





Grace stated that she is currently finalizing the grant application guidelines, which she plans to complete this month for the board's review and potential revisions at the January meeting.

Grace mentioned that the Body Armor State Games may want us to host a pickleball tournament in 2027.

Grace discussed her conversations with NCDOT and Amtrak about increasing ridership in local communities and throughout the state. They previously ran a promotion with the Burlington Sock Puppets and are interested in partnering with them again for another promotional campaign.

Grace a Costar report showing the hotel demand for the area.

The next TDA board meeting will be on January 27, 2026.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 pm.

# ALAMANCE COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

## Combined Balance Sheet

As of January 31, 2026

	General	Fixed Assets	Total
<b>Assets</b>			
<i>Current assets:</i>			
Cash on deposit	\$ 1,267,813	\$ -	\$ 1,267,813
Occupancy tax receivable	95,852	-	95,852
Investments	1,185,331	-	1,185,331
<i>Noncurrent assets:</i>			
Fixed assets	-	16,149	16,149
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$ 2,548,997</b>	<b>\$ 16,149</b>	<b>\$ 2,565,146</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
<i>Liabilities:</i>			
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ (13,454)	\$ -	\$ (13,454)
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>(13,454)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(13,454)</b>
<b>Total assets and liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 2,535,543</b>	<b>\$ 16,149</b>	<b>\$ 2,551,691</b>
<b>Fund Balances</b>			
<i>Investment in general fixed assets</i>	\$ -	\$ 16,149	\$ 16,149
<i>Fund balances:</i>			
Undesignated	\$ 2,424,373	-	\$ 2,424,373
Designated	19,059	-	19,059
Estimated change in fund balance (current year)	92,111	-	92,111
<b>Total fund balances</b>	<b>\$ 2,535,543</b>	<b>\$ 16,149</b>	<b>\$ 2,551,691</b>

## ALAMANCE COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance (Budget and Actual)

As of January 31, 2026

	Amended Budget	Actual	Over (Under) Budget	Percent Over/ (Under)
<i>Revenues:</i>				
Occupancy tax - 2/3	\$ 1,040,886	510,832	\$ ( 530,054)	49.1%
Penalties	0	0	-	#DIV/0!
Interest	0	25,508	25,508	#DIV/0!
Grants	10,000	6,000	( 4,000)	60.0%
Misc revenue	-	2,066	2,066	#DIV/0!
<b>Total revenues</b>	<b>1,050,886</b>	<b>544,406</b>	<b>( 506,480)</b>	<b>51.8%</b>
<i>Expenditures:</i>				
Salaries	128,739.00	75,310.24	( 53,429)	58.5%
FICA	9,415.00	8,890.54	( 524)	94.4%
Retirement	18,527.00	7,794.33	( 10,733)	42.1%
Health Insurance	19,848.00	10,528.00	( 9,320)	53.0%
Dental Insurance	1,188.00	693.00	( 495)	58.3%
Life Insurance	314.00	135.60	( 178)	43.2%
401k	2,488.00	677.99	( 1,810)	27.3%
Workers' Compensation Projection	564.00	329.00	( 235)	58.3%
Professional services	163,160.00	97,516.08	( 65,644)	59.8%
Supplies-Automotive	1,000.00	462.98	( 537)	46.3%
Supplies-Department	2,000.00	257.29	( 1,743)	12.9%
Training Expense	14,435.00	609.50	( 13,826)	4.2%
Daily Travel	1,000.00	0.00	( 1,000)	0.0%
Promotions	29,172.00	4,297.65	( 24,874)	14.7%
Trade Shows	7,827.00	2,820.38	( 5,007)	36.0%
Telephone & Postage	3,000.00	1,345.56	( 1,654)	44.9%
Communications	8,000.00	4,836.08	( 3,164)	60.5%
Printing	16,200.00	1,313.14	( 14,887)	8.1%
Maint & Repair Bldg & Gro	124,617.00	0.00	( 124,617)	0.0%
Maint & Repair Vehicles	2,500.00	0.00	( 2,500)	0.0%
Advertising	357,728.00	190,459.85	( 167,268)	53.2%
Building & Equipment Rents	6,300.00	3,600.00	( 2,700)	57.1%
Copier Lease	1,200.00	534.00	( 666)	44.5%
Contracted Services	0.00	284.00	284	#DIV/0!
Insurance & Bonds	1,285.00	997.00	( 288)	77.6%
Dues & Subscriptions	27,379.00	15,146.29	( 12,233)	55.3%
Miscellaneous Expenses	2,500.00	306.35	( 2,194)	12.3%
Sports Development Council	10,000.00	0.00	( 10,000)	0.0%
Sponsorships	39,500.00	23,150.00	( 16,350)	58.6%
Grants	50,000.00	0.00	( 50,000)	0.0%
Bond Arbitrage	1,000.00	0.00	( 1,000)	0.0%
<b>Total expenditures</b>	<b>1,050,886.00</b>	<b>452,294.85</b>	<b>( 598,591)</b>	<b>43.0%</b>
Revenues over (under) expenditures	-	92,111	92,111	
<i>Other financing sources (uses):</i>				
Appropriated fund balance	-	0	-	
<b>Total other financing sources (uses)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>	
Revenues and OFS over (under) expenditures and OFU	\$ -	92,111	\$ 92,111	
<i>Fund balance:</i>				
Beginning of year - July 1		2,443,432		
End of period		<u>2,535,543</u>		

# ALAMANCE COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

## Year-to-Date Schedule of Collections

As of January 31, 2026

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**Distribution:**

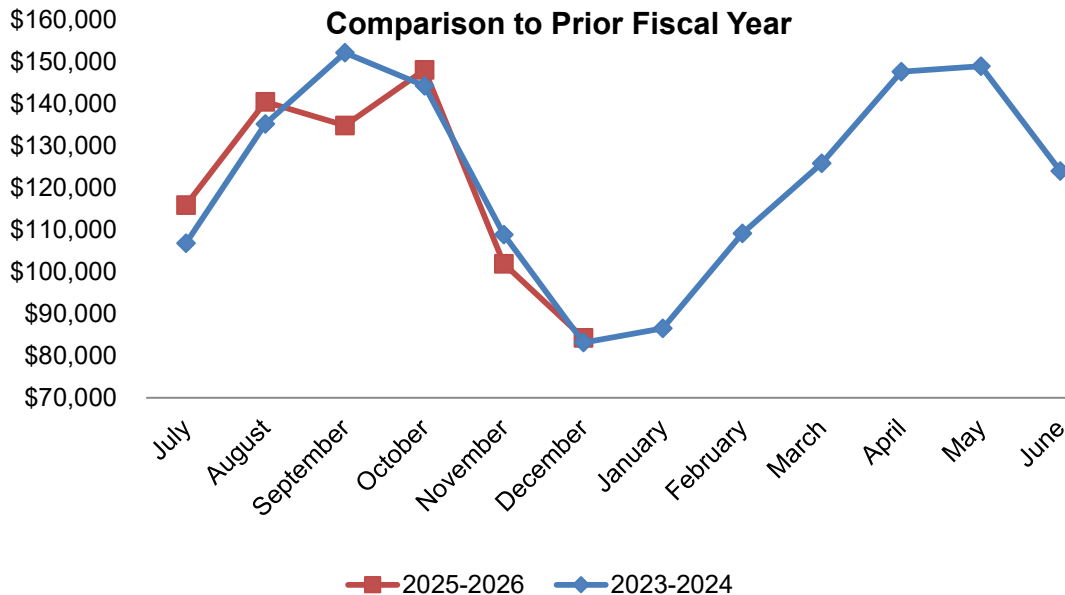
Administrative Fee (3%)	\$ 22,098
County Share (1/3)	\$ 234,386
Authority Share (2/3)	\$ 469,481
	\$ 725,965

**Collections by Source:**

Hotels	\$ 657,533
Owner Lodging	\$ 68,432
	\$ 725,965

**Monthly Collections:**

	<u>2025-2026</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>	<b>Percentage Change</b>
July	\$ 115,996	\$ 134,920	-14.03%
August	140,593	149,030	-5.66%
September	134,919	125,453	7.55%
October	148,218	141,365	4.85%
November	101,962	107,423	-5.08%
December	84,277	87,531	-3.72%
January		92,171	-100.00%
February		103,979	-100.00%
March		128,051	-100.00%
April		152,328	-100.00%
May		153,440	-100.00%
June		123,744	-100.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 725,965</b>	<b>\$ 1,499,436</b>	-2.65%



**ALAMANCE COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Investment Portfolio Report

As of January 31, 2026

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<b>Institution</b>	<b>Instrument Type</b>	<b>Maturity Date</b>	<b>Amount</b>
PNC Bank	CD	07/13/26	74,160
PNC Bank	CD	07/29/26	50,303
PNC Bank	CD	02/17/26	60,709
PNC Bank	CD	05/03/26	43,340
			<hr/>
			228,512
			<hr/>
NCCM Trust	Savings		956,819
			<hr/>
			1,185,331

