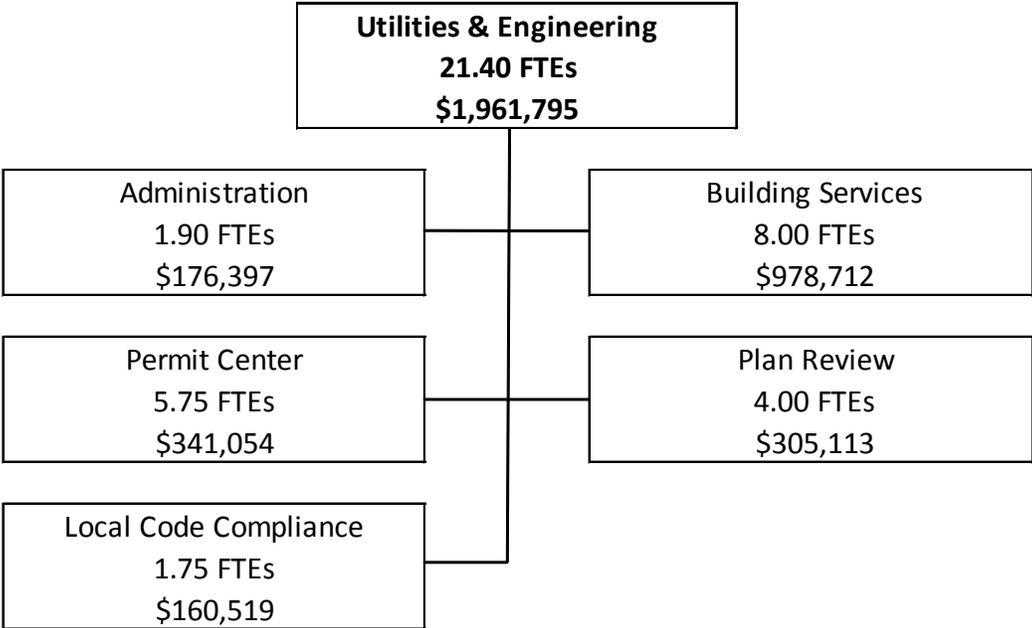


Catawba County Government



Utilities & Engineering

Summary

	2010/11 Actual	2011/12 Current	2012/13 Requested	2012/13 Approved	Percent Change
Revenues					
State	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
Charges & Fees	924,810	964,294	780,700	781,700	-19%
Miscellaneous	3,228	0	0	0	0%
Local	439	0	0	0	0%
From Self Insurance Fund	0	0	0	0	0%
From W&S Construction	0	0	0	0	0%
General Fund	1,280,222	977,378	1,176,224	1,180,095	21%
Total	\$2,208,699	\$1,941,672	\$1,956,924	\$1,961,795	1%
Expenses					
Personal Services	\$1,806,756	\$1,503,782	\$1,516,102	\$1,520,973	1%
Supplies & Operations	401,943	437,890	440,822	440,822	1%
Capital	0	0	0	0	0%
Total	\$2,208,699	\$1,941,672	\$1,956,924	\$1,961,795	1%
Expenses by Division					
Administration	\$164,820	\$176,946	\$174,215	\$176,397	0%
Building Services	1,214,343	987,118	978,712	978,712	-1%
Permit Center	318,189	338,446	340,485	341,054	1%
Plan Review	322,011	280,222	303,922	305,113	9%
Code Compliance	189,336	158,940	159,590	160,519	1%
Total	\$2,208,699	\$1,941,672	\$1,956,924	\$1,961,795	1%
Employees					
Permanent	32.70	21.40	21.40	21.40	0%
Hourly	0.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%
Total	33.00	21.40	21.40	21.40	0%

Budget Highlights

The Utilities and Engineering department includes Building Services, Plan Review, Permit Center, Erosion Control, and Local Code Compliance. The department's budget is a one percent increase from the prior year.

Revenue generated from issuing building permits continues to decline, with the budget anticipating a 19 percent decrease in Fiscal Year 2012/13. Despite significant reductions over the past several years, it is projected that Building Services revenues will only recover 59 percent of its anticipated cost to operate for Fiscal Year 2012/13. To recognize this decline in fee revenue, while also appreciating economic conditions and their effect on the building community, the building permit fee philosophy was updated to strive for 100 percent cost recovery while factoring in economic conditions and the fees charged by other counties throughout the State. Under this new philosophy, the budget expands the application of one existing fee for Plan Review services, but does not include any additional fee changes.

Performance Measurement

Fiscal Year 2012/13

Outcomes for Fiscal Year 2012/13 continue to focus on customer satisfaction, efficient service, and safety of the public through the enforcement of State and local development regulations. Staff continues to place customer service as a high priority, striving to achieve at least a 95 percent satisfaction rating from customers. Building Services will continue to provide quality customer service, performing at least 88 percent of requested building inspections on the next day or on the contractor's requested inspection date. An outcome to monitor inspector workload will ensure the average wait time for inspections remains low. Other notable outcomes for the department include reviewing 97 percent of commercial blueprints within 10 working days, reviewing 100 percent of sedimentation and erosion control plans within 10 days, and using Code Compliance Technicians to perform residential Building Level 1 footing inspections when already on a job site to save time and resources in Building Services.

