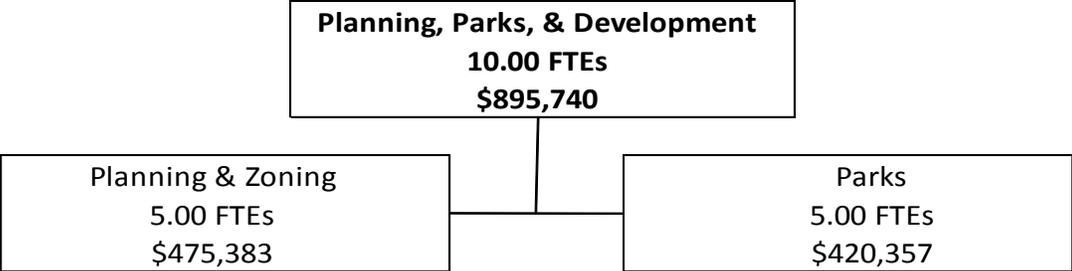


**Catawba County Government**



# Planning, Parks, & Development

Organizations: 420030 - 420040

	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Current	2015/16 Requested	2015/16 Approved	Percent Change
<b>Revenues</b>					
Charges & Fees	\$38,761	\$37,891	\$36,416	\$36,416	-3.9%
Local	0	1,653	0	0	0%
State	0	0	0	0	0%
Miscellaneous	1,044	400	400	400	0.0%
Indirect Cost	0	1,653	0	0	0%
From Community Development	0	0	0	0	0%
General Fund	734,801	735,926	842,432	858,924	16.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$774,606</b>	<b>\$777,523</b>	<b>\$879,248</b>	<b>\$895,740</b>	<b>15.2%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
Personal Services	\$649,379	\$642,614	\$718,236	\$733,803	14.2%
Supplies & Operations	125,227	134,909	161,012	161,937	20.0%
Capital	0	0	0	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$774,606</b>	<b>\$777,523</b>	<b>\$879,248</b>	<b>\$895,740</b>	<b>15.2%</b>
<b>Expenses by Division</b>					
Planning & Zoning	\$471,964	\$457,387	\$463,432	\$475,383	3.9%
Parks	302,642	320,136	415,816	420,357	31.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$774,606</b>	<b>\$777,523</b>	<b>\$879,248</b>	<b>\$895,740</b>	<b>15.2%</b>
<b>Employees</b>					
Permanent	9.00	9.00	11.00	10.00	11.1%
Hourly	2.00	2.00	2.25	2.25	12.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>11.00</b>	<b>11.00</b>	<b>13.25</b>	<b>12.25</b>	<b>11.4%</b>

## Budget Highlights

The Planning, Parks, and Development budget increased by 15.2 percent (\$118,217) from the previous year's approved budget. The majority of this increase is attributed to expanding Catawba County Parks' days of operation from a four-day a week schedule (Friday-Monday) to a six-day a week schedule (Thursday-Tuesday). The budget includes funding for one full time Park Ranger position and increased part-time wages.

## Performance Measurement

### Fiscal Year 2015/16

The Planning, Parks, and Development Department's outcomes will emphasize ensuring timely and quality customer service, promoting economic development, and increasing wellness opportunities for County citizens. Some of Planning's objectives include reviewing development-related requests with a turnaround time faster than the state average; assessing and maintain approximately two miles of established natural surface trails; and ensuring the Village at Sherrills Ford development complies with the County's Unified Development Ordinance and the development agreement. Parks outcomes

continue to focus on maintaining attendance numbers, fostering a spirit of volunteerism at the three County parks, and providing educational opportunities for the County's residents.

### **Fiscal Year 2014/15**

At mid-year Planning, Parks, and Development was on target to meet all 13 of its Fiscal Year 2014/15 outcomes. The department provided high quality customer service by processing all rezoning requests, non-residential site plans, and final major subdivision plans within target timeframes. Planning promoted and encouraged new opportunities for business creation by amending the Unified Development Ordinance, declassifying the Maiden Creek and Allen Creek as WS-II Protected and Critical Watersheds. The department coordinated with Building Services and Environmental Health to develop an information sheet which identifies permitting and construction requirements for development in floodplain areas. Planning continued to promote economic development opportunities along Highway 321 by working with existing businesses to help develop the Carolina Thread Trail. In regards to Development, Planning has used the Scattered Site Community Development Block Grant to perform two major rehabilitations for two low-income homeowners.

