



FY24 – Q4  
Quarterly Report

# EXPLORE BREVARD





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# I. Organizational News

## FY24 Q4 Board & Staff

Many actions by the board and staff were related to the closing out of one fiscal year and preparing for another. This included a final push to potential grant recipients regarding available Transylvania Aways and Destination Infrastructure funds, approval of the first portion of the \$1M Ecusta Trail pledge, the presentation and approval of a new budget and a new marketing plan, negotiating and executing a number of annual contracts, and more.

Contracts for the lease and operations of the Brevard/Transylvania Visitor Center, as well as the lease of office space above the visitor center, were executed as well. Both lease agreements are between Transylvania County (County) and the Brevard/Transylvania Chamber (Chamber) with the TCTDA reimbursing the County for the expense. The visitor center operations agreement is between the TCTDA and Chamber. The visitor center contract covers a two-year period. The office space lease has a one-year term with an option for a second year, which gives flexibility as TCTDA staffing and office space needs change. Along those lines, it is worth noting that based on discussion at the annual retreat and a recommendation from the executive director, funding for a part-time position was included in the FY25 budget. This will be kept under the 20 hours a week mark that would make it a permanent position. On a final note, all three contracts followed the previous agreements with the only substantive change being the addition of limited Explore Brevard retail available for purchase at the visitor center.

The fourth quarter of FY24 also included efforts related to the upcoming temporary closure of the Bobby Setzer Fish Hatchery. Following conversations with local outfitters, TDA Directors from five WNC counties, including Transylvania, sent a letter to their state legislative representatives sharing concerns about the significant reduction of trout stocks in 2025-2027 while necessary construction occurs to the hatchery and requesting that they do what they can to mitigate the economic impact on their counties. Direct conversations with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission occurred as well.

[Read the letter here.](#)





## Board Members

**Dee Dee Perkins, Chair**  
Interested Individual

**Jessica Whitmire, Vice Chair**  
Town of Rosman Appointee

**Lauren Wise**  
City of Brevard Appointee

**Nory LeBrun**  
Member-at-large

**Dana Antonuccio**  
Accommodations Owner / Operator

**Isaac Allen**  
Interested Individual

**Dionne Hodgson**  
Accommodations Owner / Operator

**Larry Chapman**  
Transylvania County Appointee

**Madeline Magin**  
Member-at-large

## Marketing

**Dee Dee Perkins, Chair** Board

**Dana Antonuccio** Board

**Dionne Hodgson** Board

**Nory LeBrun** Board

**Layton Parker** Community

## Transylvania Always

**Jessica Whitmire, Chair** Board

**Lauren Wise** Board

**Dionne Hodgson** Board

**Eric Caldwell** Community

**Grant Bullard** Community

**Mandi Bentley** Community

**Kate Hayes** Community

## Destination Infrastructure

**Madeline Magin, Chair** Board

**Dee Dee Perkins** Board

**Jessica Whitmire** Board

**Nicole Bentley** Community

**Melanie Spreen** Community

**Aaron Baker** Community

**Jeffrey Adams** Community

## Grant

**Isaac Allen, Chair** Board

**Dana Antonuccio** Board

**Larry Chapman** Board

FY2024

# Board and Committee Members



## FY24 Q4 Partner Support

Our winter sweepstakes winners were blown away by the hospitality of our participating tourism partners. They are pictured on the right with their waiter, enjoying dinner at The Bohemian.

We hosted five national and international travel writers and the executive director of Visit NC, Wit Tuttle, ahead of the Adventure ELEVATE conference in Asheville. They came to Transylvania County for a 4-day pre-conference excursion. While they were here, they encountered over 20 businesses. We anticipate great media coverage from their stay.

We released our Sumer Camp toolkit, including camp counselor discount cards, a camper parent landing page on our website, and a counselor tips page.

We also released a “Leave It Better” and “Be Waterfall Wise” toolkit to allow partners to share our important messaging throughout the busy season.

Operations and outreach specialist, Virginia Watkins, joined Heart of Brevard’s HUB for the Arts Committee to strengthen our organization’s relationships with the local arts community and help enhance visitor experiences.

A Facebook group was created for tourism partners to have a direct line of communication with us and each other. This provides a way to give partners timely updates and connect in real-time, rather than rely solely on our partner e-blast once a month.





# Committee Update

## Transylvania Always

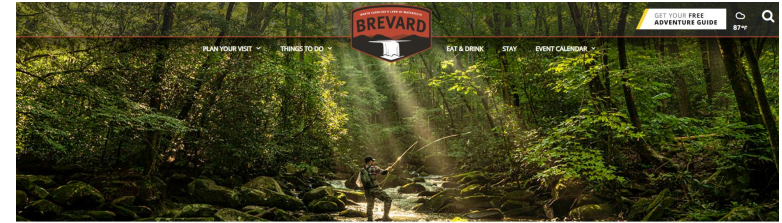
The TCTDA celebrates completing the "Trail Town Stewardship Designation" pilot program by Outdoor NC, which emphasizes destination stewardship, responsible travel, and sustainable tourism. As one of 15 counties in this pilot, the TDA met requirements like identifying accessible outdoor spaces and educating visitors on responsible travel. The program's resources will be featured in the digital "Outdoor NC Trail Town Visitor Guide" and on the new Explore Brevard website.

The Leave It Better and Be Waterfall Wise campaigns began their annual spring push before summer, building on last year's updates. A new 7' tall, portable Trashesquatch banner was also added to our collection and was most recently sighted at the Cradle of Forestry.

Two new rebranded kiosks were created at Bracken Mountain Preserve trailhead and outside DuPont State Recreational Forest's visitor center, the latter undergoing a structural facelift. This completes the first phase of county-wide kiosk rebranding with tailored designs for each location.

At the start of the quarter, the Land Managers Meeting brought together leaders from Pisgah National Forest, DuPont State Recreational Forest, Gorges State Park, and Headwaters State Forest to review campaigns and discuss trends and concerns for visitor education.

Jack Henderson, the French Broad Paddle Trail Manager for MountainTrue, also reported on the French Broad's Strategic Master Plan and their grant request to assist with a paddle trail rest stop and campsite at Poplar Bend during the May TAC meeting.



### Explore Responsibly

#### 8 Ways to Be a Mindful Traveler While Visiting Brevard and Transylvania County

As you plan your travels, have you thought about how you can journey with more intention? There are plenty of ways to reduce your footprint while amplifying your experience. We all carry the responsibility to explore with reverence—to look out for each other, and to cherish our lands.

While you're here, we invite you to explore responsibly using the guide below.





# Q4 Project Funding Transylvania Always

Projects that are aligned with the mission of the TCTDA's Transylvania Always initiative by either addressing the impact of users in public lands or creating safe and enjoyable use of natural recreational assets.

