



— VISIT —
HAYWOOD
WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS

HAYWOOD COUNTY
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

May 27, 2026 | Board of Directors Meeting



— VISIT —
HAYWOOD
WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS

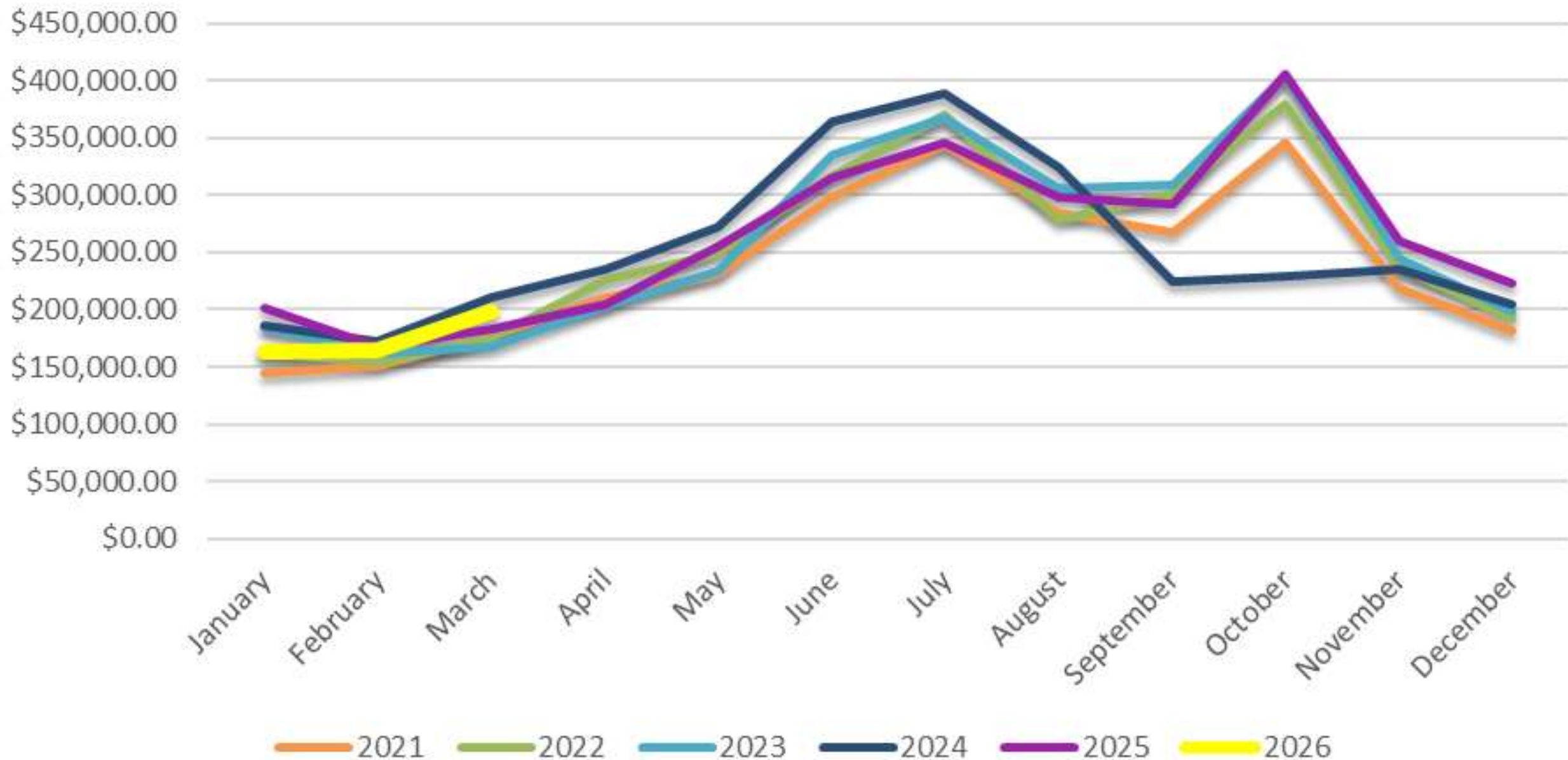
Occupancy Tax & Lodging Data

Fiscal Year Monthly Occupancy Tax Comparison (Gross)

