



Annual Update

STATESVILLE TOURISM
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

PRESENTED TO THE
STATESVILLE CITY COUNCIL
AND THE CITIZENS OF STATESVILLE

SEPTEMBER 14, 2026



Tourism is economic development with a WELCOME attached!

What is a Tourism Development Authority (TDA)?

Public oversight + destination storytelling + visitor services + economic-development impact.

A Tourism Development Authority is a public authority created to promote travel and overnight stays.

For Statesville, that work supports local businesses, hotel demand, visitor experiences and community visibility.

Mission: encourage travelers to stop and stay in the Greater Statesville Area.

We are the storytellers.

We turn the people, places, events, history and experiences of Statesville into reasons to visit, stay overnight and spend locally.



PROMOTE

destination marketing, paid media and public relations



CONNECT

partners, visitors, media, event planners and group opportunities



MEASURE

lodging performance, audience behavior and visitor impact

Tourism is economic development with a WELCOME attached!

A Board Focused on Growing Statesville’s Visitor Economy

Nine Council-appointed community leaders bring hospitality, tourism and local perspective together around one clear purpose.

OUR PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

Encourage travelers to **STOP + STAY** in Greater Statesville, generating economic activity throughout our community.

HOSPITALITY

Jay “Jimmy” Patel

Chair • JAM Hospitality

Zankhana “Tika” Shah

Ramada Inn & Suites

Pritesh Nagarji

ABC Investments & Management Co.

TOURISM + DESTINATION

Pete Barger

Southern Distilling Company

Michelle Hepler

Rescue Ranch

Daniel Leatherman

Iredell County Parks & Recreation

Wes Davidson

First Flight Bicycles

COMMUNITY

Donald Hicks

Secretary • Statesville Housing Authority

Joe Bondi

Red Buffalo Brewing Company

Gina Lawrence

Treasurer • Non-voting ex officio

Kristi Madison Pfeufer

Statesville City Council Liaison

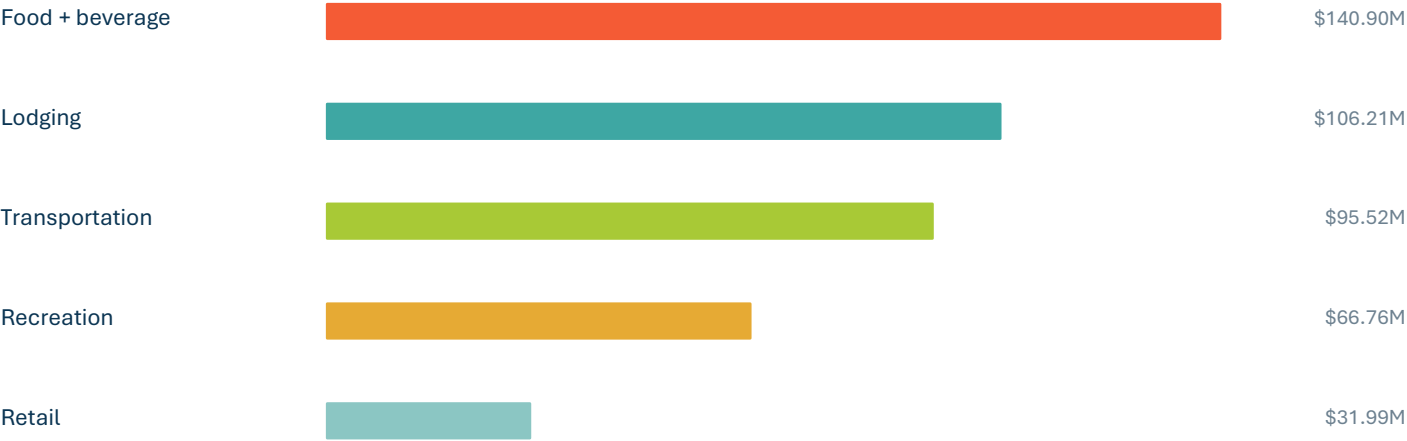
THE AUTHORITY BRINGS HOSPITALITY, TOURISM + COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP TOGETHER AROUND ONE GOAL: MORE OVERNIGHT VISITATION.

Tourism is meaningful economic activity.

Visit NC reports visitor impact at the county level; these figures represent all of Iredell County.