## Q4

- **The Pisgah Conservancy & U.S. Forest Service: "Pisgah River Rangers" \$4,999**
  - This program enhances Pisgah's ecological health by educating visitors and providing stewardship for long-term protection. The grant allowed for more staff, enabling simultaneous educational and stewardship projects. It employs local college students and recent graduates, giving them experience with nonprofit and federal agencies to develop future public lands leaders.
- **MountainTrue: "Updated French Broad River Stewardship & Enhancement" \$4,000**
  - To better respond to woody debris blockages and garbage removal, this initiative provides the heavy equipment necessary to tend to our French Broad River's narrow corridors and steep banks in our headwaters with the help of a Jon boat, trailer, various saws and other equipment.
- **MountainTrue: "French Broad Paddle Trail Rest Stop & Campsite – Poplar Bend" \$4,680**
  - This project fulfills part of the "Strategic Master Plan for the French Broad River Blueway – Transylvania County" (The Blueway Plan), funded by the TCTDA. It addresses the need for a new river access site near the Everett Road bridge in Pisgah Forest. MountainTrue's Poplar Bend project, in partnership with Conserving Carolina, will develop a new rest stop and campsite for paddlers along the French Broad River.

**Year-To-Date Funding: \$98,800.52**



# Committee Update

## Destination Infrastructure

With a continued commitment to the TCTDA's strategic goal of enabling and supporting projects that preserve and/or enhance the infrastructure of the destination, the Board of Directors at their March meeting issued payment for the first \$250,000 of a \$1M pledge toward the Ecusta Trail. This was following a presentation by the City of Brevard requesting \$250K to fund costs related to designing and engineering the Ecusta Trail and related infrastructure (such as bridges and road crossings), and producing construction-ready plans, of which the board approved.

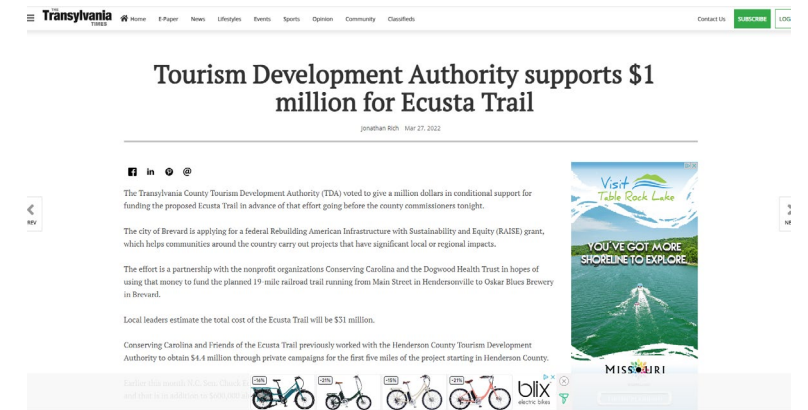


Image courtesy of the City of Brevard



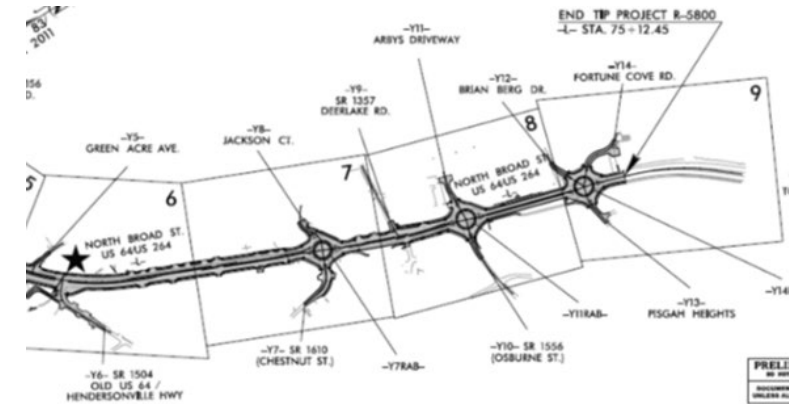
# Q4 Project Funding Destination Infrastructure

Projects that make a substantial impact on the tourism infrastructure of the destination, with cycling, downtown Brevard, entryways to our public lands, arts, music, and outlying communities being identified as priorities. These are typically brick-and-mortar projects.

## Q4

- **Heart of Brevard: “Downtown Holiday Expansion Project” \$10,000**
  - This project enhances holiday lighting in downtown by expanding decorations along East and West Main Street gateways. It includes installing power receptacles on 15-20 poles to create a vibrant, festive atmosphere that attracts visitors and boosts community spirit.
- **City of Brevard: “Asheville Highway Greenway Safety Improvements” \$24,999**
  - The Estatoe Trail section along Asheville Hwy, where NCDOT’s R-5800 project includes three roundabouts, is a critical yet unsafe link to connect the future Ecusta Trail to downtown Brevard. Improved pedestrian and cyclist design treatments are needed in NCDOT plans. This grant funds the development of treatment illustrations, design details, and cost estimates to aid NCDOT and City decision-makers in approving and funding these improvements.
- **Heart of Brevard: “Clemson Plaza Mural” \$15,000**
  - This grant will enhance the Loretta Mary Aiken mural at Clemson Plaza with educational information about the NC Music Mural Project and NC African American Heritage Commission. It includes wrapping an adjacent utility box, erecting a plaque for the NC Music Trail & NC Cultural Resources, and creating marketing materials and a website page to showcase the site’s story and history.

**Year-To-Date Funding: \$80,604.85**



# Q4 Project Funding Tourism Marketing

Projects that are designed to generate overnight visitation and/or add significant value to the visitor experience. Strong preference is given to efforts that impact traditionally slower periods of visitation. These projects are often events but can also be programs or other initiatives.

## Q4

- **Friends of Gorges State Park: “2024 Mountain Monarch Festival” \$2,000**
  - Gorges State Park’s 3rd annual monarch festival raises awareness and educates about the Monarch Butterfly, supported by Friends of Gorges with event programming, promotions, and financial backing. It consistently draws first-time visitors from across the region, making it the park’s busiest day of the year.
- **Center for Spiritual Wisdom: “Beginning the Great Search: A Day with John Philip Newell & Cami Twiling” \$4,995**
  - Their most prestigious event to date, “Beginning the Great Search,” features John Philip Newell, an internationally renowned Celtic spiritual teacher and author from Edinburgh, Scotland. Hosting Newell positions our area as a destination for spiritual and ecotourism, drawing visitors seeking meaningful connections with nature.
- **Mary C. Jenkins Community & Cultural Center: “Juneteenth Family Fest 2024” \$4,100**
  - This expanded and now multi-day event celebrates and honors an important day in history and for freedom through music, food, live performances and activities for all ages. With the support of six other local organizations, the TDA grant was designed to help target a new visitor profile through enhanced marketing efforts across the region.

