

2016 Community Profile

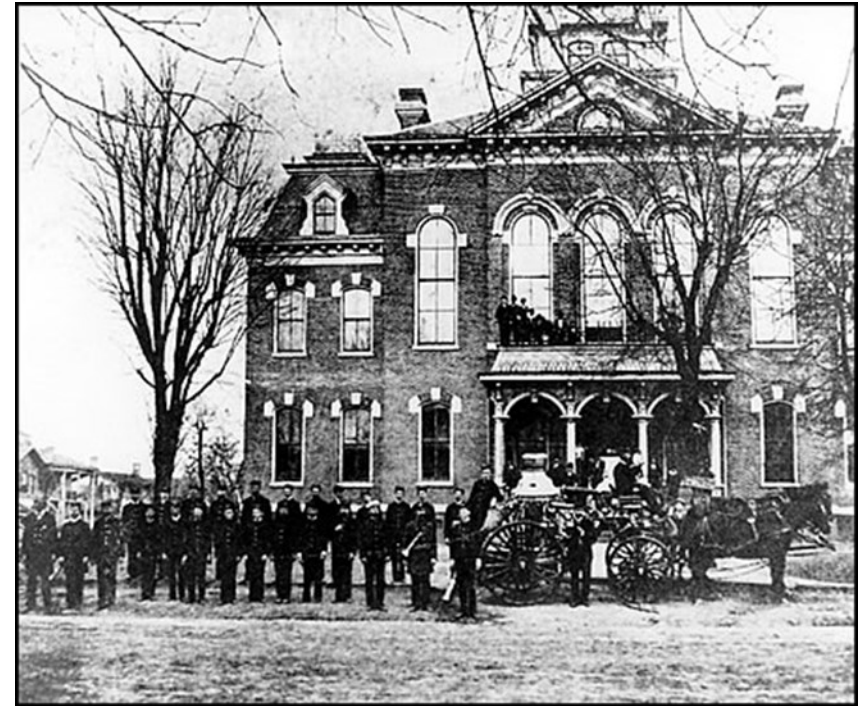
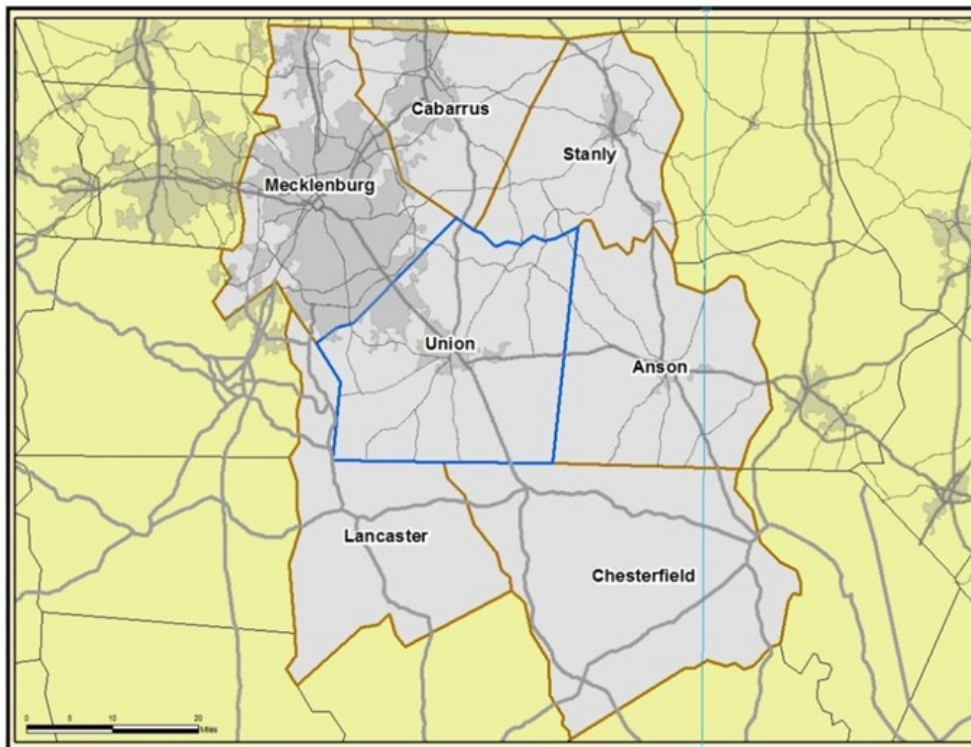
Union County, North Carolina



Overview

Established in 1842, Union County was formed from parts of Anson County and Mecklenburg County. Its name was a compromise between Whigs, who wanted to name the new county for Henry Clay, and Democrats, who wanted to name it for Andrew Jackson. Situated in the south central Piedmont area of North Carolina, Union County's estimated population is 220,546, with approximately 643 square miles of land.

The County provides a wide range of services including public safety, human services (Social Services, Health, Veterans and Transportation), funds for education, cultural and recreational activities, and general administration functions. Additionally, the County owns and operates water, wastewater and solid waste programs.

