

## North Carolina County Trade Pull Factor Report – 2023

County Trade Pull Factors (CTPF) serve as a crucial metric for assessing the retail strength of a county's economy. The CTPF is calculated by dividing a county's per capita sales tax revenue by the state's per capita sales tax revenue.

- A **CTPF greater than 1.0** indicates that the county is successfully attracting revenue from other areas, benefiting from retail activities that draw in consumers.
- A **CTPF of 1.0** signifies a balanced scenario, where the county is neither gaining nor losing retail revenue.
- A **CTPF less than 1.0** indicates that the county is losing revenue to neighboring areas, often due to residents shopping elsewhere.

Monitoring these factors provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of retail business development programs and their impact on local economies, helping communities strategize for improved economic performance. By analyzing CTPFs, counties can better understand consumer behavior and tailor their initiatives to enhance retail activity and retention.

In 2023, 19 counties in North Carolina reported higher-than-average CTPF, with Dare County leading at 3.11. This significant CTPF highlights the impact of the Outer Banks' tourism appeal, drawing visitors from various regions and countries. Despite having a relatively small population of 38,110, Dare County's tourism influx underscores its status as a prime destination.

Interestingly, Hyde County, the second smallest in the state with just 4,607 residents, ranks nineteenth with a CTPF of 1.01. This anomaly is attributed to the substantial tourism revenue generated by Ocracoke Island, which significantly boosts sales tax revenue in relation to its population size. Overall, the top 19 counties average a population of 243,894, emphasizing how population density correlates with tourism revenue.

Collectively, tourism revenues averaged an impressive \$1.241 billion in these counties, reflecting the economic pull of the sector in driving local revenue, especially in regions with popular tourist attractions.

In North Carolina, 57 counties reported CTPFs between 0.50 and 1.00, with an average CTPF of 0.73. Many of these counties, despite having large populations, struggle generating tourism revenue due to their proximity to larger urban areas that offer more retail, entertainment, medical

facilities, and educational institutions. This dynamic leads to a "bedroom county" scenario, where residents commute to urban centers for work, resulting in a drain of local wealth.

These counties are often characterized by extensive agriculture and timber industries, along with significant open space. On average, agricultural and timber revenues in these counties amounted to \$195.5 million, while tourism contributed around \$139.3 million. The limited availability of shopping, recreation, and entertainment options keeps residents from spending their money locally, further impacting the economic vitality of these areas. As a result, these counties face challenges in retaining economic benefits within their borders.

Fifteen counties in North Carolina reported CTPFs of less than 0.50, with an average CTPF of 0.41. These counties are predominantly rural, featuring small populations and few incorporated towns. Their economies heavily rely on agriculture and forestry, which shape the local financial landscape. The average agricultural and forestry revenue for these counties was approximately \$195.5 million, reflecting their reliance on these industries for economic sustenance. Despite a combined average population of 71,506, the limited tourism activity and infrastructure hinder their ability to attract visitors and generate additional revenue, emphasizing the challenges faced by rural economies in diversifying their income sources.

A breakdown of the CTPFs for all 100 counties, between 2019 and 2023, is found in Table 1. Their CTPF rank for 2023 is also listed, with 100 being the highest-ranking county and 1 the lowest.

For questions about this report, call Mark Seitz, Pender County Cooperative Extension Director at the NC Cooperative Extension Center – Pender County, at 910-259-1235.

