



Jackson County TDA 2021-22 Proposed Budget

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NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAIN TOWNS OF CASHIERS,
CHEROKEE, DILLSBORO AND SYLVA



Presented this 19th day of May, 2021



**JACKSON COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
FY 2021 - 2022 PROPOSED BUDGET**

In accordance with G.S. 159, the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act, the proposed budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022, is hereby presented for your consideration and approval. A virtual Budget Hearing will be held on Wednesday, June 16, 2021 at 12:55 PM. Please call 828-848-8711 and request to be added to the virtual meeting to provide oral comment during the meeting. You will need to provide an email address or phone number to receive the link or number for the meeting. You must call to make this request by 11:00 AM, Wednesday, June 16, 2021. A public notice has been published in accordance with all the requirements of G.S. 159-12 as well as other State and Federal requirements.

The Room Occupancy Tax rate is four (4) percent. There is a 59-percent increase over the initial FY 2020-2021 budget due to a rebound in post-COVID 19 travel and the reopening of High Hampton.

A \$5,000 salary increase, a \$5,000 retention bonus, and a \$10,000 incentive is included for Executive Director per contract. A \$8,768 increase and a \$2,500 incentive is included for the Sales and Marketing Manager. All increases will be effective September 1, 2021.

Public Relations in the amount of \$86,200 is proposed in the following line item:

24-4926-393-01	Public Relations	\$86,200
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The Advertising budget has been broken down into advertising, website projects, and media components for a total cost of \$702,961.

24-4926-370-00	Ad Firm Media	\$438,529	62.38%
24-4926-370-01	Website Service	\$19,200	2.73%
24-4926-370-02	Creative and Production Services	\$100,000	14.23%
24-4926-370-03	Digital Campaign Reporting	\$12,000	1.71%
24-4926-370-04	Email Campaigns	\$7,200	1.02%
24-4926-370-05	SEM Management Fee	\$14,400	2.05%
24-4926-393-05	Website Projects	\$38,400	5.46%
24-4926-393-06	Ad Firm Retainer - Brand Leadership	\$60,840	8.65%
24-4926-393-08	Misc. Agency Expenses	\$12,392	1.76%

The Visitor Center operation contracts under 24-4926-393-00 are proposed to remain the same as the current year. Sylva and Cashiers Space Allocation will increase by 3%.

Dillsboro space will remain at \$1,920. The total for all visitor center operations is \$178,421. \$10,000 is proposed split between the Visitor Centers for improvements to the Visitor Experience.

Jackson County Chamber of Commerce	\$72,000
Hooper House Foundation Space	\$9,929
Dillsboro space (rent+utilities)	\$1,920
Office Supplies, Water, PPE	\$3,500
Copier lease	\$2,264
GrowthZone lead software	\$1,896
Visitor Center Improvements - Sylva	\$5,000
Total Jackson Center	\$96,509
Cashiers Area Chamber	\$66,000
Cashiers Area Chamber - Space	\$8,912
Office Supplies, Water, PPE	\$2,000
Visitor Center Improvements - Cashiers	\$5,000
Total Cashiers Center	\$81,912



NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAIN TOWNS OF CASHIERS,
CHEROKEE, HILLSBORO AND SYLVIA

Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

GOALS AND STRATEGY

2021-2022 Executive Director Goals

Destination Marketing

- Develop strategies to protect what we have while attracting events and visitation to our community
- Connect with customers through all stages of their experience from awareness to interest to booking to visiting to post-visit
- Place greater emphasis on engaging with customers in two-way conversations, more so than one-directional communication
- Build the destination brand around the community's goals, values and creative energy
- Elevate our destination brand by promoting progressive people and organizations invested in sustainability and equality
- Increase and prioritize messaging for the high-value, mindful visitor who contributes more to our community, economically and otherwise
- Improve and align data management and digital strategy to optimize marketing ROI (to compensate for loss of 3rd party cookie data)

Destination Management

- Protect and steward our natural environment and our authentic social and cultural characteristics
- Balance the need for growth with responsible and sustainable development
- Develop outreach programs in the local community to broaden our networks
- Be more involved in economic development initiatives
- Connect visitor experience with the quality of life of residents in my community
- Support initiatives to address hospitality industry workforce shortages
- Expand networks and collaboration with health, safety and security organizations to improve our destination's resilience to future shocks

Destination Organization

- Adopt operating standards and consistent measures of performance with other destination organizations
- Develop new KPIs to better measure the economic and social impact of tourism and business events beyond visitor volume
- Acquire competencies and skill sets to effectively compete in a disruptive economy
- Pay close attention to safety, health and security as a strategic consideration in our future planning



NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAIN TOWNS OF CASHIERS,
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Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

GOALS AND STRATEGY

2021 – 2022 Sales and Marketing Manager Goals

Social Media

- Couple data with audience sentiment to deliver the best content possible
- Research and utilize new social media platforms that align with JCTDA's strategic plan
- Produce content that is representative of our audience with a focus on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Promote sustainability initiatives and encourage visitors to adhere to The Leave No Trace Seven Principles®.
- Explore new creative approaches to content marketing
- Use data to create and deliver optimal paid campaigns - capitalize on opportunities year-round.
- Use data-centric decision making to optimize ad delivery and efficiency

