CURRENT TECHNOLOGY PROJECT SUMMARY 2010-2011

The Technology Department works with other departments on a project basis. Listed below are the current projects that are being addressed by the Technology Department along with a status indicator.

800 MHZ VIPER System: This project is to enhance our ability to talk to Public Safety officials in our county and surrounding counties. We have coverage issues in the county with the current VHF system that must be addressed. Viper is already established here and the build out of tower sites is taking place in our area. By partnering with the North Carolina State Highway Patrol, Catawba County can upgrade its communications system using the infrastructure provided by the state. In partnership with the fire and rescue departments in the county and EMS we received a $803,964.00 grant to purchase radios for the departments. These radios have been ordered, issued and are operational. The Sheriff's Department also received a grant for $254,000 with a 50% match for radios. Project complete except for state approval of final paperwork.

Target Date: December 31, 2010

99% Complete

On Budget

On Time

Computer Replacement: Replace 20 percent of the desktop and notebook computers, excluding DHR agencies, to maintain compatibility with other agencies and software standards.

100% Complete

On Budget

On Time

Electronic Document Management: This multi-year project allows electronic storage and retrieval of documents, reduces storage requirements, allows easier retrieval and sharing of information as well as protect the integrity of public records for historical purposes. This year, Public Health and the Records Division of the Sheriff's department have begun using the system.
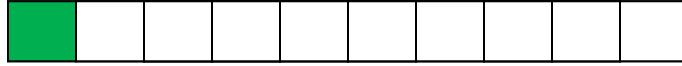
90% Complete

On Budget

On Time

Justice Center addition and technology infrastructure redesign: As the addition to the Justice Center is built, all existing networks for phones and data will have to be extended to the new building and some technology relocated or replaced to accomodate the new building.

10% Complete

On Budget

On Time

Mobile Workforce: Many duties performed by County employees require them to be away from an office environment. Keeping them in the field more hours reduces cost and provides better service for the public. Mobile workers are defined as those who perform their duties in the field on a regular basis. To date, funding for this project has enabled a mobile workforce in areas such as Environmental Health, EMS, Sheriff, Building Inspections, Fire Marshal's Office, School Nurses, Home Health nurses, Animal Control,Maintenance,Emergency Services and Sheriff with GPS and Vision Mobile. Tax Appraisal and Fire Inspections have begun moving to more mobile work environments. Supporting a mobile workforce requires technology resources both in the field and internally. Funds will be used for hardware and software expansions to support additional mobile workers.   Flexibility and mobility are hallmarks of the workforce of the future.   As we expand this capability, we will need to expand hardware and software accordingly.

90% Complete

On Budget

On Time

PeopleSoft Enterprise Initiative: Upgrade Financial and HRM Systems to version 9.1: The new versions offer greater efficiencies in banking, tracking and documentment management as well as human resource management and payroll functions. Every department will be affected by the upgrades and will receive training in the new functionality. The systems have been installed in testing environments and every process will be tested thoroughly to assure minimal disruption in services when they are moved to production. Target production date is November 30, 2011.

80% Complete

On Budget

On Time

Permit Center Application Replacement

The system used for permitting and inspections was over 10 years old and could not provide the services that are expected by the building community. The software could not be modified to provide these services and was not supported for upgrade by the vendor. The County was able to negotiate licenses for a system that allows collaboration and information sharing between Catawba County and the municipalities from a single vendor. This expedites services for citizens and builders as well as benefits staff members by allowing access to all permitting related functions from a single data source. The project consists of three distinct phases: Phase I – Bring County permitting offices online with the new system; Phase II – Add functions to allow municipalities access for issuing and tracking permits from the system; Phase III – implement electronic plan review for Catawba County offices. Phase I was completed in October 2009 for Catawba County and the City of Hickory . Phases II and III are in progress as well as an upgrade to enhance the mobile inspection area of the system.

