



To: TDA Board  
From: Nick Breedlove, TDA Executive Director  
Date: April 10, 2026  
Subject: Monthly Director's Brief

**Dear Board Members,**

Please find below my monthly update below:

**1. FY Budget Planning**

Staff is finalizing a conservative \$3.5 million operating budget for the coming fiscal year, which projects \$58.3 million in accommodation sales. I have been working closely with Darlene on the draft, and we will present it for the Board's review at the May meeting. We are on track to bring it forward for adoption at the June 17 meeting.

**2. Lodging Performance**

The start of spring has been softer this year across Jackson County and its neighboring counties, with a slight decline in occupancy compared to the same period last year. On a positive note, we successfully held our Average Daily Rate (ADR), which has translated into room revenue that is up 8.2 percent year-over-year – which is positive news.

**3. Visitor Guide Distribution**

Our new Visitor Guides have arrived and look outstanding. This is the earliest we've received new guides since I've been here, which is great news so we can get them in front of people planning late spring/early summer trips. To ensure new-guide delivery for all pending inquiries, we held mail leads for two weeks and have since distributed approximately 1,100 guides to those requests. Now that we are current on mail leads, we will begin full distribution to all state welcome centers, local kiosks, and area hotels in the weeks ahead.

**4. Public Relations & Media Outreach**

Two high-value PR opportunities are on the horizon this month:



1. **People Magazine — NYC (April 22):** Jackson County has been selected as one of only three statewide partners to present to top editors-in-chief (15 of them from various top-tier media) at People Inc.'s New York office. I am coordinating with our PR firm LHG to have both myself and a PR representative attend, and I am currently developing our presentation materials. This is a rare and valuable platform to position Jackson County in front of key decision-makers at one of the country's most widely read publications.
2. **Nashville Media Mission — (April 29):** LHG will travel to Nashville to meet with key media contacts in the Nashville market. While Nashville has consistently shown strong interest in our destination, converting that awareness into actual visitation has proven challenging. This mission is aimed at deepening those relationships and identifying more targeted strategies to reach the Nashville traveler.

## 5. Community Engagement & Events

I had the opportunity to represent the TDA at several noteworthy community events in recent weeks:

**Cashiers Area Chamber of Commerce Grand Re-Opening:** The Chamber celebrated a beautiful renovation of their space, made possible in part through TDA funding. It was nice to see the investment come to life thanks to a great plan for the space by Susan Sapienza.

**BLOOM (Business Leaders Opening Opportunities in the Mountains):** Jackson County Economic Development's annual business dinner provided a great opportunity to connect with local business and community leaders. We became a sponsor of the event this year.

**Dillsboro Arts Glass Festival (March 28):** Vendors I spoke with reported exceptional turnout for this inaugural TDA-funded event.

**Sylva's Spring Art Walk (April 9):** Downtown Sylva was lively and energetic, with strong foot traffic and active retail engagement throughout the event – it was encouraging to see the town's shops and restaurants thriving.

**The Historic Sylva Walking Tours** the TDA funded have been going well. WCU Mountain Heritage Center Interim Director Peter Koch said we have ten individuals signed up for this Sunday's (April 12) tour. They'll begin working on creative elements for a brochure so this tour can be taken at any time.