	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	\$ Change from Previous Year	% Change from Previous Year
January	\$184,467.69	\$186,374.80	\$201,802.09	\$162,893.11	(\$38,908.98)	-19.28%
<i>Canton</i>	\$15,055.47	\$20,320.83	\$15,212.14	\$13,623.75	(\$1,588.39)	-10.44%
<i>Clyde</i>	\$17,470.28	\$16,150.10	\$11,492.80	\$14,514.62	\$3,021.82	26.29%
<i>Lake Junaluska</i>	\$13,371.82	\$8,856.70	\$15,684.34	\$5,952.10	(\$9,732.24)	-62.05%
<i>Maggie Valley</i>	\$84,230.59	\$86,145.46	\$98,739.45	\$73,493.67	(\$25,245.78)	-25.57%
<i>Waynesville</i>	\$54,339.53	\$54,901.71	\$60,673.36	\$55,308.97	(\$5,364.39)	-8.84%
February	\$162,325.68	\$171,592.82	\$167,308.30	\$165,420.70	(\$1,887.60)	-1.13%
<i>Canton</i>	\$13,852.03	\$17,963.11	\$14,973.41	\$13,621.36	(\$1,352.05)	-9.03%
<i>Clyde</i>	\$15,802.06	\$13,965.94	\$10,246.79	\$13,826.42	\$3,579.63	34.93%
<i>Lake Junaluska</i>	\$13,240.97	\$11,140.80	\$7,753.81	\$9,591.11	\$1,837.30	23.70%
<i>Maggie Valley</i>	\$71,592.00	\$78,844.03	\$77,469.39	\$70,314.01	(\$7,155.38)	-9.24%
<i>Waynesville</i>	\$47,838.62	\$49,678.94	\$56,864.90	\$58,067.80	\$1,202.90	2.12%
March	\$168,067.49	\$211,448.41	\$182,523.15	\$198,551.83	\$16,028.68	8.78%
<i>Canton</i>	\$19,106.54	\$20,266.92	\$16,762.40	16464.39	(\$298.01)	-1.78%
<i>Clyde</i>	\$15,154.29	\$19,672.69	\$12,889.35	18609.86	\$5,720.51	44.38%
<i>Lake Junaluska</i>	\$11,528.51	\$13,510.97	\$19,478.05	13489.64	(\$5,988.41)	-30.74%
<i>Maggie Valley</i>	\$69,112.76	\$84,011.37	\$63,363.34	70051.91	\$6,688.57	10.56%
<i>Waynesville</i>	\$53,165.39	\$73,986.46	\$70,030.01	79936.03	\$9,906.02	14.15%
	\$3,043,483.81	\$3,270,866.51	\$2,932,906.56	\$2,349,523.62	\$191,000.61	8.85%

[Link to Online Version](#)

YOY Monthly Occupancy Tax Comparison





— VISIT —
HAYWOOD
WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS

Old Business

Raccoon Creek Bike Park - Grant Extension Request

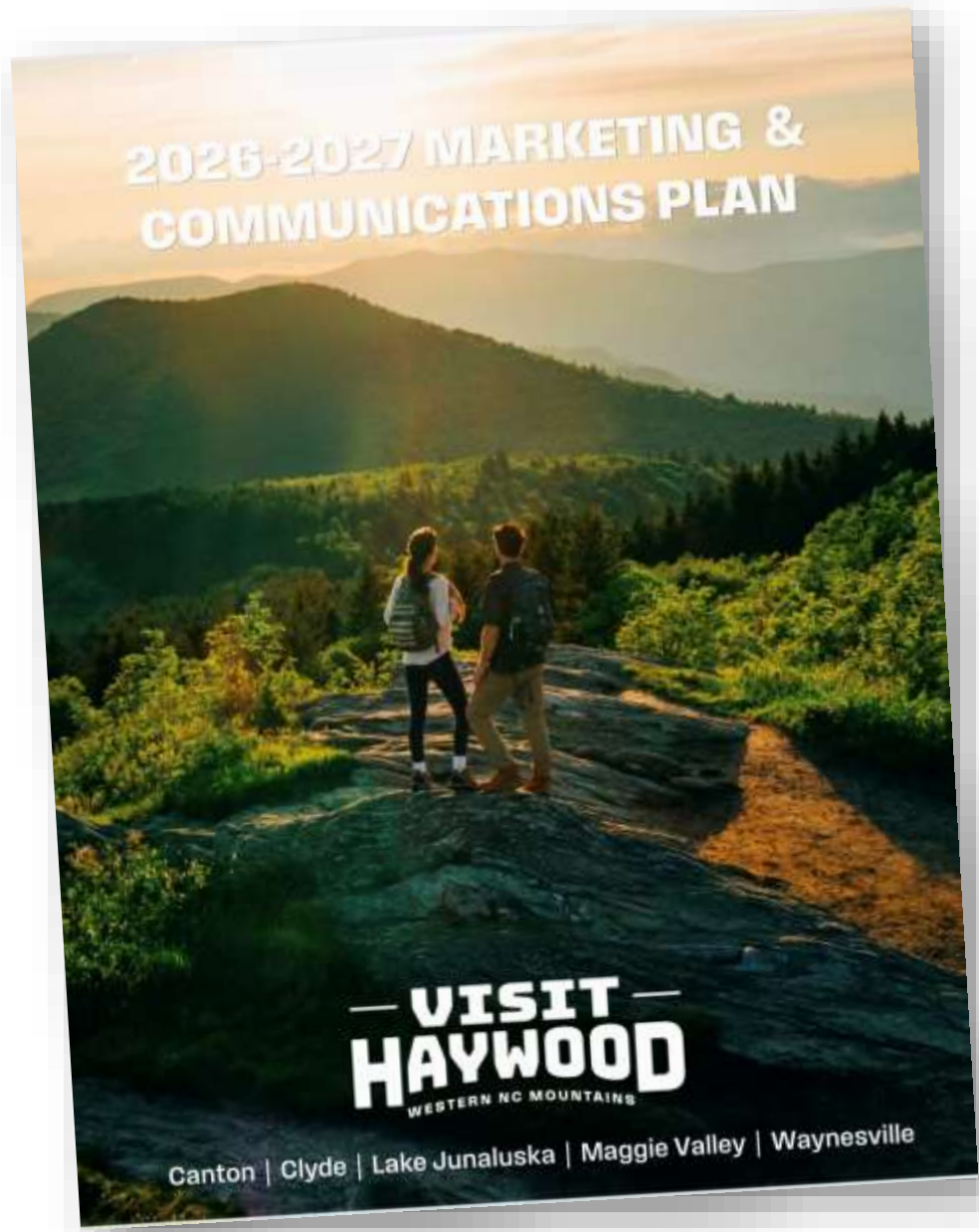
Original Completion Date:	June 30, 2026
New Completion Date:	July 31, 2026
OTPF Grant Award Amount:	\$150,000
County-Wide Grant Award:	\$125,000
TOTAL – Roll-Over to FY26-27:	\$275,000