Parks is on target to achieve its attendance goal (108,000) with a total of 49,293 patrons at mid-year. The Parks system had 192 volunteers and 531 volunteer hours during the first half of the year, putting it well on its way to achieving its target 825 volunteer hours. Additionally, Parks had 1,429 patrons participate in educational programs, nearly accomplishing its yearly goal, of having 1,600 patrons, by mid-year.

### **Fiscal Year 2013/14**

#### *Planning*

Planning achieved 11 of its 12 (92 percent) Fiscal Year 2013/14 outcomes. Planning met its customer service outcome of expeditiously and accurately reviewing development-related requests and projects by processing, reviewing and approving rezoning requests, non-residential site plans, minor and family subdivision plans, and preliminary and final major subdivision plats within 10 working days; residential zoning permits within two working days; and special use, variance, and non-conforming applications within 45 days of receipt of the completed application.

To offer physical fitness and wellness opportunities for citizens and visitors, Planning updated the County's Parks Master Plan and continued implementation of the Carolina Thread Trail (CTT) Master Greenway Plan. CTT Plan implementation involved completing a natural surface trail design for the Lyle Creek greenway and coordinating CTT signage efforts with various municipalities. Construction of .4 mile natural surface trail at the Bunker Hill Covered Bridge was also planned but not completed due to a property transfer issue beyond the department's control. The department promoted development and encouraged new opportunities for business creation by recommending text amendments to the Unified Development Ordinance to the Board of Commissioners, of which five amendments were approved.

Planning achieved its fourth outcome, ensuring development along the Highway 150 corridor, by completing and presenting the plan to the Planning board in May 2014. The department promoted agricultural sustainability by coordinating with Cooperative Extension in hosting demonstration classes/events and collaborating with surrounding counties' Cooperative Extension departments to conduct the Foothills Aggregation Center Feasibility Study. Promotion of economic development

opportunities along the 321 Corridor by implementing short-term strategies was accomplished with the construction of the Rocky Ford Road Bridge. This was another collaborative effort with NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT). Planning worked with NCDOT and the Rural Planning Organization (RPO) to promote economic development opportunities along the Highway 16 Corridor by working with NCDOT and the Rural Planning Organization (RPO); however, progress has stalled due to lack of NCDOT funding. The Uni-four's vulnerability to natural hazards was reduced by Planning's partnership with Emergency Management in working to develop the Unifour Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The department continued to improve the quality of life for Catawba County citizens by ensuring that homes are decent, safe, and sanitary, using Scattered Site Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to complete two major home repairs and four minor home repairs. An Urgent Repair CDBG grant (\$37,500) was used to repair 8 houses that posed an imminent threat to the life and safety of very low-income homeowners with special needs. The Individual Development Account CDBG (and third outcome) that the department planned to implement during Fiscal Year 2013/14 was eliminated by the Federal Government.

### *Parks*

Catawba County Parks had 109,550 patrons during the fiscal year, exceeding its goal of 108,000 patrons for the year. This was a 4.5 percent decrease from the previous fiscal year. Parks had 1,054 volunteer hours, far exceeding its goal of 750 volunteer hours. Compared to the previous fiscal year, the 1,054 volunteer hours is a 23 percent reduction. This type of community engagement promotes environmental stewardship education, reduces operating costs, and increases youth involvement. Parks had 1,828 patrons participate in educational programs, 228 (14 percent) more than its outcome goal.

## PLANNING, PARKS, AND DEVELOPMENT

### Planning

#### 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 advising developers/property owners, and expeditiously and accurately reviewing development-related requests/projects through the completion of the following:
  - a. Process 100 percent of rezoning requests and submit staff report with recommendation to the Planning Board and subsequently to the Board of commissioners with a turnaround time of 65 days or less. (2012 NC county average: 65 calendar days; Department actual: 65 days).
  - b. Reviewing and approving the following completed applications:
    - i. non-residential site plans within 12 days (2012 NC county average: 16 days; Department actual: 12 days)
    - ii. residential zoning permits-within two days, not counting weekends (Department actual: 2 days)
    - iii. special use, variance, and nonconforming applications with submittal of staff reports to the Board of Adjustment within 45 days of receipt (2012 NC county average: 50 days for special use; Department actual 45 days)
    - iv. preliminary subdivision plats, and reporting to the Subdivision Review Board, within 30 days of receipt. (2012 NC county average: 34 days; Department actual 30 days)
    - v. final major subdivision plats (along with field verifying required improvements) and minor, family and exempt subdivision plats within 12 days. (2012 NC county average: 16 days; Department actual 12 days)
2. To offer physical fitness and wellness opportunities in concert with travel and tourism, continue the implementation of the adopted Carolina Thread Trail (CTT) Master Greenway Plan by:
  - a. Continuing construction of approximately .4 mile of natural surface trail at Bunker Hill Covered Bridge and beginning landowner outreach for property owners northwest of the Bridge to the NCDOT rest area.
  - b. Finalizing the approximate .25 mile of natural surface trail at the Government Center Complex in Newton to tie into the City of Newton Heritage Trail and Newton/Conover sidewalk network connecting a continuous trail network of over 5 miles.
  - c. Coordinating with CTT on the location and construction of blueway access points within Catawba County along the South Fork, Jacob Fork, and Henry Fork Rivers.
  - d. Assessing and maintaining approximately 2 miles of established natural surface CTT designated trails in the County including:

- i. Murray's Mill/David Lee Stewart Trail
  - ii. Government Center Trail
  - iii. Bunker Hill Covered Bridge Trail
3. Promote development and encourage new opportunities for business creation by evaluating the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) annually and recommending amendments for consideration by the Board of Commissioners.
4. Advance a unified vision to aid in the acceleration of North Carolina Department of Transportation funding for major road improvements for regional cooperation on land use issues, continue serving on an "informal" NC 150 Council of Planning (COP) with the jurisdictions along Hwy. 150 modeled after the NC 73 COP. Ongoing throughout Fiscal Year 2015/16.
5. To preserve and promote the historic Bunker Hill Covered Bridge, continue to assist the Catawba County Historical Association with the administration of the Federal Highway Administration and State grants, and County funds. This will be completed by the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of Fiscal Year 2015/16.
6. Promote and process the pending development of the Village at Sherrills Ford and the Terrell community development throughout Fiscal Year 2015/16.
7. To promote economic development opportunities along the 321 Corridor, implement the short term strategies identified in the 321 Eco-Tech Development Plan within the next 4 years.
  - a. Continue pursuing grant and other funding sources to begin design and construction of South Fork CTT from NC 10 Highway toward Rocky Ford Rd. This will be coordinated with existing businesses in the corridor. (Goal #17).
  - b. Continue working with existing businesses to be active participants in the development of the CTT network in the corridor (Goal #19).
8. To promote economic development opportunities along the Highway 16 Corridor, implement the short term strategies identified in the 16 South Corridor Development Plan within the next 4 years.
  - a. Work with NCDOT and WPCOG to prepare and adopt the Countywide Bicycle Mapping and Signage project. (Goal #12).
9. To promote economic development opportunities along the Highway 150 Corridor, implement the short term strategies identified in the Highway 150 Corridor Development Plan within the next 4 years.
  - a. Pursue the development of well-planned development offering amenities, services, and jobs designed to attract a wide ranging population at strategic locations within the corridor.

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

### **Statement of Purpose**

To increase affordable housing opportunities and ensure safe housing for low-to-moderate income persons by administering a series of CDBG and Housing Finance Agency related grants assisted by the Western Piedmont Council of Governments.

### **Outcomes**

1. To ensure that homes are decent, safe, and sanitary, Planning will use Scattered Site CDBG funds (\$225,000) to perform four major rehabilitations and five minor repairs to low income homeowner's residences. Housing will be brought up to North Carolina Rehabilitation Standards. Project will close out during 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Fiscal Year 2015/16.
2. To alleviate housing conditions which pose an imminent threat to the life or safety of very low-income homeowners with special needs, Planning will utilize Urgent Repair CDBG Funds (\$75,000) to repair 16 such homeowner's residences. Project will run through the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter of Fiscal Year 2015/16.

## **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 the County's unique natural heritage are Catawba County Parks' primary goals. These goals will be accomplished through the execution of the Comprehensive Parks Master Plan. Implementation steps will incorporate projects, programs, goals, objectives, strategies, and opportunities as called for in the Plan. Development and expansion of facilities will arise as staffing and resources are available.

### **Outcomes**

1. Parks will ensure that Catawba County citizens have access to quality educational, recreational, and physical activities. This will be measured by Parks annual attendance estimated at a minimum of 100,000 patrons, as evidenced by traffic counter statistics/sign-in sheets and the quarterly Parks report.
2. To complete Parks' improvement projects, promote environmental stewardship education, reduce operating costs, and increase community involvement, Parks will solicit 825 volunteer labor hours. In an effort to involve youth, these projects will include school and scouting groups when possible.
3. To share environmental/interpretive information, promote physical activity, and broaden public awareness and participation in the preservation of Catawba County's unique natural heritage, Parks will host educational, interpretive, and school programs with no less than 1,600 patron participants.