**Year-To-Date Funding: \$68,668.00**







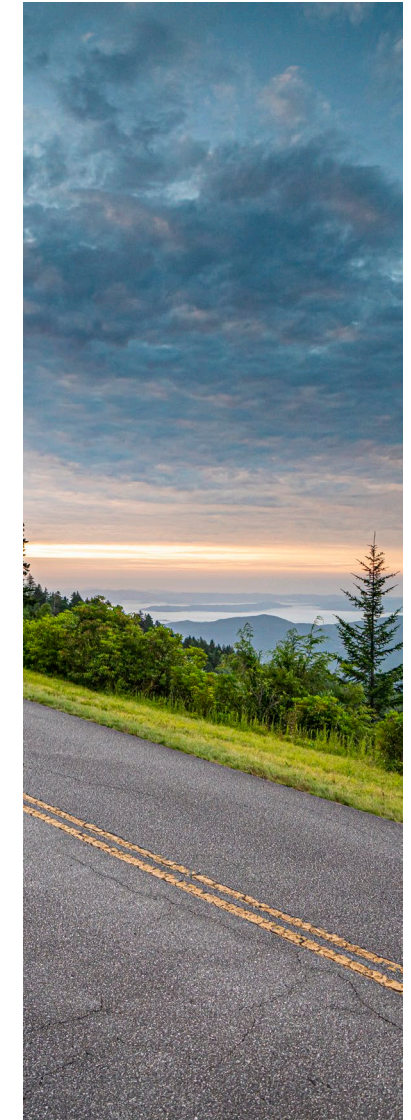
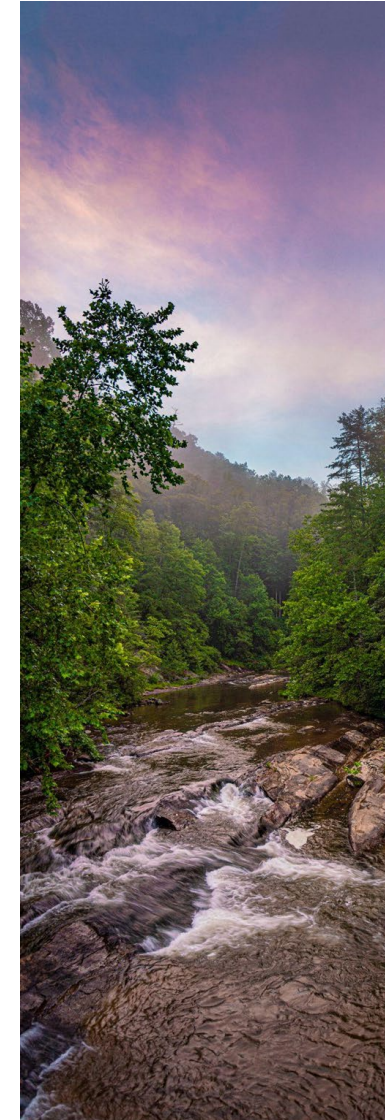
## II. Marketing



# FY24 Q4 Marketing Overview

With the advent of spring, TCTDA's fourth quarter marketing strategies and tactics shifted toward families, with extended focus on seasonal adventure, culture, and lifestyle experiences. Explore Brevard's spring advertising and communications were targeted toward the following:

- Continued focus on mid-week travel and “play and stay” opportunities with particular emphasis on targeting families, younger audiences
- Close-drive and fly markets, plus niche adventure (cycling, camping, hiking) and cultural/ lifestyle
- TV placements, especially those in 200-mile radius: Atlanta, Raleigh, Charlotte, Knoxville & Nashville
- Ongoing emphasis on Brevard's iconic brand imagery: waterfalls, rivers, trails, downtown, festivals and attractions
- Perennial brand positions: wellness, romance, kid-friendly activities, unique adventure
- Strengthen digital campaigns by expanding creative messages and distribution across platforms and new targets
- Continued positioning Explore Brevard for new earned media/PR opportunities through media missions, FAM tours, pitches, and queries
- Refreshed the *Leave it Better* and *Be Waterfall Wise* campaigns supporting Transylvania Always
- Continued collaboration with Madden on the Explore Brevard website





# Marketing Digital



During the fourth quarter, Explore Brevard’s digital ads transitioned from spring to summer messaging and was aimed at closer geographic markets. The seasons’ digital campaigns focused on outdoor adventure, culture, and lifestyle experiences. Audiences were targeted based on demographics, points of origin, habits, and niche interests.

Digital ads continued across multiple platforms, including programmatic display, native, keyword search, pre-roll, Facebook, and more. Ads retargeted those already familiar with the brand while prospecting for new viewers. Fourth quarter digital outlets also included YouTube, Blue Ridge Outdoors, Pink Bike, and AAA Go.

Media One’s Facebook advertising targeted audiences across designated nearby areas, as well as some national locations including NC, SC, AL, FL, OH, VA, TN, GA, TX, DC, NY, GA, TN, KY, and more.

The digital presence of web page partner ads continued through TCTDA’s Partner Marketing Program.



# Marketing Print

In the fourth quarter, print placements again supplemented the larger digital marketing campaign. and were targeted more toward regional or local markets. Print placements included.

- **Our State – North Carolina Outdoors** – A special Issue. TCTDA purchased a full page ad which the publication placed on the back cover “because the creative was so good.”
- **Southern Living – Regional Travel Directory Ad**
- **Southern Living Carolinas – Arts NC/SC focused Ad**
- **Our State Ad**
- **Laurel and WNC Print Co-Op Ads**

ADVENTURE  
IN EVERY  
DIRECTION

250 Waterfalls  
1000+ Miles of Trails  
Countless Unforgettable Experiences

explorebrevard.com | 800.648.4523

**BREVARD**

HERE, WEEKENDS START ON WEDNESDAY  
Escape your 9-to-5 for epic adventures every day of the week.

**SYLVANSPORT**  
The award-winning WAST redefines the modern travel trailer experience. Visit us in Brevard, NC or online to see our full line of campers, trailers, and outdoor gear.

SYLVANSPORT.COM  
(828) 393-4927

**DAVIDSON RIVER OUTFITTERS**  
The area's oldest and largest Fly Fishing Outfitter, offering a full guide service, instruction, tying sessions and all of the supplies to make your next trip a success.

DAVIDSONFLYFISHING.COM  
(828) 877-4181

**DEERWOODE RESERVE**  
New Event Venue & 11 rustic cabins on 175 acres of wildlife preserve, minutes to downtown. Water activities, trail & dog-friendly. Weddings & groups welcome!

DEERWOODE.COM  
(828) 201-2415

explorebrevard.com | 800.648.4523

**BREVARD**

**LONG WEEKEND.  
SHORT DRIVE.**

Lush forest. Spectacular long views.  
Cascading waterfalls. Cozy accommodations.  
Your next great escape is closer than you think.

explorebrevard.com

**DEERWOODE RESERVE**  
New Event Venue & 11 rustic cabins on 175 acres of wildlife preserve, minutes to downtown. Water activities, trail & dog-friendly. Weddings & groups welcome!

