



DRAFT Jackson County TDA 2026-27 Budget

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Presented this 20th day of May, 2026



JACKSON COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FY 2026 - 2027 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, 2026 and ending June 30, 2027, is hereby presented for your consideration and approval.

An in-person Budget Hearing will be held on Wednesday, June 17, 2026 at 12:55 PM.

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.

About the JCTDA

The Jackson County Tourism Development Authority (JCTDA) is a Destination Management Organization responsible for overseeing the use of a 6% room occupancy tax collected from guests staying in accommodations throughout Jackson County. This tax applies to the rental of rooms, lodgings, or accommodations in hotels, motels, inns, tourist camps, and similar establishments that are subject to state sales tax.

Accommodations operated by nonprofit charitable, educational, or religious organizations are exempt from this tax when the facilities are used for their nonprofit purposes.

The JCTDA is governed by a board of nine voting members, all appointed by the Jackson County Board of Commissioners. This quasi-governmental body meets monthly and includes representatives from the local visitor economy, along with ex-officio members.

The room occupancy tax is collected in addition to any state or local sales taxes. It must be collected by all accommodation providers who are required to collect sales tax, including short-term rental operators. The Jackson County Board of Commissioners, under the authority granted by House Bill 96 (2011), initially set the tax rate at 4% through Resolution R12-34. This rate was increased to 6% on October 15, 2024, with the new rate taking effect on July 1, 2025.

No property taxes are used to fund the operations of the Jackson County TDA.

Staff

Nick Breedlove, Executive Director
Samantha Nelson, Social Media and Content Director

Board Makeup

Group One: (3) Individuals from North Jackson County Hospitality and Tourism Sector

Group Two: (3) Individuals from South Jackson County Hospitality and Tourism Sector

Group Three - (1) Individual from Hospitality and Tourism Sector (county-wide)



Group Four - (1) representative from the Cashiers Chamber of Commerce in a non-lodging, tourism-related business (who is not employed by the CACOC).

Group Five - (1) representative from the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce in a non-lodging, tourism-related business (who is not employed by the JCCOC).

Group Six- The Executive Director from the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce. The Executive Director will be an ex officio member with no term limit.

The Executive Director from the Cashiers Area Chamber of Commerce. The Executive Director will be an ex officio member with no term limit. The Jackson County Finance Officer shall serve as an ex officio member of the Authority and serve as the Finance Officer of the Authority. In addition, a County Commissioner or designee shall serve as an ex officio member of the Authority.

FY 26-27 Board

Dale Collins, Chair, Tuckasegee Fly Shop*
Jason Kimenker, Vice Chair, At Large, Friends Of Panthertown*
Craig Smith, Secretary, Tembo Hospitality*
John Faulk, Applegate Inn*
Brett Stewart, Hotel Cashiers*
Trevor Brown, Jackson County Parks & Recreation Department (JCCOC Appointment)*
Mandi Cantrell, Landmark Vacation Rentals, South Jackson*
Peter Evers, Hotel Sylva*
Jack Austin, TJ Baileys (CACOC Appointment)*

Ex-Officio Board Members:

Jenny Hooper, Jackson County Commissioner
Todd Vinyard, Jackson County Chamber of Commerce
Susan Sapienza, Cashiers Area Chamber of Commerce
Darlene Fox, Finance Director, Jackson County

Vision Statement

To be the premier mountain destination providing an active lifestyle, spectacular natural assets and a friendly community for citizens and visitors alike.

Mission Statement

To promote the growth of year-round tourism opportunities that benefit the Jackson County economy. The TDA's efforts put people to work, grow jobs, build community, and make our towns a vibrant place to live, play and work.

Budget Highlights

The **Advertising** budget has been broken down into advertising, website projects, and media components for a total cost of \$1,048,000.

24-4926-370-00	Ad Firm Media	\$760,000
24-4926-370-02	Creative and Production Services	\$88,000
24-4926-370-03	Digital Campaign Reporting	\$20,000
24-4926-370-04	Email Campaigns	\$30,000
24-4926-393-06	Ad Firm Retainer - Brand Leadership	\$50,000
24-4926-393-08	Misc. Agency Expenses	\$25,000
24-4926-370-10	Media Management	\$75,000
	Total	\$1,048,000

Public Relations The public relations figure includes the retainer fee of \$85,860, monthly admin fee of \$250, Content Production at \$12,000, and a \$40,000 allocation for PR-related projects and to host travel writers.

24-4926-393-01	Public Relations	\$141,760
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The operating contracts for the **Visitor Centers** (for services and space rental), categorized under account number 24-4926-393-00, are proposed to be increased by three percent in order to accommodate inflation and Consumer Price Index adjustments over the last year.

Jackson County Chamber of Commerce		
Visitor Center Operations		
Jackson County Chamber of Commerce		\$101,391.30
Hooper House Foundation Space		\$14,396.37
Office Supplies		\$3,000
Copier lease		\$2,264
Jackson Chamber Digital Kiosk - Annual Fee		\$4,200
Total Jackson Center (Sylva)		\$125,251.56
Cashiers Area Chamber		
Cashiers Area Chamber		\$92,942.38
Cashiers Area Chamber - Space		\$12,926.58
Office Supplies, Water Service for Visitors		\$2,000
Total Cashiers Center		\$107,869

Capital Projects

In the fiscal year 2026-27, the Jackson County Tourism Development Authority (JCTDA) is allocating \$1,000,000 in Capital Project Funds. All Capital Projects need approval from both the JCTDA Board and the Jackson County Board of Commissioners. According to state law on occupancy tax, at least two-thirds of JCTDA's funds must be allocated to advertising and public relations, and the remaining one-third of funds can be used for Capital Projects.

