When I became County Manager in 2014, one of my initial priorities was to ensure our organization has a strategic approach to the important work we do. As a result, the County’s FY2017-2019 Strategic Business Plan was written to capture many of the Board’s and residents’ priorities, and I am excited that we have completed the three-year plan.

The 2019 Mecklenburg County Performance Report supports our community vision that “Mecklenburg County will be a community of pride and choice for people to LIVE, LEARN, WORK and RECREATE.” The report highlights the outcomes, strategies, key performance indicators and key initiatives for the County.

Some of our greatest accomplishments in this plan include, but are not limited to:

- High employee motivation and satisfaction, with the most recent result of 89 percent.
- AAA Bond Rating from each of the three rating agencies (Fitch, Moody’s and S&P) all three years.
- High customer satisfaction, countywide, for each of the five customer service standards (courtesy and respect, ethics, service quality, communication, and timeliness).
- Development and use of a long-range financial model that enables the County to more accurately project operating and capital needs over a five-year period.
- Completion of 35 Park and Recreation capital projects between FY17 and FY19, seven of which were completed in FY19.
- Decline in the youth smoking rate, which is down to 8.4 percent.
- Compliance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS).
- Opening of the County’s first Community Resource Center including the co-location of multiple health and human services to ease access for residents.
- Improved recidivism rates of Criminal Justice Services clients by nearly two percentage points compared to FY17.

Our greatest accomplishments directly impact the residents, visitors and employees of Mecklenburg County. We are proud of our success thus far, but we know there is more work to do over the next three fiscal years as we continue moving the County from “strategy to success.”

Please take a moment to review the 2019 Performance Report.

Sincerely,

Dena R. Diorio, County Manager
Mecklenburg County
Residents in Mecklenburg County will reside in a welcoming and thriving metropolitan area comprising 14 counties in North Carolina and South Carolina. Mecklenburg County will be the regional place of choice and home to generations of families and cultures from all over the world and economic backgrounds. Taxes will be competitive relative to the region for the scope and quality of service provided by local government. We will celebrate diversity and inclusion, promote equality of opportunity and have respect for all of our citizens. We will have safe communities that provide affordable housing opportunities throughout the County. We will provide alternatives to incarceration for those suffering from the disease of alcoholism, substance abuse and mental illness. We will eliminate preventable child deaths and injuries and will have no disparities in resident health based on ethnic background. We will reduce homelessness and poverty in the community. Our senior citizens will receive appropriate services in order to be able to age with dignity. Residents will be physically and socially connected to one another. Residents will have ownership of the community and actively participate in citizen involvement opportunities.

Residents in Mecklenburg County will have access to high-quality education at any point in life and be prepared to meet the needs of employers. We will be a model learning community committed to maximizing academic achievement for every student regardless of socio-economic standing. The County will continue to be a regional hub for higher education, offering individuals opportunities to attain degrees and further their professional development.

Residents in Mecklenburg County will have access to a system of parks, greenways and open space located throughout the County that connects neighborhoods and satisfies public recreation needs. We will sustain and enhance the environment by protecting our natural landscapes, and have an abundant source of clean drinking water, healthy creeks and good air quality. We will preserve our historical landmarks. Residents and visitors will learn, be inspired by, and enjoy our community’s arts, cultural, and recreational opportunities.

Residents in Mecklenburg County will have continuing employment opportunities in a diverse economy that provide all who are capable and willing to work, a living wage. All residents will have the opportunity to share equitably in the community’s prosperity. We will be innovative and have a vibrant economy as we attract new businesses and support existing businesses. We will have adequate regional mass transit that connects residents to their homes, work, schools, park facilities and commercial centers.

Mecklenburg County will be the best local government service provider.

To serve Mecklenburg County residents by helping them improve their lives and community.

Ethics: We work with integrity
Customers: We serve our customers with courtesy and respect
Employees: We recognize employees as our most important resource
Excellence: We invest in learning and improving
Teams: We work as a team, respecting each other
Accountability: We focus on results
INTRODUCTION
Mecklenburg County’s 2017 – 2019 Corporate Strategic Business Plan mirrors the top most important work for the County in a three-year period. Moreover, this Plan builds on the County’s first Strategic Plan adopted in the early 2000s. Since that time, the County has continuously refined and improved upon decision-making strategies that now include a greater culture of strategic thinking that aligns work to community needs. In fact, “Strategy to Success” - which is the County’s philosophy of performance management - ensures that the organization is making strategic decisions and investments based on quantifiable and qualitative performance data.

