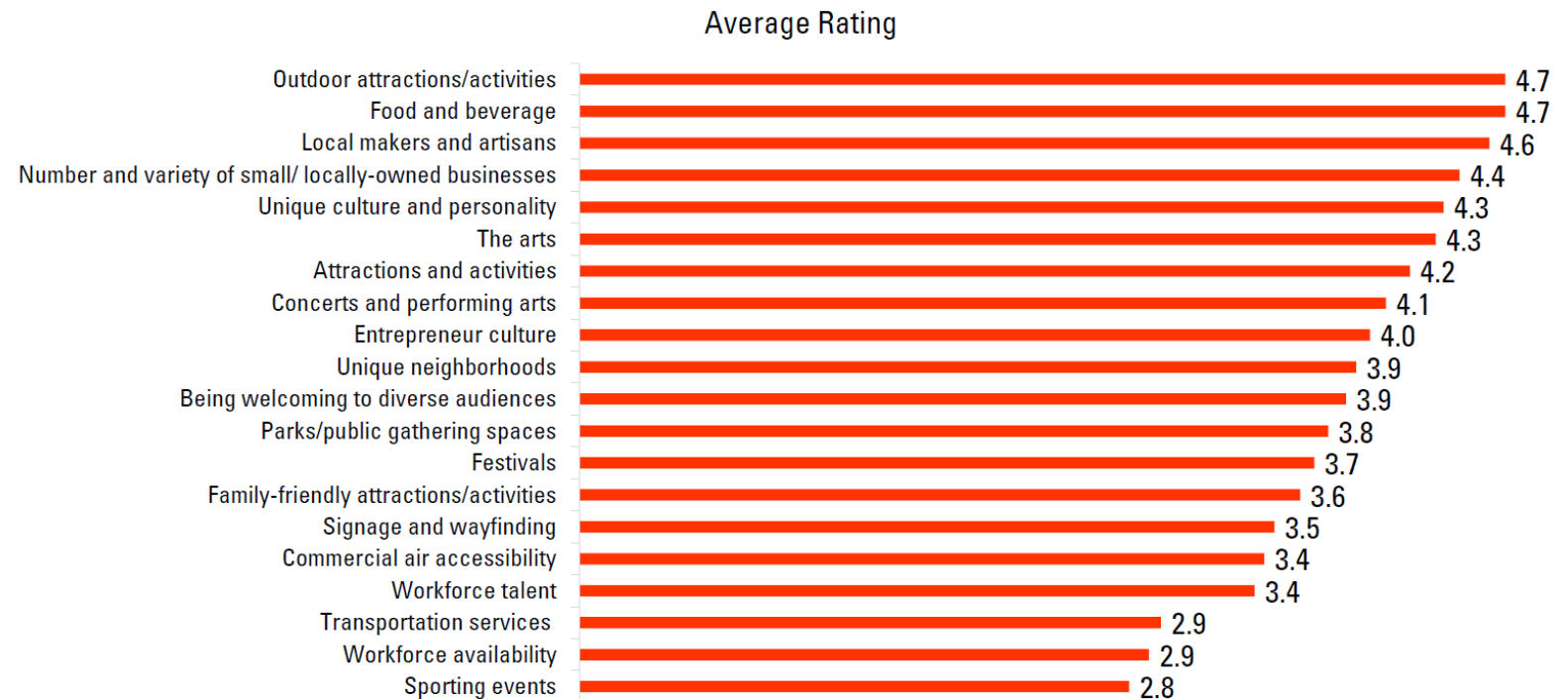
POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism  
Development Authority



# 2024 EXPLORE ASHEVILLE PARTNER SURVEY

- Fielded survey December 2023 - March 2024 to all active Explore Asheville partners
- 178 responses received from wide variety of partners categories and geographic regions around the county
- Outdoor attractions/activities and food and beverage were perceived highest destination assets
- Workforce availability and sporting events were perceived lowest rated destination assets
- Most responded that the generation of business demand is needed throughout the year, and that excess demand is not an issue during any part of the year  
Driving business during the shoulder season was cited as the greatest need
- Many respondents felt houselessness and perceived public safety concerns were the biggest risks to the success of their organizations, with economic vitality and resident sentiment following.

## Average respondent rating of all Asheville destination assets (1-5 scale)



The following are characteristics and assets that contribute to great places to visit and live. Please rate them according to how strong they are in Asheville and Buncombe County, where 1 is not a strength and 5 is a very significant strength.



## 2024 EXPLORE ASHEVILLE PARTNER SURVEY CONT.

Based on feedback provided by the 2024 Partner Survey, we are implementing the following:

Partner Survey Findings	What We're Doing
43% of respondents cited attending one or fewer partner events, indicating a lack of availability to attend events taking place Tuesday-Thursday	Hosting five of six FY25 tentpole partner events on Monday to accommodate majority of partners
Sporting events cited as lowest ranked destination asset	Explore Asheville has expanded digital sports assets, revamping the sports landing page on exploreasheville.com to showcase breadth of venues and capabilities to host and has hired a director of sports, film & entertainment to attract new groups and events
Workforce availability, 2nd lowest ranked destination asset	Explore Asheville has begun a Workforce Development program, aimed at educating and inspiring the next generation of travel & tourism workforce
Educating visitors about places to visit beyond downtown Asheville cited as a need	Working with intention of partnering with more widespread and diverse business audience by increasing partner network 7.6%
Networking and small business-related partner events cited as need by partners in reference to Explore Asheville events	New events programming, such as New Partner Breakfasts and Partner Happy Hours, aimed at small and new business networking, collaborating, and information sharing
More than 50% of respondents do not use or do not know how to use the Explore Asheville Event Calendar	An improved event submission experience is launching in September with our new website; our partnership team will be sharing tutorials and providing assistance to help partners transition to new platform



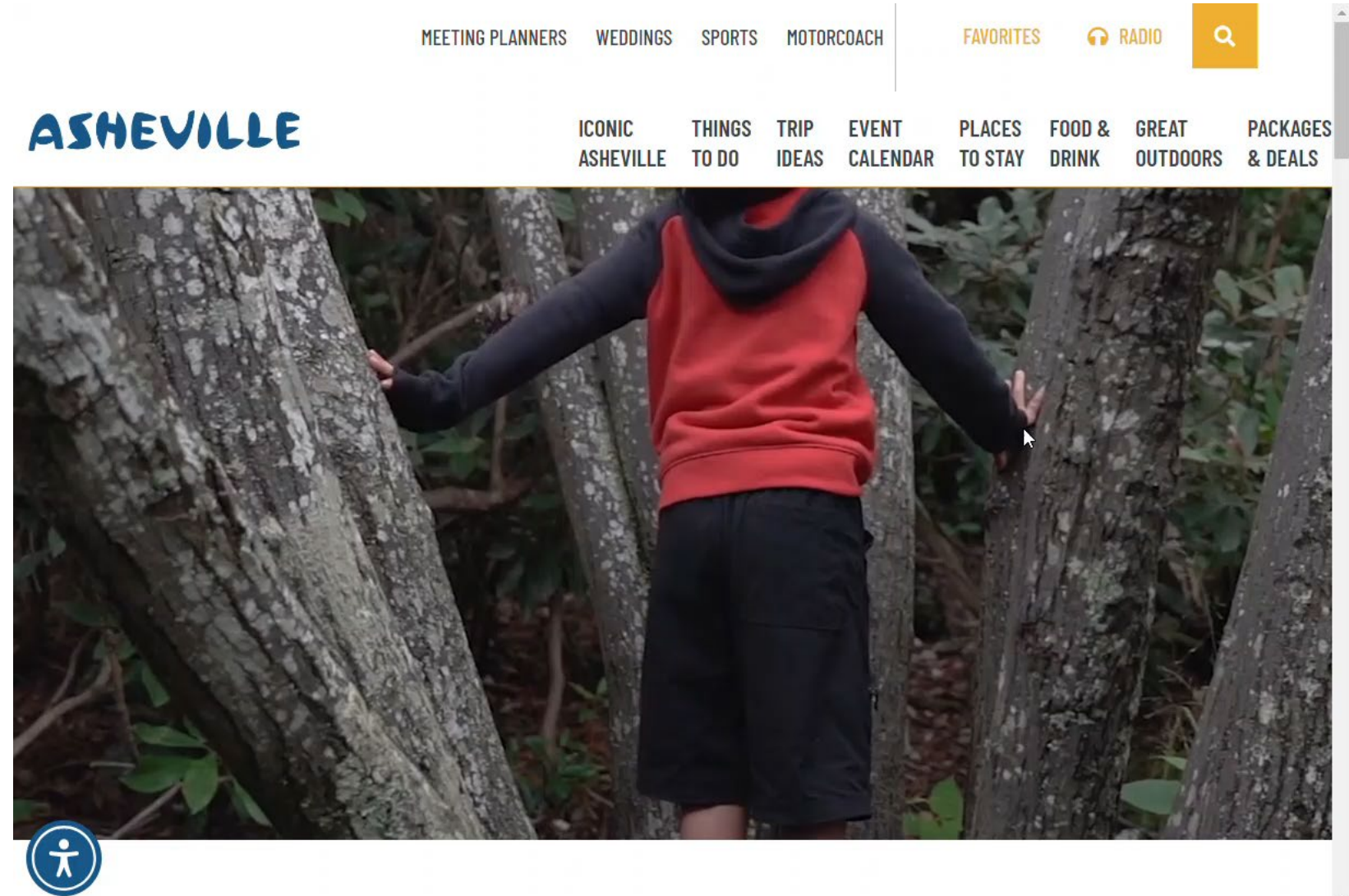
# OUTDOOR NC TRAIL TOWN STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Elevating visitor experiences, prioritizing resident quality of life, stewarding place

Pilot statewide program included Explore Asheville and 17 other destinations in NC willing to deepen their stewardship ethos, promote responsible visitation and inclusive, accessible travel via coaching and toolkits.