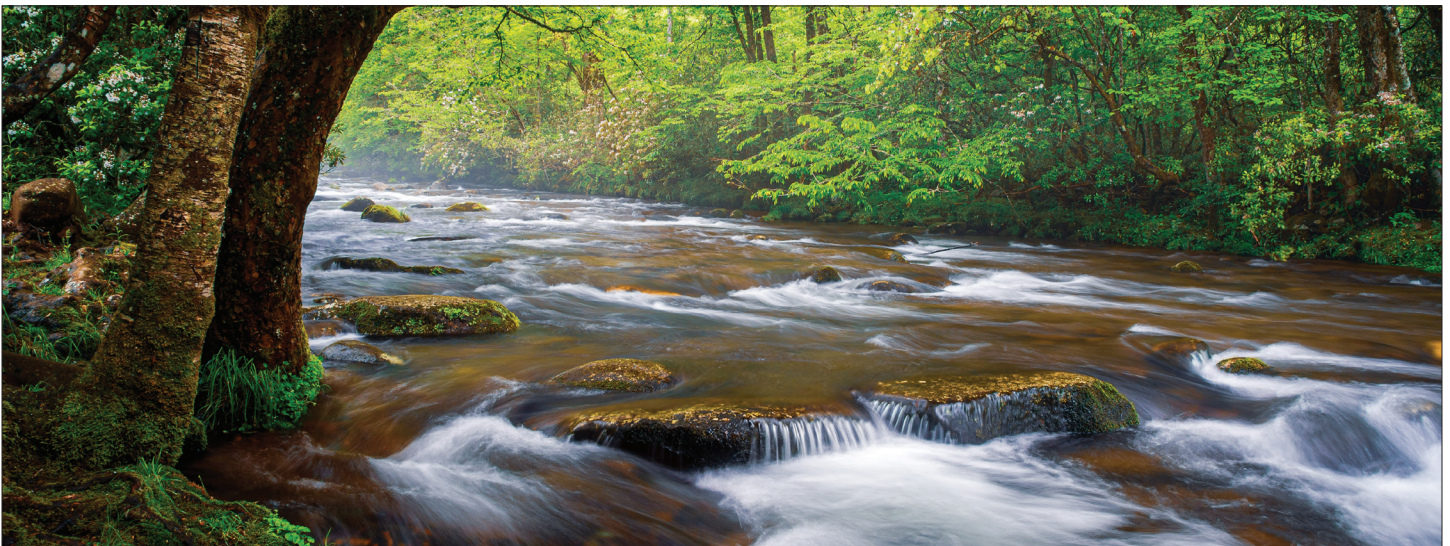


Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

GOALS & STRATEGY

2026-2027 Executive Director Goals

- **Position Jackson County as the Region’s Best Value** - As travel budgets tighten, we will highlight Jackson County’s natural strengths: affordability, outdoor adventure, and authentic family experiences. We’ll focus our messaging on “high-return” travel—showing budget-conscious visitors they can have a premium mountain experience here without the premium price tag. Rather than just increasing our spend, we will use smarter, more efficient marketing to stay ahead of our competitors.
- **Maximize Digital Impact with Our Current Team** - With our Social Media and Digital Content Director now fully on board, we are shifting from building our digital foundation to making it perform at its peak. We will focus on getting the most out of our existing tools by prioritizing organic reach and content created by our visitors. This allows us to stay highly visible and keep our audience engaged without needing a major budget increase.
- **Tourism Capital Project Fund (TCPF)** - We will continue to manage the TCPF with a focus on long-term stability and fiscal discipline. In a tighter economy, we will apply strong criteria to new project applications to ensure they offer a clear return and a real benefit to our community. Our goal is to keep current projects moving forward while making sure the fund remains a credible, lasting resource for the county.
- **Use Local Authenticity as a Competitive Edge** - Our unique local character is a major advantage that sets us apart from more commercial destinations. We’ll strengthen our digital storytelling by partnering with local businesses to help them highlight their unique offerings, giving our visitors a more genuine look at what makes a trip here special.
- **Invest in High-Return Signature Events** - We are becoming more strategic with our event funding. We will prioritize events that clearly increase overnight stays and boost the local economy, particularly during our slower shoulder and off-peak months.
- **Stay Flexible Through Data-Driven Decisions** - We will use real-time data to stay nimble as economic conditions shift. By building regular performance checks into our annual plan, we can quickly move resources to where they are needed most. We’ll keep a close watch on how travelers are feeling about costs to ensure Jackson County’s message stays relevant and effective all year long.





Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

GOALS AND STRATEGY

2026-2027 Social Media & Content Goals

- 1. Grow Instagram Audience to 100,000 Followers** - Continue building a strong and engaged audience on Instagram by reaching 100,000 followers, while maintaining a focus on content quality, audience relevance, and meaningful engagement.
- 2. Expand Multi-Platform Presence (Threads & Pinterest)** - Build on current momentum by strengthening our presence on Threads and Pinterest, increasing both reach and engagement through consistent, platform-specific content strategies.
- 3. Evolve Content Strategy to Emphasize POV & First-Person Storytelling** - Leverage emerging content trends by producing more first-person, “point-of-view” style content that immerses viewers in the destination experience and drives higher engagement.
- 4. Deepen Audience Connection Through Interactive Storytelling** - Strengthen audience engagement by prioritizing content that drives interaction, saves, and shares. Focus on proven high-performing formats including Instagram Story trivia series, swipe-to-reveal storytelling posts across Instagram and Threads, and curated itinerary-style content that inspires trip planning and real-world visitation.
- 5. Optimize Paid Social Strategy to Strengthen Performance** - Refine Meta advertising strategy to improve campaign efficiency, expand reach, and engage highly targeted audiences, with the goal of reaching users who demonstrate intent to visit Jackson County or book a stay. Strengthen website performance by increasing engaged time on key landing pages, indicating higher intent and stronger trip-planning behavior.

Tourism Impact

The following data reflects the 2024 calendar year and was released in August 2025. These are the most current statistics available until the next update in August 2026.

\$463,140,000

in annual expenditures by tourists
(lodging, food service, transportation,
retail, recreation & entertainment).

- **2,464** – Jobs directly supported by tourism.
- **\$118,400,000** – Worker paychecks annually
- **\$14,900,000** – State tax revenues generated by tourists.
- **\$15,530,000** – Local county tax revenues generated by tourists.
- **\$682.40** – Tax savings per resident as a result of tourist spending
-

The Economic Impact of Travel on North Carolina Counties. This study was prepared for Visit North Carolina by Tourism Economics.





Jackson County Tourism Development Authority GOALS AND BUDGET

Executive Director Notes for FY 2026-27 Budget

Budget

FY 26-27: \$3,513,661

FY 25-26: \$3,541,549

Change: -0.79%; Conservative forecast this FY

Projected Tax Collections

FY 26-27: \$3,420,661

FY 25-26: \$3,420,661

Change: No Change

Investment Earnings

FY 26-27: \$88,000

FY 25-26: \$60,000* Initial projection, actual YTD is \$88,000

Change: Matching FY 26-27 to FY 25-26 actuals.

Late Payment Penalties

FY 26-27: \$5,000

FY 25-26: \$5,000* Initial projection, actual YTD is \$7,400

Change: No change. Penalty income remained consistent, reflecting stable taxpayer compliance.

Capital Projects (TCPF)

FY 26-27: \$1,000,000

FY 25-26: \$1,250,000* Revised upward from \$1m via fund balance transfer.

Change: -\$250,000 (-20%) In FY 25-26 we used a small portion of fund balance so four projects could begin work.

Fund Balance Utilized

FY 26-27: \$0

FY 25-26: \$0

Change: None

- Budget Efficiency** - For fiscal year 2026-27, we are reducing several budget categories and optimizing the budget:

Printing - decrease by \$54,740 - as we identified a less-costly printer and are printing fewer paper copies of our annual guide.

Travel - decrease by 34.7% - eliminate two conferences

Research - decrease by 27.6% - the second year of Tourism Economics Contract is \$10,000 less expensive and we are eliminating KeyData as our data sets are comprehensive and cover its reporting.

SEM - Our Search Engine Marketing will now be handled by Madden as opposed to Love Communications. There is cost-efficiency in this change.

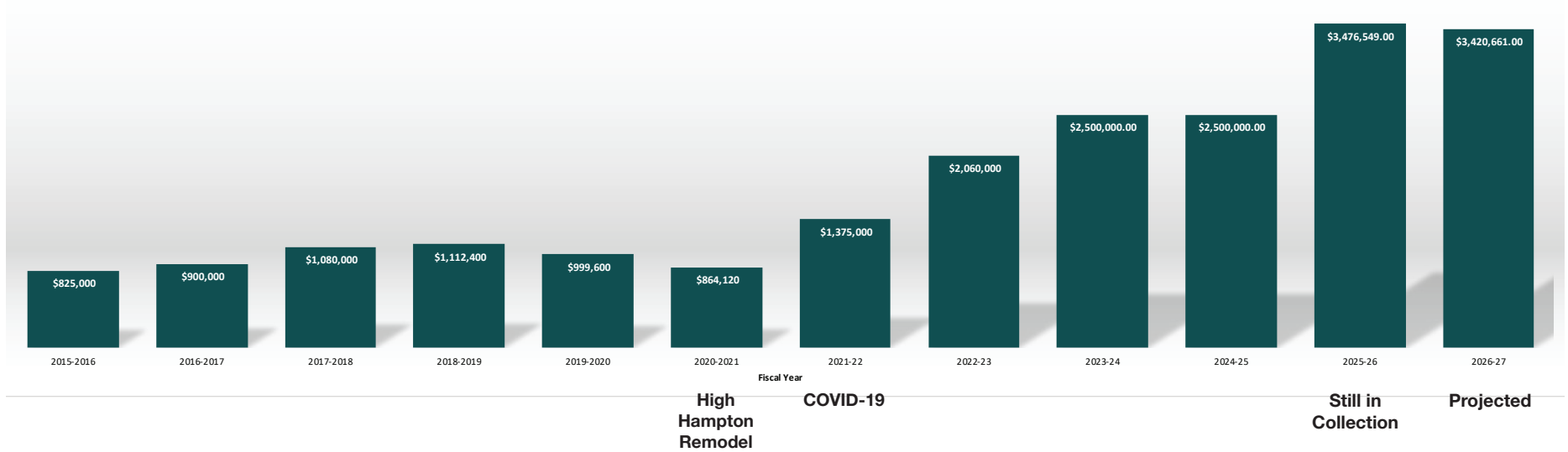
- TCPF** - We have allocated \$1,000,000 for this year's Tourism Capital Project Fund.
- Visitor Center Contracts** - We adjusted the Visitor Center contracts to include a 3% increase to accommodate inflation and consumer price index changes.
- COLA & Salaries** - The Executive Committee is proposing a 2.9% COLA for TDA Staff along with a merit increase for both staff members.
- Lodging Pipeline** - The extensively renovated Jarrett House will open in May 2026 and will begin collecting revenue. While we did not model revenue from the Jarrett House to be included in this year's budget, it will be in addition to proposed collection figures.
- Conservative Projections** - While the JCTDA typically builds for growth, we are proposing a flat-line budget this year. This conservative approach accounts for economic uncertainty while maintaining our core operational capabilities.





Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

BUDGET & FINANCE FY 26-27



Fiscal Year	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Budget	\$ 828,000	\$ 953,500	\$ 1,144,523	\$ 1,165,005	\$ 1,203,579	\$ 872,120	\$ 1,754,372	\$ 2,655,098	\$3,399,472.00	\$3,117,372.00	\$ 3,541,549.00	\$ 3,513,661.00
Projected Tax Collections	\$ 825,000	\$ 900,000	\$ 1,080,000	\$ 1,112,400	\$ 999,600	\$ 864,120	\$ 1,375,000	\$ 2,060,000	\$2,500,000.00	\$2,500,000.00	\$ 3,476,549.00	\$ 3,420,661.00
Actual Tax Collections	\$921,923.24	\$1,033,643.21	\$1,078,253.84	\$1,191,547.46	\$1,092,658.09	\$1,993,466.46	\$2,637,438.19	\$2,576,925.76	\$2,495,882.25	\$2,341,394.73	In Collection	Future Collections
Investment Earnings	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,023.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 88,000.00
Penalties	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Capital Projects (TCPF)									\$ 367,767.00	\$ 750,000.00	\$ 1,250,000.00	\$ 1,000,000.00
Fund Balance Utilized	\$ -	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 37,605.00	\$ 183,979.00	\$ -	\$ 363,372.00	\$ 579,098.00	\$ 834,472.00	\$ 542,372.00	\$ -	\$ -

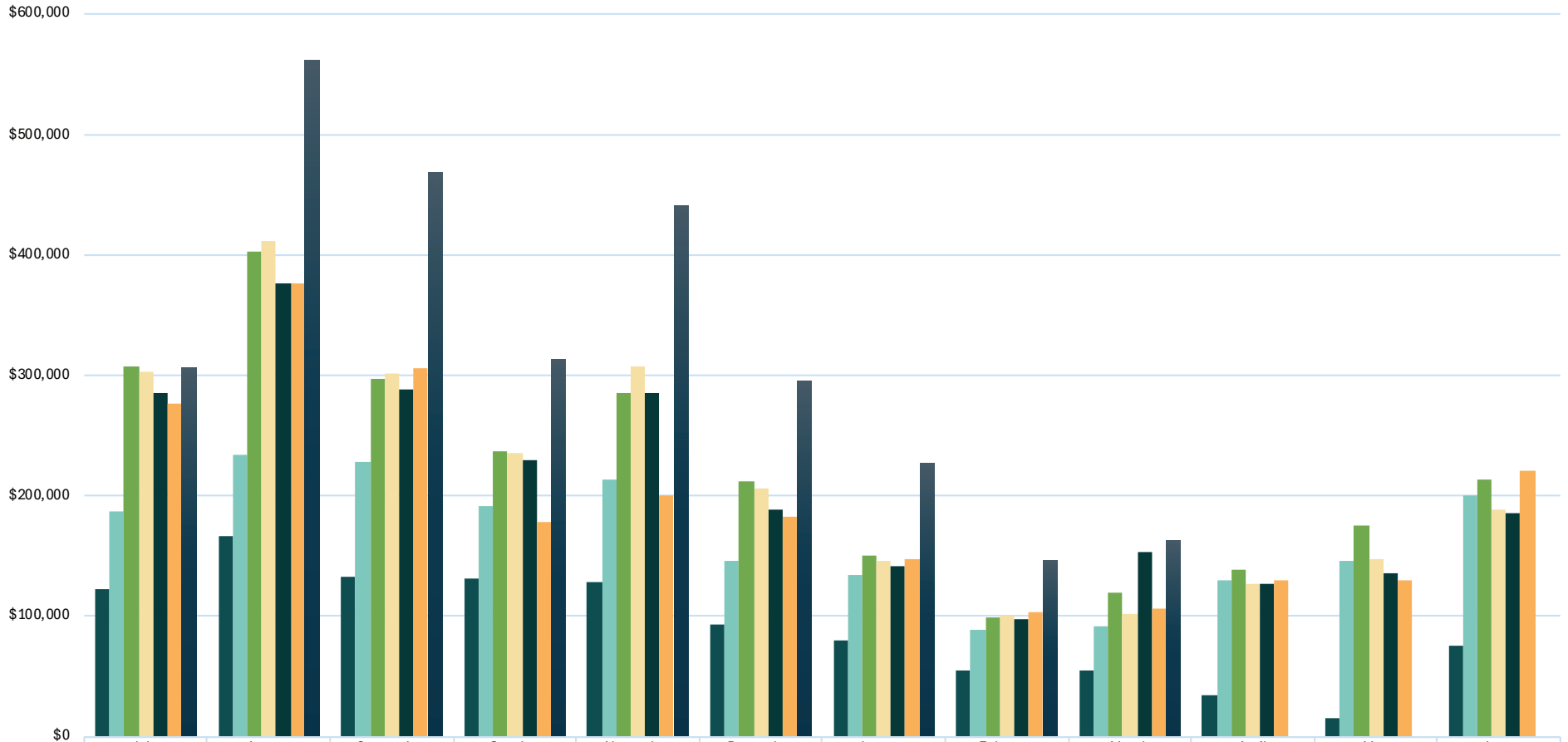
Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Fund Balance Ending June 30	\$ 546,117	\$ 575,908	\$ 535,808	\$ 541,937	\$ 700,167	\$ 1,837,439	\$ 2,739,114	\$ 3,616,742	\$ 3,851,070	\$ 3,237,999



Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

OCCUPANCY TAX TRENDS

Occupancy Tax Collections by Month



	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
FY 19-20	\$122,421.68	\$166,057.35	\$133,172.02	\$130,912.47	\$129,268.34	\$93,829.84	\$79,652.13	\$55,878.75	\$55,161.52	\$34,404.69	\$15,854.63	\$76,044.67
FY 20-21	\$187,832.18	\$233,507.83	\$228,972.44	\$191,265.61	\$213,445.79	\$145,657.78	\$134,351.26	\$89,094.11	\$91,596.16	\$130,350.75	\$146,638.28	\$200,754.27
FY 21-22	\$306,871.17	\$402,414.91	\$296,676.95	\$236,495.92	\$285,094.57	\$212,552.55	\$150,929.14	\$98,820.63	\$120,494.03	\$138,246.01	\$175,198.14	\$213,514.02
FY 22-23	\$302,567.11	\$410,949.64	\$301,922.72	\$235,450.13	\$307,778.37	\$206,012.13	\$146,534.48	\$100,429.24	\$102,142.20	\$127,334.09	\$147,200.16	\$188,605.49
FY 23-24	\$285,430.89	\$376,418.22	\$289,116.07	\$229,745.47	\$285,381.98	\$189,325.49	\$141,538.21	\$97,063.80	\$153,142.20	\$127,759.55	\$135,216.14	\$185,581.58
FY 24-25	\$276,502.15	\$376,774.10	\$305,905.67	\$178,664.06	\$200,505.68	\$183,028.80	\$148,345.35	\$104,135.28	\$107,065.49	\$129,568.03	\$130,002.73	\$220,678.83
FY 26-27	\$306,652.00	\$561,413.72	\$468,254.13	\$313,730.30	\$441,022.82	\$295,471.35	\$227,104.30	\$146,571.14	\$163,248.27			



Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

OCCUPANCY TAX TRENDS

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2022	41.1%	51.1%	54.4%	59.9%	54.2%	65.8%	67.0%	63.4%	60.3%	70.9%	53.9%	48.4%
2023	38.7%	45.5%	47.1%	58.1%	61.7%	68.6%	65.3%	60.9%	63.3%	68.4%	58.9%	46.4%
2024	34.1%	45.1%	50.9%	56.6%	57.8%	63.8%	64.3%	65.4%	56.1%	74.8%	57.3%	56.0%
2025	45.5%	54.6%	54.7%	53.4%	59.6%	66.2%	68.5%	64.3%	58.3%	71.9%	59.4%	46.5%
2026	38.1%	52.0%	52.0%	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Hotel Occupancy data courtesy: Smith Travel Research, Most current data as of April, 2026.