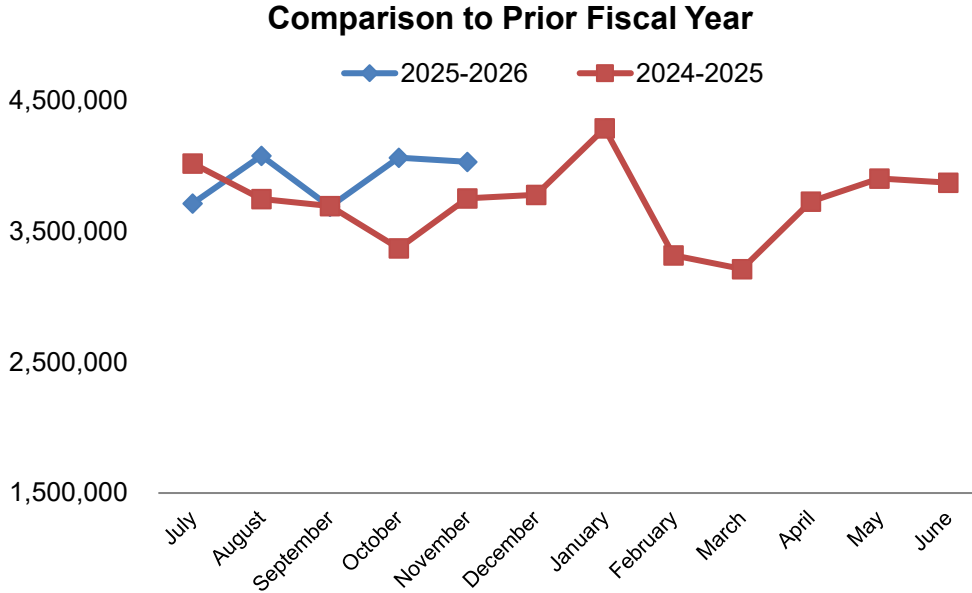
# ALAMANCE COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

## Year-to-Date Summary of 2% County Sales Tax Collections

As of January 31, 2026

### Monthly Collections:

	<u>2025-2026</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>Percentage Change</u>
July	3,714,188	4,021,948	-7.65%
August	4,079,611	3,748,931	8.82%
September	3,689,942	3,696,232	-0.17%
October	4,064,306	3,373,106	20.49%
November	4,033,441	3,753,561	7.46%
December		3,781,299	-100.00%
January		4,289,187	-100.00%
February		3,318,329	-100.00%
March		3,213,623	-100.00%
April		3,730,360	-100.00%
May		3,906,009	-100.00%
June		3,872,678	-100.00%
Total	<u>\$ 19,581,489</u>	<u>\$ 18,593,778</u>	5.31%





**November 21, 2025**

# **Brand Refresh & Strategic Messaging**

**Alamance County Tourism Development Authority**

**PREPARED BY:**

Destination by Design Planning LLC  
136 Furman Rd, ste 6 Boone, NC 28607  
Zach Hoffman, Business Development  
(828) 263-7933 | [zach@dbdplanning.com](mailto:zach@dbdplanning.com)

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# Cover Letter

*Dear Grace VandeVisser and Members of the Selection Committee,*

Destination by Design is pleased to submit this proposal for the Alamance County Tourism Brand Refresh. With the County's new strategic plan in place and a seven-to-eight-year-old brand ready for modernization, this initiative represents a timely opportunity to strengthen how Alamance tells its story—visually, verbally, and strategically—to both residents and visitors.

As a full-service branding and destination marketing firm, DbD specializes in community-led, strategy-driven brand development. Over nearly 15 years, we have partnered with more than 150 municipalities, tourism organizations, and economic development agencies to create brands that elevate local identity, unify communications, and drive measurable impact. Our work across North Carolina—including the recent branding initiative for Visit Hickory—demonstrates our ability to craft place-based brands that honor local character while positioning destinations for long-term relevance and growth.

For Alamance County Tourism, we will lead a thoughtful and collaborative process grounded in discovery, stakeholder input, and strategic messaging development. The refreshed brand will align directly with the newly adopted strategic plan, ensuring the County has a clear value proposition, strong messaging pillars, and a modern visual identity supported by a comprehensive brand guide. From logo development and tagline

exploration to applied mock-ups and final brand assets, our goal is to equip the TDA with a refreshed toolkit that strengthens awareness, improves communication consistency, and reflects the County's evolving tourism vision.

We appreciate the opportunity to support this important effort and would be honored to collaborate with Alamance County Tourism on the next evolution of its brand. Please let us know if you need any adjustments or have additional direction as we move into the full proposal.



Matt Powell  
Communications Director, Destination by Design  
[matt@dbdplanning.com](mailto:matt@dbdplanning.com), (828) 386-1866  
136 Furman Rd. Boone, NC 28607  
[www.destinationbydesign.com](http://www.destinationbydesign.com)



## Place Branding & Destination Storytelling

Destination by Design (DbD) is a multi-disciplinary placemaking and marketing firm. We specialize in economic development strategies that increase visibility and enhance quality of life. Our team collaborates to create the places you love by developing and promoting vibrant Main Streets and destination-quality parks, trails, and recreation areas.

**For over a decade, we have partnered with communities to develop and leverage assets for sustainable growth, while providing branding solutions to tell their stories.**

Our Communications division takes a hands-on approach, working closely with communities and facilitating a process to help them discover their authentic identity. Beginning with boots-on-the-ground, we engage stakeholders, perform market research, and extract insights to shape a community-led vision for the brand.

Using what we discover, our creative team develops a strategy to serve as the cornerstone for all marketing and communication efforts. By crafting intentional brand language—including positioning, promise, voice, and taglines—we ensure a cohesive identity and messaging.

Building on this framework, we translate the brand visually through logo designs, photography, videos, websites, signage and marketing collateral. Our designers provide comprehensive art direction to ensure that the visual brand remains consistent with the strategy, and recognizable in diverse environments.

Our collaborative, multidisciplinary approach results in distinctive visual solutions, increased public engagement, and innovative end-products for communities and destinations nationwide.

# — Project Team

Erin Welsh, Destination by Design's Branding Director, will serve as the primary point of contact and lead day-to-day coordination to ensure all components of the brand refresh align with Alamance County Tourism's goals and recently adopted strategic plan. Creative direction will be led by Senior Art Director Matt Wagoner, with design support from our team of graphic designers, to develop a modernized visual identity, updated logo concepts, and a comprehensive brand guide that reflects the County's distinct character and visitor experience. Strategic messaging oversight will be provided by Communications Director Matt Powell, ensuring that all positioning, tagline development, and narrative elements support long-term brand consistency and effective destination marketing. Supported by DbD's broader team of planners, designers, and marketing specialists, this leadership group will deliver a collaborative, stakeholder-informed process resulting in a refreshed brand that resonates with partners, strengthens awareness, and equips the County for future growth.



## **Matt Powell**

### **Communications Director**

A multi-award-winning Creative Director, Matt leads all of DbD's branding and marketing-related projects, directs multimedia and web campaigns, and develops targeted brand strategies to promote quality of life. With a Masters in Communications and an undergraduate in Recreation & Tourism Management, Matt is passionate about helping communities discover authentic brand stories that increase their visibility, visitation, and economic vibrancy.



## **Erin Welsh**

### **Primary Contact & Branding Director**

With over three years at Destination by Design, Erin brings a wealth of expertise in brand strategy, marketing, and project management. A proud Elon University alumna and longtime resident of the NC High Country, Erin has led impactful projects for municipal, county, and destination marketing organizations. Her strategic insights and storytelling skills foster strong connections with communities, driving successful outcomes for clients. Outside of work, she enjoys exploring the region's scenic beauty and staying active in the local community.



**Matt Wagoner**

Senior Art Director

Matt has been a designer for 15+ years, and has built brands for communities, non-profit organizations and startups big and small. He especially loves taking communities through a discovery process, the branding journey, and helping them uncover the unique attributes that will make them stand out. Matt is a graduate of University of South Carolina with a Fine Arts degree in Graphic Design. His favorite activities include long walks on the beach, camping with the fam, and mountain biking- just don't ask him to ride a skinny.



**Sarah Pinnix**

Paid Media Specialist

With more than 17 years of experience in the digital space, Sarah witnessed the advent of the social media era, helping brands and organizations. Sarah Pinnix is a seasoned digital marketing expert with over 16 years of experience helping businesses and organizations achieve real, measurable growth. Known for her data-informed approach, Sarah's core focus is on getting results with paid advertising and social media, managing campaigns on platforms like Google Ads, Meta (Facebook and Instagram), TikTok, and YouTube. An avid hiker and kayaker, Sarah has a passion for exploring the outdoors, cooking with fresh local produce, and checking out the culinary landscapes of the places she visits.



**Jon Black**

Visual Content Director

Jon Black is a photographer & director with 15 years experience in the field. Curious about the wide-ranging human experience Jon is always learning from the communities and institutions he documents. Jon currently has his eye on innovation and sustainable development. From small organizations to enterprise scale operations, witnessing people work towards a common-good goal keeps him inspired. Jon loves jumping on the trampoline with his family, traveling abroad and learning to cook.