DEERWOODE.COM  
(828) 201-2415

**HEADWATERS OUTFITTERS**  
Moments become memories when you step into the waters of Transylvania County. Find adventure and escape for a while with Headwaters Outfitters.

HEADWATERSOUTFITTERS.COM  
(828) 877-3106

**THE SUNSET MOTEL**  
Voted #1 roadside motel. It's downtown, walkable, retro, fun, clean and affordable. With comfy beds, 4K TVs, record players, fraps, tranquil wooded setting, and hammocks. Dogs love us.

THESUNSETMOTEL.COM  
(828) 884-9106

**SYLVANSPORT**  
The award-winning WAST redefines the modern travel trailer experience. Visit us in Brevard, NC or online to see our full line of campers, trailers, and outdoor gear.

SYLVANSPORT.COM  
(828) 393-4927

**DAVIDSON RIVER OUTFITTERS**  
The area's oldest and largest Fly Fishing Outfitter, offering a full guide service, instruction, tying sessions and all of the supplies to make your next trip a success.

DAVIDSONFLYFISHING.COM  
(828) 877-4181

**D.D. BULLWINKEL'S**  
D.D. Bullwinkel's Outdoors & Moose Tracks Footwear is your local go to for gear, apparel & footwear. Serving as WNC's destination for the outdoors for 30 years.

DOBULLWINKELS.COM  
(828) 862-4700



## Marketing Broadcast

During the fourth quarter, Explore Brevard's: 30 second "Be Cool" TV spots ran in Charlotte, Atlanta, Nashville, and Knoxville on targeted cable channels. In addition, the spots ran on CBS Sunday Morning in Charlotte and on the highly rated local evening newscasts of WRAL-TV in Raleigh. Various videos were also utilized on YouTube, digital, and pre-roll platforms as well as through social media advertising.



# Marketing eNewsletters & Blogs

**Partner Spotlights** Two Partner Spotlights featured Explore Brevard partners during the fourth quarter. The April eblast featured Davidson River Outfitters and in June, Deerwoode Reserve was in the spotlight.

## Adventurist & Field Notes

During the fourth quarter, three Field Notes eblasts were distributed to approximately 38,000 opt-in subscribers. In April, "View From the Top - Transylvania County's most notable Blue Ridge Parkway mileposts" highlighted several of our favorite places on the Blue Ridge Parkway to stop, explore, relax, and take in the views. May's Field Notes, "The Ultimate Guide to Water Activities in Brevard & Transylvania County, NC" detailed ways you can paddle, fish, swim, tube, and slide in our refreshing rivers, stocked streams, and alluring lakes. In June, "Relax, Unwind, and Be Well in Transylvania County." focused ways readers can find their inner peace in Brevard and Transylvania County.

The Adventurist, Explore Brevard's signature e-newsletter was distributed at the end of each month, highlighting top events of interest for the following month, and inviting visitors to enjoy the unique offerings of the area.

Five blogs were posted on explorebrevard.com in the fourth quarter. Three of the blog captured Field Notes content for that particular month and transitioned it to a featured blog section on explorebrevard.com. The other two were part of the Outdoor NC program content. They include "Explore Responsibly: 8 Ways to Be a Mindful Traveler While Visiting Brevard and Transylvania County" and "Destination Trip Tips: Catalina Noreña".







## SAVOR THE *Flavors* OF BREVARD, NC

Calling all foodies! Get ready to journey through the flavors of Brevard, NC. From savory bites to sweet delights, our charming town is a paradise for those who love to enjoy mouthwatering moments. Whether you want to indulge in fine dining or grab a casual bite, Brevard welcomes you with open arms and plates full of delicious food. For a classic Brevard experience go hit some single track on a mountain bike and chase it down with craft beer from one of our many breweries. Another favorite that's not to miss is enjoying a scoop of ice cream... or two, after a sun-soaked day on the river or trails.



# Marketing Website Updates

The new website is a top priority, with the core team of Board and Marketing Committee Chair Dee Dee Perkins, TDA staff members Clark Lovelace and Mollie Gordon, and Garnet Fisher from Market Connections collaborating with website developer Madden on the design and development of the site. This project also includes a content overhaul, which is being spearheaded by Mollie Gordon and supported by Market Connections copywriter Anna Chastain.

The homepage and top navigation pages are nearly completed with attention shifting to development and content for secondary and interior pages, as well as design and migration of directories and events listings.

Normal maintenance and enhancement of the current website continue, with spring and summer landing pages and five new blogs published in the last quarter.

## Summer Visitor Guide

The long-awaited summer months are finally here. Warm, sunny days, green forests, and bustling towns set the scene for a lively season in Transylvania County. Our little slice of mountain paradise is the perfect place to take in the vistas, relax by the water, and enjoy the freedom of summertime. Ready to plan your escape? Let's get to it.

[View the Guide](#)



# Marketing Billboards & Signage

## 280 Billboard

- Brevard and Transylvania County's local brand board on Highway 280 continues to welcome visitors and residents alike near the Transylvania County line. Spring featured a cycling image on the billboard. It has been updated for summer with the image on this page.



## Interstate Billboards

- Explore Brevard continued to advertise on three targeted billboards strategically located on interstates in the region. These placements include I-40, coming west from Hickory; I-85 near the 74 turn-off toward Asheville, and I-26 at the Asheville Airport, which serves as a directional board. The spring/summer vinyls were installed right before the fourth quarter began.

## Kiosks

- During the fourth quarter, new informative designs were created for kiosks at DuPont Recreational State Forest and Bracken Nature Preserve. These are being printed and will be installed before the end of July.
- Additional kiosks to be completed in FY25 include Downtown Brevard, Pisgah Ranger Station, Sliding Rock, Gorges Visitor Center, and Champion Park



**BE LIKE TRASHSQUATCH**  
**LEAVE IT BETTER**

We encourage visitors and locals alike to consider the impact we all have on our public lands. We are fortunate that half of our county land is composed of beautiful forests, parks, waterfalls, and rivers. Because we treasure these incredible natural assets, we ask that you follow the principles of Leave No Trace and take action to Leave It Better.

- Pick It Up.** Bring a trash bag and pick up not just what you packed in, but all that you see.
- Pitch In.** For every 10 hours you spend in the great outdoors, give one hour of service or make a donation to an organization that supports public lands.
- Prepare Yourself.** Educate yourself on local rules, safety regulations and trail policies before you visit public lands.
- Protect Habitats.** Avoid disturbing any natural habitats or wildlife.
- Politeness, Please.** Be courteous and patient with others you may encounter on the trail with a focus on being a shining example of your user group.
- Preach What You Practice.** Teach others to Leave It Better by being an advocate in person and on social media.

Make trash in public lands as rare as me!

