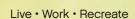


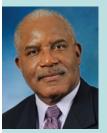
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Message from the County Manager



The economic downturn affected everyone both nationally and locally during Fiscal Year 2009.

I recall listening to residents of this community express concerns

about the financial challenges they faced rising unemployment, skyrocketing gas prices, increasing food costs and escalating costs for health insurance and medical care. Additionally, thousands sought community assistance and monetary support or the first time.

It was the most challenging year I've had to date as County Manager. Demand for County services increased while sales tax revenue continued to decline and State funds were reduced for our health and human service agencies.

These difficult times have fostered a stronger sense of community and renewed the organization's commitment to helping residents improve their lives. County staff managed within tight budgets, enhanced collaborative efforts and leveraged partnerships in order to ensure needed services were offered.

The organization also wanted to sustain results achieved on the Community & Corporate Scorecard, a tool used to depict the Board of County Commissioners' vision for our community. The 2015 Community Vision includes 25 measurable goals. All services provided by Mecklenburg County are targeted toward achieving these goals and align to one of four focus areas:

- Community Health & Safety
- **Growth Management & Environment**
- Social, Education & Economic Opportunity
- Effective & Efficient Government

We use traffic light symbols as a visual for gauging progress toward our goals. Although progress has been made and some results already achieved (46 percent green lights), we still have a significant journey ahead of us if we are to successfully achieve all of our desired results.

Mecklenburg County strives to be the best local government service provider. This annual performance report highlights the County's achievement of and progress toward these goals over the past four fiscal years. I hope this report helps you learn more about Mecklenburg County government and our efforts to serve you and our community.

> Harry L. Jones, Sr. County Manager

Performance Legend

- A green light indicates either the goal has been achieved or performance is at least 95% of the long-term target.
- A yellow light indicates performance is between 86% and 94% of the long-term target.
- A **red light** indicates performance is at or below 85% of the long-term target.
- A yellow/red light indicates mixed results; performance evaluated using statistical analysis and expert knowledge.
- No light indicates that measurement data are not yet available and/or that targets have not been established.

Desired Results View Community **Effective & Efficient Focus Area Health & Safety** Government Reduce Health Risks & Diseases Increase Customer & Stakeholder Satisfaction Improve Management of Mental Customer/ Illness, Developmental Disabilities Increase Citizen Awareness Stakeholder & Substance Abuse of County Responsibilities, Services & Results Increase Safety & Security of Residents Increase Efficiency & Effectiveness of Criminal Justice Services Internal **Business** Improve **Employee Efficiency Process Financial** Improve Financial Reduce/Avoid Costs Management **Employee & Enhance Workforce** Increase Employee Organization Retention & Motivation & Capacity Satisfaction Recruitment KEY Solid Line County Is Primary Service Provider Dotted Line County Is Not Primary Service Provider



Growth Management & Environment



Social, Education & Economic Opportunity

Improve Air, Water & Land Quality

Improve/Expand Parks, Open Spaces, Greenways & Recreational Opportunities

> Preserve Historic Sites & Landmarks

Improve Access to Public Facilities

Increase Economic Development & Job Opportunities

Increase Literacy & Workforce Development

Increase Citizen Self-Sufficiency

Increase Respect/Appreciation of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity

Increase Employee Access to Information Enhance Citizen Involvement

Maintain Triple-A Bond Rating Maintain Affordable & Competitive Tax Rate

Increase Employee Knowledge, Skills & Abilities Improve Technology-Related Capacities



Mecklenburg County

Community Health & Safety

Early Care is Best for Pregnant Women

As the population in Mecklenburg County continues to grow, so does the number of births: almost 15,000 babies were born here in 2008. Unfortunately, 2,632 pregnant women – more than 17 percent – did not see a doctor until after their first three months of pregnancy.

The County tracks several community health indicators related to births and birth outcomes, including the percentage of women who receive prenatal care during their first trimester. This is a community concern because of the relationship of prenatal care to low birth weight and premature deliveries, both which can lead to costly infant care, chronic illness, developmental issues and even infant mortality.

