catawba county

north carolina



Annual Financial Highlights





BETTER.

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2022



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



C. Randall Isenhower



Barbara G. Beatty Vice Chair



Austin M. Allran



Kitty W. Barnes



Sherry E. Butler

INSIDE THIS REPORT

Board of Commissioners 2
Management's Message
Catawba County Government 3
Community Profile
Economic Outlook5
Long-term Financial Planning 8
Revenues & Expenses 9
Net Position
Capital Assets10
Long-term Obligations
General Fund 13
Fund Balance
Achievements

CONDENSED FINANCIAL STATEMENT

This publication provides you, the public, with an easy-to-read overview of the County's finances.

The information is derived from the County's 2022 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report. The Annual Comprehensive Financial Report includes more detailed information, was prepared in conformance

with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), and was audited by the County's independent auditors. The 2022 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report is available for review on the County's website at www.catawbacountync.gov



MANAGEMENT'S MESSAGE

Citizens of Catawba County:

We are pleased to present the 2022 Catawba County Financial Highlights. This report is an opportunity to present the financial activity of Catawba County in an open and transparent manner.

In today's complex world of financial reporting, analyzing financial statements can be a challenge—especially for those without accounting backgrounds. This report was designed to address that issue by providing a recap of your County government's finances in an easy to read format.

The financial statements used in this report are simplified and condensed to reflect financial information regarding Catawba County's government-wide information. The County's government-wide financial statements provide information on revenues, expenses, and net position of Catawba County for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022.

Most of the information in this report is drawn from the financial information appearing in the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2022. The Annual Comprehensive Financial Report is a more detailed and complete financial presentation prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and was audited by the County's independent external auditors. While the financial data in this report conforms with GAAP, the statistical, economic and demographic data are taken from various sources and are not necessarily GAAP based. Additional financial information can be found in the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, available at Catawba County public libraries and online at www.catawbacountync.gov/depts/ finance/.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact the Chief Financial Officer at (828) 465-8210, or write to: Chief Financial Officer, Catawba County, P.O. Box 389, Newton, NC 28658.

Sincerely,

Mary Furtado

Mary & Monison

Mary Morrison Interim Chief Financial Officer

County Manager

CATAWBA COUNTY GOVERNMENT

In 1937, Catawba County became the third county in the State to adopt the councilmanager form of government. The Board of Commissioners is comprised of a fivemember board elected at large on staggered terms in a countywide election. The Board of Commissioners is the policymaking and legislative authority for the County. It is responsible for adopting the annual budget, approving zoning and planning issues and other matters related to the health and welfare of the County. The Board makes appointments to various boards and commissions and appoints the County Manager.

The County Manager is the Chief Executive Officer and is responsible for 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.

Catawba County provides its citizens with a broad range of services that include public safety, environmental protection, health and human services, cultural and recreational programs, community and economic development, and education.



ABOUT CATAWBA COUNTY

COUNTY SERVICES

Education

- 28 Catawba County Schools
- 7 Newton-Conover Schools
- 10 Hickory City Schools
- Catawba Valley Community College

Human Services

- Social Services
- Public Health
- Mental Health
- Medical Examiner

Public Safety

- Sheriff
- Emergency Services
- Fire/Rescue Services
- Veterans Services
- Animal Control
- E911/Comm. Center

Economic Development & Planning

- 3 County Parks
- Information Technology
- Planning & Zoning
- Utilities & Engineering
- Facilities

Culture & Recreation

7 County Libraries

Environmental Protection

- Cooperative Extension
- Soil & Water Conservation
- Forest Ranger

General Government Administration

- Board of Commissioners
- County Management
- Legal
- Budget
- Tax Assessor/Collector
- Board of Elections
- Human Resources
- Self Insurance
- Register of Deeds
- · Finance & Purchasing

Solid Waste Management

- Blackburn Landfill
- Recycling/Convenience Centers
- Household Hazardous Waste
- Methane Recovery