## As a result:

- Built new Responsible Tourism landing page
- Building new Accessible Asheville landing page to assist visitors in finding accessible accommodations and experiences
- Created content for the Trail Town Visitor Guide, a digital resource showcasing a selection of diverse trails to be published August and distributed by Visit NC





# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

## Inspire: Increasing BC Youth Awareness and Aspirations in Travel and Hospitality Industry

Encouraging future careers in travel and hospitality with our inaugural high school internship program, launching summer 2025.

### Program Kick-Off and Research:

- Partnered with Robyn Pass, National Board-certified Teacher and Career Academy Advocate with the Erwin High School Hospitality Camp, June 17-20.
- Filled gaps in camp schedule and organized experiences at 12 Bones, French Broad Chocolate, Taco Billy, and Well Played for fifteen 9-12 grade students to engage with partners and learn about our industry.
- Provided a guided tour of the Asheville Black Cultural Heritage Trail.
- Created Hospitality Camp graduation gift bags with local products and visitor guides to support partners and expose the students to locally made items.





# NEW PARTNER EVENTS

## Earth Day & Heroes of Hospitality

### Explore Asheville Travel & Tourism Earth Day Clean Up:

- More than 100 travel and tourism partners, community members, and friends gathered for an Earth Day clean up at five locations throughout Asheville.
- We picked up 460 pounds of trash, preventing it from washing into local streams/ivers.

### Explore Asheville Heroes of Hospitality Awards:

- Inaugural industry event recognized local professionals who provide excellent hospitality and customer service.
- Convened 130 partners to celebrate 33 nominees and 6 winners as well as the inaugural round of LIFT fund recipients.
- Winners include:
  - David Teafatiller: Guide, Hike Bike Kayak Asheville
  - Marco Gaspar: Chef de Partie, The Lobster Trap
  - Marsha Furness: Assistant Manager, Talloni, A Shoe Salon
  - Maura Juarez: Housekeeper, Virtelle Hospitality
  - Ralford McIntosh: Banquet Server, Omni Grove Park Inn
  - Ryan Jackson: Customer Host, FOX-N-OTTER Escape Rooms





# LEGACY INVESTMENT FROM TOURISM (LIFT) FUND

Twelve tourism-related capital projects awarded in inaugural cycle

- In April 2024, the BCTDA approved investing nearly **\$10 million** in **12 tourism-related capital projects** through the inaugural cycle of the LIFT Fund – *the most awards made in a single capital project grant cycle*
- These investments will support the maintenance and design of tourism-related capital projects, project administration, enhancement of natural resources, and expansion of necessary infrastructure
- 77% of available funds were committed to City- or County-owned projects

## 2024 LIFT Fund Investments

Grantee	Project	Award Amount
Buncombe County	Ferry Road Community	\$4,000,000
City of Asheville	Aston Park Tennis Center Court Rebuild Design	\$40,000
City of Asheville	Coxe Avenue Complete Street	\$2,983,890
City of Asheville	ExploreAsheville.com Arena Capital Maintenance	\$675,000
Asheville Museum of Science	Museum Repair and Expansion Plan	\$250,000
Black Wall Street AVL	Black Wall Street AVL Visitor Experience Upgrade	\$77,500
Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation	Craggy Gardens Visitor Center & Picnic Area	\$750,000
Hood Huggers Foundation	Blue Note Junction (Phase 1 Construction)	\$500,000
Media Arts Project (MAP)	Supernova Immersive Experience Project Design	\$200,000
RiverLink	Gateway Park	\$270,018
Swannanoa Valley Fine Arts League	Red House Gallery and Studios	\$92,495
Asheville Botanical Garden	Asheville Botanical Garden Renovations	\$150,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$9,988,903</b>



# EVENT GRANTS & SPONSORSHIPS

Support for local festival & cultural events through grants and sponsorships

Explore Asheville/BCTDA supported the following events in FY24 Q4:

- Asheville Makers Inc. - **Maker Faire Asheville**
- Asheville Downtown Association - **Downtown After 5**
- Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center - **{Re}HAPPENING 12**
- The Utopian Seed Project - **Trial to Table Series**
- UNCA - **Our Turn to Play Scholarship Dinner**
- The North Carolina Arboretum Society - **Bloom with a View**
- Asheville Downtown Association - **Pritchard Park Summer Culture & Art Series**
- Asheville Brewers Alliance - **AVL Beer Week**
- Swannanoa Valley Museum - **Swannanoa Valley Music Heritage Concert**
- Black Wall Street AVL - **GRINDfest**
- Black Mountain Center for the Arts - **Art in Bloom**
- Center for Honeybee Research - **Asheville HoneyFest**
- Connect Beyond Festival - **Connect Beyond Festival**
- Weaverville Business Association - **Weaverville's Music on Main**
- UNCA - **Asheville Ideas Fest**
- The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Association of Asheville & Buncombe County - **"Celebrating the History and Legacy of Juneteenth"**
- Asheville FM - **Voices; An Evening of Poetry, Literature, and Community**

**\$72K**

Grants &  
Sponsorships



**17**  
Events



# NEW PARTNERSHIPS

## Onboarded 44 local businesses as Explore Asheville partners

- Explore Asheville onboarded 44 local businesses as new partners in Q4, ranging from hostels and breweries to galleries and farms.
- In FY24, Explore Asheville partnered with 140 new businesses in Asheville and Buncombe County, expanding our partner network by 7.6%.
- Through these partnerships, Explore Asheville staff can connect incoming visitors and group travelers to the variety of experiences in Asheville and Buncombe County.



### WHAT & WHERE

#### Regions of New Partners

- Biltmore Village
- Black Mountain
- Downtown
- East Asheville
- Leicester
- North Asheville
- River Arts District
- South Asheville
- West Asheville

#### Business Categories

- Food & Drink
- Food Adventures
- Transportation
- Meetings/Event providers
- Photographers
- Attractions
- Arts/Cultural
- Guides/Outfitters
- Venues/Co-working
- Tours
- Lodging
- Catering
- Wellness
- Farms
- Retail