Sales

- Represent the JCTDA at various sales tradeshows that align with the JCTDA Sales Plan
- Join meeting planner and group tour associations to build relationships with planners
- Utilize Jackson County's natural assets, unique meeting spaces, and accommodation inventory to bring group bookings to our area
- Build a diversified and loyal group travel client base for Jackson County
- Work closely with accommodation providers to jointly fill room blocks during need periods
- Work with group planners, tour operators, and local stakeholders to create unique experiences for groups visiting Jackson County
- Work closely with hoteliers to understand their needs and desires for group bookings

Ongoing Annual Organizational Goals

1. Bring the "Play On" brand to life through an integrated marketing strategy.
2. Create an awareness and desire to explore and fall in love with Jackson County.
3. To foster tourism development in the area by offering grants to projects, attractions, events, and services which will increase tourism to the Jackson County area.
4. To examine the range of existing visitor attractions and services, and to use the information to identify unrealized marketing opportunities.
5. To work with community organizations to achieve an effective, coordinated and comprehensive marketing program.
6. To work with local government, businesses, and non-profit organizations to identify and develop new facilities, attractions, and services to improve tourism activities.
7. To contribute to the economic development and quality of life in Jackson County.



NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAIN TOWNS OF CASHIERS, CHEROKEE, DILLSBORO AND SYLVA

Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

GOALS AND BUDGET



Executive Director Notes for 2021-22 Budget

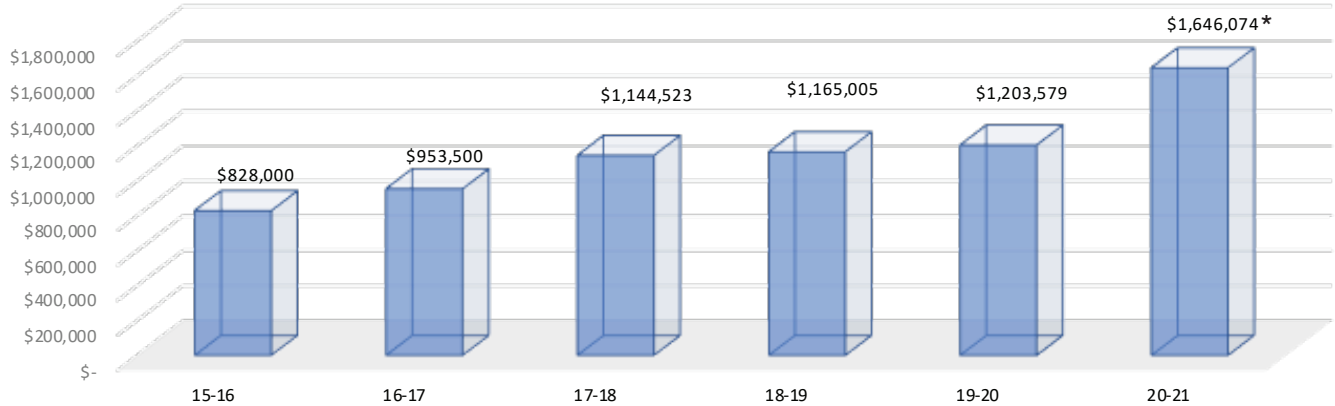
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, we recognized significant losses in visitation and occupancy tax collections during March-May, 2020. Following that period, we saw an upward trajectory and considerable increase in tax collections from June 2020 through the present. The primary source of accommodation driving the growth were vacation rentals.
- We are projecting \$1.375 million in tax collections and utilizing some fund balance for acceleration of our marketing programs at a time when people are beginning to travel again. Additional advertising dollars are recommended to be competitive with every destination in the U.S. vying for the same travelers.
- A salary increase for Mr. Sullivan is included as his role and duties have expanded significantly. He will be assuming social media marketing duties that we currently contract for with Rawle Murdy. The salary increase is offset by the transfer of the responsibilities to Mr. Sullivan.
- A line item for Research & Analytics is included to receive real-time visitor data and spending patterns. Research is necessary due to the shifting demographic of visitors in a post-COVID travel period. The contracts for this service are Zartico, KeyData, and VisaVue.
- We are proposing part-time contract labor to assist with various PR and social media tasks along with other office duties. We do not have enough work to justify another full-time position at this time, however, we are both at capacity with our current responsibilities and need part-time help.
- A contract is budgeted for Magellan Strategy (Chris Cavanaugh) to work with the Executive Committee to develop an incentive strategy for our positions instead of solely using performance reviews.
- Travel has increased due to having two employees attend many of the same conferences. One of the core components of our strategic plan is to maintain the most skilled staff. Also budgeted are tradeshow for group sales and meetings.
- Printing has increased due to the number of print projects we have and the popularity of our items.
- We are bringing social media advertising in-house under Mr. Sullivan's position, so there is a line item for social media spend. With a very competitive landscape to attract travelers this year, we increased this amount over last year.
- A \$10,000 funding line item is for our Visitor Centers to prioritize new offerings, fixtures, technology, etc., in each visitor center; funds will be split evenly between the centers.
- \$5,000 is budgeted to develop a video for group meetings and small conferences for our sales strategy.
- Funds have been added to the rent line item to account for a remodel of our existing office or to rent at a new building given our growing space needs.
- Memberships & Subscriptions have increased to include association memberships for group meetings and sales.
- Included are \$50,000 for Capital Projects and \$50,000 in grant funds this fiscal year. Committees are making recommendations for guidelines and the application process. The Jackson County Commissioners must approve all Capital Projects.
- We are increasing funds for sustainability endeavors this year.



NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAIN TOWNS OF CASHIERS, CHEROKEE, DILLSBORO AND SYLVA

Jackson County Tourism Development Authority BUDGET & FINANCE FY 21-22

Fiscal Year Occupancy Tax Collections



*Figure will increase
Amount listed above is
as of April 31, 2021

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Fund Balance Ending June 30	\$ 546,117	\$ 575,908	\$ 535,808	\$ 541,937	\$ 700,167

Figures from Annual Audit

Year	Tax Rate	Totals	Accommodation Sales	YOY Change in Sales
FY 19-20	4%	\$1,092,658.09	\$27,316,452.25	-8.30%
FY 18-19	4%	\$1,191,547.46	\$29,788,686.50	10.51%
FY 17-18	4%	\$1,078,253.84	\$26,956,346.00	4.32%
FY 16-17	4%	\$1,033,643.21	\$25,841,080.25	12.12%
FY 15-16	4%	\$921,923.24	\$23,048,081.00	10.84%
FY 14-15	4%	\$831,725.84	\$20,793,146.00	10.81%
FY 13-14	4%	\$750,594.91	\$18,764,872.75	3.25%

Visitor Spending & Impact

Year	Expenditures	Change	Payroll	Employment	State Tax Receipts	Local Tax Receipts	Tax Savings
2019	\$207,480,000	0.81%	\$51,850,000	1,870	\$11,360,000	\$9,500,000	\$470.46
2018	\$205,810,000	5.30%	\$50,870,000	1,890	\$11,340,000	\$9,500,000	\$464.01
2017	\$195,440,000	3.71%	\$48,520,000	1,850	\$10,860,000	\$9,080,000	\$462.46
2016	\$188,450,000	7.12%	\$44,910,000	1,810	\$10,550,000	\$8,630,000	\$457.77
2015	\$175,920,000	2.78%	\$41,530,000	1,710	\$9,790,000	\$8,040,000	\$428.70
2014	\$171,160,000	4.99%	\$38,780,000	1,660	\$9,170,000	\$7,750,000	\$412.46
2013	\$163,030,000	4.47%	\$36,550,000	1,610	\$8,940,000	\$7,370,000	\$399.55

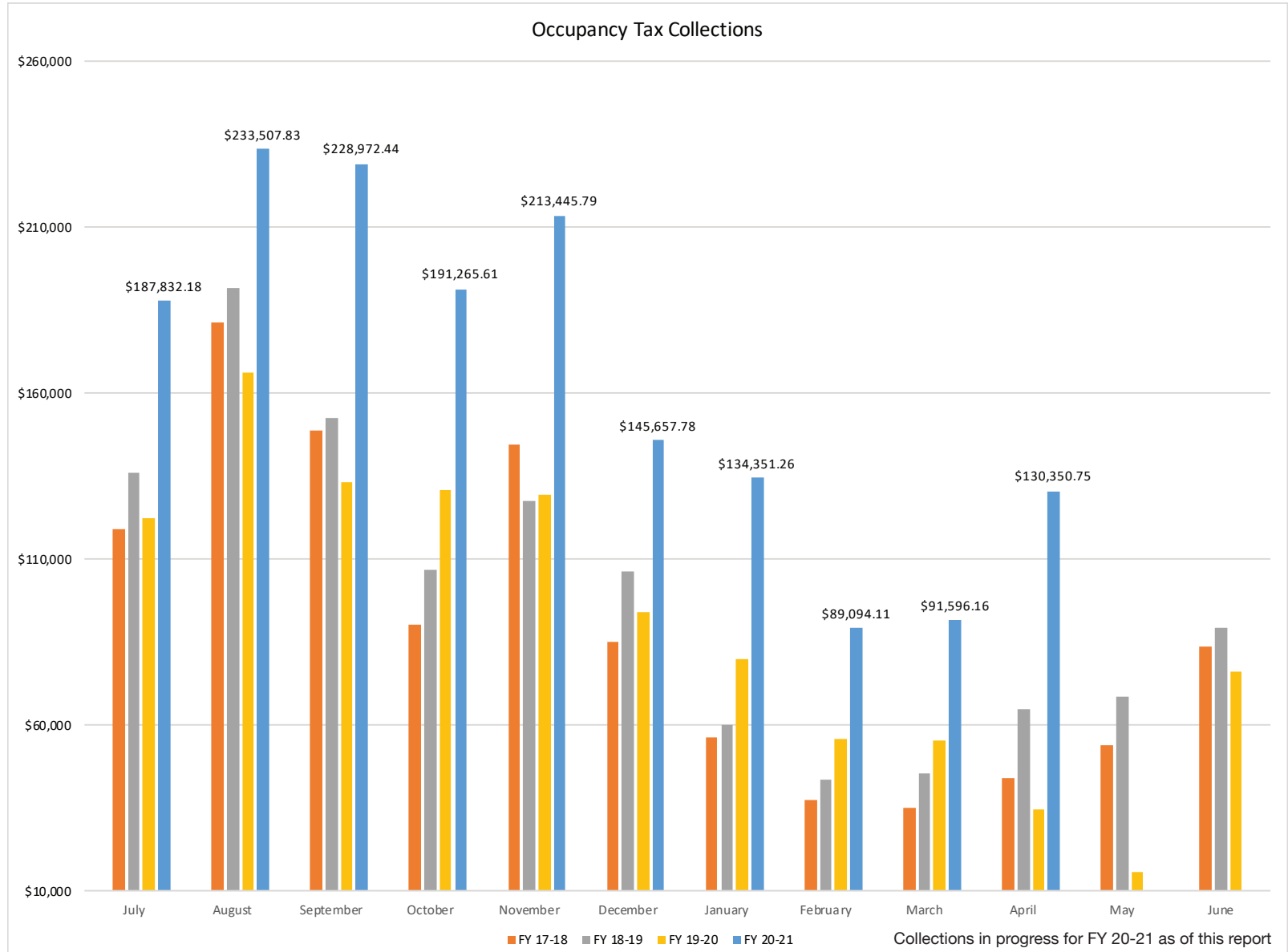
Annual Visitor Impact Source: "The Economic Impact of Travel on North Carolina Counties." (2009-2020)
This study was prepared for VisitNC by the U.S. Travel Association, Washington, D.C.