GOAL AREAS AND OUTCOMES
The County’s 2017 – 2019 Corporate Strategic Business Plan translates the Board of County Commissioner’s Community Vision into action. There are five goal areas that reflect the County’s strategic priorities, each with one desired outcome. For each outcome, there are several strategies, key performance indicators and associated methodologies for tracking progress towards the outcomes. The key performance indicators outlined in the report are most integral to the County understanding its position around the key outcomes.

KEY INITIATIVES
There are also currently seven key enterprise-wide initiatives that represent the emerging and changing needs of the community. While there may be additional initiatives the County considers in future versions of its Strategic Business Plan, the ones outlined in this report reflect work that has occurred in FY2019.

To learn more about Mecklenburg’s Corporate Strategic Business Plan visit: https://www.mecknc.gov/CountyManagersOffice/Pages/Strategic-Planning-Evaluation.aspx
ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNMENT

OUTCOME
To be an open, transparent and high performing organization that effectively uses resources to provide high quality services to our visitors and residents

Key Performance Indicators

EMPLOYEE INDICATORS
- 89% of County employees were satisfied at work
- $5.5% across-the-board pay increase in FY2020 budget for County employees

FINANCIAL INDICATORS
- AAA the County carries the highest credit rating as rated by the three leading rating services
- $1,248 amount of debt per capita, which is below the “Big 4” average

CUSTOMER INDICATORS
- 97% of responding customers were satisfied with County services

*Note: The Big 4 comparison counties include: Durham County, Guilford County, Forsyth County and Wake County

89% of County employees were satisfied at work

$1,248 amount of debt per capita, which is below the “Big 4” average

97% of responding customers were satisfied with County services

AAA the County carries the highest credit rating as rated by the three leading rating services

To be an open, transparent and high performing organization that effectively uses resources to provide high quality services to our visitors and residents
For 17 years, Mecklenburg County has administered the annual Employee Climate Survey to all full-time and part-time employees. In FY2019, 70 percent of employees who received the survey provided a response. The results from 11 questions on the survey are averaged together to gauge the level of motivation and satisfaction employees have with working for the County. Of those who responded, 89 percent provided positive responses across those questions. This result remains high, as the County continues to implement strategies aimed at engaging and retaining employees.

The County continues to monitor the two-year retention rate, which measures the percentage of new employees hired by the County who remain employed for at least 24 consecutive months. In FY2019, Mecklenburg County hired a Human Resources consultant to focus on employee engagement and retention strategies. The County also increased its investments in employees in the FY2020 budget with a 5.5 percent across-the-board pay increase and enhancements to employee benefit offerings. While the County is using these strategies to retain employees, the recent decrease in retention is likely due to an increasingly competitive labor market, especially in technical and medical jobs. The County anticipates that its increased focus on retention and engagement, along with investments in employees, will lead to an increase in the two-year retention rate in the coming years.

In addition to retaining qualified employees, Mecklenburg County seeks to recruit new employees through a qualified and diverse applicant pool. The applicant pool satisfaction rate measures hiring manager satisfaction with the quality and diversity of the applicant pool from which they may select new hires. Talent Acquisition continued to build on a new proactive approach to filling positions by meeting with hiring managers before posting a job opening to deepen the recruiter’s understanding of the position needs. These meetings have helped Talent Acquisition better source the specific skills that hiring managers need. Additionally, Talent Acquisition is working to decrease the overall days to fill a vacant position, which will allow the County to hire the best talent available for its vacant positions before those candidates accept other offers.
Mecklenburg County’s strong financial management and conservative use of debt plays a significant role in maintaining the County’s credit worthiness and an affordable tax rate. The County uses its bond ratings as a measure of credit quality. Credit rating agencies issue these ratings based on all aspects of the County, including its economy, growth trends, governance, financial performance and financial stewardship. Mecklenburg County’s general obligation bonds carry the highest credit rating, AAA, as rated by Fitch, Moody’s, and Standard & Poor’s (S&P). The AAA credit rating is extremely important, as it is an independent confirmation of the County’s strength and helps keep interest costs low. Mecklenburg County’s strong fiscal stewardship, healthy reserves and strong debt capacity all support the strong credit rating.

In addition to the bond ratings, Mecklenburg County tracks financial goals through looking at general bonded debt per capita. In 2010, as the County was coming out of the Great Recession, Mecklenburg County implemented a debt diet and adjusted its management strategy. This allowed the County to symmetrically reduce the amount of debt outstanding from $2.2 billion to $1.5 billion and ensure funding availability through a dedicated debt service fund. At the same time, the County has been able to expand and support $1.6 billion in needed capital investments for schools, libraries, parks and recreation and government facilities with strategic use of direct funding for capital investments, in addition to bond financing. The County’s population has grown rapidly since 2010, which has also reduced debt per capita, placing it below the comparative “Big 4” average of $1,387 (The “Big 4” are the next largest counties in the state after Mecklenburg—Durham, Guilford, Forsyth and Wake counties).