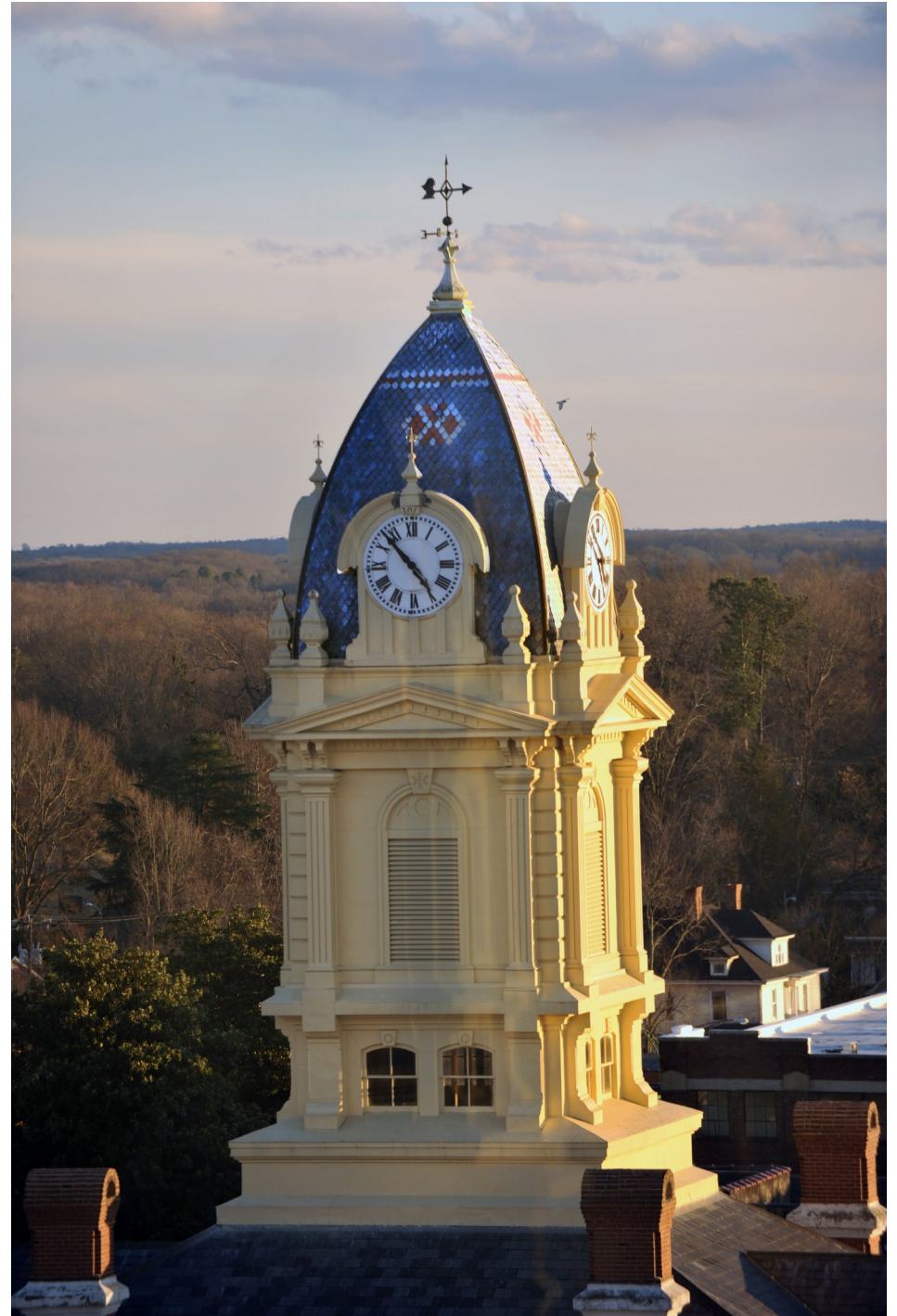


Union is tenth fastest growing county in the state of North Carolina since July 2010. It provides a unique blend of rural and metropolitan lifestyles. While having vast areas of nature untouched by development, it also has areas flourishing in suburban and industrial growth. The primary factors contributing to Union's economic growth are agriculture, business and industry.

Between 2000 and 2010, the County experienced rampant growth, driven mainly by residents seeking a higher quality of life through lower tax rates, newer communities, larger lots, better public school test scores, and less congestion. During that period the County grew at 63.25% (78,329), which stressed the infrastructure, namely the school system and public services. This increased the need for additional personnel in schools, police, and social services, and demanded new school and public works infrastructure.

The County's incorporated municipalities include Fairview, Hemby Bridge, Indian Trail, Lake Park, Marshville, Marvin, Mineral Springs, Monroe (the County seat), Stallings, Unionville, Waxhaw, Weddington, Wesley Chapel and Wingate. The July 2014 (most recent available) population of these municipalities totaled 145,785, meaning approximately 32% of Union County's population lives in unincorporated areas.

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Governance



Board of Commissioners from left to right: Jerry Simpson, Frank Aikmus (Vice-Chairman), Stony Rushing (Chairman), Lance Simpson, and Richard Helms.

Cynthia Coto was appointed to the position of County Manager in November 2010. The County Manager is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Board of Commissioners as the County's Chief Executive Officer.

The County has a Commissioner-Manager form of government with five at-large Commissioners comprising the governing body.

The Commissioners are elected on a staggered basis for terms of four years and formulate the policies for the administration of the County. The Board of Commissioners annually adopts a budget and establishes a tax rate for the support of County services. The County Manager has the responsibility of administering these programs in accordance with policies and the annual budget adopted by the Board. The County is responsible for providing public safety, health and human services, public utilities, park and recreation programs and local funding for public education. The commissioners meet the first and third Monday of every month.



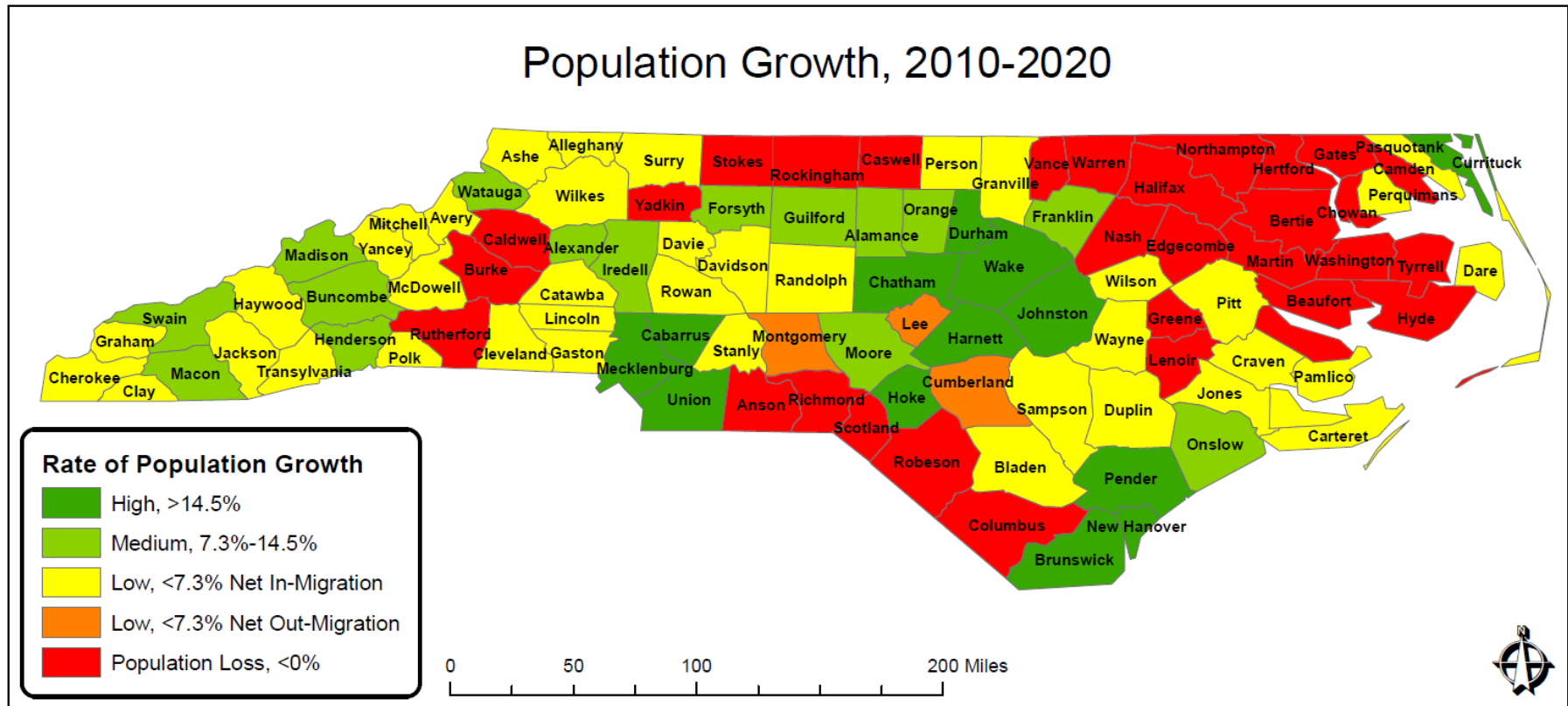
County Manager, Cynthia Coto

Population

For the period 2000 to 2010, the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census (the “U.S. Census Bureau”) ranked the County as the 16th fastest-growing County in the country, measured by percentage population increase. During this period, the County’s population grew by 62.8%, rising to 201,292 from 123,677.

Since 2010, population growth has slowed, due to a variety of factors. The North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM) estimated the County’s population, as of July 2015, to be 220,546, yielding an average annual growth of 1.84% since 2010. Their projections suggest the County’s population will reach 243,620 by July 2020, meaning average annual growth will be approximately 2.01%.

