

# 2006-2007 Annual Report



## Currituck County Department of Travel & Tourism

This document examines the progress of the Currituck County Department of Travel & Tourism. Information and data includes occupancy and sales tax collection, statistical research and the Department's marketing strategy. This report also highlights visitor spending and the economic impact of tourism in Currituck County for the 2006-2007 fiscal year.

### Tourism Advisory Board

John Wright, Chairman  
Sanctuary Vineyards

Don Austin  
The Peach Basket

Janice Farr  
Sun Realty

Krista Boughey, Vice-Chairman  
Seaside Vacations

Don Cheek  
Corolla Light Resort

Vivian Simpson  
Historic Jarvisburg Colored School

### Tourism Development Authority/Board of Commissioners

Barry Nelms, Chairman

Ernie Bowden

J. Owen Etheridge

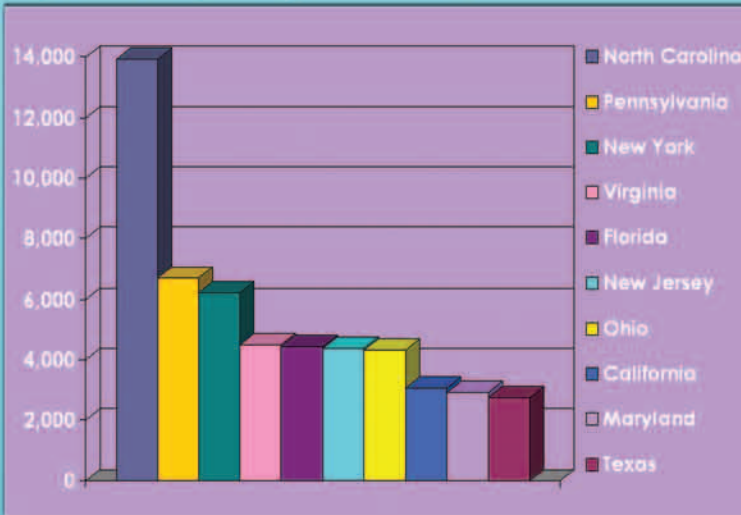
Gene Gregory, Vice-Chairman

Janet Taylor

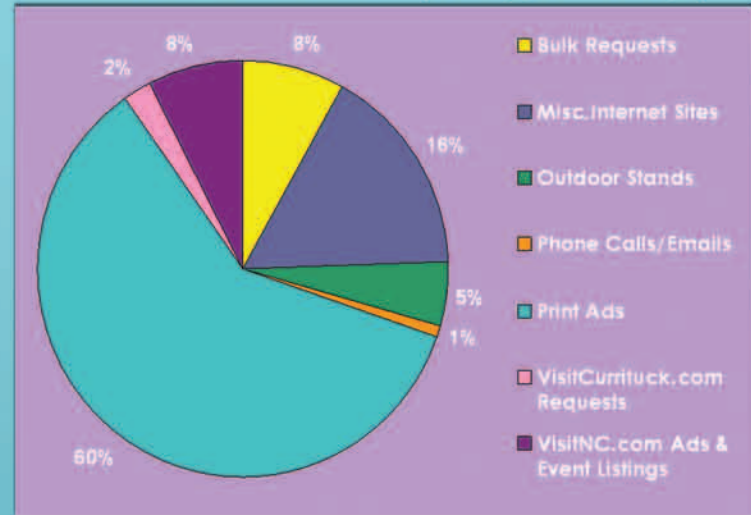


## STATISTICAL RESEARCH

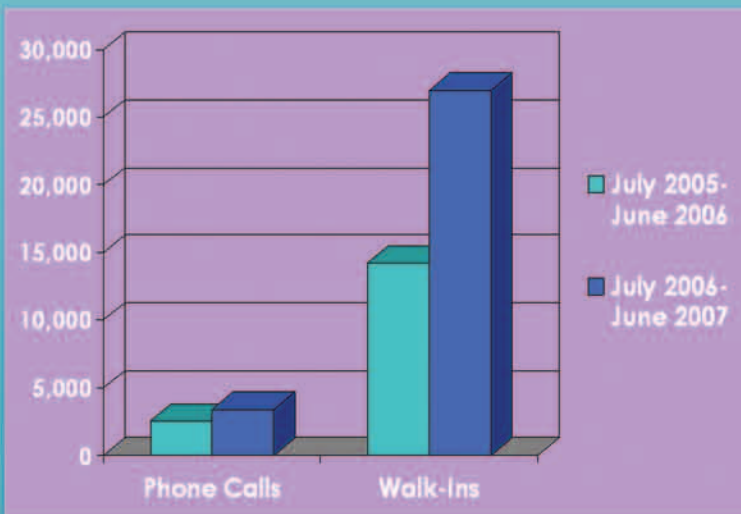
### Top States Requesting Information



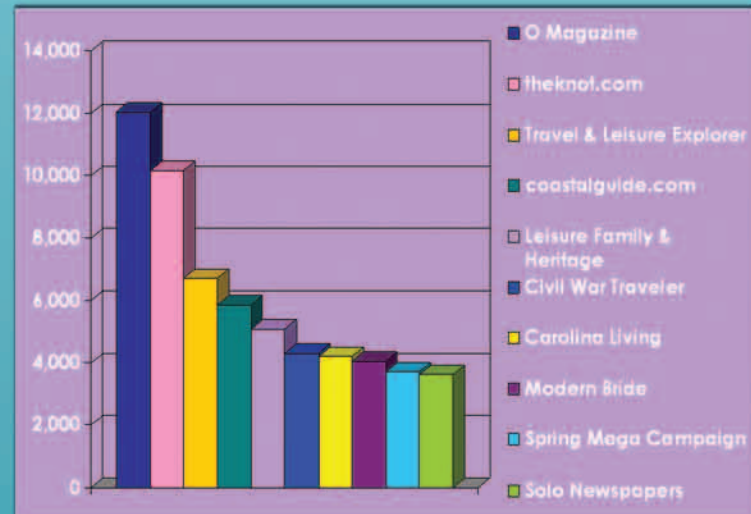
### Source of Visitor Information Requests (by Percentage)



### Phone Calls & Walk-Ins to the Visitor's Center



### Top Advertising Sources of Information Requests



### The VisitCurrituck.com Web Site

The web site, VisitCurrituck.com, received 2,265,216 page hits during the 2006-2007 fiscal year. It was also ranked among the top ten sites on Google (with "Outer Banks" in the search engine). By industry standards, these are considered great accomplishments for a site less than two years old.

### Monthly Report

Detailed information on tourism statistics and advertising can be found in the Travel & Tourism Monthly Report, located in the Business Resources section of VisitCurrituck.com. Sign up to receive this report by emailing [businessresources@visitcurrituck.com](mailto:businessresources@visitcurrituck.com).

## BUSINESS RESOURCES

In an effort to better communicate with tourism-related businesses, the Travel & Tourism Department created the Business Resources section on VisitCurrituck.com.

A number of documents have recently been added to this section, including the 2007-2008 Marketing Plan and the Monthly Report. Minutes and agendas from Tourism Advisory Board meetings, policies for publications and websites, and business registration procedures can be found in the Business Resources section.

If your tourism-related business is not included in the Department's database, please call 252-232-2708.



## ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIPS

The Currituck County Department of Travel & Tourism is currently a member of the following associations:

**North Carolina Coast Host** is a membership organization made up of tourism partners such as accommodations, attractions, convention and visitor bureaus and publishers located along I-95 and eastward. The primary mission is to increase economic growth by promoting travel and tourism in eastern North Carolina.

**Northeastern North Carolina Regional Economic Development Commission** promotes economic development, travel and tourism for sixteen northeastern North Carolina counties. The organization supports efforts to increase visitor awareness of the area's many natural, historical, cultural and recreational opportunities.

**North Carolina Association of Convention & Visitor Bureaus** was organized as a network of destination marketing organizations working cooperatively to promote North Carolina as a convention and leisure destination.

**SouthEast Tourism Society** is a non-profit organization dedicated to the development of tourism agencies and promoting tourism within STS member states. This is accomplished by sharing resources, networking, providing continuing education, cooperative marketing and many other programs.

**Outer Banks Wedding Association** is a non-profit marketing group that represents the Outer Banks wedding industry.

## 2007-2008 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Increase the number of visitors to Currituck County, which will increase occupancy and sales tax revenues.
2. Increase the exposure of Currituck County's brand image.
3. Enhance and aggressively market the tourism web site, VisitCurrituck.com.
4. Develop and maintain strategic alliances with tourism-related businesses, attractions and other groups.
5. Utilize the available reporting data to direct the Department's resources to enhance Currituck County's marketing position.
6. Analyze the effectiveness of advertising campaigns in state, national and international publications and media outlets.
7. Encourage day-trip travelers to stay overnight.



*The 2007-2008 Marketing Plan includes a detailed strategic plan, research and analysis, advertising plan and much more.*

*PDFs of the plan can be viewed in the Business Resources section of VisitCurrituck.com.*

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### Currituck County Mainland Office

145 Courthouse Road  
Post Office Box 39  
Currituck, NC 27929

P 252.232.2708  
F 252.232.3298

### Currituck Outer Banks Visitor's Center

500 Hunt Club Drive  
Corolla, NC 27929

P 877.287.7488  
F 252.453.9653



**Director of Travel & Tourism**  
Diane Sawyer  
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**Marketing Coordinator**  
Veronica Brown  
vbrown@vistcurrituck.com

## PUBLICATIONS

### PRINTED PUBLICATIONS



**Currituck Outer Banks Visitor's Guide** includes a comprehensive list of all tourism-related businesses, annual events, historical features and general travel information.