**GENERAL BONDED DEBT PER CAPITA (FY2018)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>General Bonded Debt Per Capita (FY2018)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cabarrus County</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Guilford County</td>
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Note: Due to timing in availability of data, results reflect data from FY2018.

**GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES PER CAPITA (FY2018)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Union County</td>
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Note: Due to timing in availability of data, results reflect data from FY2018.

**FY18 BOND RATING**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>North Carolina Counties</th>
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<th>Moody’s</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wake County</td>
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<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The Big 4 comparison counties include: Durham County, Guilford County, Forsyth County and Wake County.

**FISCAL YEAR**

General fund expenditures per capita is a measure that reflects the County’s budget discipline and fiscal stewardship. The County’s strong management and good financial policies and practices have helped keep spending reasonable and build healthy reserves – supporting the County’s ability to weather an economic downturn. The result for Mecklenburg ($1,055 per capita) is only slightly above the “Big 4” average of $969 per capita.

*Note: Due to timing in availability of data, results reflect data from FY2018.
When Mecklenburg County residents interact with a County department, they are offered the chance to complete a survey assessing their satisfaction with the service(s) received. The questions relate to the County’s five customer service standards, which include: communication, courtesy and respect, ethics, service quality and timeliness. For the last six years, the County’s customer satisfaction score has remained at 97 percent or greater. Of all the customer service standards, courtesy and respect remained the highest in FY2019 at nearly 99 percent positive results.

In addition to the customer satisfaction surveys, the County conducts a Community Survey, administered annually to a random sample of County residents. One of the purposes for the survey is to understand the public’s level of satisfaction with communication from the County. Of those who responded to the survey, 43 percent noted that the County did an “excellent” or “good” job of communicating information about County issues, services and performance to the public. The FY2019 result is the highest it has been in the last four years.

**KEY INITIATIVES**

**KEY INITIATIVE #1: Long-Term Financial Planning**

In FY2016, the County began the implementation and use of a long-range financial planning (LRFP) tool to help accurately project operating and capital needs over a five-year period. This process included the development of a prototype LRFP model using Quantrix software, development (with UNCC) of a statistically valid revenue forecasting model, standardization of capital planning inflation factors, and numerous input and model refinements. The County used the model extensively to support the adoption of the FY2019 – FY2023 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and the 2017 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) Bond Referendum. This model has been shared with the bond rating agencies and the State Treasurer’s Office, leading the bond rating agencies to now list long-range financial planning as a core strength for Mecklenburg County.

The LRFP model has also become an important budgeting tool and was used to analyze numerous strategies for the FY2020 budget. It was utilized to support a host of new budget initiatives and studies, including: Affordable Housing, the Sales Tax Referendum, a Land Bond Study, Park & Recreation Greenway Acceleration, Assessed Value Appeal Loss, Health Care Reserve Analysis and Revenue / Expense / Fund Balance Forecasting.

The County has worked continually to enhance the LRFP model. Recent updates include a CIP Tracker with data/diagnostic links to InfoAdvantage, CIP Budget Book Automation, a Construction Planning Tool and a Historical CIP Spending Analysis. Refinements to revenue forecasting have also improved budget accuracy. FY2019 property tax revenue (unaudited) is anticipated to be within 0.6 percent of budget, while sales tax and other revenue forecasts for the FY2020 budget were raised based on refined economic trend analysis.

**KEY INITIATIVE #2: Business Continuity**

Departments updated Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP) each year (FY2017 – FY2019) and posted them on MeckWeb. Annually, departments held all COOP tabletop exercises across the three years. In addition, Information Technology Services (ITS) conducted separate Cyber Security workshops in FY2017 and FY2019. Individual departments also performed COOP training during this period as requested.

The County successfully activated the COOPS during the December 2017 Ransomware Attack. Mecklenburg County’s response to, and subsequent communication around, the cyber crisis gained national attention and recognition. No data were lost and ITS was able to recover almost 100 percent of critical systems within 30 days. Departments activated COOP protocols within hours of the attack, resulting in no shutdown of business operations. After the attack, ITS implemented several “new normal” security policies and tools and is continuing to upgrade system/data recovery capabilities and strengthening cybersecurity.

Mecklenburg County leaders shared the cyber-attack response story at the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), the National Symposium on Cybersecurity & Local Government, Big 10, the National Association of Government Accountants and several other public forums.