Water and Sewer

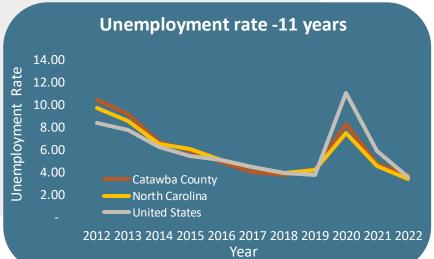
 Water & Sewer Management Located in a peaceful valley just east of the Blue Ridge Mountains, Catawba County is conveniently located within a 1-hour drive to Charlotte, Asheville, and Winston-Salem, and affords easy access to both Interstate 40 and Highway 321. The County's mid-Atlantic location is halfway between New York and Miami and includes a land of scenic beauty and diverse cultures with a large industrial workforce. Three beautiful lakes are located within its 414 square miles, and the Catawba River winds along its western, northern and eastern border.

Early Catawbans were German and Scotch-Irish, who initially settled in Pennsylvania and migrated to the south when converging factors of crowding and under-employment evolved. The County is named for the river and the Catawba Indians who settled in the valley and welcomed the first German and Scotch-Irish settlers who arrived in 1747.

Catawba County was officially established on December 12, 1842 when Lincoln County was divided by an act of the North Carolina General Assembly. The County has eight cities and towns within its boundaries, and is home to a population of 161,909 residents, which positions it as the 18th largest county in North Carolina and one of the 29 urban counties with population of 100,000 or more.



ECONOMIC OVERVIEW



Local Economy

As of Spring 2020, Catawba County was in the midst of over a decade of economic expansion, nearing record levels in low unemployment. Then came the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and the COVID-19 pandemic with employment falling nationally, and at the state and county levels. Since this time, the local economy has stabilized, and new and expanding industry announcements are at an all-time high despite national concerns about labor availability.

Economic Development

Catawba County has taken a proactive, aggressive approach in charting its economic future through targeted expansion. Job gains have been made as a result of significant expansion projects—funded both privately and in partnership with the public sector—occurring in a wide range of industries from traditional manufacturing to high-tech. This mix of public-private partnership and private investment underscores the County's balanced economic health and resiliency.

In 2021-2022, \$357.6 million in industry investments and 874 new jobs were announced in the County. A sampling of the companies include:

 Everything Attachments, a manufacturer of high-quality farm implements and tractor attachments, committed to create 147 new jobs and invest a minimum of \$20M in new facility construction, machinery and equipment over the next five years.

- **Prysmian Group,** announced an expansion of their Claremont facility. The \$50M expansion committed to create 50 jobs and introduce new, industry-leading technologies for the production of optical fiber.
- Corning Optical Communications, announced plans in September 2021 for a manufacturing expansion in Trivium Corporate Center in Hickory. Corning committed to invest \$150M and create 200 jobs. Corning is addressing demand from leading network operators, in particular AT&T, which announced plans to significantly expand its fiber footprint.
- Pöppelmann Plastics USA, announced plans to expand its existing manufacturing facility in Claremont. Over the next three years, Pöppelmann committed to create 100 new jobs and invest a minimum of \$19M in a new 100,000 square foot facility on the company's existing campus.
- WestRock Company, a leading provider of differentiated paper and packaging solutions, announced plans in October 2021 to expand and create 50

new jobs and invest a minimum of \$47M to construct a 285,00 square foot expansion over the next three years.

2022 Top 10 Employers

- Catawba County Schools
- Target Stores Div.
- Catawba Valley Medical Center
- Corning Optical Communications
- CommScope
- Catawba County Government
- Wal-Mart Associates
- Dip Partner Frye
- Gkn Driveline Newton
- Catawba Valley Community
 College

While Catawba County's economy is built upon a large industrial base (with 27.6% of its workforce in manufacturing), deliberate and targeted growth in several key sectors has resulted in a more balanced economic composition today than what existed a decade ago.

Deliberately Driving Workforce Development

Catawba County has made significant strides in preparing its workforce with the skills to meet current and future labor needs of local employers. Programs have been designed to target high-school students as well as college-aged students and adult learners to ensure the County's workforce is poised to help local businesses thrive. Several key initiative include:

K-64

K-64 is a systemic approach to shaping future careers and meeting workforce demands by connecting students and employers throughout the educational curriculum. K-64 increases student and employer engagement in educational programs proven to prepare a qualified workforce by collaborating

with employers to align courses of study with

workforce needs, connecting students to real-world careers and related curriculum choices from early on, and empowering adults to enhance employability in a dynamic work environment.

