



WELCOME

August 27, 2025

Joint Meeting of the Buncombe County Tourism Development
Authority and the BCTDA Nonprofit Corporation

EXPLORE
ASHEVILLE

POWERED BY

Buncombe County Tourism
Development Authority

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Matthew Lehman

- 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, August 27, 2025 | 9:00 a.m.

Asheville Art Museum | 2 S. Pack Square | Multipurpose 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	Matthew Lehman
9:05 a.m.	Approval of July 23, 2025 Meeting Minutes	Matthew Lehman
9:10 a.m.	July 2025 Financial Reports	Melissa Moore, Buncombe County Finance Director / BCTDA Fiscal Agent
9:15 a.m.	Penalty Waiver Request – Downtown Inn & Suites	Matthew Lehman
9:20 a.m.	Legacy Investment From Tourism (LIFT) Committee Recommendation a. Wayfinding Program Funding Recommendation	Tiffany Thacker
9:25 a.m.	Administrative Updates a. Approval of Agreements Setting Forth Structure with Buncombe County, BCTDA and Explore Asheville b. Approval of Resolution to change the name of the Nonprofit corporation	Sabrina Rockoff, McGuire Wood & Bissette Law Firm, BCTDA Legal Counsel
9:35 a.m.	President & CEO Report a. Industry Metrics b. Other Updates	Vic Isley
9:45 a.m.	Marketing Update	Dodie Stephens
10:05 a.m.	Asheville City Council Update	Vice Mayor Antanette Mosley
10:10 a.m.	Buncombe County Commission Update	Commissioner Terri Wells
10:15 a.m.	Miscellaneous Business	Matthew Lehman
10:20 a.m.	Comments from the General Public	Matthew Lehman
10:25 a.m.	Adjournment	Matthew Lehman

SAVE THE DATE

Annual Meeting | September 8, 3pm – 6pm | The Wortham Center

The next joint BCTDA monthly meeting is **Wednesday, October 1**, at 9:00 a.m., in the Board Room of Explore Asheville, located at 27 College Place. Please contact Sarah Myers at smyers@ExploreAsheville.com or call 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 Matthew Lehman

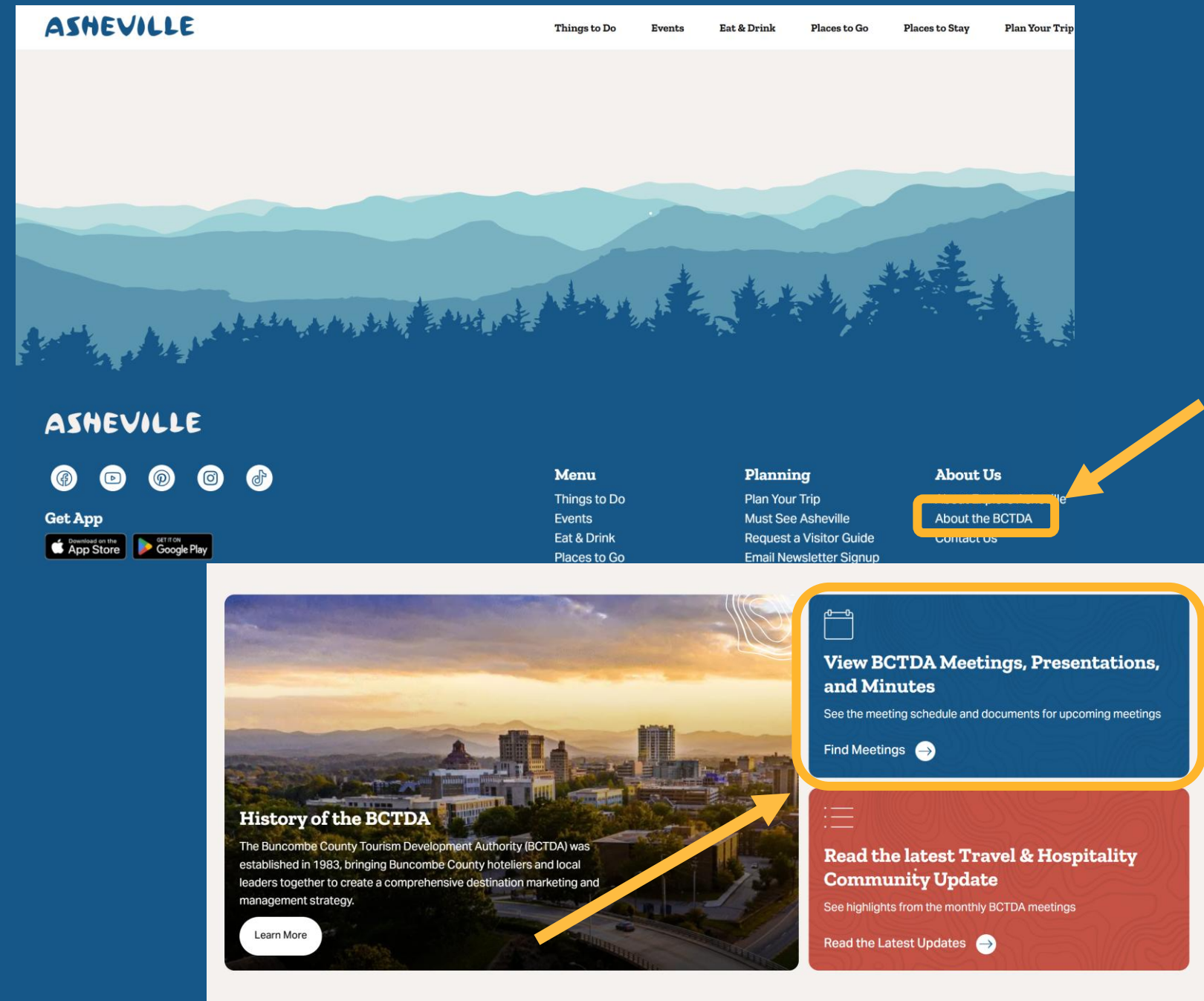
For our viewers watching remotely, documents were emailed to everyone who registered on Zoom by 8:00 this morning.

The agenda and meeting documents are also available online.

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

Go to:

- ExploreAsheville.com
- About the BCTDA section
- View BCTDA meetings, presentations, and minutes



WELCOME INCOMING CHAIR

Matthew to serve as chair from July 2025 – June 2026

- Matthew Lehman will serve one year as BCTDA Board Chair from July 2025 – June 2026
- Matthew has been on the BCTDA Board since 2021



WELCOME BOARD & GUESTS

Chair Matthew Lehman

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



JULY 23 MINUTES

Chair Matthew Lehman

Questions/ Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the July 23, 2025, BCTDA Board meeting minutes.

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote



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, July 23, 2025

- Present (Voting):** HP Patel, Vice Chair; Larry Crosby, Michael Lusick, Lucious Wilson, Elizabeth Putnam, Himanshu Karvir, Tim Rosebrock, Brenda Durden
- Absent (Voting):** Matthew Lehman
- Present (Ex-Officio):** None
- Absent (Ex-Officio):** Asheville Vice Mayor Antanette Mosley, Buncombe County Commissioner Terri Wells
- Staff:** Vic Isley, Jenn Kass-Green, Sarajane Case, Michael Kryzanek, John Dawson, Tiffany Thacker, Jay Curwen, Shawn Boone, Tina Porter, Kimberly Puryear, Josh Jones, Ashley Greenstein, Sarah Myers
- BC Finance:** Mason Scott, Buncombe County Assistant Finance Director
- Legal Counsel:** Sabrina Rockoff, McGuire, Wood & Bissette
- In-Person Attendees:** Ben Ward, CC Fraga; Explore Asheville Interns
Dave Nutter, Connect Buncombe
John Ellis, Retired, prior BCTDA Member
Casey Gilbert, Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce
Rick Bell, Asheville Buncombe Hotel Association
Olivia Ward, OnWard Digital Media
Brooke Randall, Mountain XPress
Meghan Rogers, Asheville Independent Restaurant Association
- Online Attendees:** Kyle McCurry, Carli Adams, McKenzie Provost, Shelby Pearsall, Emilie Softe; Explore Asheville
Dean McElveen, Carolina Mornings
Jim Muth, TPDF Committee
Angi Daus, Asheville Regional Airport
Lacy Cross, Movement Bank
Summer Casiano, Tanger Asheville
Robert McGee, Richmond Hill & River Rescue
Chris Smith, Asheville Buncombe Regional Sports Commission
Felicia Sonmez, Blue Ridge Public Radio
Cliff Mori, BREW-ed Brewery Tours
Ed Silver, TSG
Itinease McMiller, SBGTV
Hannah Kaminer, Mast General Store

