



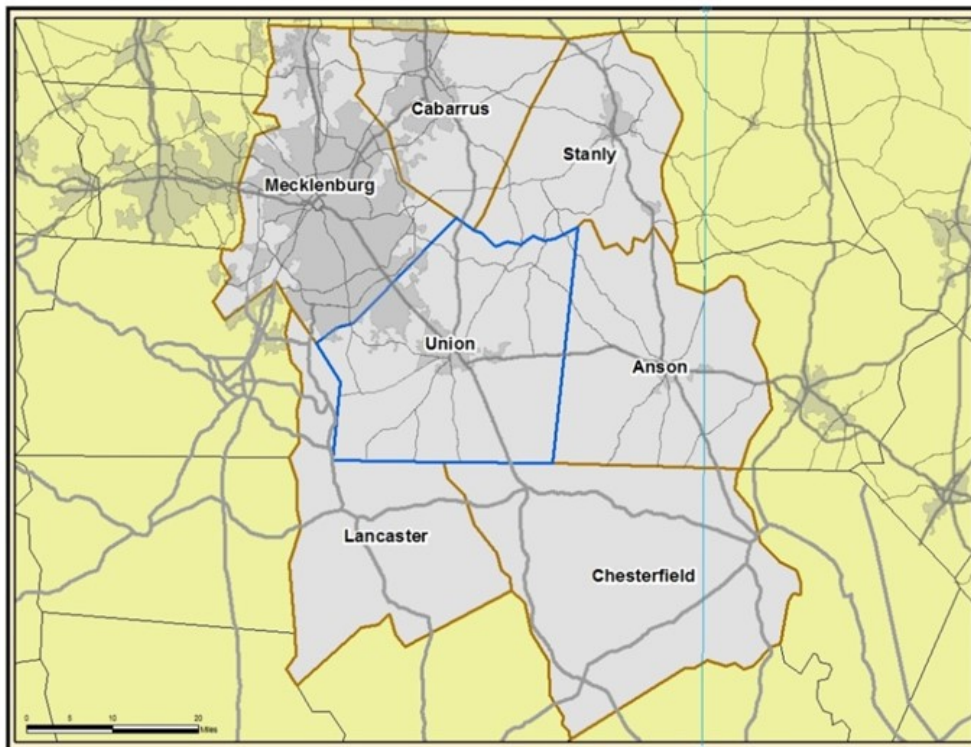
2021 Community Profile

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 242,657, 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.



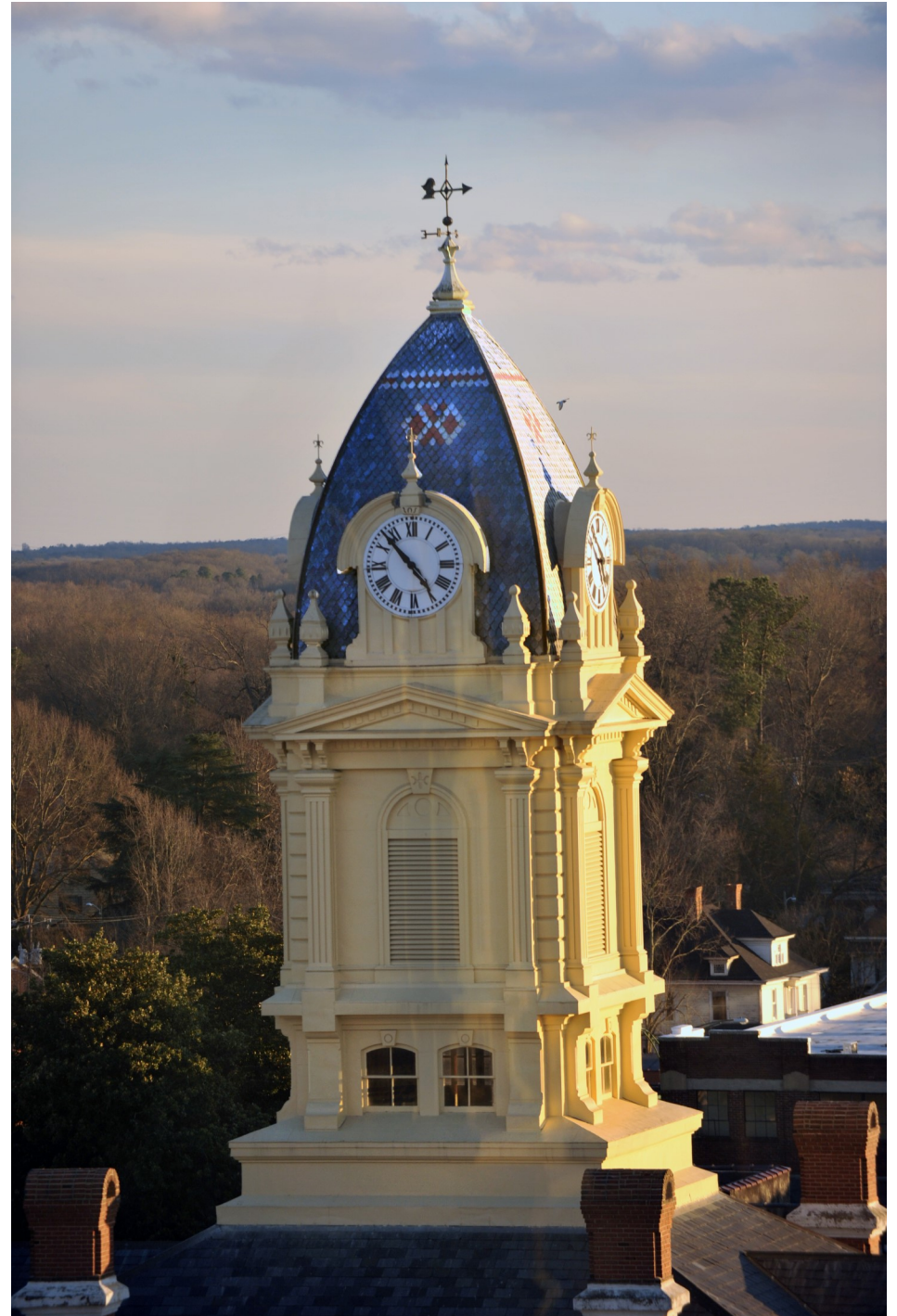
Union has remained one of the ten fastest growing counties in the state of North Carolina since July 2010.