Target Date for Completion: December 2012

80% Complete

On Budget

On Time

Public Health Inventory System: H1N1 Grant funds secured by Public health have been allocated to implement a more efficient inventory tracking system for clinic and home health use. The system uses hand held scanners and barcodes to record inventory movement. Target date for production is August 2011.

30% Complete

On Budget

On Time

Public Health Billing and Clinic Management System: The billing software used by Public Health is outdated and in need of replacement.   The department's current system, CMHC, is a mental health product manipulated and made to work for Public Health; however, it is still lacking the clinical components of a Public Health system. Public Health has been waiting on the state to develop a new billing system known as HIS but this system has major flaws and its future use and reliability is uncertain. The new Insight Public Health Billing and Clincic Management system will provide a robust system for tracking and following-up on processing claims. Target date August 22, 2011

50% Complete

On Budget

On Time

Public Health Digital Signage: H1N1 grant funds were received to educate the public concerning H1N1 prevention and care. The funds are being used to implement electronic/digital signage in clinics and other targeted areas where clients will have the opportunity to learn more about this and other timely health concerns.

100% Complete

On Budget

On Time

SharePoint Services: At the July 2008 Department Head meeting, it was decided to add SharePoint services to our existing Office platform. The main purpose for using SharePoint was to provide a place for collaboration and at the same time have a common storage area for institutional knowledge. The first phase of the plan was to move SharePoint onto a production server. Training was provided for users to create and manage sites. The system currently hosts departmental, various committee and project management information as well as the internal Intranet used for communication throughout the agency. It will serve as a single point of information/document repository to maximize efficiency and security for records management as well as provide an optimal environment for collaboration. Business Intelligence features are being added to facilitate monitoring and planning based on departmental activity. Completed March 2011.

100% Complete

On Budget

On Time

VisionMobile and AVL for Emergency Vehicles: Catawba County has been using VisionAir products since March 1998. We are currently utilizing VisionAIR Computer Aided Dispatch, Records Management System, Field Based Reporting, Fire Service Management, GeoLynx Mapping, and the Jail Management System.

VisionAIR mobile enhances our current investment by enabling the flow of information to and from units in the field. In addition to data and reports, it incoporates GPS tracking with Automated Vehicle Locating(AVL). Units can then be dispatched based on the closest available unit as opposed to the current base dispatched method. Once dispatched, call information is sent to the unit's onboard computer with adress and mapping directions for the incident.

Catawba County benefits from this purchase in the following ways:

- Increased Officer Safety using GPS and AVL technologies
- Improves Response Times by having visual maps of the nearest Public Safety Units
- Improves Response Times by sending information of dispatched calls to the Public Safety Units
- Delivers valuable information to Public Safety laptops from existing databases (warrants, criminal history, hazmat,etc.)Officer's can enter reports directly from the field

VisionMOBILE fully enhances the VisionAIR Public Safety Suite that Catawba County currenty uses and transforms Catawba County's Public Safety division into a mobile platform.

100% Complete

On Budget

On Time

Web Site Redesign: In coordination with the Public Information Officer, the current Catawba County web site was evaluated and is being upgraded to offer new services to the public. The Technology Department is working with each department to review the services that each department offers and how to best present those services to the public. The sites incorporate many Web 2.0 design concepts including Facebook and Youtube. Due to the dynamic nature of the web site, work will continue indefinitely on this project.

90% Complete

On Budget

On Time

Participate in Regional GIS Website: This is a coordinated project with surrounding counties—Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, Iredell, Lincoln, and Wilkes—to implement a regional GIS website. This site is being hosted and operated through a vendor (at no cost to the county), and is a condensed version of our current Real Estate website. Users can verify an address without prior knowledge of exactly which county the address is located in. This site provides basic parcel related information. A direct link to the appropriate county's website is provided if further information is required by the user. This website was publicized and has been in full use since February.