One reason for a delay in initiating prenatal care is lack of access to care. Other reasons include:

- Late recognition and diagnosis of pregnancy
- Hesitation because of an unplanned pregnancy
- Wait times for obstetrician appointments
- Inability to afford care
- · Cultural and individual beliefs

Data on prenatal care show that the rates of entry into early care vary by race and ethnicity. Hispanic women have the lowest rates of entry into early care but have relatively good birth outcomes, likely because they represent a largely young and healthy population. White women have the highest rate of first trimester care and the best birth outcomes, followed by Asian and then African American women.

Like Hispanic women, African American women have lower rates of entry into early care; however, they have the poorest birth outcomes, suggesting that many of these women may have other health issues. Therefore, the County seeks to improve maternal health and prenatal care by focusing on family planning and reducing pre-pregnancy health risks such as high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity.

While prenatal care is not available at the Health Department, women can obtain pregnancy testing and family planning services. Those who test negative can visit Family Planning, which provides annual exams and contraception. Women who test positive have the option of securing an immediate appointment with a designated obstetric nurse who provides education on nutrition, exercise and smoking; a month's supply of prenatal vitamins; and referrals to services such as Medicaid, WIC (Women, Infants and Children nutrition program) and case management.

Healthy babies lead to a healthier and better community for all residents. The County, medical community,



Risky Teenage Drivers

"Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for teenagers in America," according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Web site. "Mile for mile, teenagers are involved in three times as many fatal crashes as all other drivers."

Inexperience is one reason for automobile accidents caused by teenage drivers. Other reasons for accidents involving young drivers (15 -20 years old), include speeding, drinking and driving, drug use or distractions such as loud music, conversation with passengers and cell phone use.

According to a study by the American Automobile Association (AAA), 46 percent of teens admitted being distracted by texting while driving. Risky Drivers continued on page 14



COMMUNITY HEALTH & SAFETY 2009

2015 Performance Goals	FY06	FY07	FY08	FY09 Results
Child Abuse Rate To have the County's abused children rate to be below the State's rate				Meck: 12.3 State: 12.8 (cases per 1,000)
Violent Crime Rate To be in the quadrant with the lowest crime rate among comparable jurisdictions in the region				Lowest Crime Quadrant (838 crimes per 100,000) Performance Trend ▲
Mental Health Index To obtain 80% or more of targeted mental health goals including increased access to mental health services by decreasing wait time and increased number of consumers staying in the community and/or receiving in-home services		<u> </u>		80% of goals obtained
Disabled Adult Abuse & Neglect Rate To have fewer than 33 cases per 10,000 disabled adults				Meck: 58 State: 27 (cases per 10,000)
Health Index To obtain 75% or more of targeted health goals including low adolescent pregnancy, preventable mortality and communicable disease rates	•			38% of goals obtained Performance Trend ▲
Trial Court Performance Index To achieve 75% or more of targeted trial court goals including case clearance rate, time to disposition and age of active pending cases				No goals obtained
Functional Capacity of Jails Not to exceed functional capacity more than 20% of the year				94% of time exceeded functional capacity
Domestic Violence Index To achieve 75% or more of targeted goals				28% Offender Program Completion 998 DV Reported Crimes (per 100,000)



loss of life and property due to flooding is not just words on paper. He's lived it.

Cagle lived in the second floor of the Cavalier Apartments when Brian Creek flooded on August 28, 2008. "How fast the water rose, it blew my mind," Cagle said of the flood. "It turned my life upside down."

A few weeks before the flooding, Mecklenburg County purchased the Cavalier Apartments. It was the largest single floodplain buyout in County history; a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant covered more than 60 percent of the purchase, relocation and demolition cost.

When the flood hit, the County's plans to gradually relocate the tenants became urgent. With the County's help all residents, including Luke Cagle, found new housing within a few weeks. The Cavalier Apartments were then torn down, and all 13 acres became open space.

decade, the damage could have been far worse. An additional 150 creek-side homes and businesses would have been under water had the County not bought those properties in recent years and torn down the buildings.

Since the floodplain buyout initiative began in 1999, Storm Water Services has removed more than 200 homes and more than a dozen businesses from floodplains and converted the areas to open space. Local storm water fees and federal grants are leveraged to fund the program.

Activity in just the past fiscal year included:

- More than 240 families permanently relocated out of floodplains
- More than 60 flood-prone structures purchased
- 30 acres of urban floodplain reclaimed as open space.

Why buyouts are needed

Local floodplain maps were first drawn in the late 1970s. They showed thousands of homes and businesses had been built in high-risk areas. Although new restrictions were put in place for future floodplain development, existing structures were allowed to remain.

