

# HALIFAX COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024

*Come for the History  
Stay for the...*

*Bourbon*



Weldon Mills Distillery

*Brews*



Timber Waters Brewery

*Bites*



Local Eats

*& Birds*



Sylvan Heights Bird Park



HALIFAX COUNTY

CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU



# 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

**A**t the Halifax County Convention & Visitors Bureau (HCCVB), we are powered by a dedicated Board of Directors appointed by the Halifax County Commissioners. Their leadership is not just a guiding force—it is the cornerstone of our mission, ensuring that every initiative we undertake is strategic, impactful, and far-reaching.

Our funding is entirely driven by a 5% room tax paid by visitors who stay overnight in our accommodations. Let it be clear: no local tax dollars are used in our efforts. In addition, the City of Roanoke Rapids has implemented a 1% tax specifically aimed at fueling marketing and tourism development within the city. The Halifax County Tourism Development Authority (HCTDA), established through legislation in 1987, rigorously manages these funds to maximize their effectiveness.

We are unwavering in our belief that tourism is a transformative force for Halifax County.

### YVONNE THOMPSON Chairperson



Visitor spending is not only a testament to our county's growing appeal; it is a powerful catalyst for economic growth, job creation, and commercial development that directly enhances the quality of life for our residents.

We challenge you to partner with the HCCVB team. Together, we will harness the full potential of tourism to ensure a prosperous, dynamic future for Halifax County.

## Board of Directors

We thank our board for their support.

Yvonne Thompson, Chairperson  
Tony Brown, Vice Chairman  
Brent Lubbock, Secretary  
Sandra Bryant, Treasurer  
Mike Davis  
Raquel P. Harvey

Jessica Hedgepeth  
Larry Perkins  
Shawn Taylor  
Cathy Scott, Ex-Officio  
Beth Burchell, Ex-Officio  
Mary Duncan, Ex-Officio

# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

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LORI R. MEDLIN, CDME  
President/CEO



Dear Stakeholders, Partners, and Supporters,

It is with immense pleasure and deep gratitude that I present our annual report for 2023-2024. This report is more than a summary of data; it is a testament to the unwavering dedication, innovation, and resilience that define Visit Halifax.

In a year of both challenges and opportunities, we remained steadfast in our mission to position Halifax County, North Carolina, as a premier travel destination and a thriving community for our residents. Together, we reached remarkable milestones and left a significant mark on our community. In 2023, occupancy tax funds brought in by visitors achieved an increase of over 14.84%, while short-term rentals surged by an outstanding 5.38%.

These visitor dollars allowed us to reinvest directly into the growth and development of our county. With this support, we extended our reach to over 292,972,298 people through paid and earned media—an extraordinary testament to our effective marketing efforts.

The crowning achievement of 2023 was the record-breaking visitor spending of \$134.45 million in Halifax County. This surge not only bolstered local businesses but also fueled the economic engine of our community. Tourism is more than just visitors—it's about jobs and stability for our residents. We are proud to have directly and indirectly employed over 1,000 individuals, creating vital opportunities and support for our local workforce.

Looking forward, we are energized by the limitless possibilities ahead. We remain fully committed to showcasing the rich history, vibrant culture, natural beauty, and warm hospitality that make Halifax County unique.

I want to extend my heartfelt appreciation to our dedicated team, invaluable partners, and supportive community. It is through your collective commitment that these remarkable accomplishments have been made possible.

Thank you for being a vital part of this journey. Together, we will continue to shape the future of tourism in Halifax County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori".

CEO of Visit Halifax

Check Out Our New Visitor Guide



# VISITOR IMPACT FOR HALIFAX COUNTY

Calendar Year 2023

In 2023, visitors to Halifax County contributed an impressive \$368,356.16 in daily spending, fully engaging with the diverse offerings of the county.