**TABLE 1: COUNTY TRADE PULL FACTORS: 2019-2023**

Extension District	County	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2023 RANK
NC	ALAMANCE	1.07	1.05	1.09	1.03	0.99	80
SC	ALEXANDER	0.40	0.44	0.48	0.46	0.47	13
NC	ALLEGHANY	0.53	0.58	0.63	0.61	0.66	41
SC	ANSON	0.45	0.46	0.47	0.45	0.50	17
NC	ASHE	0.75	0.80	0.84	0.78	0.82	62
W	AVERY	1.23	1.31	1.51	1.51	1.48	97
NE	BEAUFORT	0.79	0.79	0.81	0.81	0.84	65
NE	BERTIE	0.32	0.34	0.38	0.38	0.41	7
SE	BLADEN	0.48	0.48	0.52	0.48	0.53	18
SE	BRUNSWICK	0.94	0.95	1.01	1.03	1.06	85
W	BUNCOMBE	1.56	1.47	1.42	1.47	1.38	94
W	BURKE	0.60	0.61	0.66	0.64	0.64	34
SC	CABARRUS	1.20	1.15	1.17	1.15	1.12	88
W	CALDWELL	0.55	0.57	0.60	0.58	0.59	26
NE	CAMDEN	0.36	0.41	0.45	0.44	0.47	12
SE	CARTERET	1.36	1.34	1.40	1.39	1.36	93
NC	CASWELL	0.23	0.24	0.27	0.27	0.28	1
SC	CATAWBA	1.09	1.09	1.09	1.08	1.05	84
NC	CHATHAM	0.62	0.68	0.74	0.77	0.78	60
W	CHEROKEE	0.83	0.85	0.93	0.92	0.87	66
NE	CHOWAN	0.70	0.71	0.75	0.76	0.72	50
W	CLAY	0.53	0.60	0.68	0.67	0.64	33
W	CLEVELAND	0.75	0.71	0.74	0.73	0.73	53
SE	COLUMBUS	0.54	0.55	0.58	0.54	0.59	25
SE	CRAVEN	0.87	0.87	0.88	0.85	0.84	64
SC	CUMBERLAND	0.91	0.90	0.94	0.90	0.90	70
NE	CURRITUCK	1.37	1.40	1.57	1.52	1.42	95
NE	DARE	3.05	2.93	3.31	3.25	3.11	100
NC	DAVIDSON	0.60	0.64	0.66	0.64	0.64	36
NC	DAVIE	0.61	0.65	0.68	0.64	0.65	40
SE	DUPLIN	0.54	0.54	0.55	0.53	0.61	28
NC	DURHAM	1.71	1.68	1.59	1.61	1.57	99
NE	EDGECOMBE	0.59	0.89	0.74	0.62	0.59	24
NC	FORSYTH	1.06	1.04	1.09	1.08	1.05	83
NE	FRANKLIN	0.46	0.49	0.54	0.54	0.54	19
SC	GASTON	0.77	0.82	0.84	0.85	0.83	63