From July 2025 through February 2026, our occupancy averaged 57.4%, compared to 59.3% during the same eight-month period last year – a small dip of about two percentage points. On the plus side, our shoulder months are holding steady: July rose 4.2 points to 68.5%, September gained 2.2 points, and November added 2.1 points, showing that demand before and after our peak times remains healthy. October, at 71.9%, continues to be our busiest month and proves that the fall leaf season is still the most reliable part of our yearly performance.

The drop in our numbers is tied almost entirely to a slower winter, largely because we didn't have the previous year's influx of Helene recovery workers and broadband crews. December fell 9.5 points from the previous year to 46.5%, January dropped 7.4 points to 38.1%, February dipped 2.6 points, and March dropped 2.7 points. If April follows its usual patterns, we expect to finish the year between 56% and 58%: slightly lower than last year, but caused by a slower winter rather than a general decline across the whole calendar.





Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

BUDGET TRENDS

Year	Tax Rate	Totals	Accommodation Sales	YOY Change in Sales
FY 26-27	6%	\$3,420,661.00	\$57,011,016.67 *	-2.14%
FY 25-26	6%	\$3,495,298.00	\$58,254,966.67 **	-9.07%
FY 24-25	4%	\$2,500,000.00	\$62,500,000.00	0.00%
FY 23-24	4%	\$2,500,000.00	\$62,500,000.00	-5.66%
FY 22-23	4%	\$2,650,000.00	\$66,250,000.00	0.48%
FY 21-22	4%	\$2,637,438.19	\$65,935,954.75	32.30%
FY 20-21	4%	\$1,993,466.46	\$49,836,661.50	82.44%
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%
FY 12-13	3%	\$545,218.06	\$18,173,935.33	---

* Projected

** Still in Collection

Tourism Impact

Year	Expenditures	Change	Payroll	Employment	State Tax Receipts	Local Tax Receipts	Tax Savings
2024	\$463,140,000	-1.05%	\$118,400,000	2,464	\$14,940,000	\$15,530,000	\$682.40
2023	\$468,000,000	1.30%	\$121,600,000	2,470	\$15,300,000	\$15,300,000	\$687.05
2022	\$452,570,000	3.50%	\$119,200,000	2,401	\$15,200,000	\$15,000,000	\$703.38
2021	\$437,410,000	49.50%	\$110,400,000	2,343	\$15,600,000	\$15,600,000	\$723.41
2020	\$292,700,000	-0.80%	\$84,500,000	2,141	\$11,100,000	\$12,800,000	\$537.62
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
		%(from previous)					\$(per resident)



Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

FUND 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% of the current fiscal year's budget. The target fund balance will fluctuate depending on future annual operational budgets.

An additional 8% 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 time frame to replenish amounts used from the Fund Reserve.

Date Approved: November 13, 2019





Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

CAPITAL PROJECTS

The Tourism Capital Project Fund (TCPF) is designed to support strategic investments in tourism-related projects that drive visitation, increase spending, and boost the overall economic impact in Jackson County. By providing financial support for sustainable tourism development at the local level, the TCPF helps create and retain jobs, attract out-of-county visitors, and enhance the overall visitor experience. For FY 26-27, the JCTDA has budgeted \$1,000,000 for capital projects.

Ongoing & Previous TCPF Projects:



Pinnacle Park Trail Expansion
FY 25-26
\$341,322



The Village Green Restrooms
FY 25-26
\$204,000



Dillsboro Link
FY 25-26
\$250,000



Whittier Fairgrounds
FY 25-26
\$500,000



Tuck Greenway Expansion
FY 24-25
\$750,000



Bridge Park Upgrades
FY 23-24
\$367,757

Total Community Investment:
\$2,413,079

Tourism Dollars at Work in Jackson County



COUNTY OF JACKSON
FY 2026-2027 PROPOSED BUDGET
Report dates 07/01/2025 - thru - 06/30/2026

Account Number	Description	Last Year Budget	Current Year Budget	Actual YTD	Remaining Budget	Department Request	Admin Recommended
		07/01/2024 06/30/2025	07/01/2025 06/30/2026	07/01/2025 06/30/2026	07/01/2025 06/30/2026	07/01/2026 06/30/2027	07/01/2026 06/30/2027
24-3230-130-00	JACKSON COUNTY TDA	2,500,000.00	3,476,549.00	2,799,202.57	677,346.43	3,420,661.00	3,420,661.00
TAX REVENUE		2,500,000.00	3,476,549.00	2,799,202.57	677,346.43	3,420,661.00	3,420,661.00
24-3270-170-01	JACKSON TDA - PENALTY	5,000.00	5,000.00	7,400.17	-2,400.17	5,000.00	5,000.00
24-3270-190-00	MARKETING AND ADVERTISING	10,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
PENALTY & INTEREST		15,000.00	5,000.00	7,400.17	-2,400.17	5,000.00	5,000.00
24-3831-491-00	INVESTMENT EARNINGS	152,000.00	60,000.00	88,172.05	-28,172.05	60,000.00	88,000.00
REVENUES		152,000.00	60,000.00	88,172.05	-28,172.05	60,000.00	88,000.00
24-3991-000-00	FUND BALANCE	656,005.00	295,322.00	0.00	295,322.00	0.00	0.00
FUND BALANCE		656,005.00	295,322.00	0.00	295,322.00	0.00	0.00
DEPARTMENT TOTAL Revenue		3,323,005.00	3,836,871.00	2,894,774.79	942,096.21	3,485,661.00	3,513,661.00
24-4926-121-00	SALARIES & WAGES	181,050.00	165,022.00	139,633.96	25,388.04	175,808.00	175,808.00
24-4926-170-00	BOARD MEMBER EXPENSE	900.00	1,050.00	253.99	796.01	1,050.00	1,050.00
24-4926-181-00	SOCIAL SECURITY CONTRIBUTION	11,225.00	11,225.00	8,657.30	2,567.70	10,900.00	10,900.00
24-4926-182-00	RETIREMENT EXPENSE	24,623.00	24,623.00	20,037.60	4,585.40	26,547.00	26,547.00
24-4926-183-00	HOSPITALIZATION INSURANCE	23,214.00	23,163.00	16,876.60	6,286.40	18,910.00	18,910.00
24-4926-185-00	UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	628.00	628.00	446.05	181.95	684.00	684.00
24-4926-186-00	WORKMAN'S COMPENSATION	2,299.00	2,299.00	2,299.00	0.00	2,345.00	2,345.00
24-4926-187-00	MEDICARE TAX	2,625.00	2,625.00	2,116.72	508.28	2,549.00	2,549.00
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 SERVICES-AUDIT	12,072.00	9,500.00	10,075.00	-575.00	9,500.00	9,500.00
24-4926-192-00	LEGAL SERVICES	13,700.00	2,000.00	7,495.00	-5,495.00	8,000.00	8,000.00
24-4926-260-00	OFFICE SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS	6,000.00	6,000.00	1,164.25	4,605.76	6,000.00	6,000.00
24-4926-299-00	MISCELLANEOUS	20,600.00	11,640.00	7,476.20	4,163.80	11,840.00	11,840.00
24-4926-311-00	TRAVEL	41,050.00	36,000.00	10,109.77	22,804.34	23,500.00	23,500.00
24-4926-321-00	TELEPHONE	7,600.00	4,600.00	6,841.09	-2,241.09	6,000.00	6,000.00
24-4926-321-01	TELEPHONE-VISITOR CENTERS	0.00	0.00	-992.93	992.93	0.00	0.00
24-4926-321-02	TELEPHONE-TDA	6,000.00	6,000.00	4,965.06	1,034.94	6,000.00	6,000.00
24-4926-325-00	POSTAGE	42,770.00	55,570.00	27,536.32	26,493.82	52,570.00	52,570.00
24-4926-331-00	UTILITIES	3,700.00	3,200.00	3,091.46	68.54	3,800.00	3,800.00
24-4926-341-00	PRINTING	96,339.00	129,941.00	34,772.08	95,158.48	75,201.00	75,201.00
24-4926-351-00	REPAIRS & MAINT-BUILDING	500.00	500.00	0.00	500.00	500.00	500.00
24-4926-370-00	AD FIRM MEDIA	561,500.00	600,000.00	279,627.70	320,372.30	600,000.00	760,000.00