Mortgage lenders require property owners in floodplains to buy flood insurance. But the cost to the community is high - repeated evacuations, emergency shelter operations, multiple insurance payouts and disruption to lives.

In some cases, the most cost-effective way to prevent future flood losses is for government to buy the highrisk property and tear down the structure. The urban floodplain is then returned to its natural state: a safe place to store excess water during a flood.



More Parks for Play

In a year when people increasingly sought free or inexpensive activities because of economic hard times, the County's parks and other recreation facilities provided several choices. In FY2009, there were well over 11 million total visits - an increase of 22 percent from the previous year. In addition, more than 73,000 people attended park and recreation special events.

The increasing demand for services and growing population underscore the potential future need for more parks, recreation and open space.

Parks continued on page 14

Park and Recreation by the Numbers

Here's a look at the number of visits in some major categories:

Parks and Athletics	9,027,732
Recreation Centers	800,515
Aquatics	549,604
Nature Preserves	534,197
Therapeutic Recreation	11,843



GROWTH MANAGEMENT & ENVIRONMENT 2009

2015 Performance Goals	FY06	FY07	FY08	FY09 Results
Customer Satisfaction w/ Recreational Opportunities Achieve 80% customer satisfaction rating with County recreational opportunities				Customer Satisfaction: 91%
Job Growth Rate To have positive net growth in the number of jobs				0.32% increase
Preservation Rate To increase the number of preserved historic sites and landmarks				8 new sites preserved
Business Property Growth Rate To have positive growth in business property valuation				6.07% Performance Trend ▲
Transit Proximity Index To have 85% or more of the County's parks, greenways and libraries within one-quarter mile of a transit stop			<u> </u>	Parks: 54% Greenways: 43% Libraries: 100%
Parks & Open Space Index To have 100% goal attainment for voter approved parks, recreational amenities, greenways and natural resources				9.2% of goal obtained
Environmental Quality Index To have 100% goal attainment for improving air quality, stream water quality, and solid waste management and maintaining excellent lake water quality				50% Performance Trend ▲

Higher Numbers in Hard Times

A record number of people – 205,529 total visits – came through the doors of the Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services (DSS) in 2009. The economic downturn resulted in several first timers. The increase created long lines, crowded conditions and presented challenges for staff who accept applications and interview clients.

"Employees who have been at DSS more than 20 years tell me they have never seen demand this high," DSS Director Mary Wilson said.

Applications for public assistance increased by 35 percent; applications for Food and Nutrition Services (food stamps) rose by 47 percent, and in Work First, the cash assistance program for families in need, applications were up 57 percent. As of June 2009, one in five County residents received some form of public assistance – a 19 percent increase over the previous year.

"It became clear that providing services to our clients as efficiently and effectively as possible had to be our focus if we wanted to continue being the safety net for this community," Wilson said.

Faced with the increased demand, and \$11 million in department budget cuts, DSS leadership had to make innovative changes to provide more people with services. The department's solutions included the following:

Opened a West Side Office

An internal analysis revealed that about 45 percent of the department's customers reside in West Charlotte. As a result, DSS opened a full-service office at the Valerie C. Woodard Center on Freedom Drive in February 2009. In the first few months of operation, the new office saw double-digit increases in customer traffic each week, which continued throughout the year. The department plans to open another location in March 2010 off

Albemarle Road in East Charlotte to help meet additional customer needs.

Expanded Community-Based Social Work

DSS social workers and eligibility staff are now deployed throughout the community for several hours each week to provide intake and referral services. The staff works with several partner agencies such as Ada Jenkins Center, Crisis Assistance Ministry, Latin American Coalition, Matthews Help Center and Urban Ministry Center.

Launched Saturday Hours

In a survey of more than 1,000 customers, DSS found that 35 percent were currently employed and 40 percent had to take time off from work or school to access services during normal business hours. In June 2009, DSS began providing services on Saturday mornings from 8 a.m. until noon, offering greater flexibility for customers.

Hard Times continued on page 14



You Must Read

One book held the attention of many Mecklenburg County residents for six weeks in 2009. Thousands read Harper Lee's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, "To Kill a Mockingbird," as part of Charlotte Mecklenburg Library's The Big Read, a community-wide effort to encourage reading.

