

## Economic Impact of the Appalachian Theater

The Appalachian Theater, located in the heart of Boone, North Carolina, is a historic venue that has been a cornerstone of the community for over 80 years. Originally opened in 1938, the theater has undergone significant renovations while retaining its classic charm, offering a cozy, intimate setting for a variety of performances and events. With its beautifully restored Art Deco architecture, the Appalachian Theater hosts everything from live music and theater performances to film screenings and community gatherings. Its rich history, combined with its commitment to providing high-quality entertainment, makes it a beloved landmark in the Appalachian region.

Every year, the theater attracts thousands of visitors to the area to see a show, concert, movie, or other performance. The associated direct flow of money into the local economy associated with visitor spending creates a significant economic impact for the local economy. Economics students in the National Association for Business Economics (NABE) group at Appalachian State University conducted a study to measure the annual economic impact study of the theater. Data used in the analysis was a combination of theater visitation data (provided by the Appalachian Theater) and Center for Economic Research and Policy Analysis (CERPA) spending pattern primary data.

The ticket sales data from the Appalachian Theater provided total 2024 ticket sales, including the zip codes in which the sales were made. Using data analysis, the sales were separated into two categories: overnight sales and day-trip sales. This was based on the assumption that sales made within 120 miles of Boone, NC were within day-trip range. Sales outside of this range were associated with increased costs of travel and lodging using previously recorded local spending data specific to the Watauga County area. Aggregate spending pattern data for all visitors was estimated as a function of visitor type and average trip spending, by spending category (hotels, restaurants, entertainment, etc.).

Summing expenditures in all categories totaled an annual direct spending of \$4.4 million across all theater-related visits. This direct spending circulates through the regional economy and generates additional local spending through the “multiplier effect.” Total direct spending, by spending category, is entered into a geographically specific input-output model (IMPLAN) that captures these multiplier effects, by economic sector. The total annual economic impacts of the Appalachian Theater are estimated as **\$4.9 million in total economic activity, 46 jobs, and \$376,000 in tax dollars** generated.

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