HICKORY North Carolina®

CITY SNIPPETS

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Year of the Trail

The City of Hickory joins communities across North Carolina in celebrating the 2023 Year of the Trail, a statewide campaign inviting every North Carolinian to get outside onto the trails, greenways, and blueways that stretch across "the Great Trails State."

On August 10, 2021, the N.C. legislature passed HB 554, designating 2023 as the "North Carolina Year of the Trail." This historic designation underscores the tremendous energy behind showcasing, promoting, and celebrating North Carolina's trails, both in terms of their incredible positive impact on quality of life for N.C. residents, as well as significant economic impact on individual communities that benefit from "trail tourism." The chosen year is significant, as 2023 marks the 50th anniversary of the 1973 North Carolina Trails System Act, which created the state's Trails Program.

The City of Hickory is fortunate to offer 26 parks and a vast network of trails, greenways, and blueways which showcase this region's diverse landscapes, from grand mountain vistas to quiet rivers, vibrant urban greenways and the rolling hills of the piedmont.

The Hickory Trail is an economic catalyst that showcases these spaces and connects destinations across the city. From the Hickory Trail, residents and visitors will have access to some of Hickory's greatest assets, including a beautiful lake, vibrant downtown, educational centers, sporting and entertainment venues, and the airport. An interactive map and additional information about the Hickory Trail is available online at www.hkytrail.com.

Why not make it a goal this year to explore the trails and enjoy outdoor recreation?

Stay tuned throughout the year for more updates about the Year of the Trail and special events designed to showcase Hickory's outdoor recreational spaces. Planned events, as part of the celebration, include guided hikes, mountain biking races, group rides and trail runs, and more.

Year of the Trail is the largest statewide celebration of trails and outdoor recreation in North Carolina history.

For more information on the Year of the Trail and to receive updates about statewide events and advocacy efforts, please visit www.greattrailsnc.com.

Project Grants Available from Community Relations Council

Is your organization working on a project or program that will enhance community relations in our city? The City of Hickory Community Relations Council (CRC) is currently seeking projects to fund for the 2022-2023 fiscal year and is inviting non-profit agencies, churches,

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HICKORY CITY COUNCIL
February 7 & 21 at 7 p.m.
Julian G. Whitener
Municipal Building (City Hall)
HickoryNC.gov

DOWNTOWN HICKORY WINTER FARMERS MARKET
Saturdays only 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
The Sails on the Square
HickoryFarmersMarket.com

VISITING WRITERS SERIES
February 2: Tracy K. Smith
February 16: Howard Bryant
7 p.m.
P.E. Monroe Auditorium, LRU
LR.edu/VWS

MY FURRY VALENTINE
Saturday, February 4
11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Fairbrook Optimist Dog Park

FREE SHREDDING EVENT BY ENVIROSHRED
Saturday, February 11
10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Patrick Beaver Memorial Library

MASTERWORKS: POETRY IN MOTION
Saturday, February 11
7:30 p.m.
P.E. Monroe Auditorium, LRU
WPSymphony.org

CADILLAC CREW
February 17 - March 4
Hickory Community Theatre
HickoryTheatre.org

HPD POLAR PLUNGE
Saturday, February 18
Registration: 11 a.m.
Plunge: 1 p.m.
Hickory Foundation YMCA
Outdoor Pool

CHAMBER CLASSICS: JOHN SALMON TRIO
Saturday, February 18
7:30 p.m.
Drendel Auditorium, SALT Block
WPSymphony.org

BLACK HISTORY MONTH: LIVING WAX MUSEUM
Saturday, February 25
11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Ridgeview Recreation Center

For more events, please visit
HickoryEventsCalendar.com

institutions, schools, and individuals to consider submitting grant requests. The deadline for submitting for the CRC's Spring 2023 grant cycle is Friday, March 31, at noon. Applicants may include any 501(c)(3) or otherwise tax-exempt organizations.

Priority will, generally, be given to projects that are designed to deliver the greatest impact on positive human relations, that are most effective in bringing different sub-communities of Hickory together, and that provide services and resources to the people who can most benefit.

Additional information and grant application forms are available online at www.hickorync.gov/community-relations-council, or by contacting staff liaison Captain Philip Demas with the Hickory Police Department at 828-261-2608 or pdemas@hickorync.gov.

Programs to Assist Entrepreneurs, Small Businesses

The City of Hickory is committed to promoting business and economic development and offers a range of incentives and business development programs to support new and expanding businesses.

Small Business Loan Program

The CDBG Small Business Loan Program provides loans to businesses looking for funding to create jobs and purchase equipment necessary to take their business to the next level. Since the program is funded with CDBG funds, all loans must be made to businesses with the intent of creating jobs for low to moderate income individuals (household income is less than 80 percent of the area median income). Loans of up to $20,000 may be awarded for eligible businesses to purchase business equipment only.

Microenterprise Grant Program

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), a microenterprise is a business that has five or fewer employees, one of whom is the owner of the business. The City's Microenterprise Grant Program awards grants ranging from $1,000 to $4,000 based on the needs outlined in the submitted business plan. Since qualifying projects will also be funded with CDBG funds, applicants must have a household income of less than 80 percent of the area median income. Grant funds may be used for the following purposes: business equipment, inventory, necessary fixed assets, marketing and business promotion, or other essential business improvements, as approved by the Business Development Committee. Grant funds may not be used for real property improvements.

Small Business Loan and Microenterprise Grant applications will be reviewed by the City of Hickory's Business Development Committee before going to the Hickory City Council for approval. For more information about the City of Hickory's business development programs, please contact the Office of Business Development at 828-323-7414 or visit www.hickorync.gov/business-development-programs.