From February through March, people participated in group discussions, attended book themed-events, watched the Oscar-winning film version of the book and listened to book chapters read by local celebrities via free podcasts. The coming-of-age story narrated by a young white girl living in the segregated South in the 1930s explores such themes as race relations, gender roles, social and economic status and justice.

The community-wide reading project focused on young children, too, with books such as "The Sneetches," by Dr. Seuss, and "Maniac Magee," by Jerry Spinelli. These

books reflected similar themes as "To Kill a Mockingbird," but were geared more to their age and reading comprehension.

The Big Read is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts designed to restore reading to the center of American culture. For Mecklenburg County and its community stakeholders, the goal is to be a more literate community. Based on recent estimates and available data, 26 percent of the County's adult population is illiterate and only 67 percent of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools students are reading on or above grade level.

Several businesses and organizations partnered with the library to make The Big Read a success:

 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools participated, involving students across all grade levels and in English, science and civics classes.

- Mecklenburg County government hosted book cafés and held a panel discussion for its employees.
- The Young Lawyers and Criminal Lawyers of the Mecklenburg County Bar association sponsored a "Walk in My Shoes" photo contest for high schools.

Other partners included The Charlotte Observer, the Charlotte Bobcats, Generation Engage, Levine Museum of the New South, Monkey Joe's, WTVI public television, UNC Charlotte, and the town of Davidson just to name a few.



SOCIAL, EDUCATION & ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY 2009

2015 Performance Goals	FY06	FY07	FY08	FY09 Results
Ethnic & Cultural Diversity Index To have 80% of residents believe Mecklenburg County is a diverse community, provides an array of cultural activities and has diverse minority-owned businesses				Diverse Community: 85% Cultural Activities: 85% Minority-Owned Business: 76% Performance Trend
Unemployment Rate To have the County's unemployment rate at or below the State's rate				Meck: 11.5% State: 11.2%
Adult Literacy Index To increase the percentage of adults that are literate				74%
Student Literacy Index To have students perform on grade level or above on End of Grade Reading (95%), Math (88%) and Writing tests (80%)				Math: 79% Reading: 67% Writing: 75%
Self-Sufficiency Index To have 50% of clients on public assistance increase their earned income; to assist veterans in accessing VA services; and to decrease the County's homeless population				Clients with increased earned income: 37% Homeless population: 14% increase Veteran claims processed: 5,054 Paid veteran claims: \$17.2 million
Workforce Development Rate				Under Development

Are you a Fan or Follower?

Today's information era is designed for everything to be at your finger tips. In 2009, Mecklenburg County began using social media tools to connect with individuals who access and share information online and via mobile technology.

The County's initial foray into social media had very modest beginnings. It began with only two Twitter accounts used to provide timely information to the public, such as news releases and events. Now the County also uses Facebook, YouTube and Flickr to respond to customer questions, provide updates on County news and activities and share photo galleries.

The success of the County's Twitter usage continues to grow. As of January 5, 2010, the County's main account (twitter.com/MeckCounty) had 1,031 followers and a total of 707 tweets.

An array of information has been pushed to fans and followers, including topics on Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners meetings, updates on the H1N1 (swine flu) virus, seasonal flu shots, health and safety tips and a how-to video on composting. The tools also have allowed the County to connect residents with programs and services to meet



their interests, such as horseback riding lessons or other Park and Recreation programs.

A positive impact of the County's social media venture has been the dialogues and forums that have occurred with residents. One example is a discussion using Twitter to talk about the new North Carolina statewide ban of smoking in bars and restaurants. Another is when the County solicited input from residents on ways to improve how information is provided to the community.

For a current list of all the different County social media sites, please visit www.MecklenburgCountyNC.gov.



Twitter is a microblogging site that uses 140 characters to share information or engage in conversations with other users. Users can receive the updates they subscribe to on the Web site or through updates to their mobile phone or PDA.



Facebook is a social networking site. Users can add friends and send them messages as well as update their personal profiles to notify friends about themselves.



YouTube is a video sharing Web site on which users can upload and share videos.



Flickr is an online photo and video sharing Web site.