100% Complete

On Budget

On Time

Design Business Search Website: In an effort to create a more complete dataset of businesses in the area, we obtained a business dataset purchased by the Western Piedmont Council of Governments, a membership list from the Chamber of Commerce, and the fire inspection list from the Fire Marshall's office; compared, and then combined this information. The result is a much more accurate set of data than any of these agencies previously had access to. We believe there will be many uses of this data. One of the uses will simply be to make people aware of the services provided in Catawba County, and hopefully, encourage them to use these resources instead of seeking services elsewhere.   We've been in discussions with the EDC, the municipalities, and the Future Economists Group who each believe they will have multiple uses of this information. A website has been set up to search the data, but we haven't made this well known at this point. It will be a huge undertaking to keep the data current. We've developed a tool which allows editing and intend to share the editing capabilities with trusted agencies. We're currently continuing discussions with various groups, both public and private, to determine some of the uses of the data and the maintenance process.

90% Complete

On Budget

On Time

GIS Software Upgrade – ArcGIS Version 10: Our software vendor, ESRI, released a major upgrade in June 2010. The entire look and feel of the product has changed; and it affects several of our applications, including our most heavily relied upon applications--Public Access and the Real Estate Website. The current Real Estate Website will not run on Version 10 so a new site is being developed in conjunction with this upgrade.

We have installed the new version on most of our core user's desktops; and are installing the new version on all new computers. In addition, this upgrade is being coordinated with the municipalities since they are connected to our network. Implementation is expected to continue slowly over the next several months.
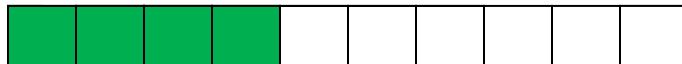
40% Complete

On Budget

On Time

GIS Website Redesign: The current platform for our GIS website is not supported in our vendor's most recent upgrade. We will not be able to continue enhancements to the site without support. Feedback indicates the site is well liked and we know it is heavily used--averaging 80,250 hits per day in FY 10/11. The new site must be as comprehensive as our existing site. Design and development of a new site continues to be a major project.   We are currently investigating several different platforms for the new site; and have developed some less complex sites using these different platforms.

40% Complete

On Budget

On Time

911 Communication Center Analog to Internet Protocol Conversion: The Catawba County E911 Communications Center Strategic Plan addresses NG911 technologies. Strategic Initiative 2 states: Improve public safety by leveraging modern information systems and technology. Recommendation 2.2 states: Implement Next Generation 911 (NG911) technology and standards: The goal of the NG911 Initiative is to establish the national architecture and transition plan which will enable the general public to access 911 services through virtually any communications device. It is anticipated the NG911 System will support a transition to enable the general public to make a 911 "call" from any wired, wireless, or Internet Protocol (IP) based device, and allow the emergency services community to take advantage of Enhanced 911 (E911) call delivery and other internetworking technologies. The primary goal of the NG911 System is to save lives, health, and property by improving emergency services access and response in the United States.

 In moving forward with the plan to be a NG911 center, the Catawba County E911 Communications Center is upgrading ANI/ALI and other services with Intrado. The Intrado Intelligent Emergency Network is an IP-based emergency communications architecture, deployed in support of public safety agencies throughout the country.   Target Completion Date: October 2011.
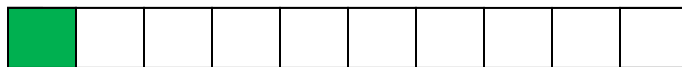
5% Complete

On Budget

On Time

Joint Zoning Layer with Municipalities: Creation of one zoning layer, edited by all jurisdictions, in an effort to decrease duplication of work among jurisdictions. Currently each jurisdiction maintains their own zoning layer and emails county staff with changes. This effort is then duplicated in the County's version of that jurisdiction's zoning layer. Not only is this duplication of effort, it reduces the level of accuracy with multiple copies being maintained, or the possibility that the change doesn't get forwarded at all. The public relies on the County's Real Estate Site for accurate information. This is a way to ensure we are all using the most up-to-date, accurate layer; and to reduce duplication of effort.

10% Complete

On Budget

On Time