# CULTURE & BUSINESS AFFAIRS Q4 INTIATIVES

**Jennifer Kass-Green**  
Vice President of Culture & Business Affairs

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



# ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATES

New Team Member | Staff Retention Rate

## New Team Member:



**Kayla Speis**

Social Media Manager

## FY24 Staff Retention Rate:

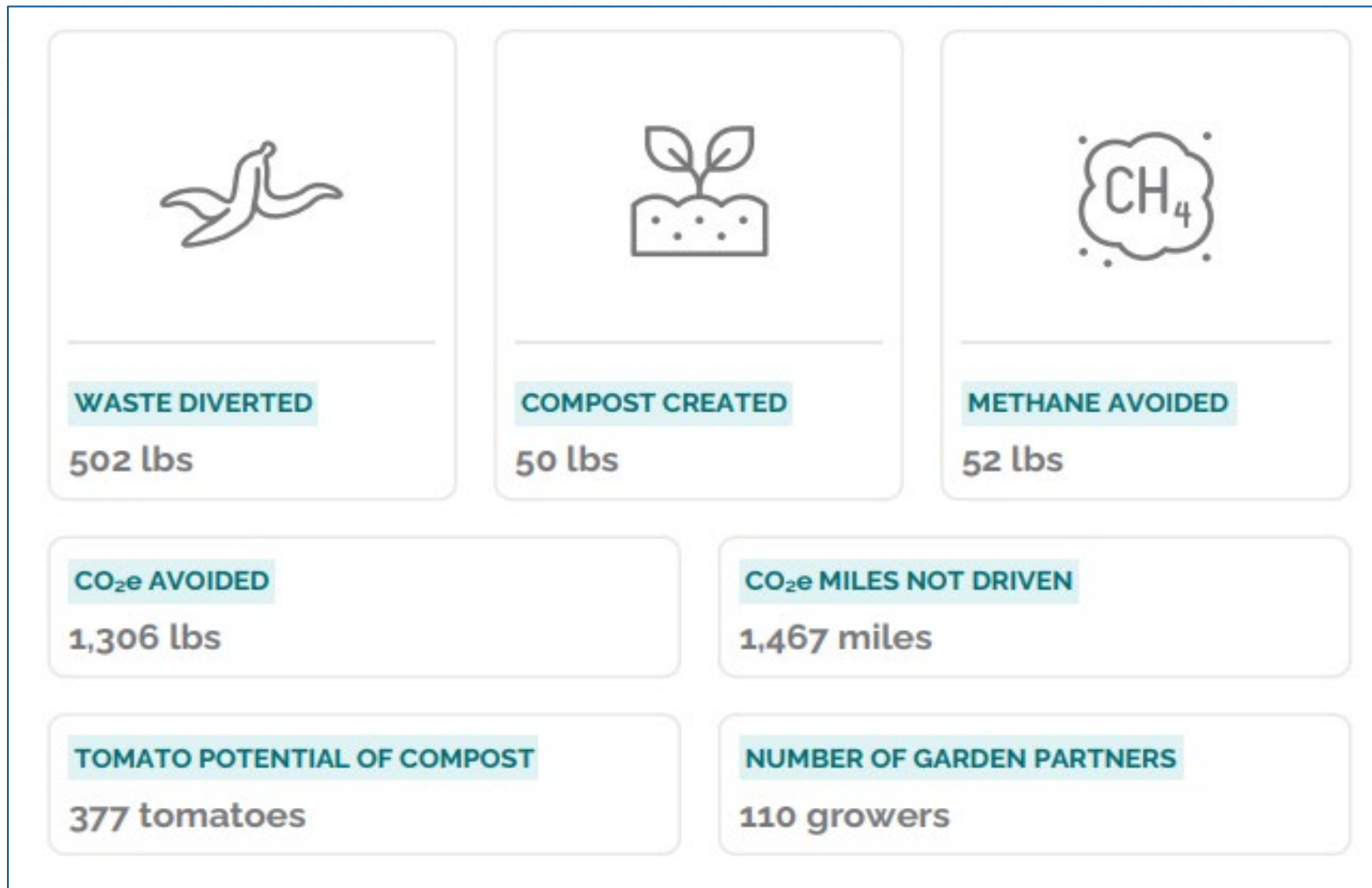
**91%**



# COMPOSTING EFFORTS

FY24 Impact Report from CompostNow

Since Explore Asheville became a member Sept. 2023:





# VOLUNTEER TIME OFF (VTO)

Total Volunteer Hours + Organizations in FY24

- Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College
- Asheville Greenworks
- Asheville Open
- AVLFest
- Bountiful Cities
- Buncombe County Schools
- Equal Plates Project
- George Washington Carver Edible Park
- Habitat for Humanity
- LPGA Amateur Golf Association
- NC Craft Beverage Museum
- Rebuild Jones Park
- RiverLink
- Skyview Golf Association
- Southern Conference
- The Blood Connection
- United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County

176.5

Hours  
Volunteered



17

Non-Profit  
Organizations



## UNITY BLAZE CERTIFICATION TRAINING

Partnership with Black Folks Camp Too

- Unity Blaze Certification course completed by all team members in May.
  - Provided by Black Folks Camp Too, a company founded by a seasoned outdoor industry executive dedicated to making the outdoors an enjoyable place for all.
  - Aims to deepen understanding of the challenges faced by underrepresented communities and develop the skills to welcome everyone to the great outdoors.
- Founder and President Earl B. Hunter, Jr. delivered on-site team-wide training on May 8.
- Ongoing partnership with Black Folks Camp Too will build on these skills to reach more customers and create a more inclusive outdoor industry

# Black Folks

— CAMP TOO —







# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PERFORMANCE UPDATE

**Michael Kryzanek, CHME**

Explore Asheville | VP of Business Development

**Colleen Swanson**

Meetings Database Institute (MDI) | Executive Vice President

EXPLORE  
ASHEVILLE

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# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

**Michael Kryzanek, CHME**  
Explore Asheville | VP of Business Development

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ASHEVILLE**  
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Development Authority



# GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

To be additive, balanced, and aligned in our efforts

---

1

## ADDITIVE

Focusing on new business and the quality of the visit

2

## BALANCED

Pursuing and booking off-peak business throughout the year focusing on specific need periods

3

## ALIGNED

Attracting business aligned with our strategic pillars, economic development sectors, and community assets



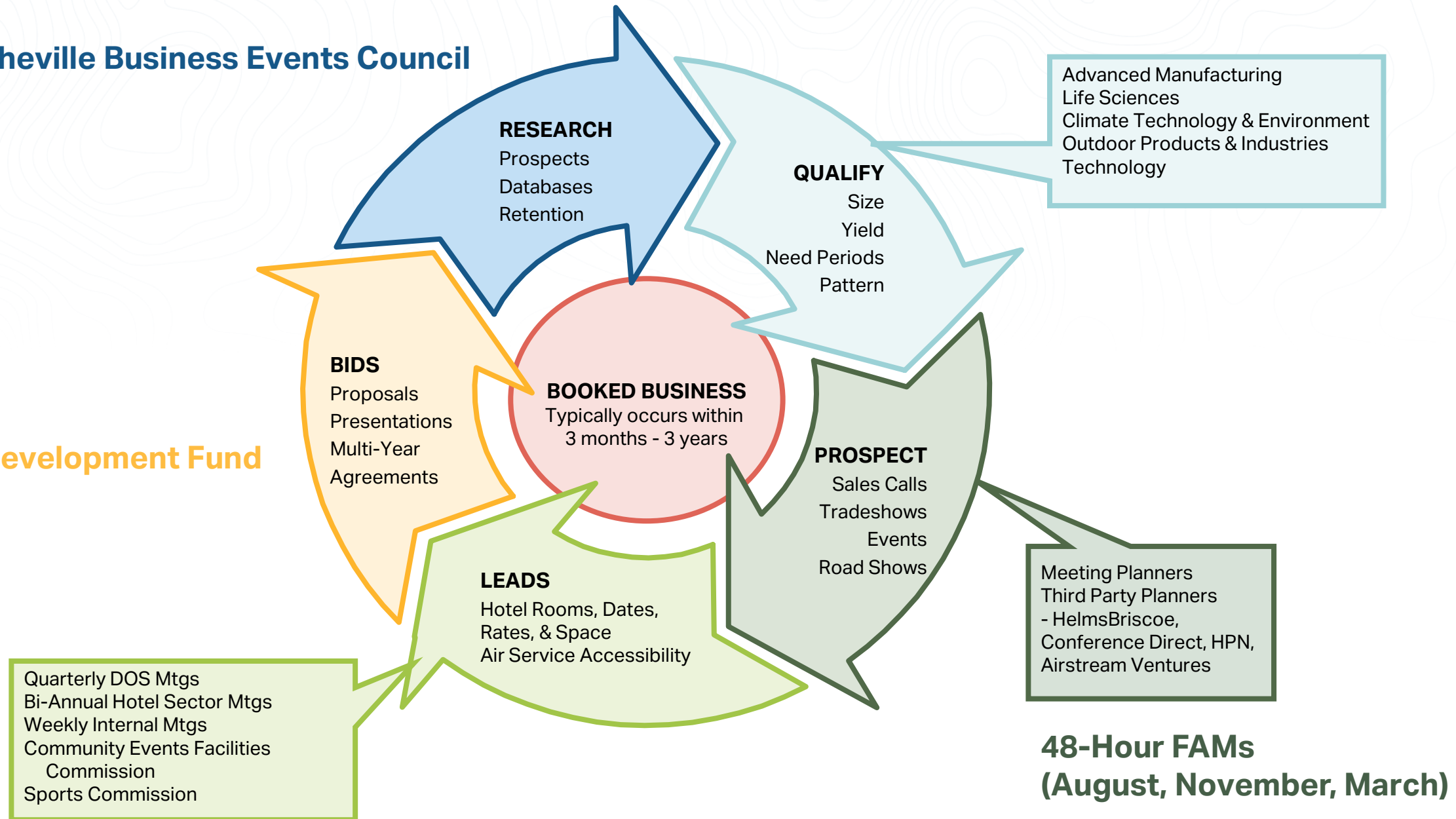


# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CYCLE

The process of securing group business for our destination

## Asheville Business Events Council

## Meetings Development Fund





# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TEAM



**Michael Kryzanek**  
VP of Business Development

- Oversees, leads and coaches team
- Asheville Business Events Council and reputation-building events
- Finance and budget planning; contract management



**Connie Nuckolls Holliday**  
Director of Sales

- Directs day-to-day group sales efforts
- Manages third-party partnerships
- Fosters hotel, venue and service relationships
- Oversees Meetings Development Fund



**Shawn Boone**  
Senior Sales Manager

Nationwide Markets:

- Technology
- Manufacturing
- Food and Beverage
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Assigned states: AL, AR, FL, GA, IN, KY, LA, MI, MS, MO, OH, SC, TN



**Tina Porter**  
Senior Sales Manager

Nationwide Markets:

- Sports
- Health & Wellness
- Outdoor Products and Industries

Assigned states: AZ, CA, CO, IA, IL, ID, KS, MN, MT, NE, NM, ND, NV, OK, OR, SD, TX, UT, WA, WI, WY



# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TEAM

---



**Kathryn Dewey**  
Sales Manager

Nationwide Markets:

- Life Sciences, Medical, Pharma, Health
- Climate & Environmental

Assigned states:

AL, AR, FL, GA, IN, KY, LA, MI, MS, MO, OH, SC, TN



**Khal Khoury**  
Sales Manager

Nationwide Markets:

- Adventure Travel
- Weddings
- Group Tour
- Reunions
- SMERF (Social, Military, Education, Religious, and Fraternal Groups)



**Emily Crosby**  
Group Service Manager

- Manages exclusive service program for conferences and events once booked
- Plans and coordinates 48-hour FAM trips



**John Dawson**  
Group Service Coordinator

- In-market service delivery for groups and 48-hour FAM coordination
- Meetings Development Fund admin
- Administrative support



# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TEAM

---



**Ali Wainright**  
Group Sales Coordinator

- Site inspection, tradeshow and travel support
- CRM and economic impact calculator
- Administrative support



**Mia Brown**  
Sales & Marketing Assistant

- CRM administration
- Visitor guide fulfillment
- Administrative support





# FY24 PERFORMANCE

**Michael Kryzanek, CHME**  
Explore Asheville | VP of Business Development

**EXPLORE  
ASHEVILLE**  
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Development Authority



# FY24 GOAL

Annual room night goal set for the Business Development Team

---

**75,000+ room nights** distributed via  
**1,000+ leads** to our  
**90+ lodging partners**

**Generates \$50 million in direct community spending from over 400 definite events**





# YEAR-OVER-YEAR PERFORMANCE

Fiscal Year 2024 vs. Fiscal Year 2023

2024 Benchmarked Room Night Goal: 75,000+

	FY24	FY23	% Difference
Room Nights (Raw/Unbenchmark)	63,998	63,964	+0.1%
Group ADR	\$225.02	\$214.45	+4.9%
Events Booked	415	394	+5.3%
Average Size (room night)	154	162	-4.9%
Leads Issued to Hotel Partners	1,088	1,047	+3.9%
<b>Room Nights (Benchmarked)</b>	<b>83,140</b>	<b>75,818</b>	<b>+9.7%</b>





# BENCHMARKING EXPLAINED

Emphasis is placed on booking new business and room nights in specific need periods

**OFF-PEAK  
GROUPS**  
JANUARY – MARCH



**1.5 room nights**  
for every room night booked

**WEEKNIGHT  
GROUPS**  
SUNDAY – THURSDAY



**1.5 room nights**  
for every room night booked

**REPEAT  
GROUPS**



**0.5 room nights**  
for every room night booked





# COMPETITIVE MARKETS FOR ASHEVILLE GROUP BUSINESS

## 2023 Calendar Year-End Data

Market	Occupancy	ADR	RevPAR	RevPAR % Difference
Buncombe County, NC	68.7%	\$181.40	\$124.67	-
Charleston, SC	69.6%	\$170.64	\$118.81	-4.7%
Savannah, GA	70.7%	\$148.32	\$104.79	-15.9%
Wilmington, NC	64.7%	\$140.97	\$91.28	-27.8%
Chattanooga, TN	62.8%	\$114.74	\$72.03	-42.2%
Greenville, SC	68.5%	\$119.82	\$82.13	-34.1%

(source: STR, LLC)







# IMPACT EVENT RECRUITMENT

**Michael Kryzanek, CHME**

Explore Asheville | VP of Business Development

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



# ASHEVILLE BUSINESS EVENTS COUNCIL (ABEC)

An ongoing partnership with the Economic Development Coalition of Asheville-Buncombe County

---

**ABEC provides opportunities for collaboration on destination promotional efforts and is targeted at attracting groups in the following strategic business sectors, which the EDC has identified as growth opportunities:**

Advanced Manufacturing

Life Sciences

Climate Technology and Environment

Outdoor Products and Industries

Technology

Hosting meetings, conferences, and events associated with these business sectors can strengthen industry-specific supplier/customer relationships for local businesses, attract EDC prospects, and provide exposure for Asheville and Buncombe County to business decision makers

ABEC meetings this past fiscal year featured presentations by HCA Healthcare, Asheville Regional Airport, a panel discussion featuring NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information and the Asheville Brewer's Alliance

ABEC members, representing target sectors, are asked to provide access and/or referrals to organizations, associations, and boards with business potential for Asheville in exchange for access to data/statistics and networking/promotional opportunities





# INDIE LODGING CONGRESS

July 16-17 \* 100 attendees \* \$127,000 in direct spending

## INDIEConfab Programing

### Managing with an Owner's Mindset

Owners and management companies can oftentimes be out of sync when it comes hotel operations. How can owners and managers come together and maximize guest satisfaction, hotel profit, and creating a great & unique experience?

### The Power of Mentorship in Hospitality

Over 90% of hotel general managers in the United States are white. Over 60% of the hospitality and tourism workforce is made up of female employees, however only 17% of them are in senior or leadership positions. In the hospitality industry, 13% of people in leadership positions are people of color. (Gitnux Marketdata Report) How do we train, prepare and uplift the next generation of young leaders with an eye towards diversity? This panel dives into how mentorship plays a key role in sculpting the future of hospitality leadership.

### Welcome Them Home: Lessons in Leadership & Hospitality

What role is a daring brand to play in meeting the emotional needs of its employees and guests? Of these needs, which are we to prioritize and how do we do that in ways that show our sense of sincere care? The urgency of now suggests that the hospitality sector must offer an invitation to transformative experiences and that hospitality writ large has the power to shift & shape culture.

### Neighborhood Transformation & Development

Great hotels and restaurants can transform neighborhoods and be the center of gravity for revitalization efforts. How can hospitality development enhance & contribute to a locale while also preserving & honoring the existing community? Listen in as our panelists share their personal experiences building and growing their hospitality ventures in different areas across the US.

### Experiential Hospitality

The demographics of hospitality consumers are changing; millennials, Gen Z and Gen Alpha are now a predominant audience. Glamping, eco lodges, wellness retreats, and other unique stays are becoming the go-to for the younger generation. How important is it to incorporate these different experiences into hotels and how can it be done in an intriguing way?

### Wheel of Hospitality

This fun panel will spin a virtual wheel filled with questions chosen by our team, advisory board, and followers. Whichever question the wheel chooses will be answered by our panelists. These questions will be goofy, thought provoking, controversial and everything in between!



**Carolyn Schneider**  
Founder • Corner Booth Hospitality



**Greg Smith**  
Senior VP, Human Resources • Preferred Travel Group



**Jennifer Krapp**  
Head of Restaurant Operations • The Indigo Road Hospitality Group



**Amy Michaelson Kelly**  
Principal & COO • Hatteras Sky



**Ben Weinberg**  
Co-Founder & Co-CEO • Trillborn



**Rob Blood**  
Founder • Lark Hotels



**Kimberly McGlenn, Ph.D.**  
Founder • Grant Blvd & Blk Ivy



**Michael Everett**  
Executive VP • CoralTree Hospitality



**Chris Osaka**  
CEO • Tomu



**Shawn Chopra**  
Founder & Creative Director • good neighbor



**Soné Ehabe**  
Principal & Interior Designer • 4Walls Interior Design LLC



**Emily Isenberg**  
Founder & Creative Director • Isenberg Projects



**Brigitte Harenda**  
President • B&Co.



**Jennifer Parks**  
VP, Member Development and Communications • Curator Hotel and Resort Collection



**Dan Ryan**  
Podcast Host • Defining Hospitality



**Alexis Lanman**  
CMO • New Waterloo



# MO SUMMIT 2025

## Impact event secured for April 2025 & 2026

- Known as the premier gathering for impact CEOs, the MO Summit brings together leaders who are redefining capitalism and creating solutions to the world's most pressing social and environmental issues. The event features a combination of core panel discussions and extensive networking opportunities
- The 8<sup>th</sup> annual MO Summit is expected to attract more than 100 CEOs of high-growth, positive-impact companies. These leaders are at the forefront of using business as a force for good, creating an inclusive, regenerative, and sustainable future
- Many of these executives will experience Asheville for the first time, creating new opportunities to further diversify our local economy and business community
- Local talent such as Alex Matisse, founder of East Fork Pottery, and Meherwan Irani, renowned chef and co-founder of Chai Pani have presented at previous MO Summits
- The summit's direct economic impact is anticipated to be nearly a quarter of a million dollars, significantly boosting local businesses midweek







# FOCUSING ON SPORTS

**Michael Kryzanek, CHME**

**Explore Asheville | VP of Business Development**





# SPORTS GROUPS BOOKED THROUGH EXPLORE ASHEVILLE OCCURRING MID-MARCH THROUGH END OF 2024

## 28 SPORTS GROUPS AND EVENTS BOOKED THROUGH EXPLORE ASHEVILLE TEAM:

- 1) FIRST competition 2024
- 2) NC Athletic Directors Association State Conference
- 3) 2024 Ville to Ville Craft Brew Relay
- 4) Blue Ridge Spring Dinger 2024
- 5) Spring Mountain Turf National Championships Tournament
- 6) 2024 NCYSA Spring State Cup
- 7) Super NIT Softball Championships
- 8) AKC Disc Dog Challenge 2024
- 9) Summer Zone Turf Mountain Championship Tournament
- 10) Summer Turf Softball State Championships
- 11) Asheville Lacrosse Classic (Boys) 2024
- 12) Asheville Lacrosse Classic (Girls) 2024
- 13) Summer Mountain Turf National Championship Tournament
- 14) NET Elite: Asheville Summer Bash
- 15) NET Elite: Asheville Summer Clash
- 16) Youth World Series (D2 D3)
- 17) The National PE Institute 2024
- 18) Love Shine Play
- 19) 2024 Top Gun USA Sports, Tournament of Champions
- 20) Altra Running
- 21) 2024 Riverside Summer Shootout – Boys
- 22) 2024 Top Gun USA Sports, New Sliding Mitt Championship
- 23) 2024 Riverside Summer Shootout – Girls
- 24) Super NIT Turf Invitational Tournament
- 25) East Coast State Police Women's Softball Tournament
- 26) Fall Zone Qualifier/Fall Winter Super NIT Championships
- 27) Fall Mountain Turf National Zone Qualifier Tournament
- 28) Camp Collab

## 5 SPORTS GROUPS AND EVENTS BOOKED BY EXPLORE ASHEVILLE THAT HAD ABRSC INVOLVEMENT:

- 1) 2024 Southern Conference Basketball Championship
- 2) 92<sup>nd</sup> Asheville Open Tennis Championship 2024 (Adult)
- 3) 92<sup>nd</sup> Asheville Open Tennis Championship 2024 (Junior)
- 4) 2024 Gran Fondo Asheville
- 5) 2024 Southern Conference Women's Volleyball Championship





# SOUTHERN CONFERENCE WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

## Asheville Partnership Lands SoCon Volleyball Championship for Three Years, 2024 - 2026

Explore Asheville, the regional sports commission and Harrah's Cherokee Center staff collaborated to land the championship for Asheville for the next three years. Ingles signed on to support as the title sponsor.

