



Cabarrus County
2024 Trends Report

The View

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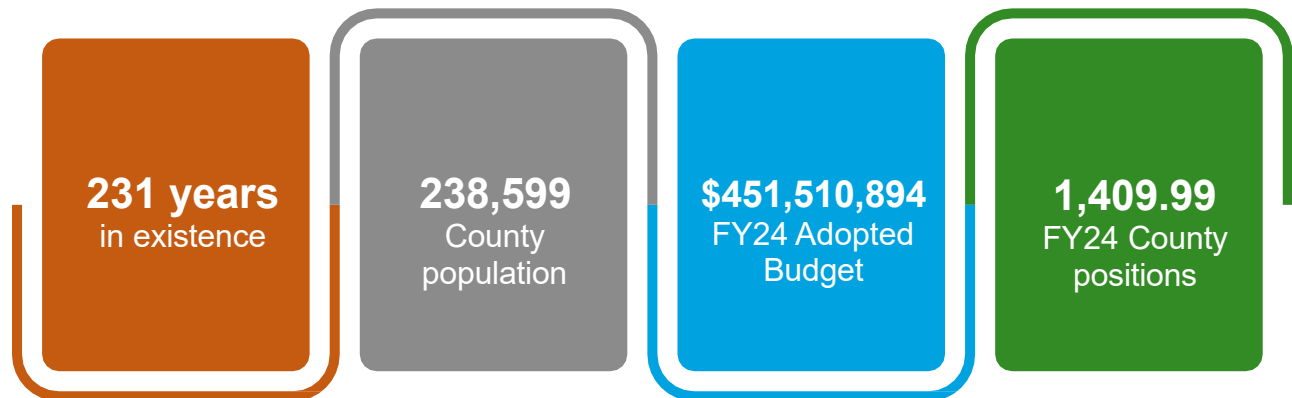
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About Cabarrus County

Cabarrus County, incorporated in 1792, is in the Piedmont section of the State of North Carolina and is bordered on the north by Rowan and Iredell counties, on the east by Stanly County, on the south by Union County and on the west by Mecklenburg County. Cabarrus encompasses approximately 230,400 acres.

There are six municipalities in the County, the largest of which is the City of Concord (the County seat). Concord is approximately 124 miles from the City of Raleigh and 18 miles northeast of the City of Charlotte. The second largest municipality is the City of Kannapolis. The towns of Mount Pleasant, Harrisburg, Midland and Locust are smaller municipalities in the county.

The North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management estimated a county population of 238,599 as of July 2022, making the county the 9th largest in North Carolina. State legislation guides the process by which counties levy property tax on both real and personal property located within its boundaries.



Organizational Structure



**Cabarrus County
Board of Commissioners**
(left to right):
Chris Measmer, Lynn Shue
(Vice Chair), Steve Morris
(Chair), Kenny Wortman
and Tim Furr*
**Commissioner Tim Furr
filled the seat vacated by
Commissioner Barabara
Strang in July 2023.*

Structure: The County has operated under the Board of Commissioners-County Manager form of government since 1976.

Board authority: Policy-making and legislative authority are vested in a governing board consisting of five commissioners. The governing board is responsible for, among other things, passing ordinances, adopting the budget, appointing committees and hiring the County manager, clerk to the board, tax administrator and County attorney.

Board election process: Board members are elected on a partisan basis, serving four-year staggered terms, with new members (two or three) elected every two years.

County Manager's role: The County manager serves as the chief executive and is responsible for carrying out the policies and ordinances of the governing board, overseeing the day-to-day operations of the government and appointing the heads of the various departments.

Organizational chart: The County's 27 departments operate under the guidance of the County Manager or one of the Assistant County Managers. [View the County's organizational chart \(Updated May 2024\).](#)

Cabarrus County Strategic Plan and Values



Goals

Engagement: Strengthen community ties to increase understanding, participation and trust

Advancement: Create pathways for upward economic mobility to support a prosperous and sustainable future for our community

Workplace Culture: Support employees through shared actions, values and culture to deliver exceptional service and become an employer of choice

Stewardship: Responsibly manage resources and care for assets to support the interests of our community

Innovation: Modernize county government to meet current and future needs, improve efficiency and raise the level of accountability

Values

Teamwork: We work together to build a stronger organization. Everyone contributes skills, knowledge and efforts to achieve common goals.

Respect: We value each other. We treat and expect to be treated with respect to shape healthy relationships, foster cooperation, learn and create a welcoming environment.

Communication: We practice clear, accurate and timely communication to support connection, understanding and trust. We involve the right people and remove communication barriers to improve outcomes.

Integrity: We demonstrate integrity by always upholding the organization's ethical and professional standards. We are dependable and work to establish credibility through honest, transparent actions.

