HICKORY
North Carolina
CITY SNIPPETS
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2022: Year in Review

The year 2022 was another one for the history books with many milestones and accomplishments celebrated. As we embark on a new year, let's reflect back on the City of Hickory's top highlights of the previous year.

Ridgeview Works: Launched in January 2022 as a collaborative partnership between the City of Hickory, Hickory Public Library, and Western Piedmont Workforce Development - NCWorks, the Ridgeview Works program provides free personalized career services to the Ridgeview community of Hickory. Citizens can receive one-on-one assistance from an NCWorks Career Advisor in the group study room at Ridgeview Branch Library every Wednesday afternoon from 1-4:30 p.m.

Metronet Construction: In early March 2022, Metronet broke ground on construction of its 100 percent fiber optic infrastructure in Hickory. Metronet is fully funding the multimillion-dollar project that will provide Hickory residents and businesses with access to ultra-high-speed internet. Upon completion, Hickory will become a Gigabit City with Metronet's future-proof fiber optic network.

Biosolids Facility: On April 5, 2022, Hickory City Council awarded a contract for the construction of a 15.4 dry ton per day Biosolids Facility to be located at the Henry Fork Wastewater Treatment Facility.

Bruce Meisner Park

Bruce Meisner Park: The City of Hickory celebrated the grand opening of its 26th park on April 8, 2022. Bruce Meisner Park offers a paved walking trail or promenade, a picnic shelter with restrooms, outdoor grills, and 73 acres for park visitors to enjoy the natural beauty of the landscape and a wide variety of recreation activities.

Downtown Social District: The City of Hickory became one of the first communities in the state to establish a social district. The Hickory Downtown Social District went into effect on March 15, 2022, enabling patrons of downtown ABC permitted establishments to carry and consume alcoholic beverages on the sidewalks, Union Square, and other public areas inside of the social district.

No. 1 Most Affordable Metro

Hickory Tops National Rankings: U.S. News analyzed the 150 most populous metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) to find the best places to live and released the 2022-2023 rankings in May 2022. With a low cost of living, the Hickory MSA ranked No. 1 in Most Affordable Places to Live in the United States. In addition to ranking at the top of the list for affordability, Hickory moved up 21 spaces to become No. 31 in Best Places to Live in the United States. Hickory also moved up 2 spaces to rank No. 3 in Best Places to Live in North Carolina.

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

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

ROCK OF AGES
January 20 - February 4
Hickory Community Theatre
HickoryTheatre.org

VISITING WRITERS SERIES: TRACY K. SMITH
Thursday, February 2
7 p.m.
P.E. Monroe Auditorium, LRU
LR.edu/VWS

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

VISITING WRITERS SERIES: HOWARD BRYANT
Thursday, February 16
7 p.m.
P.E. Monroe Auditorium, LRU
LR.edu/VWS

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

For more events, please visit
HickoryEventsCalendar.com

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MDI Expansion: On July 12, 2022, Merchants Distributors, LLC (MDI), a wholesale grocery distributor founded in Hickory in 1931, announced plans to invest $35 million in a new expansion of its services and operations, creating 125 jobs. The company anticipates adding approximately 250,000 square feet to its perishable capacity at its Caldwell County facilities, which are located within the City of Hickory.

The Learning Lab: On August 11, 2022, Hickory Public Library celebrated the grand opening of its new Learning Lab. Located on the second floor of Patrick Beaver Memorial Library, The Learning Lab provides access to technology and tools that support creativity, exploration, connection, and accessibility through hands-on-learning.

Hickory Metro Convention Center Expansion: The Hickory-Conover Tourism Development Authority, Hickory City Council, and Conover City Council held a special meeting on September 15, 2022, to approve plans for an expansion and renovation to the Hickory Metro Convention Center. Once completed, the 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.

Hickory Metro Convention Center Expansion

Affordable Housing: The City partnered with JRN Development to construct six affordable homes in the Ridgeview community. A ribbon cutting celebrated the completion of the new homes on September 21, 2022. In December 2022, Hickory City Council approved the second phase of development with JRN to build ten affordable homes.

Elevate HKY: On September 28, 2022, the Sabre Society of North Carolina hosted an Elevate-themed public fundraising event for the new Hickory Aviation Museum. The City of Hickory is partnering with the Sabre Society of North Carolina/Hickory Aviation Museum and Catawba Valley Community College to construct 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.

New Hickory Aviation Museum

Microsoft Investment

$1B Microsoft Announcement: Leaders of Catawba County, the Cities of Conover and Hickory, the Town of Maiden, and the Catawba County Economic Development Corporation announced on November 9, 2022, that Microsoft Corp. plans to invest a minimum of $1 billion in the phased development of four datacenters in Catawba County over the next 10 years. The datacenters will be located in Conover, Hickory, and Maiden and will create at least 50 new jobs.