Where visitors spend



Council takeaway

Tourism spending supports local businesses, jobs and public revenue. The opportunity is to convert more visitor interest into overnight stays in Statesville.

A Pivotal Moment for Statesville

Statesville joined the North Carolina Civil Rights Trail in FY2026.

HONORING LOCAL HISTORY

The marker recognizes the 1960 Woolworth student sit-ins and the courage of the students who challenged segregation downtown.

CONNECTED TO A LARGER TRAIL

The designation links Statesville to a growing statewide heritage tourism network.

BUILDING FUTURE EXPERIENCES

This creates an opportunity to develop Statesville's African American history as a meaningful visitor experience.



This is not the end of the story. It's the beginning of a larger opportunity.

What Comes Next

The FY2026 Civil Rights Trail marker is a milestone. The next opportunity is to connect Statesville’s African American history to meaningful visitor experiences.

01

Research the Green Book story

Document businesses associated with T.V. Mangum and Black travel during segregation.

02

Learn through national peers

Attend the U.S. Civil Rights Trail Conference with Councilwoman Lisa Pearson.
October 26–28, 2026 • Memphis, TN

03

Build interpretation

Connect markers, places, oral histories and Statesville assets into visitor-ready stories.

04

Create visitor experiences

Develop heritage routes, partner storytelling and itineraries that encourage people to stay longer.

From a marker to a connected heritage tourism experience.

Statesville Event Center.

A modern venue positioned to attract regional weekday meetings, conferences and group business.

● Sound + Video Fully Upgraded

New speakers, wireless microphones and high-resolution projectors. Installation completed June 2026.

● ADA-Compliant Touchscreen Controls

Simple, accessible operation for presenters and event staff, with full system integration.

● \$300,000 From Occupancy Tax

Funded by the 5% occupancy tax on overnight hotel stays: visitor-generated tourism dollars, not local taxpayer dollars.



An improved public asset. A stronger tool for weekday group business.

Last Night in Statesville

Overnight visitation is generating meaningful lodging revenue before most of the community begins its day.

FY2026 LODGING ECONOMY

\$27.6M

taxable lodging sales represented by FY2026 gross occupancy-tax collections

\$100.78

average hotel room rate
Jan–Jun 2026

The visitor-paid 5% occupancy tax generated about \$1.381M in FY2026 gross collections. That equates to approximately \$27.6M in taxable lodging sales across the market.

THE OVERNIGHT MARKET IS EVOLVING

54.4%

Mon–Thu hotel occupancy
Jan–Jun 2026

\$708K

estimated short-term rental revenue
Jan–Jul 2026

+12.9%

short-term rental revenue growth
vs. Jan–Jul 2025

LAST NIGHT IN STATESVILLE

Visitors paid for lodging, ate in restaurants, bought fuel, shopped and experienced Statesville. Tourism was working while Statesville slept.

The opportunity is Monday–Thursday.

January–June 2026 STR hotel performance shows where destination sales and group business can make the greatest difference.

MON-THU

54.4%

occupancy

FRI-SAT

59.4%

occupancy

A 5-point occupancy spread

Weekends are stronger. The growth opportunity is filling more rooms Monday through Thursday.

WEEKDAY HOTEL ECONOMICS

\$101.43

ADR

Average room rate on sold rooms

\$55.14

RevPAR

Room revenue across all available rooms

That is exactly where meetings, conferences, tournaments, corporate travel and group recruitment can help.

The days Statesville most needs to grow are the days our sales strategy is built to win.

We’re Learning Who Stays, Where They Come From + What They Do.

Better visitor intelligence helps us connect overnight demand to the local businesses and experiences travelers choose while they are here.

WHO IS STAYING OVERNIGHT

TOP ORIGIN MARKETS

	Raleigh–Cary, NC	9,100	
	Atlanta–Sandy Springs, GA	8,200	
	Pittsburgh, PA	7,600	
	Greensboro–High Point, NC	5,400	+23.5%
	Charlotte–Concord–Gastonia, NC	4,200	+27.9%

overnight trips

WHAT VISITORS EXPERIENCE

MOST-VISITED MEASURED LOCAL PLACES INCLUDED

Katana Kitchen LOCAL DINING 71.8K	Statesville Event Center MEETINGS + EVENTS 61.3K
Amalfi’s Pizza LOCAL DINING 45.3K	Boxcar Grille FORMER LOCATION 37.1K
Broad Street Burger Co. LOCAL DINING 35.8K	Fresh Chef FORMER LOCATION 34.8K

EXIT 148 SIGNAL • Katana Kitchen + the former Boxcar Grille ranked among the most-visited measured places despite very limited lodging inventory.