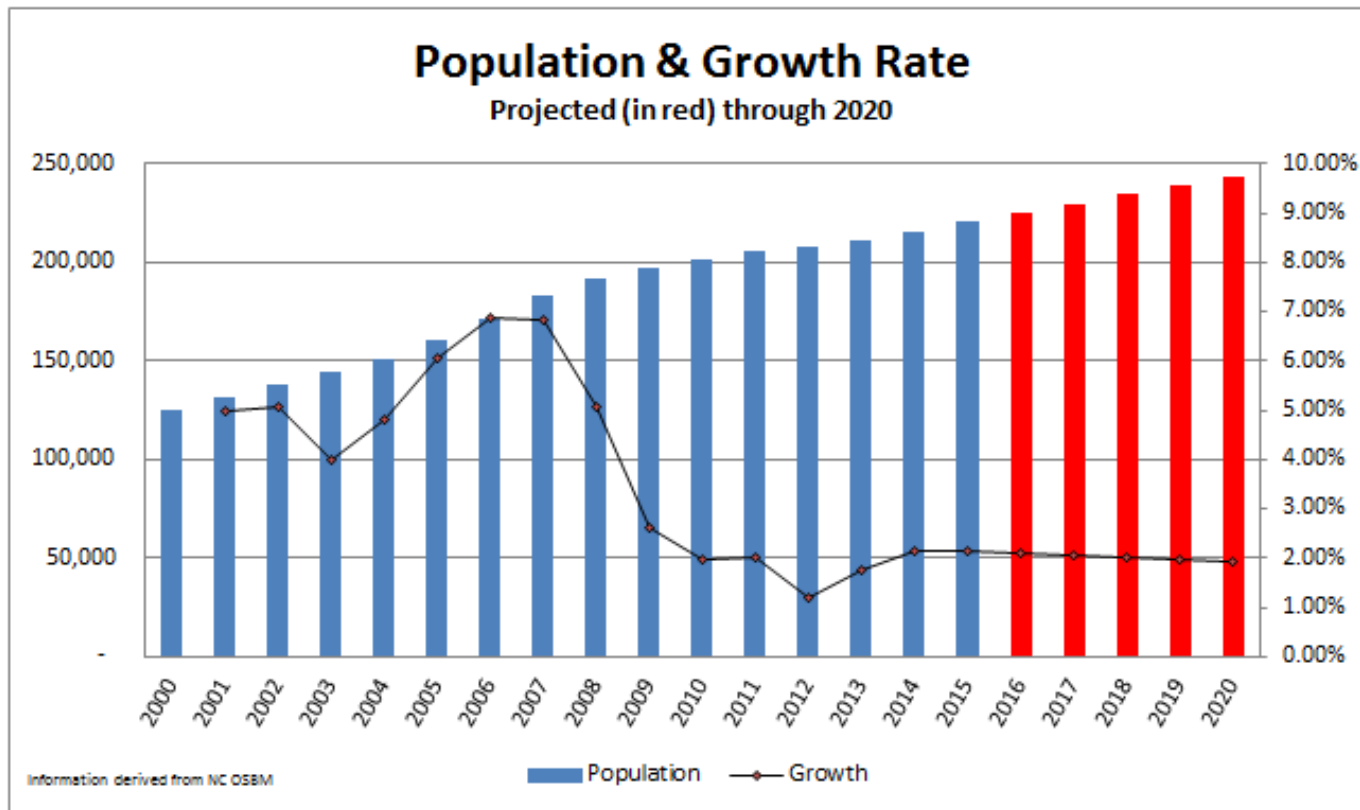
The County is a rich agricultural hub that has blossomed into a bedroom community for the Charlotte-Gastonia-Concord Metropolitan Statistical Area. The added population has brought a majority of residents to the western portion of the County, shifting the balance of service needs. With this shift has come a change in the County demographics from a farming community to a diversified economic residential base.



With diversity of ethnicity comes a challenge from the schools to teach children who may have little background with English. This is evident in that 1 in 8 households (12.8%) speak a language other than English in their home in Union County.

As a percentage of population, Union County is unique due to the recent residential inflow that has skewed the age brackets with a greater percentage of population between 6-17 and 35-54, as compared to the State of North Carolina. Although North Carolina has changed during the last decade, with greater numbers of retirees and near-retirees looking at either beach or mountain homes, there is plenty of diversification across the age spectrum thanks to a burgeoning job market in the major metropolitan areas. In contrast to the rest of the State, Union County's percentage of population between 25-34 is close to 2% lower than that of the State of North Carolina.

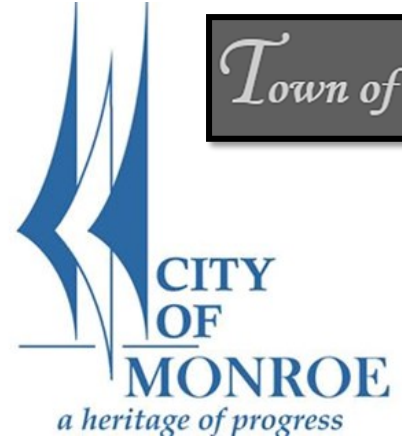
The average age has been slowly increasing in the County, which has been attracting middle aged professionals, likely driven by a better life balance, with newer and robust housing availability. The Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM) demographic report suggests Union County will see a decline in 5-17 year old (school aged) children by 4,564 over the course of the next five years. This is a result of the aging population within the County, decline in new home building, and the national trend to have fewer children.



According to the North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management, the July 2013 estimated population (most recent available) for each of the County's municipalities is as follows:

Union County, NC Municipalities and Population			
Municipality	Population	Municipality	Population
Fairview	3,539	Monroe	34,032
Hemby Bridge	1,541	Stallings	14,645
Indian Trail	36,628	Unionville	6,200
Lake Park	3,580	Waxhaw	12,102
Marshville	2,469	Weddington	10,101
Marvin	6,271	Wesley Chapel	8,218
Mineral Springs	2,840	Wingate	3,562
Mint Hill	57		

NC OSBM municipal Information has not been updated since July 2014



Economy

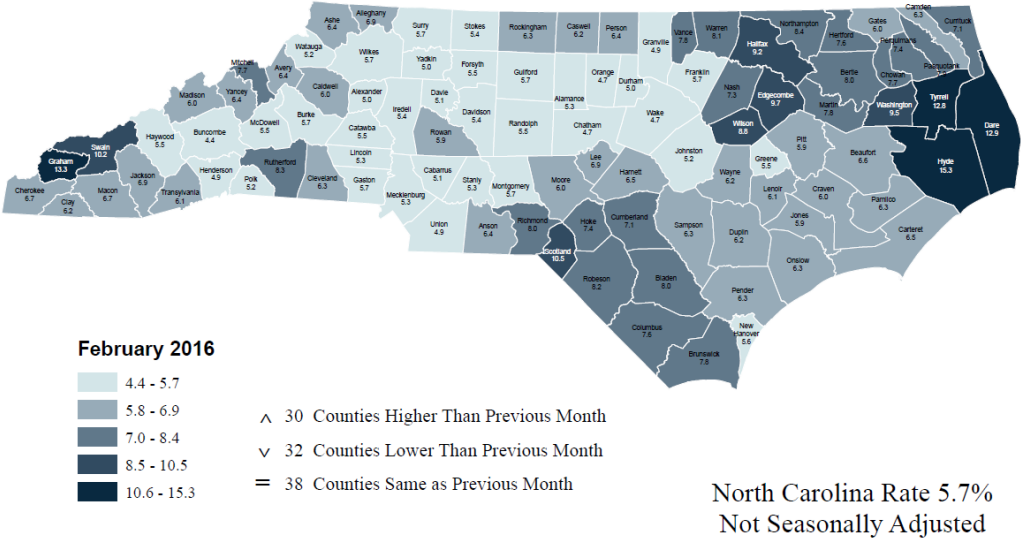
Employment

The North Carolina Employment Security Commission has published the percentage of unemployment in the County to be as follows:

Year	Union County, NC - 4 Year Unemployment Rates												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
2012	8.7	8.8	8.2	7.6	8.0	8.6	8.8	8.4	7.6	7.6	7.9	8.0	8.2
2013	8.6	7.9	7.5	7.0	7.5	7.6	7.4	7.0	6.5	6.3	6.0	5.9	7.1
2014	5.8	5.9	5.5	5.8	5.8	5.7	6.0	6.2	5.3	4.6	4.5	4.2	5.4
2015	4.8	4.6	4.5	4.3	4.9	5.1	5.3	5.2	4.5	4.7	4.5	4.4	4.7
2016	4.8	4.9											

The NC Department of Commerce has estimated the February 2016 State unemployment rate at 5.7% compared to the United States rate of 5.2%. Union County has historically shown a lower unemployment rate than several of the neighboring Counties and the State. To the right is the most recent unemployment rates across the state as published by the North Carolina Department of Commerce. As of February 2016, Union County has the 3rd lowest unemployment rate in the State.

