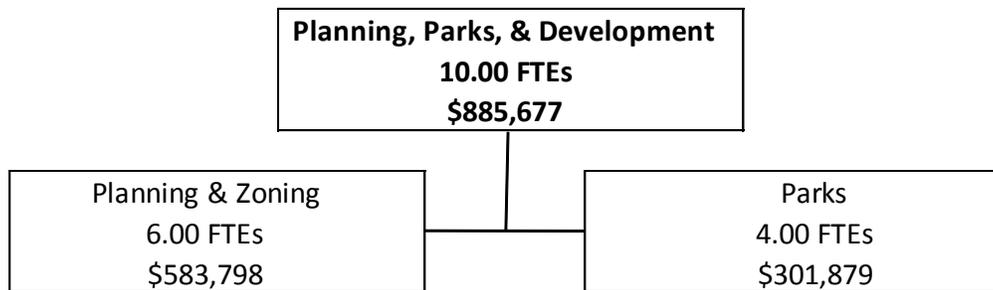


Catawba County Government



Planning, Parks, & Development

Summary

	2009/10 Actual	2010/11 Current	2011/12 Requested	2011/12 Approved	Percent Change
Revenues					
Charges & Fees	\$35,616	\$74,579	\$80,994	\$80,994	9%
Local	0	0	0	0	0%
State	4,239	6,770	25,000	25,000	269%
Miscellaneous	64,661	500	500	500	0%
From Self Insurance	9,515	0	0	0	0%
From Community Development	0	0	0	0	0%
General Fund	830,528	846,277	840,538	779,183	-8%
Total	\$944,559	\$928,126	\$947,032	\$885,677	-5%
Expenses					
Personal Services	\$752,791	\$742,595	\$752,546	\$708,054	-5%
Supplies & Operations	182,253	178,031	194,486	177,623	0%
Capital	9,515	7,500	0	0	0%
Total	\$944,559	\$928,126	\$947,032	\$885,677	-5%
Expenses by Division					
Planning & Zoning	\$632,093	\$622,884	\$645,676	\$583,798	-6%
Parks	312,466	305,242	301,356	301,879	-1%
Total	944,559	928,126	947,032	885,677	-5%
Employees					
Permanent	12.00	11.00	11.00	10.00	-9%
Hourly	1.00	2.40	1.70	1.70	-29%
Total	13.00	13.40	12.70	11.70	-13%

Budget Highlights

The Planning, Parks, and Development budget includes the County's planning and zoning efforts and the operation of County parks. The department's overall budget is a 5 percent decrease from Fiscal Year 2010/11, which includes targeted cuts in the Planning division. The Planning Division's budget was cut by \$39,086, equivalent to a 6 percent reduction from the current fiscal year.

Since current planning activities such as rezoning requests and subdivision permits are down from historic levels, the primary reduction in the Planning division comes from the elimination of a vacant full-time position dedicated to current planning. This reduction will not hurt the high level of customer service the division provides or the division's outcomes. Other smaller reduction areas include the elimination of funding for a Water Study from the Western Piedmont Council of Governments, a reduction in part-time wages that are used for digitizing old departmental records, and a reduction in funding for outside conservancies.

Performance Measurement

Fiscal Year 2011/12

The Planning, Parks, and Development department's outcomes for Fiscal Year 2011/12 focus on providing quality customer service, leading and assisting in grant development, providing recreational opportunities for citizens through the County's three passive parks, and serving as change agents within the community by improving the County in terms of the environment, open space, and mobility. During the fiscal year, the department will also complete a Historical Inventory Survey, documenting historic structures located within the County, to help preserve the County's historical heritage and provide information for the Catawba County Historical Society, residents, and visitors alike. In addition, the department will work to maximize Community Rating System Credit points under the National Flood Insurance Program, which may help lower flood insurance rates for County homeowners.

Fiscal Year 2010/11

At mid-year, all of Planning, Parks, and Development's outcomes are on target and expected to be achieved by fiscal year end. Achievements include:

- Adoption of the Carolina Thread Trail Plan by the Board of Commissioners on December 20, 2010.
- Planning staff provided educational outreach to property owners about farming activities in the County to reduce the impacts of conflicting uses through the implementation of the recently adopted Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD) program and by conducting a Farmland Preservation Workshop for farmers. The workshop was conducted in October with surrounding cities to encourage adoption of a VAD Program in their jurisdiction.
- Documentation has been gathered from local, state and national historic entities to conduct a Historical Inventory Survey. Information is currently being reviewed for completeness and discrepancies are being explored. Research and meetings will be conducted to gain additional insight. The department is also exploring the desire to create a historic ordinance after the survey is complete.
- As of December, the Parks Division had recorded attendance of 49,253, well on their way to achieving attendance of 81,000 patrons by fiscal year end.
- Approximately 202 volunteers have provided 909.5 hours of volunteer service at the County Parks.