A scenic view of the Western NC Mountains. The foreground shows a rocky, moss-covered trail winding through green vegetation. A hiker is visible in the distance on the right side of the trail. The background features rolling mountain ranges under a blue sky with light clouds.

— VISIT —
HAYWOOD
WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS

New Business

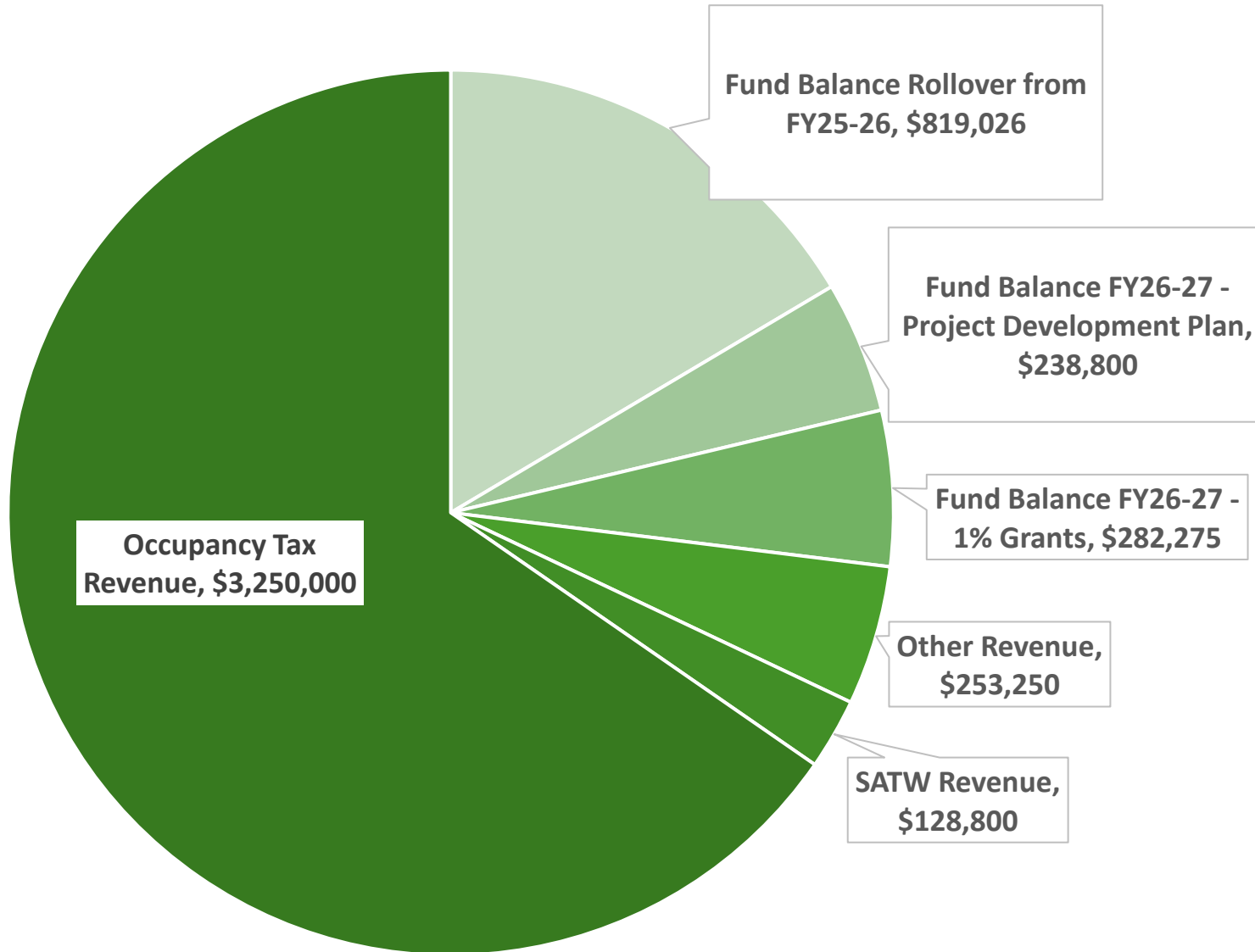


2026-2027 Marketing & Communications Plan

This plan prioritizes:

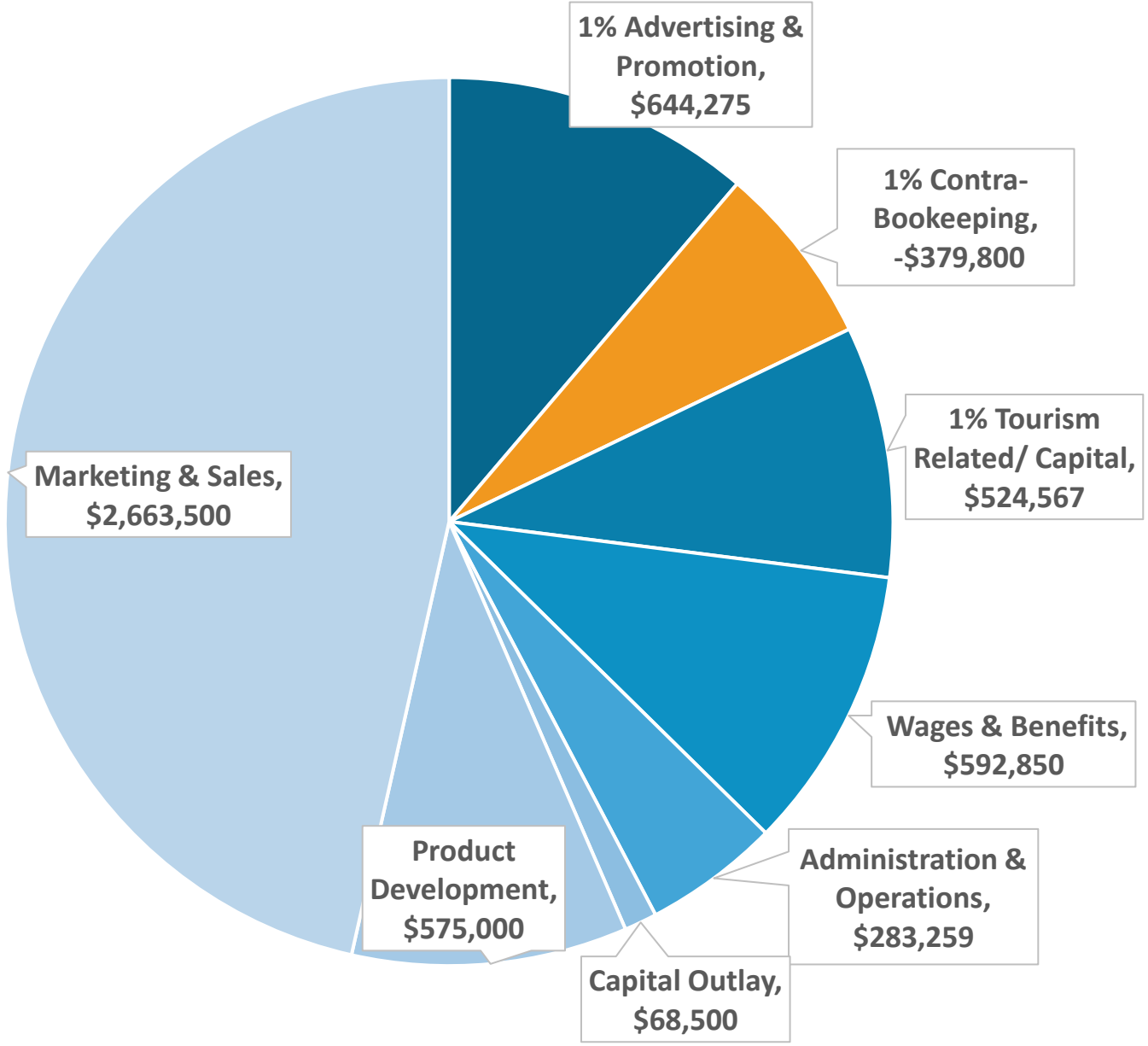
- ❖ Intentional storytelling
- ❖ Data-informed decision making
- ❖ Audience-centric personalization
- ❖ Strategic use of emerging technologies
- ❖ Driving year-round visitation
- ❖ Co-op advertising & partner collaboration