COUNTY OF JACKSON
FY 2026-2027 PROPOSED BUDGET
Report dates 07/01/2025 - thru - 06/30/2026

Account Number	Description	Last Year Budget	Current Year Budget	Actual YTD	Remaining Budget	Department Request	Admin Recommended
		07/01/2024 06/30/2025	07/01/2025 06/30/2026	07/01/2025 06/30/2026	07/01/2025 06/30/2026	07/01/2026 06/30/2027	07/01/2026 06/30/2027
24-4926-370-01	WEBSITE SERVICE	33,200.00	35,200.00	94,341.69	-61,314.07	35,200.00	60,200.00
24-4926-370-02	CREATIVE & PRODUCTION SERVICE	140,500.00	85,000.00	69,747.00	15,253.00	85,000.00	88,000.00
24-4926-370-03	DIGITAL CAMPAIGN REPORTING	13,200.00	15,000.00	12,350.00	2,650.00	15,000.00	20,000.00
24-4926-370-04	E-MAIL CAMPAIGNS	38,300.00	30,000.00	25,410.00	4,590.00	30,000.00	30,000.00
24-4926-370-05	SEM MANAGEMENT	188,600.00	207,520.00	172,620.01	34,899.99	185,000.00	0.00
24-4926-370-09	SOCIAL MEDIA SPEND	160,000.00	168,000.00	116,824.22	25,215.41	168,000.00	168,000.00
24-4926-393-00	VISITOR CENTER OPERATIONS	218,745.00	249,465.00	226,625.00	4,718.00	233,121.00	233,121.00
24-4926-393-01	PUBLIC RELATIONS	121,000.00	133,000.00	107,179.63	25,820.37	141,760.00	141,760.00
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-RECORDING	1,400.00	1,400.00	250.00	1,150.00	1,400.00	1,400.00
24-4926-393-05	CONTRACTED-WEBSITE	104,600.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
24-4926-393-06	CONTRACTED-AD FIRM RETAINER	69,400.00	50,000.00	42,903.00	7,097.00	50,000.00	50,000.00
24-4926-393-07	CONTRACTED SERVICES-STR	12,500.00	12,200.00	12,084.48	115.52	12,819.00	12,819.00
24-4926-393-08	CONTRACTED-AD FIRM MISC	40,402.00	30,000.00	23,741.91	6,258.09	30,000.00	25,000.00
24-4926-393-11	SOFTWARE, INTERNET, MISC SERVIC	33,089.00	45,936.00	43,113.91	1,656.60	45,534.00	45,534.00
24-4926-393-14	CONTRACTED SERVICES-HR OUTSOU	6,920.00	9,600.00	5,004.20	4,595.80	9,600.00	9,600.00
24-4926-393-15	RESEARCH AND ANALYTICS	73,500.00	70,469.00	71,037.12	-568.12	51,000.00	51,000.00
24-4926-399-00	CONTRACTED SERVICES	55,200.00	62,450.00	48,821.62	13,628.38	62,450.00	62,450.00
24-4926-399-09	MEDIA MANAGEMENT	0.00	50,000.00	0.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	75,000.00
24-4926-412-00	BUILDING RENT	23,280.00	23,280.00	19,000.00	2,380.00	24,540.00	24,540.00
24-4926-454-00	INSURANCE	3,754.00	3,754.00	11,280.22	-7,526.22	3,754.00	3,754.00
24-4926-491-00	DUES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS	11,159.00	9,739.00	11,637.15	-1,935.58	8,829.00	8,829.00
24-4926-550-00	CAPITAL OUTLAY-EQUIPMENT	10,500.00	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
24-4926-550-01	CAPITAL PROJECTS	745,000.00	1,295,322.00	750,000.00	545,322.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00
24-4926-699-00	GRANTS	50,000.00	100,000.00	15,797.00	79,203.00	100,000.00	100,000.00
24-4926-699-02	MISCELLANEOUS DONATIONS	72,111.00	11,700.00	6,000.00	5,700.00	11,700.00	11,700.00
24-4926-990-00	CONTINGENCY	0.00	3,000.00	0.00	3,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY		3,323,005.00	3,836,871.00	2,496,937.88	1,280,669.27	3,485,661.00	3,513,661.00
DEPARTMENT TOTAL Expense		-3,323,005.00	-3,836,871.00	-2,496,937.88	1,280,669.27	-3,485,661.00	-3,513,661.00
FUND TOTAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTH		0.00	0.00	397,836.91	2,222,765.48	0.00	0.00
REPORT TOTAL		0.00	0.00	397,836.91	2,222,765.48	0.00	0.00



Jackson County Tourism Development Authority INTEGRATED MARKETING



In collaboration with the Jackson County TDA's Executive Director, Madden Media sets strategy then plans and executes the integrated marketing programs for JCTDA. The agency began working with the JCTDA in 2025.

Paid Media (Advertising)

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

Creative Campaigns

Creation of digital, print, video and out-of-home advertising persuading travelers to choose Jackson County via compelling visual moments captured by real travelers. The 'More Peak Moments' brand is featured in all advertising and further supported through authentic imagery of Jackson County.

Search Engine Optimization

SEO is a digital marketing strategy that aims to improve the visibility of a website or web page in organic search engine results. By utilizing various techniques, such as keyword research, on-page optimization, and backlink building, SEO seeks to enhance a site's relevance, authority, and user experience. In 2025-2026 there is a revamp planned for on-site SEO to enhance the visibility of content from DiscoverJacksonNC.com to those searching for information on Google and other search engines.

Email

Engaging monthly emails to our database of 80,000 active subscribers promoting the happenings in Jackson County and encouraging overnight trips. The JCTDA authors the content and Madden deploys. A welcome email series enhances the user data via enticing users to self-report their preferred travel style and activities.