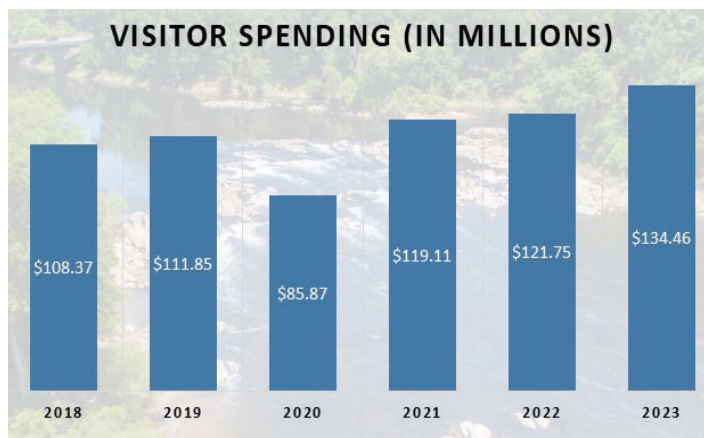
Total visitor expenditures from both domestic and international sources reached a record-breaking \$134.45 million—marking an astounding 10.4% increase compared to 2022. Halifax County ranked 7th among North Carolina's 100 counties in tourism growth! This data is derived from an annual study commissioned by Visit North Carolina, a unit of the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina, and conducted by Tourism Economics. The study further highlights significant growth in the county's accommodation sector, with overall revenue increasing by 14.31% and short-term rentals experiencing a strong 5.38% rise.

## Key tourism impact highlights for 2023:

- Halifax County's travel and tourism industry provided direct and indirect employment to over 1,000 individuals.
- State tax revenue from tourism activities amounted to \$5.7 million, primarily through state sales, excise, and income taxes. In addition, \$4.2 million in local tax revenue was derived from sales and property taxes tied to travel-generated and travel-supported businesses.
- Tax dollars generated by the tourism industry in Halifax County saved each taxpayer \$208.98 in taxes.

The full report, titled "Economic Impact of Travel on North Carolina Counties 2023," can be accessed at [partners.visitnc.com/economic-impact-studies](https://partners.visitnc.com/economic-impact-studies). This comprehensive study,

prepared for Visit North Carolina by Tourism Economics in collaboration with the U.S. Travel Association, provides crucial insights into the economic role of tourism within the state.



At the state level, visitor spending surged by 6.9% to an unprecedented \$35.6 billion in 2023, while direct tourism employment grew by 4.8%, adding 227,224 jobs.

Wit Tuttell, Executive Director of Visit NC, remarked, "North Carolina's tourism industry draws strength from our many regions' authentic cultural and experiential diversity. This new report from Tourism Economics illustrates growth not only in our renowned mountains and coastal areas but also in our urban centers and rural communities. Tourism continues to serve as a cornerstone of economic development, with visitor spending directly benefiting residents through job creation and tax relief."

*Lori Medlin, President & CEO of Visit Halifax, emphasized the local impact: "These figures are a testament to the exceptional efforts of our tourism industry, even while navigating ongoing staffing challenges. The fact that visitors to Halifax County spent over \$368,356.16 per day speaks to the enduring appeal of our community and its offerings."*

# 2023 VISITOR SPENDING

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Where do our visitors spend money in Halifax County?



Lodging \$31.72M



Tax Savings per Resident \$208.98



Food & Beverage \$43.29M



Recreation \$17.84M



Retail \$10.74M



Transportation \$30.87M

# MARKETING & PR

In 2023, Visit Halifax implemented a marketing strategy to showcase Halifax County's unique attractions. We aim to inspire visitors to stay longer and experience the county's hospitality.

Key highlights include promoting Halifax's prime location as North Carolina's entry point, featuring our diverse accommodations, award-winning distillery, and charming

hometowns. Increased video content on social media drove higher engagement and expanded our reach.

We also focused on pet-friendly partnerships to ensure a welcoming experience for all visitors. Each visit strengthens Halifax County's reputation as a premier travel destination.