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 60.25 percent (75,683), which stressed the infrastructure, namely the school system and public services. This increased the need for additional personnel in schools, law enforcement, and social services, and increased school and public works infrastructure.

Union 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 2018 (most recent available) population of these municipalities totaled 157,375, meaning approximately 32 percent of Union County's population lives in unincorporated areas.

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Governance



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

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.

Mark Watson was appointed to the position of County Manager in January 2019. The County Manager is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Board of Commissioners as the County's Chief Executive Officer.



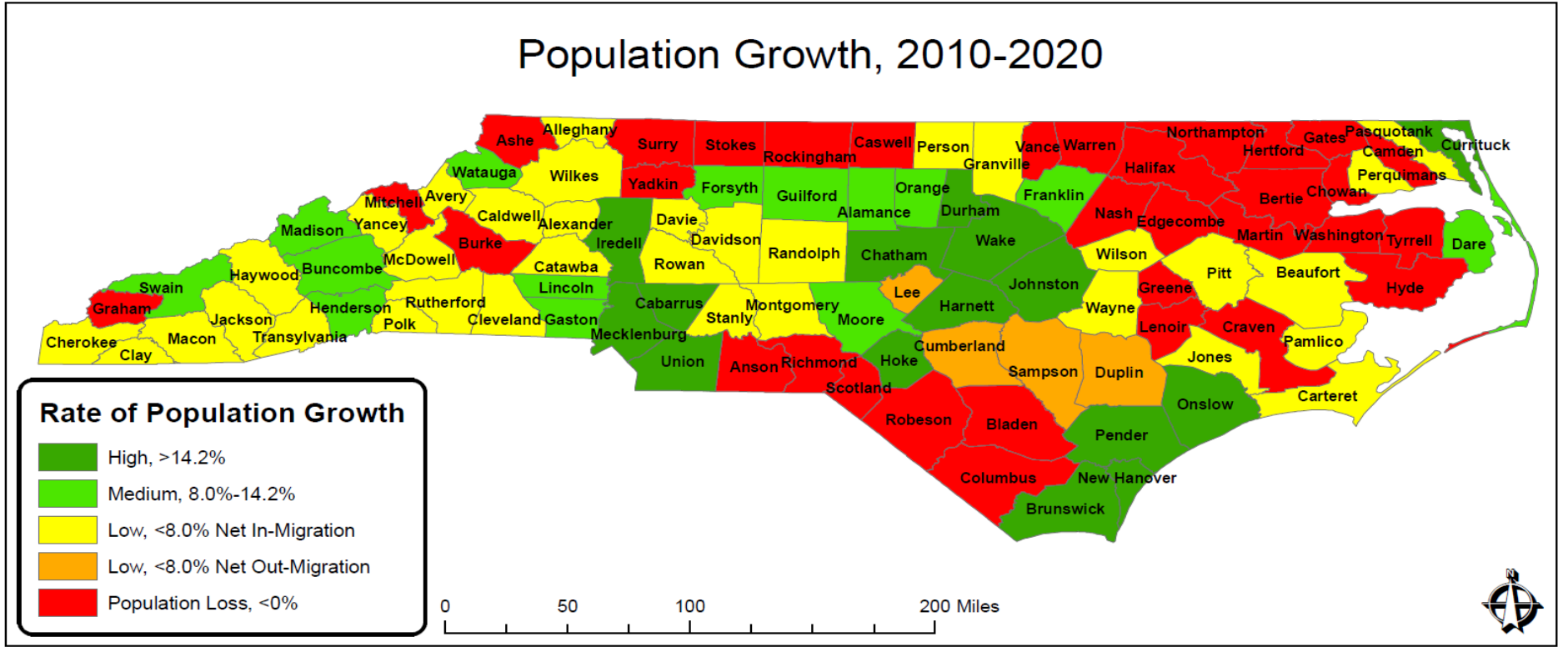
County Manager, Mark Watson

Population

For the period 2000 to 2010, the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census (the “U.S. Census Bureau”) ranked Union County as the 16th fastest-growing county in the country, measured by percentage population increase. During this period, the County’s population grew by 60.25 percent, rising to 201,292 from 125,609.

