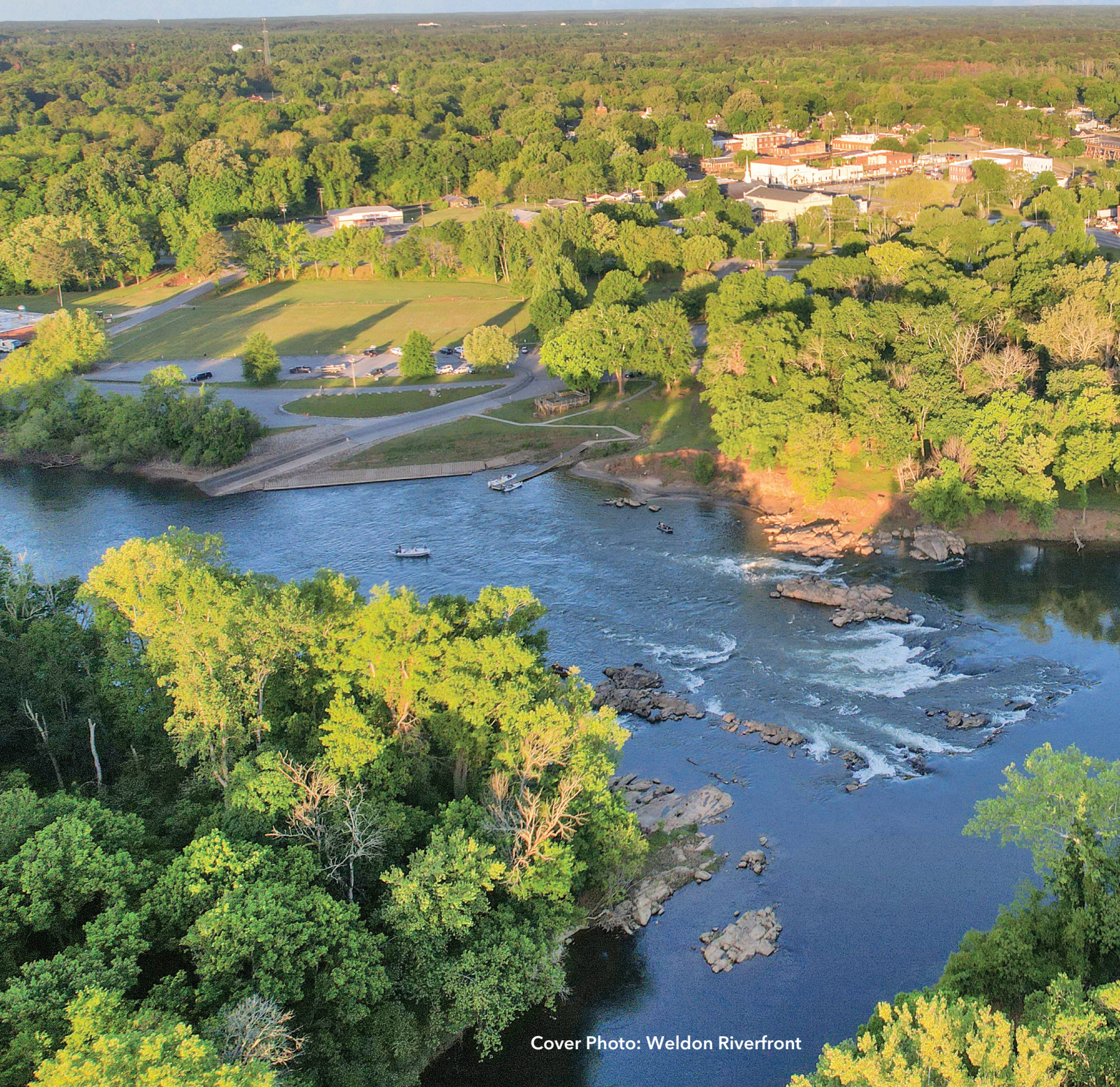


HALIFAX COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022



Cover Photo: Weldon Riverfront

HALIFAX COUNTY Tourism Development Authority

MISSION STATEMENT

To promote the growth of tourism in Halifax County

Every single day, we are working to:



Drive visitation to
Halifax County



Tell the stories of
Halifax County



Grow the economy of
Halifax County

HCCVB BOARD MEMBERS

Our efforts are lead by volunteers appointed by the Halifax County Commissioners, who provide leadership and expertise to ensure effective operations. The Halifax County Tourism Development Authority does business as the Halifax County Convention & Visitors Bureau (HCCVB) and is dedicated to promoting Halifax County as a visitor destination. We also represent and support the interests of the local tourism industry and promote public awareness of the importance of tourism.