Fiscal Year 2011/12

At mid-year, Utilities and Engineering was on target to achieve all of its outcomes with the exception of two. One of these two outcomes relates to reviewing 97 percent of commercial blueprints within 10 working days, with the department only reviewing 93.7 percent during this time period. Reductions in staffing have made this outcome more difficult to attain, and while not on target, the department will continue to strive for this goal. The second outcome not on target pertains to Code Compliance Technicians performing 100 percent of building level 1 footing inspections. Preliminary training to complete this outcome was not achieved in the previous year due to budget constraints, so efforts during the first half of the fiscal year have surrounded completing this required training. Once this is accomplished, Code Compliance Technicians will be able to begin completing these inspections.

Overall, the Utilities and Engineering Department accomplished the following during the first half of the fiscal year:

- 68 tours, 26 presentations, and 6 displays have been given/presented, reaching 2,987 people.
- 92.93 percent of requested building inspections were performed on the day of the request.
- 100 percent of sedimentation and erosion control plans submitted were reviewed within five days.
- 90 percent of all Building Services training was provided locally.
- Staff reviewed the existing Building Services office space, completed preliminary drawings, and determined cost estimates for the relocation of the Plan Review function to the Catawba County Government Center in Newton.

Fiscal Year 2010/11

Utilities and Engineering met all goals surrounding customer service, with 100 percent of customer complaints being resolved within 24 hours. Additionally, Utilities and Engineering staff received 100 percent positive feedback from its customer survey, sent to a computer generated list of customers each month.

A major goal of Building Services is quality control, and as such it performed 279 quality control inspections in Fiscal Year 2010/11. Of these inspections, 98.92 percent were approved, which exceeds the goal of a 95 percent approval rating. Building Services also provided timely service, with 96.37 percent of its 22,358 inspections being performed by either the next day or on the contractor's requested date. Building Services Officials averaged 12.87 inspections per day (higher than the NC Department of Insurance's recommended building inspector productivity), which is largely possible due to the County's investment in mobile technology.

Plan Review exceeded its outcome surrounding fast customer service, with 99.86 percent of the 700 plans reviewed within 10 days. (The average time for this review was 4.03 days.) This exceeded its goal by 2.86 percent.

Erosion Control and Local Code Compliance significantly exceeded its target of reviewing 100 percent of all sedimentation and erosion control plans within 10 working days, by reviewing all plans within seven working days (the average being three days). It was unsuccessful, however, at training Code Compliance Technicians to perform residential building level 1 footing inspections due to a self-imposed spending freeze during the fiscal year. Technicians did receive GPS training to assist in this outcome. However, footing inspection training and actual class time for certification were not planned until Fiscal Year 2011/12.

UTILITIES AND ENGINEERING ADMINISTRATION

Statement of Purpose

Coordinate and manage Utilities and Engineering, Building Services, Plan Review, Permit Center, and Erosion Control and Local Code Compliance so citizens of Catawba County can live, work, and recreate in a clean and safe environment. The approach will be economically viable and environmentally friendly.

Outcomes

1. Manage and develop public-private partnerships and funding in conjunction with the development of the EcoComplex and Resource Recovery Facility to increase Catawba County's tax base and create jobs as measured by results of partnership agreements.
2. Ensure citizens receive quality customer service from all Utilities and Engineering Staff by:
 - a. Maintaining a customer service satisfaction rating of 95 percent or above as evidenced by customer survey reports.
 - b. Responding to and resolving 98 percent of all customer complaints within 24 hours through direct contact methods as measured by documented activity and follow up actions conducted for resolution.
3. Increase citizen awareness of the functions of Utilities and Engineering and County Government in general through communication and educational efforts to citizens, employees, and other interested parties through the continued efforts of the departments' Informational Officer and other departmental staff as measured by educational tracking logs.

BUILDING SERVICES

Statement of Purpose

The mission of the Building Services Division is to provide consistent, timely, and courteous advice and service to customers, contractors, businesses, homeowners, and the general public through the application of the State Building Code. The focus of the service is to protect public safety by ensuring all buildings are built to code specifications while promoting economic development through a partnership with the building industry. The operations of the Building Services Division have, as its foundation, four guiding principles: protecting the public; providing the best possible customer service; promoting economic development; and ensuring consistency in the application of Codes, and treatment of customers.

Outcomes

1. Ensure citizens receive quality customer service from Building Services Officials by:
 - a. Performing 88 percent of requested inspections by the next day or on the contractors requested inspection date, with an ultimate goal of performing 100 percent of inspections within this timeframe.
 - b. Maintaining a customer service satisfaction rating of 95 percent or above as evidenced by customer survey reports.
 - c. Responding to 98 percent of all customer complaints within 24 hours through direct contact methods as measured by documented activity and follow up actions conducted for resolution.