FY 2026-2027 Proposed Revenue



Total Revenue: \$4,972,151

FY 2026-2027 Proposed Expenses



This budget prioritizes:

- ❖ SATW 2026 Convention
- ❖ County-wide Project Development Plan
- ❖ Research & Destination Insights
- ❖ Capital Grant Program
- ❖ Always-On Marketing & Advertising

**Note \$379,800 in contra-bookkeeping*

Revenues	\$4,972,151
Expenses	
1% Marketing/ Advertising/ Promotion	\$644,275
Total 1% Contribution to Destination Mktg	-\$209,600
Total 1% Contribution to Project Dev Plan	-\$61,200
Total 1% Contribution to Ice Fest	-\$109,000
1% Tourism Related	\$524,567
Total 1% Expenses	\$789,042
Wages & Benefits	\$592,850
Administration & Operations	\$286,259
Capital Outlay	\$68,500
Marketing & Sales	\$2,663,500
Product Development	\$575,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$4,972,151
TOTAL REVENUES	\$4,972,151
<i>Variance</i>	<i>\$0</i>

FY 2026-2027 Proposed Budget

Suggested Motion:
**Vote to move the
 budget forward and
 call for a public hearing on
 June 24, 2026**



— VISIT —
HAYWOOD
WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS

Fiscal Year 2026-2027

Grant Summary & Committee Recommendations

FY26–27 Grant Process Summary

December 2025:

- FY26–27 grant applications and updated guidelines released
- Required templates and Destination Master Plan criteria published

January to April 2026:

- Introduced new 1:1 grant coaching sessions
- HCTDA Staff provided ongoing applicant support and technical assistance
- Initial applications for capital, tourism promotion and legacy events due 3/17/26
- Staff reviewed applications for eligibility, completeness, budgets, marketing plans and Master Plan alignment. Suggested improvements and corrections for most applications
- Applicants submitted revisions and corrections as needed by 4/9/26

FY26–27 Grant Process Summary

May 2026:

- ❑ All applications compiled and uploaded for review. [Full grant documents can be viewed here](#) (*click each hyperlink and scroll down to review complete applications*).
- ❑ Product Development Committee independently reviewed and scored applications based on:
 - Tourism impact, overnight visitation potential, destination master plan alignment & Community and economic impact
- ❑ Full-day committee review meeting held. [Meeting notes can be viewed here](#).
 - Meeting included in-person capital grant presentations.
 - Committee discussed applications, presentations, funding priorities based on preliminary budgets available, and conditional recommendations
- ❑ Funding recommendations agreed upon for EC and Board consideration
- ❑ Executive Committee reviewed and discussed all applications and PDC recommendations.

Powered By Visitors

Visitors who spend the night in Haywood County lodging facilities (Hotels, Motels, B&Bs and Short-Term Rentals) pay 4% occupancy tax on their accommodations. Lodging properties collect the assessment, then remit it per state law for the HCTDA to leverage and invest on behalf of Haywood County - all through the lens of our travel economy and local residents.

3% of these funds are used for HCTDA operations and county-wide programs. The remaining 1% is split by zip code, used for destination marketing and reinvested into each zip code via grant programs.



Occupancy Tax Restrictions

Per Session Law 2007-337, House Bill 1013:

The Haywood County Tourism Development Authority shall use at least two-thirds of the funds to **promote travel and tourism** in the county and shall use the remainder for **tourism-related expenditures**.

Promote Travel & Tourism:

To advertise or market an area or activity, publish and distribute pamphlets and other materials, conduct market research, *or engage in similar promotional activities that attract tourists or business travelers to the area.*

Tourism-Related Expenditures:

Expenditures that, in the judgement of the HCTDA, are designed to increase the use of lodging facilities, meeting facilities, and convention in the county by attracting tourists or business travelers to the county. The term *includes tourism-related capital expenditures.*

Scoring

Scores between 18-20 will have a high priority for funding

Scores between 15.0-17.9 will be recommended for funding

Scores between 12.0-14.9 consider funding if resources allow

Scores below 12 points will not be recommended for funding.