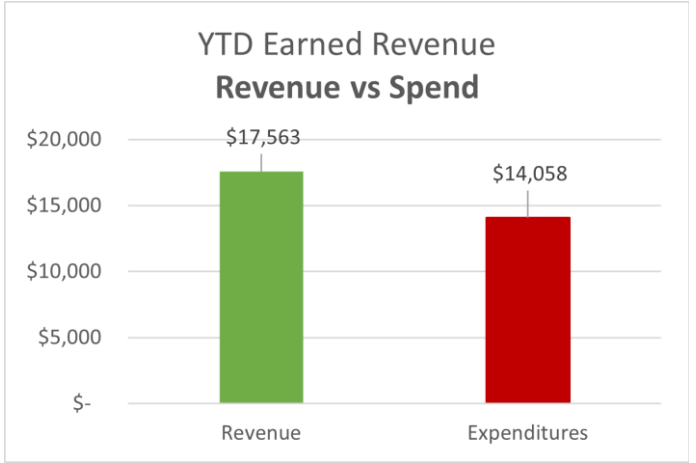
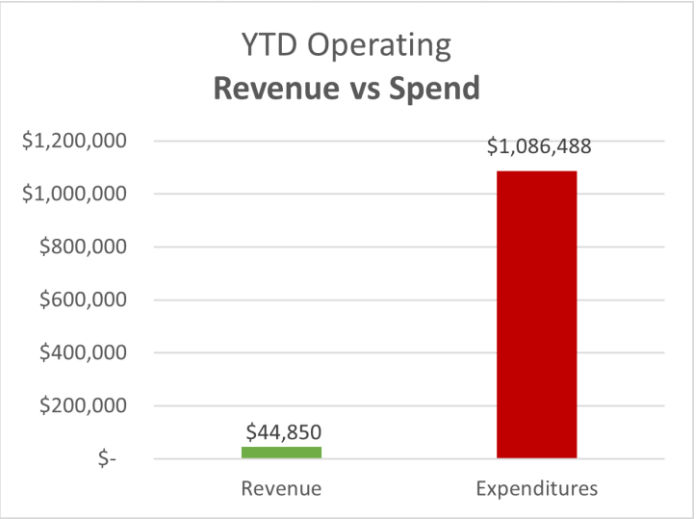
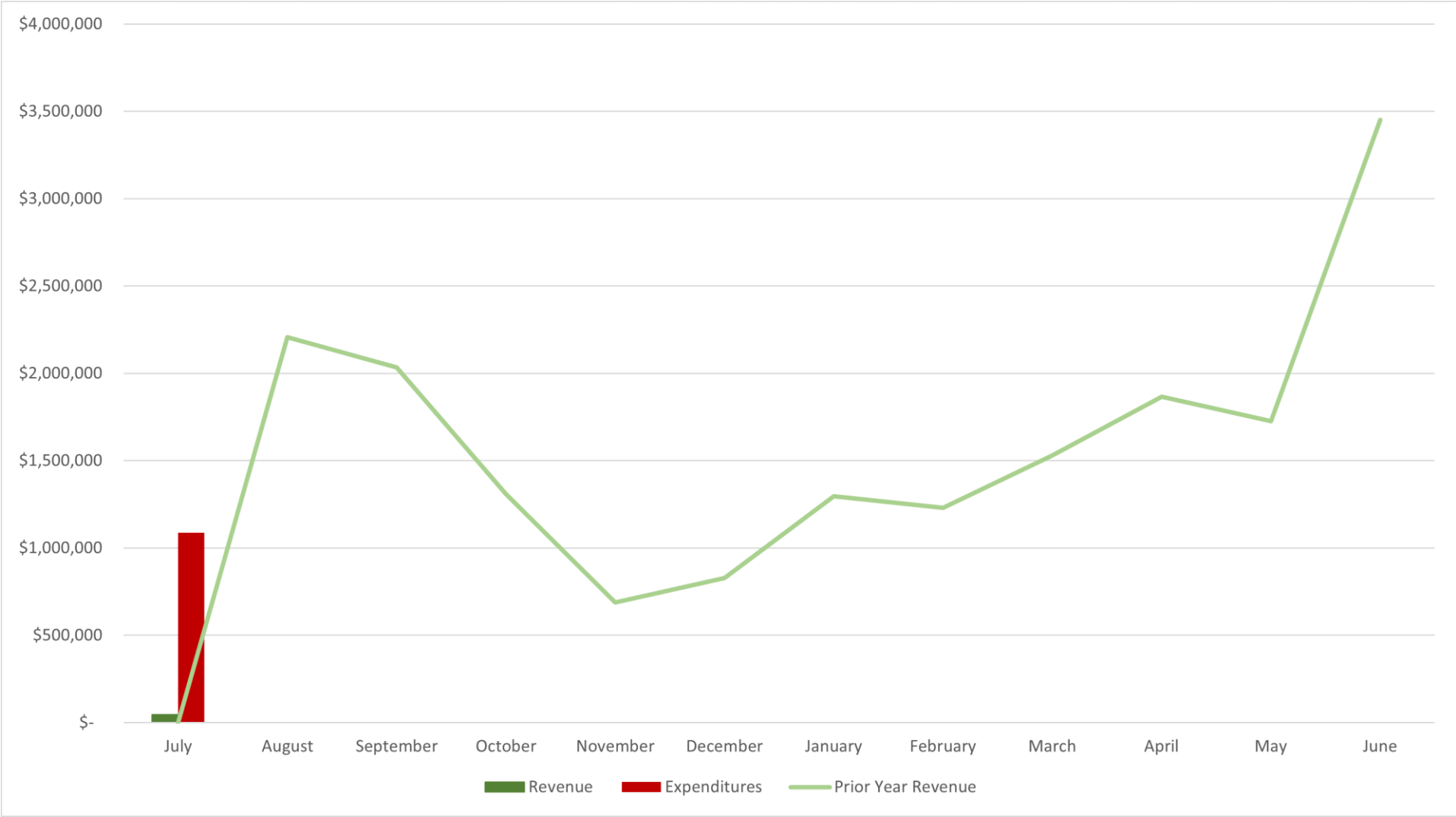


FINANCIAL UPDATES

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

OPERATING AND EARNED REVENUE FUNDS

Revenues (Current and Prior-year) vs Expenditures (current year), July 2025



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

OPERATING AND EARNED REVENUE FUNDS

Monthly Summary of Activities, July 2025

Operating Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$25,915,000	\$ 44,850	\$ 44,850	0.2%
Total expenditures		\$ 1,086,488	\$ 1,086,488	4.2%

Earned Revenue Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$55,000	\$ 17,563	\$ 17,563	31.9%
Total expenditures		\$ 14,058	\$ 14,058	25.6%

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

PROJECT FUNDS: TPDF AND LIFT FUNDS

Monthly Summary of Activities, July 2025

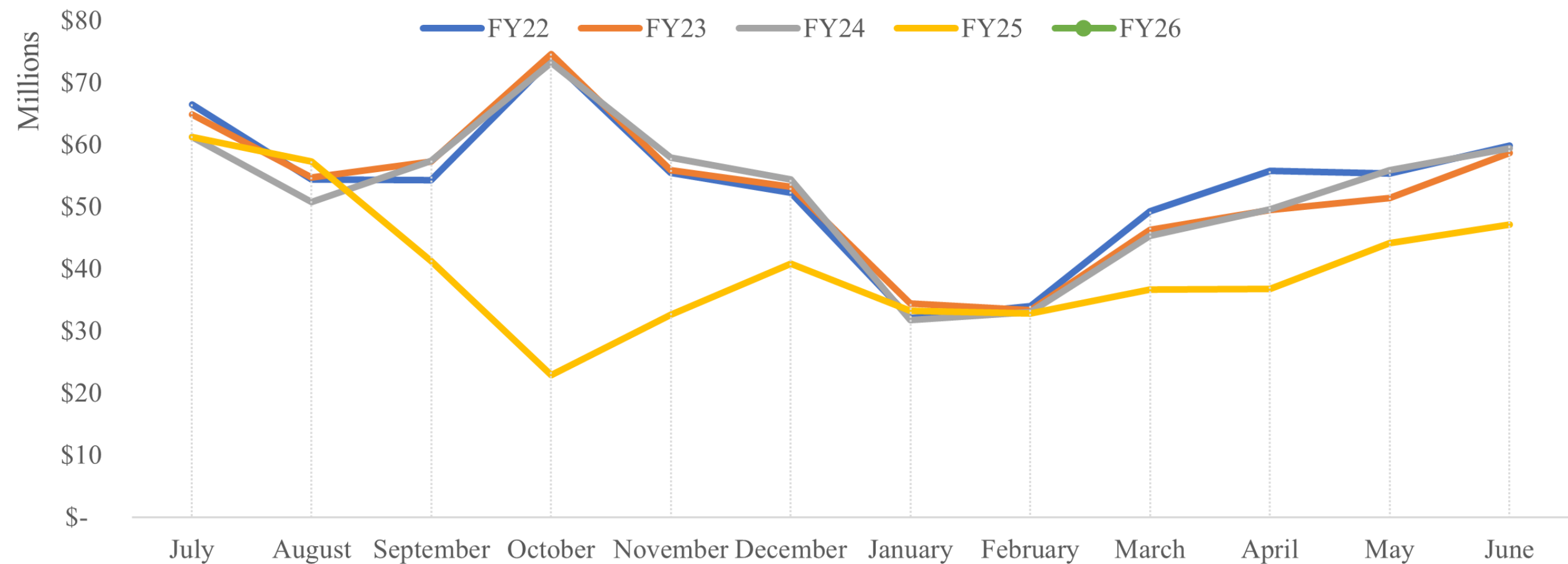
Tourism Product Development Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Life to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$34,737,985	\$104,364	\$47,211,718	>100%
Total expenditures		\$189,635	\$9,063,887	26.1%
Active projects		21		
Funding available for future grants		\$12,473,733		

Legacy Investment From Tourism Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Life to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$10,008,903	\$40,256	\$16,694,160	>100%
Total expenditures		\$0	\$121,250	1%
Active projects		12		
Funding available for future grants		\$6,308,582		

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

LODGING SALES

Shown by Month of Sales, Year-to-Date (5 years), July 2025



For more information, see financial and sales statements page 9

JULY 2025 FINANCIAL REPORTS

Chair Matthew Lehman

Questions/Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the July 2025 financial reports as presented.

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote





PENALTY WAIVER REQUEST DOWNTOWN INN & SUITES

**Matthew Lehman
BCTDA | Chair**

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

PENALTIES FOR LATE REPORTING AND PAYMENT

Chair Matthew Lehman

- A penalty waiver request from Downtown Inn & Suites was received by Explore Asheville staff on July 30, 2025.
- The waiver request is for \$729.96, the sum of penalty fees for two months of late filing and late payment on one property.
- The written request to have the penalty fees waived and the accompanying rationale, as well as supporting documentation, were provided to the BCTDA to review in advance of today's meeting.
- Buncombe County Finance Department confirmed the penalty amounts for the late filing in April and May 2025.
- Reminder: The two-step waiver approval process requires the Buncombe County Commissioners to vote.



PENALTY WAIVER REQUEST

Chair Matthew Lehman

Questions/ Comments

Call for a Motion:

Motion to recommend approval of the penalty waiver request from the Downtown Inn & Suites in the amount of \$729.96 *(or another amount)* OR to deny the penalty waiver request as presented.

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote





LIFT FUND RECOMMENDATION: WAYFINDING PROGRAM

Tiffany Thacker
**Explore Asheville | VP, Partnership
& Destination Management**

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

EXPLORE ASHEVILLE WAYFINDING SYSTEM

A navigation experience enriching the cultural and visual fabric of Buncombe County

- Established in 2010, the Explore Asheville Wayfinding System features a comprehensive network of over 400 signs designed to guide residents and visitors safely and seamlessly throughout Buncombe County.
- Goals of Wayfinding System:
 - Increase overnight room nights
 - Boost economic impact by directing visitors across the region
 - Encourage repeat visits by highlighting the destination's depth
 - Strengthen and expand the Asheville area brand
 - Enhance the overall visitor experience



WAYFINDING ADMINISTRATION

Wayfinding Elements

Each element is designed to cater to diverse user needs and preferences.

Three Sign Elements/Types:

1. **Wayfinding Signage** (Vehicular Directional, Pedestrian Directional, Parking, Municipal or District Identification)
2. **Informational and Orientation Signage** (Information Kiosks, Orientation Map, Interpretive)
3. **Placemaking Signage** (Landmark, Public Art Installations, Murals)

Wayfinding Program Vendors:

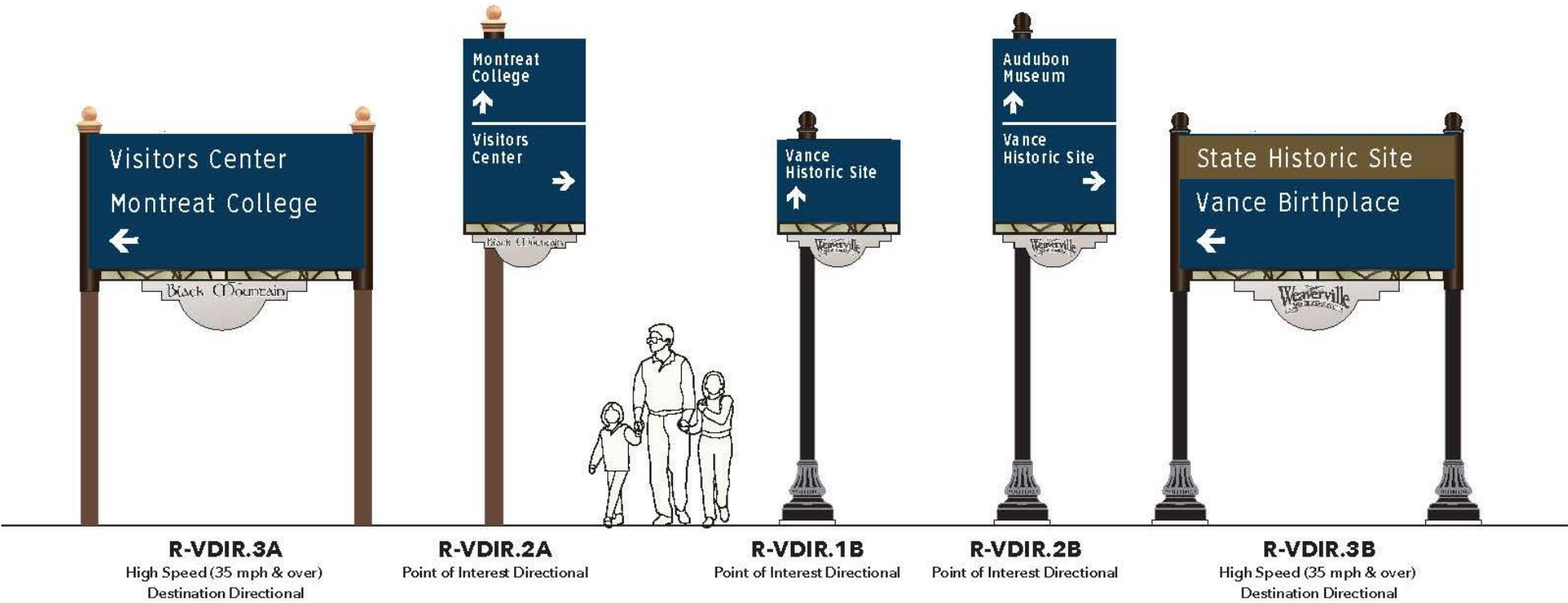
- Merje (Design)
- Geograph (Production, Installation, Maintenance)



