

Introduction

The Budget in Brief summarizes the adopted Catawba County Fiscal Year 2016/17 Budget in the amount of \$252,801,734 (including transfers). The fiscal year begins July 1, 2016, and ends June 30, 2017. The Board of Commissioners began the budget process by establishing goals and objectives for the County to achieve. The budget was presented to the Board on May 23, 2016. Departmental hearings were held with the Board on May 31, 2016, with a Public Hearing on June 2, 2016, and final budget adoption on June 6, 2016. If you would like to view the budget in its entirety, please visit our [web site](#).

Economic Growth

As Catawba County's economy grows, as shown by decreasing unemployment (5.1 percent as of March 2016), strong sales tax revenue growth (18.7% from July 2013 to February 2016), and increasing building permit activity, the County is taking deliberate steps to accelerate and reinforce this economic growth. The Board of Commissioners' goals, which serve as a compass to guide the organization in making decisions, focus on economic diversification, workforce development, and the importance of key community infrastructure like broadband internet access in creating and promoting business, learning, and a quality sense of place. The budget strategically invests to enhance quality of life and harness the positive momentum.

*For Fiscal Year 2016/17, the Board of Commissioners established a goal of branding and marketing key community strengths, each of which contributes to Catawba County's strong **quality of life**. The budget strategically invests in education, economic development, public safety, and parks to enhance quality of life and harness the positive momentum of the local economy.*



Board of Commissioners' Fiscal Year 2016/17 Goals

1. Lobby private providers and State and Federal government to expand broadband internet availability throughout the County, connect key community assets, and work to address geographic areas with deficient service.
2. In partnership with the private sector and assistance from state government, support the creation of jobs and property tax base and the development of the County's workforce. Specific strategies include:
 - a. Support the enhancement of workforce development programs and efforts, working with educators and the private sector to train the workforce for jobs from existing and new employers that will be available through the efforts of the EDC.
 - b. Aggressively promote and market economic development.
 - c. Review incentive guidelines to ensure they are competitive but reasonable in terms of return on investment.
 - d. In partnership with the EDC and Hickory, develop and aggressively market Park 1764.
 - e. Continuously monitor County regulations to ensure they support orderly growth and business development.
3. Collaborate with the Economic Development Corporation, Convention & Visitors Bureau, Chamber of Commerce, and others as appropriate to brand and market key community strengths:
 - a. Overall quality of life: cost of living, availability of health care, low crime rate, quality of education, etc.
 - b. Community arts, culture, and recreational amenities
 - c. Location: proximity to major airport, ease of highway access, short distance from other attractive communities with strong amenities



Service Pressures & Capital Expansion

Public Safety

- Maintaining the 8-minute average EMS response time performance goal by funding a full year of costs for paramedic crew expansions at Bandys and Mountain View bases that occurred during the Fiscal Year 2015/16.
- The budget assists the Sheriff's Office in its aggressive pursuit of drug-related crimes by funding two additional narcotics investigators and increased investigative funds.
- The budget increases revenue set aside for a long-planned expansion of the Catawba County Detention Center. Total costs for the project are estimated at \$17 million, and \$8.8 million will have been set aside by the end of the fiscal year.

Parks

- Funds are included in the budget to begin planning and design for Mountain Creek Park in southeastern Catawba County and to potentially expand the footprint of Riverbend Park through acquisition of adjacent property.

Education

- For Fiscal Year 2016/17, Catawba County increases its funding by an additional \$57 per pupil, from \$1,483 to \$1,540, resulting in a total operating increase of \$655,817 for Catawba County Schools, Hickory City Schools, and Newton-Conover City Schools.
- Increasing support for Catawba Valley Community College to \$4 million (3%), moving the County's statewide rank of 16th highest in total community college funding.

Property Tax Rate

The budget maintains a property tax rate of \$0.575 for every \$100 of valuation, which will be held constant until the next Countywide Revaluation in 2019 barring State decisions affecting the County's revenue stream or service responsibilities. This rate will enable the County to address needed EMS service expansion and jail capital needs, important to maintaining the quality of life the community has grown accustomed to and ensuring the County does not fall behind in providing basic services.