Find out more about LEAVE IT BETTER and how you can make a difference at [explorebrevard.com/leaveitbetter](http://explorebrevard.com/leaveitbetter)

Leave It Better is brought to you by Transylvania Alliance, an initiative of the Transylvania County Tourism Development Authority dedicated to protecting our public lands for future generations.

**BE WATERFALL WISE**

Every year, serious injuries and deaths occur around waterfalls. Admire the beauty. Be aware of the danger.

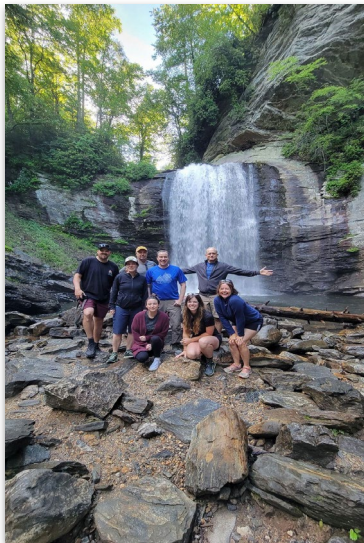
Please follow the safety tips below and share this important waterfall safety knowledge with others.

Las cascadas son peligrosas  
滝は危険  
Les cascades sont dangereuses  
瀑布危险  
Cachoeiras são perigosas  
폭포는 위험합니다  
Wasserfälle sind gefährlich  
झरने खतरनाक होते हैं।  
Водопады опасны

- OBSERVE** all posted signs leading to waterfall areas. OBSERVE todos los señales que conducen a la zona de cascada.
- STAY** on marked trails and observation areas. PERMANÉZCA en los caminos marcados y las zonas de observación.
- DO NOT** jump off of waterfalls or dive into pools. NO salte de las cascadas ni se sumerge en las piscinas.
- DO NOT** swim or wade upstream near a waterfall. NO nade ni se sumerja río arriba cerca de una cascada.
- WATCH** for slick rocks around waterfalls. CUIDADO con las rocas resbaladizas alrededor de las cascadas.
- WATCH** your children and pets at all times. VIGILE a sus hijos/as y mascotas todo el tiempo.
- DO NOT** climb on rocks above waist height. NO escale las rocas que sean más altas que su cintura.
- Visit [waterfallsafety.com](http://waterfallsafety.com) for more information. Visite [waterfallsafety.com](http://waterfallsafety.com) para más información.

**BREVARD TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY TOURISM**  
CORPORACIÓN DE TURISMO DEL CONDADO DE BREVARD





## Marketing Public Relations

During the fourth quarter, Brevard and Transylvania County continued engaging with journalists and fielding press inquiries, hosted media FAM tours, and explored earned media opportunities. These efforts have resulted in excellent press showcasing the area.

### **AdventureElevate FAM Tour**

In June, Visit NC and the TCTDA hosted five select journalists who attended the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) conference in Asheville. Wit Tuttell, Executive Director of Visit NC, and Mark Johnson with Market Connections led them on an immersive four-day adventure experience throughout Transylvania County with pit stops in Pisgah Forest, Brevard, Cedar Mountain, and Lake Toxaway. This project included substantial planning work by Mark Johnson and Mollie Gordon, on-site co-hosting by Mollie Gordon and Clark Lovelace, and the services of more than twenty local businesses in an effort to provide an unforgettable experience. The attendees were impressed. We anticipate numerous stories of this endeavor over the next year or two. Mark Johnson attended the AdventureElevate conference and made additional media contacts during a "Media Connect" session

The media group included:

- Caroline McCarley: HGTV.com, TravelChannel.com, Singletrack.com, Freehub, and Mountain Flyer
- Belinda Luksic: Escape (Australia), Telegraph UK, Toronto Star, Travel & Leisure, CNT, and The Points Guy
- Steve Lyons: Explore, Everything Zoomer, Postmedia, and Free Press
- Ariel Frager: Girl Camper Magazine, and Gear Junkie
- Andy Austin: AndyAndTheVan.com, social channels with over 170,000 followers



# Marketing Public Relations

## **Amy White FAM Tour**

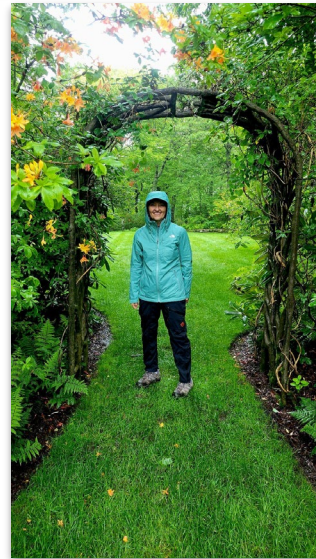
In June, a national travel and eco writer visited Transylvania County in tandem with AdventureElevate. Amy writes for National Geographic, Garden & Gun, and Sierra. She is a key national sustainability writer. Mark Johnson introduced Amy to Southern Highlands Reserve. She has done one SHR story so far in Sierra Magazine coming out later this month. Amy is working on another story about Southern Highlands Reserve and the Red Spruce partnership with the US Forest Service. She also plans to do a story about Transylvania County waterfalls and Transylvania's efforts toward sustainability.

## **Stinson Carter FAM Tour**

Stinson Carter, a writer for Esquire, Fatherly, MSNBC visited in April. Along with his family, he explored Pisgah National Forest, Downtown Brevard and the Toxaway area.