Capital Applications Summary

Clyde Riverfront Park – Construct an open pavilion venue and implement Clyde’s first segment of the Hellbender Trail at Riverfront Park, creating a critical connection between downtown Clyde and the Pigeon River.

Stuart Auditorium Modernization – Transform the historic 2,000 seat auditorium into Haywood County’s premier, year-round destination for large-scale events by investing in a climate-controlled breezeway, ADA public restrooms, new stage lighting, and renovated facilities green room and restrooms.

Boyd Ave Greenway Connector – Build the segment of the Richland Creek Greenway to connect Dutch Fisher Ballpark to Boyd Ave and improve the connection to Killian St to provide safe off-road walking, jogging, and biking.

Kiwanis Playground 2.0 Enhancement – Establish new upgraded play equipment where the crumbling 22+ year old play structure is currently located at the Waynesville Recreation Park to enhance year-round interactive play through increased sensory and accessibility features.

Upper Falls Connector Trail – Connect the Blue Ridge Parkway to the valley floor of Graveyard Fields and accommodate equipment needed to support broader restoration work and major trail system improvements while expanding recreation opportunities by adding trail mileage and creating a first link in a new loop around Upper Falls trail.

Capital Funding Requests & Recommendations

Applicant Name	Grant Type	Project	Total Cost	Grant Request	Ave. Score	PDC Rec	EC Rec
Town of Clyde	Capital	Clyde Riverfront Park	\$473,946	\$72,720	18.8	Fully Fund. 1%- \$54,710 3%- \$18,010	Agree
Lake Junaluska Assembly	Capital	Stuart Auditorium Modernization	\$388,000	\$175,000	17.3	Fully Fund. 1%- \$126,730 3%- \$48,270	Agree
Town of Waynesville	Capital	Boyd Ave Greenway Connector	\$255,000	\$127,500	16.1	Fully Fund 1% - \$127,500	Agree
Kiwanis Club of Waynesville	Capital	Kiwanis Playground 2.0 Enhancement	\$537,300	\$90,000	13.7	Fund up to \$90,000 with contingencies*	Agree
The Pisgah Conservancy	Capital	Upper Falls Connector Trail	\$441,410.88	\$66,808.17	17.9	Fully fund 3% - \$66,808.17	Agree

Capital Funding – Kiwanis Funding Contingency

The Product Development Committee supports recommending funding of the playground project up to \$90,000 from the Waynesville 1% Capital Funds, contingent upon Kiwanis receiving the PARTF grant and submitting a revised plan for the park to HCTDA, incorporating artistic and ecological elements to make the park a more unique and Haywood-focused asset.

The revised park plan should include:

- A planting plan, coordinated with the Waynesville Tree Board, that provides shade amenity, ecological habitat value, and spatial connection to the larger park ecosystem.
- An arts program that integrates local artist work into the visual/tactile/sonic experience.
- Attempt to integrate more unique play structures/experiences that increase engagement with the natural world and surrounding park environment.

Canton Funding Requests & Recommendations

Applicant Name	Grant Type	Project	Total Cost	Grant Request	Average Score	PDC Rec	EC Rec
Town of Canton	Legacy	118 th Day Labor Day Festival	\$200,050	\$15,000	17.7	Fully fund. \$15,000 – 1%	Agree
Lake Logan	Promo	Cold Mountain Music Festival	\$82,400	\$17,700	15.4	Partial Fund \$10,000 – 1%	Agree
Canton Merchant Partnership	Promo	Haywood Grows Farm Fest	\$53,450	\$10,000	11.4	Partial Fund \$7,000 – 1% contingent*	Open for Board discussion
Canton Merchant Partnership	Promo	Mill Around Town	\$10,700	\$3,000	12.8	Fully Fund \$3,000 – 1% contingent*	Agree

FY 26-27 Promotion Requests: \$45,700

FY 26-27 Promotion Funds Available~: \$15,121 + \$28,000 FB (\$43,121)

~Numbers are preliminary estimates

**Both contingent upon receiving a revised marketing plan with increased marketing outside a 50-mile radius.*

Lake Junaluska Funding Requests & Recommendations

Applicant Name	Grant Type	Project	Total Cost	Grant Request	Ave Score	PDC Rec	EC Rec
Lake Junaluska Assembly	Legacy	Independence Day Celebration	\$47,200	\$9,150	17.2	Fully Fund 1% - \$9,150	Agree
Lake Junaluska Assembly	Promo	Lake Junaluska Promotions	\$59,436	\$39,624	14.2	Partial Fund 1% - \$16,286 Contingent*	Agree
Steve Sutton Memorial Charitable Trust	Promo	Steve Sutton Festival	\$42,452	\$15,000	15.2	Partial Fund 1% - \$5,722	Agree