Accountability: We are accountable to ourselves, our team and our community. We are willing to have crucial conversations and pursue opportunities for improvement. We directly address issues, learn from our experiences and respond with professionalism.

Strategy Development

In 2023, Commissioners unanimously approved working with Centralina Regional Council (Centralina) to develop a board-guided strategic plan that sets priorities and provides a framework for future business operations. This initiative began with conversations that signaled a renewed appreciation for staff contributions to the community. Then, County staff helped compose a plan informed by a deep understanding of our organization and the needs of our residents. Over 900 staff inputs were collected to inform the plan.

This strategy challenges us to act intentionally and decisively as we enhance our workplace, improve processes and align our efforts to five focus areas. The strategy also:

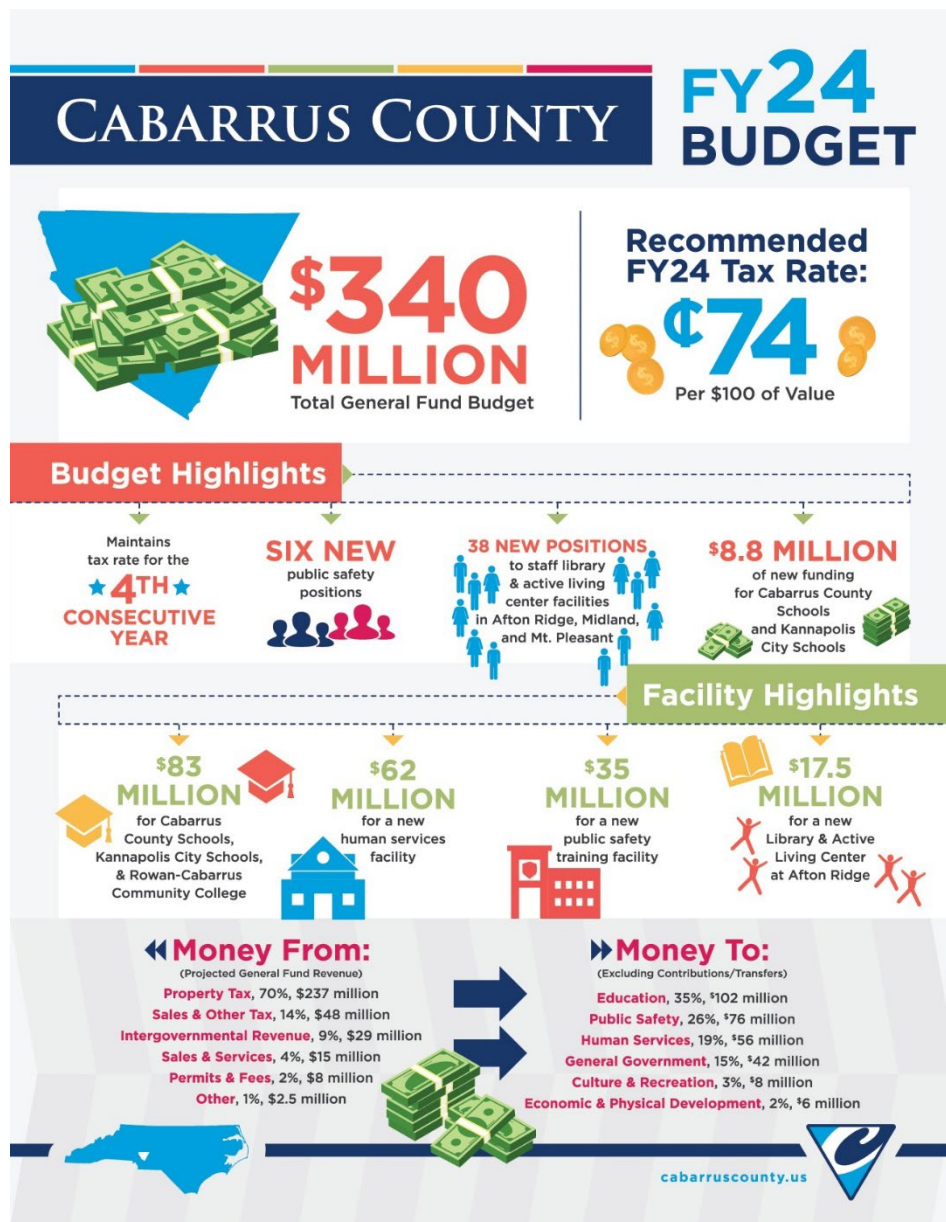
- Stretches the value of tax dollars, grants and service fees that support the evolving needs of our fast-growing community;
- Calls on meaningful partnerships that expand opportunity so more residents know about, engage with and benefit from our services; and
- Solidifies our commitment to delivering quality work while holding us accountable for fulfilling state-assigned responsibilities, including local education, safety, economic and physical development, health and human services, environmental protection, culture, and recreation.