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Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

BUDGET & FINANCE FY 21-22





NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAIN TOWNS OF CASHIERS,
CHEROKEE, DILLSBORO AND SYLVIA

Jackson County Tourism Development Authority FUND RESERVE POLICY

Jackson County Tourism Development Authority Fund Balance Reserve Policy

Fund Balance Reserve Purpose

The Fund Reserve Policy is created for the following purposes:

1. Avoid cash-flow interruptions
2. Provide funding for unanticipated, non-recurring, significant expenses that cannot be absorbed with annual revenues and cannot be avoided
3. Allow the TDA to sustain operations during unanticipated emergencies

Fund Balance Reserve Establishment

Contributions can be made to the Fund Reserve gradually so as not to disrupt the Occupancy Tax available for TDA use. The Target Balance should be reached no later than 24 months past the creation of this policy.

Reserves

The Fund Reserve Balance will be an amount equivalent to 30-percent of the current fiscal year's budget. The target fund balance will fluctuate depending on future annual operational budgets. An additional eight percent of the unappropriated fund balance will be reserved and restricted as required by the Local Government Commission for local government entities.

Fund Balance Reserve Use and Replenishment

The Executive Director will determine when use of the Fund Reserve is needed and will present its petition to the Board for evaluation and approval.

Restoring the Fund Reserve Balance to its target level should be a priority. The Board should determine the means and timeframe to replenish amounts used from the Fund Reserve.