WAYFINDING ADMINISTRATION

Wayfinding Systems - Regional

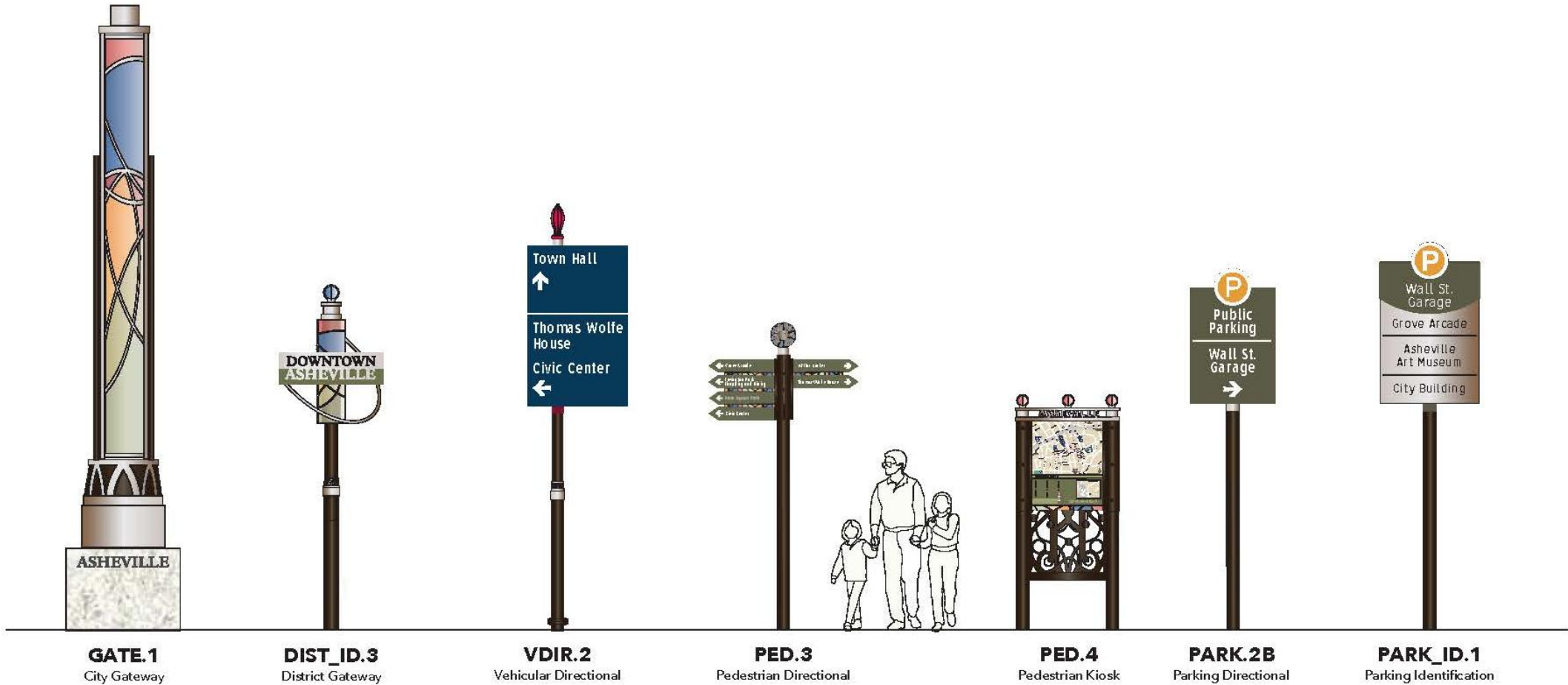
Regional System



WAYFINDING ADMINISTRATION

Wayfinding Systems - Regional

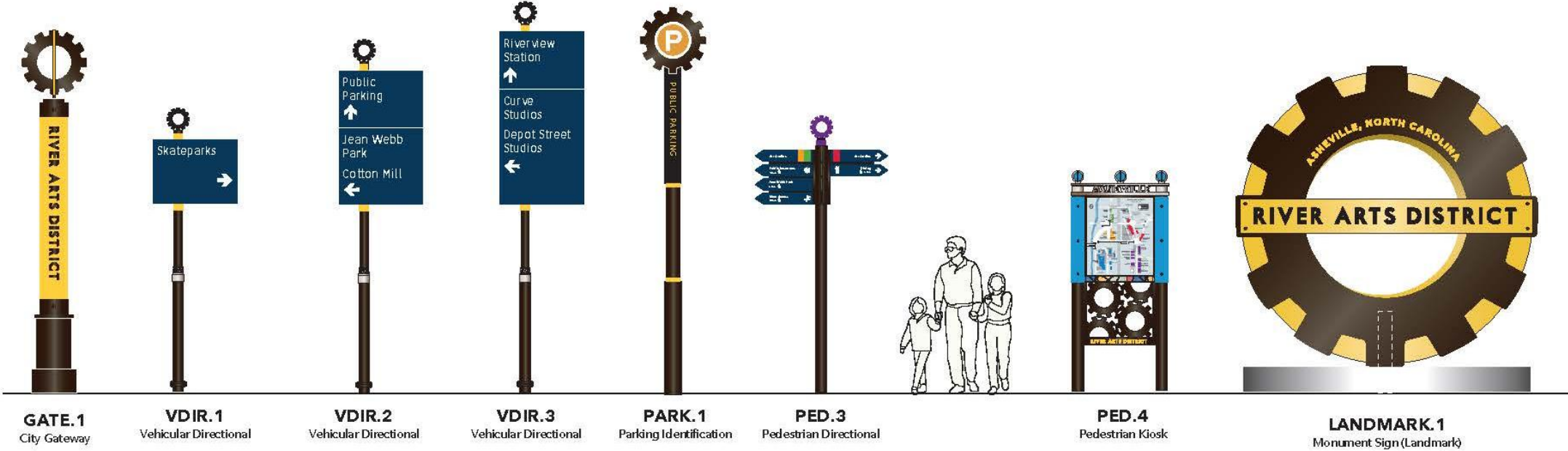
Asheville System



WAYFINDING ADMINISTRATION

Wayfinding Systems

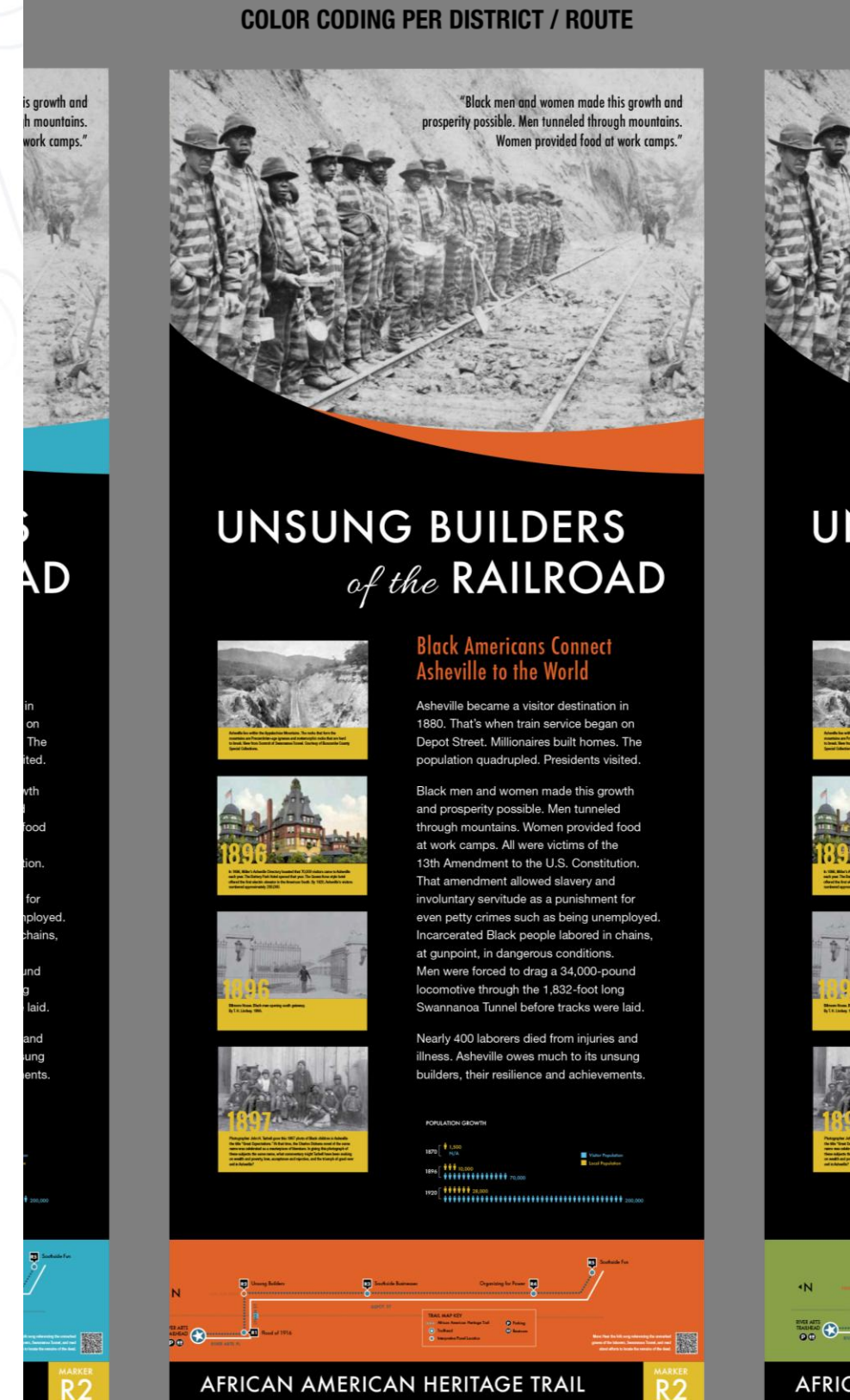
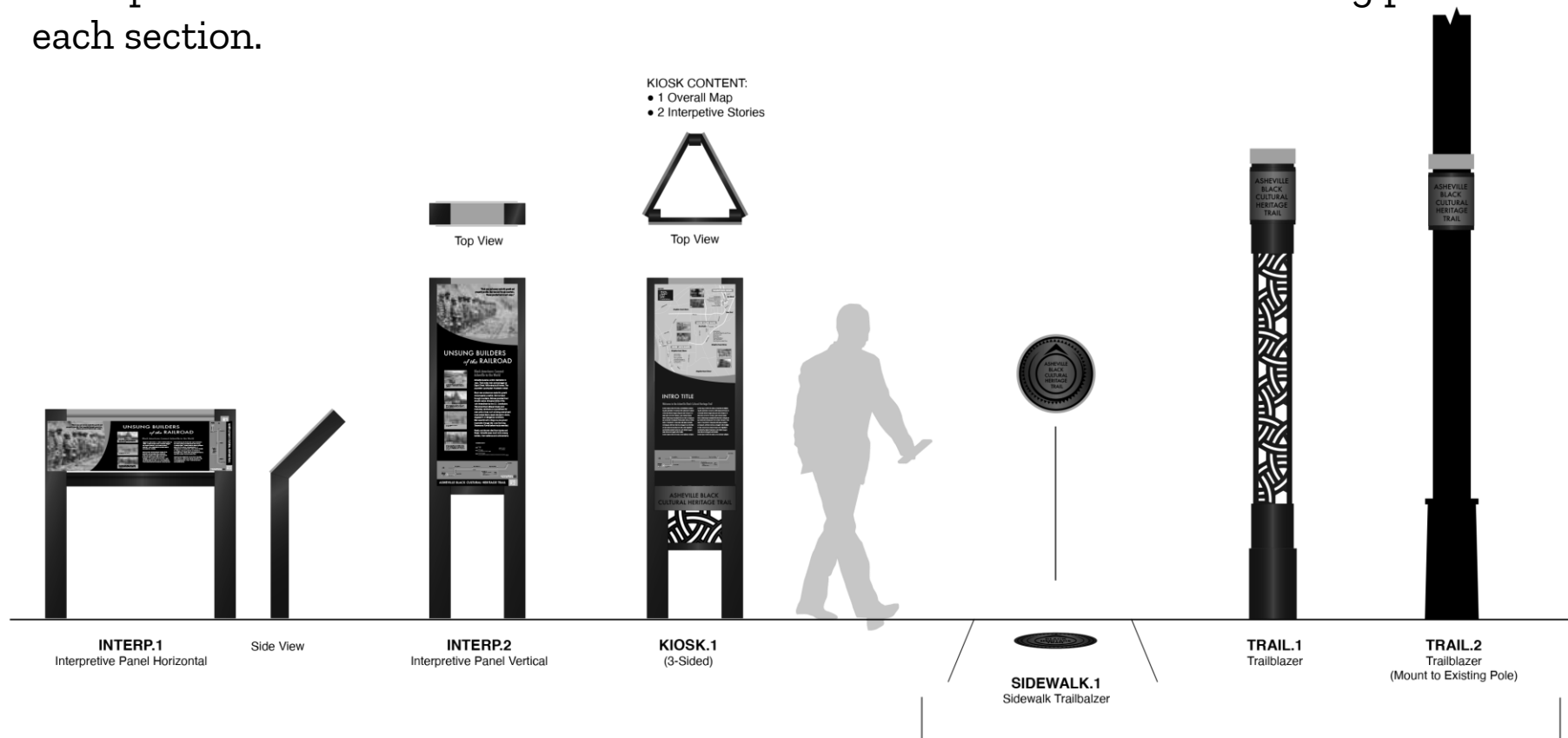
River Arts District System