**Megan Biddix**

Brand Strategy & Communications Specialist

Megan built her career in hospitality and nonprofit leadership, supporting small businesses and downtown development and sparking a passion for place-making and the stories that connect people to community. She holds a degree in cultural anthropology with a minor in sustainable development from Appalachian State University. Outside of work, she enjoys exploring back roads with her dog, tending her growing plant collection, traveling, skiing, and diving into a good book.

# — Project Approach

## **TASK 1A:**

### **Discovery, Analysis, and Engagement**

#### **OBJECTIVE**

This foundational phase will focus on working directly with a key branding committee to build clarity around Alamance County's tourism identity, visitor experience strengths, and strategic direction. We will conduct document reviews, one or two stakeholder discussions, and targeted research to gather the essential insights that will guide the brand refresh, messaging framework, and visual development. All work will align with the County's strategic plan to ensure the refreshed brand supports its goals, priorities, and core audiences, while keeping the process efficient and cost-effective.

#### **DELIVERABLE(S)**

Discovery and Analysis Report

#### **TASK 1.1: PROJECT INITIATION AND MANAGEMENT**

We will begin with a virtual kickoff meeting to confirm roles, align expectations, and review key objectives from the strategic plan. Our team will finalize the project work plan, outlining milestones, deliverables, communication protocols, and decision-making structure. A brief announcement template will be provided for use by the TDA to introduce the project publicly.

#### **TASK 1.2: FIELD VISIT AND STAKEHOLDER CONVERSATIONS**

DbD will conduct an in-person field visit to experience key destinations, evaluate existing brand touchpoints, and meet directly with staff and selected partners. We will facilitate one-on-one interviews or small working sessions with representatives from tourism assets, municipalities, attractions, lodging partners, and business leaders to gather insights about perception, needs, and future vision.

#### **TASK 1.3: INDEPENDENT RESEARCH AND MARKET ANALYSIS**

We will review existing brand materials, digital presence, and communication channels, along with peer destination benchmarking and regional competitive analysis. This includes an assessment of visual identity, messaging, web presence, social media, tourism data, visitor demographics, and demand trends.

#### **TASK 1.4: DISCOVERY SUMMARY PRESENTATION**

All insights will be consolidated into a Discovery Summary that highlights key themes, brand challenges, competitive opportunities, and initial strategic recommendations. The summary will be presented to the TDA and core leadership team and will guide creative development.

## **TASK 1B:**

### **Discovery, Analysis, and Engagement**

#### **OBJECTIVE**

Option B will engage a broader set of voices across Alamance County to shape a deeper, more inclusive understanding of its tourism identity, visitor experience strengths, and strategic opportunities. Building on document review and core stakeholder input, we will also implement a county-wide survey and a series of focus group meetings with additional key stakeholders. This enhanced engagement ensures the brand refresh, messaging framework, and visual development are grounded in a wide-ranging input set and reflect the full spectrum of the County's audiences and priorities.

#### **DELIVERABLE(S)**

Online Survey

Additional Focus Group Meetings

Discovery and Analysis Report

#### **TASK 1.1: PROJECT INITIATION AND MANAGEMENT**

We will begin with a virtual kickoff meeting to confirm roles, align expectations, and review key objectives from the strategic plan. Our team will finalize the project work plan, outlining milestones, deliverables, communication protocols, and decision-making structure. A brief announcement template will be provided for use by the TDA to introduce the project publicly.

#### **TASK 1.2: FIELD VISIT AND STAKEHOLDER CONVERSATIONS**

DbD will conduct an in-person field visit to experience key destinations, evaluate existing brand touchpoints, and meet directly with staff and selected partners. We will facilitate one-on-one interviews or small working sessions with representatives from tourism assets, municipalities, attractions, lodging partners, and business leaders to gather insights about perception, needs, and future vision.

#### **TASK 1.3: STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS**

In addition to core meetings, DbD will facilitate one broader stakeholder workshop that includes tourism partners, community leaders, municipalities, and local businesses. This session will focus on brand perceptions, audience priorities, and alignment of the County's tourism vision.

#### **TASK 1.4: ONLINE SURVEY**

DbD will design an online survey to collect broad feedback on brand perception, visitor experience strengths, and messaging direction. The County may host this on an existing platform, shared via email and social channels.

#### **TASK 1.5: INDEPENDENT RESEARCH AND MARKET ANALYSIS**

We will review existing brand materials, digital presence, and communication channels, along with peer destination benchmarking and regional competitive analysis. This includes an assessment of visual identity, messaging, web presence, social media, tourism data, visitor demographics, and demand trends.

#### **TASK 1.6: DISCOVERY SUMMARY PRESENTATION**

All insights will be consolidated into a Discovery Summary that highlights key themes, brand challenges, competitive opportunities, and initial strategic recommendations. The summary will be presented to the TDA and core leadership team and will guide creative development.

## TASK 2:

### Brand Strategy and Positioning

#### OBJECTIVE

In this phase, we will translate stakeholder insights, market analysis, and discovery findings into a cohesive brand strategy that reflects Alamance County's tourism identity—its cultural richness, welcoming atmosphere, and diverse visitor experiences. This strategy will define not only what the brand looks like but what it means, establishing the messaging, tone, and positioning needed to guide creative development and long-term marketing. The resulting framework will ensure consistent, compelling communication across digital platforms, partner organizations, and visitor-facing materials.

#### DELIVERABLE(S)

Brand Strategy and Strategic Messaging

#### TASK 2.1: BRAND DISCOVERY WORK SESSION

We will facilitate a collaborative session with Alamance County Tourism staff and key partners to explore the brand's core themes, personality, audience needs, and competitive positioning. Through guided discussion and structured branding exercises, we will clarify the distinctive qualities that set Alamance apart from peer destinations and identify the messages and attributes that should anchor the refreshed brand. This session builds alignment and prepares the team for strategic messaging development.

#### TASK 2.2: BRAND DIRECTION, STRATEGIC MESSAGING AND TAGLINE CONCEPTS

Drawing from research insights and the discovery session, DbD will develop the foundational elements of the brand:

- A clear brand positioning statement
- Key value propositions tied to target audiences
- Messaging themes that reflect the County's tourism strengths
- Suggested tone and voice direction

We will also develop a set of tagline concepts (up to three) that express the brand's personality and positioning in a memorable, campaign-ready format. Each tagline will be presented with supporting rationale and early examples of how it could be applied in future marketing.

#### TASK 2.3: DRAFT BRAND STRATEGY

DbD will prepare a comprehensive Draft Brand Strategy that includes:

- Refined positioning statement
- Core brand values and tone
- Strategic messaging pillars and narrative themes
- Audience-specific messaging (visitors, partners, attractions, regional collaborators)
- Alignment recommendations for communications, advertising, and digital platforms

This document will serve as the foundation for visual identity development and will ensure that the refreshed brand is grounded in clear, consistent, and actionable messaging.

#### TASK 2.4: FINAL BRAND STRATEGY

Following review and feedback from the TDA, we will refine and finalize the full Brand Strategy. The final product will be formatted as a polished digital document that can be shared internally or distributed to county tourism partners. This strategy will serve as the guiding blueprint for logo development, brand guide creation, and future marketing efforts.

# TASK 3:

## Logo Refresh and Visual Identity Development

### OBJECTIVE

In this phase, we will translate the updated brand strategy and strategic messaging into an evolved visual identity system that builds upon the existing Alamance County Tourism brand. Rather than developing an entirely new identity, our focus will be to refresh, modernize, and strengthen key visual elements—such as the logo, color palette, typography, and supporting graphics—while retaining recognizable components of the current brand. The refreshed system will be more cohesive, flexible, and functional across visitor-facing platforms, ensuring the brand remains familiar yet more aligned with current goals, audiences, and best practices.

### DELIVERABLE(S)

Logo System

Brand Plan Manual

### TASK 3.1: CREATIVE DIRECTION WORKSHOP

DbD will facilitate a collaborative workshop—virtual—with Alamance County Tourism leadership to establish the direction for the brand refresh. We will review mood boards, assess strengths of the existing visual identity, discuss what elements should be preserved, and explore opportunities for refinement. This ensures alignment on how the refreshed identity should evolve in tone, color, typography, and overall aesthetic.

### TASK 3.2: LOGO DESIGN CREATIVE PROCESS

Using insights from the brand strategy and creative direction workshop, DbD will develop refreshed logo options that update and modernize the existing mark while maintaining continuity where appropriate. This structured, refresh-focused process includes:

- **Conceptualize (Meeting 1):** Present up to three (3) refreshed logo concepts—each offering a different degree of modernization and refinement. Facilitate a discussion around which elements should remain and which should evolve.
- **Iterate (Meeting 2):** Refine the selected concept(s), incorporating feedback to adjust typography, iconography, composition, and color adjustments that strengthen recognition and usability.
- **Refine (Meeting 3):** Finalize the refreshed visual identity and develop an updated logo system, including simplified, stacked, and digital-friendly variations.

### TASK 3.3: BRAND PLAN DELIVERY

Deliver a comprehensive Brand Plan that compiles the Final Brand Strategy, refreshed Logo System, and updated Style Guide into one practical reference. The guide will clarify logo usage, brand structure, refreshed color palette, refined typography system, and imagery direction—providing staff and partners with clear standards for consistent implementation.

