



# CITY SNIPPETS

Information. Well Crafted.

## 2023: A Year in Review

Over the course of the past year, the City of Hickory has embarked on pivotal projects, celebrated many accomplishments, and planned for the future. As we prepare for the year ahead, let's reflect back on the City of Hickory's top highlights of 2023.

### Groundbreakings

On May 1, 2023, construction started on the expansion of the Hickory Metro Convention Center. Now well underway, this project will renovate the existing facility and add more than 46,000 square feet to the convention center. Once completed, the renovated and expanded Hickory Metro Convention Center facility will be approximately 165,600 square feet all on one level with 132,000 usable square feet for meetings and events. This investment will continue to make Hickory an attractive destination for conventions, meetings, trade shows, and sports tourism events. Follow the progress of this project at [www.visithickorymetro.com/construction](http://www.visithickorymetro.com/construction).



A new segment of the Hickory Trail also started taking shape in 2023. On Oct. 18, 2023, the community marked the official start of construction of the Historic Ridgeview Walk with a groundbreaking ceremony. The Historic Ridgeview Walk will provide connectivity within the Ridgeview area, creating a necessary link between downtown Hickory and U.S. 70. through the Ridgeview community. Work also continued on the Riverwalk and Aviation Walk throughout 2023. Learn more about the Hickory Trail at [www.hkytrail.com](http://www.hkytrail.com).

Another transformative project to break ground in 2023 was the expanded Hickory Aviation Museum & Catawba Valley Community College Workforce Innovation Center. On Oct. 26, 2023, a groundbreaking ceremony celebrated the start of construction for a new building at Hickory Regional Airport to house the museum's vintage military aircraft, preserve aviation history, and provide STEM education and workforce development opportunities to the Hickory region. This new building will become a regional destination for both aviation and learning.



ADDRESS

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## HICKORY CITY COUNCIL

Tuesday, Feb. 6 & 20  
6 p.m.

Julian G. Whitener  
Municipal Building (City Hall)  
[HickoryNC.gov](http://HickoryNC.gov)



## HICKORY FARMERS MARKET

Saturdays only 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
The Sails on the Square  
[HickoryFarmersMarket.com](http://HickoryFarmersMarket.com)

## RIDE THE CYCLONE

Jan. 19 - Feb. 10  
Hickory Community Theatre  
[HickoryTheatre.org](http://HickoryTheatre.org)

## MASTERWORKS: CARMINA BURANA

Friday, Feb. 9  
7:30 p.m.  
P.E. Monroe Auditorium, LRU  
[WPSymphony.org](http://WPSymphony.org)

## VISITING WRITERS SERIES: ED YONG

Tuesday, Feb. 13  
7 p.m.  
P.E. Monroe Auditorium, LRU  
[LR.edu/VWS](http://LR.edu/VWS)

## BARBECUE

Feb. 23 - March 9  
Hickory Community Theatre  
[HickoryTheatre.org](http://HickoryTheatre.org)

For more events, visit  
[HickoryEventsCalendar.com](http://HickoryEventsCalendar.com)



## STAY CONNECTED

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 City of Hickory, NC - Government

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## Top Rankings & Recognitions

For the second year in a row, U.S. News & World Report declared the Hickory MSA as America's most affordable metro in its annual Best Places to Live rankings released in May 2023. With a low cost of living and high quality of life, the Hickory MSA ranked 25th overall among the country's best places to live. These recent rankings brought national attention and helped Hickory earn additional praise from other sources, including a popular magazine and national television show. In March 2023, Travel + Leisure Magazine listed Hickory first among its list of the 10 Most Beautiful and Affordable Places to Live in the U.S. The City of Hickory was selected as the "World's Greatest City" by How 2 Media and featured on the national television series "World's Greatest!..." airing in December 2023 on Bloomberg TV.

## New Partnerships

The City of Hickory welcomed new opportunities with strategic partnerships in 2023. For example, the City joined forces with the Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation to install an in-stream litter collection device called a trash trap in Horseford Creek on Aug. 14, 2023. The trash trap captures floating litter from stormwater runoff and prevents it from reaching the Catawba River. Through this partnership, Catawba Riverkeeper staff and volunteers will clean and

- maintain the device and use the program as a gateway for public education and outreach.



On Aug. 21, 2023, Appalachian State University welcomed its first students at its new Hickory campus. Over the last several years, the City has been planning various economic development opportunities in Hickory around the Hickory Trail system and Hickory Regional Airport. With App State's new Hickory campus right in the heart of this area, the timing was right for a partnership with the City, ASU, and other partners to begin planning an innovation district in Hickory.

In November 2023, the Rotary Club of Hickory partnered with the City and donated \$150,000 toward purchasing new playground equipment for Miracle of Hickory Park. Once installed, the new playground will offer a variety of physical, social, and sensory experiences. With different zones of play offering multiple levels of challenge, the thoughtfully designed play space will feature inclusive elements such as adaptive swings, a wheelchair accessible glider, cozy spaces, and specially engineered slides.

## Crafting the Future

Throughout 2023, the City continued on its path to craft a stronger, more vibrant future. This work included completing a new Parks, Recreation & Sports Tourism Master Plan and updated Library Strategic Plan. These plans will guide their respective departments over the next few years to achieve their goals and meet the needs of the community. Copies of both plans are available on the City website, [www.hickorync.gov](http://www.hickorync.gov), where you can find more information about City projects, programs, and services.