Strategy Implementation

In Spring 2024, County staff proposed ideas to make progress in each goal area. County management reviewed the ideas and made a final recommendation in alignment with the County's Fiscal Year 2025 budget (FY25). The full recommendation for strategy implementation can be found under the County's Strategic Plan webpage, cabarruscounty.us/Strategy.

County Budget Insights

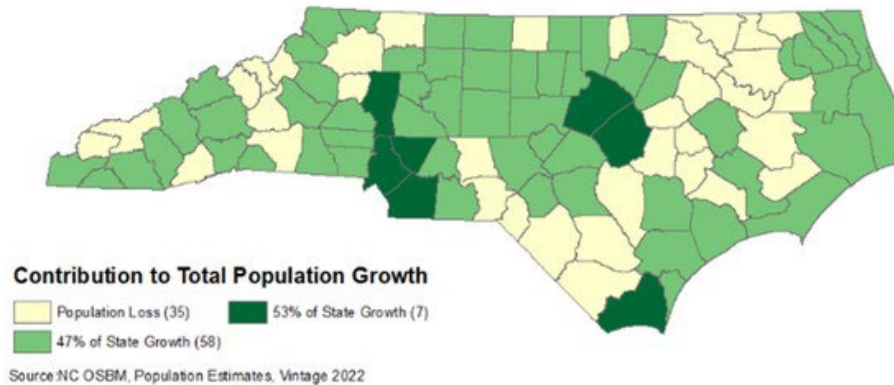
Unprecedented sales tax led to strong revenues for FY24. Sales tax revenues totaled nearly \$75 million – an increase of 13% from last year and 58% from five years ago. [The County's budget](#) leverages those revenues on retaining existing employees and enhancing our ability to attract talent through strategic employee investments. In addition to personnel, the budget prioritizes other key components to the future of Cabarrus, including education and capital (building) projects.



Population & Demographics

Cabarrus County added 5,726 people from 2021 to 2022 – that’s an increase of 2.5% (from 232,873 to 238,599). Of the County’s 238,599 population, 184,665 or 77.4% live in a municipality. The remaining 53,934 or 22.6% live in unincorporated areas.

Top 7 Counties Accounted for 53% of Overall Growth Between April 1, 2020 and July 1, 2022



County demographics have shifted as populations increase. As of 2022, key takeaways include:

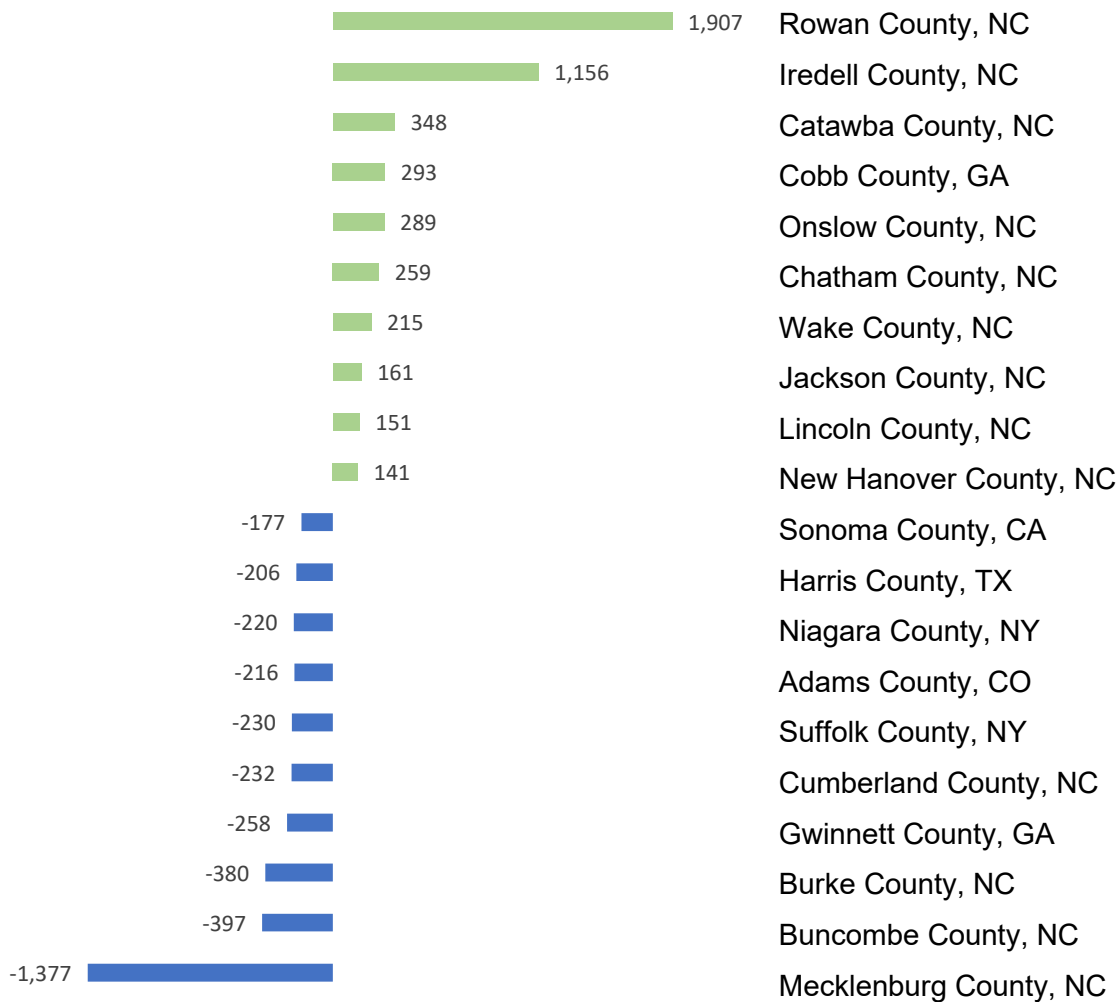
- Black or African American, Asian, Hispanic and American Indian and Alaska Native populations increased 14.4% since 2010.
- Diversity in population means that more than 15% of residents speak a language other than English at home.
- Census data shows that almost 5% of residents indicate that they speak English less than “very well.”
- While the County’s median age is 38, almost a quarter of the total population is under 18 years of age.
- 35% of households had one or more children under 18 residing there while 26% of households had one or more people aged 65 years and over residing there.