WAYFINDING ADMINISTRATION

Asheville Black Cultural Heritage Trail

- 14 stops with 20 panels divided up among three sections of town (Downtown, Southside, and River Area).
- Three color-coded sections to help with wayfinding.
- Three-sided introduction kiosks at each section.
- Each panel can stand alone in its content or flow in order from the starting point of each section.



2025-26 EXPLORE ASHEVILLE WAYFINDING BUDGET

Why the LIFT Fund?

- **Better Alignment:** 2022 legislative updates shifted TPDF to major tourism capital projects. The LIFT Fund supports tourism-related capital projects, making wayfinding and placemaking a stronger fit.
- **Ongoing Maintenance:** The legislation allows the LIFT Fund to support maintenance of capital projects. Since most of the program’s budget goes to upkeep and enhancements, the LIFT Fund is the most appropriate funding source.

Item	Amount
Wayfinding Maintenance	
Fall 2025	\$96,000
Spring 2026	\$150,000
Finial Replacement	\$50,000
BCHT Maintenance	\$5,000
Subtotal	\$301,000
Wayfinding System Updates	
Placemaking Signage	\$50,000
RAD Gateway Update (Clingman Ave.)	\$20,000
Subtotal	\$70,000
Total	\$371,000



LIFT FUND COMMITTEE INVESTMENT RECOMMENDATION

Chair Matthew Lehman

Questions/Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the LIFT Fund Committee's recommendation to award the Explore Asheville Wayfinding Program in the total amount of \$371,000 to support management and maintenance in FY 2026.

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote





ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

Sabrina Rockoff
McGuire Wood & Bissette Law Firm |
BCTDA Legal Counsel



AGREEMENTS BETWEEN BUNCOMBE COUNTY & BCTDA; AND BCTDA & EXPLORE ASHEVILLE

BUNCOMBE COUNTY, BCTDA & EXPLORE ASHEVILLE

ADMINISTRATIVE AGREEMENTS

Chair Matthew Lehman

Questions/Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the administrative services agreements between Buncombe County and the BCTDA, and the BCTDA and Explore Asheville, as presented.

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote





RESOLUTION TO CHANGE THE NAME OF THE NONPROFIT CORPORATION

RESOLUTION TO CHANGE NAME OF THE NONPROFIT CORPORATION

Chair Matthew Lehman

Questions/Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the resolution to change the name of the nonprofit corporation to Explore Asheville, as presented.

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote





PRESIDENT & CEO REPORT

Vic Isley
Explore Asheville | President & CEO

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ASHEVILLE
POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism
Development Authority

TOURISM-RELATED CAPITAL PROJECT INVESTMENTS

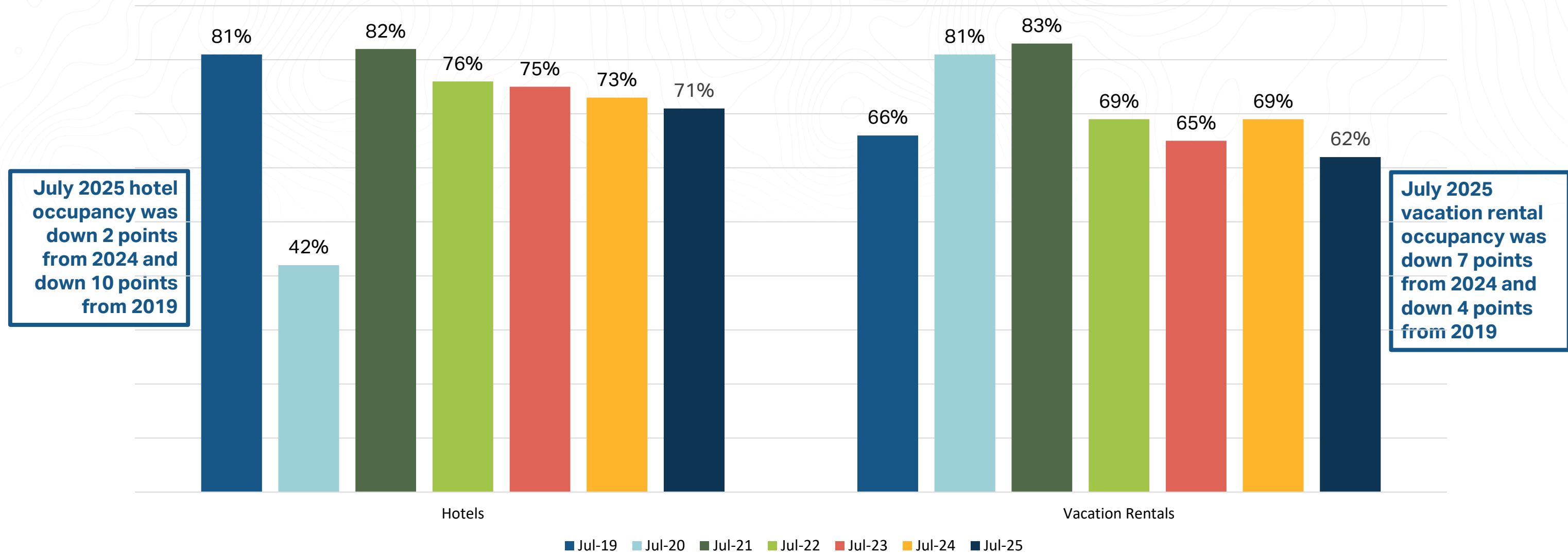
Nearly \$100 million invested in more than 50 projects since 2001





