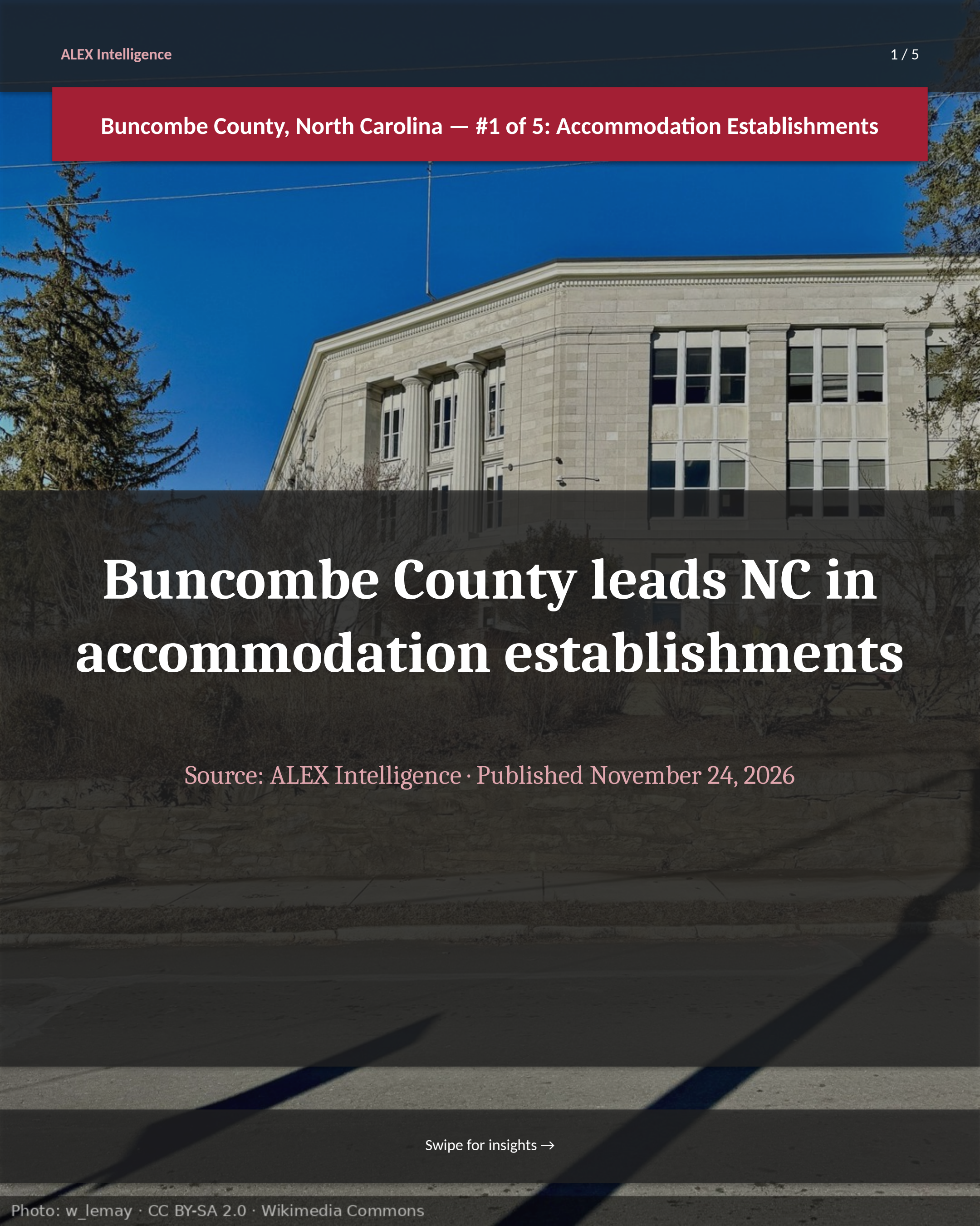
Buncombe County, North Carolina — #1 of 5: Accommodation Establishments



Buncombe County leads NC in accommodation establishments

Source: ALEX Intelligence · Published November 24, 2026

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THE DATA

137

Accommodation Establishments (2022)

Buncombe County has the highest count of accommodation establishments among all counties in the Asheville metro and across North Carolina.