County migration patterns

From 2016-2020, most residents migrating out of Cabarrus County moved to surrounding counties, while migration into the county occurred from Florida, New York, and in-state migration within North Carolina.

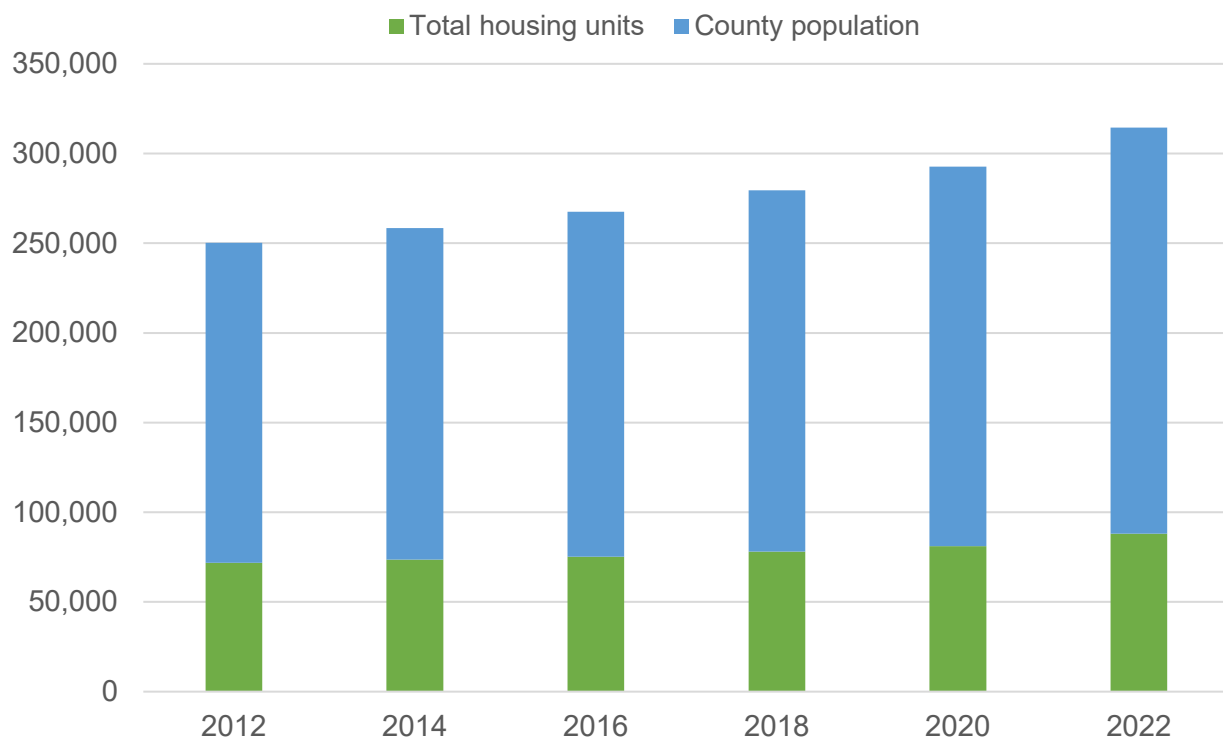
For all data used in the calculation, the overall net migration for 2016-2020 was **-391**, compared to the overall net migration from 2015-2019 at **1,025**.