Since 2010, population growth has slowed, due to a variety of factors. The North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM) estimated Union County’s population, as of July 2020, to be 242,657, yielding an average annual growth of 1.87 percent since 2010. Their projections suggest the County’s population will reach 248,429 by July 2021, with average annual growth at approximately 1.95 percent.

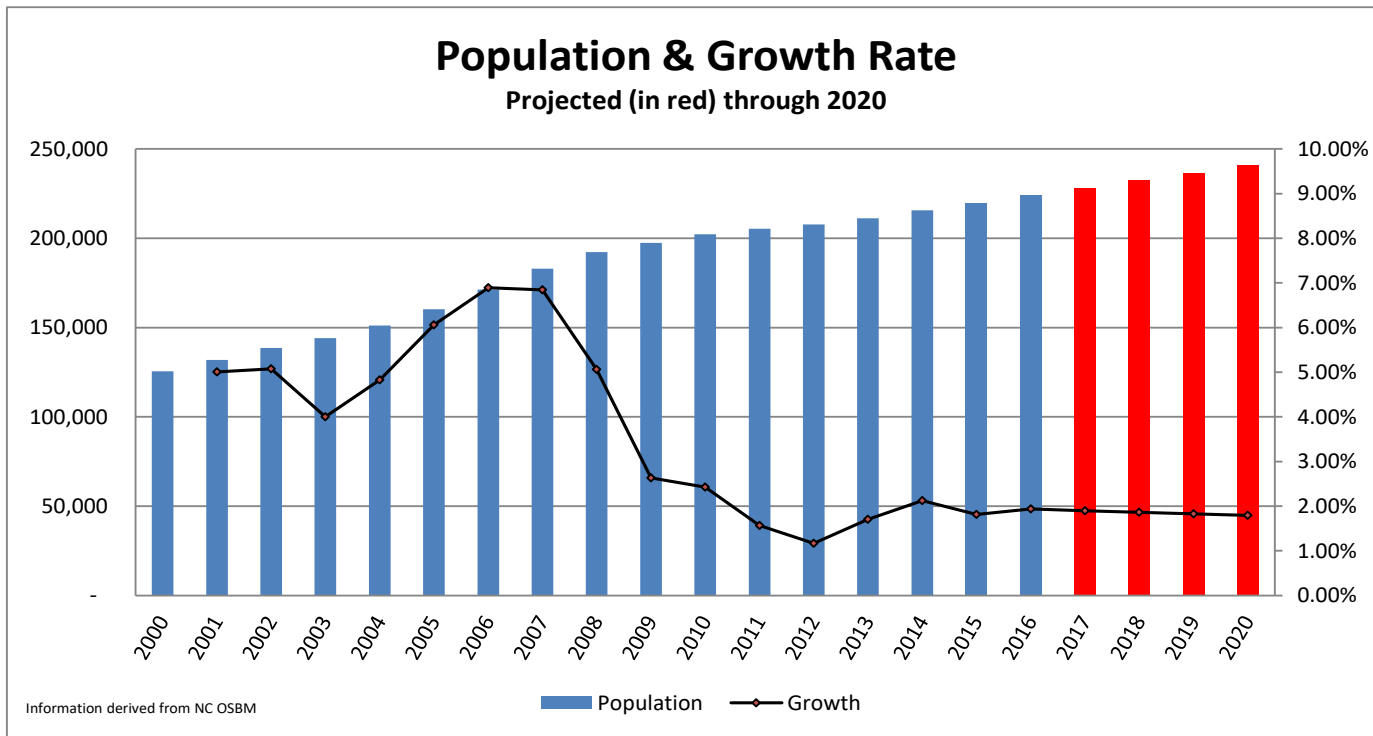
The County is a rich agricultural hub that has blossomed into a bedroom community for the Charlotte-Gastonia-Concord Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The added population has brought residents to the western portion of the County, shifting the balance of service needs. This shift brought on a change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



With diversity of ethnicity comes a challenge for the schools to teach children who may have limited background with English. About 14.2 percent of the population speak a language other than English in their home in Union County, mainly Spanish and Russian.

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 0-17 and 45-64, 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 over 65 years of age is 3.60 percent lower than that of the State of North Carolina.