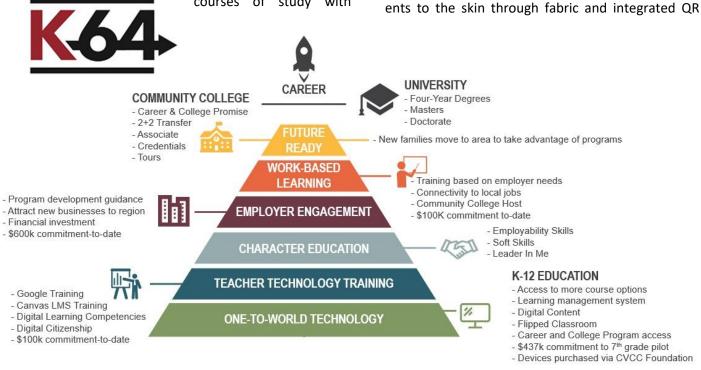
Catawba County Promise

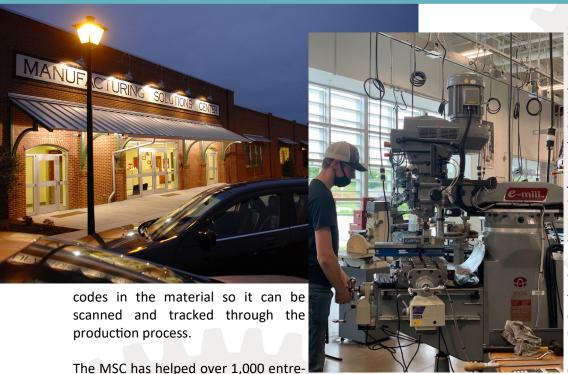
Lenoir-Rhyne University offers a program called the Catawba County Promise to provide a minimum of 50% off tuition for any first-year undergraduate student with a 3.5 or higher high school GPA who is a resident of North Carolina or to a transfer undergraduate student with more than 30 attempted hours from an accredited North Carolina community college and a 3.5 GPA.

Manufacturing Solutions Center (MSC)

A branch of Catawba Valley Community College (CVCC), MSC is focused on helping manufacturers increase sales, and improve product quality and production efficiency. MSC brings all of the resources needed to launch a product together, under one umbrella.

This combination of expertise and equipment has enabled the development of innovative products such as wearable technology that measures and regulates blood circulation, delivers active ingredients to the skin through fabric and integrated QR





Southeastern Catawba County Business Park

In April 2022, Catawba County purchased 54 acres in the southeastern part of the County. The land is planned for development as a business park aimed at growing jobs and the tax base in that area.

Strong Medical 8 Healthcare Presence

Well positioned to meet the future medical and health care needs of its citizens, the County is home to a prospering medical and healthcare community and two large

medical centers.

Catawba Valley Medical Center (CVMC) is the largest not-for-profit community hospital in the region. While technically owned by Catawba County, CVMC is completely self-supporting. Based on the quality and consistency of medical care pro-



production inputs.

Trivium Corporate Center

Trivium Corporate Center is a 378-acre Class A Business Park being developed jointly by Catawba County and the City of Hickory. There have been 5 project announcements associated with the park so far—for a total of \$369M in private investment supporting the creation of 772 jobs. Project announcements include Corning, ITM, Cataler North America, American Fuji Seal and Gusmer Enterprises.

preneurs and worked with companies in all 50

states and 32 countries to conduct product testing

or prototyping, or to find domestically-produced



vided, CVMC has received numerous awards in recent years, including:

- Women's Choice Awards for Best Hospital in patient experience and various medical specialties
- American Nurses Credentialing Center—Magnet Designation
- The Joint Commission Top Performer Quality Measures in Heart Attack, Pneumonia, Surgical Care, Stroke and Perinatal Care



Long Term Financial Planning

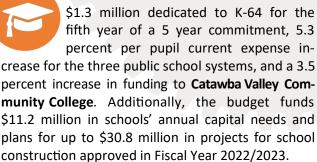
Catawba County's economy continues to grow as reflected in strong retail sales, increasing building permit activity, business investment and the County's low unemployment rate. The County is taking deliberate steps to accelerate and reinforce this economic growth.