North Carolina Unemployment Rates by County
February 2016



Note: February 2016 data are preliminary.
Prepared by Labor & Economic Analysis, North Carolina Department of Commerce 4_2016

Major Employers of Union County, NC

Company Name	Industry	Employment Range
Union County Schools	Education & Health Services	1000+
Tyson Farms Inc	Manufacturing	1000+
Tdy Industries Llc	Manufacturing	1000+
County Of Union	Public Administration	1000+
Harris Teeter	Trade, Transportation & Utilities	1000+
Wal-Mart Associates Inc	Trade, Transportation & Utilities	500-999
Pilgrims Pride Corporation	Manufacturing	500-999
Wingate University	Education & Health Services	500-999
City of Monroe	Public Administration	500-999
Unicon Inc	Natural Resources & Mining	500-999
Scott Technologies Inc	Manufacturing	500-999
Charlotte Pipe & Foundry Company	Manufacturing	500-999
South East Employee Leasing	Professional & Business Services	500-999
Food Lion	Trade, Transportation & Utilities	250-499
Charlotte Mecklenburg Hospital	Education & Health Services	250-499
Lowe's Home Centers Inc	Trade, Transportation & Utilities	250-499
Allied Staff Augmentation Partners	Professional & Business Services	250-499
Consolidated Metco Inc	Manufacturing	250-499
Edwards Wood Products Inc	Manufacturing	250-499
Windsor Window Company	Manufacturing	250-499

Source: Employment Security Commission, Third Q 2015

Retail Sales

Total local sales and use tax collections for the most recent nine fiscal years are shown in the table below:

<u>Local Option Sales Tax Collectoins</u>		
Fiscal Year Ended	Total	Change From
<u>30-Jun</u>	<u>Receipts</u>¹	<u>Previous Year</u>
2007	\$36,308,330	— %
2008	37,588,851	3.53%
2009	36,554,311	-2.75%
2010	30,943,989	-15.35%
2011	30,616,457	-1.06%
2012	36,675,651	19.79%
2013	35,457,649	-3.32%
2014	39,342,956	10.96%
2015	42,967,774	9.21%

¹Includes sales and use tax collections by the County and all municipalities; excludes Art. 44

Source: North Carolina Department of Revenue, Sales and Use Tax Division

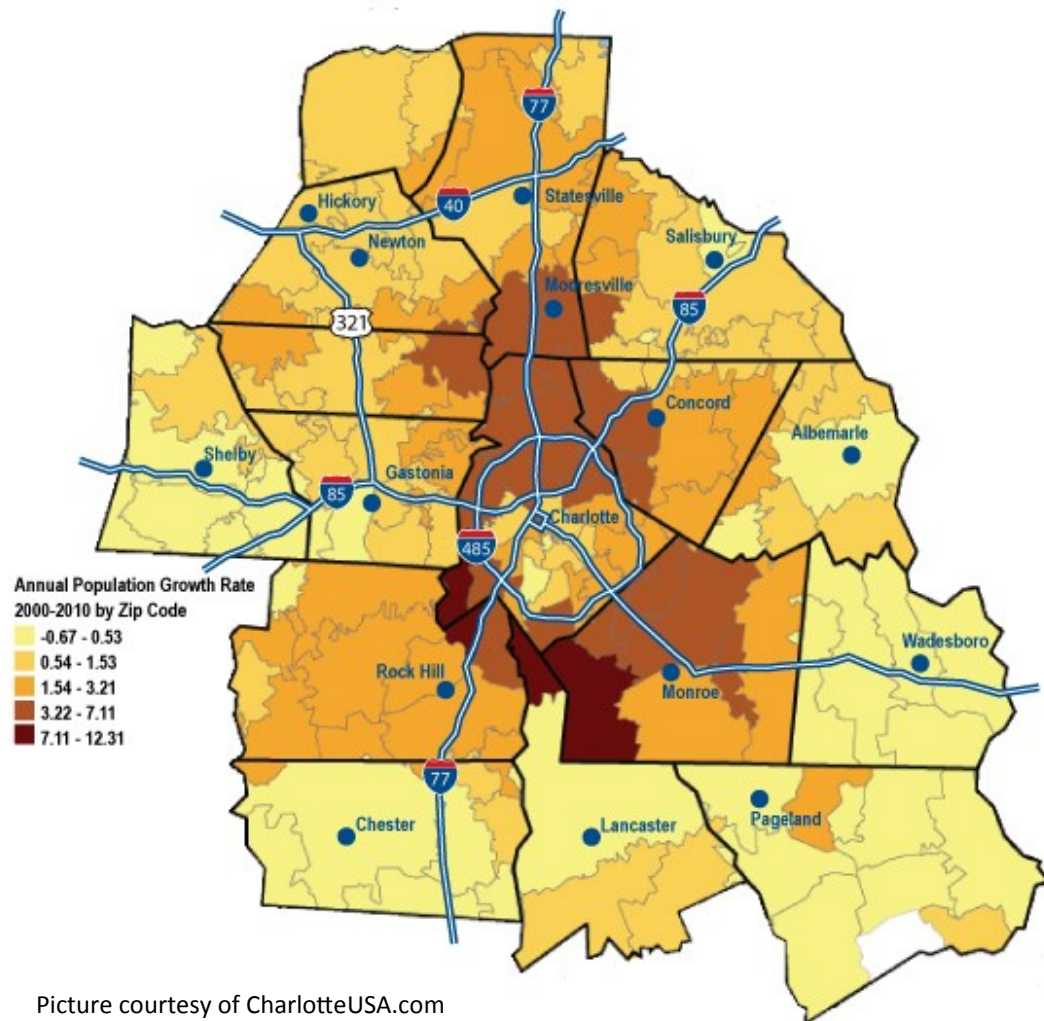
Union County is part of the Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia Metropolitan Statistical Area which is home to 8 Fortune 500 Companies including Bank of America, Duke Energy, Nucor Steel, and Lowe’s Home Improvement. Other large super regional firms include Harris Teeter, Food Lion, Cheerwine, and Sundrop.

In addition, the region is known for its auto racing, being home to over 75% of all NASCAR teams, and is home to the Charlotte Motor Speedway, owned by Speedway Motorsports. Because of this, the City of Charlotte built the NASCAR Hall of Fame in their downtown area. The CMS track hosts three NASCAR events each year.

Major employers in the region include Wells Fargo, Carolinas HealthCare, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, City of Charlotte, US/American Airways (Hub), Presbyterian Healthcare (NOVANT), University of North Carolina @ Charlotte, Belk, Family Dollar, IBM and Bank of America. Charlotte has long been known as the second largest banking and finance center in the United States, however since the 2008 recession, there has been additional diversification.

