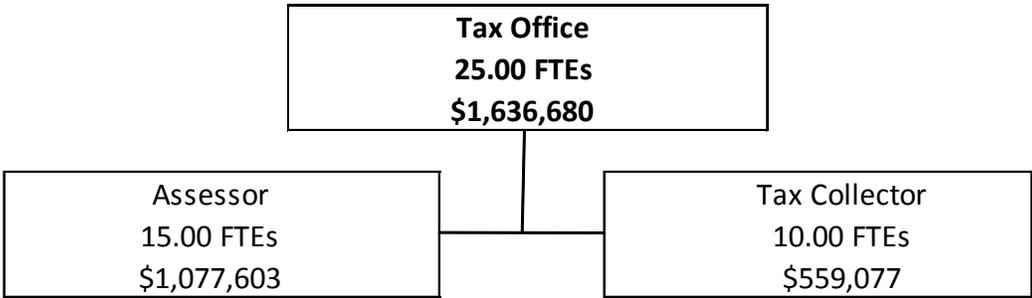


Catawba County Government



Tax Department

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2012/13	Summary
	Actual	Current	Requested	Approved	Percent Change
Revenues					
Property Tax	\$79,768,849	\$79,851,008	\$81,067,667	\$81,137,540	2%
Privilege License Tax	\$24,876	\$22,500	\$22,500	\$22,500	0%
Charges & Fees	267,924	250,465	258,900	258,900	3%
Contribution to General Fund	(79,521,985)	(79,533,281)	(80,764,590)	(80,834,463)	2%
General Fund	1,026,941	1,080,239	1,048,625	1,052,203	-3%
Total	\$1,566,605	\$1,670,931	\$1,633,102	\$1,636,680	-2%
Expenses					
Personal Services	\$1,269,676	\$1,298,595	\$1,265,402	\$1,268,980	-2%
Supplies & Operations	296,929	372,336	367,700	367,700	-1%
Tax Refunds	0	0	0	0	0%
Capital	0	0	0	0	0%
Total	\$1,566,605	\$1,670,931	\$1,633,102	\$1,636,680	-2%
Expenses by Division					
Assessor	\$1,053,195	\$1,110,649	\$1,074,025	\$1,077,603	-3%
Collections	513,410	560,282	559,077	559,077	0%
Total	\$1,566,605	\$1,670,931	\$1,633,102	\$1,636,680	-2%
Employees					
Permanent	26.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	0%
Hourly	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%
Total	26.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	0%

Budget Highlights

The Tax Department's (Assessment and Collection) budget reflects a 2 percent decrease from last year. This comes primarily from the retirement of two longtime employees who were replaced at a lower salary level, as well as small reductions in operating expenses.

Performance Measurement

Fiscal Year 2012/13

The Tax Department's outcomes for Fiscal Year 2012/13 continue to provide a high level of customer service while striving to continuously improve the rate of collection for all taxes. The Assessor's Office will work closely with the Technology Department in the upcoming year to identify and improve at least three business processes through the use of technology. Other Assessor outcomes are consistent with prior years, and include processing 85 percent of deed transfers from the Register of Deeds within 10 business days, assisting qualifying citizens in

enrolling in tax relief programs, and providing quality customer service by responding to taxpayer inquiries within 24 hours.

The Collection Division of the Tax Department has updated its outcome regarding increased collections, setting a target to increase the year-end non-motor vehicle tax collection rate by 0.25 percent. Based on the most recent data available, this would increase the County's tax collection ranking within the State by eight positions. The Collections division is maintaining its outcome for delinquent tax collections, striving to improve collection by five percent, as compared to the prior year.

Reappraisal outcomes focus on representing the County's position on property value to the North Carolina Property Tax Commission and preparing for the scheduled 2015 reappraisal of property.

Fiscal Year 2011/12

At mid-year, the Tax department had either achieved, or was on target to achieve, all of its outcomes. All Real and Personal Property Tax bills were mailed on July 15, 2011, well before the September 1st outcome deadline. The department was additionally processing 85 percent of all deed transfers within 9.1 business days from receipt from the Register of Deeds, exceeding its goal of 85 percent within 10 days.

The status of outcomes in the Collector's Office related to improving tax collection rankings and increasing the delinquent accounts collection percentage will not be known until the end of the year. The office continues to respond immediately if information is available, or by the next business day if research is required, to taxpayer inquiries.

The Reappraisal Office continues to defend the County's position on property value appeals to the North Carolina Property Tax Commission, with 19 commercial/industrial properties and one residential property under dispute at mid-year from the 2011 revaluation of property. The division is on target to meet all of its outcomes related to preparing for the 2015 revaluation as well, sending out 1,062 sales verification questionnaires and keying 938 valid sales into the sales history database to be used in determining 2015 values.

Fiscal Year 2010/11

To provide citizens with prompt notification of their taxes owed, the department mailed real and personal property tax bills on July 16, 2010, significantly earlier than its September 1st target date. The department also mailed motor vehicle bills an average of 25 days prior to the first day of the month the bill was due, surpassing its target of 15 days. The department consistently places a focus on customer service, and responded to all taxpayer inquiries within 24 hours, with most being responded to immediately.