**KEY INITIATIVE #3: Enterprise Risk Management**

In FY2019, the County retooled the Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Program. Mark Beasley, NC State Professor and ERM Consultant, assisted the County’s Executive Team and Cabinet with understanding ERM concepts and best practices for identifying and addressing the County’s enterprise risks. The Executive Team held three workshops to identify/prioritize risks and develop a go-forward ERM structure. The revised ERM structure will have an enterprise risk committee chaired by the County’s Risk Officer and assigned risk owners, and will focus on creating reporting templates, developing key risk indicators and establishing linkages to strategic plans.

**KEY INITIATIVE #4: Grants Management Strategy**

In FY2019, the Financial Services Department continued work towards implementing Uniform Guidance requirements for procurement of goods and services using Federal funds. Under the new guidance, the team worked with staff to navigate requirements for individual programs and seek exceptions, where necessary, to efficiently implement the program. Procurement staff participated in quarterly grants meetings with the Grants Management team to provide training and clarifications, worked with legal and program staff to address questions and issues as they arose, and tracked issues to identify opportunities to enhance training and procedures. The team also worked to improve reporting by identifying grants to capture in Amplifund as they came up for renewal and develop several other public forums.
GOAL AREA 2: CONNECTED COMMUNITY

OUTCOME
To foster access to physical, social and information resources for all residents and visitors in our community.

Key Performance Indicators

- 7 capital Park & Recreation projects completed
- 3.3 more miles of finished greenways
- 162,392 households that were active library cardholders
- 381 acres of expanded parks and nature preserves
Over the course of the last three years, the Park and Recreation Department completed 35 capital projects identified in the 2008 Comprehensive Master Plan. In FY2019, the department completed seven projects, which expanded the parks, nature preserves and open space areas in the County by 381 acres, extended the finished greenways by 3.3 miles and improved 26,000 square feet of indoor recreation space by renovation. Total County cost for the seven projects was $5,363,104.

These projects move the County forward in efforts to promote access to public parks, greenways, nature preserves and recreation centers. The map below highlights the locations of the completed FY2017 projects (light blue), FY2018 projects (medium blue) and FY2019 projects (dark blue), illustrating the spatial distribution of projects across the County.

### Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Active Cardholders

The Charlotte Mecklenburg Library saw a significant increase in its customer base in recent years, peaking with a 61 percent increase in active cardholders from 2013 to 2017. In FY2018, the Library saw its first decrease in active cardholders since 2013, but in FY2019 the number held relatively steady with new cardholder signups. The temporary closure of the Morrison Regional Library in FY2018 for renovation, along with the waning initial impact of the ONE Access™ (www.cmlibrary.org/oneaccess) program, impacted the number of active cardholders.

In FY2019, North County Regional Library closed for renovations, and the Library observed some impacts to active cardholders, although customers did gravitate to the Cornelius, Davidson and on-line branches. Using the impact findings from the Morrison Regional Library, the Library placed a greater emphasis on engaging and retaining the customers during the closure of the North County Regional Library.

ONE Access™ was launched in 2015 as an initiative to give instant Library accounts to all students enrolled in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS), other educational institutions and to all Mecklenburg County and City of Charlotte employees. While ONE Access™ has continued to be an essential program that provides barrier-free Library access to people across Mecklenburg County, the initial effect of the ONE Access™ program, which brought a large influx of new users, has had a smaller impact in recent years. In addition, early CMS student users of the program began to age out of the system, and new signups for 2019 were lower than the early 2015 roll-out of the program.
Key Initiative #5: Bringing Mecklenburg County To You

In FY2019, the County’s Asset and Facility Management Department commenced implementation of Phase II of the master plan strategy to build Community Resource Centers (CRCs) at strategic locations throughout the County. The intent of the CRCs is to enhance community access to Health and Human Services. The County hired an architectural firm to begin master planning and conceptual design of the Northeast CRC site near the intersection of Eastway Drive and North Tryon Street, as well as a Construction Manager at Risk team to provide pre-construction services and build the facility. Additionally, after completion of the first CRC at the Valerie C. Woodard Center, the County completed the renovation of the remaining approximately 200,000 square feet of vacant space in the facility. This allowed the Office of the Tax Collector, the County Assessor’s Office, the Community Support Services Department and various divisions of the Public Health Department to relocate to the Woodard Center. The relocation resulted in further vacating of the Hal Marshall Center and Walton Plaza, allowing for potential redevelopment of those sites.

In the Government District, the County completed a renovation project at the Judge Clifton E. Johnson Building to consolidate three fragmented divisions of the Finance Department, while also relocating the Enterprise Project Management and Business Process Management Offices from the Woodard Center. The County also hired an architectural firm to design renovations to the County floors of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center for the relocation of the Public Information Department and expansion of existing departments already in the building.