The 2024 volleyball championship marks the first time in the conference's history that the tournament will be hosted exclusively at a neutral location for all teams.

Area businesses will benefit from the boost in business during the shoulder season month of November. Residents and visitors alike can buy tickets now to reserve their spot to take in exciting college volleyball.

The authority's recent TPDF investment in multi-sport courts for the ExploreAsheville.com arena, in partnership with the City, enabled our community to expand into women's volleyball.

**Annual Estimated Direct Spend - \$160,000+**





# JAY CURWEN STARTS AUG. 12

## New Director of Sports, Film & Entertainment

In this newly created role, the Director of Sports, Film, & Entertainment will be responsible for providing strategic leadership to attract and retain profitable opportunities in the sports, film, and entertainment industries for Asheville and Buncombe County.

Curwen is an Asheville native and UNC Asheville graduate, and he brings extensive experience in outdoor recreation, event management, and film production to the role.

### Curwen's Background

- Served as Senior Director of Sales & Retail for Nantahala Outdoor Center for the last 12 years
- Drove regional and national sales for iconic brands including Hoka, Patagonia and The North Face for more than two decades
- Spent 10 years as a sponsored multi-sport athlete, and competed as a professional runner, triathlete, road cyclist, and mountain biker
- Won Mount Mitchell Challenge / Black Mountain Marathon in '98 and '99 and has been its Race Director since 2004
- National Champion Triathlete and Adventure Racer, a two-time finisher of the Hawaiian Ironman World Championship, and has represented the U.S. in multiple World Championships
- Worked on location on the production of major motion picture Summer Camp; his regional film experience dates to the filming of Last of the Mohicans and Patch Adams







# MEETINGS DATABASE INSTITUTE ANALYSIS

**Colleen Swanson**

Meetings Database Institute (MDI) | Executive Vice President

**EXPLORE  
ASHEVILLE**  
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Development Authority





# MEETINGS DATABASE INSTITUTE (MDI)

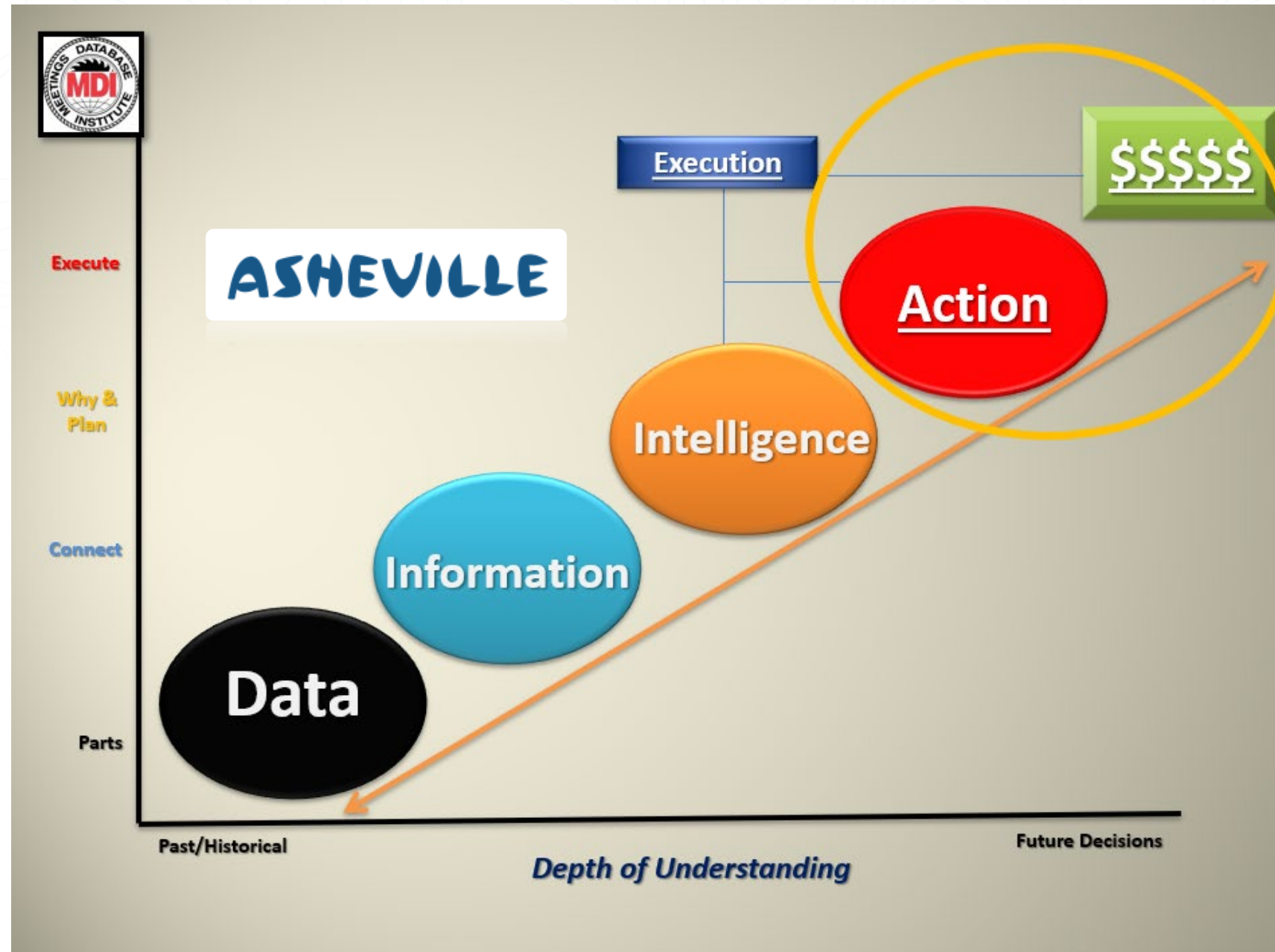
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- Founded in 1994
- A *strategic* data management and solutions firm, specializing in the hospitality and meetings marketplace.
- Integrity, Intelligence and Impact
- Analyzed and Managed over 4 Million Accounts
  - \$35+ Billion Room Revenue
  - 200 Million+ Roomnights
- Provide a clear roadmap of actionable database intelligence in order to increase revenue and impact.





# DATA PATH TO SUCCESS







# FY25 ARRIVALS

(JULY 2024-JUNE 2025)

## DEFINITES

(CONTRACTED BUSINESS THROUGH EXPLORE ASHEVILLE)





# KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

## FY25 Arrival Definites (Contracted through Explore Asheville)

---

- Market Segments
- Feeder States
- Sizes - Peak Rooms
- New vs. Repeat
- Time of Year - Arrival Months
- Lead-Times: (Turned Definite to Arrival)
- Weekday/Weekend - Day of Week