The Charlotte MSA is the 22nd largest Metropolitan Statistical Area in the nation and the ninth fastest growing since the last census in 2010.

According to the US Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, the County had a median household income (MHI) of \$65,892 in 2014 (most recent available data), which was the second highest in the State. Additionally, the County MHI is 41.1% above the North Carolina average (\$46,693) and 23.2% higher than the U.S. National (\$53,482) average.



Picture courtesy of CharlotteUSA.com

Agriculture

Union County is home to over 1,100 farms and ranks high in numerous categories of production. As a state-wide measure, Union County ranked third in the total amount of economic revenue generated from Agriculture, exceeding \$464 million as of the 2012 report¹. A statewide breakdown of those crops and livestock shows the County ranked second in soybean and wheat production, third in chicken (broilers) and egg production (layers). The County ranked fourth in turkey production and tenth in cattle production statewide. As a measure of productivity based on solely livestock, the County ranked third. Other Crops that brought revenue into the County were grain corn, hay, and cotton (however to a much less extent). Additionally, the County agriculture provided revenue from nursery's, greenhouses, floriculture, vegetables, fruits and nut production.

Both Tyson Farms Inc. and Pilgrim's Pride Corp. are large employers, but also taxpayers in the County through their investment in plant, equipment and human training. In addition, Pilgrim's Pride is a user of the County's water and wastewater system.

With over 200,000 acres dedicated to farming, and 61% of that dedicated to harvest crops, it becomes easy to see the impact Agriculture has made on the County. Given 44% of the County (by acre) is used in some method of agriculture, it is hard to stray off any main road and not see agriculture impacting the land.

In addition to the more typical forms of agriculture, Union County has a burgeoning number of equine stables, forestry projects and vineyards located in the County.



¹ The National Agriculture Statistics Service Report is release every five years, and the information is compiled and released approximately 18 month later. The last report was released on May 2, 2012. The report is available [here](#), and the North Carolina Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services Census of Agriculture is available [here](#).

Comprehensive Planning

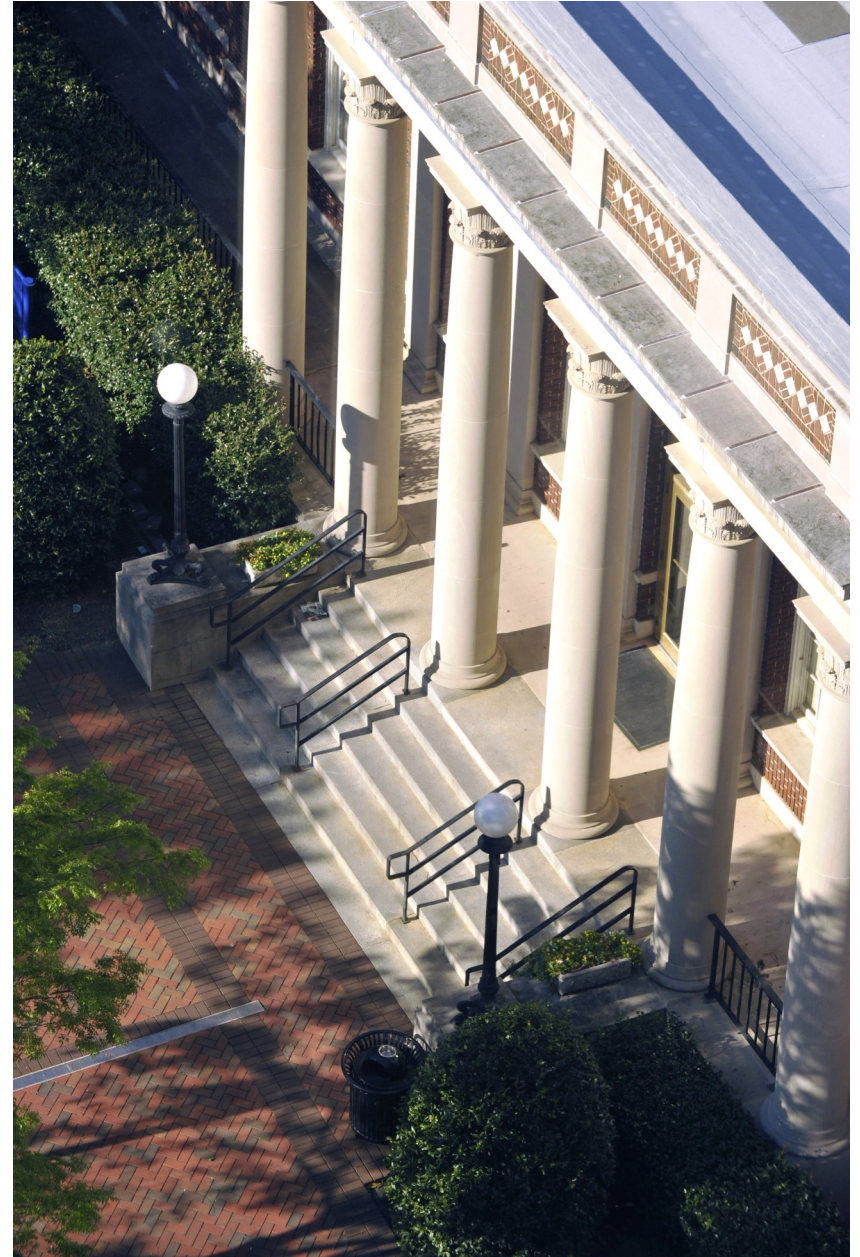
Long-Term Financial Planning and Major Initiatives

The North Carolina State Demographics Unit expects the County's population to grow by additional 8.4% or 18,457 residents between 2015 and 2019, reaching a projected 239,003 residents. Public school enrollment, currently at approximately 42,019 students (UCPS), is projected to decrease during the same time. This is a result of expansion from Charter Schools, in combination with the population of 5-17 year olds decreasing from 47,134 currently to 44,038, a 6.6% reduction¹.

Although it is anticipated the County will experience minimal growth, maintenance of existing infrastructure and facilities will become an even greater challenge. While the County's current debt load is significant, 41.1% or \$163.1 million of the County's tax supported debt will be retired during the next five years. Within the next ten years, 65.6% or \$260.5 million of the County's tax supported debt will be retired. This maturation of debt sets the stage for the preparation of the next round of infrastructure and maintenance needs.

The tax-supported Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) contains projected capital expenditures for the Union County Public Schools (UCPS), South Piedmont Community College (SPCC) and other County programs and functions such as law enforcement, parks and recreation and general government. The CIP is funded through current revenues, capital contributions and long-term debt. The CIP and financial forecast is updated annually to reflect changing priorities and circumstances.

¹Data obtained from North Carolina Office of State Budget Management



Union County Public Works retained a consultant to develop a comprehensive water and wastewater master plan. The Plan provides for an assessment of water and wastewater service areas including water supply, water treatment and distribution, wastewater collection, wastewater treatment and disposal and provides an integrated plan for a consolidated method for improving and expanding its water and wastewater systems. The integrated plan provides a comprehensive approach to Union County's water resources development and utilization and serves as a guide for future system development maintenance and investment decisions.

This plan included community outreach, population & demand/flow projections, system performance criteria, water and wastewater system models, future water and wastewater scenarios and a 20-year CIP. Based on the service area projections and system evaluations and assessments, the CIP defines the needed system improvements for the 20-year planning horizon.

Needed capacity and system improvements for existing and future system conditions were identified, prioritized and compiled into a CIP for the 20-year planning horizon. The CIP is based on an assumption of an Inter-Basin Transfer (IBT) increase from five million gallons per day to ten million gallons per day granted by the State by 2017.