Key Initiative #6: Land Disposition Strategy

Mecklenburg County has engaged in efforts to strategically undertake the acquisition and disposition of real estate to accomplish its goals, including to support County programs such as “Bringing Mecklenburg County to You” and to address the Board of County Commissioners’ and community’s concerns related to economic opportunity. The result is a land disposition strategy that seeks ongoing taxable revenue to sustain operations and focuses on community goals and priorities.

In FY2019, there was a continuation of the effort to locate and acquire sites needed for the Southwest and East Community Resource Centers (CRCs). Additionally, the County sold its property located at 4th and Graham Streets to the City of Charlotte for incorporation into the new Gateway Station development. The sales agreement included conditions for the new development to include affordable housing.

As part of the County’s approach to increase economic opportunity for all, the Board of County Commissioners approved various strategies to increase access to affordable housing. One of those strategies was to re-purpose the land occupied by the Tom Ray Center and Carlton Watkins Center (both vacated when employees relocated to the Woodard Center) for affordable housing. The County commenced an effort to develop a competitive RFQ/RFP process for selection of a developer to design, construct and operate housing on that site.

Photos of the Valerie C. Woodward Center, 3205 Freedom Drive

14 acres of vacant County property in the Grier Heights neighborhood may be repurposed as a mixed-income housing development.
GOAL AREA 3: ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

OUTCOME
To enhance the economic stability and success of our current and future residents

Key Performance Indicators

HOMELESSNESS RATE PER CAPITA
1.55 homeless individuals per 1,000 population

WORK FIRST TRAINING TO EMPLOYMENT
68% of participants in the Work First program finished and entered employment

Annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count

87 more beds available for shelter and housing compared to 2018

FISCAL YEAR
68% of participants in the Work First program finished and entered employment
Mecklenburg County’s Economic Services Division (ESD) works to help Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) recipients achieve self-sufficiency and stability through the Work First Training to Employment program. The program connects participants to various employment-related resources, with the goal for participants to gain meaningful employment. Fewer Work Experience Program (WEP) contracts compared to FY2017 continued to contribute to the decline in employment rates, while the State of North Carolina’s decisions to cut program funding also had a large impact.

The division’s move to pay-for-performance contracts in 2018 initially led to a reduced number of contracts for Work First service provision. While the number of contracts remained constant through FY2019, the number of individuals who participated in the program and received training fell by more than half to 222 individuals. Of those individuals who finished the program, 151 entered employment or gained work experience.

In March 2019, the state instructed the counties to stop providing childcare to any individuals applying for childcare benefits, including Work First and FNS Education & Training program participants, due to a lack of childcare funding. The freeze in childcare provision continued through the end of the fiscal year. This negatively impacted the number of Work First customers participating in work program activities, including training, and those attempting to enter the workforce. Lack of childcare continues to be a significant barrier to Education & Training program participation and employment.

The increase from the 2018 to the 2019 Point-in-Time Count census was due in part to additional temporary shelter capacity within the system serving the homeless population. The number of beds available for emergency shelter and transitional housing increased from 2018 to 2019 by 87 beds, which is an additional increase over the previous year’s increase of 198 beds. Most of the increase in the number of beds was due to 66 additional emergency shelter beds that were activated because of new programs added to the inventory and cold temperature, serving individuals who might otherwise have slept outside in unsheltered locations. The County will use the 2019 PIT Count data along with other data on homelessness and housing to call for developing partnerships and collaborations across sectors and to increase access to homelessness prevention assistance and permanent, affordable housing opportunities in the community.

Mecklenburg County’s Community Support Services - Homeless Services Division connects persons who are homeless, or about to become homeless, to available community resources and services. In collaboration with other organizations and as a requirement of federal funding from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), the County conducts an annual Point-In-Time (PIT) Count, which is an unduplicated one-night estimate of both sheltered and unsheltered homeless populations on one night in January. While the trend in the PIT Count results shows a steady decline from 2011-2017, there has been an increase since 2018. Results from the 2019 PIT Count indicate there was a 4 percent increase, with 74 more people experiencing homelessness on the night in January compared with the 2018 PIT count.

The increase from the 2018 to the 2019 Point-in-Time Count census was due in part to additional temporary shelter capacity within the system serving the homeless population. The number of beds available for emergency shelter and transitional housing increased from 2018 to 2019 by 87 beds, which is an additional increase over the previous year’s increase of 198 beds. Most of the increase in the number of beds was due to 66 additional emergency shelter beds that were activated because of new programs added to the inventory and cold temperature, serving individuals who might otherwise have slept outside in unsheltered locations. The County will use the 2019 PIT Count data along with other data on homelessness and housing to call for developing partnerships and collaborations across sectors and to increase access to homelessness prevention assistance and permanent, affordable housing opportunities in the community.