### TASK 3.4: FOUNDATIONAL BRANDED ASSETS

We will produce a curated set of refreshed branded assets to support immediate use of the updated identity. These may include new digital templates, social media graphics, letterhead, business collateral, presentation slides, and sample visitor-facing applications. These materials help ensure the refreshed brand is quickly and consistently adopted across platforms.

### TASK 3.5: APPROVAL AND DELIVERY

Upon final approval, DbD will deliver all refreshed brand files in multiple formats (EPS, SVG, PNG, JPG, PDF) along with a well-organized asset library for future use. Alamance County Tourism will retain full ownership of all design work, ensuring long-term flexibility and independence.

# Budget

The services outlined in this proposal have been carefully structured to support Alamance County Tourism’s goal of refreshing its brand in a way that aligns with the County’s new strategic plan, strengthens messaging, and elevates its visual identity for years to come. The total project cost ranges from **\$26,500 to \$37,500**, depending on the selected level of engagement for Task 1 (Option A or B). This range reflects a well-defined scope that prioritizes strategic clarity, high-quality design, accessible and inclusive communication, and practical tools for implementation.

Our pricing model is fully transparent and itemized by task and deliverable, ensuring alignment with project milestones and clear expectations at every step. Should Alamance County Tourism wish to expand the scope—such as adding broader engagement, additional branded assets, or campaign development—we can provide these services at our standard hourly rate of **\$150/hour**.

## ALAMANCE BRANDING INITIATIVE

**Task 1 (OPTION A): Discovery, Analysis, and Engagement .....\$9,500**

- 1.1: Project Initiation and Management
- 1.2: Field Visit and Stakeholder Conversations
- 1.3: Independent Research and Market Analysis
- 1.4: Discovery Summary Presentation

**Task 1 (OPTION B): Discovery, Analysis, and Engagement .....\$20,000**

- 1.1: Project Initiation and Management
- 1.2: Field Visit and Stakeholder Conversations
- 1.3: Stakeholder Workshops
- 1.4: Online Survey
- 1.5: Independent Research and Market Analysis
- 1.6: Discovery Summary Presentation

**Task 2: Brand Strategy and Positioning .....\$10,000**

- 2.1: Brand Discovery Work Session
- 2.2: Brand Direction, Strategic Messaging and Tagline Concepts
- 2.3: Draft Brand Strategy
- 2.4: Final Brand Strategy

**Task 3: Logo Refresh and Visual Identity Development .....\$7,500**

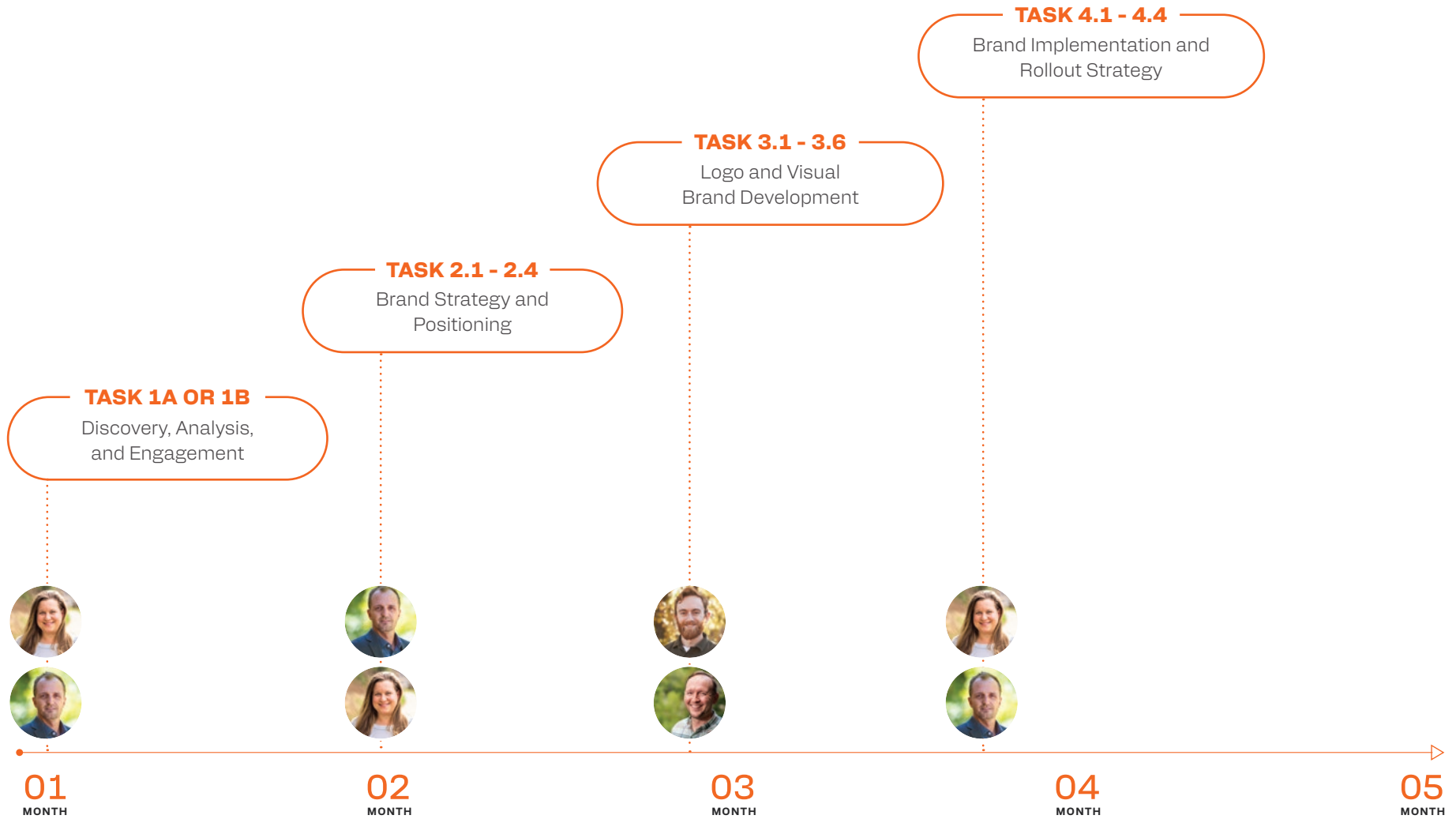
- 3.1: Creative Direction Workshop
- 3.2: Logo Design Creative Process
- 3.3: Brand Plan Delivery
- 3.4: Foundational Branded Assets
- 3.5: Approval and Delivery

**\$26,500 - \$37,500**

TOTAL PROJECT COST

# Schedule

While ideal timelines provide a framework, the complexities of reality can introduce variables. We are fully dedicated to ensuring that all deliverables are accomplished promptly and in accordance with our commitment to timeliness.



# Portfolio

## New River Gorge Towns

Regional Tourism Brand

DbD helped create NRG Towns to unite the communities surrounding New River Gorge National Park and Preserve under a shared identity - "Real Towns. Unreal Adventures." The brand captures Appalachian heritage, outdoor adventure, and small-town connection, inviting visitors and residents to "Feel the NRG." A flexible visual system features adaptable logos, vibrant colors, and playful iconography, supported by a comprehensive style guide. Implementation emphasizes community-led adoption, regional collaboration, and growth through partner toolkits, storytelling campaigns, and events like NRG Towns Day. The result is a cohesive, authentic brand that builds pride, strengthens tourism, and positions the region as a premier Appalachian destination.



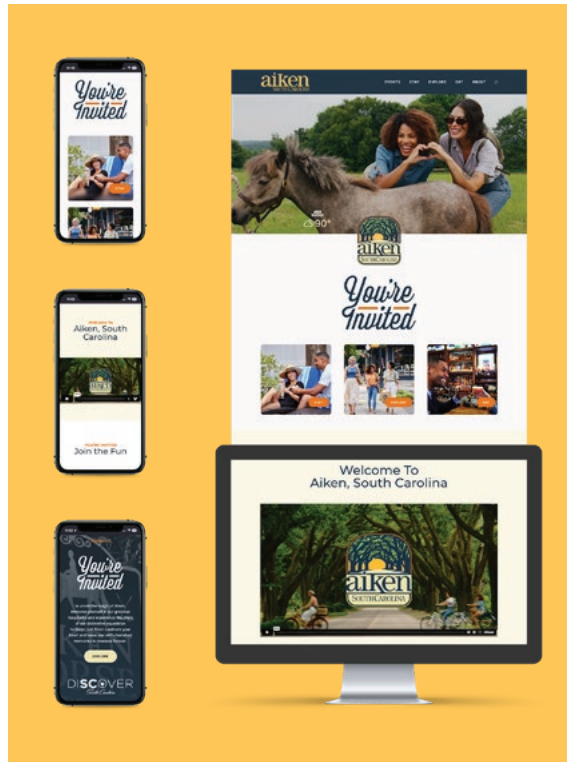
# City of Aiken, SC

Agency of Record, Website, Destination Brand & Marketing Campaign

Nestled in the heart of South Carolina, Aiken is a captivating city that seamlessly blends history, charm, and modern vitality. With roots dating back to the early 19th century, Aiken is steeped in equestrian heritage, cultural diversity, and a strong sense of community—a city where visitors can explore picturesque trails, boutique shopping, diverse culinary delights, and rich history. Destination by Design (DbD) is helping shape Aiken’s competitive tourism future through an inclusive brand strategy, visual identity refinement, and extensive marketing initiatives, including the development of a new website ([VisitAikenSC.com](http://VisitAikenSC.com)), commercial content and creative production, and a comprehensive digital marketing campaign plus print advertising. These efforts have resulted in a 250% increase in web traffic, demonstrating the power of a strategic, well-executed tourism marketing approach in driving engagement and visitation.