INDUSTRY METRICS

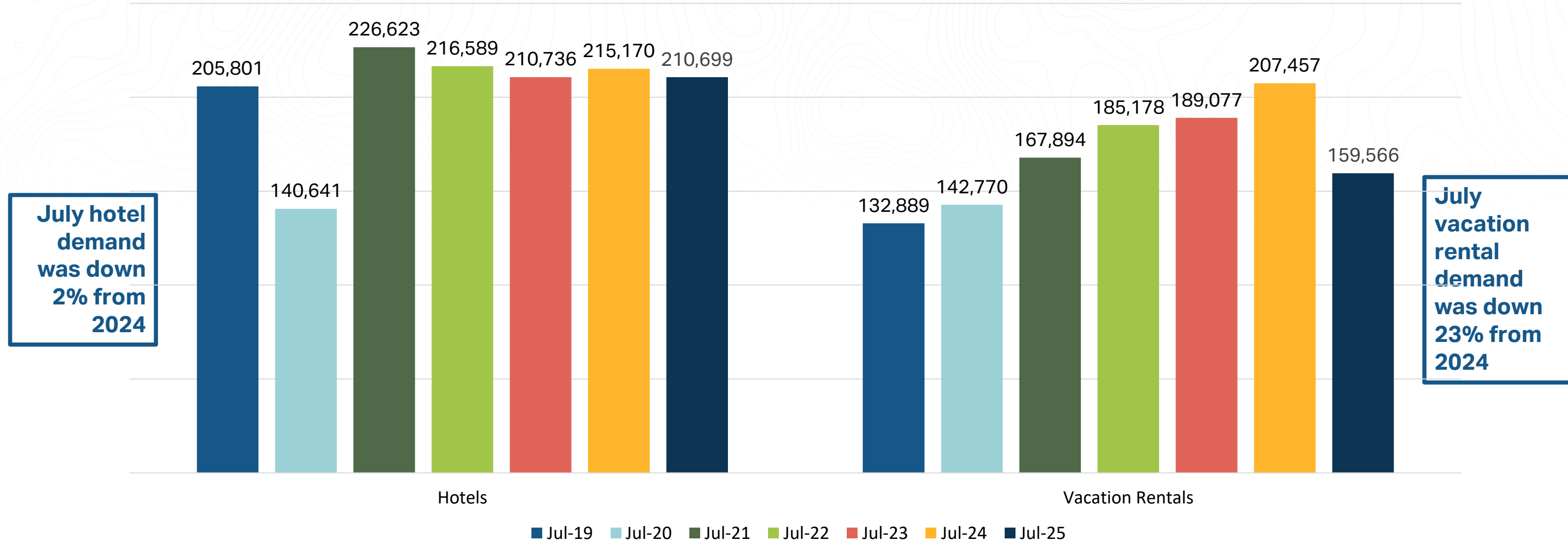
JULY LODGING OCCUPANCY



Sources: Smith Travel Research (STR) & AirDNA



JULY DEMAND

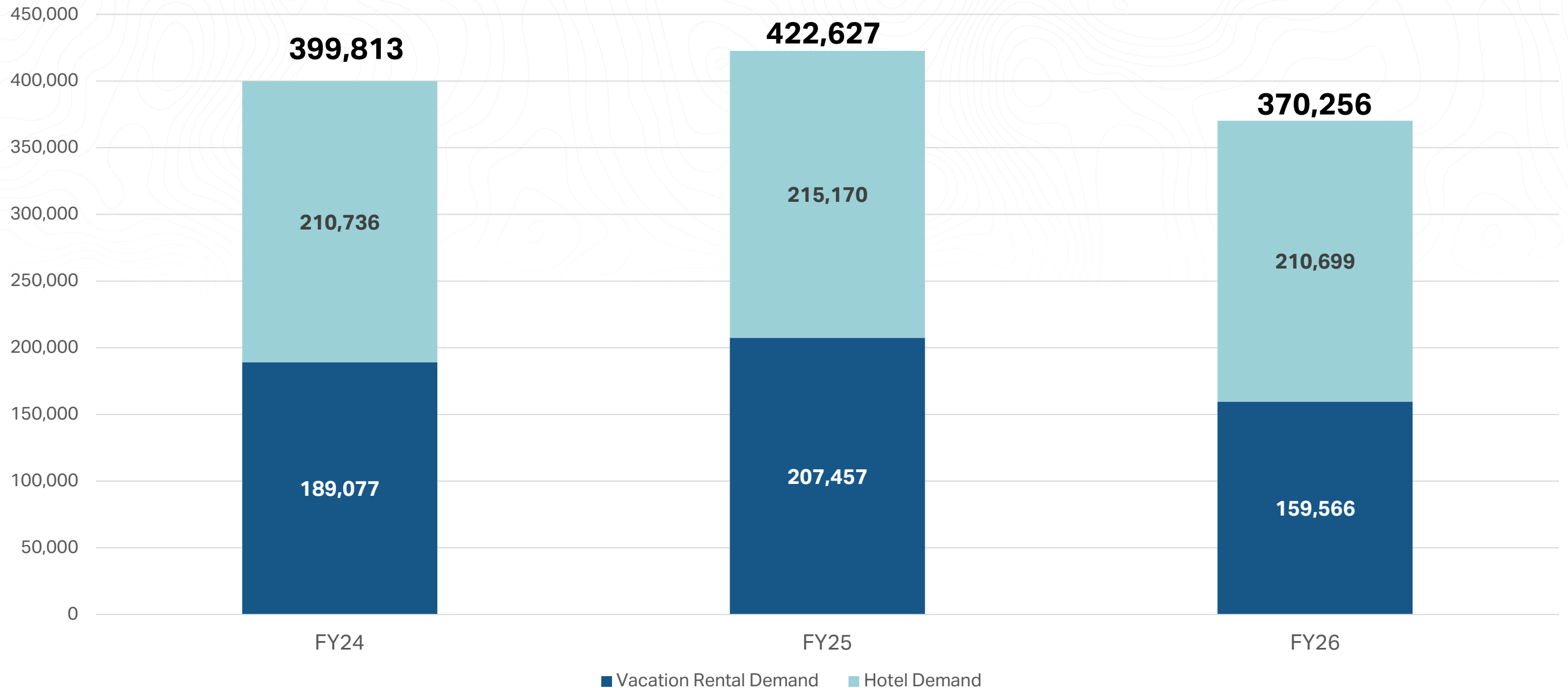


Sources: Smith Travel Research (STR) & AirDNA



TOTAL ROOMNIGHT DEMAND

-12% change FYTD (July 2025 compared to July 2024)



Sources: Smith Travel Research (STR) & AirDNA





OTHER UPDATES

SPECIAL EVENTS ON THE HORIZON

Join us for Travel & Hospitality Night, Mike's Retirement Party, and the Annual Meeting



Join us for the
THIRD ANNUAL TRAVEL & HOSPITALITY NIGHT
Thursday August 28, 2025

Take advantage of this special ticket offer for travel and hospitality industry professionals in Asheville and Buncombe County (along with their family and friends) for the Asheville Tourists baseball game against the Hub City Spartanburgers at McCormick Field.

[More Information](#)

EXPLORE ASHEVILLE | POWERED BY Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority

TRAVEL & HOSPITALITY NIGHT

Thursday, August 28

6:35 p.m.

McCormick Field



MIKE'S RETIREMENT

Tuesday, September 2

3 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Explore Asheville Board Room



Join us for the
2025 Annual Meeting
Monday, September 8 | 3-6pm | The Wortham Center for the Performing Arts

- Recognize the progress made together in a most challenging year
- Panels on new and upcoming events
- Presentation of the 26th annual William A.V. Cecil Award
- Networking, seasonal bites, and local beverages

[RSVP Here](#)

EXPLORE ASHEVILLE | POWERED BY Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority

ANNUAL MEETING

Monday, September 8

3 p.m. – 6 p.m.

The Wortham Center



QUESTIONS INPUT COMMENTS



MARKETING UPDATE

Dodie Stephens

Explore Asheville | VP of Marketing

EXPLORE
ASHEVILLE
POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism
Development Authority

COLLECTIVE EFFORTS HONORED

Locally, Nationally, Globally

U.S. Travel Destination Award Winner
& Skift Idea Awards Finalist

*Bridging Communities: Amplified Events
and The Always Asheville Fund*

Best of WNC 2025

*Local Events & Information Source 3rd
Place*

Folio Eddie Awards Finalist

Northstar Meetings Group Video Series



STRATEGIC AREAS OF FOCUS

INSPIRE: Harnessing and inspiring influential voices

ENGAGE: Sparking conversations; amplified by partners/creators

CONVERT: Strong calls to visit now



MEDIA CENTER MARKING ONE YEAR SINCE HELENE

Recognizing the resilience of Asheville, Buncombe County & Western North Carolina



Coordinating on behalf of region:
Media Center | Wednesday, Sept. 24 - Friday, Sept. 26

Main objectives of this hub:

- Honor the loss that occurred in our region
- Celebrate the grit, gumption and resolve of WNC's people
- Recognize the significant progress made in the last year while noting the need for continued investment
- Extend an invitation for friends, families and visitors to return for the fall travel season
- Encourage balanced media coverage on our region

Heroes of Helene: Honoring Recovery & Resilience Together
September 25 @ 4:00 - 7:00 pm at Highland Brewing

Hosted by the Asheville Chamber, Explore Asheville, and Highland Brewing, in partnership with the City of Asheville and Buncombe County, this free outdoor evening will feature live music & local food, heartfelt tributes, family-friendly games & activities, community connection



ONE-YEAR PARTNER TOOLKIT & MEDIA TRAINING

Resources for support and unified messaging heading into fall

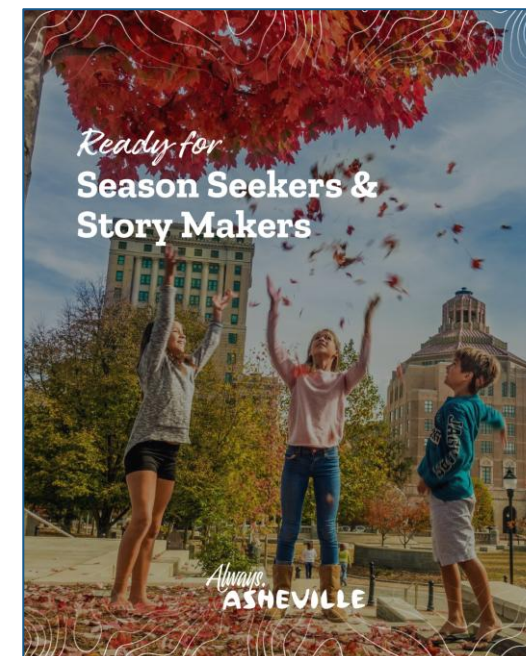
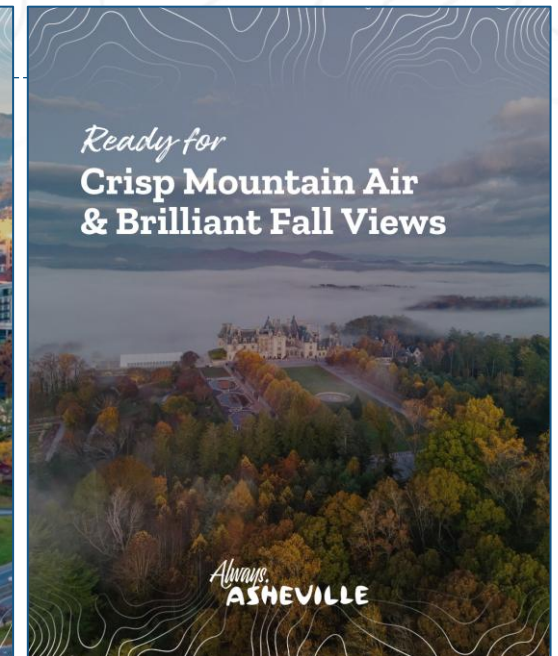
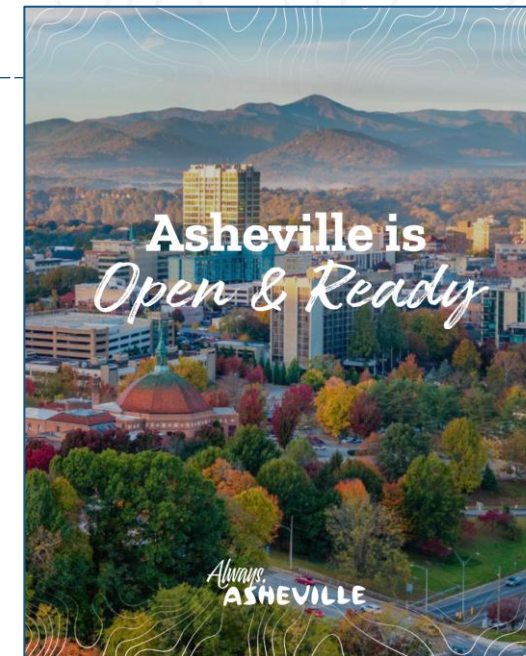
OBJECTIVE: Provide partners the assets, messaging and confidence to engage visitors and celebrate the area's progress during the one-year milestone and upcoming leaf season.

Partner Toolkit: Open & Ready: One Year Strong

- Launching mid-September, aligned with milestone and leaf season
- Assets include social media templates (Then & Now, Seasonal, Neighbor Spotlights), sample captions, talking points, suggested visuals, and sector-specific videos
- Core partner message highlights resilience, progress, seasonal motivators and a strong invitation to visitors

Media Training Webinar: Partner Engagement

- Early September webinar led by JPR, with kickoff by Vic Isley and toolkit rollout from EA marketing
- Focus on media readiness + how to plug into fall promotions
- Helps partners amplify consistent messaging and increase confidence in working with press



REGIONAL BROADCAST MOMENTUM

Public relations targets drive market TV & radio stations to inspire late-summer and fall travel

OBJECTIVE: Leverage unprecedented regional broadcast interest for new relationships and ongoing travel news sharing in key drive markets, building visitor confidence, awareness and reasons to travel now

Example of how this is plays out...

WSPA ZIP TRIP: New press contacts from recent recovery coverage translated into 19 live segments on WSPA Greenville's travel program highlighting seasonal events and openings, airing now and across fall.

New connections and recent regional coverage:

- Greenville, SC
- Charlotte, NC
- High Point, NC
- Hickory, NC
- Raleigh, NC
- Johnson City, TN



EXPANDING PROACTIVE: NATIONAL MEDIA OUTREACH

Relationships with top writers, editors and PR firms promote summer, fall and holiday coverage.

