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VISITATION NUMBERS RELEASED FOR WAKE COUNTY
9.87 Million Visitors Spend \$1.42 Billion in 2009

Raleigh, NC – Two nationally respected travel and travel research organizations have released 2009 numbers in terms of total visitation and visitor spending in Wake County. D.K. Shifflet and Associates calculated approximately **9.87 million** travelers visited Wake County in 2009 while the United States Travel Association (USTA) shows those visitors contributed more than **\$1.42 billion** into the local economy.

According to D.K. Shifflet and Associates, the number of visitors to Wake County is 9.87 million with a current breakdown of 73% leisure and 27% business and an even further breakdown as 5.39 million daytrip visitors and 4.49 million overnight visitors.

“The most significant change was the business to leisure ratios,” said Denny Edwards, president and CEO of the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau. “Due to the significant decline of the business transient client, we heavily marketed to the leisure visitor, as well as the meeting and sports markets, successfully filling the gap in overall visitation numbers.”

Visitor spending in the Capital City area generated more than \$113 million in state (\$72.2 million) and local (\$41.4 million) tax receipts last year, according to USTA.

Equally important, visitor tax revenues actually save resident taxes, as visitor tax receipts also 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 same revenue if the current level of service and amenities in Wake County were to be maintained.

In 2009 tax revenues from visitor spending saved each Wake County household \$232.10 in state taxes and \$133.30 in local taxes for a total of \$365.40 savings.

More than 18,000 people are employed in the hospitality industry in Wake County representing an estimated \$480 million in payroll income. Nearly 183,000 jobs throughout North Carolina are attributed to tourism.

The word “visitor” represents more than just tourists. In addition to leisure visitors, it includes business travelers, sports participants, 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.

These statistics are from the “2009 Economic Impact Of Travel On North Carolina Counties.” The study was prepared for the North Carolina Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development by the U.S. Travel Association.

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.