FY 26-27 Promotion Requests: \$63,774
FY 26-27 Promotion Funds Available~:
\$26,158 + \$5,000 FB (\$31,158)

~Numbers are preliminary estimates

**Contingency to specifically fund promotion of Friends of the Lake 5K, US Army Chorus 70 Anniversary Concert, Smoky Mountain Ukulele Zen Retreat, Historical Audio Walking Tour of LJ, Cherokee Lake Cruise, and Wildflower Walks.*

Maggie Valley Funding Requests & Recommendations

Applicant Name	Grant Type	Project	Total Cost	Grant Request	Average Score	PDC Rec	EC Rec
Town of Maggie Valley	Legacy	Backyard 4 th	\$26,280	\$6,570	17.2	Fully Fund 1% - \$6,570	Agree
Maggie Valley Falls Days	Legacy	Fall Days	\$31,100	\$7,775	13.5	Fully Fund 1% - \$7,775	Agree
Haywood County Arts Council	Promo	Smoky Mountains Bluegrass Festival	\$50,019	\$10,000	14.3	Fully Fund 1% - \$10,000	Agree
Ben's Backdraft Barbecue	Promo	Barbecue Festival	\$25,000	\$12,500	12.8	Fully Fund 1% - \$12,500 Contingent*	Agree

FY 26-27 Promotion Requests: \$36,845

FY 26-27 Promotion Funds Available~: \$47,733 + \$310,000 FB (\$357,733)

~Numbers are preliminary estimates

**Contingent upon applicant working with TDA to revise the marketing plan.*

Waynesville Funding Requests & Recommendations

Applicant Name	Grant Type	Project	Total Cost	Grant Request	Average Score	PDC Rec	EC Rec
Lake Junaluska Assembly	Legacy	Independence Day Celebration	\$47,200	\$3,750	17.2	Fully Fund 1% - \$3,750	Agree
Haywood County Pride on Main	Promo	Pride on Main	\$13,800	\$8,000	12.9	Partial Fund 1% - \$4,700 Contingent*	Agree
DWC	Promo	Appalachian Heritage Weekend	\$61,290	\$39,425	14.9	Partial Fund 1% - \$30,000	Agree
Shelton House	Promo	Shelton House / Haywood Co Arts Trail	\$3,000	\$2,000	14.9	Fully Fund 1% - \$2,000	Agree

FY 26-27 Promotion Requests: \$53,175
FY 26-27 Promotion Funds Available~: \$41,850 + \$165,000 FB (\$206,850)

**Contingent upon receiving a revised marketing plan with all forms of marketing, including free, listed.*

~Numbers are preliminary estimates

Haywood County Funding Requests & Recommendations

Applicant Name	Grant Type	Project	Total Cost	Grant Request	Average Score	PDC Rec	EC Rec
Smoky Mountain Event Center	Legacy	Haywood County Fair	\$70,821.96	\$15,000	15.7	Partial Fund 3% - \$12,000 Contingent*	Agree
Haywood County Arts Council	Promo	Studio Tour	\$12,595	\$6,000	15.0	Fully Fund 3% - \$6,000	Agree

FY 26-27 Promotion Requests: \$21,000 + RO \$9812.67 (\$30,812.67)

FY 26-27 Promotion Funds Available~: \$28,000

~Numbers are preliminary estimates

**Contingency that they collect zip code data with their ticket sales so the TDA can run the Economic Impact Calculator.*

A photograph of two motorcyclists riding on a paved road through a scenic, mountainous landscape. The lead rider is wearing a black leather jacket and a helmet, while the passenger is wearing an orange jacket and a helmet. The background features lush green hills, evergreen trees, and a cloudy sky. The text '— VISIT — HAYWOOD' is overlaid in large white letters, with 'WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS' in smaller white letters below it.

— VISIT —
HAYWOOD
WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS

Proposed Agency Contracts

Advertising Agency of Record Scope of Work | FY 2026-2027



\$869,543 Agency Marketing Budget includes:

- Agency Fees for advertising, creative & reporting: \$318,343
- Annual advertising including Google, Meta, CTV, special events and more: \$541,000
- Other Expenses: \$10,200



Requesting a motion approving this scope of work, extending our Advertising Agency Contract through the end of June 2027, noting that the funding is included in the budget, and authorizing the Executive Director to sign.

Public Relations Scope of Work | FY 2026-2027



\$212,000 Public Relations Budget includes:

- Agency Fees: \$97,248
- Media Visits & SMT: \$29,000
- Content Creator Program: \$28,500
- PR Enhancement: \$50,000
- Other Expenses: \$7252

Requesting a motion approving this scope of work, extending our Public Relations Agency Contract through the end of June 2027, noting that the funding is included in the budget, and authorizing the Executive Director to sign.