## REFERENCE

Eric Gordon  
Tourism Manager  
(803) 679-0012  
[egordon@cityofaikensc.gov](mailto:egordon@cityofaikensc.gov)



# Bath County, VA

Destination Branding, Marketing Plan, Campaign  
Photography, & Community Engagement

From adventure to relaxation, the County of Bath envelops you in diverse encounters. With a fusion of historical charm, tranquil beauty, and excitement, Bath offers something for everyone. In collaboration with Visit Bath County, DbD has contributed to positioning Bath as a premier destination nestled within the Allegheny Mountains. Our joint effort has shaped an identity that preserves the ageless charm of the rejuvenating springs, an attraction that has captivated explorers for generations, and encapsulates the heart of a place where nature restores both body and soul.



# Visit Hickory, NC

## Destination Branding

Nestled between the Blue Ridge Mountains and the bustling piedmont, Hickory Metro combines small-town warmth with metropolitan amenities. In partnership with the Hickory Conover Tourism Development Authority, DbD has been instrumental in redefining the Hickory brand, creating a welcoming identity that showcases its vibrant community and boundless opportunities. From family-friendly activities and gourmet dining experiences to top-notch sports facilities and expansive outdoor spaces, Hickory offers an ideal blend of relaxation and adventure. Our efforts highlight the area's cultural vibrancy, connectivity, and appeal as a central hub for business, leisure, and sports tourism, positioning Hickory as a dynamic destination for visitors from near and far.



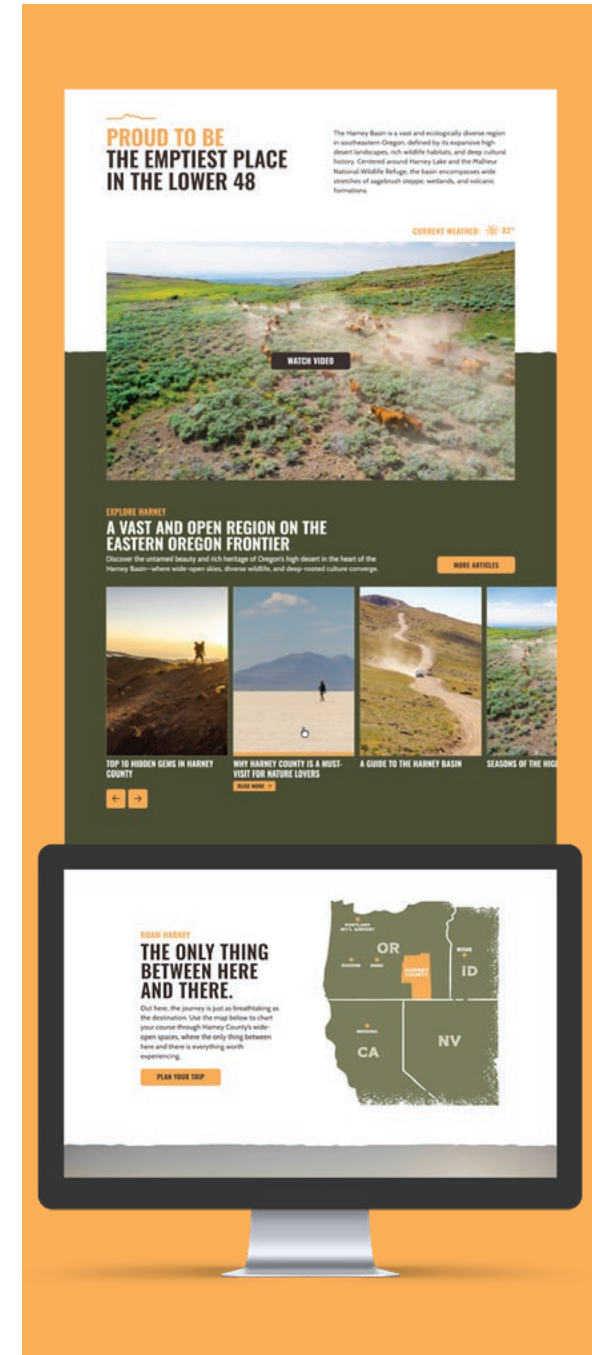
# Harney County, OR

County Branding, Content Production, and Marketing Plan

Harney County, located in remote eastern Oregon, may appear as one of the emptiest areas in the continental US, but it conceals a resilient community and diverse ecosystem. Amidst the expansive high desert, mountains, and meadows, the Burns Paiute Tribe's influence fosters reverence for the land. With our branding and marketing experience, we are positioning Harney as an innovative steward of its natural resources, developing an authoritative brand voice, crafting a land ethos, promoting a new natural resource and restoration economy, while amplifying community voices, and embracing the frontier identity. The essence of the brand revolves around the elements of land, water, sky, and soul, with a focus on becoming an example of stewardship within the region and the United States.

## REFERENCE

Marla Polenz  
Communications Coordinator  
High Desert Partnership  
(541) 573-7820  
[marla@highdesertpartnership.org](mailto:marla@highdesertpartnership.org)

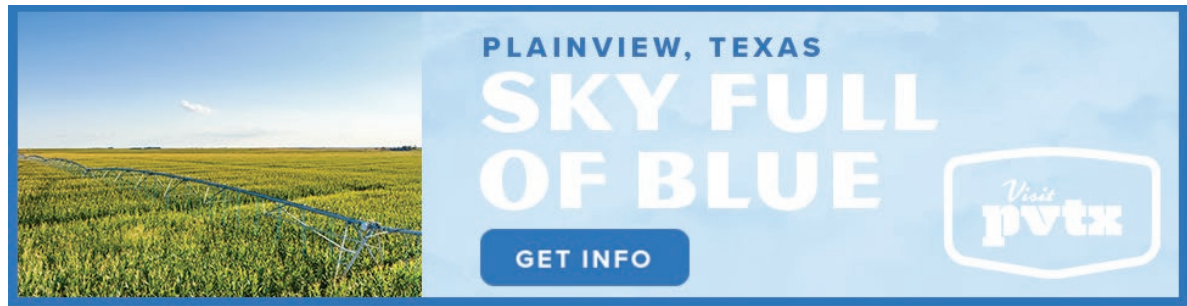


# Plainview, TX CVB Brand Marketing

Tourism Branding, Marketing Plan,  
and Community Engagement

Plainview, Texas—a community rapidly revitalizing its historic downtown and enhancing quality of life through park investments—sought a modern, future-focused brand to elevate its appeal as a visitor destination and highlight its unique cultural and recreational assets. Through our collaborative, research-driven approach, we developed a comprehensive branding strategy that celebrates Plainview’s rich history and budding downtown arts scene.

The “PVTX” brand identity was crafted to capture the city’s distinct sense of place, using a memorable shorthand to foster local pride and enhance recognition among travelers exploring the Texas Panhandle. The tagline “Sky Full of Blue”—inspired by hometown legend Jimmy Dean- is now a memorable symbol of Plainview’s wide-open landscapes, blue-sky adventures, and limitless opportunities for visitors to experience the Texas Panhandle.



# DeSoto County, FL

Destination Brand, Website, and  
Marketing Content

Discover the last southern wilderness, where history, landscape, and cultures merge into “FLORIDA WILD”. Partnering with DeSoto County, DbD crafted a distinctive destination identity, inviting adventurers to explore this inland gem and uncover a new side of Florida. All of the branding, marketing, content creation, and advertising campaigns drive people to the newly designed [visitdesoto.com](http://visitdesoto.com) website as well as a new Economic Development site [godesotofl.com](http://godesotofl.com). The launch of which has been so successful we are currently working on another site for DeSoto County’s Economic Development.

## REFERENCE

Sondra Guffey

Economic Development Director

(863) 993-4807

[s.guffey@desotobocc.com](mailto:s.guffey@desotobocc.com)



# Downtown Manteo, NC

Branding, Wayfinding, & Community Engagement

DbD helped the Town of Manteo, NC to develop a brand identity for its historic downtown Main Street area. Although part of Dare County, and adjacent to the famed Outer Banks, our research determined that Manteo was in need of a distinct identity that would set them apart from this popular coastal destination. They needed to create a destination brand all their own by embracing their historic walkable downtown, wayfaring heritage, and friendly, leisurely vibe. The resulting logo mark and brand concept, Meet Me in Manteo, perfectly encapsulates this.