Over the course of the past couple of years, the Board of Commissioners led a strategic planning process aimed at enhancing and promoting the County's quality of life in order to attract working-age families and to continue to grow the economy. In the coming years, the County will continue to focus on anticipating future service pressures and delivering responsive serves to the community.

In looking towards the future, the strategic plan invests in services and infrastructure related to many of the 10 major focus areas as well as general service

needs. Some of the highlights of these investments include:

Education



Parks

The budget provides funds for a new Mountain Creek Park in the southeastern section of the County.

Public Safety



The budget includes \$3 million in initial funding for the construction of a new emergency medical services base in Newton.

The County is able to make these investments within available revenues, maintaining the property tax rate of \$0.575 for every \$100 of valuation, thanks to a strong tradition of fiscal stewardship and conservative budgeting.

Comprehensive long-range plans have been developed for critical service areas such as school construction, jail expansion, water and sewer infrastructure, parks, libraries, and solid waste.



2022 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS (Revenues/Expenses)

0.53

REVENUES - Monies the County receives from a variety of sources to provide services to citizens.

Local governments rely heavily on tax revenues for operating governmental and business-type activities. Catawba County is no exception, 75% of the total operating revenue is attributed to taxes, which consist mainly of property tax and sales tax.

- Property tax, the County's largest single revenue source, accounted for \$125.4 million or 49% of governmental revenue. The property tax rate of \$.575 for every \$100 of value is below the State average of \$0.676 making Catawba County's tax rate the 22nd lowest of all 100 counties in North Carolina.
- Sales and other taxes accounted for \$56.1 million or 22% of revenue. Catawba County remains a retail magnet, capturing 59% of the \$5.6 billion in retail sales from the four-county Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). In the two previous years, retail sales increased 16% and 1%, respectively. Shopping in Catawba County

	2022	2022 2021				
ALL FUNDS						
Assets and Deferred Outflows	\$ 549,407,279	\$ 472,723,109				
Liabilities and Deferred Inflows	264,106,859	280,871,763	244,790,245			
Net Position	\$ 285,300,420	\$ 285,300,420 \$ 245,154,430 \$				
REVENUES			_			
Governmental Activities	\$ 244,704,832	\$ 224,356,216	\$ 207,695,914			
Business-type Activities	10,177,532	10,273,414	12,930,565			
Total	\$ 254,882,364	\$ 234,629,630	\$ 220,626,479			
Total	\$ 234,862,304	\$ 234,02 <i>3</i> ,030	\$ 220,020,479			
EXPENSES						
Governmental Activities	\$ 205,005,076	\$ 209,258,095	\$ 195,574,931			
Business-type Activities	9,731,297	8,254,698	11,162,454			
Total	\$ 214,736,373	\$ 214,736,373 \$ 217,512,793 \$ 200				
CAPITAL ASSETS - net of depreciation	on					
Governmental Activities	\$ 172,513,330	\$ 164,390,764	\$ 158,089,436			
Business-type Activities	76,451,253	76,577,071	75,648,002			
Total	\$ 248,964,583	\$ 240,967,835	\$ 233,737,438			
LONG-TERM DEBT OUTSTANDING						
Governmental Activities	\$ 147,410,281	\$ 163,178,809	\$ 159,961,557			
Business-type Activities	2,179,806	5,621,380	6,822,036			
Total	\$ 149,590,087	\$ 168,800,189	\$ 166,783,593			

PROPERTY TAX RATES

0.575 - 0.575 - 0.575 - 0.575 - 0.575 - 0.575 - 0.575



helps support local business and keeps property taxes low.

EXPENSES - Monies the County spends to provide services to citizens.

The County incurs a number of expenses to provide a variety of quality services to its citizens. Overall expenses decreased by \$2.7M from the prior year. This is a combination of increases and decreases

across several function. Significant variances include: (a) Education decrease of \$3.9M as renovations to various public schools near completion, (b) Economic and physical development increase of \$1.3M, (c) \$1M increase in public safety, and (d) \$1.5M increase in the business – type activities.