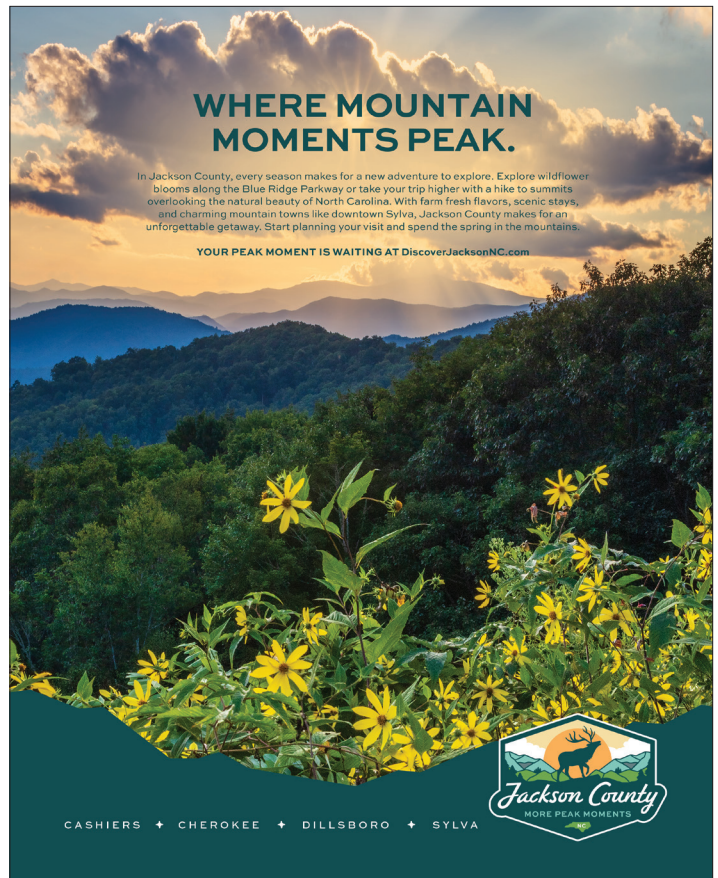
Search Engine Marketing

SEM is a digital marketing strategy aimed at increasing a website's visibility in search engine results through paid advertising. It involves activities like keyword research, pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, and bid management to drive more targeted traffic to websites.

DiscoverJacksonNC.com uses SEM to enhance its online presence, and Madden Media will be optimizing and enhancing the JCTDA's SEM work in FY 26-27, taking over from Love Communications.

July 1, 2024 - March 30, 2025 Statistics

- Impressions: 8,755,579
- Clicks: 305,685
- Click-through rate: 3.49%
- Cost per click: \$0.39/avg
- YouTube views: 1,143,082





Jackson County Tourism Development Authority INTEGRATED MARKETING

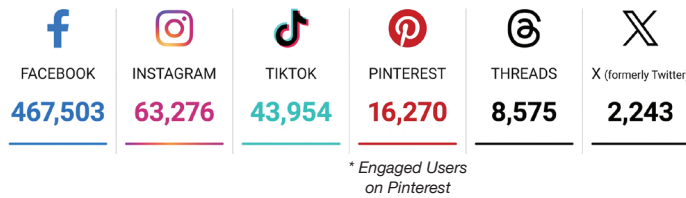


Research, Reporting and Analysis

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, Tourism Economics' Symphony Platform, Key Data, AirDNA, and a variety of sources that influence media buys and targeting across all platforms and campaigns.

Social Media Following @DiscoverJacksonNC

Total Audience: 601,821



Social Media

Organic and Paid Social is handled in house by the JCTDA's Social Media Manager.

2025 Overview

Performance Summary (Organic Social Media)

Impressions across our platforms: 47,054,501
Engagements: 2,380,024
Post Link Clicks: 396,530
Audience: 587,158
Net Audience Growth: 86,171
Video Views: 8,823,125

Paid Social Media (Advertising)

Impressions: 29,961,770
Engagements: 3,792,123
Cost Per Engagement: \$0.04
Link Clicks: 457,388
Video Views: 2,738,959

Website

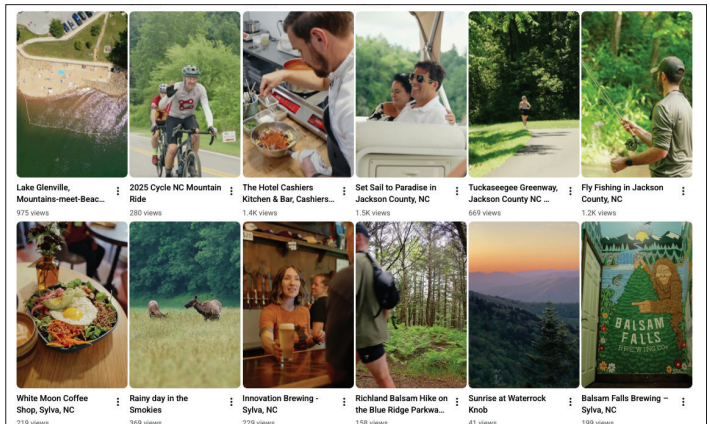
www.DiscoverJacksonNC.com is an online platform for all brand content supporting social media, paid search, email and paid media channels. In May 2025, the JCTDA launched its new website, an upgrade from the site built in 2017. The new website features information on outdoor adventures, attractions, food & lodging listings, a book-direct engine, 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.

2025 Website Sessions - 878,403 (Increase of 7.3%)



Short-Form Video Production

Tembo Hospitality Group, based in Sylva, North Carolina, is a prominent hospitality company specializing in creating memorable guest experiences through its portfolio of resorts, vacation properties, and restaurants. In 2023, the JCTDA contracted with Tembo Hospitality Group to create short-form videos for our social media channels, leveraging their expertise in marketing and advertising. The company excels in various services, including videography, photography, and digital marketing.



2025 Video Views - 11,562,084



Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

INTEGRATED MARKETING



Lou Hammond Group is the Jackson County TDA's Public Relations Firm.

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.

LHG Coordinated 6 individual journalist visits from July 2025 to present.

LHG conducts 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
- Thought leadership and account administration, including
- Biweekly conference calls, monthly coverage reports; inclusion on LHG social media channels
- Crisis 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

Individual Visits

Schedule, provide briefing book, attend & follow up

Influencer Outreach

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





Jackson County Tourism Development Authority PUBLIC RELATIONS HIGHLIGHTS

The New York Times

How to Create Your Own Affordable Wellness Vacation

You don't need to spend a fortune to participate in one of travel's hottest trends. Here are some suggestions, including seaweed soaks, robotic massages, sound baths and sauna circuits.

Nature Therapies

The healing power of nature drives many wellness offerings, including forest bathing. Slow, mindful walks in the woods, rooted in the Japanese practice of shinrin-yoku, have been linked to [improved mental health](#).

[The Association of Nature and Forest Therapy Guides and Programs](#) certifies trails that encourage reconnecting with nature. One of [two certified trails](#) in Jackson County, N.C., features two streams along a nearly half-mile wooded trail. Visitors can take self-guided audio tours or [book a two-and-a-half-hour guided forest-bathing walk](#) from \$50 a person.

Total Earned Impressions: 5,571,836,712 to date
Total Media Equates: \$3,223,689 to date*

Sampling of Media Coverage:

- AFAR
- Forbes
- Travel + Leisure
- Southern Living
- USA Today
- New York Times
- Garden & Gun
- The Local Palate
- The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

*July 25 – April 26

I've Lived in the Carolinas for 30+ Years and This Is My Favorite Small Town—With a Charming Downtown and Mountain Views

It doesn't get much cuter than this.
By [Kristy Tellez](#) | Published on March 14, 2026



Tucked within the Blue Ridge Mountains just west of Asheville, Sylva, North Carolina, is an [under-the-radar mountain town](#) teeming with distinct experiences. Walkable and creative, Sylva pairs craggy Blue Ridge vistas with a remarkable food scene and historic stays, as well as some delightful surprises.

"Every town in the Southeast might be historic and charming, but there's something about Sylva's character and people that keeps visitors coming back," Nick Breedlove, the executive director of Jackson County Tourism Development, tells *Travel + Leisure*. "This is the kind of place where outdoor adventure is minutes from downtown and where names and stories are still known. We've long said Sylva is 'in the middle of the most,' and that still holds true today."

Here's what you need to know before planning a trip to Sylva, North Carolina.