2. To control the cost of training and education, Building Services will provide at least 60 percent of all required Building Inspector training and certification locally. Surrounding jurisdictions will be invited to participate in these locally held trainings as well, serving to further drive down the cost to the County.

3. To provide quality building inspections, Building Services will ensure inspectors maintain a reasonable workload by monitoring the number of inspections conducted per day per inspector (Mid-year Fiscal Year 2011/12: 14.44 inspections per day). The goal of the division is to average between 10-14 inspections per day; which, while higher than the North Carolina Department of Insurance recommended productivity of 12, is possible due to investments the County has made in mobile technology. With inspectors already maintaining a higher than average workload, any increase in requested inspections may lead to an increase in average wait times for safety and quality control reasons. A recommendation to add staff will therefore be made before the average wait time for a building inspection is consistently three days or higher.

PERMIT CENTER

Statement of Purpose

Provide permitting information and service to the citizens of Catawba County, including municipalities. The Permit Center currently operates two locations within the County in an effort to provide convenient locations for the public to acquire permits and information for Building Services, Planning, and Environmental Health in a coordinated, efficient, and friendly manner.

Outcomes

1. Ensure citizens receive quality customer service from the Permit Centers by:
 - a. Maintaining a customer service satisfaction rating of 95 percent or above as evidenced by customer survey reports.
 - b. Responding to 98 percent of all customer complaints within 24 hours through direct contact methods as measured by documented activity and follow up actions conducted for resolution.
2. Ensure timely permit issuance by maintaining equity in the workload at each permit center location. Permit Center staff will continuously track the amount of work performed at each location, allowing for the department to quickly move resources where they are the most needed.

PLAN REVIEW

Statement of Purpose

Provide plan review information and service to the citizens of Catawba County, including municipalities in a coordinated, efficient, and friendly manner. The plan review section provides plan review for commercial projects to ensure code compliance with the State Building Codes, conducts on-site safety inspections of existing buildings, provides plan review and inspections for existing buildings utilizing the North Carolina Rehabilitation Code (Rehab Code), conducts plan review services based on State local option plan review guidelines and conducts plan review during express plan review appointments.

Outcomes

1. Provide timely plan review services by reviewing 97 percent of all commercial blueprints submitted for code compliance and contacting the applicant with the results within 10 working days. Meeting this outcome will expedite the plan review process allowing construction to begin much sooner, thus, promoting Catawba County's economic development.
2. Ensure citizens receive quality customer service from Plan Review Officials by:
 - a. Maintaining a customer service rating of 95 percent or above as evidenced by customer survey reports.
 - b. Responding to 98 percent of all customer complaints within 24 hours through direct contact methods as measured by documented activity and follow up actions conducted for resolution.
3. Promote awareness and use of time and money saving optional services available to Catawba County customers and citizens, which are:
 - a. The North Carolina Rehabilitation Code, which allows for the renovation of older buildings by relaxing certain requirements for modern buildings. Staff will provide informational materials to customers about this program, which encourages the use of existing buildings as measured by plan review logs.
 - b. Local Option Plan Review, which allows County Plan Review Officials, to perform plan specification and document approval for various building classifications that would otherwise require submittal to the North Carolina Department of Insurance. Measure and report number of plans submitted and reviewed by plan review logs and monthly reports.
 - c. Express Plan Review, which provides customers the opportunity to have their design professionals meet with local government officials to accelerate plan approvals and permit issuance. This optional service allows projects in most cases to be reviewed and permitted in the same day, thus allowing construction to begin much sooner. Measure and report the total number of plans submitted and reviewed by plan review logs and monthly reports.

LOCAL CODE COMPLIANCE AND EROSION CONTROL

Statement of Purpose

To protect regional water quality through the administration of a local soil sedimentation and erosion control program, providing timely permitting service to local contractors and developers. To protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of Catawba County through the implementation of the local code compliance program, providing assistance and information to enhance and improve our community and public awareness.

Outcomes

1. Provide timely plan review services by reviewing and permitting 100 percent of all sedimentation and erosion control plans submitted for code compliance and permitting within 10 working days. Meeting this outcome will expedite the plan review and permitting process allowing grading to begin much sooner, thus, promoting Catawba County's economic development as measured by monthly reporting.
2. Ensure citizens receive quality customer service from Erosion Control and Local Code Compliance Staff by:
 - a. Maintaining a customer service satisfaction rating of 95 percent or above as evidenced by customer survey reports.
 - b. Responding to and resolving 98 percent of all customer complaints within 24 hours through direct contact methods by documented activity and follow up actions conducted for resolution.
3. To promote departmental efficiency, Code Compliance Technicians will perform 100 percent of residential Building Level I footing inspections while already on the job site inspecting erosion and soil sedimentation control measures. This will save Building Inspectors up to 35 minutes of travel time and one and a half hours of inspection time per residential unit.
4. Provide public and employee education regarding Soil Sedimentation, Erosion Control and Stormwater awareness in cooperation with the North Carolina Department of Natural Resources (NC DENR), the County's Waste Reduction Coordinator/Educator, municipalities and other sources made available as measured by tracking logs.