System improvement projects are categorized as water supply/treatment projects, wastewater treatment/disposal projects, water distribution projects, or wastewater collection projects. A project identification (ID) system defines the project location and type. System improvements and expansions will be funded through a combination of pay-as-you-go funding and revenue bonds supported through utility rates.



Education

Primary Education

State law provides for and funds the operating costs of a sound, basic educational program which is supplemented by the County and Federal governments. The building of public school facilities has been a joint State and County effort. Local financial support is provided by the County for capital and operating expenses.

The following table shows the number of schools and average daily membership for Union County Public Schools for the past eight school years:

Union County Public Schools - ADM Count								
School Year	Elementary Grades (K-5)		Intermediate Grades (6-8)		Secondary Grades (9-12)		Total ADM	% Change, YOY
	Number	ADM	Number	ADM	Number	ADM		
2008-09	29	19,426	8	8,785	10	10,357	38,568	3.93%
2009-10	30	19,593	9	8,954	11	10,819	39,366	2.07%
2010-11	30	19,425	9	9,157	11	11,318	39,900	1.36%
2011-12	30	19,133	9	9,542	11	11,684	40,359	1.15%
2012-13	30	18,521	9	9,851	11	11,970	40,342	-0.04%
2013-14	30	18,777	9	10,112	11	12,258	41,147	2.00%
2014-15	30	18,495	9	10,249	11	12,505	41,249	0.25%
2015-16	30	18,569	9	10,094	11	13,304	41,967	1.74%

Source: NC DPI; Average Daily Membership, Month 4 for current year, final ADM for prior years

Charter Schools

In addition to Union County Public Schools, the only charter school established in the County is Union Academy. UA as it is commonly known, offers 2 campuses and provides K-12 education split between two campuses, both located in Monroe. Founded in 2000, the school is run by their own board and receives funding from both the State and the County, operating under a State charter that provides a non-sectarian, de-regulated learning environment that is designed to allow greater freedom to parents and leaders to determine the best options to run the school. The school was designed to promote innovation through public education.

Charter schools are not new to North Carolina or the United States, as the first opened in 1991, and have been operating in the State since 1996. Union Academy is free for all residents, and admission is granted on a lottery basis irrespective of gender, race, religion, or origin. As such, the School has been positively accepted into the community. According to the NC State Board of Education, Department of Public Instruction, the fourth month Average Daily Membership (ADM) for the school year started August 2015 was 1,387 students encompassing grades K-12.

As of this writing, 2 additional charter schools have been approved by the State of North Carolina, and are enrolling for August 2016.

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Higher Education

Wingate University located on a 400-acre campus in the Town of Wingate serves approximately 2,700 students and offers 35 undergraduate majors in arts and sciences, business education, fine arts, music and sport sciences. Students can also earn a Doctor of Pharmacy and Doctor of Education. It is fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.



South Piedmont Community College (SPCC), with locations in Monroe and Wadesboro, serves both Union and Anson counties. It offers technical courses designed to meet the skill needs of local employers, including in-plant training. Local financial support is provided by the County for capital and operating expenses.

Additionally, the County is located within a one-hour drive of several other colleges and universities. These include Central Piedmont Community College, The University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Queens University, Johnson & Whales, Johnson C. Smith University and Charlotte Law School.

Transportation

The expansion, maintenance and improvement of primary and secondary highways within the County are primarily the responsibility of the State. Each municipality within the County bears the primary responsibility for its local street system. The County has limited financial obligation with respect to construction and maintenance of roads.

The County is served by two U.S. highways (74 and 601) and eight North Carolina highways (16, 75, 84, 200, 205, 207, 218, and 522). The County is within one mile of Interstate 485. In addition, U.S. Highway 74 Monroe Bypass – Connector toll road has begun construction, and will connect near Interstate 485 loop. The State of North Carolina in 2008 included “GAP” funding for the Monroe Bypass – Connector toll road project. The GAP appropriation provides funding for the difference between the projected toll revenues and the total project cost. A sum of \$24 million per year is committed during the life of the project financing. Construction of the Monroe Bypass – Connector, a 20-mile interstate road linking eastern Union County with I-485 in Charlotte is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2018. Current project costs are estimated at \$840 million.

MONROE BYPASS



CSX Transportation provides freight rail service to the County and Greyhound Trailways provides bus service to the County. In addition, Charlotte/Douglas International Airport is approximately 17 miles from the County boundary and is now directly accessible via Interstate 485. The Charlotte-Monroe Executive Airport, an FAA-designated reliever facility to Charlotte/Douglas International Airport, offers general aviation, air freight and charter service as well as hangar and repair facilities for corporate and private aircraft.

County Utilities

Public Service Enterprises

The County operates a water and wastewater utility serving approximately 46,200 water connections and 33,600 wastewater connections. The water system serves a significant portion of the County, including all major urbanized areas except the Cities of Monroe and Marshville. The primary water supply is the Catawba River Water Treatment Plant (CRWTP), an impoundment and treatment facility jointly owned and operated by the County and the Lancaster County Water and Sewer District, South Carolina. The County also receives some water through a purchase water agreement with Anson County, North Carolina. The two combined water treatment sources provide an average of approximately 12.5 million gallons per day (“MGD”) with a peak capacity of approximately 25 MGD of treated water to the County’s customers. The County is the wholesale water provider to the Town of Wingate and also has an agreement with the Town of Monroe to provide up to 1.99 MGD of water capacity.

Additional water capacity will be needed in the 2019 time frame to serve the growing needs of the County. The County recently updated its comprehensive water and wastewater master plan to evaluate alternatives. The draft master plan update provides for purchasing additional capacity from our partner in the CRWSP by 2019 and the development of a new eastern water treatment plant in partnership with the Town of Norwood on the Yadkin River. The new 12 MGD Yadkin Regional Water Supply project is schedule to be complete by 2022. The existing County water main network contains pipes ranging in size from 2 inches up to 42 inches in diameter. The distribution system includes approximately 5,391,000 feet or 1,021 miles of water main, five pump stations (plus one pump station under construction) and six elevated tanks (plus one under construction).

The water system is composed of asbestos-cement pipe, polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipe, cast iron, ductile iron and reinforced concrete pipe. The County currently specifies only PVC pipe and ductile iron pipe for its distribution water main system. The majority of the water main system is less than 25 years old.

The County’s wastewater collection system piping is comprised of both gravity and force mains with pipe diameters ranging from four inches to 48 inches. The County’s wastewater collection and treatment system currently consists of over 600 miles of pipe, approximately 65 wastewater lift stations and five wastewater treatment facilities. Wastewater pump stations range in size from 2HP to 250HP and pump capacity from 10 gallons per minute (“GPM”) to 3,000 GPM.

The County’s five wastewater treatment plants (WWTP) comprise a combined capacity of 8.15 MGD. The County also contracts for additional 5.65 MGD of treatment capacity with the City of Monroe and the City of Charlotte for a total capacity of 13.8 MGD. Current wastewater flows average 9.0 MGD. Additional wastewater treatment capacity will be needed in the 2019-2020 timeframe. The County has completed the design of the expansion of the 12 Mile Creek WRF from 6.0 to 7.5 MGD and anticipates a start of construction this summer with a completion in early 2019. The County is also discussing with the City of Monroe joint participation in an expansion of their wastewater treatment plant to meet growth needs in eastern Union County.

Solid Waste Facilities

The County currently provides residents and businesses alike with municipal solid waste disposal, construction and demolition waste disposal and recycling opportunities. At our main Solid Waste Management Facility (SWMF), Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) disposal services are provided through a state-of-the-art transfer station. At the transfer station, MSW properly deposited on the permitted transfer station floor and loaded onto tractor-trailer trucks and transported to a lined landfill for ultimate disposal. For the general public's convenience, there are six sites strategically located throughout the County that accept "bagged" household garbage and recyclable materials.