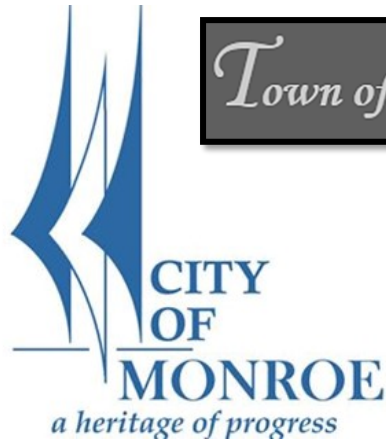
The average age has been slowly increasing in the County, which has been attracting middle aged professionals, likely driven by a better life balance, with newer and robust housing availability. The OSBM demographic report suggests Union County will see a decline in 0-17 year old children by 1,161 during the next five years and a major increase in population over 65 by 7,234. 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 2018 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	3,773	Monroe	35,330
Hemby Bridge	1,592	Stallings (part)	15,890
Indian Trail	39,390	Unionville	6,731
Lake Park	3,722	Waxhaw	14,249
Marshville	2,466	Weddington (part)	10,853
Marvin	7,166	Wesley Chapel	8,981
Mineral Springs	3,065	Wingate	4,104
Mint Hill (part)	63		

Information updated as of July 2018



Economy

Employment

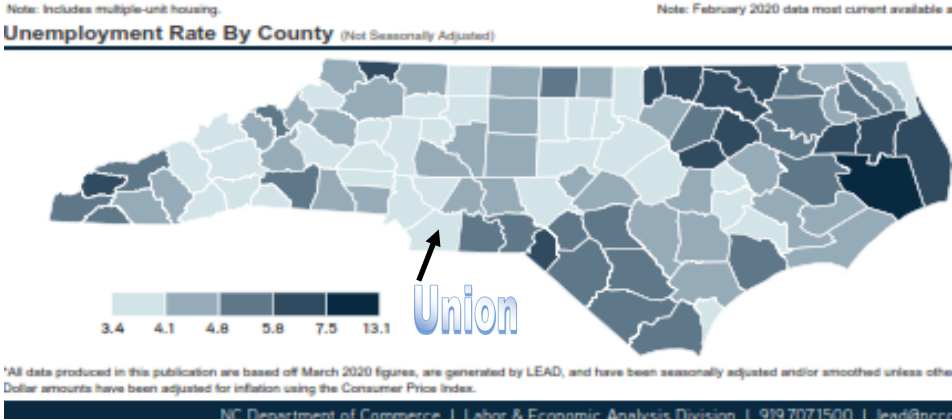
The Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis has published the percentage of unemployment in the County to be as follows:

Union County, NC - 4-Year Unemployment Rates													
Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
2016	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.1	4.2	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.4
2017	4.6	4.4	4.1	3.6	3.8	4.1	4.2	4.3	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.6	4.0
2018	3.9	3.9	3.6	3.3	3.3	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.5	3.5
2019	4.0	3.7	3.6	3.1	3.5	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.1	3.1	3.1	2.9	3.4
2020	3.5	3.3	3.8	10.2	10.3	6.3							

The Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis estimated the March 2020 Union County unemployment rate at 3.8%, compared to the State and National levels of 4.4%. While the national rate for April 2020 skyrocketed to 14.7 percent and the state rate increased to 12.2 percent due to the impact of the COVID-19 lockdowns, County unemployment data rose to only 10.3 percent.

Union County has historically shown a lower unemployment rate than several of the neighboring counties and the state, and this seems to be holding true during this crisis as well. As illustrated above, as of June 2020 the County unemployment rate dropped back down to 6.3 percent, and was trending much lower than national and state averages. While the full impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has yet to be realized, optimistic estimates point to a quick recovery and return to pre-pandemic economic levels by the end of the year, while others point to an 18-24 month window or longer. The chart on the right illustrates unemployment rates across the state as of March 2020 as published by the North Carolina Department of Commerce.

North Carolina Unemployment Rate by County March 2020



Major Employers of Union County, NC

Company Name	Industry	Range
Union County Public Schools	Educational Services	1000+
Tyson Farms Inc	Manufacturing	1000+
Tdy Industries Llc	Manufacturing	1000+
County Of Union	Public Administration	1000+
Harris Teeter	Retail Trade	1000+
Wal-Mart Associates Inc.	Retail Trade	500-999
Pilgrims Pride Corporation	Manufacturing	500-999
City Of Monroe	Public Administration	500-999
Wingate University	Educational Services	500-999
Food Lion	Retail Trade	500-999
Charlotte Pipe & Foundry Company (A	Manufacturing	500-999
Atrium Health	Health Care and Social Assistance	500-999
Consolidated Metco Inc	Manufacturing	250-499
Usa 3m	Manufacturing	250-499
Mcgee Brothers Company Inc	Construction	250-499
Windsor Window Company	Manufacturing	250-499
Lowe's Home Centers Inc	Retail Trade	250-499
C R England Inc	Transportation and Warehousing	250-499
Greiner Bio-One	Manufacturing	250-499
True Homes Llc	Construction	250-499
Berry Global Films Llc	Manufacturing	250-499
Dean R Sandbo	Accommodation and Food Services	250-499
Mccollum Staffing Inc	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	250-499
Scott Clark Toyota	Retail Trade	250-499
Union Academy	Educational Services	250-499