2016/17 Board of Commissioners' Economic Development Strategies

Support
Workforce
Development

Lobby to Expand
Broadband

Review
Incentives
Guidelines

Develop &
Market Park
1764

Monitor Growth
& Development
Policies

Market Key
Community
Strengths

Economic Development

Catawba County has successfully diversified and balanced its traditional manufacturing base of furniture, textile, and telecommunications. Over the last 10 years the Trade, Transportation, & Utilities; Education & Health Services; and Professional and Business Services sectors have all expanded. Comprehensive efforts are being directed at identifying and recruiting new sectors in manufacturing such as biomedical, pharmaceutical, technology and building products. Economic development announcements in the past year include over \$517 million in new investment and 434 jobs. Additionally, the County will continue to identify and recruit non-manufacturing sectors such as retail development.

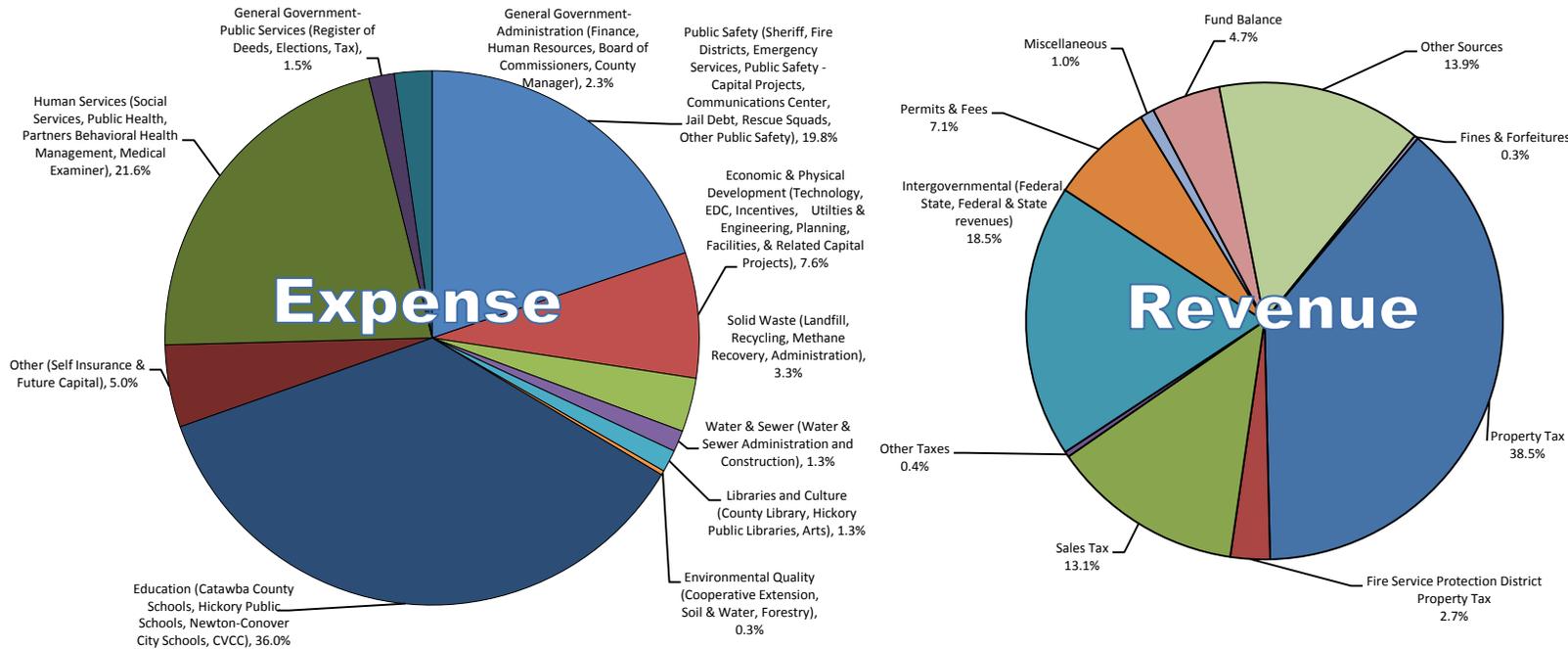
Workforce Development Partnerships

The County also provides annual operating and capital support to CVCC, which takes a strong leadership role in preparing the workforce with the skills to meet current and future labor needs of local employers through several initiatives:

- The ACT Career Readiness Certificate
- Catawba Valley Furniture Academy
- Catawba Valley Manufacturing Academy
- Manufacturing Solutions Center
- Apprenticeship Catawba

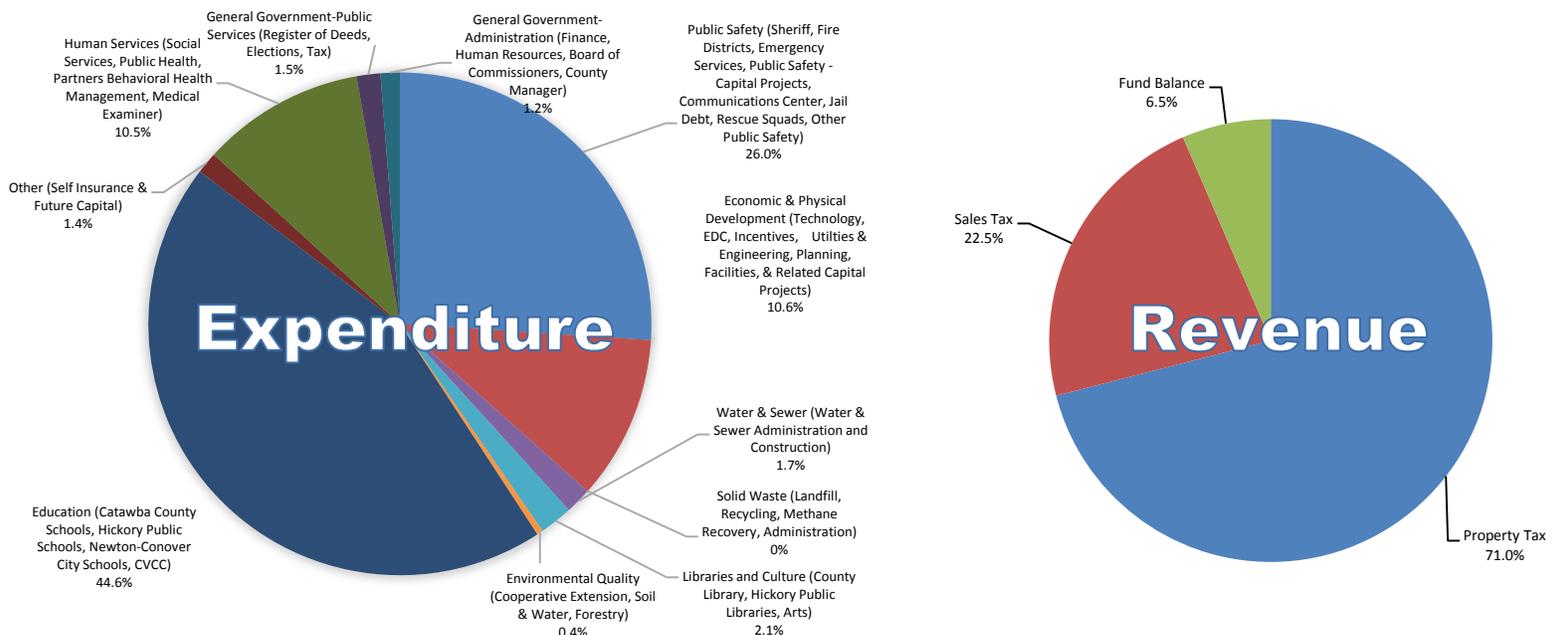
Total Budget Expense & Revenue

The General Fund is the County's chief operating fund. In Fiscal Year 2016/17 the General Fund is \$189,780,502. Total County budget (including all funds and excluding transfers of \$14,115,155) is \$238,686,579.



