



FREE ARTS TROLLEY SERVICE

Connecting Downtown and the RAD

INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

The Arts Council's latest Buncombe County Creative Jobs Pandemic Report shows that among the 20 sectors in Buncombe County, the Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (A, E, & R) sector had the fastest jobs growth rate at 53% from 2015-19. However, from 2019-20, A, E, & R experienced the greatest percentage of employment loss in Buncombe County—an overall loss of 34% representing a decline of over 1,300 jobs.



In an effort to support the recovery of the local creative sector, this spring the Asheville Area Arts Council is launching a new free trolley service to connect visitors and residents to businesses in the Central Business and River Arts Districts.

This free service will be offered on Second Saturdays at minimum, from 12-8 pm year round starting in April 2023, with the potential for additional days to be added between April and October depending upon funding. Ideally, the service would be available every Saturday from April to October to provide better data for analysis with more impactful results.

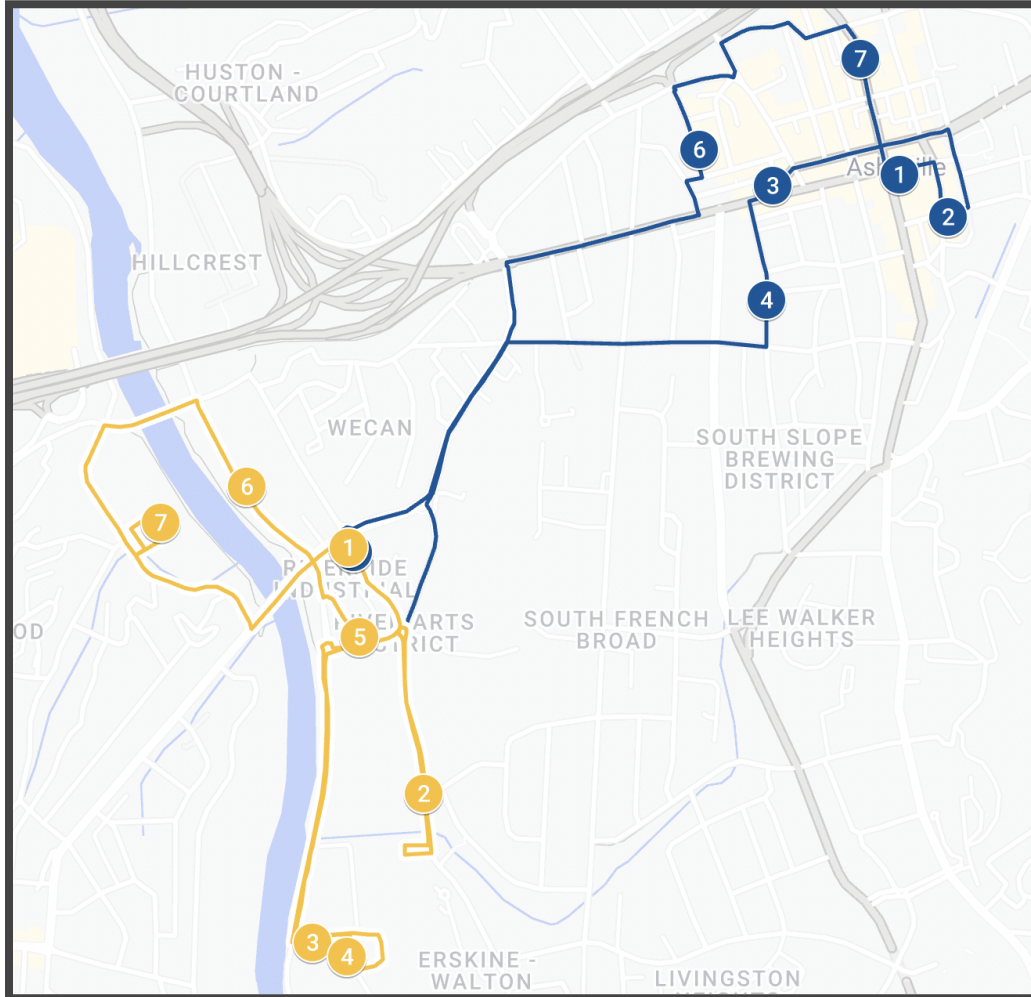
Two chartered Gray Line trolleys will circulate on 20-30 minute intervals. The Downtown Trolley connects the main areas of the Central Business District to the River Arts District, and the RAD Trolley loops throughout the River Arts District. Residents and visitors can view stops and current location of trolleys through the arts council's upgraded website and new ArtsAVL app launching in early 2023.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- ✓ Reduces traffic congestion and parking issues (park once, and ride!) which is more environmentally friendly.
- ✓ Provides assistance to arts businesses still recovering from the pandemic.
- ✓ Helps relieve parking/ navigation issues in the RAD created by ongoing long-term construction projects.
- ✓ Provides connection to high density destinations in the RAD and CBD that are not an easily walkable distance from each other.
- ✓ Disperses tourists out of the City center, increasing the number of businesses supported by visitor spending, and enhancing the visitor experience.



Trolley Routes



proposed trolley routes

Downtown Trolley Loop:

- 1 Asheville Art Museum • 2 The Block • 3 Pritchard Park • 4 Rabbit Rabbit • 5 Wedge Studios • 6 Citizen Vinyl • 7 Center for Craft • repeat

RAD Trolley Loop:

- 1 Wedge Studios • 2 Depot Street • 3 Riverview Station • 4 Foundy Street • 5 Black Wall Street • 6 Cotton Mill Studios • 7 New Belgium • repeat

PROJECT PARTNERS

Asheville Area Arts Council | ashevillearts.com

Founded in 1952, the Asheville Area Arts Council is the second oldest arts council in the state of North Carolina. The mission of the arts council is to keep the arts at the heart of our community. The Arts Council fulfills this mission by supporting arts professionals and businesses in Buncombe County through Connection, Advocacy, and Services for Creatives.