At the SWMF, a large Construction and Demolition (C&D) debris landfill is located adjacent to the transfer station. There are currently eight C&D cells permitted through the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ), that collectively represent in excess of 600,000 cubic yards or air-space for future disposal. These cells are designed for a contiguous vertical expansion over the previously closed MSW landfill.

The County promotes recycling and provides the opportunity for residents and businesses to recycle paper, cardboard, plastics, glass, aluminum, scrap metal (including white goods), used motor oil, antifreeze, electronics and used tires free of charge.

The County is evaluating means to improve and expand the services provided at cost-effective rates. Programs that are currently in the developmental/exploratory stage include enhanced nutrient rich compost, colored mulch and other landscape products for sale at the SWMF in FY 2017. The County is also proposing a new flat rate structure for our new residential convenience center development project at the SWMF to provide a more economical and efficient drop-off area for Union County residents.

The County uses an enterprise fund to account for the operations of its solid waste programs and charges tipping fees for disposing of solid waste. This source generated approximately \$3.85 million for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2016 and has experienced significant growth and volume increases at the SWMF in the second half of FY 2016.



Housing

Construction Activity

The County's housing construction and residential permits began to substantially decline in the fiscal year ended June 30, 2008. There were approximately 40% fewer residential permits in fiscal year 2008 than the previous fiscal year. Annualized trends based on the fiscal years 2010-2011 suggest that residential construction and commercial construction activity reached a ten-year low. The County's housing data is starting to show signs of improvement. The total number of building permits issued County-wide for July 2014 through May 2015 were 3,301 compared to 3,385 such permits issued during the period July 2013 through May 2014, reflecting a 2.5% decrease. The value (in thousands) during that same period in 2013-2014 was \$396.94MM versus \$335.12MM during the same period of the current year. What is important to consider is the information below on residential permits is inclusive of remodeling and renovations, and is not a measure of new home growth.

The following table shows the number of building permits issued and the estimated value of the related construction in the County for the past seven fiscal years and a portion of the current fiscal year:

Building Permits and Estimated Values						
FY Ended	Non-Residential		Residential		Total	
	Number	Value ²	Number	Value ²	Number	Value ²
2009	409	\$105,731	1,725	\$148,101	2,134	\$253,832
2010	278	51,858	1,759	118,588	2,037	170,446
2011	210	56,050	1,537	134,358	1,747	190,408
2012	232	66,331	1,829	178,838	2,061	245,169
2013	255	150,362	2,385	269,294	2,640	419,656
2014	400	104,010	3,285	320,781	3,685	424,791
2015	519	85,815	3,177	284,674	3,696	370,489
2016 ¹	462	153,783	2,716	258,545	3,178	412,328

Source: County Department of Inspections of Union County, City of Waxhaw, and City of Monroe

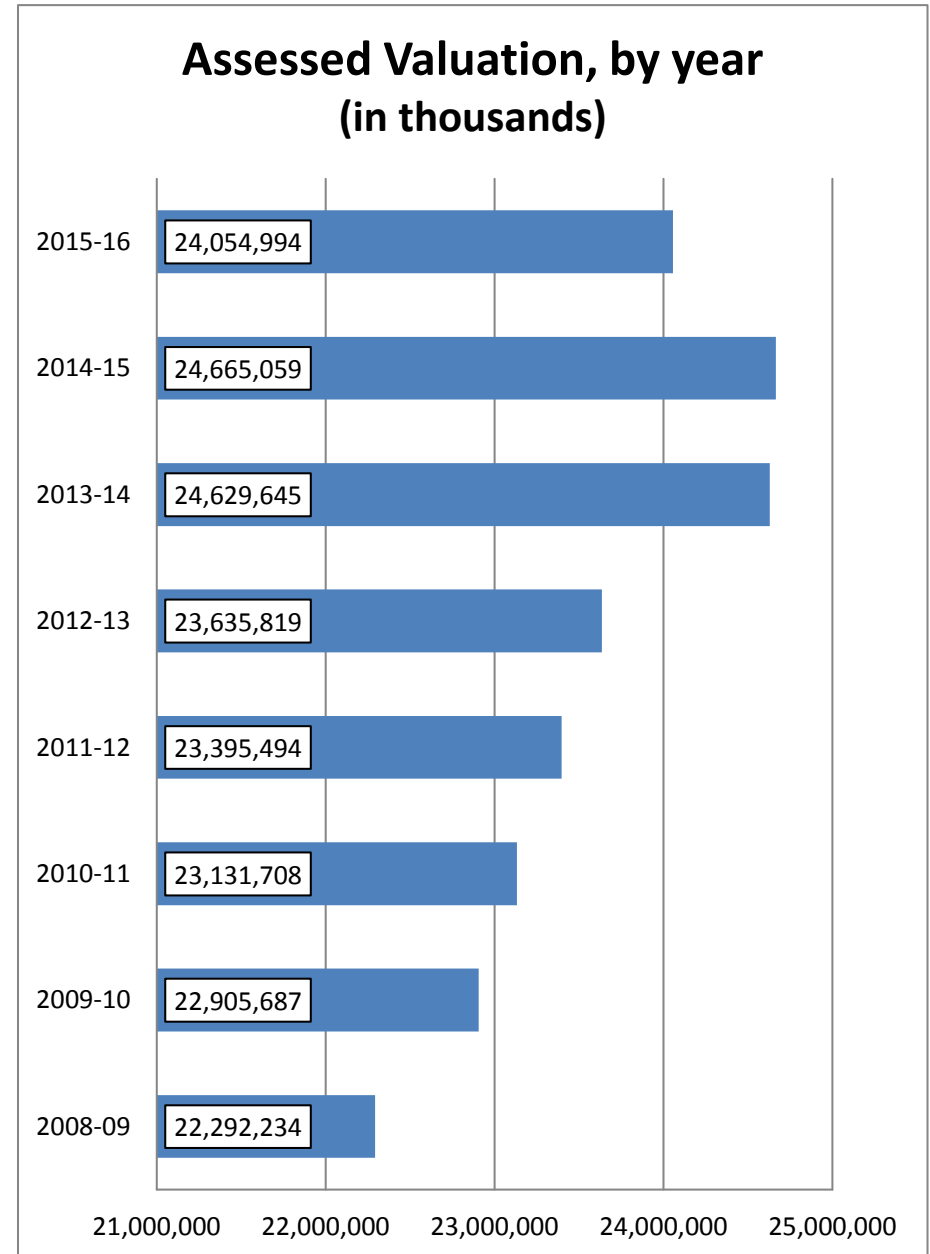
¹ July through March

² In Thousands

Tax Base

Growth and Valuation

The County has continued to grow, even through the economic downturn of 2008, and experienced growth in assessed valuation that has increased by roughly \$250 million each of the last three years, and approximately \$600 million in 2010. In FY 2014, Union County experienced a resurgence in building activity, which continued through FY 2015, however with slower growth. The growth rate of assessed valuation grew at approximately 1.70% (compounded) between revaluation periods. This slow and dependable growth aids the County for the purposes of planning, education, safety, and water/wastewater utility.



Parks, Recreation and Regional Attractions

The County is home to several regional attractions, parks, and recreation facilities that draw crowds. Below are few:



Union County Parks and Recreation Department owns and operates three parks including Cane Creek Park in Waxhaw, Fred Kirby Park in Lake Park, and Jesse Helms Park in Wingate. These parks offer a wide variety of passive and athletic activities and services to the public.