Local Property & Sales Tax Expense & Revenue

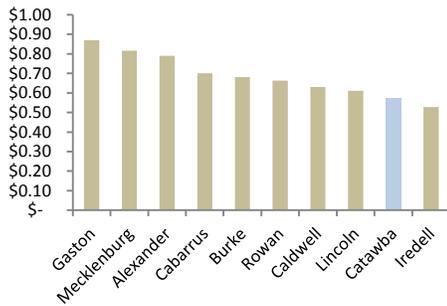
Below reflects the allocation of the County's local funds (property tax, sales tax, and related fund balance) totaling \$138,483,573. Education funding is the largest County expenditure, followed by Public Safety.



Peer County Comparisons

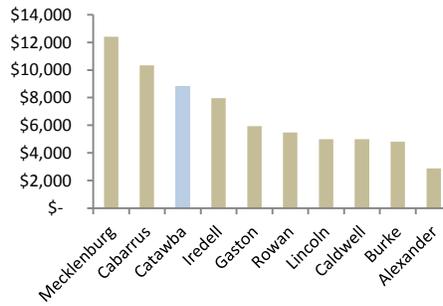
Property Tax Rate

Catawba County's tax rate of \$0.575 for every \$100 is the 8th lowest tax rate of North Carolina's 27 urban counties (with a population over 100,000) and the 2nd lowest among Catawba's neighboring counties.



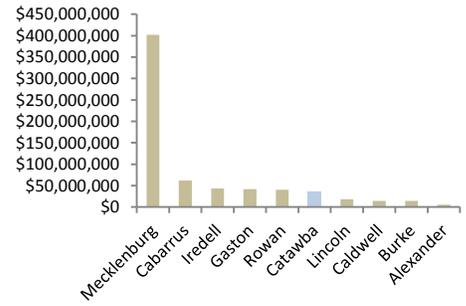
Taxable Sales Per Capita

Sales Tax is the second largest revenue source for the County, which has greatly benefited from being a regional retail hub, ranking 3rd in Taxable Sales per Capita among neighboring counties thru February 2016.



Current Expense Funding

Current Expense funding assists with operating needs including instructional programs and support services for the County's 3 public schools. The County is expected to maintain its ranking of 15th in total current expense funding.



County Performance

EMS response time is projected to exceed the 8-minute BOC goal

Fiscal Year	County Performance	County Goal
FY12	7:40	8:09
FY13	7:45	8:09
FY14	7:50	8:09
FY15	7:55	8:09

Public Health ensured good health outcomes by increasing the percentage of Medicaid recipients who identified a medical home

Fiscal Year	County Performance	County Goal
FY11	78%	78%
FY12	90%	80%
FY13	92%	90%
FY14	92%	92%

Park attendance continues to exceed its annual visitors goal

Fiscal Year	County Performance	County Goal
FY13	110,000	100,000
FY14	110,000	100,000
FY15	110,000	100,000
FY16	180,000	100,000

Communication Center dispatches 911 calls within 49 seconds, well below the County's goal and industry standards

Fiscal Year	County Performance	County Goal
FY13	50	70
FY14	50	70
FY15	50	65
FY16	50	65

Public Health continues to prevent childhood diseases by ensuring children are age appropriately immunized

Fiscal Year	County Performance	County Goal
FY12	95%	95%
FY13	85%	85%
FY14	85%	85%
FY15	90%	90%

As investment continues, the number of sworn personnel nears the State average

Fiscal Year	County Performance	State Average
FY11	1.5	1.8
FY12	1.5	1.8
FY13	1.6	1.8
FY14	1.7	1.8