Our funding is primarily provided by a 5% room tax paid by visitors while staying overnight in accommodations. No local tax dollars are used in our efforts.

In addition to the county-wide 5% occupancy tax, the City of Roanoke Rapids adopted a 1% tax that is dedicated to the marketing and tourism development of that city. These funds are administered by the HCTDA, which was

YVONNE THOMPSON Chairperson



formed in 1987 by enabling legislation that created the room tax.

We hope you will agree that the HCCVB team and board have a strong belief in the power of the tourism industry to be a driving economic force for Halifax County.

We invite you to engage with the HCCVB staff. Visitor dollars support jobs, drive demand for commercial development and improve the quality of life in Halifax County.

Board of Directors

We thank our board for their support.

Yvonne Thompson, Chairperson
Jay Carlisle, Vice Chairman
Brent Lubbock, Secretary
Sandra Bryant, Treasurer
Tony Brown
Mike Davis

Brian Harris
Jessica Hedgepeth
Cathy Scott, Ex-Officio
Beth Burchell, Ex-Officio
Mary Duncan, Ex-Officio

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

LORI R. MEDLIN, CDME
President/CEO



2021 was another challenging year for the world and destination marketers. As our tourism industry reached for recovery and COVID-19 restrictions ebbed and flowed, we attempted to bring more visitors to Halifax County. At the same time, we understood that our industry was facing an unprecedented labor shortage which limited the ability of all of our tourism-related businesses to operate at full capacity. Full overnight visitation was not an option with limited hotel capacity, so we concentrated on drive markets and locals, encouraging support of local restaurants, shops, and attractions. Through it all, our team at VisitHalifax stayed positive and continued to work with our partners on safe and effective recovery. 2020 saw our tourism spending decrease by 23%, and the impact of Covid on our industry will take years to recover from.

Our position as the first major exit as you enter the state of North Carolina, our new and award-winning distillery, and our unique home towns were featured throughout our marketing efforts. Capitalizing on our success as a pet-friendly stop, we amplified this message by promoting our other pet-friendly partners.

Our board made a conscious decision to shift resources toward building product so that when we fully recovered from the impact of COVID, we would have more options to offer visitors. We invested in the development of Exit 173 on the northeast quadrant by working with new hotel developers, investing in retail recruitment, and NCDOT on traffic engineering. We invested in Wayfinding for the Town of Weldon to encourage visitation. We invested heavily in the Roanoke Canal Trail, supporting bridge replacement and trail conversions, and Chockoyette Park for enhancements to increase youth sporting events. We began our investment in the Bradford Denton house to enhance the visitor experience in Halifax and supported the many aspects of the 2026 Vision for Halifax.

We have and will continue to rely heavily on the research and market analysis from our friends at VisitNC to monitor our recovery. We welcome ideas from our local tourism industry. Please do not hesitate to call and let us know your thoughts. We will get through this time of recovery and remain Halifax County Strong!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lori". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing "L" and a cursive "i".

VISITOR IMPACT FOR HALIFAX COUNTY

Calendar Year 2021

County Spending increased by 38.7% Percent
to \$119.11 Million

Domestic and international visitors to and within Halifax County spent \$119.11 million in 2021, an increase of 38.7% from 2020. The data comes from an annual study commissioned by Visit North Carolina, a unit of the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina.