Source: North Carolina Department of Commerce

Retail Sales

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

<u>Local Option Sales Tax Collections</u>		
<u>Fiscal Year Ended</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Change From</u>
<u>30-Jun</u>	<u>Receipts¹</u>	<u>Previous Year</u>
2008	\$37,588,851	— %
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%
2016	46,941,527	9.25%
2017	51,058,846	8.77%
2018	52,365,228	2.56%
2019	55,837,316	6.63%

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

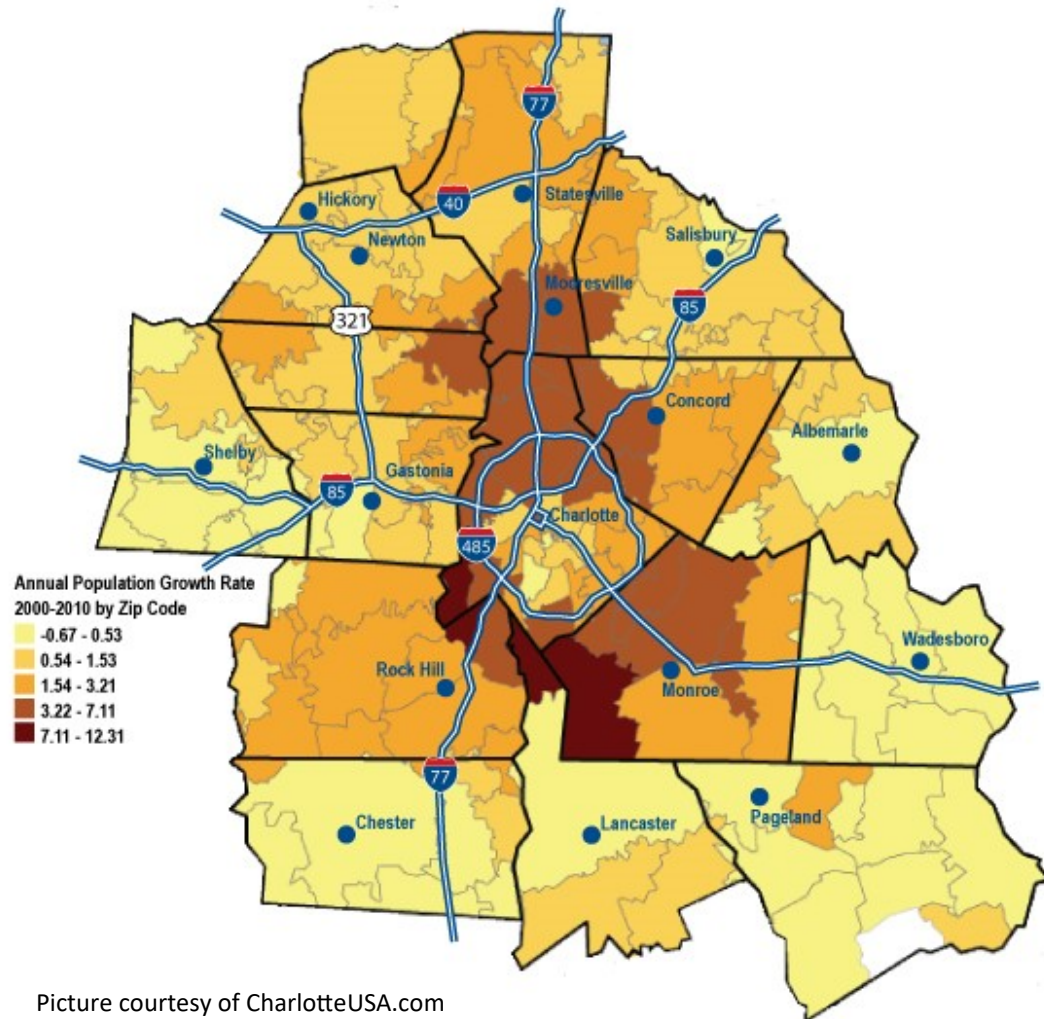
Source: North Carolina Department of Revenue, Sales and Use Tax Division

Union County is part of the Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia MSA, which is home to six Fortune 500 Companies, including: Bank of America, Duke Energy, Nucor Steel, and Lowe’s Home Improvement. Other large interregional firms include Harris Teeter, Food Lion, Cheerwine, and Sun-drop.

In addition, the region is known for its auto racing, being home to over 75 percent of all NASCAR teams, and the home of the Charlotte Motor Speedway (CMS), owned by Speedway Motorsports. Due to these close ties, the City of Charlotte built the NASCAR Hall of Fame in their down-town area. The CMS track hosts three NASCAR events each year.