Fiscal Year 2009/10

Planning and Development achieved 11 of its 15 outcomes for Fiscal Year 2009/10. Planning was able to provide quality customer service by reviewing all development-related requests/projects within targeted time frames. The department also is in the process of finalizing the acquisition of the 600-acre Mountain Creek tract on Lake Norman. In April 2010, the Governor released Clean Water funds, and the County received an executed contract for the grant. Due diligence work is underway in order to close on the property by the end of 2010.

The department was not able to facilitate the improvement of traffic movement on NC Highway 150 because Federal funding for this grant was limited to congressional appropriated projects. However, the department successfully updated the County's Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan during the fiscal year.

The Parks Division met its attendance goal of increasing daily attendance average by 10 percent. A total of 134,463 patrons visited Catawba County parks in Fiscal Year 2009/10, which equated to a 10.7 percent rise in attendance over the previous year. The Parks Division also exceeded its goal of 500 volunteer hours. During the fiscal year, 667 volunteers provided 1,797 labor hours for improvement projects in Catawba County Parks. The division also achieved its goal of conducting educational/interpretive programs with no less than 800 patron participants. During the fiscal year, nearly 5,400 patrons participated in a program hosted by the Parks' staff.

PLANNING & ZONING

Statement of Purpose

Conduct a comprehensive planning program, including the administration of the Unified Development Ordinance and the development and implementation of long-range planning studies. The planning program is designed to promote and maintain the orderly physical growth and development of Catawba County which serves to improve the quality of life for its citizens and provide economic development opportunities within the County.

Outcomes

1. Provide quality customer service by expeditiously and accurately reviewing development-related requests/projects through the completion of the following:
 - a. Processing of all rezoning requests and preparation of report(s) and recommendation(s) for submittal to the Planning Board no later than 10 days prior to the scheduled public hearing. Recommendations from the Planning Board to the Board of Commissioners will be forwarded after the public hearing.
 - b. Reviewing and approving of complete non-residential site plans within 10 working days by independently reviewing plans and serving as a member of a technical review team to comprehensively review non-residential site plans and coordinate comments.
 - c. Reviewing and approving of completed applications for residential zoning permits in coordination with the Permit Center for questionable situations (i.e. floodplain, topography, setback issues) within two working days.
 - d. Reviewing of special use, variance and nonconforming applications with submittal of staff reports to the Board of Adjustment within 45 days of receipt of complete application.
 - e. Reviewing of preliminary and final major subdivision plats and field checking final subdivisions for drainage, street layout, and other required improvements as specified in the Unified Development Ordinance within 10 working days of application date and providing reports to the Subdivision Review Board.
 - f. Reviewing of minor and family subdivision plans to ensure compliance with the Unified Development Ordinance within 10 working days.
2. Improve the quality of life for the citizens of the County in terms of the environment, open space, and mobility by serving as change agents whereby planning staff actively shapes and molds planning projects of a local or regional nature. Examples of such projects include the Metropolitan Planning Organization, Catawba River Study Committee, Unifour Recreation and Open Space Task Force, Air Quality Committee, and Public Health's Eat Smart, Move More Committee to explore park partnerships as part of the community's wellness activities.

3. Increase affordable housing opportunities and ensure safe housing for low-to-moderate income persons by administering the following Scattered Site, Urgent Repair, and Individual Development Account Community Development Block Grants, with assistance from the Western Piedmont Council of Governments:
 - a. Scattered Site CDBG – administer the third allocation of the \$400,000 grant to rehabilitate five substandard units owned by low/moderate income elderly homeowners, provide emergency repairs to a minimum of 10 homes, and relocate one homeowner. This grant was awarded October 2009 and the start up began in 2010. This year completes the third year of a three year project.
 - b. Urgent Repair CDBG – Applying for new \$75,000 grant in Spring 2011 and, if approved, will provide minor repair for 15 housing units owned by low/moderate income elderly homeowners. If awarded this grant would begin in the Fall 2011 and should be completed in 2013.
 - c. Individual Development Account (IDA) CDBG - provide down-payment assistance to 30 first-time homeowners through a \$70,000 grant for the Unifour. This grant was awarded in 2010 and is scheduled to be completed in 2013.