Top 10 Counties with movers **to Cabarrus** and **from Cabarrus County**



Housing

As county and regional populations continue to rise, housing supply has not met demand. Housing affordability has become a widespread issue. The County has intentionally focused on addressing the housing crisis with federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. Examples include WeBuild Concord’s Lincoln Street Townhome project, a 26-unit development in the Logan Community, and Cooperative Christian Ministries’ The Rebuilders College project at the Brown Mill site, providing 48 transitional housing units along with wraparound care and education services.



Housing Affordability in Cabarrus County (2022 American Community Survey)				
Income	\$20,000 and below	\$20,000 to \$34,999	\$35,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 to \$74,999
Total Households	6,808	7,299	8,064	12,441
% of White (alone) households at this income level	8%	8%	10%	17%
% of BIPOC households at this income level	11%	13%	12%	15%
Cost burden occurs when household pay is more than 30% of income in housing	66%	61%	42%	25%
Severe cost burden occurs when households pay more than 50% of income on housing	56%	25%	6%	3%

Housing Affordability Over Time (2022 American Community Survey)				
	2000	2010	2020	2022
North Carolina median home value	\$108,300	\$154,200	\$236,900	\$280,600
Cabarrus County median home value	\$118,200	\$169,000	\$285,000	\$354,600
Cabarrus County median rent	\$566	\$741	\$1,151	\$1,249
Cabarrus County median household income	\$46,140	\$48,666	\$71,177	\$78,857

Revaluation

2024 is a revaluation year for Cabarrus County. Revaluation is the process of establishing an appraised market value. This gets done for every real estate parcel in the County with mass appraisal techniques.

The revaluation process is heavily dictated by State law (NCGS 105-286) with minimal local control. For example, revaluations must occur at least every eight years, but the State can direct they be conducted sooner if values fall or rise more than 15% from the going market rate. Our values established on January 1, 2020, were determined to be more than 15% lower than market rates in 2022. That means a revaluation would be required no later than January 1, 2025.

Faced with this reality, the County followed the current Board policy and stayed with our four-year revaluation cycle as recommended by the Department of Revenue. During a revaluation, Cabarrus reviews property values based on the market and economic conditions to bring assessed values in line with the worth of the property as of January 1 of the revaluation year.

2024 Revaluation Data:

- The County's Tax Department appraised more than 97,000 properties and analyzed about 42,000 transactions during the current revaluation period.
- New real property valuations total \$40.7 billion – an increase of \$14.6 billion, or 56%, from the prior year.
- When personal property, public service companies and motor vehicles are included, the County's total estimated valuation for FY25 totals \$47 billion.
- Based on these valuations, the total general fund property tax levy for FY25 is \$280 million – an increase of 19% from FY24.

County	2023 Tax Rate	Prior Revaluation Year	Most Recent Revaluation Year	% Increase in Revaluation
Alamance	\$0.4320	2019	2023	79%
Cabarrus	\$0.7400	2020	2024	56%
Iredell	\$0.5000	2019	2023	42%
Mecklenburg	\$0.4731	2019	2023	52%
Pitt	\$0.6841	2020	2024	45%
Rockingham	\$0.6950	2019	2024	58%
Wake	\$0.6570	2020	2024	51%
Wilson	\$0.7300	2016	2024	56%

About the 2024 Revaluation Process

The County started the 2024 revaluation process in 2022. The Board of Commissioners held a public hearing on the 2024 Schedule of Values in September 2023 and adopted the schedule at their October Regular Meeting. The schedule serves as the appraisal manual for revaluation and includes information related to listing, assessing, valuing and applying rates.

County real estate appraisers review properties by analyzing data collected through field visits and aerial images to estimate fair market value (the price a willing seller may receive from a willing buyer.) In cases where property owners make improvements or other changes, appraisers visit the property to evaluate.

The process of evaluating property depends on communication between the property owners and the tax administration office. The County mails property owners a listing document each January to help avoid discrepancies in property value and prepare for revaluation. The document informs owners of their responsibility to report any changes to the property. Discrepancies are then addressed through the revaluation appeal process.