## REFERENCE

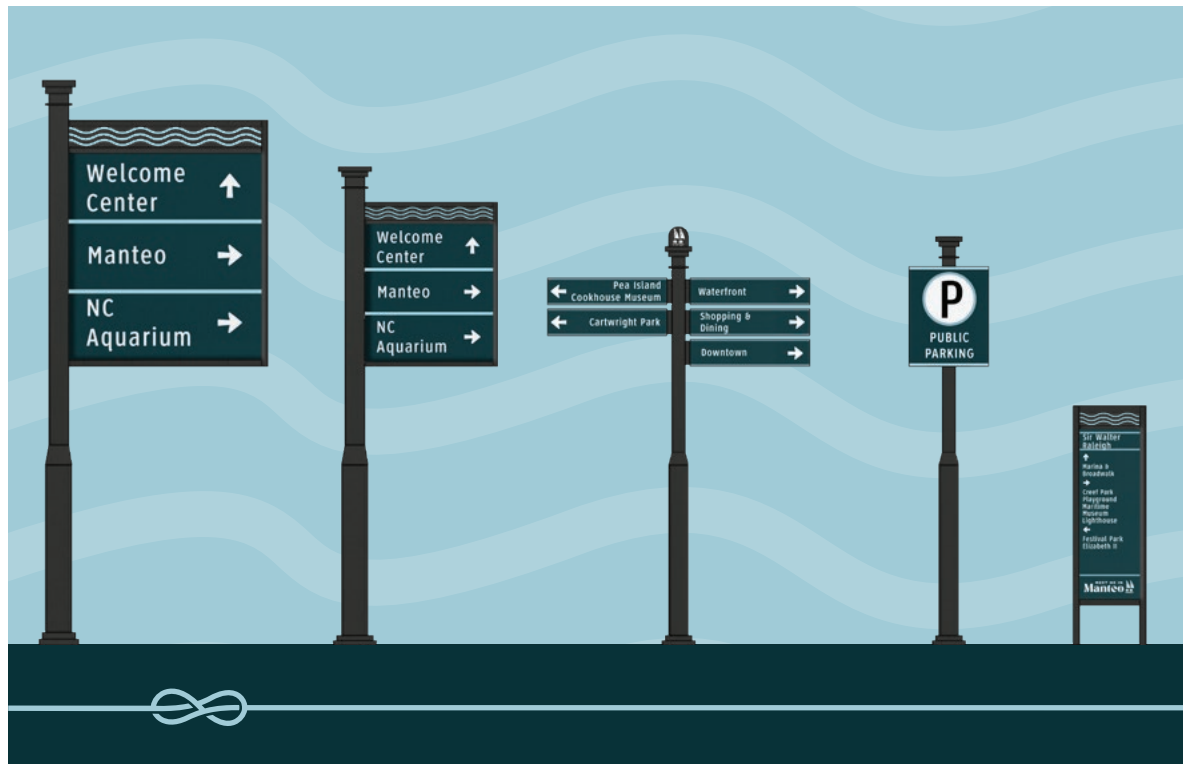
Melissa Dickerson

Town Manager

Town of Manteo

(252) 473-4112

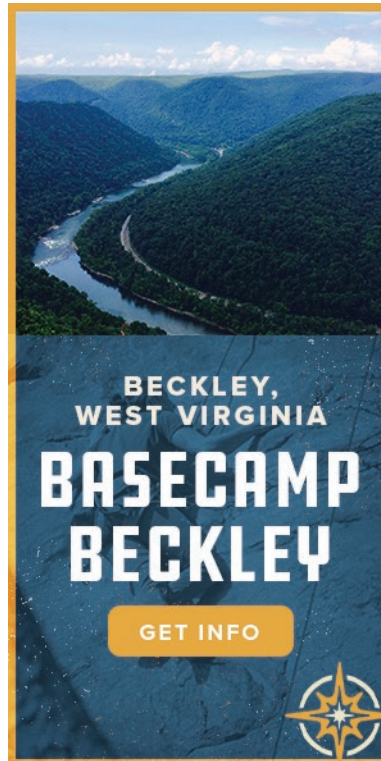
[mdickerson@manteonc.gov](mailto:mdickerson@manteonc.gov)



# City of Beckley, WV

Destination Branding and Outdoor Tourism Plan

The Beckley Outdoors Plan and the Basecamp Beckley brand will establish and promote Beckley, WV as a premier outdoor destination. In addition, the DbD planning team led a tourism master planning effort to develop and improve unique outdoor infrastructure such as trails, greenways, river accesses, rock climbing areas, parks, public art, and multi-use public spaces for events and festivals. These projects aim to create a vibrant City that attracts and retains businesses, residents, and visitors.



# McDowell County, NC

Destination Branding, Marketing Plan, Content Creation, and Social Media Creation

Destination McDowell is a 15-year visionary strategy, masterminded by the McDowell County Tourism Development Authority, aimed at skillfully managing its capital infrastructure program through strategic decision-making and investments. Through an extensive, year-long collaboration with local businesses, government officials and staff, residents, and tourism partners, the plan harnesses the diverse geography of McDowell County – from high peaks to river valleys – to enrich the visitor experience. Recommendations include innovative public venues, streetscapes, expansive trail systems and more, fostering downtown revitalization and outdoor adventure.

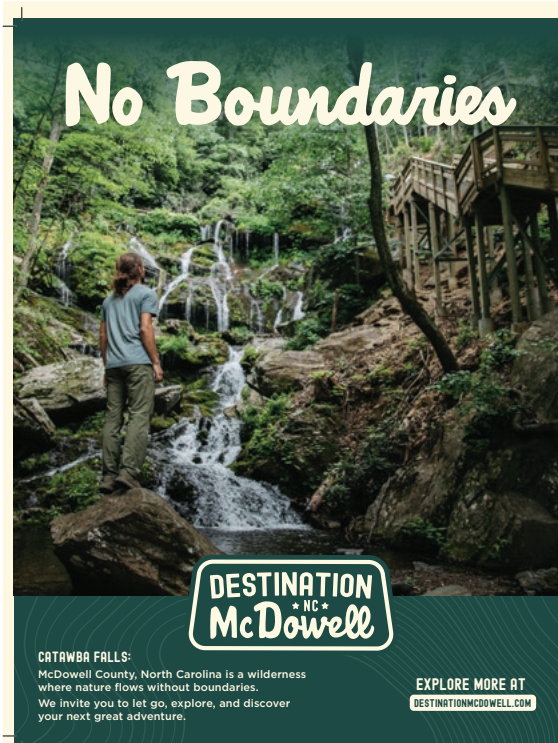
## REFERENCE

Shannon Odom  
Executive Director  
McDowell County  
Tourism Development Authority  
(828) 668-4282  
[execdirector@blueridgetravelers.com](mailto:execdirector@blueridgetravelers.com)

## LINKS



Click for Link



Let's Get  
Started.



828-386-1866

[zach@dbdplanning.com](mailto:zach@dbdplanning.com)

Monday-Friday  
9:00am-5:00pm

# ALAMANCE COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BYLAWS

## ARTICLE 1 – Authorization

### Section 1 – Alamance County Tourism Development Authority

The Alamance County Tourism Development Authority (“Authority”) was created by resolution by the Alamance County Board of Commissioners, on August 15, 1988. Such authority was granted to Alamance County, North Carolina pursuant to Session Law 1987-950, as amended by Session Law 2007-527 and Session Law 2013-414.

### Section 2 – Organization Status

The Authority is a public authority under Chapter 159 of the North Carolina General Statutes and shall comply with all applicable provisions of the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act.

### Section 3 – Objectives

The Authority shall expend its share of occupancy tax revenues to promote, solicit, and encourage travel, tourism and conventions in Alamance County, North Carolina. The Authority shall represent Alamance County through state, national and international advertising and promotion for business and leisure.

### Section 4 – Fiscal and Administrative Year

The fiscal year and administrative year of the Authority shall be from July 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup> of the following year.

## ARTICLE 2 - Purposes and Basic Policies

### Section 1 – Policies

- a.) Neither the name of the Authority nor the names of any of its’ officers in their official capacities may be used in connection with commercial concerns nor with any partisan interest or for any purpose not appropriately related to the promotion of the objects of this Authority.
- b.) The Authority may cooperate with other organizations and/or agencies with similar concerns to those of the Authority, but persons representing the Authority in such matters shall make no commitment to bind the Authority without the approval of the Authority Board as then constituted.
- c.) The Authority shall not participate in or intervene in any political campaign (including the publishing or distribution of statement) on behalf of any candidate for public office.

- d.) It shall be the operational policy of this Authority not to discriminate against any person or persons based on race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, or handicap.

### **ARTICLE 3 – Meetings**

#### Section 1 - Regular and Special Meetings

The Authority shall meet as deemed necessary by the Chair but in any event, it shall hold meetings at least quarterly. Special Meetings of the Authority may be called at any time by the Chair. At least forty-eight (48) hours-notice of the time and place of the Special Meetings shall be given by the Chair to each member of the Authority.

#### Section 2 - Open Meetings

All meetings of the Authority are to be held in accordance with Article 33C of Chapter 143 of the North Carolina General Statutes, commonly referred to as the Open Meetings Law.

#### Section 3 – Quorum

A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the voting members of the Authority.

#### Section 4 - Voting and Rules of Procedure

No voting member shall be excused from voting, except upon matters involving consideration and determination in which a member has a direct personal or financial interest as defined by North Carolina General Statutes Section 14-234.