### Halifax Resolves

In 1776, on a small island just beyond the... **Halifax Resolves**... **LET FREEDOM RING**... **Professional Tips for Choosing Accommodations**



Travel Taste & Tour

**A**fter a long winter... **Halifax County, NC**... **Halifax County, NC**... **Halifax County, NC**



Destination Reunions

**Halifax County, NC**

On the banks of the mighty Roanoke River, recreation with... **Halifax County, NC**... **Halifax County, NC**... **Halifax County, NC**

“Great visitor center, friendly staff, great information, clean bathrooms and dog friendly! This is probably the best visitor center in USA!”

**Visitor at the Halifax County Visitor Center**

# SOCIAL MEDIA

**Visit Halifax**  
June 14-15 @ Hit the road for the ultimate treasure hunt at the 301 Endless 100 Mile Sale! From deals to antiques, collectibles, and more, communities along US 301 are coming together to offer a 100-mile stretch of highway filled with hidden gems waiting to be discovered.  
<https://bit.ly/2VU0R8g>  
#DiscoverHalifaxNC #VisitNC #VisitHalifaxNC #301Endless100MileSale #TreasureHunt

**Visit Halifax**  
March 14 @ Scotland Neck's A & M Bar-Be-Que serves up fantastic Eastern NC barbecue, Brunswick stew and more!  
Check it out: <https://bit.ly/2VU0R8g>  
#DiscoverHalifaxNC #VisitNC #VisitHalifaxNC

**Visit Halifax**  
February 26 @ Save the dates: April 12-14 Join us for the NC State-Wide Kick-Off, marking the two-year celebration of the 250th anniversary of the Halifax Resolves!  
Dive! Halifax is the birthplace of American independence. Celebrate with reenactors, living history programs, presentations, open houses, and more! There will be special activities at the Historic Halifax sites planned for the entire weekend.  
Find full schedule here: <https://www.visithalifax.com/250>  
#DiscoverHalifaxNC #VisitNC #VisitHalifaxNC #DeclarationOfIndependence #Halifax250thCelebration

**Visit Halifax is at Brownings Grill**  
May 31 - Roanoke Rapids @ Craving the ultimate hotdog experience? Look no further than Brownings Grill in Roanoke Rapids. Order ahead or pull right up for piping-hot perfection served straight to your car. Your taste buds will thank you! <https://bit.ly/3B9VtMf>  
#DiscoverHalifaxNC #VisitNC #VisitHalifaxNC

**Visit Halifax**  
September 12, 2023 @ Celebrate 31 years of promoting heritage, southern hospitality, and agrarian culture at Halifax Harvest Days.  
Oct 20-21: <https://bit.ly/3QfFD1e>  
#DiscoverHalifaxNC #VisitNC #VisitHalifaxNC #HalifaxHarvestDays

**Visit Halifax**  
August 16, 2023 @ The North Carolina Marine & Estuary Foundation is doing amazing work to restore the Striped Bass Population on the Roanoke River and Albemarle Sound! Watch this video to learn more about this vital project. We are proud to support this effort and hope you will, too! <https://www.ncmefoundation.org/>  
#NC Wildlife Resources Commission Town of Weldon Down East Guide Service Visit North Carolina Roanoke River Partners, Inc. Weldon Mills Distillery  
#VisitHalifaxNC #RoanokeRiver #StripedBassFishing #VisitNC

**Visit Halifax is at Medoc Mountain State Park**  
July 30, 2023 - Hollister @ #ScenicSunday inspiration from Medoc Mountain State Park  
#enwike/IG  
#DiscoverHalifaxNC #VisitNC #VisitHalifaxNC

**Visit Halifax**  
July 7, 2023 @ Attention Bourbon and Spirits lovers! Tickets are on sale NOW for the first annual NC Bourbon & Spirits Festival on Sept 30. Follow link for more Festival/Ticket info: <https://bit.ly/435dick>  
#DiscoverHalifaxNC #VisitNC #VisitHalifaxNC #BourbonFestival

**Visit Halifax**  
November 14, 2023 @ If you are looking for the best in Eastern NC barbecue, look no further than Ralph's BBQ in Weldon. Owned and operated by the Woodruff family for more than 60 years, Ralph's offers a full buffet of home cooked like chopped, minced and sliced barbecue with a spicy vinegar-based sauce, fried chicken, Brunswick stew, hushpuppies, banana pudding, collards, potatoes and more!  
1400 Julian R Altbrook Highway, Weldon.  
#DiscoverHalifaxNC #VisitNC #VisitHalifaxNC

**5 places you must go when visiting Halifax County, NC**

Have you ever heard of "North Carolina's longest museum"?


