

Immediate Release
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10.4 Million Visitors to Wake County Spent \$1.5 Billion in 2007

Raleigh, NC (August 5, 2008) – Two nationally respected travel **and travel** research organizations released 2007 numbers in terms of total visitation and visitor spending in Wake County. D.K. Shifflet and Associates calculated more than **10.4 million** travelers visited Wake County in 2007 while the Travel Industry Association of America shows those visitors contributed more than **\$1.5 billion** into the local economy – an increase of 10.7 percent from \$1.34 billion in 2006.

According to D.K. Shifflet and Associates, the number of visitors to Wake County is 10.4 million with a current breakdown of **61 percent leisure** and **39 percent business travelers**.

The Travel Industry Association of America’s study, released today, and commissioned by the North Carolina Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development, ranks Wake County No. 2 among North Carolina’s 100 counties in terms of domestic visitor spending. Mecklenburg County (\$3.4 billion) ranks No. 1 while Guilford County (\$1.0 billion), Dare County (\$762 million) and Buncombe County (\$709 million) round out the top five. Overall, the statewide increase for domestic visitors was up 7.4 percent up to \$17.1 billion.

Visitor spending in the Capital City area generated more than \$110 million in state (\$68 million) and local (\$42 million) tax receipts last year, according to TIA.

Equally important, those revenues actually save residents taxes by generating tax revenues through their local spending, which in turn are used for education, school construction, water, sewer and other necessities. If these tax revenues were not generated by visitors, the local taxpayers would need to provide the revenue if the current level of service and amenities in Wake County were to be maintained.

More than 18,000 people are employed in the hospitality industry in Wake County representing more than \$486 million in payroll income. Nearly 200,000 jobs throughout North Carolina are attributed to tourism, an increase of 2.2 percent.

The word “visitor” represents more than just tourists. In addition to leisure visitors, it includes business travelers, convention delegates, day-trippers, families on weekend getaways, and people visiting the area for specific reasons ranging from shopping and dining to cultural and sporting events.

The Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau, as the official destination marketing organization of Raleigh and Wake County, accelerates sustainable economic growth and development by increasing visitor and convention business. Through its

website, www.visitRaleigh.com and other tools, the GRCVB assists local visitors in a variety of ways.