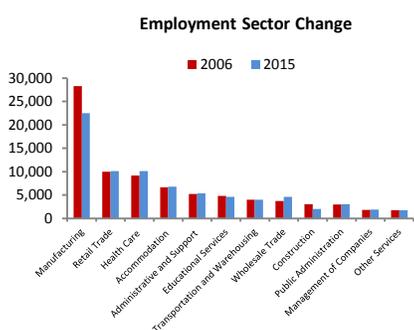
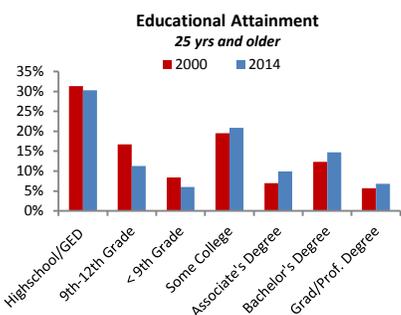
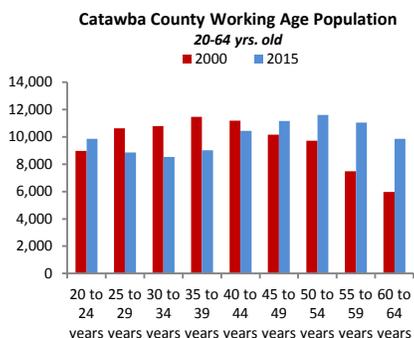
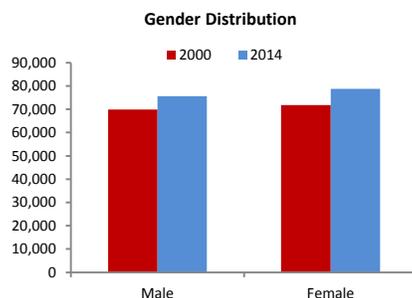
Environmental Health responds to nearly every Well/Septic Compliant in 48 hours

Fiscal Year	County Performance	County Goal
FY13	100%	100%
FY14	95%	95%
FY15	95%	95%
FY16	95%	95%

As development activity continues, building inspectors continue to exceed the average per day inspection target

Fiscal Year	County Performance	Target
FY13	14.5	14
FY14	14.5	14
FY15	14.5	14
FY16	14.5	14

Demographics



History & Location

Named for the Catawba Indians who resided in the area prior to European settlement in 1747, Catawba County (est. 1842) is located in a peaceful valley just east of North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains. The center of the Greater Hickory metro area, Catawba County is conveniently located within a 1-hour drive to Charlotte, Asheville, and Winston-Salem, and affords easy access to both Interstate 40 and Highway 321. The County's mid-Atlantic location is halfway between New York and Miami and includes a land of scenic beauty and diverse cultures with a large industrial workforce.

Form of Government

Catawba County was one of the first of North Carolina's 100 counties to adopt the County-Manager Form of government. It is governed by five commissioners (Randy Isenhower-Chair, Barbara Beatty-Vice Chair, Kitty Barnes, Sherry Butler, and Dan Hunsucker) who are elected by countywide vote in partisan elections and serve four-year staggered terms.

The County Manager is appointed to serve as Chief Executive Officer and is responsible for the enforcement of laws and ordinances, preparation and administration of the annual budget, delivery of services, implementing policies, managing daily operations, and appointment of department heads. The County is fortunate to have had stability in its management structure, with J. Thomas Lundy affording the County more than 40 years of continuous service. Mr. Lundy will retire at the beginning of the new fiscal year, at which point Mick Berry will bring with him 25 years of local government experience to serve as County Manger.

Estimated Population	154,457 (2014, American Community Survey)
Median Age	40.7 (2015, NC Office of State Planning)
Per Capita Personal Income	\$36,742 (2014, Bureau of Economic Analysis)
Unemployment Rate	5.1 percent (2016, NC Dept. of Commerce)
Principal Taxpayers	Apple, Inc. Duke Energy Corporation GKN Driveline Newton, LLC. CommScope, INC. Target Corporation Draka Comteq Americas, Inc. Frye Hospital/American Medical Hickory Springs Mfg. Co., Inc. Corning Cable Systems Valley Hills Mall, LLC
Number of County Government workers	1,073



Catawba County Commissioners

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County Manager

Mick Berry (effective July 5, 2016)

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