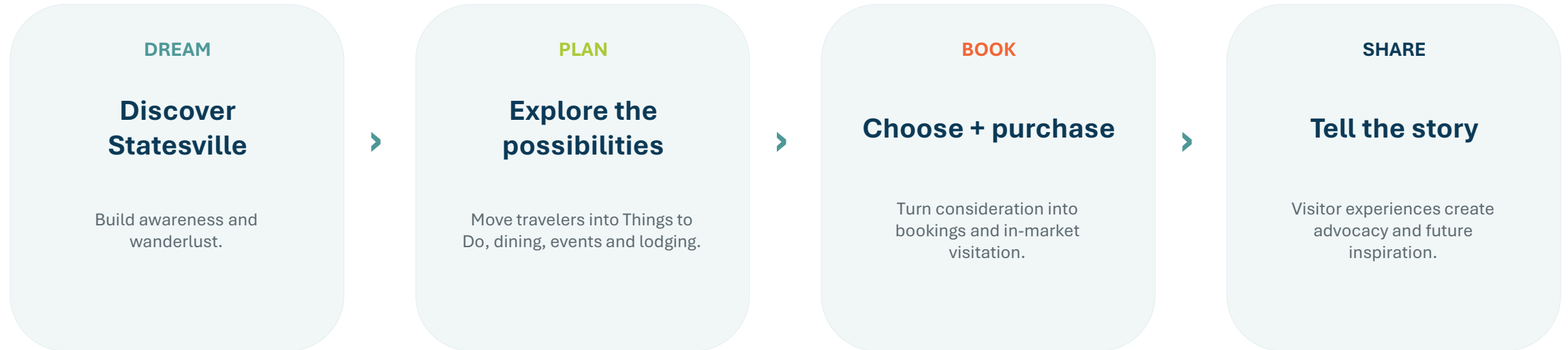
BEYOND COUNTS • Advance combines Placer.ai, GA4 + campaign analytics to understand visitor profiles, day/week/year patterns, and the pages + partners travelers choose next.

BETTER VISITOR INTELLIGENCE HELPS US TARGET THE RIGHT MARKETS + CONNECT OVERNIGHT STAYS TO LOCAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITY.

Source: Placer.ai measured visitation, reporting period as presented in the July 2026 analysis. Advance also combines Placer.ai, GA4 + campaign analytics to evaluate visitor profiles, visitation patterns + actions. Boxcar Grille and Fresh Chef have since closed; Fresh Chef is now FunkHeizers Diner.

From awareness to an overnight stay.

Advance structures Statesville marketing around the traveler journey, not isolated ad placements.



FY2027 OBJECTIVE

Increase awareness → increase engagement → increase bookings and in-market visitation.

MEASURABLE ACTION

Marketing is moving travelers deeper into the journey.

Campaign growth is translating into deeper exploration of Statesville and the experiences that can lead to an overnight stay.