Hotter summers have travelers ditching popular destinations for a 'coolcation'

Matt Alderton Studio Gannett
July 23, 2025 | Updated July 24, 2025, 5:16 p.m. ET



Sliding Rock, Cashiers, N.C. Jackson County (N.C.) Tourism Development Authority

Western North Carolina

Yet another hot — or rather, cool — spot in the region is Jackson County, N.C. Check out Whitewater Falls, the highest waterfall east of the Rockies; go swimming at Sliding Rock in Cashiers, where a natural rockslide leads to a pool of cool mountain water; rent a pontoon boat to explore the islands and coves around Lake Glenville, the highest lake east of the Mississippi River or travel the Blue Ridge Snorkel Trail to witness the underwater species that inhabit western North Carolina's scenic rivers and streams.

<https://tinyurl.com/4sveacy6>



Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

VISITOR CENTERS



The JCTDA provides funding to operate the county's visitor centers located in Sylva (left) 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.

Jackson County Chamber Updates & Plans

Visitor Services & Outreach

- Served around 16,000 visitors at the Jackson County Visitor Center.
- Provided more than 15,000 Visitor Guides to State Welcome Centers and the Asheville Airport.
- Fulfilled over 14,000 individual visitor inquiries, supporting trip planning, relocation, and local business engagement.

Our Mission

- The Jackson County Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center exists to strengthen our local economy, support small businesses, and promote Jackson County as an exceptional place to live, work, learn, and visit. We serve as a connector and resource for around 450 members and the thousands of visitors and residents who rely on the Visitor Center each year.

Highway 107 Project Support

- Assisted with 22 relocation grants and supported numerous businesses with relocation needs, including signage, new spaces, and transition guidance.
- Served as a trusted liaison between Jackson County, NCDOT, and the business community to ensure timely, accessible information during this major infrastructure project.

Statewide Collaboration: Multi Sector Plan on Aging

- Participated for three years in the statewide All Ages, All Stages NC initiative, collaborating monthly with more than 275 partners.
- With Phase One implementation underway, the Chamber now serves on the Strengthening Communities for a Lifetime workgroup to support thriving at all ages in Jackson County.

Business & Industry Engagement

- Served on the BLOOM Committee for two years, helping deliver the county's inaugural Business & Industry

Appreciation Dinner in March 2026, attended by 200 businesses.

Childcare Access & Workforce Support

- Continued work on the region's childcare shortage following the closure of seven facilities in WNC in 2023.
- Collaborated with Jackson County Economic Development, WCU leadership, and regional partners.
- Co-sponsored the N.C. Child Care Economic Summit on April 9 at SCC to advance local solutions.

July 4th Fireworks & Community Events

- After a decade of Chamber funding for the fireworks display, Jackson County Governmental Unit assumed responsibility in 2025.
- The Chamber continues as lead event producer, managing the band, marketing, setup, and kids' activities.
- Signature Events
- Concerts on the Creek enters its 17th season, continuing as a signature county event.
- Expanded Friends Night Out events to support local businesses in Sylva and, for the first time, Dillsboro.

CarolinaHealthWorks Partnership

- Through a new partnership with the North Carolina Chamber of Commerce, small businesses in Jackson County with as few as two employees can now access large group purchasing power for potentially better rates and broader benefits.
- Three Chamber member businesses are currently participating.

Visitor Center Enhancements

- Added more local products and continue to seek additional local vendor items to support small makers and connect them with customers.
- With support from the TDA, added a video kiosk to provide visitors with more ways to explore and experience Jackson County.



Cashiers Area Chamber & Visitor Center Goals FY 26-27

Mission Statement & Core Purpose:

- Extraordinary Leadership in the Cashiers Area
- Advocate for local businesses
- Information Source for our community
- Conduit for building destination awareness and responsible growth.

Strategic Priorities Chamber's Role

1. Connection & Community Engagement
2. Business Advocacy & Member Support
3. Infrastructure & Responsible Growth

1. Deliver a High-Impact Visitor Center Experience

- Continue to staff and operate a welcoming, knowledgeable Visitor Center that serves as a primary touchpoint for visitors entering the Cashiers area
- Enhance in-person and self-guided visitor experiences through improved displays, curated materials, and way-finding
- Expand use of QR-driven resources (Cashiers411, maps, itineraries) to support realtime trip planning
- Capture informal insights through visitor interactions and business feedback loops to inform future priorities

Outcome: Increased visitor engagement, longer stays, and stronger connection to local businesses and experiences

2. Strengthen Workforce Capacity & Service Excellence

- Retain and develop key staff, including the Visitor Center Host and seasonal support roles
- Continue participation in the NC State RuralWorks! program to support workforce development and digital capacity
- Invest in training and systems that improve consistency, responsiveness, and quality of visitor interactions

Outcome: Reliable, high-quality visitor services that reflect positively on Jackson County as a destination

3. Expand Regional Visibility & Visitor Awareness

- Leverage three gateway billboards (Glennville, Sapphire, Scaly Mountain) with an estimated ~32,000 impressions per week per location to capture inbound traffic
- Integrate QR-enabled campaigns directing visitors to Cashiers411 for events, itineraries, and business discovery
- Collaborate with regional partners (e.g., festivals, events, media) to extend reach and reinforce Cashiers as a key destination within Jackson County
- Prioritize placements that promote high-impact events, festivals, and seasonal campaigns that generate visitation and economic activity for the broader community

Outcome: Increased regional awareness and more efficient, collaborative use of premium marketing assets to drive visitation and support tourism-focused partners

4. Serve as a Connector Between Visitors and Local Businesses

- Maintain and grow Cashiers411 as a centralized, SEO-friendly community calendar
- Promote Chamber members through coordinated campaigns tied to seasonal visitation
- Encourage visitor spending by highlighting local dining, retail, lodging, and experiences

Outcome: Increased visibility and economic impact for local businesses aligned with tourism activity

5. Enhance Programming that Drives Visitation & Engagement

- Continue signature initiatives such as Cashiers Burger Week and Twelve Days of Christmas, designed to drive traffic during shoulder seasons and encourage exploration across multiple businesses
- Expand Business After Hours and collaborative events that strengthen the business ecosystem supporting tourism



Outcome: Increased visitation, extended stays, and broader distribution of visitor spending across the community

6. Advance Technology & Operational Efficiency

- Continue full implementation and optimization of GrowthZone to improve internal operations and member engagement
- Utilize data and analytics (email engagement, QR scans, directory usage) to inform marketing and visitor service strategies
- Develop additional digital tools that enhance both visitor access and business participation

Outcome: More efficient operations and data-informed decision-making that strengthens visitor services

7. Strengthen Strategic Partnerships

- Continue close collaboration with the Jackson County TDA and regional partners to align messaging, campaigns, and visitor services
- Serve as a local implementation partner for initiatives that enhance the visitor experience in Cashiers and surrounding communities

Outcome: Greater alignment and amplification of county-wide tourism efforts

8. Expand Seasonal Tourism Strategies to Extend Visitation

- Amplify 12 Days of Christmas as a coordinated early December campaign designed to increase overnight stays, drive retail activity, and position Cashiers as a holiday destination. Efforts will focus on bundling experiences (shopping, dining, events, and lodging) to encourage multi-day visits.
- Introduce a Fall-to-Holiday Tourism Bridge Initiative targeting leaf season visitors (“leaf peepers”) and Fall Festival attendees, encouraging return visits for Choose & Cut Christmas Tree experiences at local farms. Messaging will highlight the tradition and authenticity of

Christmas tree farming in Western North Carolina.

- Explore the creation of a “Giving Tree Forest” installation in the village core, featuring locally grown Christmas trees staged as a visual and experiential attraction. Preliminary plans include: Collaboration with a Thanksgiving weekend Festival of Trees-style event to promote and/or auction trees
- Storytelling that celebrates the heritage of Christmas tree farming in the region
- Creating a seamless transition into the 12 Days of Christmas and the annual Christmas Parade
- Encourage extended stays and repeat visitation by connecting fall and holiday experiences into a cohesive seasonal journey—from peak leaf season through year-end festivities.