Major employers in the region include Wells Fargo, Atrium Health, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, City of Charlotte, American Airlines, Presbyterian Healthcare (NOVANT), University of North Carolina at 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 in the nation and the ninth fastest growing since the last census in 2010. According to the US Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, Union County had a median household income (MHI) of \$75,397 in 2018 (most recent available data), which was the second highest in the State. Additionally, the County MHI is 42.9 percent above the North Carolina average (\$52,752) and 19.3 percent higher than the U.S. National (\$63,197) 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 \$492 million as of the 2017 report¹. A statewide breakdown of those crops and livestock shows Union County ranked first in wheat production, second in chicken (broilers) and egg production (layers), and third in soybeans. 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, agriculture provided revenue from nurseries, greenhouses, floriculture, vegetables, fruits and nut production.



Both Tyson Farms Inc. and Pilgrim's Pride Corp. are large employers and taxpayers in the County. 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 71 percent of that dedicated to harvest crops, it becomes easy to see the impact Agriculture has made on the County. Given 49 percent of the County (by acre) is used in some method of agriculture, it is hard to stray off any main road without seeing 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



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 Nov 30, 2018.

Comprehensive Planning

Long-Term Financial Planning and Major Initiatives

The North Carolina State Demographics Unit expects the County's population to grow by additional 12.36 percent or 29,984 residents between 2020 and 2025, reaching a projected 272,641 residents. Public school enrollment (ADM) is currently 41,451 students (UCPS), and is projected to decrease during the same time. This is a result of expansion from charter schools¹.

Although it is anticipated the County will experience minimal growth, maintenance of existing infrastructure and facilities will become an even greater challenge. While Union County's current debt load is significant, 46.1% or \$194.8 million of its tax supported debt will be retired during the next five years. Within the next ten years, 79.3 percent or \$390.2 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, emergency management 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. It also provides an integrated framework 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.

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 eleven 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	18,873	8	8,768	10	10,060	37,701	1.59%
2009-10	30	18,734	9	8,936	11	10,612	38,282	1.54%
2010-11	30	18,781	9	9,137	11	11,122	39,040	1.98%
2011-12	30	18,650	9	9,516	11	11,488	39,654	1.57%
2012-13	30	18,481	9	9,914	11	11,853	40,248	1.50%
2013-14	30	18,663	9	10,175	11	12,182	41,020	1.92%
2014-15	30	18,495	9	10,249	11	12,552	41,296	0.67%
2015-16	30	18,568	9	10,096	11	13,209	41,873	1.40%
2016-17	30	17,651	9	10,031	11	13,667	41,349	-1.25%
2017-18	30	17,355	9	9,889	11	13,958	41,202	-0.36%
2018-19	30	17,126	9	10,035	11	13,988	41,149	-0.13%

Source: NC DPI; Average Daily Membership, Final ADM

Charter Schools

In addition to Union County Public Schools, there are three charter school established in Union County.

Union Academy

Union Academy, or UA as it is commonly known, offers 2 campuses located in Monroe, and provides K-12 education split between them. Founded in 2000, the school is run by its own board and receives funding from both the State and the County, operating under a state charter that provides a non-sectarian, deregulated learning environment that is designed to allow greater freedom to parents and leaders to determine the best options to run the school. 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 North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), the Average Daily Membership (ADM) for the school year started August 2019 was 1,979 students encompassing grades K-12.

Union Day School

Union Day is a tuition free public charter school educating students in grades K-7 for the 2020-21 school year. Subsequent grades will be added annually until it fills in as a K-8. According to the NCDPI, the ADM for the school year started August 2019 was 449 students encompassing grades K-6.

Union Preparatory Academy at Indian Trail

Union Prep is a tuition free public charter school educating students in grades K-8. According to the NCDPI, the ADM for the school year started August 2019 was 966 students encompassing grades K-8.

Higher Education

Wingate University, located on a 400-acre campus in the Town of Wingate, serves approximately 3,200 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 as part of their thirteen graduate level programs. 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 & Wales, and Johnson C. Smith University.

Transportation

The expansion, maintenance and improvement of primary and secondary highways within Union 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.

Union 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, construction on the U.S. Highway 74 Monroe Bypass – Connector toll road was completed in November 2018, and it connects near Interstate 485 loop. The State of North Carolina in 2008 included “GAP” funding for the project, providing the 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. The project had a total estimated cost of approximately \$800 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

Union County operates a water and wastewater utility serving approximately 51,700 water connections and 38,500 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 Union County and the Lancaster County Water and Sewer District, South Carolina. The County also receives water through a purchase water agreement with Anson County, North Carolina. The two combined water treatment sources provide an average of approximately 14.6 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 City of Monroe to provide up to 1.99 MGD of water capacity.

Additional water capacity will be needed in the 2022 time frame to serve the growing needs of the County. In 2016, the County updated its comprehensive water and wastewater master plan to evaluate alternatives. The master plan update provides for constructing and the development of a new water treatment plant in northeastern Union County in partnership with the Town of Norwood on the Yadkin River. The new 12 MGD Yadkin Regional Water Supply project is scheduled to be completed by 2023. 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 5,844,960 feet or 1,107 miles of water main, six pump stations and seven elevated tanks.

The water system is composed of asbestos-cement pipe, polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipe, cast iron and ductile iron. 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.