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GOAL AREA 4:
HEALTHY COMMUNITY

OUTCOME
To create a culture of health and wellness for our residents

HIV INFECTION RATE
23.9 annual new HIV diagnoses per 100,000 residents

OZONE NAAQS INDICATOR
70 parts per billion (ppb) or 0% above the federal health-based standard (NAAQS) for ozone

HEALTH AND FITNESS PROGRAM UTILIZATION
15,235 residents used County health & fitness programs

YOUTH SMOKING RATE
8.4% high school youth smoking rate

Note: Data represents FY2017, new data will not be available until FY2020

Key Performance Indicators

HIV INFECTION RATE

OZONE NAAQS INDICATOR

HEALTH AND FITNESS PROGRAM UTILIZATION

YOUTH SMOKING RATE
Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is the virus that can lead to acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, or AIDS. While there is no cure for AIDS, if individuals are diagnosed early and begin treatment, they may live with the illness and manage it as a chronic disease. New HIV diagnoses among Mecklenburg County residents decreased from calendar year 2017 to 2018. There were 257 new diagnoses in calendar year 2018, leading to an annual case rate of 23.9 per 100,000 population.

In FY2019, Mecklenburg County introduced the new HIV Community Prevention Plan: Getting to Zero, which emphasizes testing, treatment and prevention with a focus on pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), a relatively new means of prevention through a daily pill that reduces the risk of contracting HIV. The Community PrEP Initiative, begun in March 2018, allows uninsured, vulnerable individuals to access PrEP through provider partners, and was highlighted in campaigns via mass media, social media and grassroots events.

Moving forward, the County will work on improving marketing for PrEP and explore ideas to increase the number of PrEP partners. It will continue targeting education, testing and prevention efforts to high-risk areas and offering free HIV testing at clinic and community sites. The federally funded Ryan White program provides treatment to those diagnosed who are under and uninsured. Treatment is also a major means of prevention, because as positive individuals are treated successfully, their risk of exposing others drops significantly.

The County’s Youth Tobacco Use Prevention Program aims to prevent initiation of teen tobacco use and promote smoking cessation resources to teen tobacco users. The youth smoking rate represents high school youth who reported smoking a cigarette in the last 30 days. From 2015 to 2017, the youth smoking rate dropped by 1.9 percentage points to 8 percent. As youth cigarette smoking has fallen, the use of e-cigs or vaping has increased, with use from the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) reported at 20 percent. While new data will not be available until FY2020, the Public Health Department continues to focus on decreasing youth smoking rates.

In FY2019, the focus for youth tobacco prevention included training adults who influence youth (i.e. parents, school administrators, K-12 educators, school nurses, youth group leaders, faith community, health professionals) on the harms and trends around emerging tobacco products (i.e. vapes, JUUL, e-cigs). Efforts to train individuals included workshops, presentations, webinars, community event presence and a monthly youth influencer e-newsletter. Tobacco-Free School billboards were installed, showing a new sign design which includes vapes. Priority population outreach included reaching LGBTQ+ youth, and a campaign was developed in partnership with youth, called #TooWokeToSmoke to resonate with communities of color.

According to the American Cancer Society, colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer diagnosed in both men and women in the United States each year. The National Colorectal Cancer Screening Roundtable Initiative set a goal of 80 percent for screenings among adults aged 50 and over by 2018. In 2017, Mecklenburg County assessed the percentage of residents aged 50 and over who received a screening through the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) survey. The result showed the County achieved the 80 percent goal in 2017.

In 2018, due to shifts in priorities, the Public Health Department’s focus on colorectal cancer screening was discontinued. While colorectal cancer screening is still an important issue for the County, the Public Health Department also relies on community partners to continue meeting this goal. The County remains committed to identifying emerging public health issues and engaging with local partners to develop strategies that address them.
Healthy Community

Key Performance Indicators

Health and Fitness Program Utilization

Mecklenburg County’s Park and Recreation Department provides a variety of programs that are designed to promote health and fitness in the community. These programs provide opportunities for residents to build a better quality of life by improving their physical and mental health.

Park and Recreation tracks the utilization of various health and fitness programs, including summer camps, aquatics, outdoor adventure and other programs. The number of registered users of these programs remained relatively stable, with a slight decrease from FY2018 to FY2019. The annual Community Survey results indicated that awareness of the programs has decreased in recent years. To ensure that residents are aware of the many opportunities offered by Park and Recreation, the department has invested in a marketing campaign to increase public awareness.