Traveling with your dog along I-95?

this is what summer in small-town North Carolina looks like

# DESTINATION **MARKETING** ORGANIZATION

Social media is vital to promoting Halifax County as a top destination, with **19,715** followers engaged daily across Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. We keep our audience informed and inspired by sharing dynamic content—photos, videos, events, and more. Our efforts have resulted in **2,079,330** impressions and **150,438** engagements, showcasing the power of consistent interaction. Social media is

vital in increasing awareness of Halifax County's attractions and enhancing its appeal to a broader audience.



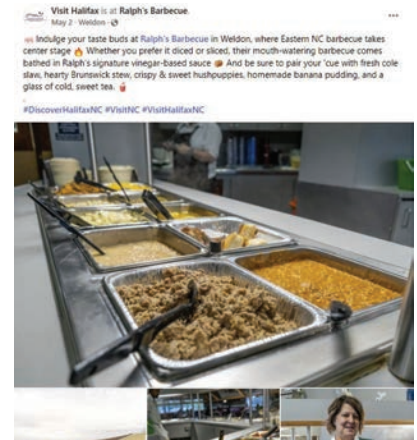
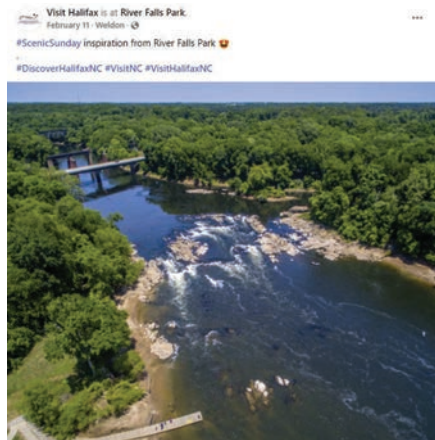
Overall Impressions Increased 20.3%

Overall Engagements Increased 75.6%

Total Followers Increased 35.7%



Top Engagement Posts



Our State Magazine Series



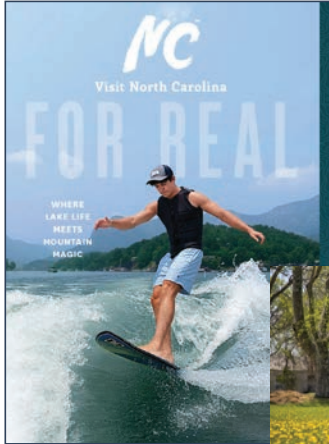
Our State Magazine Sponsored Content



Our State Magazine Sponsored Content



Billboards speak to our largest audience, Interstate-95. The HCCVB's permanent and temporary placed billboards reached over **192 million** impressions last fiscal year.



Co-op partnerships with VisitNC, like *Southern Living* and *Garden & Gun*, continue to offer a productive way to reach new visitors. Additionally, ads in *Our State Magazine*, *USA Today Travel Guide & Go Escape*, *Destination Reunions Magazine*, *NC Inland Fishing, Hunting & Trapping Guide*, and *Travel Taste & Tour* help us reach a broader audience. Our new ad in the *North Carolina Travel Guide* added 550,000 readers year-round to our reach.



The HCCVB Print Promotions reached over **95,446,296** Combined Readers

# BIRTHPLACE OF INDEPENDENCE



**AMERICA**  
**250** 1776  
**HALIFAX · NC**  
 ★★★★★★★★★★

As the United States approaches its 250th anniversary, the Halifax County Convention & Visitors Bureau (HCCVB) has taken a leading role in promoting this historic milestone, with a special focus on the Town of Halifax. Known as the “Birthplace of American Independence,” Halifax holds a unique place in U.S. history, and the HCCVB is dedicated to ensuring that its significance is shared with both residents and visitors.