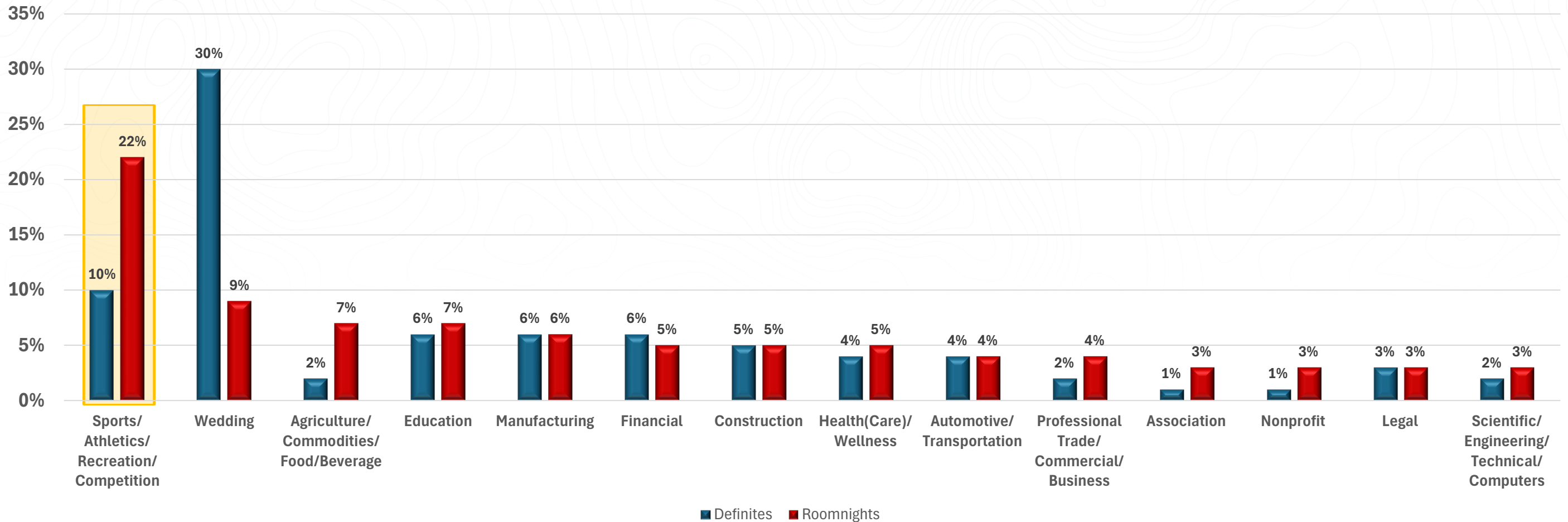






# MARKET SEGMENTS

## FY25 Arrivals Definites (Contracted through Explore Asheville)



- Many different Market Segments coming into Asheville in FY25 with Sports groups booked through Explore Asheville continue to be the key definite roomnight driving segment followed by Weddings, which shows to be our key *quantity* of definites driver
- Agriculture/Commodities/Food/Beverage has a strong roomnight showing in FY25 from a few definites
- Education strong showing in roomnights.
- Manufacturing rounds out our top 5 segments for arrivals in FY25

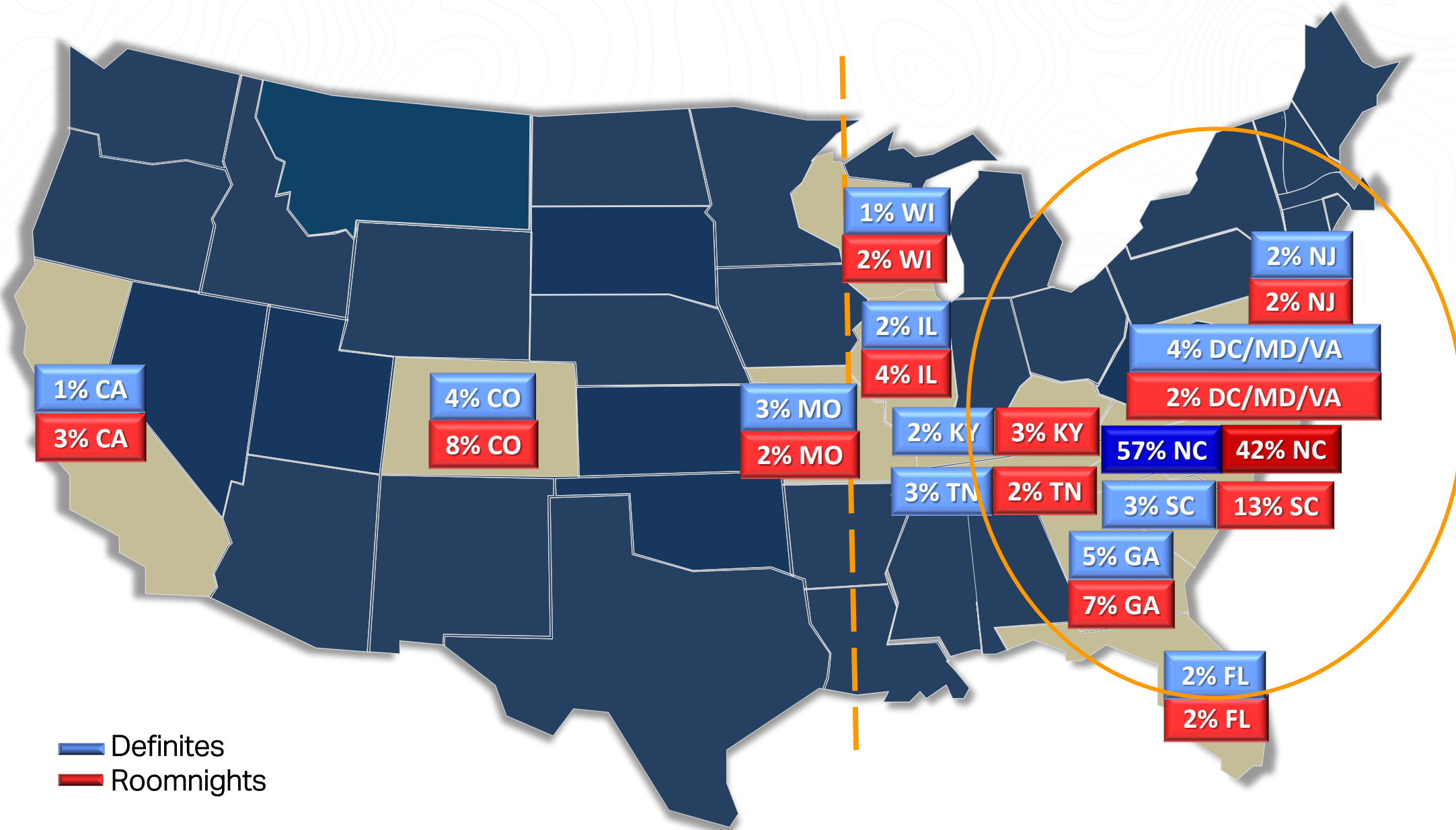






# ACCOUNT FEEDERS

## FY25 Arrivals Definites (Contracted through Explore Asheville)



Regional impact, and significant roomnights from groups located in the state of North Carolina and South Carolina is consistent.

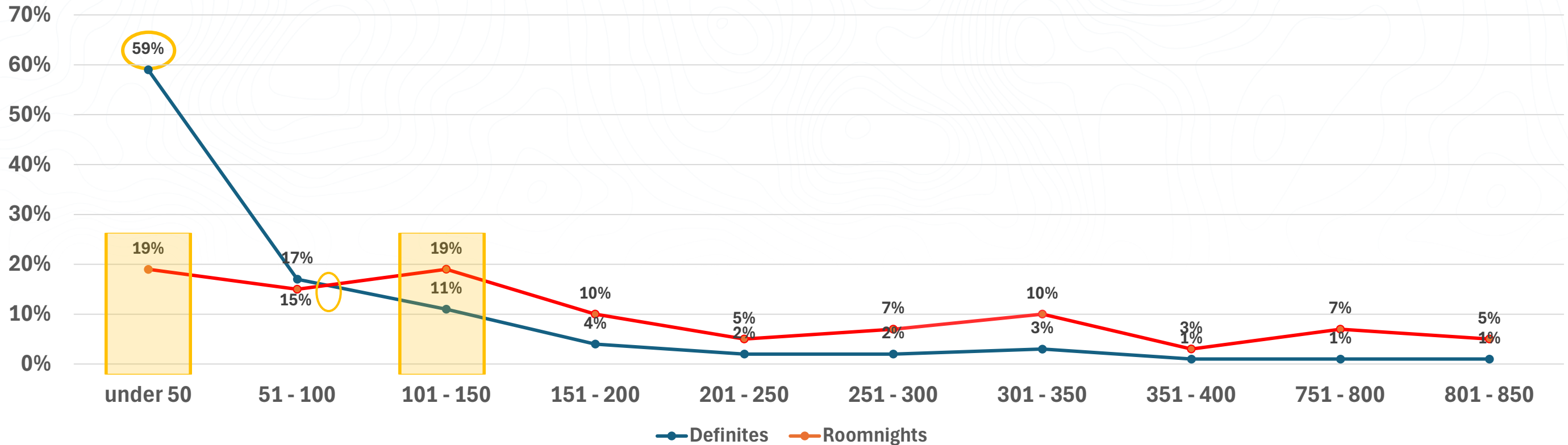
Colorado impactful roomnight driver along with Georgia.





# PEAK ROOMS

## FY25 Arrivals Definites (Contracted through Explore Asheville)



Peak Rooms showing a significant quantity of business in the 50 peak or under room category. This category drives 59% of the definite transactions and 19% of the roomnights contracted to arrive in Asheville during FY25.

There is a healthy mix of business across various other peak room sizes as you consider the deployment of the remaining business that has been contracted for arrival in FY25. Elevation in roomnights within the 101-150 peak range. Increase in larger groups (251+ rooms peak night) coming into the market in FY25.