Tourism impact highlights for 2021

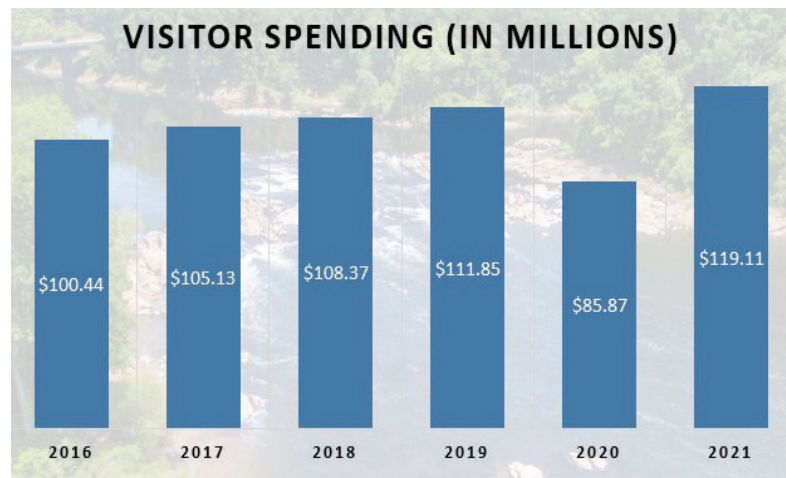
- The travel and tourism industry directly employees more than 700 and indirectly employed more than 1000 people in Halifax County.
- Total payroll directly generated by the tourism industry in Halifax County was \$26.2 million.
- State tax revenue generated in Halifax County totaled \$5.4 million through state sales and excise taxes, and taxes on personal and corporate income. About \$4.0 million in local taxes were generated from sales and property tax revenue from travel-generated and travel-supported businesses.

These statistics come from the "Economic Impact of Travel on North Carolina Counties 2021." The study was prepared for Visit North Carolina by Tourism Economics in collaboration with the U.S. Travel Association.

Statewide, visitor spending in 2021 rebounded by 44.9 percent to reach \$28.9 billion.

Following the devastating pandemic-related losses of 2020, the total fell just short of the record \$29.22 spent in 2019. Direct tourism employment increased 10.5 percent to 197,500.

"These findings are something that everyone



in North Carolina can celebrate," said Visit NC Director Wit Tuttell. "They're a testament to the resilience of our businesses and our residents, and to the enduring appeal of destinations that include everything a traveler might want. The economic well-being of the state and all its communities rises with the pleasures travelers find in the natural beauty of our public spaces, our culinary traditions and innovation, our remarkable towns and our spirited cities. North Carolina can claim it all."

"2021 was a record-breaking year for tourism spending in Halifax County." Lori Medlin, President and CEO of the Halifax County Convention & Visitors Bureau stated. "Not only is the recovery from COVID evident in the growth percentage, this spending impact surpassed pre-COVID numbers. Hats off to every member of the hospitality community in Halifax County. They have worked under tremendous pressure to save our industry during this unprecedented time!"

2021 VISITOR SPENDING

Where do our visitors spend money in Halifax County



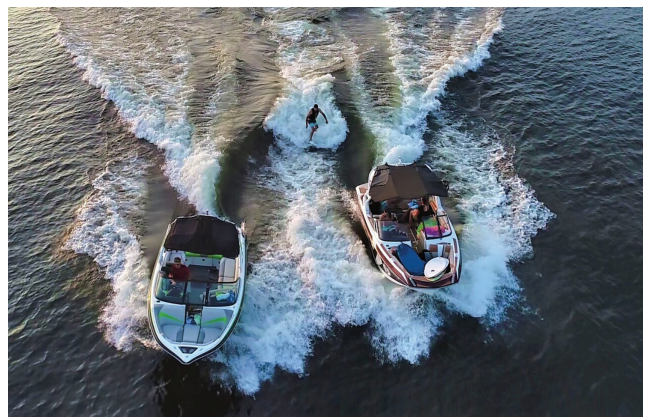
Lodging \$26.79M



Tax Savings per Resident \$194.81



Food & Beverage \$39.39M



Recreation \$16.32M



Retail \$10.82M



Transportation \$25.78M

MARKETING & PR

Advertising pivots to outdoor adventure and safe travel options

Visit Halifax manages a complete marketing plan designed to create awareness of all that Halifax County offers. Our goal is to inspire people to visit and stay overnight in our accommodations. With the onset of the global pandemic and our industry's following attempts at recovery, we have focused on safe exploration and our many outdoor attractions.