The tax bill for each property will depend on the combination of the assessed value of the property and the tax rate set by the Cabarrus County Board of Commissioners and municipal boards in June. Tax bills with the updated values are available to property owners in July 2024 and are due in January 2025. Learn more about Cabarrus County’s 2024 revaluation, including a comprehensive FAQ, at cabarruscounty.com/revaluation.

Local Economy

The [North Carolina Economic Forecast](#) predicts modest growth in the local economy in 2024. North Carolina employment is expected to add 53,400 net jobs, reaching 5,003,700 persons by December 2024, a 0.9% increase over the anticipated December 2023 employment level.

- By December of 2024, the state's unemployment rate is expected to reach 4.0%.
- North Carolina's real (inflation-adjusted) GDP growth rate for 2024 is projected to increase by 1.9%. Fourteen of the state's economic sectors are expected to see output increases.

Cabarrus County Tourism Impact Highlights

According to the Cabarrus County Convention and Visitor's Bureau in 2022, tourism in Cabarrus County reached a record in visitor spending at \$566.74 million.

- The travel and tourism industry directly employs more than 4,410 people in Cabarrus County.
- Total payroll generated by the tourism industry in Cabarrus County was \$157.8 million. State and local tax revenues totaled \$37.7 million from travel to Cabarrus County.
- Taxes generated by visitor spending represent a tax savings of \$159.86 per resident.
- Cabarrus County ranks 13th in total visitor spending among North Carolina's 100 counties



Data from "The Economic Impact of Travel on North Carolina Counties 2022"

ExploreCabarrus.com

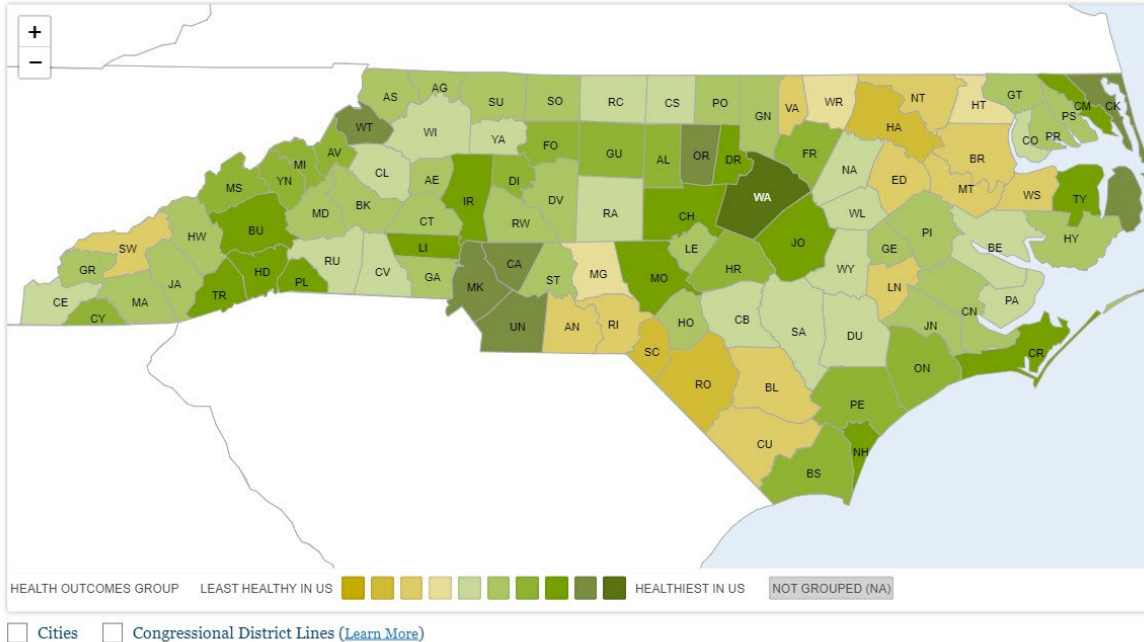
Health & Quality of Life

Cabarrus has consistently ranked well in benchmark comparisons against North Carolina's other 99 counties. Cabarrus is North Carolina's 11th healthiest county, according to [County Health Rankings](#).



County Health Rankings & Roadmaps

2024 Health Outcomes - North Carolina



Nearly 90% of our residents have health insurance, food security and are not living in poverty, putting us in the top five of North Carolina counties. More than half of our residents have a postsecondary degree or credential, which is the 11th best in the state.