Each member shall maintain the confidential nature of confidential material to which members may become privy as a member of the Authority.

No Authority member shall directly or indirectly solicit any gift, or accept or receive any gift, whether in the form of money, services, loan, travel, entertainment, hospitality, thing or promise, or any other form, under circumstances in which a reasonable person would believe that the gift was intended to influence him/her in the performance of his/her duties, or was intended as a reward for any official action on his/her part.

The Authority may adopt its own rules of procedure or in absence thereof, “Robert’s Rules of Order” shall apply.

#### Section 5 - Minutes

The Authority shall be responsible for keeping records of all meetings, including minutes, resolutions, discussions, findings, recommendations, and attendance records in accordance with North Carolina General Statutes Section 143-318.10.

An Authority staff member shall maintain accurate records of all proceedings and assist the Chair in issuing required public and legal notices.

Section 6 – Remote Participation in Meetings

The Authority may permit participation in a meeting by any means of communication by which all participants may simultaneously hear and speak to each other during the meeting. A board member participating remotely in a meeting may participate in discussions but may not make motions, seconds, or vote. Remote participants do not count toward quorum.

Requires a notice to be updated with information on remote meeting access for the public if an in-person meeting is noticed but one or more members will participate remotely. Such original notice cannot be amended less than six hours before the meeting.

**ARTICLE 4 – Board of Directors**

Section 1 – Appointments

The Authority shall consist of (5) five voting members appointed by the Alamance County Commissioners as prescribed in SL 1987-950 and subsequent amendments, , after receiving recommendations by the Chamber of Commerce. Membership structure shall consist of the following:

- a. Three owners or operators of hotels, motels, or other taxable tourist accommodations.
- b. Two individuals in the tourism industry who have demonstrated an interest in tourism development and do not own or operate hotels, motels, or other taxable tourism accommodation.
- c. The County Finance Officer shall serve as an ex officio member and serve as Finance Officer of the Authority.

Section 2 – Terms of Appointments & Compensation

Authority members shall serve two-year terms. Members shall serve no more than two consecutive terms. Vacancies in the Authority shall be filled by the Alamance County Board of Commissioners. Vacancies occurring for reasons other than the expiration of terms shall be filled for the period of the unexpired term.

Anyone appointed to complete a vacancy on the Authority Board of greater than twelve (12) months duration shall be deemed to have served a full term.

Authority Board members whose initial appointment was to fill an unexpired term, shall be eligible to serve the number of full-length terms other members are eligible to serve, unless prior to the time of reappointment, that Authority Board member has already served four consecutive years.

### Section 3 – Compensation

The Authority shall not compensate members of the Authority Board for their service on the Board but may authorize reimbursement of expenses incurred by such members on behalf of the Authority.

### Section 4 – Member Removal or Resignation

The Authority, by affirmative vote of a majority of its members, may recommend to the Appointing Board the removal of any of the appointed members of the Authority for cause.

Any member of the Authority may resign by providing a written notice to the Executive Director. Each member of the Authority Board shall hold office until his or her death, resignation, retirement, removal, or disqualification, or until the election or appointment and qualification of his or her successor.

### Section 5 – Attendance

Members are expected to attend all regularly scheduled and special called meetings of the Authority. Authority Board members shall notify the designated Tourism Authority staff member of their absence prior to regularly scheduled meetings.

Any member of the Authority Board who misses (3) three regular meetings of the Authority Board during one fiscal year period may be subject to removal from the Authority Board. The Executive Director will contact any Authority Board member who has had (2) two absences within one fiscal year period and inform him/her of the effect of an additional absence. The Chair will confer with the Officers to review the attendance records of the member. If, upon review, the Officers determine there are insufficient circumstances to justify the absences of the member, they may determine that the member is no longer in good standing and may recommend removal and replacement of the member to the full Authority Board. The Authority, by an affirmative two-thirds vote of a quorum, may recommend to the Commissioners the removal of any appointed member for cause. The County Commissioners shall make the final determination regarding the removal of any member. Upon the removal of an Authority Board member, the Executive Director will notify the Chamber of Commerce and the County Clerk to begin the process to secure a replacement to be appointed by the Alamance County Commissioners.

### Section 6 – Responsibilities & Duties

The Authority shall determine all policies under which the Authority is to be operated and shall have the general charge, supervision, and control of its' affairs, staff, funds, and property. The Authority may contract external entities to support tourism promotion and delegate responsibilities as approved by majority vote.

The Authority shall annually review the tourism-related budget and expenditures for statutory compliance, advance strategic plan initiatives, and engage a qualified firm to conduct an annual audit.

## **ARTICLE 5 – Officers**

### Section 1 – Eligibility and Election Policy

First-year Board members are ineligible to serve as Chair or Vice-Chair. Board officer elections will be held annually in September.

### Section 2 – Chairperson

The Chair shall preside over all regular and special meetings of the Authority, shall sign instruments as authorized by the Authority Board and perform such other duties as may be specified in these By-Laws or as the Authority may assign to them.

The Chair shall appoint any sub-committee chair and members, with the approval of the Authority Board.

### Section 3 – Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chairman shall act in absence of the Chair, perform the duties, and exercise the powers of that office.

### Section 4 – Finance Officer

The Finance Officer for Alamance County serves as an ex-officio member as Finance Officer of the Authority in accordance with SL 1987-950.

### Section 5 – Ex-Officio

The Authority Board, by resolution, may designate Ex-Officio members to attend and participate in meetings of the Board. Ex Officio members shall have no vote. Ex-Officio members may be assigned such duties and responsibilities as deemed appropriate by the Authority. Ex-Officio members shall not undertake any activity or encumber or spend funds without the approval of the Authority.

An immediate past Chair, whose term on the Board has expired, shall serve as an ex officio member of the Board for the year following their term as Chair.

## **ARTICLE 6 – Committees**

Committees may be established by the Authority and may be assigned such duties and responsibilities as deemed appropriate by the Authority. Committee members may be non-Authority members. Committees shall not undertake any activity or encumber or spend funds without the approval of the Authority. The Executive Director is a member of all committees and serves in a non-voting capacity. Additional staff members shall serve on committees when relevant to their assigned projects, in a non-voting capacity.

## **ARTICLE 7 - Administrative Staff**

### Section 1 – Employment

The Authority Board may employ an Executive Director and staff as needed to implement policy, plans and procedures as formulated by the Authority. Any additional staff under this part shall be hired and supervised by the Authority and shall pay the salaries and expenses of staff. All additional staff shall serve at the pleasure of the Authority.

### Section 2 – Responsibilities and Duties

The Executive Director operates under the policies established by the Authority and is entrusted with the general charge, supervision, and control of the Authority's affairs, staff, funds, and property. The Executive Director ensures the effective implementation of the Authority's strategic initiatives and operational directives.

In alignment with the Authority's powers, the Executive Director may coordinate with contracted individuals, firms, corporations, or agencies to advise and assist in the development and execution of tourism promotion programs.

## **ARTICLE 8 – Miscellaneous**

### Section 1 – Fiscal Year

The Fiscal Year of the Bureau shall begin July 1<sup>st</sup> and end June 30<sup>th</sup> of the subsequent calendar year.

### Section 2 – Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all meetings where they are applicable and consistent with these By-Laws.

### Section 3 – Definitions

Terms used herein, not otherwise defined, shall be defined in accordance with the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act or in accordance with SL 1987-950, and subsequent amendments..

### Section 4 – Records & Audits

The Authority shall keep correct records of account and shall also keep minutes of the proceedings of its' members and shall keep a record of names and addresses of the members entitled to vote. The Authority shall report quarterly and at the end of the fiscal year to the Alamance County Board of Commissioner for the preceding quarter and for the year in such detail as the board may require in accordance with SL 1987-950 and subsequent amendments.

The Authority shall have an independent annual audit made at the close of the fiscal year.

Section 5 – Gifts

The Authority may accept, with the approval of the Alamance County Finance Officer, any contribution, gift, bequest, or devise, for any purpose consistent with the objectives and missions of the Authority, and as may otherwise be subject to law.

**ARTICLE 9 – Amendments**

Section 1 – Amendments

The By-laws, or any part thereof, may be amended by two-thirds affirmative vote of the qualified members of the Authority, at any regular or special called meeting of the Authority.

Section 2 – Adoption

These bylaws shall become the bylaws of the Alamance County Tourism Development Authority upon adoption.

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Adopted Date

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Authority Chairperson Signature

**Visit Alamance**  
**STS Marketing College – May 31-June 5, 2026**  
**Macon, Georgia**  
**2026 Scholarship Application**



**Eligibility Requirements**

- Applicant must be currently employed in the travel & tourism industry within Alamance County. •
- Applicant must be able to show financial need.
- Applicant must provide one letter of recommendation from a senior level position within your organization and one letter of recommendation from within your community.