- Extreme Ice Center is a multipurpose winter sports facility with a fitness center for paid public use. It offers skating, hockey, curling, and ballet, as well as various camps. In 2016, it hosted the USA Hockey U14 National Championships. Extreme Ice is located in Indian Trail.
- Beach, Blues and BBQ is a weekend event in May that offers BBQ competition, a 5K run, and 1 mile walk to support Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (LLS), and great live music all in the heart of Monroe.
- Warbirds over Monroe is an annual event that takes place at Charlotte-Monroe Executive Airport. Started in 2005, it showcases historical planes, and has become one of the largest aviation events in the Southeast honoring those who have served our country. It typically takes place at the beginning of November, and offers excitement and viewing historical war birds in flight.
- The Museum of the Waxhaws is located in Waxhaw, and provides a glimpse of life in the 19th century, with a museum, homestead, garden, and demonstrations providing culture and education.
- The Queen's Cup is a steeplechase offered annually in April and is produced by the Charlotte Steeplechase Association, and takes place in Mineral Springs. The event draws thousands every year to view thoroughbred horses clear obstacles on two-plus mile course galloping at speeds reaching 30 miles per hour.

Outside Union County, there are a number of regional attractions. In neighboring Counties (less than 45 minute commute) there are the following entertainment offerings:

- National Football League: Carolina Panthers
- National Basketball League: Charlotte Hornets
- Triple-A Baseball: Charlotte Knights, affiliate of the Chicago White Sox
- American Hockey League: Charlotte Checkers, affiliated with the Carolina Hurricanes
- United Soccer League: Charlotte Eagles
- Carowinds Amusement Park
- NASCAR Hall of Fame & Charlotte Motor Speedway
- Major League Lacrosse: Charlotte Hounds



Mecklenburg County is home to the U.S. National Whitewater Center, on the Catawba River Basin, which is open to the public and offers bike riding, canoeing, kayaking, and whitewater boating. The Whitewater Center is also a hub for entertainment, and offers several events throughout the year with outdoor entertainment.

The PNC Music Pavilion is located in the University City neighborhood, and attracts a wide venue of musical performances throughout the spring and into the fall.



Healthcare

Carolinas HealthCare System – Union is part of Carolina HealthCare System, the largest healthcare system in North Carolina, and one of the largest systems in the nation. CHS-Union currently has capacity of 182 beds.

CHS-Union offers outpatient surgery, cancer treatment, long term care, obstetric care, and specialty clinics.

Union County is served by 17 Volunteer Fire Departments and a County-wide EMS that provides transportation and emergency care en-route to the closest hospital.

Beyond Union County

Outside of Union County there are the following full service hospitals:

- Novant Healthcare (Huntersville, Matthews, Charlotte Orthopedic, Hemby Children’s, and Presbyterian Main)
- Carolinas HealthCare System (CMC- Main, Levine Children’s, Mercy, Pineville, University, CMC-NorthEast, Jeff Gordon Children’s and Harrisburg)
- Piedmont Medical Center
- Stanly Regional

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Debt Outlook and Capital Improvement

Debt Outlook

Union County borrows funds through the use of various debt instruments; typically general obligation bonds, installment financings (certificates of participation (COP's), limited obligation bonds (LOB's), and private placements), revenue bonds, and N.C. Clean Water Revolving Loans (NC CWRL). Principal and interest debt service payments are appropriated annually in the annual operating budget(s).

Currently, the County does not have any authorized and unissued General Obligation Bonds, however the Board plans to hold a referendum for Library, Public School, and Community College General Obligation Bonds in November 2016.

There are no immediate plans for any installment financing debt.

Revenue bonds are likely to be issued in the Spring of 2017. The project, amount and impact of that debt is discussed in greater detail in both the Debt section of the budget (Section H), and the CIP (Section S).

Capital Improvement Plan

The County maintains a five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and financial feasibility forecast for tax-supported and enterprise fund activities. The tax-supported CIP contains projected capital expenditures for the Union County Public Schools (UCPS), South Piedmont Community College (SPCC) and County programs and functions such as law enforcement, parks and recreation and general government. The CIP is funded through current revenues, capital contributions and long-term debt. The CIP and financial forecast are updated annually to reflect changing priorities and circumstances. The County completed the annual update to its tax-supported CIP in April 2016 for the fiscal period 2017-2022, and can be seen in Section R of the budget document.

The County adopted a Capital Improvement Program Management Policy in November 2012 that requires an annual update to the CIP as part of the annual budget process. The County Manager, as the County's Budget Officer, shall annually submit a financially balanced, six year CIP for review and approval by the County Commission, pursuant to the timelines established in the annual budget preparation schedule.

Miscellaneous Statistical Data

Date of Incorporation	1842
Form of Government	Commissioner- Manager
Number of Full Time County Positions	1,050
Number of Full Time School Positions	Over 1,000
Land Area	643 Sq. Miles

Transportation

Major Highways:

Interstate(s) 77 and 85, 485 Beltway are all within 15 miles of eastern border. US Route 74 runs east/west, and US Route 601 runs north/south splitting the County.

Rail:

CSX Transportation operates a rail yard/switchyard in Monroe. AMTRAK is available in Charlotte, roughly 20 miles from Monroe.

Air:

Monroe Airport serves as the overflow for Charlotte-Douglas International. Monroe Airport serves as an intermodal transfer station with limited passenger flights.

Ground:

The County is served by Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS), providing ridership into and from Charlotte along the US 74 Corridor. The County also operates a limited NCDOT funded transportation service for senior citizens, disabled adults, veterans, and Medicaid clients.

Medical Facilities

Hospital:

CMC - Union

Beds:

182

Nursing Homes:

- Kindred Transitional Care
- Clare Bridge of Monroe
- Jesse Helms Nursing Center
- Smith Nursing Home
- Elizabethan Gardens Assisted Living
- Brookdale Union Park
- Village of Woodridge

Urgent Care/Outpatient:

- Fast-Med
- CMC-Urgent Care
- Union West Urgent Care

Utilities

Electric	Duke Energy, Union Power
Gas	Piedmont Natural Gas
Water	Union County Public Works
Sewer	Union County Public Works
Cable	Time Warner Cable
Phone	Windstream, Bell South

Miscellaneous Statistical Data

Certified Population¹

1970	54,714
1975	63,001
1980	70,436
1985	76,712
1990	84,210
1995	100,437
2000	125,609
2001	131,896
2002	138,589
2003	143,869
2004	150,737
2005	159,800
2006	169,262
2007	182,360
2008	191,514
2009	196,322
2010	201,292
2011	205,337
2012	207,835
2013	211,539
2014	215,956
2015 Estimated	220,546
2020 Projected	243,793

Demographics

Living in same house > 5 years	87.7%
Language other than English @ home	12.7%
High School Graduate, % of those age 25+	88.7%
Bachelor's degree, % of those age 25+	32.3%
Mean Travel time to work (min)	29.6
Number of Housing Units	76,520
Persons per household	2.98
Homeownership Rate	81.0%
Median Value of owner-occupied units	\$193,500
Per Capita Income	\$28,765
Median Household Income	\$65,892
Persons below Poverty Level, as %	10.8%
Unemployment Rate	4.9%

Population by Race (U.S. Census 2010)

White	72.8%
Black or African American	12.1%
Native American	0.6%
Asian and Pacific Islanders	1.9%
Native Hawaiian	0.1%
Multi-Racial	1.7%
Hispanic or Latino	10.8%

Population, by Age Groups

(0-17)	26.91%
(18-24)	8.70%
(25-34)	11.01%
(35-44)	13.82%
(45-54)	16.56%
(55-64)	11.33%
(65+)	11.67%