

Tourism is Big Business in the Hickory Metro

2018 - 2019 Year in review

1. Mecklenburg - \$5681.82 B
2. Wake - \$2400.87 B
3. Guilford - \$1487.69 B
4. Buncombe - \$1212.65 B
5. Dare - \$1187.38 B
6. Forstyh - \$950.57 M
7. Durham - \$859.47 M
8. New Hanover - \$612.92 M
9. Brunswick - \$599.11 M
10. Cumberland - \$574.03 M
11. Moore - \$520.69 M
12. Cabarrus - \$469.31 M
13. Carteret - \$377.05 M
14. Henderson - \$313.37 M
15. Nash - \$309.08 M

16. Catawba - \$293.05 M

In Catawba County:

- 5.69% increase in visitor spending
- 2,490 people directly employed in travel & tourism industry
- \$16.04 Million in state tax revenue
- \$8.75 Million in local tax receipts
- \$156.35 saved by Catawba County taxpayers

For 2018 Catawba County ranked 16 out of 100 counties in visitor spending for North Carolina.

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www.visithickorymetro.com

Work is still under way to create an exceptional website with Simpleview, which is the world leader in Destination Websites. Working with Simpleview was an easy process and they have been a great partner. We are continuously updating photos, articles, listings and more. This new site has already shown site traffic info that we have never had before.



Destination/Visitors Guide

Over **13,000** given out since printing in 2018. The second issue will be printed in 2020.



Facebook

- Total Page Views: 4,675
- Gained Page Likes: 709
- Gained Followers: 732
- Total Reach: 294,425



What We Know:

- Ages: 24 - 64
- Women vs. Men Followers: 64% to 25%
- Accessed primarily on Mobile device



Instagram

- Total Followers: 1,065
- Gained Followers: 504

What We Know:

- Age Range:
 - 29% Age 25 - 34
 - 31% Age 35 - 44
 - 19% Age 45 - 54
- Women vs. Men Followers: 71% to 29%
- Accessed primarily on Mobile device

@visithickorymetro

Occupancy Tax Reaches New High in 2018 -2019



There are more than **24** properties in Hickory and Conover that pay occupancy tax to the Hickory-Conover Tourism Development Authority. In the last few years there have been significant increases in the occupancy tax due to additional and renovated properties. Overnight visitors in Hickory and Conover pay a 6% occupancy tax that goes toward paying for and operating the Hickory Metro Convention Center because it is a destination. This money is used for marketing the Hickory Metro all over the nation and beyond to bring visitors to the area.

Hickory Metro Convention Center Updates

It's been another busy year at the Hickory Metro Convention Center which celebrated its 22nd year in March 2019. Below are a few highlights we would like to share:

- During Fiscal Year 2018-19 we hosted 158 events all ranging in different attendance sizes and length of event.
- In May of 2018 the Convention Center hosted the XCEL Regional Gymnastics Championship which brought 1,850 gymnasts from eight southeastern states to Hickory.
- The convention center has welcomed cosmetic updates over the last year:
 - The Visitors Center is now promoting well-crafted furniture made from artisans in the Hickory Metro.
 - Display screens highlighting top attractions from the area.
 - Wayfinding display screens were also added throughout the convention center.
 - Three eco-friendly water fountain/bottle filling stations were installed throughout the convention center encouraging guests to refill up their reusable water bottles.

A facility and space study was completed during the 2018-2019 year. Next year, plans should be in place for renovations and a future addition to the Hickory Metro Convention Center offering refreshed meeting spaces and more. The Hickory-Conover Tourism Development Authority (HCTDA) which oversees the Hickory Metro Convention Center and Visitors Bureau understands the importance of updating the center. Change and updates are imperative in order to keep current meetings and events coming to Hickory, where meetings are well crafted.

The Hickory Metro Convention Center 2018-2019 was a successful year for the convention center. With 25 new events and only a few days throughout the year without a customer in the building, the convention center hosted a total of 158 events with events ranging from 1 to 5 days or more.

FY 2018/2019

Event Type	# of Events
Corporate/Government	67
Public	34
SMERF	20
Association	28
Sports	9

- Corporate/Government
- Public
- SMERF
- Association
- Sports

*SMERF: Social, Military, Education, Religious & Fraternal

