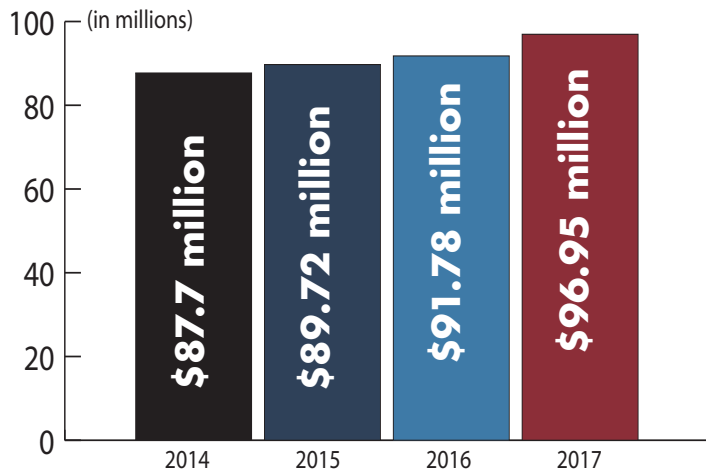


# 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

## Halifax County Convention & Visitors Bureau



### Halifax County Visitor Spending

- Highest percentage growth of any county on the I-95 corridor, in North Carolina, with **5.56% growth!**
- Occupancy tax collections were **up 8.6%** in Halifax County.
- Tourism spending reached a record breaking **\$96.95 Million!** in Halifax County in 2017.

### Best Exit on I-95

Halifax County is home to the first major exit off I-95 after crossing the border into North Carolina from Virginia. It is a well known stopover location for travelers commuting north or south via I-95. Over 42,000 motor vehicles and 100,000 people pass Exit 173 daily. It has a growing demand base both in terms of Interstate 95 passenger counts and commercial growth.

The Roanoke Rapids-Weldon area is the commercial hub for Northeastern North Carolina and was recently named one of the Top 100 (#18) Micropolitan Areas in the U.S. With demand generators ranging from industrial to medical, from research to manufacturing, commercial demand is on the rise. Major highway improvements planned over the next 3 to 5 years make this area poised for growth!



### Tourism & Our Economy

Visitors to Halifax County spent \$96.95 million across the county last year, according to a study prepared by the U.S. Travel Association for Visit North Carolina. The study, *The Economic Impact of Travel on North Carolina Counties 2017*, reported a 5.56% growth increase for Halifax County from 2016.

This marks the eighth consecutive year since 2009 that the county's tourism industry has grown. The increase also places Halifax County 12th in the state for growth of counties' tourism industries, according to Visit NC Executive Director, Wit Tuttell.

Tuttell said the average growth for counties' tourism industries last year was 4.2 percent, putting Halifax County above the state average and 12th overall in the state. He added the growth of Halifax County's tourism industry outperformed that of Wilson, Nash and Edgecombe counties, all of which also sit along Interstate 95.

Visitor related state tax revenue generated in Halifax County totaled \$6.01 million through state sales and excise taxes, and taxes on personal and corporate income. Approximately \$2.39 million in local taxes were generated from sales and property tax revenue from travel-generated and travel-supported businesses.

"It's really great growth," Tuttell said. "The county has done a good job trying to draw people off of the interstate. When people stop, they spend money." The money that came in from state and local tax receipts last year saved residents of Halifax County almost \$200 in taxes.

The property tax value of our accommodations is **\$44,248,900** which generates **\$340,716** in property taxes for Halifax County.

## Message from Board Chair and President

“We are so grateful for the tremendous success of the tourism industry in Halifax County. Our partners in the industry work hard every day to make our guests feel welcome. From servers in our restaurants to front desk team members at our hotels, from associates in our retail establishments to the folks who run our attractions, we all work together to make Tourism a success in Halifax County!”



The Tourism Industry in Halifax County is strong. Halifax County placed 12th in the state for growth of counties in 2017. We outperformed several of our neighboring communities along the I-95 corridor. Nash County ranked 90th in the state, Edgecombe County ranked 64th and Wilson County ranked 65th. Our ranking is quite an accomplishment.

It makes us very proud that this industry is having such a positive effect on the economy of our community. We represent the tourism industry here, and that is made up of people who work hard every day behind the scenes and in front of the public. We don't think those people get enough gratitude and appreciation. They keep the industry running and that helps all of us.

The continued growth of the county's tourism industry is attributed to many factors. First and foremost, it's our people getting the job done. Then its marketing our efforts through advertising on billboards, print publications, digital platforms and through our online presence. We strive every day to tell the story of all that Halifax County has to offer.