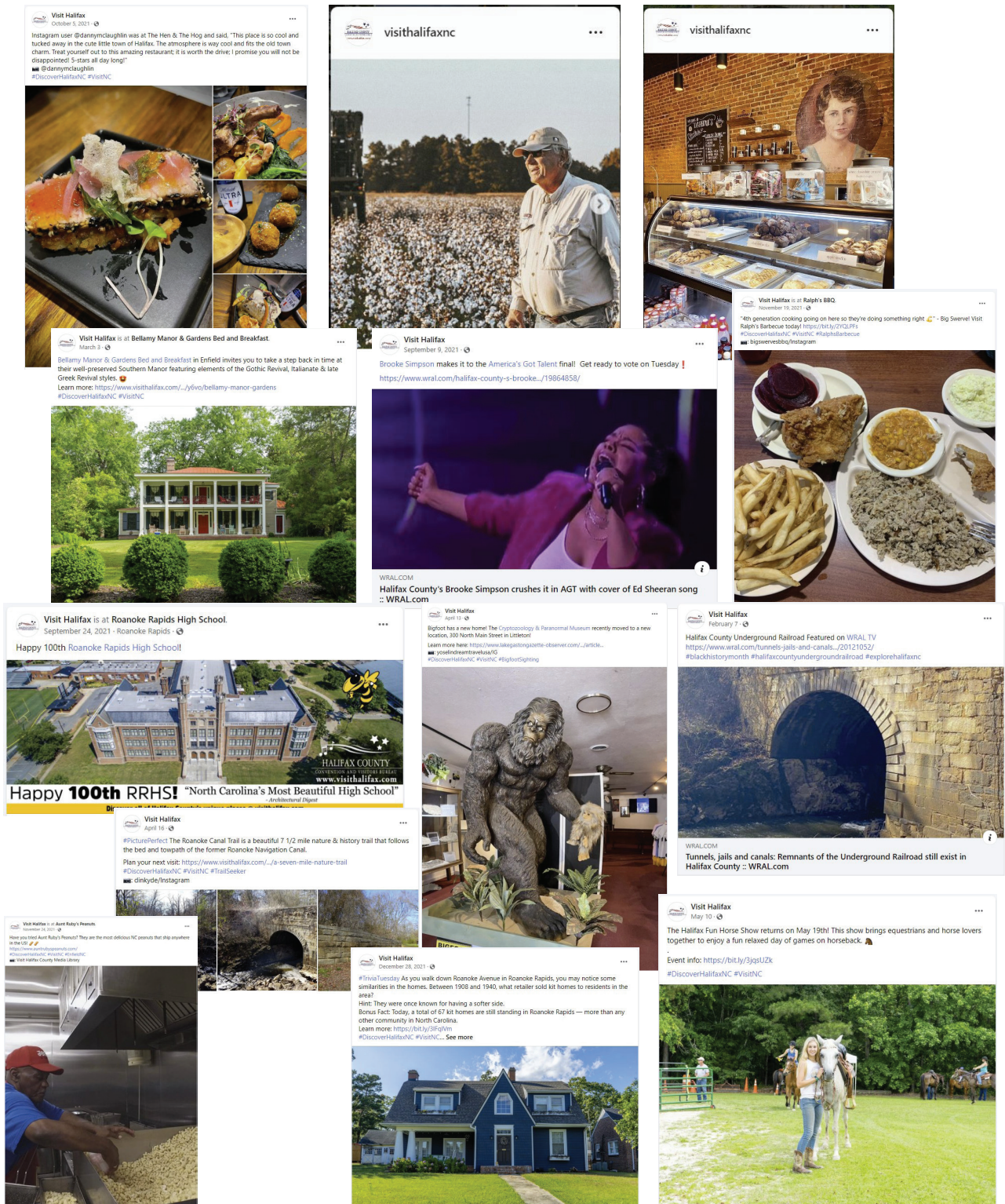
Our position as the first major exit as you enter the state of North Carolina, our new and award-winning distillery, and our unique home towns were featured throughout our marketing efforts. Capitalizing on our success as a pet-friendly stop, we amplified this message by promoting our other pet-friendly partners.