2022

Top 10 Taxpayers (15% of the assessed value)

- Apple, Inc.
- Duke Energy Carolinas
- GKN Driveline Newton
- Corning Cable Systems
- Prysmian Cables and Systems
- CommScope, Inc.
- Target Corporation
- Duke Lifepoint (Frye Regional)
- Piedmont Natural Gas, Inc.
- Hickory Springs Mfg. Co.

	2022	2021	2020				
NET POSITION - Primary Government							
Net Investment in capital assets	\$ 206,021,372	\$ 195,430,139	\$ 184,429,183				
Restricted	36,821,265	35,266,100	39,677,297				
Unrestricted	42,457,784	14,458,191	3,826,384				
Total Net Position	\$ 285,300,421	\$ 245,154,430	\$ 227,932,864				

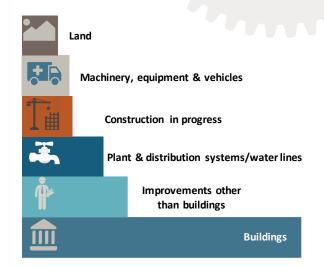
Catawba County continues strategic investments in the high priority areas of education, public safety, economic development and quality of These assets include land, buildings, infrastructure, machinery & equipment and vehicles.

The difference between revenues and expenses/ transfers represent the Change in Net Position. One of the most important questions asked about the County's finances is, "Is the County, as a whole, better off as a result of the past year's activities?" The Statement of Net Position presents information on the County assets, deferred outflow of resources, liabilities, and deferred inflows of resource with the difference reported as net position.

As of June 30, 2022, the County's net position totaled \$285.3M. The three components of net position are:

- The largest component, approximately \$206M or 72%, represents the County's investment in capital assets less any related debt used to construct or acquire those assets. The County uses these capital assets to provide services to citizens, consequently, they are not available for future spending.
- The second component, restricted net position, represents resources that are subject to external restrictions on how they may be used. External restrictions include those imposed by grantors, regulators, or restrictions imposed by legislation. Total restricted net position is approximately 13%.
- The final component of net position is unrestricted, which is 15% of the total net positon. Unrestricted net position consists of resources that the County may use to meet its ongoing obligations to citizens and creditors. Because the County funds school capital needs through long-term borrowing but does not carry the resulting assets on the financial statements, we report a deficit in unrestricted net position.

Catawba County's Total Capital Assets (net of depreciation)



As of June 30, 2022, the County's capital assets (net of depreciation) totaled \$248.9M an increase of \$7.9M over the prior year.

- Increase in buildings as the new detention facility expansion became operational.
- Increase in buildings and land with the launch of new County park.
- Increase in construction in progress for the construction of a new Emergency Medical Services base and business development sites.
- Increase in the water and sewer fund for the construction of water and sewer infrastructure.
- Construction of new landfill cells and equipment.

Below are highlights of a few major projects in progress or completed during fiscal year 2022.



In June 2022, Catawba County Commissioners celebrated the official opening of Mountain Creek Park, Catawba County's newest 606-acre park. Mountain Creek Park features a variety

of amenities including 18.7 miles of mountain biking and hiking trails, a large adventure playground, fishing pier, canoe/kayak launch, an observation platform, paved ADA-accessible trail, pickleball courts, a mountain bike pump track, picnic areas, an outdoor class room and dog park.



Scan for more info on Mountain Creek Park

ST. STEPHENS HIGH SCHOOL RENOVATION

The \$9.7M phase one renovation to St. Stephens High School was completed in FY22. The remodel includes a 33,000 square-foot addition that features spaces for Career and Technical Education (CTE) classrooms, including a welding lab, an auto repair lab and nursing lab as well as 4 new general purpose classrooms. The renovation also includes a new entrance with electronic access control security vestibule and traffic circle to improve traffic flow.