THE BIRTHPLACE OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE  
 Halifax, NC



To generate excitement around North Carolina’s America 250 celebration, the Halifax County CVB launched a comprehensive marketing and advertising campaign. The campaign included print and digital ads in high-profile publications such as *Our State*, *Garden & Gun*, and *Southern Living*, that targeted audiences interested in culture, history, and travel. The HCCVB has also maintained a strong social media presence, regularly engaging followers with educational content and updates on events tied to the celebration.

**AMERICA 250 1776**  
 HALIFAX NC  
 The Birthplace of American Independence

Let us Help You Plan. Y  
 Halifax County Convention & Visitors Bureau  
 200 Patton Blvd | Raleigh, NC 27601  
 (800) 522-4282 | visithalifax.com

**PLAN TO VISIT THE BIRTHPLACE OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE**  
 VISITHALIFAX.COM/250



To enhance the visitor experience, the HCCVB designed and implemented a Wayfinding Package across the Town of Halifax. This signage guides visitors to historic sites and enriches their understanding of the town’s historical importance. In addition, a companion banner program decorates the streets, celebrating Halifax’s role in the nation’s founding.

The HCCVB’s public relations efforts have included partnerships with UNC-TV and sponsored features on *Travels with Darley* and *N.C. Weekend* to highlight Halifax’s history and culture. Billboard campaigns and video content have also promoted key America 250 events.

The HCCVB’s efforts have successfully positioned Halifax as a central part of America’s 250th birthday celebration, and we remain committed to further promoting the area’s rich history as the events continue.



# 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
- Fourth of July Fireworks Celebrations
- NC Bourbon & Spirits Festival
- Haliwa-Saponi Powwow
- Christmas on the Avenue
- Downtown Weldon Saturdays in the Park
- Sylvan Heights Bird Park Events
- Roanoke Canal 5k
- 301 Endless Yard Sale
- Tourism Day Celebration



These dollars also support projects...

- America 250 Halifax NC
- Weldon Riverfront Enhancement
- Weldon Canoe/Kayak Outtake
- Tusca Landing Outtake
- Striped Bass Restoration Project
- Roanoke Canal Museum Operations
- Roanoke Canal Trail Maintenance
- Civil War Trails Markers
- Roanoke Valley Veterans Museum
- Halifax County Underground Railroad Trail
- Friends Groups FOHH/HHRA/RCM/HCAC
- The Spirit of Hospitality Award
- The Roanoke Valley Rocks
- Bradford-Denton House
- Youth Sports Tournaments
- Sports Facility Enhancements
- Interstate Exit Lighting
- Town of Scotland Neck Banners



“95 Road Trip, must visit.”  
**Visitor at the Halifax County Visitor Center**

## Attraction Visitation

Medoc Mountain State Park	172,158
Sylvan Heights Bird Park	62,569
Weldon Mills Distillery	46,200
Roanoke Canal Museum & Trail	33,948
Historic Halifax	31,703



Dog Run: 42,518 - 116 daily average

# CONTACT

## Visitors Bureau Staff



Lori Medlin  
President/CEO



Susan Wilhelm  
Manager of Administration



Percilla West  
Visitor Center Coordinator



Rich Lithgow  
Director of Technology

### HCCVB Spirit of Hospitality Award



Chris Chung, CEO of EDPNC & Scott Peacock, Marketing Director of VisitNC receiving the new Halifax County Visitor Guide



NCTIA Platinum Marketing Achievement Award



Behind the scenes as VisitNC's film crew captures the new Halifax County video

“ Thank you, Lori for always being such a great partner. We know that whenever we need to do something, you will respond and get it done. And not just done, but you will get it done right with style and enthusiasm.  
**Wit Tuttell ~ Executive Director, Visit NC** ”

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