Date Approved: November 13, 2019



**JACKSON COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REQUESTED BUDGET**

Number	Description	LAST YEAR BUDGET FY 2019-2020	CURRENT YEAR BUDGET FY 2020-2021	ACTUAL YTD FY 2020-2021	CURRENT YEAR REMAINING FY 2020-2021	REQUESTED BUDGET FY 2021-2022	PROPOSED BUDGET FY 2021-2022
24-3230-130-00	JACKSON COUNTY TDA	924,600.00	1,649,628.00	1,329,120.87	320,507.13	1,375,000.00	1,375,000.00
24-3230-130-04	JACKSON TDA - FUND BALA	159,871.00	-	-	-		
24-3270-170-01	JACKSON TDA - PENALTY	5,000.00	5,000.00	1,579.03	3,420.97	5,000.00	5,000.00
24-3270-190-00	MARKETING AND ADVERTISI	-	8,706.00	8,612.00	94.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
24-3270-260-00	NC DEPT OF COMMERCE-EDP	-	-	-	-		
24-3496-260-00	NC DEPT OF COMMERCE-EDP	-	25,750.00	25,750.00	-		
24-3496-260-01	NC DEPT OF COMMERCE DES	-	-	243.82	(243.82)		
24-3496-260-02	MOUNTAIN BIZWORKS PPP	-	24,497.00	24,497.00	-		
24-3831-491-00	INVESTMENT EARNINGS	5,250.00	3,000.00	66.27	2,933.73	1,000.00	1,000.00
24-3991-000-00	FUND BALANCE	-	-	-	-	331,646.00	363,372.00
TOTAL REVENUES		\$ 1,094,721.00	\$ 1,716,581.00	\$ 1,389,868.99	\$ 326,712.01	\$ 1,722,646.00	\$ 1,754,372.00
EXPENDITURES							
24-4926-121-00	SALARIES & WAGES	113,408.00	120,271.00	91,860.71	28,410.29	140,159.00	140,159.00
24-4926-126-00	PART-TIME SALARES	-	-	-	-	20,000.00	20,000.00
24-4926-170-00	BOARD MEMBER EXPENSE	2,595.00	400.00	423.15	(23.15)	6,500.00	6,500.00
24-4926-181-00	SOCIAL SECURITY CONTRIB	7,032.00	7,457.00	5,695.35	1,761.65	8,690.00	8,690.00
24-4926-182-00	RETIREMENT EXPENSE	9,365.00	12,208.00	8,923.75	3,284.25	16,020.00	16,020.00
24-4926-183-00	HOSPITALIZATION INSURAN	15,367.00	18,540.00	12,057.90	6,482.10	19,425.00	19,425.00
24-4926-185-00	UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	865.00	504.00	373.19	130.81	520.00	520.00
24-4926-186-00	WORKMAN'S COMPENSATION	1,588.00	1,266.00	447.00	819.00	1,330.00	1,330.00
24-4926-187-00	MEDICARE TAX	2,001.00	1,744.00	1,331.98	412.02	2,032.00	2,032.00
24-4926-190-00	PROFESSIONAL SER-COUNTY	16,250.00	16,250.00	12,187.53	4,062.47	16,250.00	16,250.00
24-4926-191-00	PROFESSIONAL SER-AUDIT	7,200.00	7,200.00	7,000.00	200.00	7,200.00	7,200.00
24-4926-192-00	LEGAL SERVICES	2,000.00	3,000.00	825.00	2,175.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
24-4926-260-00	OFFICE SUPPLIES	9,778.00	3,963.00	2,471.30	1,491.70	3,500.00	3,500.00



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24-4926-299-00	MISCELLANEOUS	5,555.00	6,810.00	4,065.12	1,744.88	11,480.00	11,480.00
24-4926-311-00	TRAVEL	20,423.00	8,299.00	6,034.61	430.39	35,845.00	35,845.00
24-4926-321-00	TELEPHONE	7,964.00	6,746.00	6,801.98	(55.98)	1,564.00	1,564.00
24-4926-321-01	TELEPHONE-VISITOR CENTERS	-	-	-	-	4,430.00	4,430.00
24-4926-325-00	POSTAGE	10,451.00	21,003.00	17,185.11	3,817.89	34,678.00	34,678.00
24-4926-331-00	UTILITIES	2,045.00	2,000.00	1,748.32	251.68	2,000.00	2,000.00
24-4926-341-00	PRINTING	49,273.00	79,741.00	29,888.24	6,812.76	99,741.00	99,741.00
24-4926-351-00	REPAIRS & MAINT-BUILDING	542.00	500.00	-	500.00	500.00	500.00
24-4926-370-00	AD FIRM MEDIA	278,178.00	855,232.00	175,022.50	679,009.50	500,000.00	438,529.00
24-4926-370-01	WEBSITE SERVICE	27,398.00	28,588.00	16,000.00	12,588.00	19,200.00	19,200.00
24-4926-370-02	CREATIVE & PRODUCTION S	40,884.00	32,915.00	52,175.00	(19,260.00)	45,000.00	100,000.00
24-4926-370-03	DIGITAL CAMPAIGN REPORT	11,000.00	9,600.00	7,600.00	2,000.00	9,600.00	12,000.00
24-4926-370-04	E-MAIL CAMPAIGNS	12,900.00	5,700.00	5,225.00	475.00	5,700.00	7,200.00
24-4926-370-05	SEM MANAGEMENT	13,500.00	14,400.00	11,400.00	3,000.00	14,400.00	14,400.00
24-4926-370-07	SOCIAL MEDIA	21,550.00	8,400.00	7,000.00	1,400.00	-	-
24-4926-370-08	VIDEO PRODUCTION	1,600.00	-	-	-	-	-
24-4926-370-09	SOCIAL MEDIA SPEND	-	-	-	-	72,000.00	72,000.00
24-4926-393-00	VISITOR CENTER OPERATIO	170,590.00	167,872.00	140,652.00	27,220.00	176,695.00	178,421.00
24-4926-393-01	PUBLIC RELATIONS	70,047.00	64,600.00	44,952.98	19,647.02	86,200.00	86,200.00
24-4926-393-02	CONTRACTED SERVICES	22,000.00	22,000.00	16,499.97	5,500.03	22,000.00	22,000.00
24-4926-393-03	CONTRACTED SERVICES-REC	1,400.00	1,400.00	255.00	1,145.00	1,400.00	1,400.00
24-4926-393-05	CONTRACTED-WEBSITE	8,998.00	7,500.00	1,172.50	6,327.50	8,561.00	38,400.00
24-4926-393-06	CONTRACTED-AD FIRM RETA	58,500.00	44,550.00	34,800.00	9,750.00	58,500.00	60,840.00
24-4926-393-07	CONTRACTED SERVICES-STR	7,245.00	8,280.00	8,280.00	-	8,280.00	8,280.00
24-4926-393-08	CONTRACTED-AD FIRM MISC	5,500.00	12,000.00	11,231.33	768.67	12,000.00	12,392.00
24-4926-393-11	SOFTWARE,INTERNET,MISC	24,036.00	25,328.00	23,862.63	1,465.37	34,613.00	34,613.00