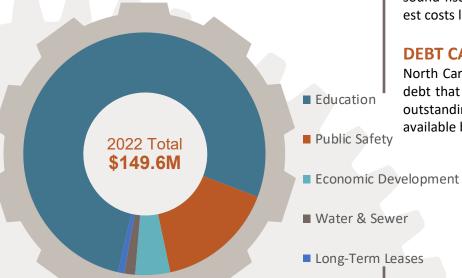


LONG-TERM DEBT OBLIGATIONS

The County's large capital improvement projects normally require long-term financing. The outstanding debt obligations consist of the following purposes: Education, Public Safety Jail Expansion, Water & Sewer Projects and Economic Development Data Center.

As of June 30, 2022, the County's outstanding long-term debt totaled \$149.6M, an decrease of \$19M over the prior year.

Uses of Outstanding Debt 2022



BOND RATING

The County obtains a credit rating or evaluation of its credit-worthiness by an independent

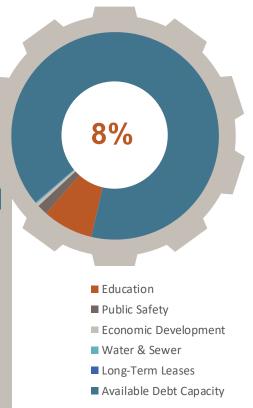
rating agency. Standard and Poor's maintained the Catawba County's general obligation debt bond rating of AA+, for the 4th consecutive year. Also, for the twelfth consecutive year, the County maintained its Aa1 bond rating from Moody's Investor Service.

This stable bond rating is a clear indication of the sound fiscal condition of the County, keeping interest costs low on the County's outstanding debt.

DEBT CAPACITY

North Carolina general statutes limit the amount of debt that a unit can issue. The County's total debt outstanding of \$149.6M is 8% of the legal debt available by general statute.

2022 County Debt Capacity

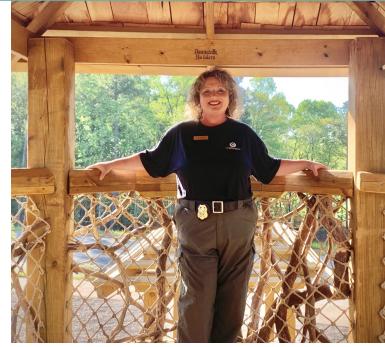


		2022	2021		2020		
TOTAL DEBT OUTSTANDING - Primary Government							
Certificate of Participation	\$	2,880,000	\$	3,895,000	\$	4,940,000	
Installment Purchases		66,675,408		66,226,794		55,215,331	
Qualified Zone Academy Bonds		-		50,000		100,000	
Qualified School Const. Bonds		27,808,553		27,808,553		27,808,553	
Limited Obligation Bonds		45,412,592		62,685,000		69,200,000	
Long-term Leases		1,242,051		-		-	
Federal Revolving Loan		600,000		675,000		750,000	
NC Department of Commerce		-		-		540,796	
Premium on long-term debt		4,971,483	_	7,459,842		8,228,913	
Total Debt Outstanding	\$	149,590,087	\$	168,800,189	\$	166,783,593	

GENERAL FUND

The **General Fund** is the primary operating fund of the County and supports the regular day-to-day operations. This fund captures the general revenues and expenditures of primary governmental activities including education, public safety, human services, parks, libraries and general government. Unlike the information presented earlier, which focused on the government as a whole, the General Fund is presented using a current resources focus (amounts to be collected or paid in the near term).

2022 Where the Money Comes From





■ Property/Sales taxes

■ Sales and services

Permits and fees

Misc.

■ Federal/State funding In 2022, the General Fund expenditures of \$195 million were lower than budget by \$23.4 million. This conservative approach to spending is a hallmark of the County.

2022 Where the Money Goes

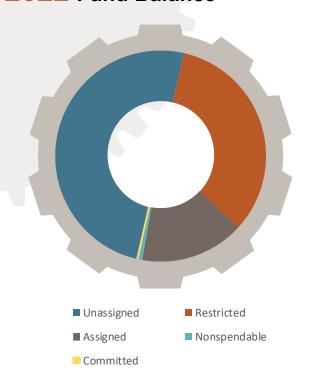
Property and Sales Tax represent the most significant source of revenue for the General Fund representing 74% of the total revenue collected. Other major sources of revenue, in the General Fund, are shown above.