This figure, drawn from the 2022 U.S. Census County Business Patterns, reflects the enduring strength of Asheville's tourism and hospitality economy. With 137 establishments, Buncombe County is not only the leader in the region but also a critical node in the post-Helene recovery infrastructure. The concentration of hotels, inns, and short-term rentals underscores sustained demand and long-term confidence in the area's economic resilience.



Photo: Warren LeMay · CC BY-SA 2.0 · Wikimedia Commons

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns 2022, NAICS 721 (Accommodation) · ALEX Intelligence computation
https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-11-24-asheville-ind-721-county

01

Tourism drives recovery and investment

The dominance of accommodation establishments in Buncombe County signals that tourism is not just rebounding—it is becoming a foundational pillar of the region's economic recovery. The funding is directly supporting infrastructure and façade improvements, which in turn enhances the guest experience and supports higher occupancy rates.

The data suggests that investors and operators are betting on sustained demand, even in the face of ongoing affordability challenges. This is not a temporary rebound but a structural shift toward a more resilient, experience-driven economy.

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02

Accommodation density reflects urban vitality

A high number of accommodation establishments is not merely a tourism metric—it is a proxy for urban vitality, walkability, and mixed-use development potential. In Buncombe County, this concentration correlates with strong pedestrian activity, vibrant commercial corridors, and ongoing revitalization efforts in downtown Asheville.

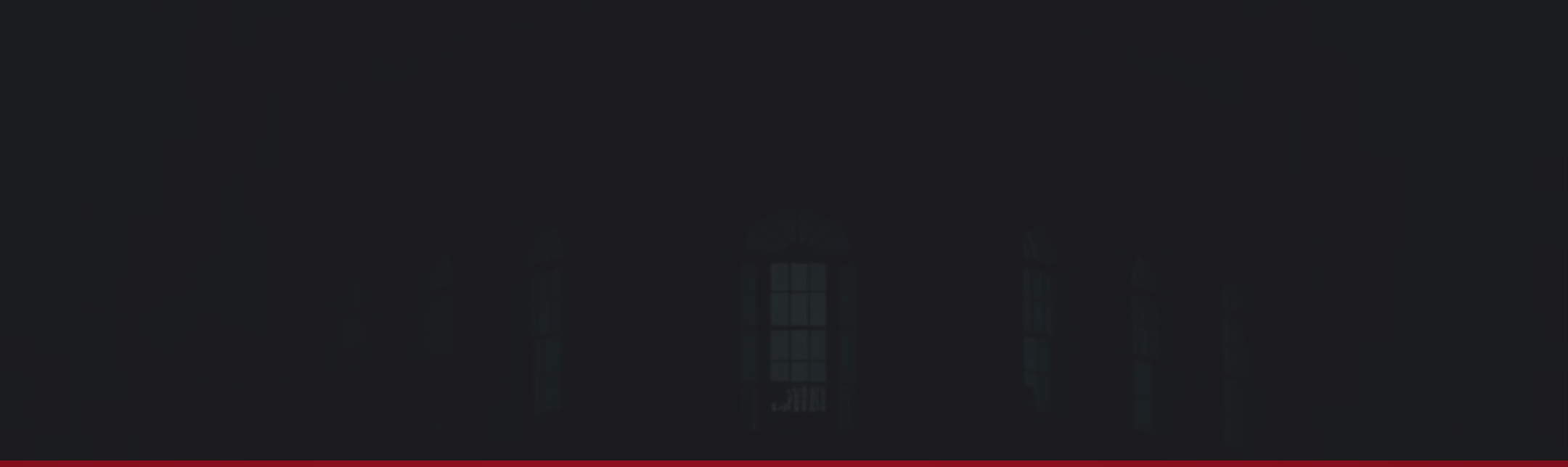
This pattern suggests that real estate values in these zones are being driven less by traditional residential demand and more by the economic returns of hospitality and retail. As such, the market is evolving toward a hybrid model where residential, commercial, and tourism assets coexist and reinforce one another—making the area a unique case study in post-disaster urban renewal.

Real Estate Strategy & Intelligence Leader. Democratized Blue Ocean Strategist & Operator.

Diane Hart Alexander, MBA, MHA

Chair & CEO, ALEX Companies
Designated Broker, Alexander Tiffany Southwest, LLC dba ALEX.realestate, et.al.
Texas License #574877-B · Broker License #565194-BB

diane@alex.realestate · +1 713.591.9902



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