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24-4926-393-13	CONTRACTED SERVICES-PHO	100.00	-	-	-		
24-4926-393-14	CONTRACTED SERVICES-HR	10,720.00	4,320.00	6,412.42	(2,092.42)	6,408.00	6,408.00
24-4926-393-15	RESEARCH AND ANALYTICS	-	-	-	-	62,000.00	62,000.00
24-4926-412-00	BUILDING RENT	6,000.00	6,000.00	4,500.00	1,500.00	18,000.00	18,000.00
24-4926-454-00	INSURANCE	2,447.00	2,447.00	2,175.00	272.00	2,447.00	2,447.00
24-4926-491-00	DUES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS	2,240.00	3,900.00	4,107.19	(207.19)	7,503.00	7,503.00
24-4926-550-00	CAPITAL OUTLAY	6,247.00	5,448.00	5,302.77	145.23	5,000.00	5,000.00
24-4926-550-01	CAPITAL PROJECTS	-	20,000.00	-	20,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00
24-4926-630-00	NC TOURISM RECOVERY GRA	-	25,750.00	9,372.37	16,377.63	-	-
24-4926-699-00	GRANTS	4,589.00	17,000.00	10,000.00	7,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00
24-4926-699-02	MISCELLANEOUS DONATIONS	3,350.00	2,775.00	2,775.00	-	8,275.00	8,275.00
24-4926-990-00	CONTINGENCY	-	2,674.00	-	2,674.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		\$ 1,094,721.00	\$ 1,716,581.00	\$ 810,093.90	\$ 859,413.10	\$ 1,722,646.00	\$ 1,754,372.00
TOTAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FUND		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 579,775.09	\$ (532,701.09)	\$ -	\$ -



NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAIN TOWNS OF CASHIERS, CHEROKEE, DILLSBORO AND SYLVA

Jackson County Tourism Development Authority INTEGRATED MARKETING

In collaboration with the Jackson County TDA's Executive Director, Rawle Murdy sets strategy then plans and executes the integrated marketing programs for JCTDA. Based in Charleston, SC, Rawle Murdy has been leading successful marketing communications for travel and tourism clients for more than 40 years. The agency began working with the JCTDA in 2016.



rawlemurdy

Paid Media (Advertising)

Research, plan, buy and evaluate a variety of print and digital advertising media that drives quality leads/inquiries and visits to Jackson County.

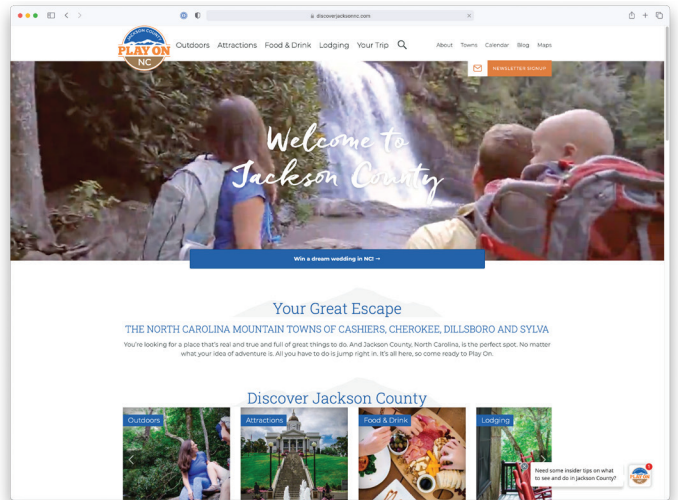
Creative Development

Creation of digital, print and video advertising promising that a trip to Jackson County is escape from their everyday lives they've been looking for. The 'Play On' brand is featured in all advertising and further supported through authentic imagery of Jackson County.



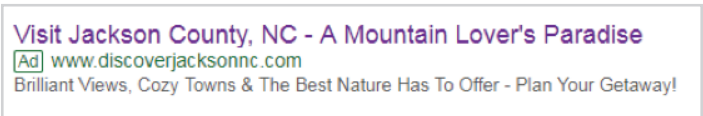
Website

www.DiscoverJacksonNC.com is an online platform for all brand content supporting social media, paid search, email and paid media channels. The website features information on outdoor adventures, attractions, food & lodging listings and trip planning. The JCTDA reinvests in its website annually with new features and technology to stay in the forefront of the traveler's mind.



Paid Search (SEM)

Sponsored ads that appear when a user is searching for anything Jackson County related on Google or Bing.