**The Currituck Outer Banks Wedding & Event Planner** assists in planning weddings, family reunions and other events. It lists catering, accommodations, photographers and other services needed to plan these special occasions.

**The Currituck Outer Banks Newspaper** includes descriptions and photos of the key attractions and activities in the area. Its purpose is to assist visitors in planning their activities once they arrive. Popular features include "Activities for Kids" and "Rainy Day Ideas."

**The Corolla Map** promotes key attractions and activities on the Currituck Outer Banks and is distributed to guests at the Visitor's Center and several local businesses.

**The Trail Guide** highlights three trails in Currituck County: shopping, wineries and breweries, and farm markets. It also lists the restaurants along the way. This is helpful to visitors interested in specific attractions.

### E-NEWSLETTER

The Travel and Tourism Department sends monthly e-newsletters to all businesses in the Department's database. The purpose is to keep tourism businesses informed and up-to-date on news and happenings in Currituck County.

### WEB SITES

Currituck County businesses are promoted online at [VisitCurrituck.com](http://VisitCurrituck.com) and [VisitNC.com](http://VisitNC.com).

The Department of Travel & Tourism is in the process of switching the web site domain name to [ComeToOurBeach.com](http://ComeToOurBeach.com).

## EVENTS & SPECIAL PROGRAMS

### JULY 4TH FIREWORKS

The 2007 Independence Day Celebration was funded through Occupancy Tax. This annual event was organized by Currituck County employees.

### PRESS TOUR

Travel writers were invited to the Currituck Outer Banks to experience the unique attractions in the area. Several articles have been published: "American Heritage In the Outer Banks of North Carolina," "BBQ-North Carolina Style," and "Smooth Traveler: North Carolina's Final Frontier."

To read these articles go to the "Media" section of [VisitCurrituck.com](http://VisitCurrituck.com).

### GOLF PROGRAM

The Travel & Tourism Department participated in a special golf program with the state of North Carolina and the Outer Banks Golf Association.

Advertorial was published in *Golf Digest*, *Golf World*, and *Golf For Women*. The Golf Channel sent a film crew to the area and featured Currituck County in a television program, while subscribers of [thegolfchannel.com](http://thegolfchannel.com) were sent e-blasts.



### SUPPORT OF FUNDS PROGRAM

The Support of Funds Program assists community groups, non-profit organizations and tourism-related businesses in marketing tourism events and activities in Currituck County.

Through this program, the following events received funding from the Tourism Advisory Board during the 2006-2007 fiscal year:

- Coastival, Currituck-Dare Community Fund
- Currituck Wildlife Festival, Coinjock Ruritan Club
- Currituck Wine & Food Festival, Currituck Winegrowers
- Currituck Wine & Jazz Festival, Currituck Co. Arts Council
- Enduring History Celebration, Jarvisburg Colored School
- Moonrise Bay Wine Festivals, Moonrise Bay Vineyards
- Outer Banks International Wine Festival, Native Vine
- Seafood & Blues Festival, Weeping Radish Farm Brewery
- Ye Olde Faire O'History, Weeping Radish Farm Brewery



### VACATION CHANNELS

A film crew and actors were hired to produce a commercial on the Currituck Outer Banks. The video promotes Currituck County's beaches, activities and attractions. Currently, it is being aired in Hampton Roads, Virginia on the Vacation Channels Network.

The commercial will also be shown on various local television stations and is available online at [VisitCurrituck.com](http://VisitCurrituck.com).

## TAX DATA

### TAX RELIEF

Tax relief is the sales tax revenue (from state and local taxes) divided by the number of households. Currituck County's average tax relief benefit per household in 2006 was **\$1,503.91**.

Comparatively, the State of North Carolina's average was \$413.03 while neighboring county, Pasquotank, had an average tax relief of \$269.62 per household.

This data shows that being a coastal beach community with a variety of attractions and activities is of great benefit to local taxpayers.