4. Improve quality of life opportunities for County citizens, promote tourism and economic development, and retain segments of rural character and wildlife habitat in the County as identified during the community-based small area planning and the Parks Master Plan through the preservation of natural areas in the County. This will be achieved by conducting the following:
 - a. Coordinating with the Foothills and Catawba Lands Conservancies to identify potential preservation areas on the Jacobs Fork River, Catawba River, and/or sites near the County's parks for consideration of acquisition or conservation easements through grants. Also work with the Conservancies to promote agricultural preservation strategies for landowners in the County. This will be ongoing throughout the fiscal year.
 - b. Implementing the adopted Carolina Thread Trail (CTT) Master Greenway Plan by forming the Greenway Trails Advisory Committee to oversee project elements such as Thread Trail designations, installation of official signage, publicity events, and grant applications.
 - c. Promoting our parks to area hotel and restaurant personnel through the Hickory Metro Convention and Visitor Center hospitality luncheons.

5. Ensure that the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) promotes orderly growth, provides a balance between the private interest and the public good, and is easily understood by the building community by evaluating the UDO on an annual basis to determine any recommended amendments to be presented for consideration by the Board of Commissioners. The focus of the amendments for Fiscal Year 2011/12 will be on evaluating regulations that may be an economic obstacle for new developments and providing more alternatives to encourage new business/development opportunities.

6. Facilitate a planning process to identify additional economic opportunities which will provide additional jobs and tax revenue in the County through the following:
 - a. Developing a Highway 150 Corridor plan which will evaluate current land use plans and regulations which apply to these areas and identify ways to provide for new economic development opportunities based upon changing conditions in the corridor, such as the introduction of public sewer. The corridor plan will be complete by the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2011/12.
 - b. Implementing the Planning Action Strategies (PAS) identified for Fiscal Year 2011/12 in the adopted Highway 321 and Highway 16 Corridor Plans. This will be ongoing throughout the fiscal year.
 - c. Developing a Farmland Protection Plan for sustaining agricultural land in Catawba County with a focus on agricultural economic development to recruit younger farmers and provide tools for farm transitioning in the County. The plan will be completed by the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2011/12.
7. Provide additional levels of public safety, reduce property loss, and minimize community disruption from the effects of flooding by evaluating the opportunity to maximize the Community Rating System credit points under the National Flood Insurance Program, which could potentially help lower flood insurance rates for citizens in the County. Methods which will be pursued to maximize these credit points include working with Emergency Services to conduct public education and outreach to citizens in flood prone areas, sponsoring a training workshop for surveyors regarding elevation certificates, and pursuing the Certified Floodplain Manager certification for one Planning staff person.
8. To help preserve the County's historical heritage and provide accurate historical information for citizens, homebuyers, and the Catawba County Historical Association, Planning will complete a Historical Inventory Survey and prepare map documenting historic structures located within the County. This will be completed by the third quarter of Fiscal Year 2011/12.

PARKS

Statement of Purpose

Provide recreational opportunities for the citizens of Catawba County through the operation and development of parks and the preservation of open space. Environmental education and the preservation of Catawba County's unique natural heritage are the primary goals of the Parks Division.

Outcomes

1. Parks will ensure that Catawba County citizens have access to quality educational, recreational, and physical activities. This will be measured by maintaining Parks annual attendance at a minimum of 81,000 patrons, as evidenced by traffic counter statistics/sign-in sheets and the quarterly Parks Division report. Particular effort will be placed on volunteerism and service to educational institutions.
2. Achieve 750 volunteer labor hours in order to complete Park improvement projects, promote environmental stewardship education, reduce operating costs, and increase community involvement. In an effort to involve youth, these projects will include school and scouting groups when possible. This will be completed as evidenced by the volunteer/project log, sign-in sheets, and the quarterly Parks Division report.
3. Host educational/interpretive programs with no less than 1,600 patron participants as evidenced by daily sign-in sheets. The goal of these programs is to share environmental/interpretive information with the public in an effort to broaden public awareness and participation in the preservation of Catawba County's unique natural heritage.
4. Catawba County parks will be well maintained and offer excellent customer service, as measured by having at least 90 percent of those who complete the Parks satisfaction survey indicate they are either "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied" with their last overall park experience.