## **Robin Sutton Anders FAM Tour**

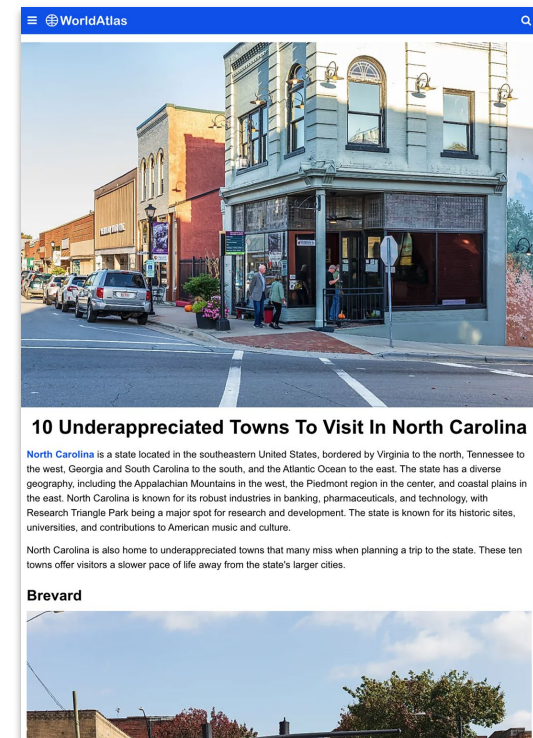
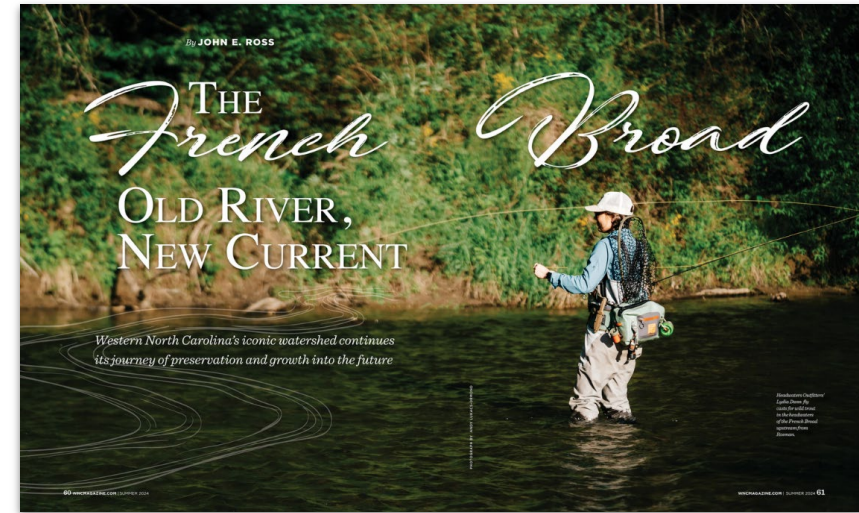
Clark Lovelace hosted Robin Sutton for a visit to the Greystone Inn. Robin was at the Greystone Inn doing research for a special feature about unique historic homes in North Carolina. Her article is in the July' edition of Our State magazine.





# Marketing Articles & TV Coverage

- **Citizen Times:** [Hidden gems: How many WNC towns are among an 'underappreciated' 10 in North Carolina?](#)
- **WUNC:** [Boundary-pushing comedian Moms Mabley honored in her hometown of Brevard, NC](#)
- **WNC Magazine, Summer Issue:**
  - "Old River, New Current" featuring Jessica Whitmire, Headwaters and more.
  - "Happy Campers" featuring (in part) Brevard Music Center, Rockbrook and Camp Carolina.
- **World Atlas:** ["10 Under-appreciated Towns in Western North Carolina."](#) (Includes Brevard)
- **Transylvania Times:** "New local adventure guide and points of interest maps available"
- **The Laurel of Asheville:** "This April in Transylvania County: Pisgah Projects, Art Market & More"
- **Charlotte Observer:** [This small town in North Carolina ranks among the best places in the South. Here's why](#)
- **Southern Living:** [6 Best Places In The South To Find Fireflies This Summer](#)
- **USA Today:** Brevard placed #9 for "Best Small Town in the South 2024" in this online voting competition



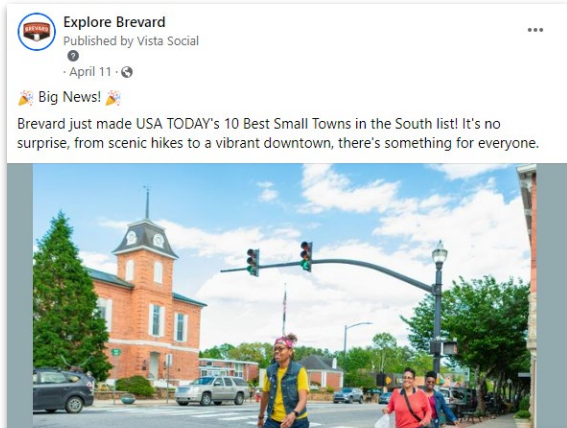
# Marketing Articles & TV Coverage

- **Travel Zoo Advertorial:** [Keep Cool in North Carolina: Immerse yourself in local waters](#) (paid by VNC)
- **Southern Living:** [18 Things To Do In Pisgah National Forest](#)
- **Southern Living:** [Head To This North Carolina Mountain Town For An Unforgettable Summer Adventure](#)
- **Travel & Leisure:** [10 Best Mountain Towns to Visit in North Carolina, According to Local Experts](#)
- **UNC TV's North Carolina Weekend:** [Pisgah Fish Camp coverage](#)
- **UPROXX:** [Road Trip From Charlotte To Asheville: The Ultimate Western North Carolina Adventure Guide](#)  
Author Emily Hart visited last summer, new articles are still coming.
- **UPROXX:** [US National Forests & Recreation Areas To Visit When The National Parks Are Too Crowded](#)
- **Business Insider:** [I've visited all 50 states solo. These are the 8 places I'd pick for a relaxing, low-key vacation](#)

The collage consists of five overlapping screenshots from various websites:

- Southern Living (Top Left):** Article titled "Immerse yourself in local waters" featuring a photo of people jumping off a wooden dock into a lake. The text mentions "There are many reasons to love North Carolina's most beautiful beaches..."
- Southern Living (Top Right):** Article titled "North Carolina Mountain Town For An Unforgettable Summer Adventure" featuring a photo of a cabin on a lake. The text mentions "In North Carolina, you'll need a steady hand on a green spiral into the hills; loops and turns as high Transylvania County and into town."
- Travel & Leisure (Middle Left):** Article titled "10 Best Mountain Towns to Visit in North Carolina, According to Local Experts" featuring a photo of a waterfall. The text mentions "There are many reasons to love North Carolina's most beautiful beaches..."
- Business Insider (Bottom Right):** Article titled "I've visited all 50 states solo. These are the 8 places I'd pick for a relaxing, low-key vacation" featuring a photo of a woman on a dock. The text mentions "Brevard is located in the heart of the 'land of waterfalls' and [it's] mountain biking's East Coast mecca..."
- PBS Travel+Leisure (Bottom Left):** Article titled "Brevard" featuring a photo of a colorful building and a video player showing a woman in a red shirt. The text mentions "Brevard has been a successful, family-owned restaurant for 50 years..."





# Marketing Social Media

## FACEBOOK METRICS

FOLLOWERS: 18.7 K

REACH THIS QUARTER: 1M

TOP PERFORMING POST: 64.3K Reach (Non-boosted/paid)

This organic content was posted in April and announced Brevard making USA TODAY's 10 Best Small Towns in the South list. It was shared 136 times.

## INSTAGRAM METRICS

FOLLOWERS: 21.4 K

REACH THIS QUARTER: 39.6 K

TOP PERFORMING POST: 5.8K Reach (Non-boosted/paid)

This organic content was posted in April and announced Brevard making USA TODAY's 10 Best Small Towns in the South list. It was shared 85 times.

*On Facebook and Instagram, reach represents the number of unique users who see your post or page.*

## YOUTUBE METRICS

SUBSCRIBERS: 342

VIDEOS: 69

TOP PERFORMING VIDEO: 19.0K Views

This quarter's top performing video was *Come to Brevard and "Be Cool"*. Ninety-seven percent of viewers watched the entire 30 second video.

