

New Hotel in Mount Airy in 2026



The historic 1892 “Sparger” building on the Spencer’s Mill redevelopment site in downtown Mount Airy is set to become The Balladeer Hotel in 2026, part of the Tribute Portfolio by Marriott International.

Drawing inspiration from the materials, stories, and legacies of America’s Favorite Hometown, The Balladeer will pay tribute to the music styles originating in Mount Airy, the craftsmanship of the granite quarry and textile mills, and nod to the great storyteller himself, Andy Griffith.

At the heart of The Balladeer is the Mount Airy community, and the hotel will work closely with community partners to create events, programming, and offerings in an effort to become a hub for locals and visitors alike.

“This project is a game changer for the City of Mount Airy,” said Mount Airy Mayor Jon Cawley. “I am thrilled to see what this hotel will offer our local community and our visitors, both honoring our rich history and propelling our exciting future.”

Sports Wagering Starts Monday, Mar 11

The following article is excerpted from the AP, which published it on February 29. Click to read the entire story written by Gary Robertson.

Eight sports gambling companies received North Carolina government licenses recently so they can accept wagers from people in the state from mobile devices and computers on Monday, March 11, the day before the start of the Atlantic Coast Conference men’s basketball tournament. Customers can bet on professional, college or Olympic-style sports.

North Carolina is set to become the 30th state, along with the District of Columbia, to offer mobile sports betting, according to the American Gaming Association. In preparation, people 21 and over can register with an operator, set up accounts and make monetary deposits.

The state will tax sports wagering and could generate over \$100 million in revenues annually within five years, according to a legislative branch analysis.

The North Carolina State Lottery Commission, which is tasked to oversee a 2023 law that authorized sports gambling, announced successful initial applicants for the interactive sports wagering operator licenses.

NCTIA Pod’s Post Primary Election Analysis

The Do Politics Better podcast – sponsored by NCTIA – recapped a knives-out primary election on Tuesday that included upsets, some intra-party take-downs, and tension that will likely carry into the legislative short session and the November election.



Hosts Brian Lewis and Skye David (both NCTIA lobbyists) are joined by Sen. Jim Perry (R-Lenoir/Craven/Beaufort) for the entire episode as they tick through races, share insights on what happened behind the scenes, and discuss some of the long-term effects it’ll have on North Carolina politics in the future.

“There is a lot of analysis out there, but this podcast gives you a perspective from a sitting senator who understands the political game from the inside,” said NCTIA Executive Director Vince Chelena. “And Senator Perry doesn’t hold back or spare anyone’s feelings on either side of the political aisle. It’s an honest take on our politics.”