Our State Magazine Contract | FY 2026-2027

\$68,300.00 Our State Contract includes:

- Two 2-page Print Ad Spreads
- One Full Page Print Ad
- Two dedicated E-newsletters
- Tar Heel Towns Digital Article
- Tar Heel Reels promoting Winter

Requesting a motion approving the Advertising Agreement with Our State magazine, noting that the funding is included in the budget, and authorizing the Executive Director to sign.





— VISIT —
HAYWOOD
WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS

Staff Reports

Product Development Committee Opening

The Product Development Committee guides the HCTDA in implementing the Destination Master Plan by taking a proactive approach to tourism planning and aiming to bridge economic gaps and foster long-term growth. The PDC also reviews, scores and makes recommendations on HCTDA grant applications, guidelines and policies and procedures.



There is currently one opening on the committee.

- Canton-Community representative
- Committee member must live and work in Haywood County

Ideal candidates will be forward thinking and represent one of these important sectors: Outdoor Recreation, Arts & Culture, Retail, Dining, or Attractions

Application Deadline: Tuesday, June 16, 5pm

[Link to Application](#) (scroll down the page)



NTTW RECAP



PARTNER OPPORTUNITIES

— VISIT —
HAYWOOD
WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS

2026/2027 CONTENT CALENDAR

July

- Visitor Guide/Co-Op Ad Sales
- Swimming Holes
- July 4 Celebrations
- Elevations/Cool

August

- Website Launch
- 828 Day (Local pride)
- Agritourism/Farms
- End of Summer

September

- Pump Track Qualifier
- Elk Rut Season/Wildlife
- Labor Day
- Fall Flavors
- Autumn Equinox

October

- SATW
- Legends & Folklore
- Leaf-Peeping
- Harvest & Music Festivals

November

- Gift of Haywood
- Small Business Saturday
- Family/ Friendship
- Late fall foliage

December

- Gift of Haywood
- Christmas Celebrations
- Shopping
- Skiing/Tubing
- Christmas Tree Farms
- Winter Solstice

January

- Ice Fest Weekend
- Skiing/Tubing
- "What's New"
- Resolutions
- Visitor Guide
- Winter Hiking
- Plan for Vacation Day

February

- Annual T-Shirt Contest
- Romance
- Dining
- Indoor Activities
- Weddings

March

- Fat Burger Month
- Annual Report
- Birding
- Spring Lodging Packages
- Start of Spring

April

- Spring Lodging Packages
- Marketing Plan
- Fishing
- Wildflowers
- Golf
- Appalachian Culture/Arts
- National Parks

May

- Road Trip Campaign
- NTTW
- Hiking
- Unique Lodging
- Ramps

June

- River & Lake Activities
- Wellness
- Biking
- Family-Friendly
- Summer Solstice

CO-OP MARKETING

We are offering special print advertising placements to interested co-op participants.

- Four 1/4-page placements in the November edition
- Four 1/4- page placements in the Spring edition
- 4 newsletter sponsorships available in November
- 4 newsletter sponsorships available in Spring





NEW WEBSITE COMING SOON!

- Will be live in August
- New Partner Portal
- Partner training sessions will be provided.

2026/2027 PARTNER GUIDE

This guide highlights the many ways partners can get involved in our marketing and partnership opportunities. Whether you're a longtime business or just getting started, there's a place for you in this growing network.

[2026/2027 Digital Partner Guide](#)



T-Shirt Contest Winner

- Nearly 1,500 votes cast
- Winner: "Mountain Serenity" by Sabine Allen
- Screen-printing by Old North Prints of Waynesville
- To be sold at the Welcome Center, Mast General Store in Waynesville, and online




MAGGIE VALLEY SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCE DAY


Area agencies providing helpful
resources for Small Business Owners.

JUNE 10 | 10AM - 2PM

MAGGIE VALLEY SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCE DAY

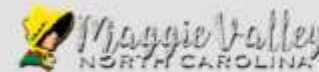
Area agencies providing helpful resources for
Small Business Owners.

 Wednesday, June 10th

 At 10 AM - 2 PM (Drop In)

 Maggie Valley Town Hall Pavilion
3987 Soco Road

Light refreshments will be served



Community and
Economic Development
HAYWOOD COUNTY





**MOUNTAIN
MORNINGS**

**Next Mountain Mornings:
July 30th at 8:30AM
Springdale Resort**



— VISIT —
HAYWOOD
WESTERN NC MOUNTAINS

**Next TDA Board Meeting:
Wednesday June 24, 2026
Gaines Auditorium, Lake Junaluska**