*On YouTube, a view is counted on when a user watches a video for a minimum of 30 seconds.*

# Marketing Photo & Video

## Trailblazers Campaign

The goal is to tell the story of Brevard and Transylvania County to potential new, or even returning visitors, by having local trailblazers highlight what makes the area special to them. Trailblazer videos will be featured in a digital campaign on social media with boosted posts, EB.com, and Youtube.

Initial versions of the Woody Platt, Jeanne & Dana Hawkins, and John Taylor Trailblazer videos have been edited. Additional spring Trailblazer interviews with Kelly Holdbrooks, Matthew Busche, Billy Smith, and Cata Norena were shot in late May. They are currently being edited.

## Festival & Drone Video Shoot of White Squirrel Weekend

Drone & street level video shoot, objective was to capture images and video from Downtown Brevard during a festival. Videos are being created to spotlight White Squirrel Weekend as well as highlight general festival scenes. Uses include social media, website, and other future video needs.







# III. Media One Digital Report



# Quarterly Report: April - June 2024





1

## Traffic Overview

Overall traffic to the website is up 47.4% compared to last year, with almost all sources of traffic up.

2

## Top Pages

The top pages besides the home page were the eat-drink page, lodging, and downtown Brevard. The white squirrel event page was the 7th most viewed page this quarter.

3

## Organic Traffic

Organic traffic was up 26.6% compared to last year. White squirrel-related clicks are the top searched keywords outside of brand keywords.





### Google Search

Clicks  
4,689



### Native Content Activation

Clicks  
4,105



### Facebook/IG

Impressions  
1,668,921



### YouTube

Video views  
63,845



### Display - Prospecting & Retargeting

Impressions  
521,894



### CTV

Video completed  
91,650



### Pre-Roll Video

Video completed  
256,004

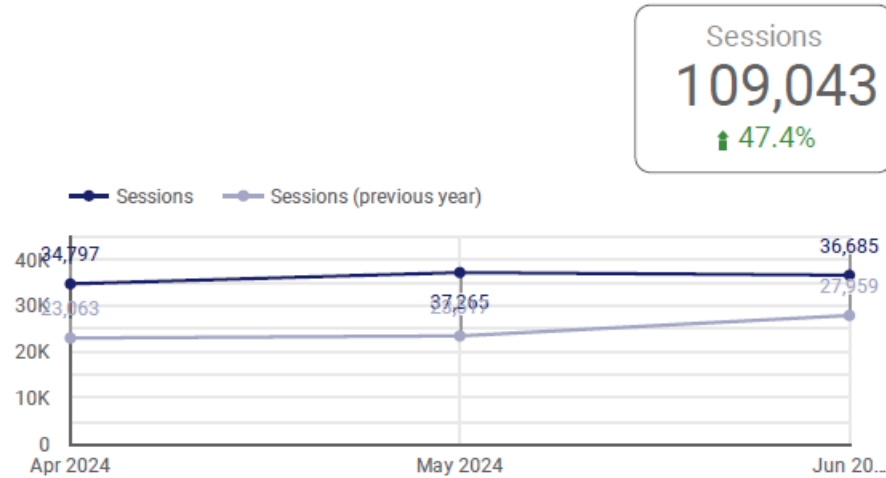
**Pacing Details:**

- Increases in delivery metrics were realized for Google, YouTube, and Pre-Roll.
- CTV ran only in April this quarter.
- All metrics for the entire campaign delivered in full with bonus metrics.





## Traffic to the Website



## Top Sources of Traffic

Rank	Session source / medium	Sessions	% Δ
1.	google / organic	44,747	28.8% ↑
2.	(direct) / (none)	15,068	40.4% ↑
3.	MediaOne / facebook	8,133	71.3% ↑
4.	MediaOne / display	7,163	129.3% ↑
5.	MediaOne / native	5,743	40.4% ↑
6.	MediaOne / google	4,298	28.6% ↑
7.	visitnc.com / referral	3,794	25.0% ↑
8.	fb / paid	3,093	-
9.	m.facebook.com / referral	2,843	887.2% ↑
10.	storage.googleapis.com / referral	1,863	-
11.	bing / organic	1,798	5.5% ↑
12.	RomanticAsheville.com / referral	1,684	-
13.	duckduckgo / organic	1,030	-12.0% ↓
14.	yahoo / organic	971	-3.9% ↓
15.	headwatersoutfitters.com / referral	639	-16.5% ↓
16.	cityofbrevard.com / referral	572	793.8% ↑
17.	MediaOne / pre-roll	483	39.2% ↑
18.	l.facebook.com / referral	421	103.4% ↑
19.	blueridgeparkway.org / referral	387	82.5% ↑
Grand total		109,043	47.4% ↑

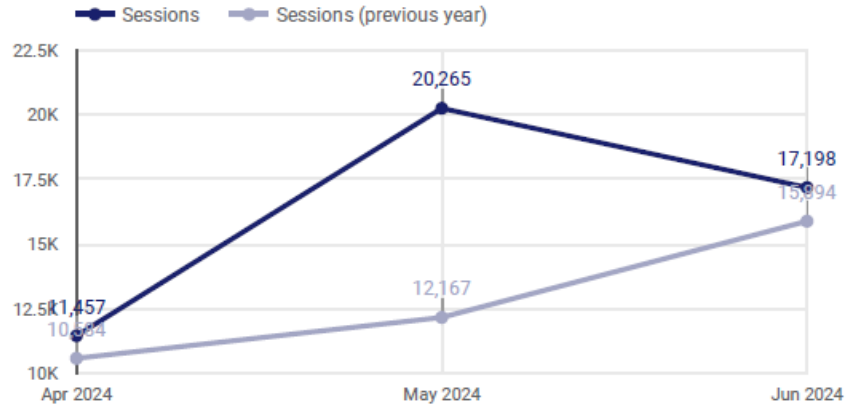
## Top Visited Pages

Rank	Page path	Views	% Δ
1.	/	28,729	-27.6% ↓
2.	/business-categories/eat-drink/	20,076	72.8% ↑
3.	/business-categories/lodging/	13,349	-33.1% ↓
4.	/artsand-culture/downtown-brevard/	8,918	13.3% ↑
5.	/top-10-waterfalls/	8,708	16.1% ↑
6.	/events-calendar/	8,543	40.0% ↑
7.	/event/white-squirrel-weekend-may-24th-26th-presented-by-dd-bullwinkels-outdoors/	8,523	1,337.3% ↑
8.	/the-great-outdoors/waterfalls/	7,245	-57.9% ↓
9.	/festivals-events/	4,976	-46.7% ↓
Grand total		245,311	-26.3% ↓



