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Spring 2026 Economic Indicators Newsletter Highlights Hickory MSA Real Estate Trends and Hickory MSA Job Market.

May 5, 2026 — The Western Piedmont Council of Governments has released the latest issue of the Economic Indicators Newsletter (EIN). This edition provides updated analysis of Hickory Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) unemployment rates, Hickory Metro gross state tax collections, regional real estate trends, and job market conditions, offering a timely snapshot of the region's current economic landscape.

Here are a few key highlights of the EIN:

- The Hickory MSA has the 5th lowest unemployment rate in the state, with the unemployment rate dropping slightly from 3.4% in December 2024 to 3.3% in December 2025.
- Between December 2024 and December 2025, the estimated number of employed persons decreased from 163,362 to 162,317 (-1,045), while the civilian labor force fell from 169,106 to 167,931 (-1,175).
- Average annual Hickory MSA bank deposits grew from $4.822 billion in June 2019 to $6.561 billion in June 2025.
- The Hickory MSA had 5,833 new housing listings and 4,306 closed sales in 2025. These totals were more than 5% higher than in 2024. All Hickory MSA locations, except Burke County and Morganton, had more new listings and closed home sales in 2025 than in 2024.
- The Hickory MSA's median sale price increased 3.4% in 2025 to $299,900. All Hickory MSA locations, except Newton, had a median sales price of $250,000 or more in 2025. Catawba County had the highest median sales price in 2025 ($316,500), followed by Hickory ($300,000) and Alexander County ($289,900).
- The Hickory MSA average sales price exceeded $364,000 for the first time in 2025. The highest average sales price was in Catawba County ($382,990), followed by Alexander County ($372,988) and Hickory ($357,564).
- As of December 2025, the Hickory MSA had 1,081 houses for sale on the region's Multiple Listing Service.
- During 2025, it took on average about 53 days to sell a home once it was on the market. A sign of a continued tight housing market, the Hickory MSA had only 3.0 months of supply of housing inventory in December 2025.
- As of November 2025, the Hickory MSA ratio of unemployed per job opening equaled 1.05. The 1.05 ratio means that there are slightly more persons counted as "unemployed" in the region than the number of job openings.
- Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations, sales, and management occupations had the most Hickory MSA online job openings. These three occupation groups accounted for 48.5% of all November 2025 job openings.

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