OBJECTIVE: Inspire travel's most trusted voices to share our story of progress with target audiences, placing the Asheville area top-of-mind for travelers and offering up fresh, newsy reasons to visit now

Expanded reach: Hired national PR firm JPR to extend national reach

Increased visibility: Steady presence through ongoing media tours, FAMs and hosted media events in-market

- NYC Media Mission: Met with national editors of publications like Travel + Leisure, Esquire, Oprah Daily, Men's Health, Fodor's Travel, Saveur and more
- Sound of Life Media Conference: Engaged with 70+ television reporters, producers and photographers from across the country in Asheville this month

Coming up:

Mountain Recovery FAM With VisitNC

Explore Asheville Open & Ready for Fall FAM

Ongoing: Fall and holiday pitching, news sharing, site visit invitations



Months after Hurricane Helene, this mountain town is on the rebound



MAJOR ACCOLADES SINCE HELENE

Earned recognition from travel's most trusted voices

- The New York Times | "52 Places to Go in 2025"
- Forbes Travel Guide | "Top 12 Destinations for 2025"
- BBC | "Best places to travel in 2025"
- Wanderlust | "The 2025 Travel Green List"
- National Geographic | "10 places where families should travel in 2025"
- Travel & Leisure | "15 Favorite Cities in the U.S."
- Tripadvisor | "#5 Food Destination in the U.S." in the "2025 Travelers' Choice Awards"
- Cosmopolitan | "35 Best Girls' Trip Destinations"
- Southern Living | "South's Best Cities 2025"
- Rolling Stone | "Best Music City"
- USA Today | "10 Best Beer Cities in the U.S."
- CNN Travel | "America's Best Towns to Visit in 2025"
- The Points Guy | "Best Solo Trips for 2025"
- Blue Ridge Outdoors | "Top Large Town" in its "Top Adventure Towns 2024"
- Afar Magazine | "Black Mountain Most Charming Small Town in NC 2024"



THE 2025 ROLLING STONE TRAVEL AWARDS

THE POINTS GUY



12 best solo trips in the US for 2025



COSMOPOLITAN

B

B

C

We Ranked the 35 Best Girls' Trip Destinations in the U.S. to Book for Your Next Bestie-cation



Forbes

Forbes Travel Guide's Top 12 Destinations For 2025



EXPLORE
ASHEVILLE

POWERED BY
Buncombe County Tourism
Development Authority

PRESENTS:



THE **ASHEVILLE SESSIONS**
CELEBRATING
100 YEARS OF
AMERICANA &
APPALACHIA

1925

ASHEVILLE

NORTH CAROLINA

2025

ASHEVILLESESSIONS.COM

FEATURING

**RIVER
WHYLESS**

**TOUBAB
KREWE**

**TYLER
RAMSEY**

**FLOATING
ACTION**



NOVEMBER 8
THOMAS WOLFE AUDITORIUM

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH AVL FEST



100% OF NET PROCEEDS TO SUPPORT HURRICANE HELENE RELIEF EFFORTS THROUGH THE ALWAYS ASHEVILLE FUND | ALWAYSASHEVILLEFUND.ORG

CLAIMING OUR PLACE IN HISTORY

Explore Asheville Presents: Centennial Weekend November 6-9

Thursday, Nov. 6 – Wicked Weed Funkatorium

> Kickoff event with a historic panel on the Asheville Sessions featuring music historians Ted Olson and Tony Russell

Friday, Nov. 7 – Pack Library & The Grey Eagle

> Free daytime sessions on Asheville in 1925 with Katherine Cutshall; Bryan Wright on remastering acoustic recordings; Olson and Russell on the sessions' significance; and a gathering of descendants sharing family legacies
> Evening concert at The Grey Eagle with Ketch Secor of Old Crow Medicine Show, Nest of Singing Birds and Jesse Smathers

Saturday, Nov. 8 – Pack Library & Thomas Wolfe Auditorium

> Free daytime panels on music as a tool for disaster recovery, the continuing legacy of live performance in Asheville, and the Eastern Band of Cherokee's influence on traditional music in Western Carolina
> Evening concert at Thomas Wolfe Auditorium featuring River Whyless, Tyler Ramsey, Toubab Krewe and Floating Action

Sunday, Nov. 9 – Location to be announced

> Free daytime community concert with local bands performing music in the spirit of the 1925 recordings





SPONSORED CONTENT PARTNERSHIPS

Influential third-party voices

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS: ADVERTISING

Third Party Voices and Validation

TRAVEL+ LEISURE

The World's Top Travel
Advisors

By **Travel + Leisure Editors** | Updated on August 1, 2025

In our 23rd annual A-List, we present a directory of the most influential trip specialists in the world, vetted by the editors at *Travel + Leisure*.

Travel + Leisure Travel Advisory Board Trip:

We will bring together an intimate group of board members for a two-day immersion to the destination. Followed by a presentation at their Pasadena conference for the entire board.

Estimated Impressions: 6,211,638

TOWN&COUNTRY



Town & Country Travel File:

First-person travel guide from Executive Travel Editor

Klara Glowczewka who will immerse herself in the Asheville area exploring a blend of art, culture, music and culinary excellence and writes a travel file that appears in Town & Country's design issue Spring 2026.

Estimated Impressions: 8,000,000



Garden and Gun Weddings:

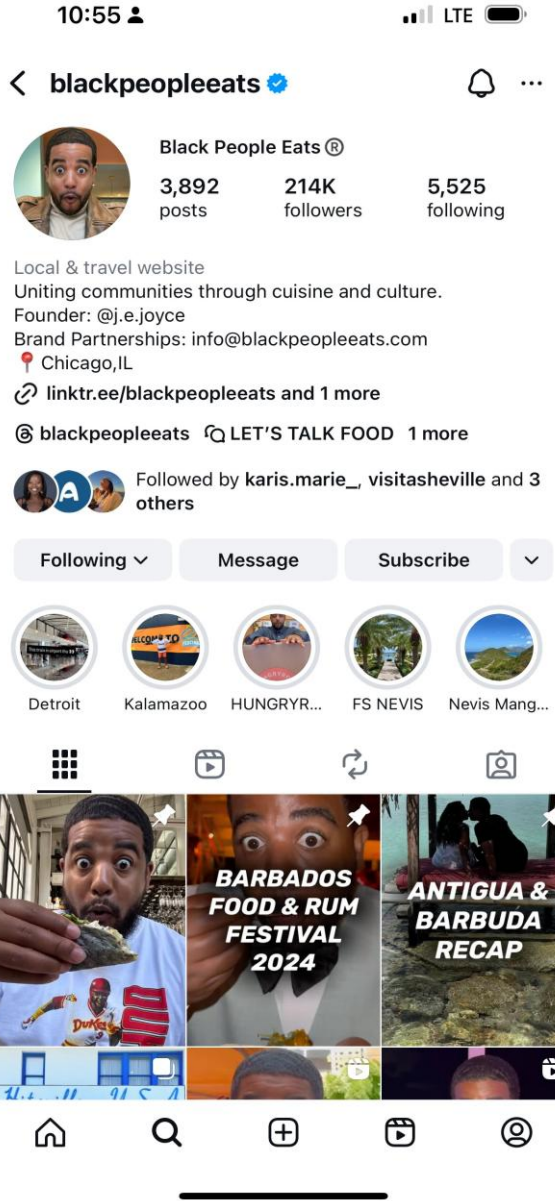
Positioning Asheville as a premier wedding destination through an integrated content program to highly targeted audience.

**Estimated Impressions:
400,000**



INFLUENCER PARTNERSHIPS

Fueling conversations and sharing in real-time



@BlackPeopleEats
Jeremy Joyce, creator of Black People Eats (reaching an audience of 300k+ across Instagram and TikTok), will be here producing Instagram Reels and daily stories to highlight the city's vibrant food culture.



Allegiant Partnership
We are partnering once again with Allegiant to bring in three influencers during the month of October.
DC Direct Flight Support
In support of the direct flight from DC that launched with Allegiant in June, we'll bring in three more influencers during December.



REASONS TO VISIT NOW

Event-centric marketing and timely calls to action

EVENTS LEAD ON PAID SOCIAL

Leaning into stronger calls to action

Interactive high-impact ad units will be refreshed quarterly, highlighting events taking place in the area and showing off our lively culture.

A: We're Open Message



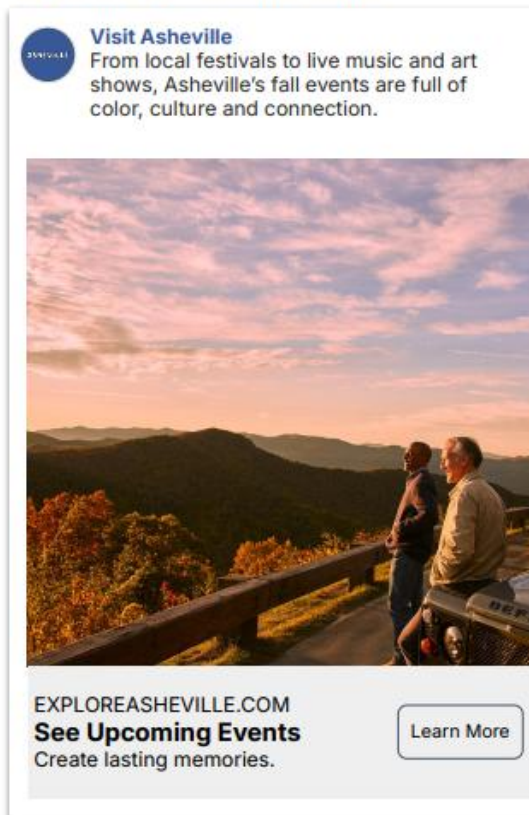
Visit Asheville
Nonstop flights. Scenic drives. We're open and ready for peak beauty.




EXPLOREASHEVILLE.COM
Getting Here Is Easy
Visit Asheville this fall.

[Learn More](#)

B: Event-Focused Message



Visit Asheville
From local festivals to live music and art shows, Asheville's fall events are full of color, culture and connection.



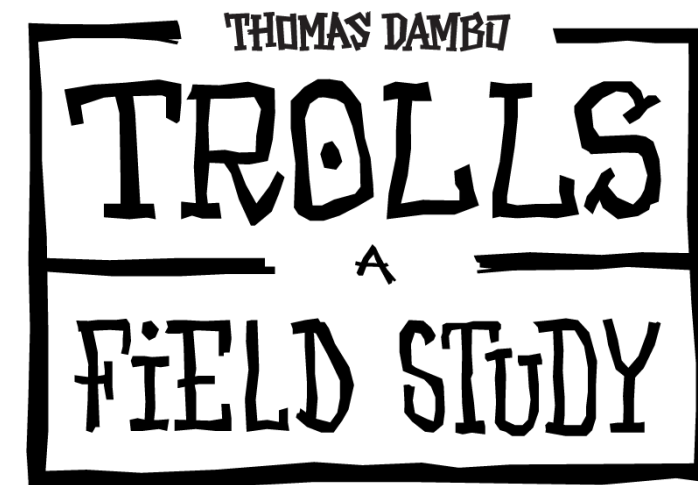
EXPLOREASHEVILLE.COM
See Upcoming Events
Create lasting memories.