Ozone NAAQS Indicator

Mecklenburg County remained in compliance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for ozone over the three-year period from FY2017-2019. To comply with the NAAQS, an area’s compliance value must be less than or equal to 70 parts per billion (ppb). Mecklenburg County’s value for the period was 70 ppb, resulting in a FY2019 Ozone NAAQS Compliance Air Quality Indicator of 0.0% above the federal health-based standard (NAAQS) for ozone.

Local projects such as GRADE (Grants to Replace Aging Diesel Engines) that provide incentives for purchasing newer, cleaner engines, along with a highly successful permitting and enforcement program have helped achieve compliance. Even with federal, state and local measures in place to reduce ozone significantly over the past decade, Mecklenburg County remains the only region in the state that is still in jeopardy of violating the NAAQS for ozone.

Drawing from stakeholder input, the County identified new voluntary and incentive-based options that build on existing local efforts in FY2019. These strategies are to become the backbone of the region’s “Path Forward,” an air quality improvement action plan that will be provided to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and implemented in the region over the next 5-10 years. Many of these new strategies will aim to move Mecklenburg County and the region towards electric vehicles and equipment, as well as support infrastructure that reduces dependency on single occupancy vehicles. To find out more about the Path Forward, visit: www.mecknc.gov/LUESA/AirQuality/Pages/BreathingRoom.aspx.

Key Initiative #7: Health and Human Services Integrated Service Delivery Model – Community Resource Center

The close of FY2019 ended the first year of operation of the County’s prototype Community Resource Center and brought with it innovative and leading-edge accomplishments. Mecklenburg County residents visited the CRC to access services over 93,500 times, with over 9 percent of visits resulting in receiving at least two or more services. Throughout the year, 64 percent of customers seeking employment assistance (325 out of 508) obtained living-wage employment, many with benefits, while approximately:

- 8 percent (7,932) resulted in receiving Medicaid assistance
- 17 percent (15,611) resulted in receiving nutrition assistance with accessing nutritious food
- 11 percent (10,129) of visits resulted in receiving Public Health services
- 36 percent (33,612) resulted in receiving Medicare assistance
- 8 percent (7,932) resulted in receiving Veterans Services, Child Support and Emergency Services

Throughout FY2019, 96 percent of customers stated that they were satisfied with services received. In a “first of its kind” national effort, the Center welcomed a full-time community health team to the CRC. The Novant Health team members connect CRC customers to healthcare providers and other community resources, complete biometric screenings, assist with personal empowerment plans and provide health education and patient advocacy, all at no cost to the customer. In addition, Central Piedmont Community College joined the Center, providing an Education Navigator to assist customers in exploring, choosing and moving successfully toward job readiness or a college/training program of their choice.

Throughout the year, CRC leadership hosted numerous Health and Human Service leaders from across the nation, as well as several federal partners, to share information regarding the development and operation of the Center. In June 2019, a bill introduced by Congresswoman Alma Adams passed on the House Floor in support of Center funding, thereby recognizing the importance of this innovative and cost-cutting approach to allocating federal social services, and awaits approval in the Senate.

Ozone NAAQS Compliance Air Quality Indicator

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*The NAAQS for ozone standard changed from 75 to 70 parts per billion (ppb) in 2018.
GOAL AREA 5: SAFE COMMUNITY

OUTCOME
To have an efficient and effective criminal justice system

Key Performance Indicators

COURT APPEARANCE RATE
91% appearance rate at scheduled court dates

RECIDIVISM RATES
21% of convicted individuals were charged with new convictions

CIVIL PROCESS SERVICE RATE
67,704 civil paper processes were returned served (99%)
**KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

**SAFE COMMUNITY**

**COURT APPEARANCE RATE**

Pretrial Services

The Pretrial Services division within the Criminal Justice Services Department monitors the percentage of program participants that appear at their scheduled court date(s). Pretrial Services tracks the court appearance rate of those individuals under the division’s supervision.

In FY2019, the division implemented a new Release Conditions Matrix that allows defendants who meet Board of County Commissioners criteria to be eligible for supervision, regardless of the defendant’s risk score. The new set of release conditions broadened the scope of individuals who would be eligible for pretrial supervision.

While the division has used telephone calls and text notifications reminders, getting individuals to appear at their scheduled court date remains a challenge. Part of the difficulty originated from technology hiccups in implementation of the notifications, which required individuals to opt-in. In addition, the rise in the transient and homeless population has made phone notifications an increasingly ineffective way of reaching clients, since many do not have access to a phone. The division is continuing to evaluate the best means for notifying and ensuring clients appear at scheduled court dates.

