



To: TDA Board
From: Nick Breedlove, TDA Executive Director
Date: July 11, 2025
Subject: Monthly Director's Brief

Dear Board Members,

Please see below for updates.

1. Tourism Capital Project Fund (TCPF) Applications

Ahead of our July 16 Board Meeting, please take time to thoroughly review the TCPF applications attached to our agenda email. We recommend setting aside at least 30 minutes for this. Representatives will be present at the meeting to answer questions and discuss project timelines. ***These projects will be presented in Closed Session.***

The Executive Committee met on July 7 to review both applications and is recommending them to the full board for approval. For new board members, please note that our board serves as the TCPF review committee and provides recommendations to the Jackson County Board of Commissioners, who then make the final funding decision.

This fiscal year, we've allocated \$1 million specifically for TCPF projects. These funds are separate from our savings or fund balance and are supported by increased occupancy tax revenue to ensure sustainable future funding.



2. FY 25-26 Marketing & Communications Activation

Staff efforts this month have been focused on launching the FY 25-26 Marketing and Communications (MarComm) strategy. This includes reviewing media placements and implementing campaign plans.

In June, we increased social media advertising to utilize remaining budget funds. As a result, 4,587 Visitor Guide requests were generated—nearly triple the average monthly volume. We're optimistic that this heightened interest will translate into increased summer travel, particularly beneficial for our tourism partners during this critical period.

3. Regenerative Tourism Workshop

I've been working with Dr. Carol Kline of Appalachian State University and regional partners to bring a Regenerative Tourism Workshop to our area. The sessions will be hosted in Downtown Sylva on August 26 and November 6.

The workshop is designed to help tourism stakeholders develop projects that "leave a place better than they found it." Examples include land trust support, trail restoration, arts initiatives, historical preservation, and permaculture. We're proud to host this cohort and look forward to showcasing the collaborative spirit of our region.

More information is available at: <http://uplifttourism.com/regenerative>

4. Transition to Tourism Economics Dashboard

We're in the final stages of transitioning from Zartico to Tourism Economics for our data and reporting needs. As a result, lodging and tourism reports will take on a new format.

Going forward, lodging partners will have direct access to reports via a shared link, eliminating the need for monthly updates from our team. This will empower partners to access timely insights at their convenience.



5. New State Requirements on Human Trafficking Training

Effective July 1, the North Carolina Department of Labor now requires all accommodation providers to enroll in and maintain records of Human Trafficking Awareness Training.

We've already notified lodging partners via a dedicated e-newsletter and a press release to local media. Details can be found here:

<https://www.labor.nc.gov/human-trafficking>

6. Destinations International Conference

Samantha and I attended the Destinations International Annual Conference in Chicago this week. The event provided valuable opportunities to engage with peers and learn industry best practices.

We sincerely appreciate the Board's support in allowing continued professional development that enhances our team's ability to deliver value and drive economic impact for Jackson County.

Please let me know if you have any questions in advance of the meeting. I look forward to seeing you on July 16.

Best,

Nick Breedlove

Executive Director
Jackson County TDA