## Organic traffic overview:

Sessions  
**49,030**  
↑ 26.6%



## Keyword Rankings:

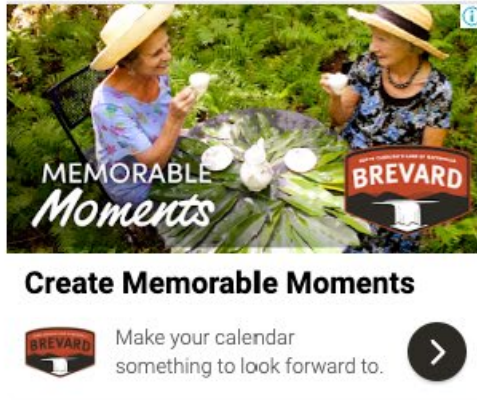
Query	Average Position
brevard	4
brevard nc	5.1
brevard waterfalls	1.6

	Query	Impressions	Clicks	Site CTR	Average Position
1.	brevard nc	63.5K	2,696	4.25%	5.12
2.	white squirrel weekend, may 24th-26th presented by dd bullwinkel's outdoors, allen tate/beverly-hanks downtown brevard, 24 may	1.7K	888	53.75%	1.01
3.	white squirrel festival	8K	847	10.52%	4.1
4.	brevard	29.1K	825	2.83%	4.04
5.	white squirrel weekend, may 24th-26th presented by dd bullwinkel's outdoors, allen tate/beverly-hanks downtown brevard, 25 may	1.2K	694	60.03%	1.01
6.	white squirrel festival brevard	1.9K	479	25.04%	2.41
7.	white squirrel weekend, may 24th-26th presented by dd bullwinkel's outdoors, allen tate/beverly-hanks downtown brevard, 26 may	767	478	62.32%	1.01
8.	things to do in brevard nc	7.5K	434	5.81%	4.91
9.	brevard north carolina	12K	414	3.46%	4.78
10.	white squirrel festival , white squirrel institute, 25 may	948	372	39.24%	2.51
11.	downtown brevard nc	1.1K	366	33.24%	2.83
12.	brevard waterfalls	1.2K	352	29.04%	1.65
13.	white squirrel festival 2024, brevard, 24 may	967	349	36.09%	2.51
14.	appalachian folk festival, allison-deaver house, 29 jun	601	321	53.41%	1.01
15.	brevard restaurants	3.9K	279	7.18%	2.36
16.	brevard nc restaurants	3.4K	265	7.84%	2.15
17.	downtown brevard	900	251	27.89%	3.16
18.	brevard nc events	613	238	38.83%	1.68
19.	explore brevard	393	234	59.54%	1.06
20.	waterfalls near brevard nc	802	214	26.68%	1.7





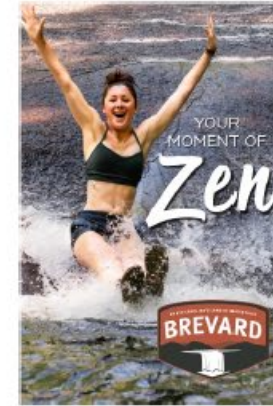
## Top Native Ad:



## Top Meta Ads:



## Top Display Ads:



## Top Pre-roll Ad:

Be Cool



## Top YouTube Ad:

Earl



\*Top digital ads based on a combination of CTR and post-click performance on the website.

\*Top video ads based on completion rate.







## IV. Visitor Reports + Insights



## Key Insights

Zartico reports through June tell us the following about visitors to Transylvania County:

### **Spending:**

- Visitors spent an average of \$176 per visit. This is about half of the state average. We assume much of this is due to our high number of day trippers.
- Top expenditure categories were (in order): Accommodations, Food, Retail

### **Origins:**

- North Carolina was the state of origin for 28% of our visitors. The top origin counties for in-state visitors were (in order): Mecklenburg, Wake, Union, Gaston, and Guilford.
- Out-of-state visitors accounted for 72% of total visits, with top origin states (in order): Florida, South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, and Alabama.
- The top origin markets for out-of-state visitors were (in order): Greenville (SC), Atlanta (GA), Columbia (SC), Tampa-St Pete (FL), and Orlando (FL).



## Short Term Rental Data (as of June, 2024)

\*Data is provided by AirDNA based on data scraping performed by a new third party, Arrivalist. These changes have uncovered that some services (like Airbnb and VRBO) were being counted twice, so "Available Units" and "Occupancy" will be lower than prior reports. The data for both years on this report was collected via the new process and is accurate for an apples to apples comparison.

### Annual

	Available Units	Occupancy	ADR
<b>Twelve-month period ending June, 2024</b>	1,474	49%	\$264
<b>Twelve-month period ending June, 2023</b>	1,355	50%	\$270
<b>% Change</b>	9%	-2%	-2%

### Monthly

Available Units	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
<b>FY 23/24</b>	1,261	1,245	1,252	1,338	1,336	1,245	1,138	956	1,120	1,079	1,250	1,352
<b>FY 22/23</b>	1,227	1,178	1,163	1,201	1,202	1,135	1,044	862	971	1,047	1,130	1,232
<b>% Change</b>	3%	6%	8%	11%	11%	10%	9%	11%	15%	3%	11%	10%
Occupancy	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
<b>FY 23/24</b>	70%	55%	50%	64%	48%	41%	24%	37%	45%	43%	48%	58%
<b>FY 22/23</b>	73%	58%	50%	64%	49%	44%	28%	34%	44%	48%	47%	58%
<b>% Change</b>	-4%	-5%	0%	0%	-2%	-7%	-14%	9%	2%	-11%	3%	0%
ADR	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
<b>FY 23/24</b>	\$291	\$277	\$268	\$269	\$271	\$274	\$252	\$239	\$253	\$247	\$258	\$273
<b>FY 22/23</b>	\$288	\$281	\$276	\$276	\$279	\$285	\$262	\$255	\$248	\$251	\$258	\$279
<b>% Change</b>	1%	-1%	-3%	-3%	-3%	-4%	-4%	-6%	2%	-2%	0%	-2%



## FY24 Q4

# Trending & Tourism Insights

As the fourth quarter of the fiscal year came to a close, the busy season was definitely upon us. Public lands are at or beyond maximum capacity, Downtown Brevard and other town centers are bustling, camps and the camper parents they bring are in full swing, accommodations are filled, lots of day trippers are making their way here, and shops, restaurants, outfitters, and other tourism-related businesses and attractions are as busy as can be. With all of this in mind, our aim is not to bring additional visitors here at this time. Our focus instead is on keeping visitors informed on what's going on, spreading their impact around Transylvania County, pushing them to be safe and responsible as they explore, and convincing day trippers to plan an overnight trip next time.

Occupancy tax returns through May reflect a drop of less than 1% over the prior year. From what we're hearing, traffic to tourism-related businesses and public lands might be down a little bit more. A full 12-month picture of occupancy tax returns will be presented in the annual report.

On a final note, many new tourism-related businesses have opened in the third and fourth quarter of FY24, including restaurants, accommodations, coffee shops, dispensaries, wine shops, retail, and more, reflecting that tourism continues to be a driver for small businesses in Transylvania County.