**A. Professional Data**

Name: Lucero Marti

Organization:

Business address: 127 E. Front St,

The Blend Burlington, City: Burlington

State: NC Zip: 27215

Business Phone: 336.901.8592

Email: theblendburlington@gmail.com

Current position within organization: Owner

Employment Start Date: 1-2-25 Supervisor:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Email & Phone:

**Essay Submission:**

- **Prepare a brief autobiography describing academic or professional strengths/challenges and career objectives.**
- **A statement of intent to include your reasons for applying for this scholarship and how this scholarship and attending Marketing College will help further your career.**
- **Please include reason(s) for financial aid.**

Thank you for your interest in Marketing College. All questions pertaining to your scholarship application should be addressed to Grace VandeVisser 336-570-1444 or by email to [grace@visitalamance.com](mailto:grace@visitalamance.com). Application and supporting materials must be received by **March 1, 2026**.

Please return application and supporting material to:  
Grace VandeVisser, Visit Alamance, 200 S. Main Street, Burlington, NC 27215 / [grace@visitalamance.com](mailto:grace@visitalamance.com)  
Scholarship recipients will be notified of their selection no later than **April 1, 2026**.

## Autobiography | Academic & Professional Journey

My name is Lucero Marti, and I am the founder and operator of The Blend Coffee Shop—a community-centered business built on connection, culture, and creativity. My professional strength lies in my ability to transform ideas into tangible experiences. I am a builder by nature: I build spaces, brands, and relationships. Launching and sustaining a small business has required resilience, adaptability, and self-education across marketing, operations, finance, and leadership.

One of my greatest challenges has been navigating growth without formal marketing education. While I have learned through trial, mentorship, and real-world execution, I recognize the limitations of relying solely on intuition and experience. Balancing daily operations with strategic brand development has been demanding, yet it has sharpened my discipline and reinforced my desire for structured, advanced marketing training.

## Statement of Intent | Career Objectives & Purpose

I am applying for this scholarship because Marketing College represents the missing link between where I am and where I am capable of going. My objective is not simply to run a successful coffee shop, but to build a scalable, recognizable brand that serves as a platform for community engagement, local artists, entrepreneurs, and collaborations.

Attending Marketing College will allow me to formalize the skills I currently practice instinctively—brand positioning, digital strategy, consumer behavior, storytelling, and data-driven decision-making. With this education, I will be able to compete at a higher level, refine my marketing systems, and position The Blend as a sustainable, growth-oriented business in an increasingly competitive market. Long-term, I aim to expand into consulting and mentorship for other small business owners, particularly women and minority entrepreneurs who often lack access to professional marketing resources.

## Reason for Applying & Impact of the Scholarship

This scholarship would be transformational. It would provide me access to structured knowledge, expert instruction, and a professional network that would immediately translate into measurable growth for my business. Unlike applicants who may pursue marketing in theory, I will apply what I learn in real time—testing, refining, and scaling strategies in a live business environment. This creates both immediate and long-term impact, not only for me, but for my employees, collaborators, and community.

## Financial Need

As a small business owner, my financial resources are reinvested directly into sustaining operations, payroll, inventory, and community programming. Like many entrepreneurs, I operate with narrow margins while prioritizing quality and ethical business practices. Funding formal education without assistance presents a significant challenge. Financial aid would relieve that burden and allow me to focus fully on learning, growth, and execution without compromising the stability of my business.

## Closing



## 2026 Tourism Funding Assistance-IN DEVELOPMENT

- **Tourism Marketing Grant** - Designed to support strategic, planned marketing campaigns aimed at promoting tourism with measurable performance goals, like increasing visitor numbers, and/or overnight stays, and overall tourism impact through advertising, digital outreach, and promotional initiatives.
- **Sponsorships** – Support a tourism-related event or project in exchange for sponsor recognition and promotional benefits (branding, visibility, or marketing exposure); helping to attract visitors and enhance the destination’s visibility through event-based engagement.

### **Objective:**

The objective of the program is to stimulate the visitor economy within Alamance County. The program is available to assist any organization or business, in tourism promotion, marketing, program development and sponsorships which will create an economic impact from visitor spending, including overnight stays, whenever possible.

The goal of the program is to help support the organization’s project so that it can thrive in the future without the need for direct funding from the grant program.

### **Grant Application Process & Guidelines:**

Any funding requests may require a presentation to the board upon request.

Projects must be tourism or culturally related and will be granted only on the basis that they enhance the development of travel and tourism.

**DATE** – Deadline to receive application. **Online?** Incomplete or late applications will not be considered by the board. Recipients will be notified of decision within **30 days** of submission.

- An organization submitting an application may only be awarded funding for two consecutive years, unless a sponsorship or the award recipient agrees to skip one grant cycle before applying again.
- Multiple project applications are excluded from the same organization during a given year, with only one approved project per year allowed.
- Application funding requests associated for marketing & promotion requires a match.
- Applications must be submitted at a minimum of 120 days before the start of any event or program.
- A maximum amount of up to \$10,000 per application would be available. This is a competitive process and not all grants will receive an award. All grant awards are subject to availability of funds. If approved, the application may be funded in its’ entirety or in part.
- Should there be a need to make a change to components of the awarded funds, the applicant must make a request to the TDA to authorize the change. If no such authorization is provided, the recipient will not receive reimbursement for said change.

- Awarded grants must be completed within the upcoming fiscal year (July-June 2027). Or do we want to provide them an alternate time frame?
- Projects must be marketed to out-of-county visitors, extending the reach beyond a local impact. Out of county visitors are individuals who travel from more than 50 miles from the location of said venue/event/program. Note: Nature of certain advertising may have reach in-market; example – radio.
- Applicant must provide an EIN.

### **Requirements for TDA Recognition:**

The use of the CVB's social media handle/tagging are to be included when sharing information about said event/promotion on social media: @visitalamance / #visitalamance

The CVB must be recognized on all marketing/promotional materials related to sponsorships either by a supplied bureau logo or a statement that the project was funded in part or in whole by the Alamance County Visitors Bureau (or the Alamance County Tourism Development Authority). Adherence to the promotional calendar submitted will be required. TDA will need to review and approve any related materials in advance of distribution or publication.

Grantees must present copies of marketing materials showing acknowledgement when submitting the evaluation.

### **Permitted Uses:**

Examples of permitted uses of **out-of-market** funding include, but are not limited to:

#### **Marketing (do we want to include):**

- Production of brochures and other print collateral for tourist attractions
- Out-of-market print, television, and radio advertising
- Billboards and other out-of-market media
- Out-of-market trade and consumer show registration fees
- Targeted digital media, including search engine marketing targeting potential visitors to Person County, promoted posts on social media, and banner ads and similar types of pay-per-click advertising
- Out-of-market mobile marketing
- Expenses associated with out-of-market public relations efforts
- Design costs
- Website creation/design
- Tourist Oriented Destination (TOD) signs
- Influencer marketing
- Swag items or other promotional materials to help promote the event and acknowledge the tourism office.

## **Restrictions:**

Funding will not be granted for normal and routine operating and administrative expenses of the organization applying. Routine operating expenses include office rentals, postage, phone charges, shipping, salaries, etc. Additionally, the following expenses are not covered: capital expenditures, existing loans, expenses/obligations prior to grant approval, scholarships and any cash awards.

Do we need to be more specific?

## **Evaluation Criteria:**

The board or separate review panel will make the final, non-negotiable decision on all applications.

- Visitor impact and potential for overnight stays
- Strength of marketing and promotional strategies
- Financial feasibility and sustainability
- If applicable, past performance of event organizers in executing successful events/programming

## **Reporting & Funding Distribution:**

An accountability report along with an itemized expense report must be submitted within 60 days of project completion. In addition, the report is to include visitor and marketing data (Reach, Engagement, Market Info, etc.).

This is a reimbursement grant (or matching?). Funds will be distributed at the completion of the project, after presentation of receipts and reporting, however, no sooner than 20 days after the approval of receipts and the evaluation/accountability form.

Reimbursement funds are for the amount shown by receipts. Total amount granted is not automatically guaranteed, only receipt amounts (copies of paid invoices) as identified in the approved application. The reimbursement will be paid directly to the organization that applied for the funding.

Do we want to extend exceptions in the case of marketing expenses where advance payment may be required?

The project must be completed by the submitted project completion date unless the administrator has approved an extension.

The last day to submit paid invoices for reimbursement, without jeopardizing future grants, must be submitted within 30/60 days of project completion, based on grant awarded.

The Alamance County Tourism Development Authority (ACTDA) reserves the rights to withhold or revoke funding if the event or sponsorship fails to meet the conditions outlined in this application or approved by the ACTDA.

**IMPORTANT NOTES:**

- ***Make sure to review and complete the application in its entirety before submitting. All requested documentation and questions are required, unless otherwise noted. Neglecting to upload a document or respond to a question will render your application incomplete and it will be disqualified for review.***

**Submissions to:**

**Grace VandeVisser, Executive Director  
Alamance County Visitors Bureau  
200 S. Main Street  
Burlington, NC 27258  
Or email: [Grace@VisitAlamance.com](mailto:Grace@VisitAlamance.com)**

**Definition:**

Out-of-market marketing:

Defined as marketing efforts designed to promote tourism to Alamance County from visitors that reside out of the county, with an added emphasis on targeting those visitors who will stay overnight in the destination. Marketing efforts with a reach of 50+ miles from Alamance County and outside of the local media market is required.

**\*Do we only want to offer this once a year?**