Union 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 631 miles of gravity main, 76 miles of force main, 62 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 has expanded the 12 Mile Creek Water Reclamation Facility from 6.0 to 7.5 MGD in early 2020. Now, the County’s five wastewater treatment plants (WWTP) comprise a combined capacity of 9.65 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 15.3 MGD. Current wastewater flows average 9.4 MGD.

In 2017, Union County created a District to operate the water and wastewater assets of the County.

Solid Waste Facilities

Union County currently provides residents and businesses alike with municipal solid waste (MSW) disposal, construction and demolition (C&D) waste disposal and recycling opportunities. At the main Solid Waste Management Facility (SWMF), MSW disposal services are provided through a State permitted transfer station. At the transfer station, MSW is 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 five sites strategically located throughout the County that accept "bagged" household garbage and recyclable materials.

At the SWMF, a large 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 325,000 cubic yards or air-space (about 3 years) for future disposal. These cells are designed for a contiguous vertical expansion over the previously closed MSW landfill. Solid Waste is applying for a minor permit modification for an additional 2 years capacity while simultaneously embarking on a major permit modification to provide long term disposal capacity of 1.5 to 2 million cubic yards of airspace.

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

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 \$5.7 million for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2019.



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 percent 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 countywide for fiscal year 2013 was the first of a marked increase, both in physical count (22 percent) and value (42 percent).

Since fiscal year 2015, the counts and value have been consistently over 3,000 for count and above \$450,000 in value. The current fiscal year is shaping up to reach fiscal year 2016 amounts in number of building permits and has already exceeded estimated value. 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.

Building Permits and Estimated Values						
	Non-Residential		Residential		Total	
FY Ended	Number	Value ²	Number	Value ²	Number	Value ²
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	592	189,488	3,733	370,714	4,325	560,202
2017	518	113,835	3,445	366,948	3,963	480,783
2018	636	203,181	3,778	437,898	4,414	641,079
2019	589	244,562	3,348	356,261	3,937	600,823
2020 ¹	516	440,093	3,324	379,667	3,840	819,760