### VISITOR IMPACT PERCENT CHANGE - 2005 vs. 2006

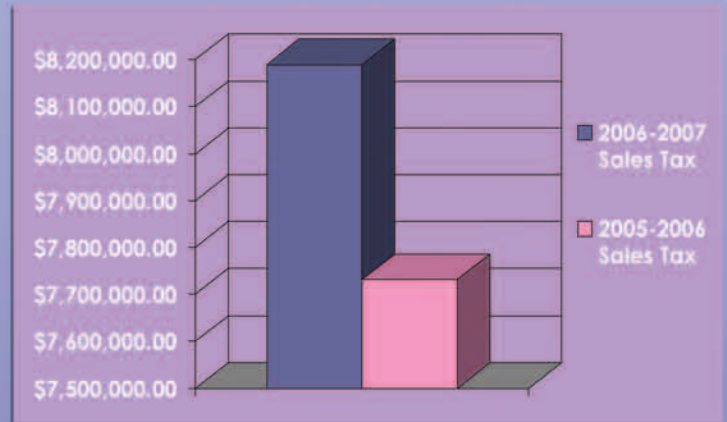
Currituck County's spending by overnight visitors increased by 9.9%. Comparatively, Pasquotank County increased 7.4%; Dare increased 8.7%. The overall State average was an increase of 8.3% and the national average went up by 7.7%.

### Currituck County Domestic Travel and Tourism Economic Impact Data for 2006

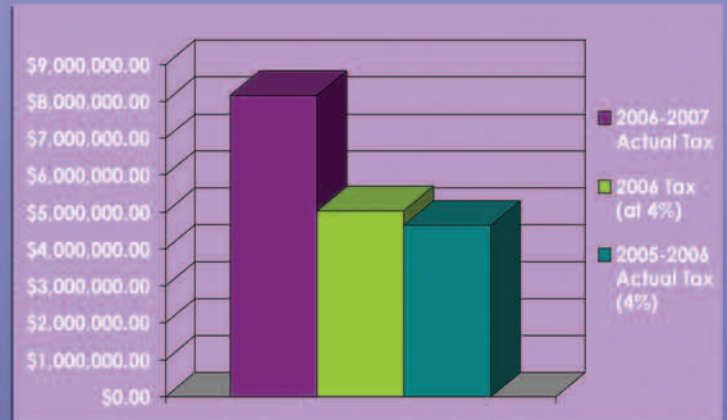
Total domestic travel expenditures	\$120,250,000
Total travel related payroll	\$24,400,000
Total number of travel related jobs	1,600
State & local sales taxes paid by travelers	\$11,280,000
County households	6,902
Tax relief per household from sales taxes (paid by travelers)	\$1,503.91

*Note: Occupancy Tax is not included in the figures of this table; only Sales Tax is included. Data Sources: Travel Industry Association of America for the NC Division of Tourism, Film, and Sports Development, and the US Census Bureau-2005 population estimate.*

### Sales Tax Collection: July 2006-June 2007 vs. July 2005-June 2006



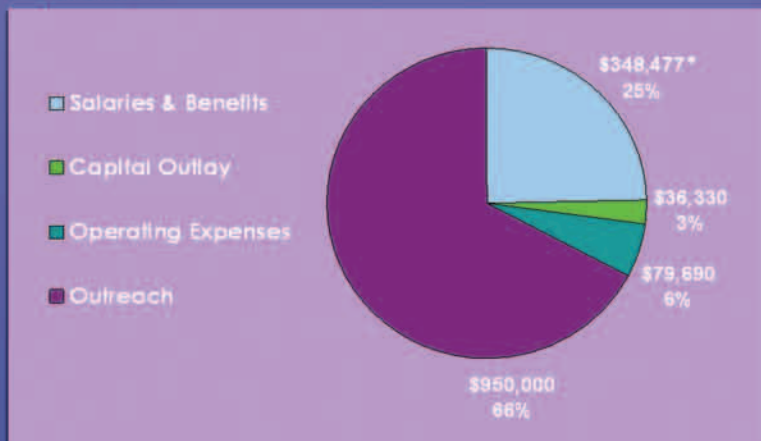
### Occupancy Tax Collection: July 2006-June 2007 vs. July 2005-June 2006



Occupancy Tax is at an all-time high with \$8,056,036 being paid by renters during the 2006-2007 fiscal year.

## EXPENDITURES

### 2006-2007 Expenditures for the Travel & Tourism Department



A review of the budget categories (Salaries & Benefits, Capital Outlay, Operating Expenses and Outreach) for the Department of Travel & Tourism by Randall Travel Marketing reveals that the Department is spending the funding it receives appropriately as a percentage of the whole budget.

*\*Includes salaries and benefits for the Public Information Department.*

These figures compare favorably with the standards set by the DMAI (Destination Marketing Association International).

According to DMAI, salaries and benefits should fall within a 25-40% range. For the Travel & Tourism/Public Information Department, 2006/2007 staffing expenses totaled 25% (of combined budgets).

The DMAI recommends office operating expenses be in the 10%-20% range. Currituck County's operating expense budget is at 6%.

The marketing and outreach expense is appropriate," according to Randall Travel Marketing "given the size of the travel market in Currituck." The DMAI recommends 40%-50% and the Travel & Tourism Department spent 66% in 2006/2007.

The total combined budget for the Travel & Tourism Department was \$1,414,497.