



VisitHendersonvilleNC.org

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# Tourism Tidbits

January 14, 2021

A newsletter from Henderson County TDA

## VisitNC Covid-19 Recovery Grant

In October 2020, Henderson County Tourism Development Authority received a \$100,000 Marketing Credit Grant as part of a stimulus recovery program created by VisitNC. The grant had to be spent by December 30, 2020. HCTDA staff worked with VisitNC's advertising agency and developed a marketing plan to boost overnight stays in Hendersonville through the end of the year. The credit enabled Henderson County to invest in VisitNC's proven co-operative marketing program that leverages the state's buying power and marketing insights. Henderson County was most fortunate to receive this significant grant to enhance HCTDA's tourism marketing budget in its efforts to recover from the devastatingly negative economic impact caused by the Covid-19 virus. Tourism is not generally considered essential to our everyday lives, but this grant program identifies tourism as one of the top economic drivers in Henderson County and North Carolina. The marketing efforts from this grant money should positively impact the local economy during the first quarter of 2020 and into the spring and summer of 2021.

The Henderson County TDA Board and staff want to take this opportunity to thank the citizens of Henderson County for their support of our restaurants, retail and other tourism related businesses during this crisis. The Board and staff are especially proud of our tourism industry partners for their diligent efforts in adapting to the numerous guidelines as they have managed new social distancing protocols and expectations by their customers.

## Great Time to Create Packages

The slower season is a great time to partner with other local businesses to develop creative Stay & Play packages. With Valentine's Day quickly approaching, romantic getaways that include flowers, chocolates, special dinners, spa treatments and the Cheers! Trail Passports are a few examples of packaging. The Stay & Play Package page on the HCTDA web site lists accommodations that offer travel packages, the categories include Lodging, Dining, Attractions, Golf, Outdoor Recreation and Weddings. As the vaccines become more readily available people will be hitting the roads and want everything planned for them.

The overnight stays may be bundled in very creative ways to make their stays in Hendersonville an experience such as including The Cheers Trail Passport, Gem Mining, Zip Lining, Apple Picking or a free appetizer at a local restaurant. Innkeepers that offer packages year-round on their web site may contact Karen Baker [kbaker@visithendersonvillenc.org](mailto:kbaker@visithendersonvillenc.org) to be included on the page. Check out the packages being offered <https://www.visithendersonvillenc.org/travel-packages>

## Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)

The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) **re-opened the loan process on January 11 for new borrowers** and certain existing PPP borrowers. To learn more, go to U.S. Small Business Administration, <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options/paycheck-protection-program>

Application submission for new borrowers started on January 11, lender availability is limited. If you have already exhausted your first PPP loan, the loan process for your second draw started on January 13. Eligibility for a PPP loan now includes.

- Small businesses
- Self-employed individuals
- Sole Proprietorships
- 501(c)(6) organizations (with certain lobbying restrictions applying)
- 501(c) and quasi-governmental DMOs (with certain lobbying restrictions applying).
- Tribal businesses
- Independent contractors
- 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations

Source – U.S. Travel Association

## Free Webinars

- **January 14** / Build Your Business with Instagram / 5:30-6:30pm / <https://www.ncsbc.net/workshop.aspx?ekey=50410038>
- **January 15** / How to Create and Stick to a Marketing Plan, Even During a Pandemic / 10-11am / <https://www.ncsbc.net/workshop.aspx?ekey=50410046>
- **January 20** - Successful Business Planning / 10-11am / <https://www.ncsbc.net/workshop.aspx?ekey=50410047>
- **January 26** / How to Sell Products Using Amazon & Etsy / 12-1pm / <https://www.ncsbc.net/workshop.aspx?ekey=50410005>
- **January 26** / Researching Opportunity & Risk / 1-2pm / <https://www.ncsbc.net/workshop.aspx?ekey=50410031>
- **January 26** / How to Find Your Customers / 5:30-7:30pm / <https://www.ncsbc.net/workshop.aspx?ekey=50410014>
- **January 27** / Build Your Business with Facebook / 12-1pm / <https://www.ncsbc.net/workshop.aspx?ekey=50410043>
- **January 28** / Your Unique Value Proposition to Your Community Partners / 11:30am-1pm / <https://www.ncsbc.net/workshop.aspx?ekey=50410044>

## Smarter Parking Improves Service in Downtown Hendersonville

Hendersonville drivers have the option to pay for parking from their mobile devices. People parking in the Azalea, Maple, and Dogwood public parking lots may use the ParkMobile app to pay for parking and extend their time without returning to a payment kiosk. The existing parking kiosks will remain as payment options in addition to the app.

“By partnering with ParkMobile, Downtown Hendersonville is able to offer a contactless and convenient parking option,” said Community Development Director Lew Holloway. “Instead of disrupting a meal or shopping experience to feed the parking meter, visitors can add time straight from their phone and enjoy downtown without interruption.”

New signage and stickers in public parking lots will provide information to drivers on how to pay for parking using the app in addition to resources posted at <https://www.hendersonvillenc.gov/visit-downtown/parking> The ParkMobile app is free to download in the App Store, Google Play, and users may also register at ParkMobile.io.

Parking rates have remained unchanged and motorists can still pay by cash or card at the kiosks, or by setting up their preferred payment method in the ParkMobile app. When using the kiosks, drivers will ‘Pay by Plate’ instead of by space by entering their license plate number when prompted on the kiosk screen. Additional information about the ParkMobile app and downtown parking is available at <https://www.hendersonvillenc.gov/visit-downtown/parking>

## Power in Brochure Marketing

- 7 out of 10 tourists pick up brochures in-market
- 83% plan to visit a business they saw in a brochure
- 43% of visitors share brochures with 3+ travel companions
- 65% of visitors plan to purchase tickets or merchandise after picking up a brochure
- 86% of hotel front desk staff observe guests using brochures always or often
- In this digital age, printed media remains the preferred method of in-market visitors when seeking tourism information
- 95% of visitors who pick up brochures become aware of a business
- 78% of visitors that pick-up brochures consider altering their travel plans
- Brochures, Maps & Travel Guides influence 53% of pre-trip planning

Source - Ian Cross – Bentley University/Center for Marketing Technology

## Building a Database

Your business should be gathering contact information from your customers at point of purchase, to build a database to develop return customers. Each quarter send an email or text to your customers alerting them of sales, new merchandise, seasonal menus or even better yet, create a loyal reward program and offer them some kind of special incentive for repeat business. Keep the database up to date.

## HCTDA Sponsored Events

- **HCTDA Board Meeting** / January 26 / 1pm
- **Group Sales Forum** / January 27 / 10-11:00 am / via Zoom
- **Henderson County Tourism Conference** / March 25
- **Cider, Wine & Dine Weekend** / April 15 - 18  
(schedule subject to state mandates)

## Contact Us

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