"Having Lori and team working so hard to promote travel and tourism in the county has been such a huge benefit to Halifax and our businesses, particularly the work that she's done with Our State keeps Halifax in the forefront of the minds of Carolinians from all over her planning road trips. We meet the tourist here all the time. So without a doubt, their work is highly effective, and we are very, very appreciative."

~ Patterson Wilson, Entrepreneur, Halifax, North Carolina

SOCIAL MEDIA



DESTINATION **MARKETING** ORGANIZATION

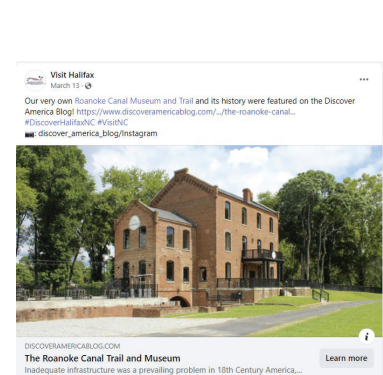
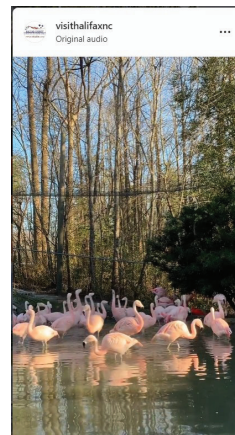
Social media continues to be a priority in marketing our destination. Being able to share engaging Halifax County experiences with our **13,668** followers daily provides an exponential value. We answer the question, "What's happening in Halifax County?" by sharing user-generated and in-house photos, videos, events, links, and more. Our top platforms are Facebook, Instagram,

and Twitter with **1,246,575** impressions, **75,117** engagements and **54,228** video views.

f 66,537 total engagement
ig 7,743 total engagement



Top Posts



Our State Magazine Series

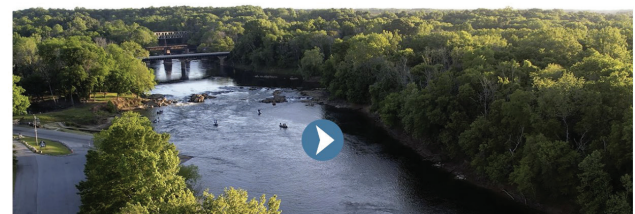


Our State Magazine 2-Page Spread

Out & About in Halifax County

On a trip to Halifax and Weldon in northeastern North Carolina, discover Revolutionary War history, splash and play in the Roanoke River, sip local spirits, and more.

by Our State Staff



Our State Magazine Sponsored Video

Billboards speak to our largest audience, Interstate-95. The HCCVB's permanent and temporary placed billboards reached over **127 million** impressions last year.

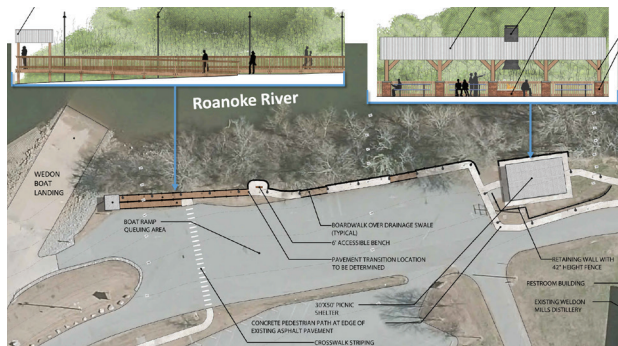


In addition to digital co-op partnerships with VisitNC like Garden & Gun. Our State Magazine, USA Today Travel Guide & Go Escape, Destination Reunions, NC Inland Fishing, Hunting & Trapping Guide, and Travel Taste & Tour continue to offer a productive way to reach new visitors. Our new ads in the North Carolina Travel Guide (2021 & 2022 editions) have added 1.1 million readers year round to our reach.