Outcome: Increased shoulder-season visitation, stronger retail performance, and enhanced positioning of Cashiers as a multi-season destination rooted in authentic mountain traditions





Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

LODGING TRENDS



Lodging Summary

January 2025 - December 2025

From January 2025 To December 2025 Location Hotels Jackson County, NC+ Location Short Term Rentals All Properties - Jackson County

Aggregated Lodging Performance

Source: STR & AirDNA

	Occupancy	ADR	RevPAR	Supply	Demand	Revenue
Jan - Dec 2025	52.7%	\$225.97	\$119.05	588.9K	310.3K	\$70.1M
% Change vs. Jan - Dec 2024	1.4%	9.0%	10.5%	1.9%	3.3%	12.6%

Hotel Performance (Jackson County, NC+)

Source: STR

	Occupancy	ADR	RevPAR	Supply	Demand	Revenue
Jan - Dec 2025	59.1%	\$190.11	\$112.39	233.3K	137.9K	\$26.2M
% Change vs. Jan - Dec 2024	2.3%	25.7%	28.7%	2.8%	5.2%	32.3%

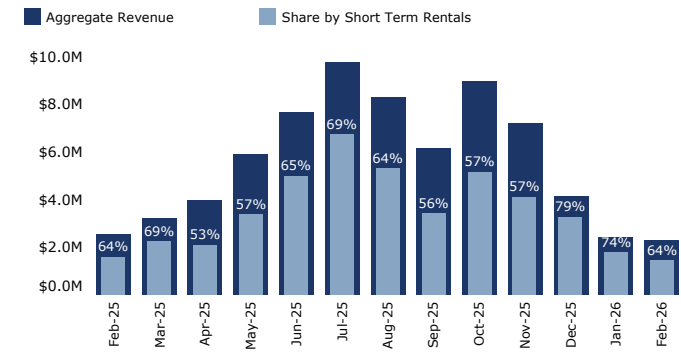
Short Term Lodging (All Properties - Jackson County)

Source: AirDNA

	Occupancy	ADR	RevPAR	Supply	Demand	Revenue	Active Properties
Jan - Dec 2025	48.5%	\$254.66	\$123.43	355.6K	172.3K	\$43.9M	1,153
% Change vs. Jan - Dec 2024	0.5%	1.6%	2.1%	1.3%	1.8%	3.4%	1.2%

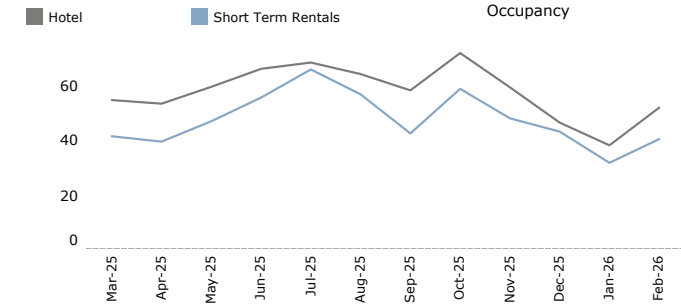
Lodging Revenue & Contribution

Hotels: Jackson County, NC+; Short Term Rentals: All Properties - Jackson County



Occupancy

Hotels: Jackson County, NC+; Short Term Rentals: All Properties - Jackson County Last 12 Months



Sources: STR and AirDNA

Note: YOY comparisons to 2019 can only be made with date ranges less than or equal to 12 months long

SYMPHONY | TOURISM ECONOMICS

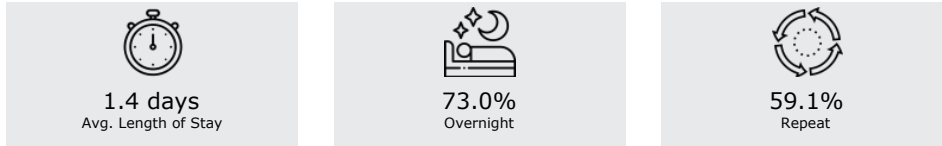
Domestic Visitors

Jackson County

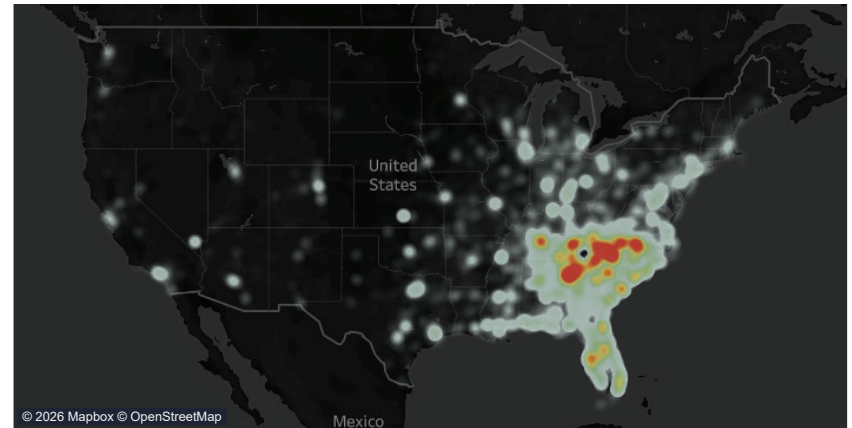


Study Geography: Jackson County | Start Date: January 01, 2025 | End Date: December 31, 2025 | Trip Type: All | Weekend/Weekday Trips: All | Show Top MSA/POI: 15

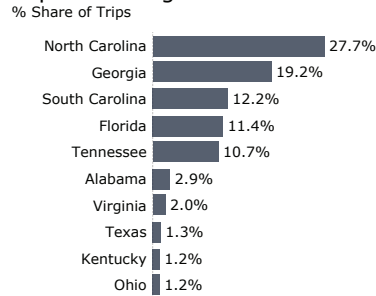
Sample Size: 196,332



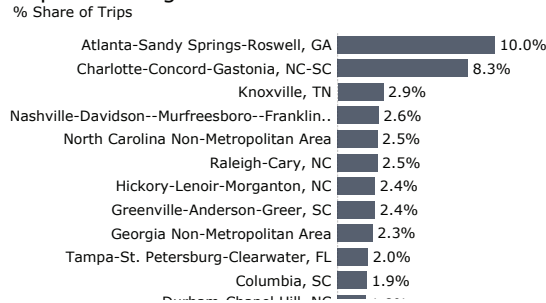
US Mainland Origin Heat Map



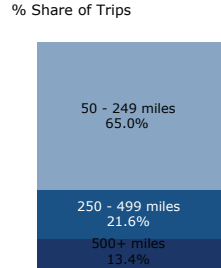
Top Visits Origin States



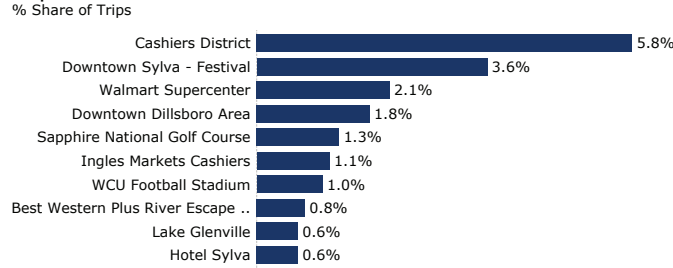
Top Visits Origin MSAs



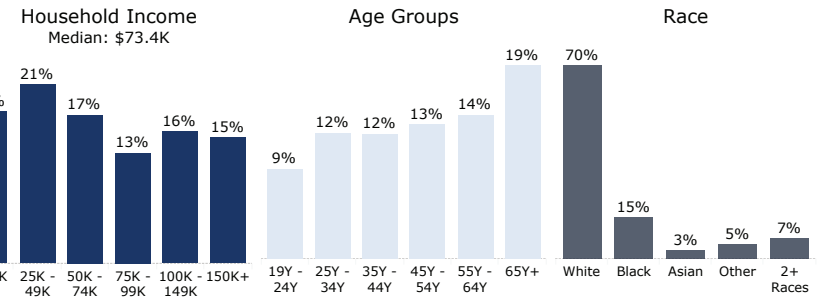
Distance Share



Top POIs Visited



Demographic Estimates



Source: Azira & US Census Bureau

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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.**