Educational Attainment	2010	2022
Less than 9 th grade	6.1%	1.1%
9 th to 12 th grade, no diploma	8.3%	3.7%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	28.5%	28.5%
Some college, no degree	21.3%	15.5%
Associate's degree	7.6%	10.9%
Bachelor's degree	17.7%	26.3%
Graduate or professional degree	10.4%	14.0%
High school graduate or higher	85.6%	95.3%
Bachelor's degree or higher	28.2%	40.3%

Behavioral and Mental Health

Local leaders have initiated a series of opportunities to connect with our community to raise awareness and address behavioral and mental health. The County received \$32.5 million from the State in 2023 to design and construct the Cabarrus County Regional Behavioral Health Center. Cabarrus County staff is working to ensure the new Regional Behavioral Health Center is operational by its 2026 opening date:

- Start-up funding from Medicaid Hold Harmless funds will allow Albemarle-based Monarch, which will operate the facility, to hire key administrative, clinical, nursing and direct care positions. Monarch is a private, non-profit organization that supports those with mental illness and substance use disorders and intellectual and developmental disabilities. Monarch serves over 31,000 people annually at more than 186 locations across the state.
- The 59,300-square-foot Regional Behavioral Health Center will feature a full continuum of care, including a Behavioral Health Urgent Care (BHUC), a Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) and a Facility-Based Crisis (FBC) program. This addresses complex navigation challenges by providing a “no wrong door” approach to receiving walk-in and drop-off patients in behavioral health crises.
- Charlotte’s human eXperience serves as the architect on the project, while Messer Construction is building the facility.

The County’s Behavioral Health Department recently hired Dr. Kamilah McKissick to oversee the regional center and the Behavioral Health navigation program and to assess the landscape of Behavioral Health Services in CabCo to identify gaps and needs.

Wellness in Public Safety

The Detention Center has partnered with Cabarrus Health Alliance to establish an in-house Behavioral Health Team. This team works with inmates to help connect them with services that they need while in jail and when they reenter the community. The mental health clinician has taken over all the duties of evaluating people on special watch or suicide watch. The mental health clinician also has counseling sessions with inmates identified with having mental health problems.

Additionally, the Sheriff’s Office has received a State grant to bring in a contracted embedded clinician for the mental well-being of Sheriff’s Office employees, as well as creating a wellness officer to liaison with the clinician and focus on physical wellness.

Opioid settlement

Cabarrus County has recently been awarded nearly \$22 million in opioid settlement funds. Cabarrus is expected to receive its allocation over the next 18 years. These funds can be used to support prevention, treatment, and recovery services. The County has engaged Health Management Associates (HMA) to lead a collaborative planning process to determine how to best utilize these funds to support communities throughout the County. As a central part of this process, Cabarrus County is seeking community input through surveys, interviews, and focus groups.

Medication Assisted Treatment

Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) is the use of FDA-approved medications to treat opioid use disorders and is considered the gold standard of care. Community paramedicine programs are increasingly recognized as a viable opportunity to bridge gaps in service delivery for individuals with opioid use disorders.

- Cabarrus County's Emergency Medical System (EMS) will utilize funds to render mobile MAT through its Community Paramedicine program. FDA-approved medications would be used for individuals battling opioid use disorders to promote long-term recovery.
- Through community paramedics, MAT can be safely delivered while simultaneously providing education, connecting individuals to resources and primary care, and diverting individuals from use of local emergency departments.
- The total dollar amount of Opioid Settlement Funds appropriated for this program is \$930,000.00.

The Cabarrus County Sheriff's Office and Cabarrus Health Alliance will partner to provide MAT to individuals with opioid use disorders who are currently incarcerated and continuing care post release.

- The intent is to use FDA-approved medications in combination with behavioral therapies to treat opioid use disorders (OUD) to promote long-term recovery, reduce recidivism, and improve the physical and mental health of people who are justice-involved while incarcerated and upon release.
- The total dollar amount of Opioid Settlement Funds appropriated for this program is \$1,450,000.00.

Impact of Trends on County Services

Self-reported by County departments in November 2023

Technology

- Cyber security (hacking and phishing have become more and more of a burden).
- Integrating AI and changing processes as AI advances.
- There is an opportunity to leverage application interfaces, including evolving AI interfaces to improve data search capabilities, enhance user experience, and connect data across business lines.

Supply chain, economy and overall costs

- Higher costs overall; higher demand for services.
- Continued supply chain issues result in disruptions to service areas, timeliness issues, long lead times.
- With economic downturn, critical services request volume increases. There is also a direct correlation between financial strains and stressors on families to increased reports of child abuse, neglect and dependency reports in child welfare, as well as financial exploitation reports in adults.
- Local economic growth has resulted in an increase in tons of construction and demolition waste coming into the County's landfill on Irish Potato Road. The projected date that the current cell will fill has been bumped up by six months (mid 2028).
- An economic downfall often results in Emergency Medical Services being used as a primary care option.
- Cost of fire equipment continues to rise as well as the supply chain and delivery time for new apparatus is now between from 24 and 36 months.