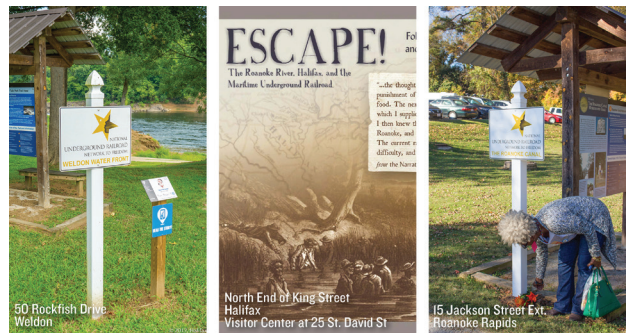


The HCCVB Print Promotions reached over **10,540,800** Combined Readers

PROJECTS & PARTNERSHIPS



Led the effort to design and apply for grant funding for the upriver and downriver boardwalks and overlook at River Falls Park. To date, the project has acquired \$850,000.00, and we are hopeful we will receive a PARTF Grant in 2023.



Continued to support the non-profit in their search for a location to tell the story of freedom seekers in Halifax County's history.



Halifax 2026 - We continued the planning process of welcoming the Nation to Halifax in 2026 with the historic site's support groups.



Interchange development, I-95 Exit 173 Site in Weldon supported. Announced Fairfield Marriott site selection



Tourism Legislation

- Roanoke River Paddle Trail \$1,025,000 (shared by Roanoke and Dan rivers)
- \$700,000 allocation to Weldon Riverfront Enhancement Project
- Purchase of Andrew Jackson School \$150,000 Grant Funds for the establishment of a museum to supplement the Freedom Trail \$50,000 and Halifax Underground Railroad \$50,000
- New Position at Historic Halifax
- \$5.2 million to complete William R Davie house and to renovate Historic Halifax Visitors Center
- Main Street assistance for Enfield, Roanoke Rapids, Weldon, and Scotland Neck

SPONSORSHIPS

Sponsorship dollars help make events and projects happen in our county. That is good for visitors and good for our local economies and non-profits!



Halifax County Harvest Days
 Enfield's Fishing Creek Paddle
 Historic Halifax Prelude to Liberty
 Fourth of July Fireworks Celebrations
 Twilight Festival Roanoke Rapids
 Sylvan Heights Birds, Brews, & BBQ
 National EMS Bike Ride
 Hollister Festival
 Historic Halifax Yuletide by Lantern Light
 Enfield Historic Homes Tour
 Christmas on the Avenue
 Roanoke Canal Half Marathon & 8k
 301 Endless Yard Sale
 Enfield Oyster Roast
 Premier Boulevard Extension Opening
 Oktoberfest on King Street
 Historic Halifax Magazine Spring Opening
 Halifax County Horse Council Shows
 Tourism Day Celebration
 RRHS 100th Anniversary Celebration



These dollars also support projects...

Weldon Riverfront Enhancement
 Weldon & Halifax Canoe Outtakes
 Roanoke Canal Museum Operations
 Roanoke Canal Trail Maintenance
 Civil War Trails Markers
 Roanoke Valley Veterans Museum
 VisitNC Farms App
 Car Charging Stations
 Underground Railroad Trail
 Friends Groups FOHH/HHRA/RCM
 The Spirit of Hospitality Award
 Hobgood & Weldon Town Banners
 The Roanoke Valley Rocks



Youth Sports Tournaments & Facility Enhancements
 Interstate Exit Lighting

Attraction Visitation

Medoc Mountain State Park	193,892
Sylvan Heights Bird Park	55,878
Roanoke Canal Museum & Trail	34,637
Historic Halifax	25,726
Weldon Mills Distillery	50,000



Dog Run: 51,917 - 142 daily average

CONTACT

Visitors Bureau Staff



Lori Medlin, President/CEO



Susan Wilhelm, Manager of Administration



Donna Bolio, Visitor Center Coordinator



Rich Lithgow, Director of Technology

"Working with Lori Medlin and her team has been a great experience. Lori has an expansive knowledge base on the tourism industry and knows what it takes to help nurture the industry. Further, she knows her area well and understands how to leverage limited resources to assist tourism related businesses in the area. Her efforts have contributed greatly to the growth of tourism in the area and I look forward to continuing to partner with her in the future!"

~Bruce Tyler, Weldon Mills Distillery

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