249%

increase in website users

207%+

increase in sessions + page views

171%

increase in engaged sessions

VISITORS ARE EXPLORING WHAT MATTERS

Lodging • Featured Attractions • Things To Do



THE DESTINATION PLATFORM

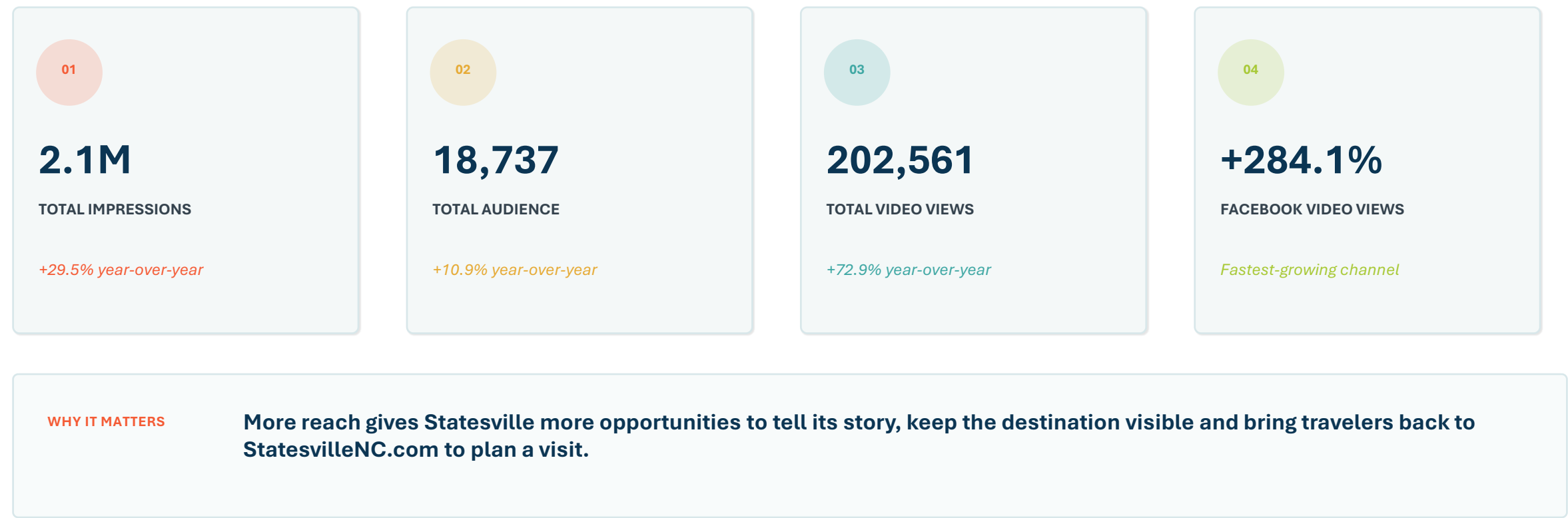
statesvillenc.com

DINE. SHOP. DISCOVER. STAY.

SEE IT FOR YOURSELF • VISIT STATESVILLENC.COM

Growing Statesville’s Audience.

Our owned social channels are expanding the audience we can inspire, engage and move toward a Statesville visit.



SOCIAL GROWTH SUPPORTS THE SAME GOAL: DISCOVER → PLAN → VISIT → STAY

FY2027 Campaign Overview

Building on FY2026 campaign performance with a year-round, multi-channel media plan.

\$125,100

FY2027 media investment

Always-on channels

July 2026 - July 2027

- **Display banner ads**
regional + extended markets
- **Paid search**
capture active travel intent
- **Meta awareness + traffic**
reach and move audiences
- **YouTube**
video storytelling across drive markets

Seasonal flight schedule

Creative bursts in high-opportunity travel windows

AUG-OCT 2026

Lat Long display + food creative

375K impressions

AUG-NOV 2026

Spotify audio

Fall drive-market awareness

MAR-JUN 2027

Spotify audio

Spring / summer travel intent

APR-JUN 2027

Lat Long display

375K impressions

Creative in market



Dine, shop, discover and stay messaging connects travelers with real local reasons to visit.

Council takeaway

FY2027 shifts Statesville from a short campaign window to sustained visibility, measurable website action and seasonal creative that supports overnight stays and local partner referrals.

Where We're Going

The next chapter is about turning stronger visitor intelligence, destination assets and storytelling into more overnight stays and greater local impact.

Grow Overnight Visitation

Build Monday–Thursday demand through group business, meetings and the Statesville Event Center.

Tell More of Statesville's Story

Build on the Civil Rights Trail milestone and grow meaningful heritage tourism experiences.

Turn Marketing Into Action

Use targeted media, visitor data and StatesvilleNC.com to move travelers from discovery to planning, booking and spending locally.

Plan the Next Chapter

Begin an updated destination strategic plan to guide FY2028 priorities and investment.

Tourism is visitor-funded. Its impact belongs to the entire community.

THANK YOU

Statesville City Council • Hospitality Partners • Local Businesses • The People Who Make Statesville Worth Discovering

DINE. SHOP. DISCOVER. STAY.

[STATESVILLENC.COM](https://statesvillenc.com)