Infrastructure

- With population growth comes additional demands on community infrastructure. We have already experienced how easily our support network in the community can become overwhelmed during the pandemic. We are anticipating a need for additional Emergency Management staffing resources to adequately prepare, assist and help our community to recover in times of disaster.

Legal

- Increased demand for internal legal review and or compliance as well as in-house training.
- New or changing legislative bills at both the federal and state levels that impact capacity and processes.
- Continued growth of municipalities into unincorporated areas of Cabarrus County will cause future changes regarding fire districts and fire departments. Currently working on Fire Prevention Ordinance updates. Updated fire code to be released by early fall 2025.
- Requests for public records are becoming much more detailed and frequent. More resources will have to be committed to maintaining data retention policies and capacity.

Volunteerism

- Decreasing volunteerism is a national trend that is having direct impacts on local organizations. For example, the American Red Cross is only able to provide limited staffing assistance for a congregate shelter. This will necessitate paid County staff providing the bulk of shelter staff.
- Nationally, the number of volunteer firefighters is dwindling. The amount of training and time required to become a volunteer is a difficult hurdle to overcome for the average citizen to attain.

Workforce

- Planning, zoning, enforcement and flood administrator positions throughout the state are open due to retirements and due to staff seeking employment in the private sector. The number of people going into these career fields is not as many as are leaving. It has become extremely competitive and it is difficult to fill open positions.
- The ability to secure staffing seems to be a common issue among many government agencies. Another challenge is continuing to provide the same level of service despite shortages in employees.
- Competition with other agencies for a decreasing number of firefighters has increased.
- Several local career fire departments are conducting market studies for starting pay increases as well as compression adjustments which will likely affect the county Squad 410 fire program.
- Hard to fill part-time and full-time staff vacancies in Active Living in Parks.
- Industry-wide reduction in youth athletic programs, officials for all sports, qualified lifeguards and summer camp staff.

Environment

- Continuing development involves constructing drainage networks which increases runoff to streams and rivers from rain fall. As a result, the peak discharge, volume, and frequency of floods increase. Additionally, this development increases the amount of impervious surface area which reduces hydrologic response time and therefore also increases flood risk.
- Water access is becoming an increasing issue as businesses and developers in the unincorporated areas of Cabarrus County seek to build or expand while meeting the fire flow and sprinkler requirements in the fire code.
- Increasing chance of severe weather events. These could present as more intense rain events, extended extreme heat periods, droughts, etc. The combination of increased population, larger areas of development, and the trend of increased severe weather will be challenging to meet at current staffing levels.
- Increased pressure to curtail global warming may cause an increase in the cost of energy and other resources.
- More rain in the winter months makes it difficult to keep erosion and water quality from run off under control, warmer temperatures bring more visitors to the parks, causing stress on trails and campgrounds, dry summer months create opportunities for fires, and more Code Red days, limiting outdoor use for those with health issues.
- The temperature, rain, snow, and cold disrupt Active Living Center participation which may result in a decline in mental and physical health.

Medicaid and Social Services

- Medicaid Expansion implementation across all 100 counties started December 1, 2023.
- Preliminary numbers show Medicaid applications received in December 2023 increased 59% over those received in December 2022 for Cabarrus County Department of Social Services.
- Medicaid's average monthly caseload has increased 43.5% over the past 12 months. Between December 1, 2023 and January 2024 there have been 5,959 individuals added to full Medicaid benefits due to expanded eligibility.
- Continued increases in our caseloads in Food & Nutrition services, Medicaid, and other financial assistance program case loads as population numbers continue to rise.

Five-year trends

- Local governments need more grant funding for programs and services outside of mandated services.
- There is typically a spike in workers compensation injuries every five years and 2024 is our fifth year for that. Accidents and incidents are other trends we are monitoring.
- Staffing, workplace culture and morale.

About the Trends Report

The 2024 Trends Report was created by the Cabarrus County Strategy & Innovation Team as a guide for County staff. The information was compiled through spring 2024 from sources such as County management, government agencies, research organizations and media outlets.

Tracking and analyzing trends improves the County's capacity to identify and proactively address emerging issues. Transparency tools, like the Cabarrus County Trends Report, help improve understanding between the County and the community it serves by:

- Defining needs and threats
- Providing context for discussions
- Pointing out external changes and challenges
- Laying the groundwork for improved accountability
- Facilitating a better-informed decision-making process

To learn more about Cabarrus County Government and other transparency tools available to residents, visit cabarruscounty.us or follow the County on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @CabarrusCounty.

Contact us!

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