



# Hiawassee, GA

## Downtown Business Development Plan



# Hiawassee, GA

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- County seat of Towns County on the GA/NC border
- Population of 880 year round
- Populated also by many tourists and those who have vacation homes on Lake Chatuge
- Most of the population is retired or students from Young Harris College
- Mayor Liz Ordiales is 1 out of 3 LGBT elected officials in all of North GA
- Median household income is \$26,600
- 97.4% white, 2.7% Hispanic



# Modernizing North GA

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A few towns in North GA have revitalized and become more tourist friendly. To the west of Hiawassee, Clayton stands out with its downtown full of retail and restaurants, and its ability to attract young people and families both to visit and to live, something Hiawassee struggles with. It is difficult for these small mountain towns to balance appealing to younger people and tourists while still maintaining their community and identity.



The Wander North Georgia outdoor store in Clayton has brought tourism and young families to the town by maintaining a popular social media presence that highlights Instagram-worthy spots in North GA

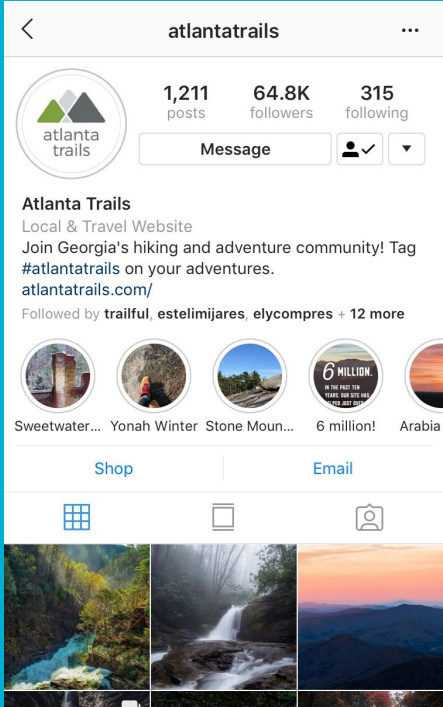
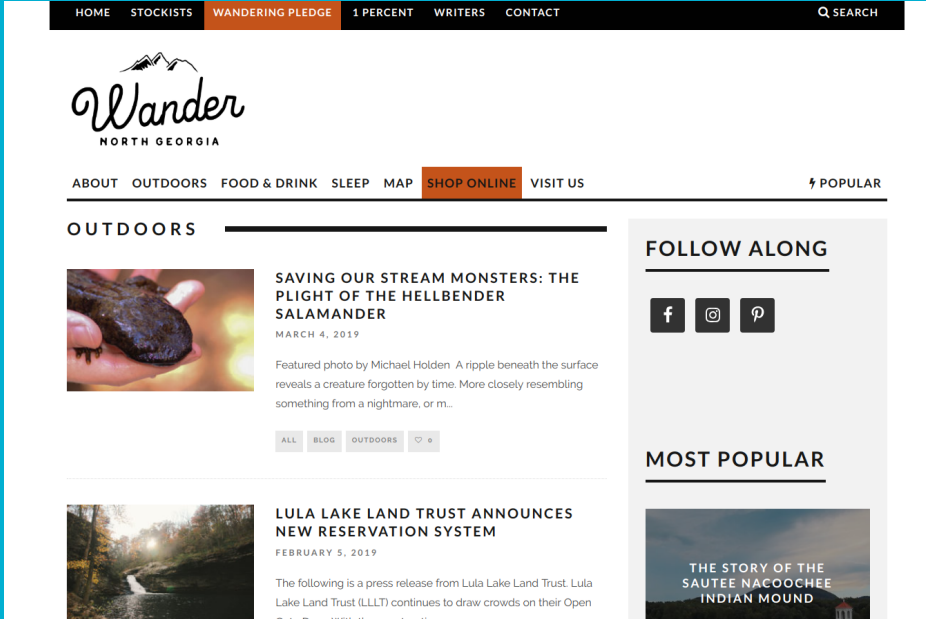
# What Makes a Small Business Work in 2019?

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- Strong social media presence and online community
- Ethical and community-based business models
- Support from local government
  - Institutional support
  - Community support
  - Business friendly regulations

# Marketing: Social Media Presence



# Ethics and Community

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- Small businesses rely on community support, so a community-based business model will be more successful
  - Things like: paying employees a minimum of \$13/hour, donating a percentage of profit to a local charity or conservation group each month, hosting community gatherings
- Figuring out the values of a potential business should be a priority. If possible, have them displayed in the business, and focus on them throughout every decision.
- Wander North Georgia's values: community, people, marketing, conservation





# Governmental Support

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- Attitudinal support
  - Does the local government want new businesses?
- Concrete support
  - Real estate
  - Licensing
  - Subsidies
  - Georgia state relations
  - Local/state relations
- Common sense regulations
  - Accessible regulations



# Trailful Outdoor Co.

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## TRAILFUL OUTDOOR CO.

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A new project by Atlanta Trails & Asheville Trails.

Opening Spring 2019 in Hiawassee, Georgia, minutes from the Appalachian Trail and the NC/GA border.

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