EFFECTIVE & EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT 2009

2015 Performance Goals	FY06	FY07	FY08	FY09 Results
Bond Rating To maintain Triple A bond rating, the highest possible score				AAA
Employee Access to Information To have 80% or more of County employees satisfied with internal communication and access to information necessary to perform job				86% satisfaction Performance Trend ▲
Employee Motivation & Satisfaction To have 80% or more of County employees satisfied with working at Mecklenburg County				88% satisfaction Performance Trend ▲
Employee Technology Resources To have 80% or more of County employees satisfied with technology related resources				88% satisfaction
Employees per Capita To optimally manage demands for service at or below the per capita average for North Carolina benchmark jurisdictions				Meck: 597 Benchmark: 645
Employee Knowledge, Skills & Abilities To have 80% or more of County employees satisfied with training and development opportunities	0			83% satisfaction Performance Trend ▲
Public Awareness To have 100% goal attainment on awareness of County services, goals and results				108% of target achieved Performance Trend ▲
Customer Satisfaction To have 80% or more of County residents satisfied with direct and online service delivery				86% satisfaction
Tax Collection Rate To be comparable or higher than state average in tax collections				97.6%
Employee Satisfaction Parity To achieve at least 80% satisfaction (parity) for each indicator by race, gender and age				Parity achieved for most indicators except for persons under 25 years of age
Resignation Rate To have the County's voluntary resignation to be at or below the national benchmark for local and state governments				Meck: 4.5% Benchmark: 70% Performance Trend ▲
Percentage at Net County Funding To have all departments expenditures within amended budget	0			91%
Advisory Committee Diversity To have advisory committee membership representative of the County's racial/ethnic population which currently is 28% Black/African American; 13% other	0			Blacks: 34% Others: 7%
Stakeholder Satisfaction To have 80% or more of County residents satisfied with quality of service, value for tax dollar and the community as a place to live, work and recreate; and to have 65% or more of residents satisfied with County communication				91% of target achieved 81% Satisfaction (Quality Service) 60% Satisfaction (Value/Tax Dollar)
Percentage Property Tax Revenue To have 51% or less of the County's revenue from property tax dollars				63%
Property Tax to Household Income To have residential property tax revenue as a percentage of household income less than or equal to select regional jurisdictions in North Carolina				Meck: 1.12% Benchmark: .97% Performance Trend ▲
Citizen Satisfaction: Input Opportunities To have 80% citizen satisfaction with input opportunities				66% satisfaction rating Performance Trend ▲
Customer Satisfaction Parity To achieve at least 80% satisfaction (parity) for each indicator by race and gender				Parity generally achieved by gender Parity achieved sometimes by race
Workforce Representation To have a diverse applicant pool consistent with the Federal Government's selection rate				Under Development
Competitiveness of Tax Rate to Businesses				Under Development

Risky Drivers continued from page 7

Although texting while driving is against the law for all drivers in North Carolina – a state law in effect since December 1, 2009 – there is still concern that not everyone is getting the message. North Carolina law also bans drivers under 18-years-old from using a mobile device while a vehicle is in motion.

A great amount of responsibility comes with the privilege and license to drive. However, young drivers are often easily influenced by peer pressure which can impair their abilities to make good decisions while behind the wheel.

Driver education courses are only one component of safe driving. Parent involvement and programs designed to curtail risky behavior are equally important. The County plans to collaborate with community partners including law enforcement, MEDIC and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools among others, to develop initiatives to promote safe driving for teens.



Parks continued from page 9

With the help of broad citizen involvement, the County has created an extensive new Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation 10 Year Master Plan. The plan includes additional parks, recreation centers, greenways, athletic fields and aquatic facilities.

Voters supported this vision by approving a \$250 million bond referendum in November 2008. County leaders will strategically acquire land and prioritize projects while managing debt.

Hard Times continued from page 10

"We want to be in the community where our customers are and make it easier for them to access services with minimal travel time or disruption to their schedules," Wilson said. "We want to do more than simply administer public assistance. We also want to reach those people who don't qualify for assistance and link them to services that help them reach or maintain independence."

Read continued from page 11

"I honestly believe one of the most notable achievements to come out of The Big Read was the fact that so many adults took the time to read for pleasure – even if it was for just one book," Arden McLaughlin, Big Read project manager, said. "Our adults need to read so that our children read. Everyone reaps the value when a community focuses its attention and resources on increasing and encouraging literacy."

FY2009 Budget in Brief

Mecklenburg County Tax Rate