[Learn More](#)

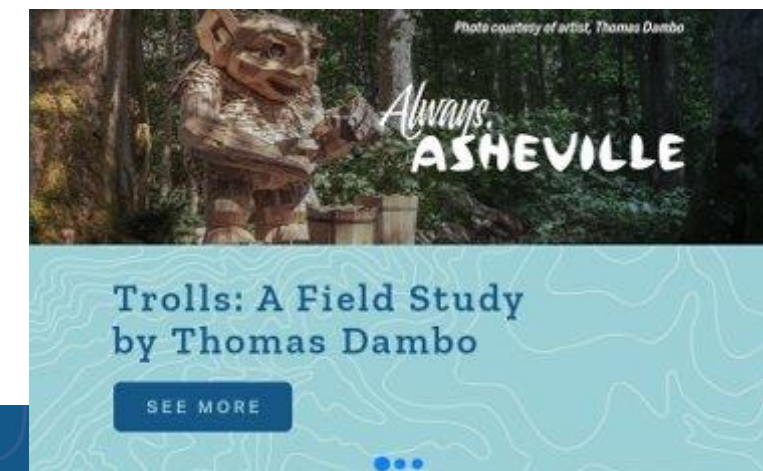
Visit Asheville
Among the trees of The North Carolina Arboretum, you'll find whimsy and charm. "Trolls: A Field Study by Thomas Dambo" evokes true folklore.



EXPLOREASHEVILLE.COM
Trolls are better offline
See Thomas Dambo's trolls

[Learn More](#)

- **Hypothesis:** For the regional campaign, if we lean into general event messaging instead of strong "We're Open" messaging we will see a stronger engagement rates?
- **Results:** The A/B test for Open & Ready messaging vs Event messaging resulted in Event messaging having a more efficient cost per lead/view at \$0.34 vs. \$0.45 w/ "Open & Ready" messaging alone.
- **Takeaway:** Results demonstrate value in highlighting events + reasons to plan a visit.



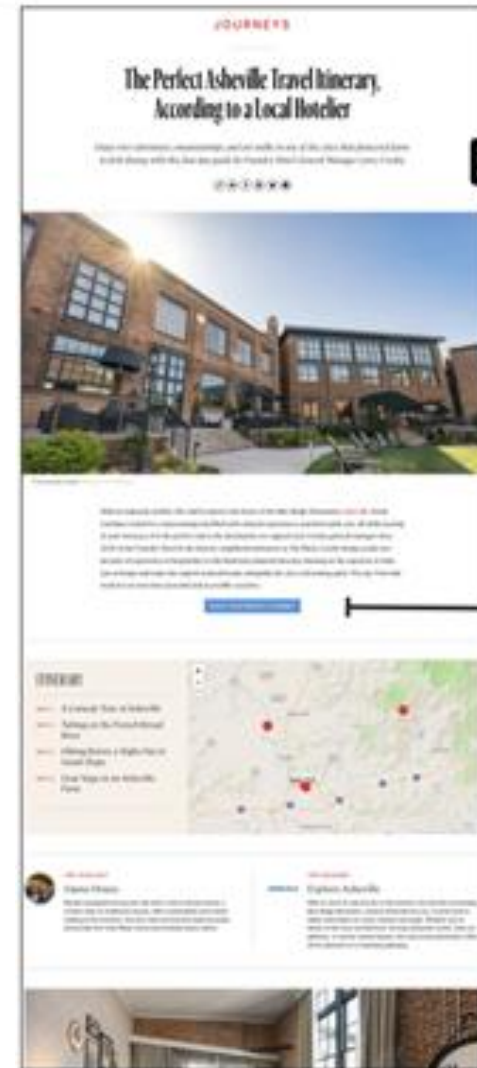
AFAR JOURNEYS & TRIP PLANNER

Expanded via partnership with Mindtrip planning tools

AFAR

Engaging Itineraries

- 10 Itineraries on AFAR.com
- All itineraries will be linked to the new Mindtrip planner tool.
- Through Mindtrip's dynamic integration, Explore Asheville's content becomes a customizable experience—allowing travelers to tweak, share, and plan their own adventures, whether they are within the Explore Asheville or Afar site ecosystem.



The "Ask AI" tab, which is sticky on the itinerary page as a user scrolls, launches the Mindtrip tool, which allows users to create a completely custom experience.

The "Plan Your Perfect Journey" button launches the featured itinerary in a concise summary layout.

Different call-to-action buttons on the itinerary page drive interaction with the Mindtrip planning tool.



Once in the tool, users can see a day-by-day trip overview along with an interactive map and points of interests linked.



Users can interact with the tool to ask questions and personalize a trip plan based on interests.

Example User Flow



Mindtrip can make recommendations and itinerary customizations based on specific asks (i.e. a dinner reservation at a specific restaurant) or preferred loyalty memberships (i.e. Marriott Bonvoy).



Users can check pricing and connect to booking partners within the Mindtrip interface, creating opportunities for meaningful action.

ALL IN FOR FALL TRAVEL



Visit Asheville
Fall doesn't wait. Neither should you.
Check out the weekly fall color report to plan accordingly.



EXPLOREASHEVILLE.COM
Catch All the C
Peak beauty awaits



Visit Asheville
Take the quickest path to slowing down. Open for fall adventure.



EXPLOREASHEVILLE.COM
Unrivald Natural Bea



8 Ways to Do Fall Right
See fall colors from new heights this fall with this unexpected itinerary.



Promoted By
Visit Asheville



Fall Color Hunter Gallery

Experience Asheville's fall color in real time! Our gallery showcases the latest vibrant hues captured by our Fall Color Hunters as the season unfolds. Check back weekly for fresh photos of the stunning autumn landscapes across the Blue Ridge Mountains.



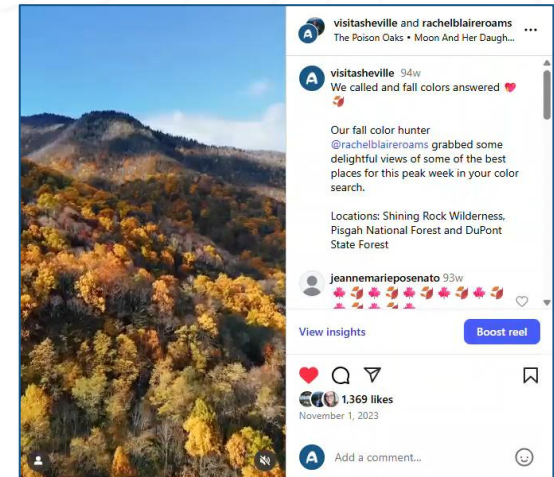
Fall color hunter at Biltmore by Erin McGrady, October 29, 2022



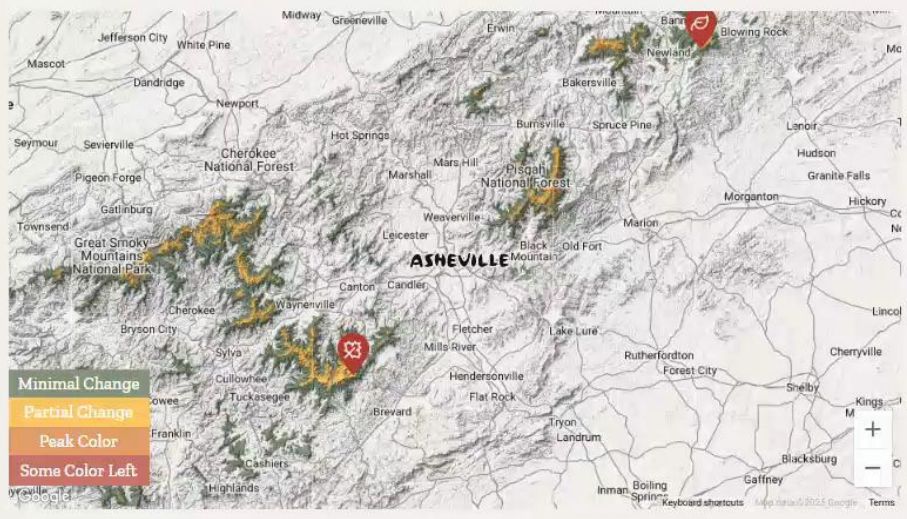
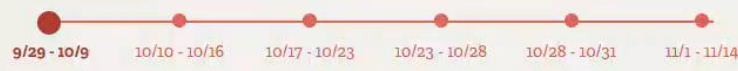
Fall at Biltmore / Photo: @chad_ridge on Instagram