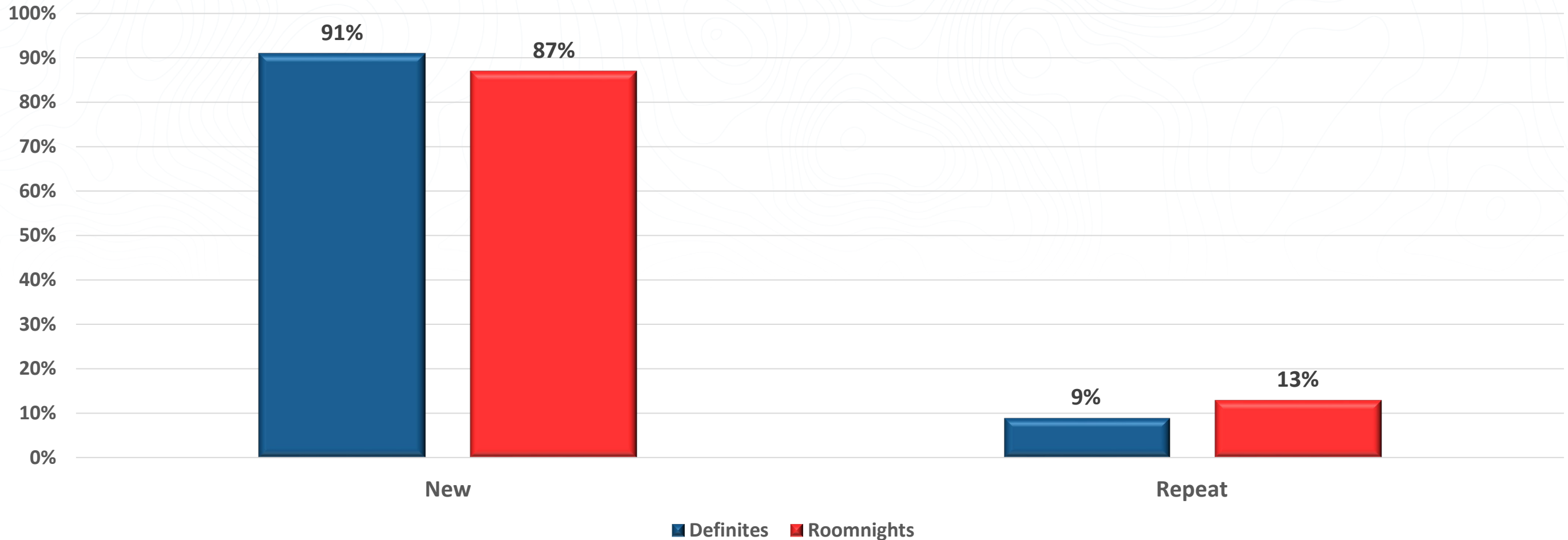






# NEW VS. REPEAT

## FY25 Arrivals Definites (Contracted through Explore Asheville)



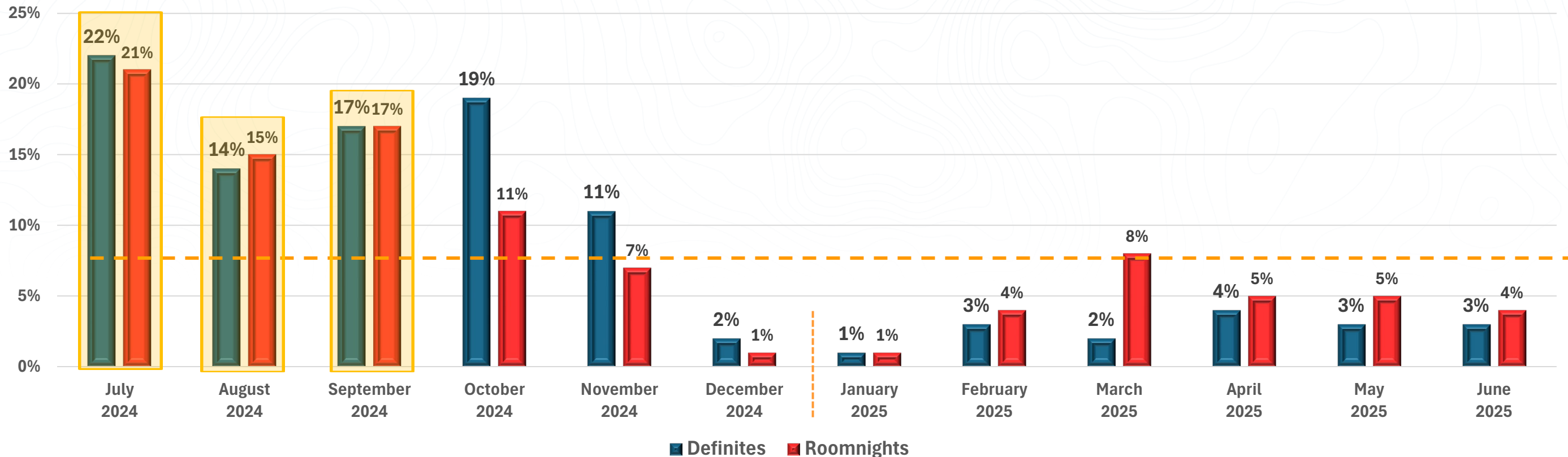
Vast amount of New Business coming into the destination in FY25. We see this New vs. Repeat comparison continue to trend strongly towards a shift in business mix to more New Business coming into the destination vs. Repeat Business.





# ARRIVAL MONTH

## FY25 Arrivals Definites (Contracted through Explore Asheville)



Arrival Months are weighted to heavy first-half of FY25 due to lead-time booking cycles (lead created to arrive date). Peak arrival months are showing to be July, August and September. Good volume of *quantity of groups* for July and October, as well as September.

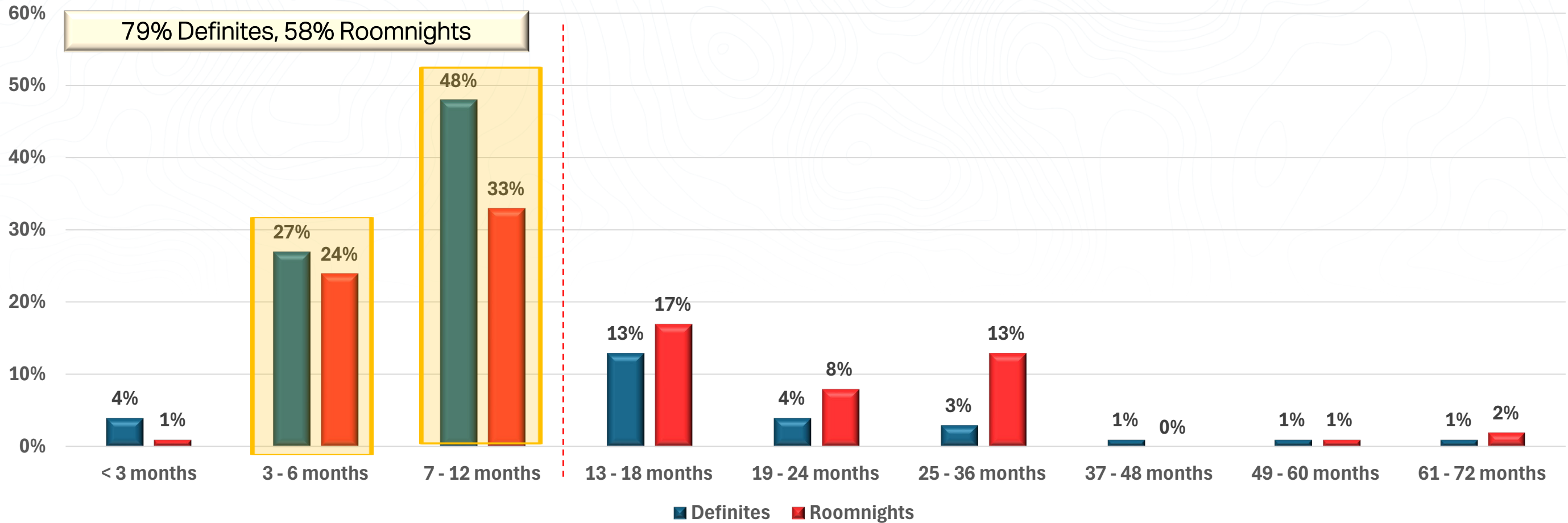
As we progress through FY25 more business will be contracted with arrival dates in the second half of FY25 (Jan-June 2025).





# LEAD-TIME: TURNED DEFINITE TO ARRIVAL DATE

## FY25 Arrivals Definites (Contracted through Explore Asheville)



As we move into FY25 we see 7-12 months (turned definite (contracted) date to arrival date) is most prevalent lead-time category, followed by 3-6 months.

79% of the definites representing 58% of the roomnights fall within a 12-month turned definite to arrival date. 42% of the roomnights, 21% of the definites resulting from groups with lead-times greater than 12 months. Slightly shorter lead-times.