The CVB then works to help develop tourism assets and market drivers. We fund expansion of ball fields to increase youth sporting event dollars spent here. We sponsor a tremendous amount of events in Halifax County. We fund living history at our Historic Site and through the creation of the Underground Railroad Trail. With our partners, we are working and funding efforts to bring an Amtrak Station to our area and to recruit new hotel properties and attractions to be built here.

We feel confident that with the groundwork that is being laid and with the growth of our infrastructure, including the Premier Boulevard extension, commercial growth adjacent to I-95 will be strong in the coming years.

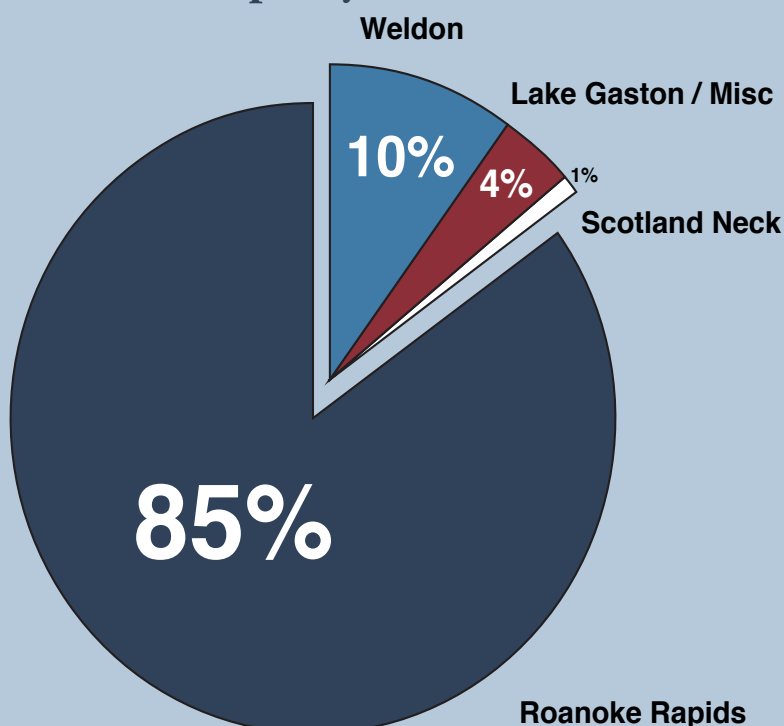
Local experiences, we hope, will bring this traffic into our smaller communities. The opportunity to visit a local shop in our downtowns, or taste farm to table food will serve to entice visitors far beyond the exit. Fishing and paddling on the Roanoke will draw visitors here from larger cities. Once in a lifetime adventures on the Roanoke Canal Trail or Medoc Mountain State Park make Halifax County a unique place to visit. Sunsets on Lake Gaston and boat rides with the family on a pristine lake make our area the perfect place to retire.

The following annual report is just a brief glimpse into the efforts of the Halifax County CVB. We believe that Halifax County has a truly unique opportunity, in the future, to capitalize on our agrarian culture, our natural resources and our location to grow this vital industry even more.

*Percilla West    Lori Medlin*

**Our Mission:**  
To promote the  
growth of tourism  
in Halifax County.

### Occupancy Tax Generated



### Attraction Visitation

Medoc Mountain State Park	150,397
Sylvan Heights Bird Park	55,097
Roanoke Canal Museum & Trail	25,039
Historic Halifax	20,253





# Leisure Demand

Southern charm, rich history, spectacular natural setting and mouthwatering dining are just a few of the delights that await you in Halifax County. Nestled on the banks of the mighty Roanoke River, which gave rise to commerce in the area, we like to say that, “rushing river water can take the edges off rocks and people”! We are confident that you will find that true and that you will enjoy with the quality of life in the area.

The natural landscape of the county provides a wealth of recreational activities. From Lake Gaston, a 34 mile man-made lake, and Medoc Mountain State Park, a 2,300 acre natural wildlife preserve and the Roanoke Canal Museum and Trail, where you can step back in time to the end of the 18th century, there is something for everyone to enjoy in Halifax County.

Attractions abound in Halifax County. Historic Halifax explores revolutionary history and is the birthplace of our nation’s independence. Sylvan Heights Bird Park takes you to continents far away to explore their birds and offers a unique experience in North America.