Photo: @rachelblairroams on Instagram



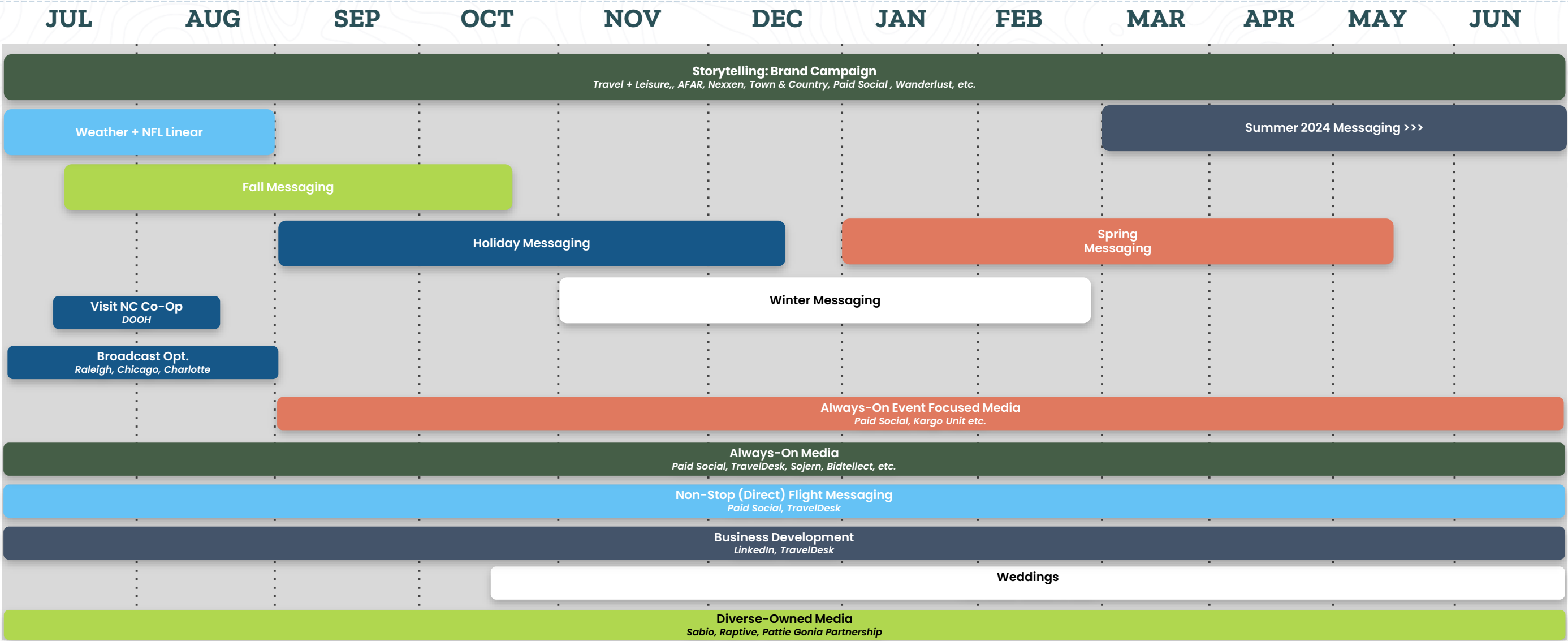
Asheville Area Fall Color Map



2025 Fall Color Hunters



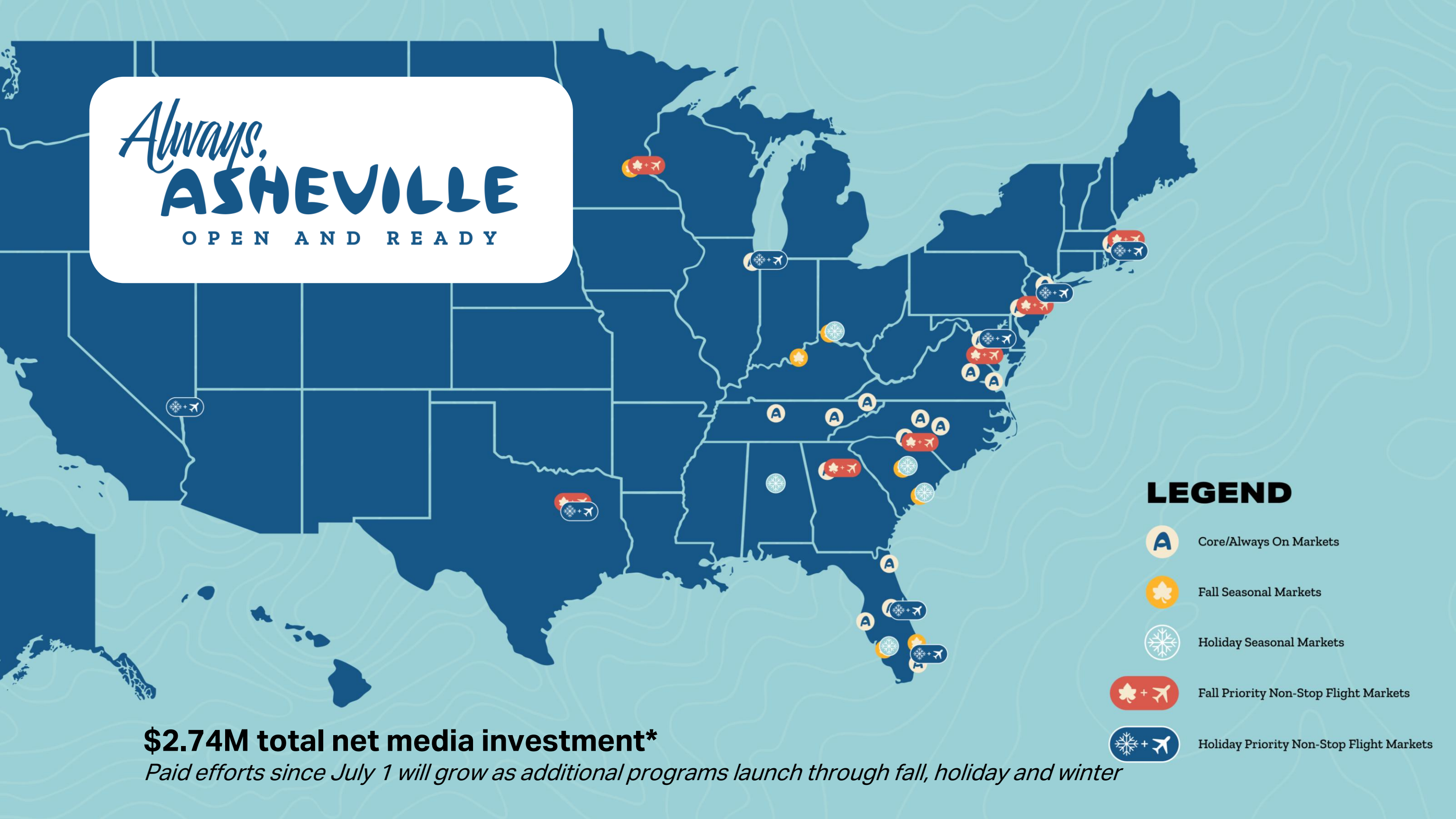
FY26 PAID MEDIA OVERVIEW: FLOWCHART



*Please note that the media chart above reflects current FY26 approvals and will be updated as planning progresses.

Always, ASHEVILLE

OPEN AND READY



LEGEND

-  Core/Always On Markets
-  Fall Seasonal Markets
-  Holiday Seasonal Markets
-  Fall Priority Non-Stop Flight Markets
-  Holiday Priority Non-Stop Flight Markets

\$2.74M total net media investment*

Paid efforts since July 1 will grow as additional programs launch through fall, holiday and winter

QUESTIONS INPUT COMMENTS



CITY UPDATES

Vice Mayor Antanette Mosley





COUNTY UPDATES

Commissioner Terri Wells

EXPLORE
ASHEVILLE
POWERED BY Buncombe County Tourism
Development Authority



MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Matthew Lehman
BCTDA | Chair

EXPLORE
ASHEVILLE
POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism
Development Authority



PUBLIC COMMENTS

Matthew Lehman
BCTDA | Chair

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

LIVE VIRTUAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Matthew Lehman

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, August 26, one request to speak had been received.

- The speaker is allowed up to 3 minutes to share comments via audio only and has agreed to abide by the Rules of Decorum for Live Public Comments.**

LIVE VIRTUAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Matthew Lehman

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

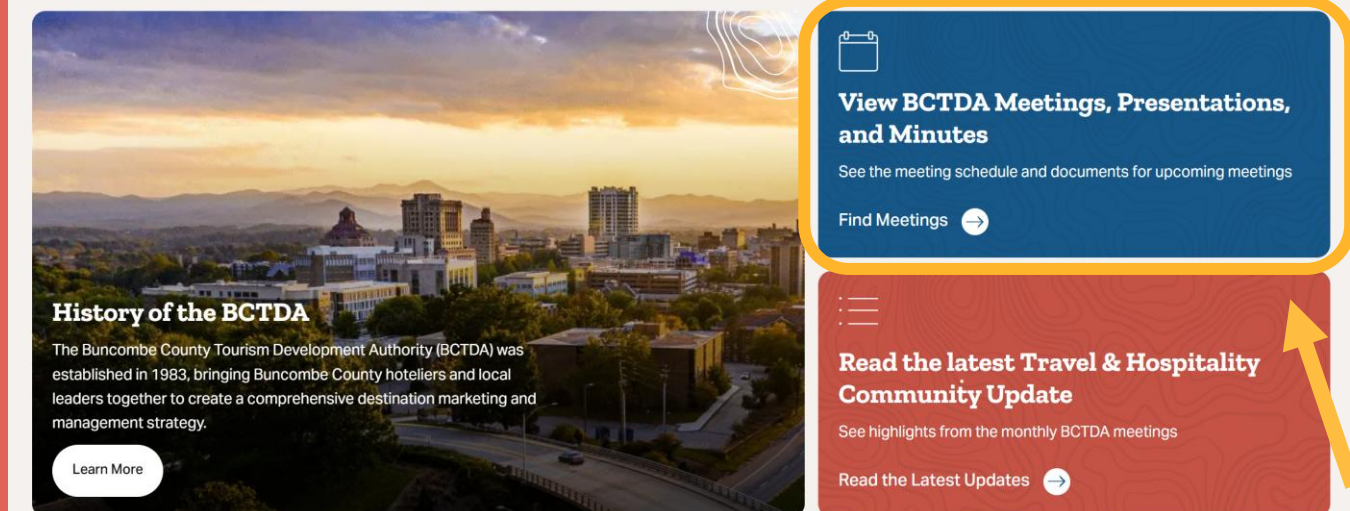
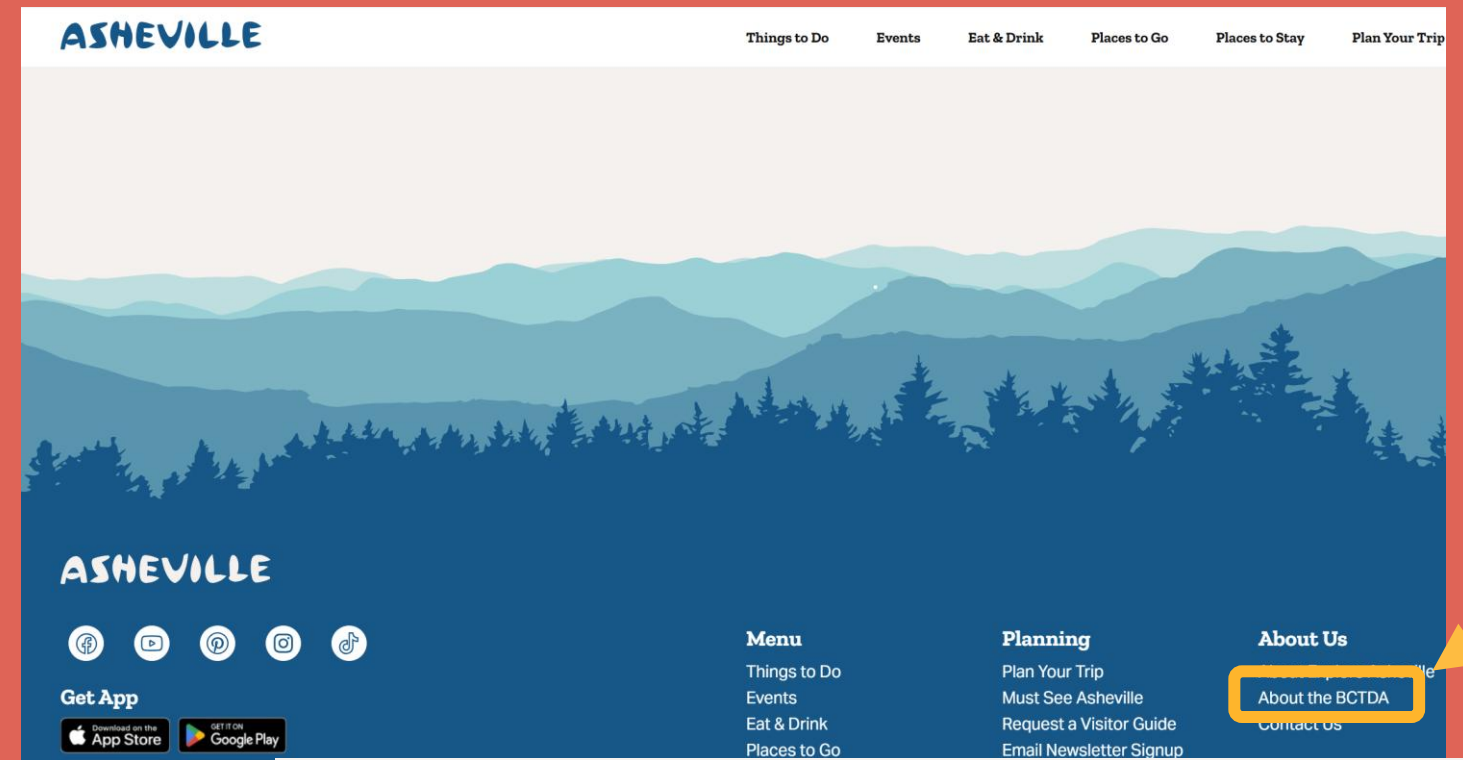
Chair Matthew Lehman

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

The next BCTDA meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 1, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. in the Board Room at Explore Asheville.

For more information go to:

- ExploreAsheville.com
- About the BCTDA section
- View BCTDA meetings, presentations, and minutes



ADJOURNMENT

Chair Matthew Lehman

Questions/Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to adjourn the BCTDA Meeting.

Motion Second

Discussion

Vote





THANK YOU

See you at the next BCTDA meeting!

Wednesday, October 1, 2025 | 9:00 a.m.

Explore Asheville Board Room | 27 College Place