Recovery Courts

Mecklenburg County’s Supervision, Treatment, Education and Prevention (S.T.E.P.) Program works to ensure that chemically dependent offenders are compliant with their court-ordered treatment plans. To ensure compliance, the S.T.E.P. Program tracks the number of missed calls and appointments with the case coordinator or probation officer.

Similar to Pretrial Services, S.T.E.P. implemented a text notification system. However, the feature did not provide the ability to both receive incoming messages and send outgoing messages. The division also saw a need to allow for messages over free Wi-Fi services to be made available at various businesses and locations throughout the County, since many clients do not have cell phone service or change cell phones frequently. As a result, the program is working with the County’s Information Technology Services Department to enhance the text message feature to make it more useful for the program and clients.

While the S.T.E.P. Program experienced some technology challenges, staff and partners have turned towards enhancing data collection and measurement practices. In FY2019, the division began ensuring that data was collected on a bi-weekly basis regarding the number of required attendances versus the actual number for court sessions, case manager meetings, probation officer meetings and treatment attendance. By tracking this information, the court ensures accountability for those who participate in the S.T.E.P. Program.

**RECIDIVISM RATES**

Re-Entry Services

The mission of Mecklenburg County’s Re-Entry Services program is to help offenders smoothly integrate back into the community with the support of wrap-around services. By providing assistance with employment, housing and treatment, the program seeks to reduce the likelihood an individual will recidivate and end up back in the criminal justice system. To understand longer-term impacts, Re-Entry Services tracks the recidivism rate of program cohorts over two years post program completion.

The FY2019 recidivism rate reflects outcomes for individuals that received services from the Re-Entry program in FY2017. When this cohort was initially selected in FY2017, many were chosen by the North Carolina Department of Public Safety (NCDPS) as part of an educational grant: Vera Institute’s Pathways to Secondary Education. As a result, many of these clients were not Mecklenburg County residents and struggled with the added stress of adjusting to a new environment and developing a new support network.

Beginning in FY2018, the department adjusted eligibility requirements for Re-Entry Services to serve only Mecklenburg County residents returning to the community following incarceration. This change helped ensure future cohorts have a direct connection to Mecklenburg County. Re-Entry Services will examine this factor during FY2020 to determine its impact, as well as determine additional factors that may have influenced the slight recidivism rate increase in FY2019. Additionally, in FY2020 the division will begin monitoring recidivism quarterly rather than annually to evaluate if programming changes are needed.

**COMBINED COURT APPEARANCE RATE**

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<th>YEAR</th>
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<td>PRETRIAL SERVICES</td>
<td>95.50%</td>
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<td>95.22%</td>
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FY17: 4,708 court appearances and 222 unexcused absences  
FY18: 4,785 court appearances and 255 unexcused absences  
FY19: 4,742 court appearances and 478 unexcused absences
Recovery Courts

In FY2019, the Criminal Justice Services Recovery Court staff worked to ensure best practices were central to all operations. The division provided training to all partner agencies, including judges, district attorneys, public defenders, probation officers, treatment agencies, peer support organizations and residential service providers. The training focused on the difficulties in serving medium-to-high risk/high need individuals in Recovery Courts and the need to address underlying issues participants are struggling with, including substance use, mental health, domestic violence, trauma, homelessness, unemployment and involvement with the criminal justice system. In addition, the Recovery Court staff incorporated the use of judicial bench books, staffing bench books and mock staffing informational aides to assist in keeping team members focused on cognitive-behavioral interventions related to recovery. To further integrate best practices around serving the needs of the whole family, technical assistance was provided to the FIRST (Families In Recovery to Stay Together) Court through the Prevention and Family Recovery Grant.

Civil Process Service Rate

The Mecklenburg County Sheriff’s Office serves an array of civil processes, including subpoenas, criminal summons, civil summons, garnishments, evictions and court orders. Appropriate service of all issued processes is essential to the fulfillment of the North Carolina statutory requirements of the Sheriff’s Office, as well as upholding its constitutionality. In FY2019, the Sheriff’s Office served 67,704 civil processes, resulting in a 99 percent service rate of the 68,395 processes that were deemed serviceable. The serviceable paper rate excludes processes that are considered unserviceable, including the paper had an incorrect address or the defendant moved from the address. Additionally, civil deputies make three good faith efforts to serve a process at varying times of the day. If the deputies make those attempts and still cannot serve the defendant, the process is marked unserviceable at no fault of the deputy. As a result, the measure differentiates the processes where best efforts and good faith attempts were made to serve the paper from those that were not served timely due to an error of the Sheriff’s Office.