Once the County collects revenues, the funds must be spent efficiently to provide services to citizens and businesses. The General Fund finances the regular day-to-day operations of the County.



FUND BALANCE (General Fund)

2022 Fund Balance



Fund Balance is the difference between what is owned (assets) and what is owed (liabilities).

At June 30, 2022, the ending fund balance of the General Fund was \$131.2M.

Of this fund balance, \$65.5M is available for spending at the Board's discretion (referred to as unassigned fund balance.) The Board of Commissioners have determined that the County should maintain an available fund balance of at least 16% of general fund expenditures. This equates to 2 months of operating expenditures in case of unforeseen needs or opportunities, in addition to meeting the cash flow needs of the County. The County has consistently exceeded this goal.

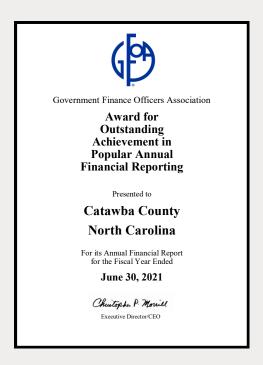
For FY2022, the County has available fund balance of 51.25% of total general fund expenditures.

Awards and Achievements

Catawba County is known across the nation as the home of an innovative county government. Our innovation is reflected in numerous awards. These awards are won in completion with thousands of other outstanding programs across the state and nation. Here are several of the most significant awards for FY2022.

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) of the United States and Canada has given an Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting to Catawba County for it's Annual Financial Highlights report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021. This is a prestigious national award recognizing conformance with the highest standards for preparation of state and local government popular reports. Catawba County has received this award for the past fourteen years.

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) of the United States and Canada presented the Finance Office the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the creation of an easily readable and understandable annual comprehensive financial report covering all



AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS

funds and financial transactions. This is the 40th consecutive year in which Catawba County has received the award.

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) of the United States and Canada presented the Budget Office the **Distinguished Budget Presentation Award** for the development of an easily understood budget document which can be used by other government units or the average citizen. This is the 33rd consecutive year in which Catawba County has received the award.

Find information on employment opportunities, community events, Board of Commissioner agendas, meeting hours, tax information, building permits and much more.

Take advantage of many online services:

Pay a tax bill

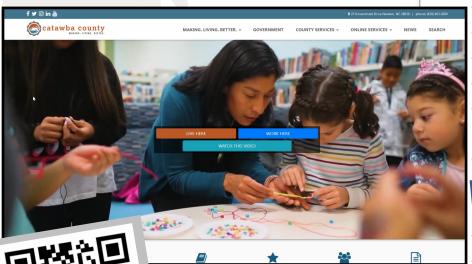
- You Tube
- Search the County library catalog



- Pay permit fee
- Review your property information
- Sign up for community alert system
- Use the online deed search
- Subscribe to the County newsletter



- Find the County on Facebook
- facebook.
- Follow Catawba County on Twitter
- Sign up for RSS feeds
- Access County forms...and more!



The County's website is an excellent source for information about County policies, services and events 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Visit Catawba County's Official Website www.catawbacountync.gov

Finance Department

For more information on financial matters of Catawba County, please call the Finance Department at (828) 465-8210.



ABOUT THE COVER

Making. Living. Better.

- *Making* refers to the community's legacy as makers and doers: we make things happen.
- Living refers to quality of life: we enjoy our location, our amenities, and our people.
- *Better* refers to the community's 'can do' spirit; we work together to make a difference.

That story is enhanced by a graphic logo that visually represents many of these same themes:

- The *outer circle* resembles a gear, which symbolized Catawba County's legacy as makers and doers.
- The *inner circle* resembles a second gear, because two gears working together drive things forward. This represents Catawba County's collaborative spirit.
- The *nature scene*, with the foothills and the river, creates a sense of place for the County and symbolized its good quality of life.
- The *foothill* is an outline of Bakers Mountain, the highest and most visible peak in the County, and the *water* represents the Catawba River—two natural assets that speak to the County's remarkable outdoors.

Catawba County, North Carolina Popular Annual Financial Report Year Ended June 30, 2022