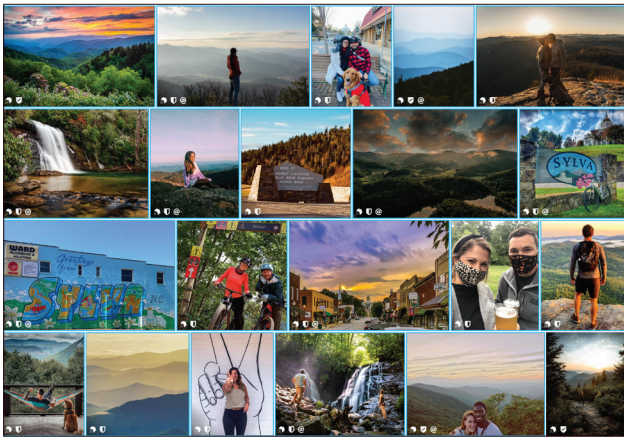


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Jackson County Tourism Development Authority INTEGRATED MARKETING

Social Media

Paid (sponsored) posts and their creation will shift from Rawle Murdy to in house this year, under Mr. Sullivan’s responsibilities.



A variety of leading-edge analytics tools are used to gather and analyze data, allowing for continual performance improvement of the website and digital marketing efforts. Data is evaluated from festivals and events, hotel feeder cities, Smith Travel Research, and a variety of sources that influence media buys and targeting across all platforms and campaigns.



E-Mail

Engaging monthly emails to our database of 34,000+ people promoting the happenings in Jackson County and encouraging overnight trips. The JCTDA authors the content and RawleMurdy deploys.

Research, Reporting and Analysis

In April 2021 the JCTDA issued an RFP for its Public Relations contract and selected Lou Hammond Group to take over the existing contract held by Pineapple PR.

Each day the LHG team combs through 70 newspapers and nearly 200 websites. The team also reads 100+ regional and national magazines monthly to track client/competitor coverage and identify placement opportunities. Recaps are shared and often discussed throughout the agency. This team approach is also reflective when meeting and pitching journalists and social media influencers. In 2019, LHG account representatives met individually with 50+ top-tier writers/influencers, conducted 29 media missions with clients in target markets such as New York, Atlanta, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Dallas, Miami and Washington, D.C. and conducted 240 journalist visits. Adapting to travel sentiment, LHG hosted virtual events ongoing for various clients in 2020, including a wine tasting with Sonoma County Tourism, Kentucky Derby precelebration for Kentucky Tourism and cocktail class with Visit Providence.



[Check out These Top 8 Sunrise/Sunset Spots](#)



We've taken the guesswork out of where to catch a beautiful sunset in the N.C. Mountains. On your next trip, grab some delicious takeout or pack a picnic and head to one of these eight sunset spots. Make sure to bring a camera because you won't want to miss these views.

[Golden Views](#)

[Perfect Patios for Al-Fresco Dining](#)





NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAIN TOWNS OF CASHIERS, CHEROKEE, DILLSBORO AND SYLVA

Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

INTEGRATED MARKETING

LHG will conduct the following for Jackson County:

- Strategic planning
- Aggressive media relations implementation
- Thought leadership
- Media events, missions
- Media training, as needed
- Deskside appointments
- Group and individual press trips
- Awards and accolades planning and outreach
- Synergistic partnership and promotions
- Crisis strategy and management
- Reporting

The annual plan includes:

- Comprehensive media relations, including national and regional print, broadcast and digital
- Coordination of 8-10 media visits, either group or individual
- Organization of two media missions; thought leadership and account administration, including biweekly conference calls, monthly coverage reports and dashboard; inclusion on LHG social media channels
- Crisis planning and support
- Development industry partner relationships & ongoing strategic direction
- Events and promotional activities after budget direction

News Bureau

Respond 24/7 to media inquiries, refer coverage opportunities, give advice on trends and developments; develop & maintain fact file, image library; maintain dedicated media lists, segment & update ongoing; monitor key outlets through staff reading program, provide media clips

Media Pitching

Craft proactive pitch angles for multi-distribution with personalization, outreach across all platforms; print, digital, & broadcast. Includes segmented story ideas, dedicated pitch & editorial calendars, award outreach & tracking

Press Materials

Create press releases, review current materials, make updates

Media Missions/ Desk Sides

Schedule, provide briefing book, attend & follow up

Trade Show Support

Schedule media appointment, provide materials, news room

Group/Individual Visits

Schedule, provide briefing book, attend & follow up

Influencer Outreach

On a campaign basis: conduct research, determine strategies, develop targeted lists





NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAIN TOWNS OF CASHIERS, CHEROKEE, DILLSBORO AND SYLVA

Jackson County Tourism Development Authority VISITOR CENTERS



The JCTDA provides funding to operate the county’s three visitor centers located in Sylva (left), Dillsboro, and Cashiers (right). The Visitor Centers greet thousands of walk-in visitors and tourists, providing information about activities, directions, events, accommodations and restaurants. They answer visitor telephone calls, fulfill Visitor Guide requests and stock kiosks throughout the county and ensure a good experience for visitors before, during and after their visit.



NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAIN TOWNS OF CASHIERS, CHEROKEE, DILLSBORO AND SYLVA

Jackson County Tourism Development Authority VISITOR RESEARCH

In 2018, The JCTDA engaged Young Strategies, Inc. to conduct Visitor Research and Strategic Planning. The project completed in late spring, 2019. Highlights of the Visitor Research appear below. This year the JCTDA is partnering with Zartico to receive real-time visitor insights on an ongoing basis to deliver stronger return on ad spend.

- Typical overnight leisure travel party composition is middle aged adults or families with children. Most are well-educated and are retired or professionals and arrive in travel parties of 2-4 people.
- The majority of travelers to Jackson County come from the 3 to 6 hour drive radius among contiguous states, however visitors responded to the survey from 42 states as well as the United Kingdom, Canada and Germany. Nearly all visitors drive into Jackson County.
- Overall spending per travel party: overnight = \$1,082; daytrip = \$202. It is important to note, typically in most destinations, overnight visitors spend 3X as much as daytrippers.
- The primary purpose for overnight visitors most recent leisure trip to Jackson County was getaway, general relaxation, driving/sightseeing, hiking and waterfalls while daytrip visitors reported driving/sightseeing, general relaxation, hiking, getaway and waterfalls.
- The majority of overnight (83%) and daytrip (88%) visitors to Jackson County report being repeat visitors indicating an opportunity to increase advertising and public relations to drive more first-time visitors who stay longer and spend more.
- Top 5 Activities by OVERNIGHT Visitors: Unique local dining, driving/site-seeing, shopping, waterfalls and hiking.
- Top 5 Activities by DAYTRIP Visitors: Unique local dining, driving/site-seeing, shopping, waterfalls and hiking.



Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

VISITOR RESEARCH

2020 Jackson County NC Visa Destination Insights Travel Profile

The Jackson County TDA's estimate is based on and extrapolated from aggregate, depersonalized card usage data provided by Visa Destination Insights for the period of 2020 and incorporates data from other independent research sources.

- There were over 120,374 estimated non-resident travelers to Cashiers, NC during 2020.
- There were over 238,417 estimated non-resident travelers to Sylva, NC during 2020.
- There were over 434,559 estimated non-resident travelers to Jackson County, NC during 2020.

Spending by Origin State to Jackson County, ranked by Total Spending

Origin State	Average Spending Per Visitor	Percent of Visitors	Percent Total Spend
NC	\$183.26	42.06%	49.06%
FL	\$198.55	12.36%	15.62%
GA	\$111.06	14.19%	10.03%
SC	\$117.33	11.34%	8.47%
TN	\$102.72	4.57%	2.99%
TX	\$163.17	2.25%	2.34%
AL	\$163.02	2.21%	2.29%
VA	\$114.49	1.63%	1.19%
LA	\$231.07	0.80%	1.17%

Source: State's Office of Tourism estimates based on aggregate Visa card usage data provided by Visa Destination Insights for the period of calendar year 2020



NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAIN TOWNS OF CASHIERS, CHEROKEE, DILLSBORO AND SYLVA

Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Direction

Travel to Jackson County is currently driven by leisure demand for scenic mountain beauty, Cherokee, and major WNC regional attractions. Western Carolina University and group travel are also drivers of visitation. The Jackson County TDA will drive growth in visitation and visitor spending by promoting an active-lifestyle destination and focusing on longer weekend stays, weekdays, shoulder and off-seasons. A combination of leisure and group promotion will drive maximum ROI.

Destination Marketing – Expand and promote the “play-on” brand to an active-Outdoors Mountain Brand

- 1. Maintain and support the highest skilled and most dynamic sales and marketing team.** JCTDA will meet the highest standards of accreditation and performance (research driven ROI) with measurable results as a research-based DMO driven by a team of professionals.
- 2. Promote and expand the active-lifestyle brand based on the market research.** Jackson County requires a brand that sets it apart as unique from other mountain destinations while capturing the active outdoors vacation/getaway experience. The brand will serve as a foundation for all marketing, sales and public relations as well as future destination development.
- 3. Maintain/expand a comprehensive research/ tracking program to guide all decisions–** Track KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) for all programs with ROI reported at all Jackson County TDA Board meetings. Provides annual reports to County Commission.
- 4. All plans, marketing, activities, events must be on-brand** – deliver on the active mountain lifestyle experience.

Destination Management – Enhance the Active Outdoors Lifestyle – a mountain destination unlike any other

- 5. Connect Jackson County visitors with memorable experiences.** Jackson County is large and visitors must be able to find activities to engage in them. Implement county-wide directional signage and way-finding systems. Improved cellular and Wi-Fi service provides visitor with connectivity. Support traffic planning efforts to diminish traffic jams during peak periods.
- 6. Support improved and expanded access to traveler experiences,** with emphasis on year-round outdoor experiences. Expand & improved parking at trail heads and waterfalls. Improved trail quality and safety. Create new trails. Support outfitters to equip visitors for biking, kayaking, canoeing, fishing
- 7. Encourage and support unique mountain dining, shopping and entertainment that set Jackson County apart from other mountain destinations.**