**TABLE 1: COUNTY TRADE PULL FACTORS: 2019-2023, pg. 2**

Extension District	County	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2023 RANK
NE	GATES	0.24	0.27	0.30	0.28	0.29	2
W	GRAHAM	0.61	0.69	0.76	0.76	0.73	52
NC	GRANVILLE	0.44	0.47	0.48	0.46	0.46	11
SE	GREENE	0.25	0.29	0.30	0.29	0.29	3
NC	GUILFORD	1.04	1.01	0.98	0.98	0.98	79
NE	HALIFAX	0.82	0.75	0.77	0.74	0.74	57
SC	HARNETT	0.50	0.54	0.58	0.56	0.57	21
W	HAYWOOD	0.88	0.92	0.97	0.95	0.96	77
W	HENDERSON	0.81	0.82	0.85	0.87	0.88	68
NE	HERTFORD	0.69	0.72	0.69	0.64	0.74	56
SC	HOKE	0.28	0.31	0.35	0.33	0.35	4
NE	HYDE	0.95	0.90	1.04	1.06	1.01	82
SC	IREDELL	0.99	1.03	1.06	1.03	1.00	81
W	JACKSON	0.93	1.00	1.08	1.09	1.06	87
SE	JOHNSTON	0.70	0.68	0.68	0.69	0.63	31
SE	JONES	0.41	0.40	0.44	0.42	0.38	5
SC	LEE	0.96	0.97	1.03	0.99	0.93	75
SE	LENOIR	0.76	0.77	0.76	0.72	0.70	46
SC	LINCOLN	0.75	0.81	0.85	0.82	0.78	59
W	MACON	1.10	1.10	1.19	1.21	1.23	90
W	MADISON	0.39	0.44	0.53	0.54	0.55	20
NE	MARTIN	0.67	0.67	0.71	0.64	0.65	37
W	MCDOWELL	0.61	0.65	0.66	0.62	0.63	32
SC	MECKLENBURG	1.52	1.48	1.39	1.44	1.45	96
W	MITCHELL	0.70	0.70	0.71	0.69	0.70	47
SC	MONTGOMERY	0.56	0.58	0.59	0.58	0.58	23
SC	MOORE	0.96	1.02	1.06	1.07	1.06	86
NE	NASH	0.85	0.82	0.84	0.86	0.88	67
SE	NEW HANOVER	1.53	1.49	1.47	1.49	1.49	98
NE	NORTHAMPTON	0.43	0.41	0.46	0.40	0.48	14
SE	ONSLow	0.85	0.86	0.90	0.87	0.80	61
NC	ORANGE	0.92	0.92	0.88	0.89	0.92	72
SE	PAMLICO	0.57	0.56	0.60	0.58	0.61	27
NE	PASQUOTANK	0.94	0.99	1.02	0.96	0.93	74
SE	PENDER	0.62	0.64	0.70	0.71	0.69	45
NE	PERQUIMMONS	0.34	0.40	0.44	0.42	0.41	8
NC	PERSON	0.64	0.63	0.66	0.65	0.64	35
NE	PITT	0.96	0.99	0.98	0.94	0.98	78
W	POLK	0.62	0.54	0.62	0.63	0.65	39

**TABLE 1: COUNTY TRADE PULL FACTORS: 2019-2023, pg. 3**

Extension District	County	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2023 RANK
NC	RANDOLPH	0.61	0.63	0.65	0.64	0.69	44
SC	RICHMOND	0.64	0.65	0.69	0.63	0.66	42
SE	ROBESON	0.62	0.62	0.66	0.60	0.65	38
NC	ROCKINGHAM	0.58	0.60	0.63	0.66	0.68	43
SC	ROWAN	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	51
W	RUTHERFORD	0.69	0.70	0.73	0.71	0.71	49
SE	SAMPSON	0.56	0.57	0.58	0.56	0.62	29
SC	SCOTLAND	0.66	0.64	0.70	0.65	0.63	30
SC	STANLY	0.73	0.81	0.84	0.84	1.29	91
NC	STOKES	0.40	0.44	0.45	0.44	0.45	10
NC	SURREY	0.93	0.96	0.98	0.97	0.95	76
W	SWAIN	0.72	0.80	0.92	0.91	0.92	73
W	TRANSYLVANIA	0.78	0.81	0.88	0.86	0.89	69
NE	TYRELL	0.41	0.42	0.48	0.48	0.48	15
SC	UNION	0.65	0.67	0.71	0.72	0.71	48
NC	VANCE	0.71	0.73	0.91	0.81	0.74	55
NE	WAKE	1.25	1.25	1.20	1.22	1.23	89
NE	WARREN	0.31	0.34	0.41	0.40	0.40	6
NE	WASHINGTON	0.53	0.54	0.56	0.51	0.50	16
W	WATAUGA	1.17	1.20	1.25	1.26	1.29	92
SE	WAYNE	0.73	0.77	0.76	0.72	0.73	54
NC	WILKES	0.74	0.78	0.75	0.82	0.78	58
SE	WILSON	0.91	0.98	0.90	0.88	0.91	71
NC	YADKIN	0.43	0.46	0.47	0.45	0.45	9
W	YANCY	0.56	0.57	0.63	0.61	0.58	22

**References:**

Census Quick Facts. (2024, March 14). United States Census Bureau.

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045223>

Visit North Carolina Economic Impact Studies. (2024, September 1). Visit NC.

<https://partners.visitnc.com/contents/sdownload/74610/file/2023+County+Level+Visitor+Expenditures+by+Percent+Change+from+2022.pdf>