Our business friendly environment and reasonable tax structure make this a great place to locate a new business. Located adjacent to our country’s busiest thorough fare, Interstate-95, and mid-way between New York and Florida, we offer easy access to the east coast. Our area serves as the retail hub for Northeastern North Carolina. Additionally, we are within 90 miles of three international airports (RDU, Richmond and Norfolk).

The largest generator of leisure demand in the market area is I-95. The interstate’s connectivity from Maine to Florida provides interstate travelers a convenient stopping point with an array of amenities. Interstate demand typically peaks in the summer months from mid-June through mid-September when children are out of school and families are on vacation. During this period, demand is at its heaviest for both area hotels and restaurants, particularly on the weekends.

Other generators of leisure demand include, youth sports tournaments, which are held at local athletic fields that are located throughout the market area and a large number of family reunions due to the convenient location of Halifax County along I-95.

# Commercial Demand

The Roanoke Rapids-Weldon area is the commercial hub for northeastern North Carolina and was recently named one of the Top 100 (#18) Micropolitan Areas in the U.S. Local hotel demand generators include KapStone Paper & Packaging, Halifax Regional Medical Center, Rural Health Group, Klausner Lumber Two, Reser’s Fine Foods, the NC Center for Automotive Research (NCCAR) and other commercial and manufacturing facilities located in the immediate area. Construction of renewable energy facilities and electrical, natural gas, and rail infrastructure have resulted in a steadily increasing demand for hotel rooms. Major highway improvements are planned in the area over the next 3 to 5 years that can significantly induce demand for accommodations. Additionally, the Roanoke Rapids-Weldon area offers the closest option for hotel rooms for corporate and commercial business travels in nearby Warren, Northampton, and Hertford counties.

**“Your connections across the region and state are so strong, and I’m very impressed by your leadership and humble service to all of us, always with an upbeat approach to the attractions you counsel and support, to drive tourism in the area. You have a way of staying out in front of opportunities that we would not be aware of and it’s already beginning to drive our success as a business.”**

*-Jack Glasure, French West Vaughan  
The Roanoke Rapids Theatre*

# Development



Supporting the creation of a new AMTRAK stop in Weldon through project consultant



Advocating for development of identified properties adjacent to I-95 through feasibility studies and marketing



Funding the expansion of local ball fields to increase the impact of youth sporting events and tournament play



Funding living history assets needed to bring Historic Halifax to life





# Marketing



Reached over **11,000,000** readers

Roanoke Rapids is the commercial hub for Northeast North Carolina. The Halifax County Convention & Visitors Bureau has identified the retirement market as a strong potential driver of visitor spending to our area.



We are funding the Certified Retirement Designation and marketing efforts to highlight this area as a must see for those considering retirement in North Carolina.

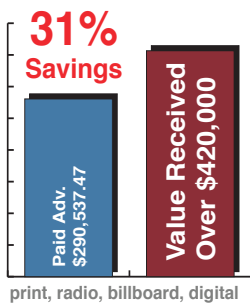
We also recognize that progressive communities across the state have developed unified wayfinding signage programs. We have created and funded the installation of a new wayfinding package for Roanoke Rapids in partnership the NCDOT and the City of Roanoke Rapids.



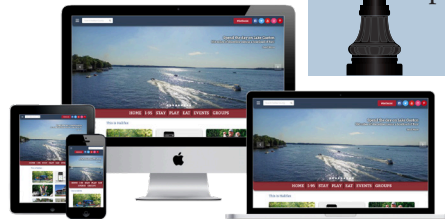
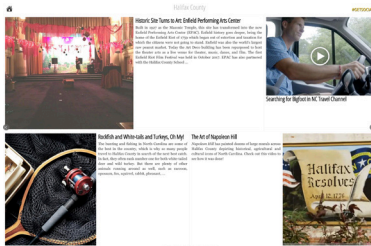
**HOTELS - EXITS 171 & 173**

Best Western, Red Roof Inn, EconoLodge, Hampton Inn by Hilton, Quality Inn, Sleep Inn & Suites, Hilton Garden Inn, Days Inn, Baymont Inn & Suites, Holiday Inn Express & Suites

Generated over **86,900,632** billboard impressions



Discover Halifax County Digital Magazine Reached **55,265**



VisitHalifax.com Reached **88,446** Users

Visitor Center Dog Run **37,856**  
 Halifax County Visitor Center **24,090**



**"I am pleased to recognize the impact you have in Halifax County in providing a welcoming and informational starting point for the visitors to our community."** - U.S. Senator Thom Tillis



## Thank You to our Board of Directors

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 Tina Gregory, Secretary  
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 Sandra Bryant  
 Jay Carlisle

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