The department did not achieve its outcome of processing 85 percent of all deed transfers within 10 business days, taking an average of 10.71 business days to process these transfers. While this goal was not achieved, the department included this as an outcome for Fiscal Year 2011/12 and believes that planned tax software upgrades will expedite this process significantly.

Tax Collection did not achieve its goal of improving the County's year-end collection rate by five positions as compared to all counties in North Carolina, slipping to 42nd in the State from 38th in Fiscal Year 2008/09. This decline to 97.27 percent represents a .07 percent drop in collection rate from the prior year, and remains higher than the statewide collection average of 97.17 percent. The division attributes the continued decline in tax collections to the County's sustained high unemployment and resulting inability of many citizens to pay their property taxes.

While the overall collection rate did decline, the department took several steps to prevent further erosion. Delinquent collection measures resulted in 1,011 payment arrangements, 1,702 wage garnishments/bank rent attachments initiated, and 28 tax foreclosures or arrangements yielding \$147,945. The department has also collected 67.76 percent of the 2010 outstanding tax bills under \$250 which translates to \$602,852 in revenue. This exceeded the goal of 25 percent collection of these accounts.

Tax Collection did not achieve its outcome of collecting 50 percent of the prior 10 years delinquent taxes during the fiscal year, only collecting 37.53 percent. The Tax Office notes that 12 percent of the current delinquent taxes are bankruptcies, and can therefore not be collected. This, combined with a continued high unemployment rate, makes this goal difficult to attain.

Reappraisal was successful in completing all final activities from the 2011 Countywide revaluation, which included completing a final residential, commercial, and industrial review, finalizing a schedule of values, mailing new valuation notices, and conducting Board of Equalization and Review hearings. Additionally, the division was active in publicizing the remaining portions of the 2011 revaluation of property.

ASSESSOR

Statement of Purpose

Ensure all real and personal property is listed annually to the owner of record as of January 1st of each year, and all licensed motor vehicles are billed by the fourth month following the renewal month, as mandated by the General Statutes of North Carolina.

Outcomes

1. To ensure citizens receive prompt notification of taxes owed:
 - a. Prepare and mail all real and personal property tax bills by August 1, 2012. Statutorily, this must be done no later than September 1st, the date in which the bills lawfully become due and payable.
 - b. Prepare and mail each month's motor vehicle tax bills at least 15 days prior to the first day of the month the bill is due.
2. Provide quality customer service by responding to all taxpayer inquiries within 24 hours of receipt and resolving outstanding issues within five working days as evidenced by monitoring and verification by supervisors within the department.
3. Provide the most current ownership information of real property to citizens by processing 85 percent of deed transfers within 10 business days of receipt from the Register of Deeds.
4. Ensure that all new construction is listed, appraised, and recorded in time for billing no later than August 1st, by constant monitoring of outstanding new construction through building permits and field reviews.
5. Educate, assist and enroll qualified County citizens in the following property tax relief programs by June 1, 2013: elderly or disabled exclusion, circuit breaker property tax deferment, builder's inventory deferment, and disabled veteran exclusion.
6. Work with the Technology Department to analyze and improve business processes through the use of technology. Specifically, the department will work to automate at least three of the processes identified, which may include data entry, workflow, or report generation.

TAX COLLECTOR

Statement of Purpose

To collect and account for all current, as well as delinquent, County and City Ad Valorem taxes charged to the Tax Collector, all County privilege licenses, issue all mobile home moving permits, collect all County street assessments, and collect all fees related to garnishment, attachment, levy, judgment, and returned checks as provided by North Carolina law.

Outcomes

1. To improve the County's tax collection rate ranking in the State, the Collection division will increase the tax collection rate for non-motor vehicle property to 97.5 percent (Fiscal Year 2010/11 collection rate was 97.25 percent). Using the latest Fiscal Year 2009/10 collection rankings as a guide, this increase would move the County up eight rankings within the State. To accomplish this goal staff will:
 - a. Utilize all lawful measures to collect delinquent taxes, including attachments, garnishments, payment arrangements, foreclosure, debt setoff, etc.
 - b. Prepare weekly and monthly status reports to track collections as compared to prior years.
 - c. As much as feasible, assign job responsibilities so that delinquent collection staff can maximize their time working delinquent accounts.
 - d. Working delinquent accounts under \$250 with a goal of collecting a minimum of 65 percent of these smaller accounts by June 30.
2. Increase the percentage of prior 10 years delinquent taxes collected by 5 percent (projected \$200,000) from the previous fiscal year (Fiscal Year 2010/11 - 37.53 percent). Statutorily, the County may only pursue enforced collection measures for accounts that are 10 years old or less delinquent, so it is important to continue all lawful measures to collect these accounts before that time expires.
3. Provide quality customer service by responding to all taxpayer inquiries within 24 hours of receipt and resolving outstanding issues within five business days as evidenced by monitoring and verification by supervisors within department.