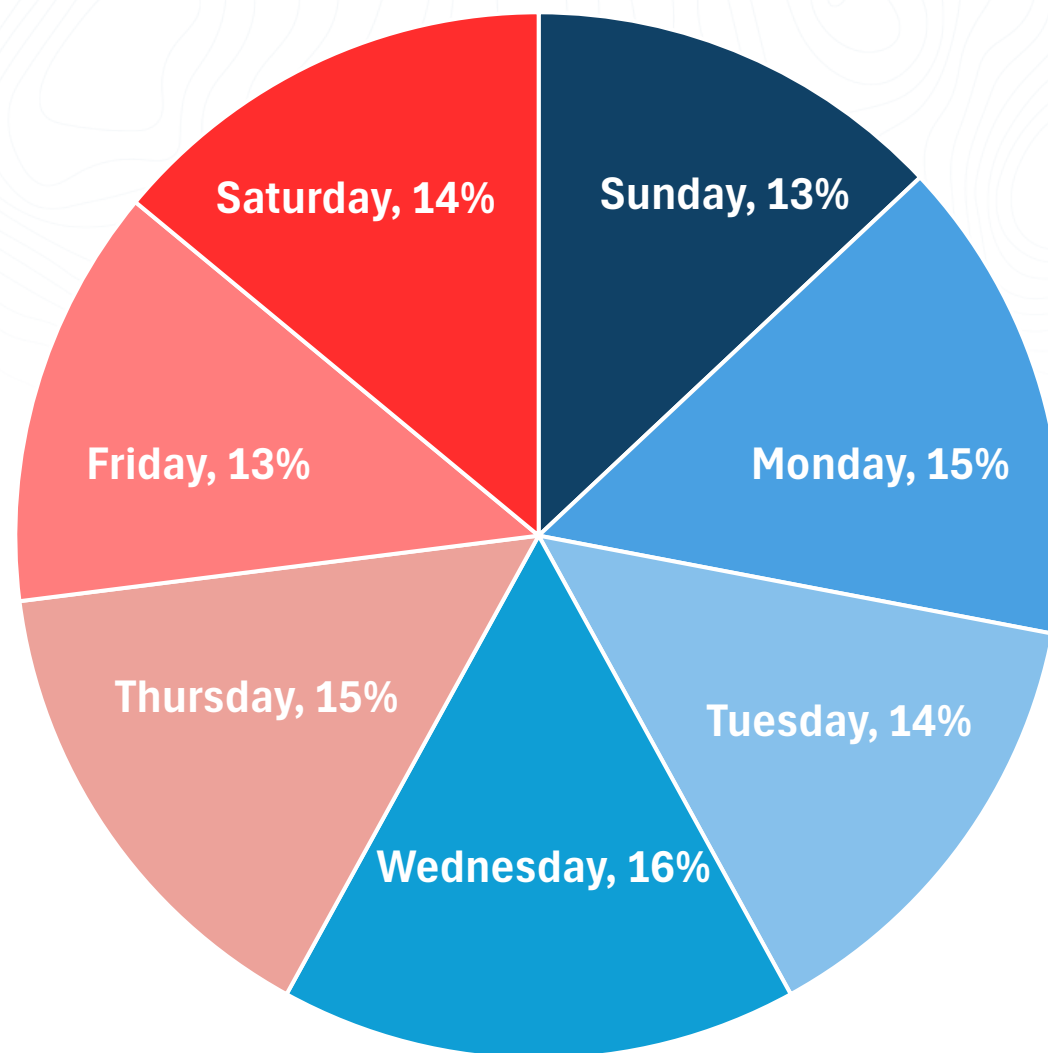






# WEEKDAY VS. WEEKEND - DAY OF WEEK

## FY25 Arrivals Definites (Contracted through Explore Asheville)



Great spread of roomnights for all days of the week with double-digit percentage of roomnights contracted for each day of the week.

We continue to see more Weekday business arriving in Asheville from business turned definite by Explore Asheville. This is a key performance metrics as Explore Asheville continues to focus on bringing in the most productive group business.



# KEY SUMMARY POINTS

## FY25 Arrivals

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- Sports/Athletics/Recreation/Competition - strongest segment in roomnights. Weddings (largest volume of definites), Agriculture/Commodities/Food/Beverage (69% from New Belgium Brewing), Education and Manufacturing are other key producing segments as well as Financial, Construction and Health(Care)/Wellness
- North Carolina and South Carolina are consistently the strongest feeder states. Georgia also showing significant roomnight impact as well as Colorado.
- Healthy spread of groups across many peak room sizes coming into Asheville in FY25. Many are smaller meetings (under 50 rooms peak = 59%) and we are also seeing more larger groups (251+ peak driving roomnights = 32%).
- Over 50% of roomnights contracted to arrival in FY25 fall into the months of July, August and September. Back-half of FY25 will fill in with in-year-for-year groups.
- Lead-times (turned definite to arrival) show strong volume of definites (79%) are within a 12-month period representing 58% of the roomnights. Lead-times slightly shorter.
- All days of week significantly impacted with roomnights for FY25. Continue to see year over year increase in midweek arrivals (Sun-Wed).



**THANK YOU**

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# **Turning Data into Intelligence and Intelligence into Action**

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2800 S. River Road, Chicago, IL. 60018  
(847) 803-6341







# CITY UPDATES

Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore

EXPLORE  
ASHEVILLE

POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism  
Development Authority





# COUNTY UPDATES

Commissioner Terri Wells

EXPLORE  
ASHEVILLE

POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism  
Development Authority





# MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Brenda Durden  
BCTDA | Chair

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





# PUBLIC COMMENTS

**Brenda Durden**  
BCTDA | Chair

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

# LIVE VIRTUAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Brenda Durden

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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, July 30, no requests to speak had been received.





# IN-PERSON PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Brenda Durden

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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

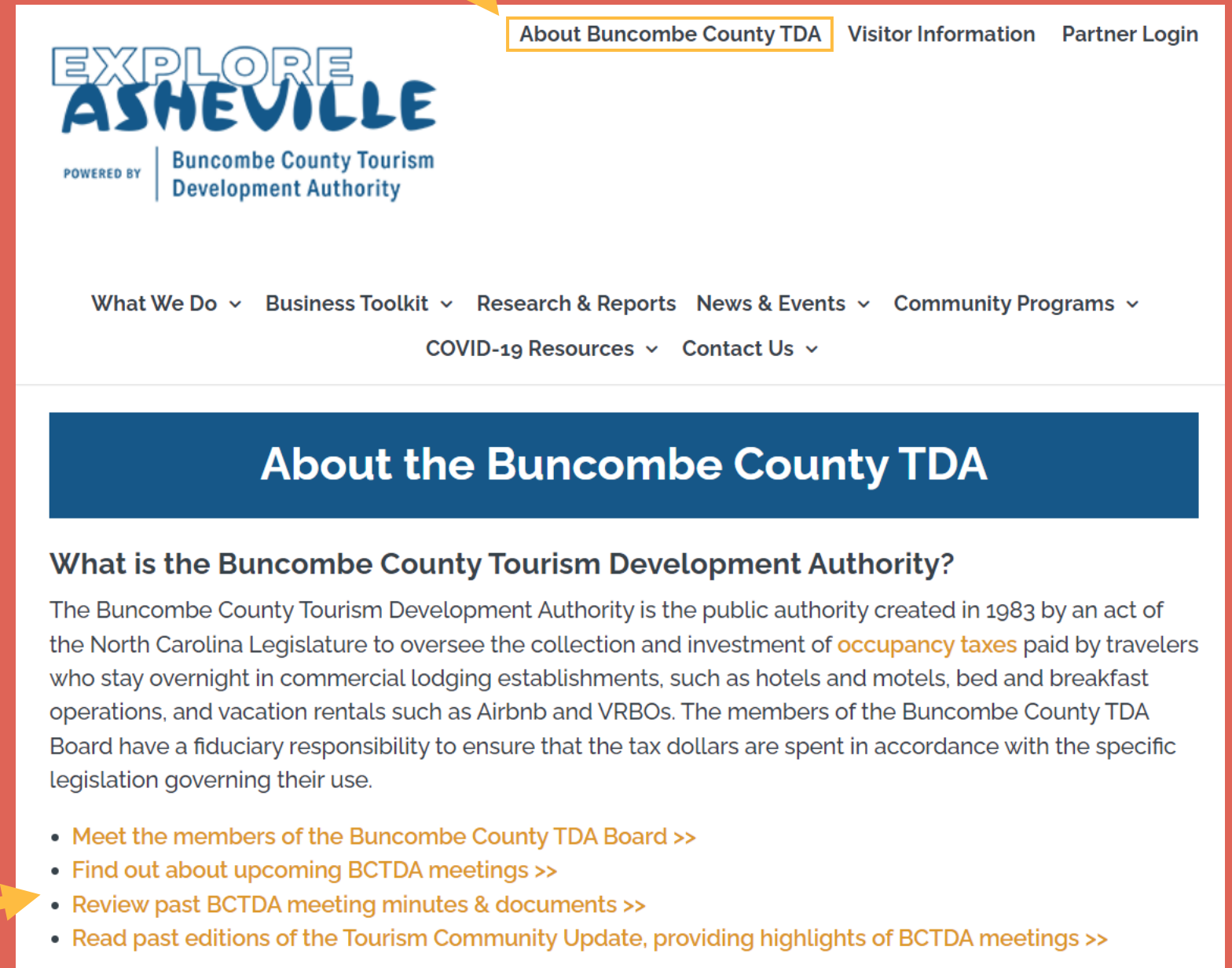
Chair Brenda Durden

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

The next BCTDA meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 28, 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 top navigation bar of the Explore Asheville website. The logo 'EXPLORE ASHEVILLE' is on the left, with 'POWERED BY Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority' below it. The navigation menu includes 'About Buncombe County TDA' (highlighted with a yellow box and an arrow), 'Visitor Information', and 'Partner Login'. Below the menu are dropdowns for 'What We Do', 'Business Toolkit', 'Research & Reports', 'News & Events', 'Community Programs', 'COVID-19 Resources', and 'Contact Us'. The main content area features a blue header 'About the Buncombe County TDA' and a section titled 'What is the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority?' with a paragraph of text and 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 >>'.





# ADJOURNMENT

Chair Brenda Durden

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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, August 28, 2024 | 9:00 a.m.**

Explore Asheville Board Room | 27 College Place

EXPLORE  
ASHEVILLE

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Buncombe County Tourism  
Development Authority