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

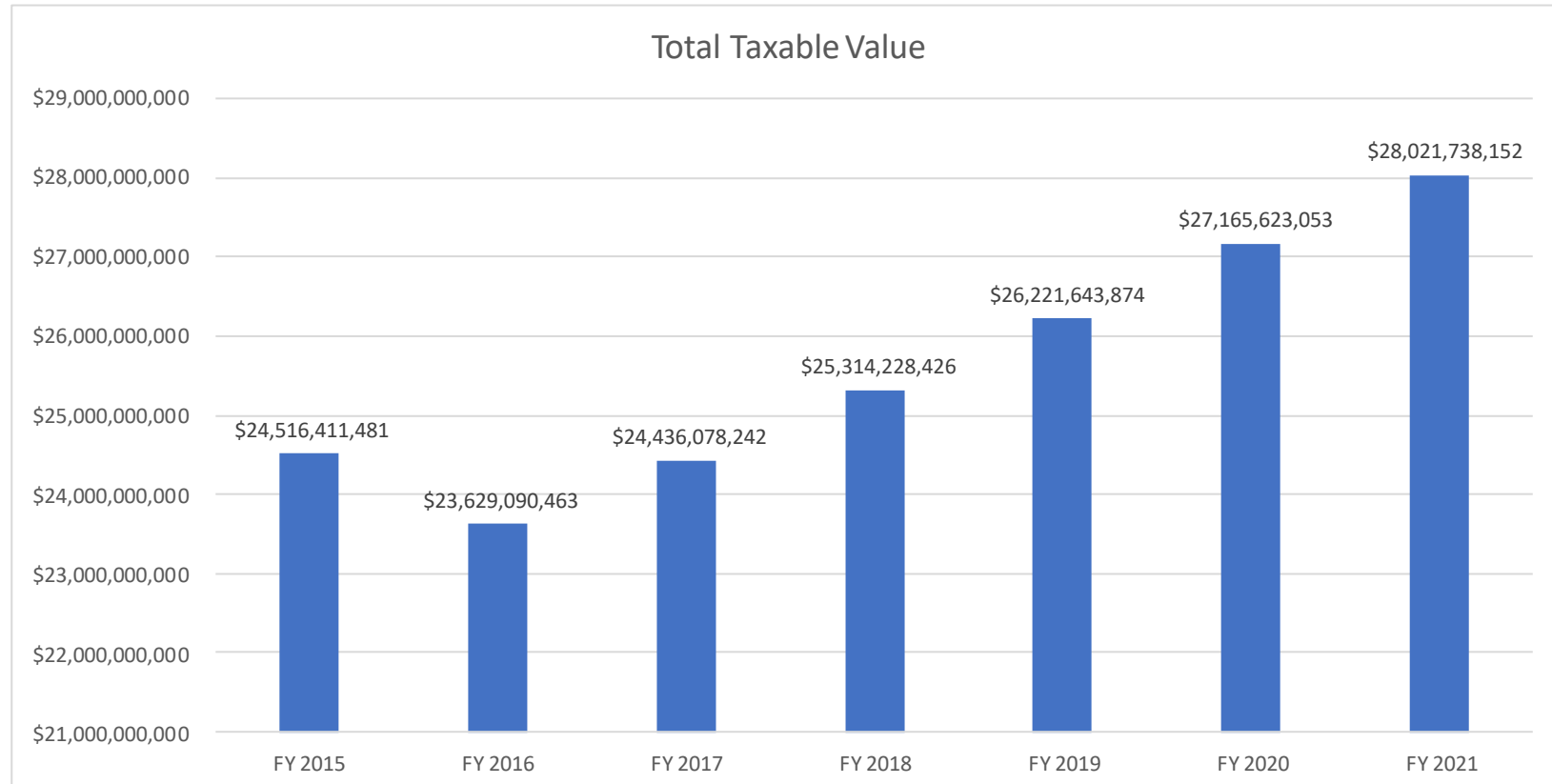
¹ July through April

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 \$900 million each of the last three years. The decrease in Total Taxable value in FY2016 was due to County Property Re-valuation. In FY 2016, Union County experienced a resurgence in building activity, which continued through FY 2020, however with slower, more stable growth. 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 open skating and skating lessons, hockey, and figure skating, as well as various camps. In 2016, it hosted the USA Hockey U14 National Championships. Extreme Ice is located in Indian Trail.
- 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

Atrium Health Union is part of Atrium Health, the largest healthcare system in North Carolina, and one of the largest systems in the nation. It has capacity of 175 beds, and offers outpatient surgery, cancer treatment, long term care, obstetric care, and specialty clinics.

Union County is served by 17 Volunteer Fire Departments and a countywide 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 Medical Center)
- Atrium Health (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 has no outstanding authorized and unissued General Obligation Bonds that were approved through referendums. The County issued General Obligation Bonds in August of 2019 for projects that were approved by voters in November of 2016 and 2018 for Public Safety, South Piedmont Community College, Union County Public Schools, and Library in the amount of \$91,910,000. The County also issued 2/3rds General Obligation Bonds in July of 2019 in the amount of \$25,349,000 for an Economic Development Industrial Park, Jail Locks and other general county infrastructure needs.

Revenue bonds were issued in May 2019. The County is anticipating issuing revenue bonds during FY 2021. The project, amount and impact of that debt is discussed in greater detail in both the Debt section of the budget and the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Capital Improvement Plan

Union County maintains a five-year (plus current) 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 2020 for the fiscal period 2021-2026, and can be seen in the *Capital Improvement Plan and Debt Management* section of the budget document.

The County adopted a CIP 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	1,263
Number of Full Time School Positions	Over 1,000
Land Area	643 Sq. Miles

Transportation

Major Highways:

Interstate(s) 77 and 85, 485 Beltway and the Monroe Expressway 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:

Atrium HealthCare System Union

Beds:

175

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
- PruittHealth

Urgent Care/Outpatient:

- Fast-Med
- Atrium HealthCare System - Urgent Care
- Union West Urgent Care

Utilities

Electric	Duke Energy, Union Power, City of Monroe
Gas	Piedmont Natural Gas, City of Monroe
Water	Union County Public Works, City of Monroe
Sewer	Union County Public Works, City of Monroe
Cable	Spectrum
Phone	Windstream, Bell South

Miscellaneous Statistical Data

<u>Certified Population¹</u>		<u>Demographics</u>	
1980	70,436	Living in same house 1 year ago	88.1%
1985	76,712	Language other than English @ home	14.2%
1990	84,210	High School Graduate, % of those age 25+	89.8%
1995	100,437	Bachelor's degree, % of those age 25+	34.8%
2000	125,609	Mean Travel time to work (min)	29.5
2001	131,896	Number of Housing Units	82,557
2002	138,589	Persons per household	2.99
2003	143,869	Homeownership Rate	80.5%
2004	150,737	Median Value of owner-occupied units	\$229,200
2005	159,800	Per Capita Income	\$34,379
2006	169,262	Median Household Income	\$75,397
2007	182,360	Persons below Poverty Level, as %	7.0%
2008	191,514	Unemployment Rate	3.8%
2009	196,322		
2010	202,166		
2011	205,331		
2012	207,726		
2013	211,265		
2014	215,747		
2015	219,660		
2016	223,915		
2017	228,171		
2018	232,814		
2019	237,477		
2020 Projected	242,657		

<u>Population by Race (U.S. Census 2018)</u>		<u>Population, by Age Groups</u>	
White	81.6%	(0-18)	26.80%
Black or African American	12.3%	(19-34)	15.40%
Native American	0.6%	(35-54)	32.80%
Asian and Pacific Islanders	3.4%	(55-64)	12.20%
Native Hawaiian	0.1%	(65+)	12.70%
Multi-Racial	2.0%		
Hispanic or Latino	11.4%		

¹ - State of North Carolina Office of State Budget Management