Gray Line Asheville | graylineasheville.com


Gray Line Trolley Tours of Asheville is a locally owned and operated licensee of Gray Line Worldwide, offering local Asheville sightseeing tours and private chartered transportation for weddings, groups and other special events. The Company, which opened in 2007, is locally owned and operated by the Helmken family.

Other Project Partners:

Partner	Role
Pat Kappes	Project Management
Mindtonic, Torrence Designs, and Helle Creative	Website, App, and Graphic Development
Ali McGhee	Marketing and PR Support
River Arts District Arts and River Arts District Business Association	Program Development
Downtown Asheville Arts District and Asheville Downtown Association	Program Development
City of Asheville	Route Approval
Asheville Art Museum, LEAF Global Arts, Highland Brewing, Rabbit Rabbit, Wedge Studios, Citizen Vinyl, and Center for Craft	Downtown Route Coordination
Wedge Studios, NorthLight Studios, Riverview Station, Wedge Brewing, Black Wall Street, Cotton Mill Studios, New Belgium	RAD Route Coordination



BUDGET

	OPTION 1 12 Trolley Days	OPTION 2 36 Trolley Days	OPTION 3 67 Trolley Days
		ONLY Second Saturdays from 12-8 pm	Second Saturdays PLUS All Saturdays from April- October from 12-8 pm
EXPENSE			
2 Chartered Trolleys	\$19,200	\$57,600	\$107,200
Website, App, Marketing & Signage	7,800	23,400	42,800
Administration	4,000	15,500	20,000
Contingency	1,000	3,500	5,000
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$32,000	\$100,000	\$175,000
REVENUE			
Sponsorships	\$25,000	\$30,000	\$75,000
Ads Sales	7,000	10,000	20,000
Grants	0	60,000	80,000
TOTAL REVENUE	\$32,000	\$100,000	\$175,000

- **Chartered Trolleys** | The Gray Line chartered trolleys cost \$100/ hr. x 2 trolleys x 8 hrs. per day = \$1,600.
- **Website, App, Marketing & Signage** | Includes expenses for the development of the trolley webpage and online advertising opportunities, magnetic banners for trolleys, signage at stops, app creation and maintenance, audio ad creation, general advertising for Arts AVL Connect.
- **Administration** | Administrative support for Arts Council staff overseeing the program.
- **Contingency** | For unexpected expenses.

AD & SPONSORSHIP OVERVIEW

Advertising Opportunities

Banner Ad (Valued at \$250 per month)	Post Ad (Valued at \$200 per month)	Audio Ad (Valued at \$200 per day)	Trolley Map Marker (Valued at \$500 per year)
Web: 728 X 90 px Mobile: 320 X 50 px	Web: 300 x 600 px Mobile: 300 x 250 px	15 second ad played once every 20 minute loop x 2 trolleys	Marker on Trolley Map accessible through website and app

Grant and Sponsorship Opportunities

	\$10,000+ (amount over \$5,000 is deductible)	\$5,000+ (amount over \$2,500 is deductible)	\$2,500+ (amount over \$1,500 is deductible)	\$1,000+ (amount over \$1,000 is deductible)
Directory Membership	✓	✓	✓	✓
Trolley Map Marker	✓	✓	✓	✓
ArtsAVL Connect Page Recognition	Large Logo	Medium Logo	Small Logo	Name Listed
Website and App Ads	4 Ads	3 Ads	2 Ads	1 Ad
Audio Ad on Trolley Ride	12 Ads	6 Ads	3 Ads	2 Ads
Social Media Spotlight	Quarterly	Bi-annual	One Time	-
Newsletter Spotlight	Quarterly	Bi-annual	One Time	-

**Membership includes a directory profile on the ArtsAVL website and app, and the ability to add event and opportunity listings.*

Included ArtsAVL Connect Marketing Perks

- ✓ Magnetic banners on the sides of the trolley will advertise the program's website and app, which includes trolley routes, destinations, and advertising.
- ✓ Additional local marketing will attract individuals to trolley webpage and app.
- ✓ Program advertised in ArtsAVL's bi-weekly newsletter (~5,000 subscribers, 50% open rate).
- ✓ Program advertised on ArtsAVL's socials (5,250+ Instagram & 9,600+ Facebook Followers).

EVALUATION & EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Evaluation

- **SURVEYS** | Business owners along trolley routes will be surveyed to see how their sales were impacted during the time the trolley was running, with a hope they will see a marked increase in sales at these times.
- **COUNTER** | The use of the trolley will be monitored by a counter clicker to help determine what months, weeks, and times are most utilized. Offerings could be adjusted or expanded based on usage and demand.
- **ANALYTICS** | Analytics will be collected for the use of the ArtsAVL app to view the trolley pages and ads on those pages. Using this data we can determine how to best maximize marketing efforts.

Expected Outcomes

Success looks like:

- ✓ Reduced traffic congestion and parking issues during the time the trolleys are running– *reducing negative environmental impacts.*
- ✓ Increased sales for businesses along the trolley routes, particularly Arts, Entertainment & Recreation businesses– *which experienced the greatest percentage of employment loss in Buncombe County due to the pandemic.*
- ✓ Reduction of the negative impacts created by ongoing long-term construction projects in the River Arts District.
- ✓ Better connection and dispersal to high density destinations in the RAD and downtown that are not an easily walkable distance from each other.
- ✓ Increase the number of tourists visiting businesses outside of the City center– *increasing the number of businesses impacted by visitor spending and enhancing the visitor experience.*
- ✓ Increased visibility for the arts businesses and programs through the Arts Council's marketing efforts.