



Annual Performance Report

Fiscal Year 2024-2025



Executive Summary

This Annual Performance Report highlights the County's progress in advancing strategic objectives for Fiscal Year 2024-2025. The report showcases innovative approaches, improved service delivery, and the dedication of County employees who work every day to provide quality services enhancing our community.

While this report does not highlight performance measures from every department, additional performance measures and related data can be found in individual department sections of Union County's annually adopted budget document.

This report highlights initiatives and metrics within key areas of focus across County services, representing only a sample of all services provided by the County. Additional performance measures and related data can be found in Union County's annual adopted budget, which is available at unioncountync.gov/budget.



Strategic Objectives



Public Safety

In concert with our community partners, provide essential services that protect the public's health, safety and welfare.



Economic Development

Through common vision and direction become a more business friendly, economically vibrant, and sustainable community by fostering the development of a qualified workforce and infrastructure capacity to support future and current economic sustainability and growth.



Community Consensus

By developing relationships based on mutual trust and understanding, engage appropriate stakeholders to identify and successfully implement programs and initiatives that reflect community priorities.



Organizational Strengthening

Develop and maintain a highly engaged workforce through shared values and clarity of purpose, with the tools, training and resources that support skills development, knowledge sharing and retention, and employee investment.



Sustainability

Through collaboration with community partners, foster an environment that promotes affordability of services, conservation of resources, and preservation of a high-quality of life to support and enrich a diverse and productive population.



Public Safety

Health and Welfare

Union County delivers thousands of meals each year to homebound seniors, yet demand for home-delivered meals continues to exceed current capacity. During fiscal year 2025, additional partnerships were developed with municipalities and nonprofit agencies, like Food for Families NC, to help bridge the gap in this service. Union County has also committed additional funding for this program in the fiscal year 2026 budget to reduce the wait list.

In addition to the nutritional support offered to seniors, **Union County Community Support and Outreach's WIC (Women, Infants and Children)** program provides essential nutrition services and education to pregnant women, new mothers, and young children.

Union County's program was featured in a North Carolina Public Health Association newsletter spotlighting exceptional local health initiatives for their innovative approaches and dedication to improving community health and accessibility. The increased communication and flexibility that have been implemented ensure that the robust caseload receives high-quality and efficient services. An area of notable success has been reducing wait times for appointments: while a similar percentage were scheduled outside the standard timeframe, the average delay dropped from 46 days in February to just 8 days in June through August.

Performance Measure Name & Description	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual
Senior Nutrition Meals Served				
Measures the number of meals served to eligible Senior Nutrition participants	123,480	98,406	83,555	68,298
Average WIC Active Clients				
Measures the average number of women, infants and children currently active on WIC	3,536	3,887	3,719	4,361
Average WIC Caseload				
Measures the average number of WIC clients each FTE manages (State recommendation is 500 cases per FTE)	631	712	599	623





Health and Welfare (Continued)

Social Services, with the support of Business Operations, implemented a multi-year plan to reduce backlogged child welfare cases. These cases, typically expected to be resolved within 45 days per North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services guidelines, had accumulated over time. In fiscal year 2025, the County saw a major reduction in these overdue cases, returning to a standard caseload timeline.

Performance Measure Name & Description	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual
Child Welfare Investigations				
Measures the average number of child welfare investigations	129	140	170	89
Child Welfare Investigations Caseload				
Measures the average number of child welfare investigation cases each social worker manages	6.8	7.3	9.0	5



Union County’s Public Health staff has also implemented innovative solutions to proactively prevent communicable disease transmission. During the fall of 2024, cases of pertussis, commonly known as whooping cough, were on the rise. Public Health’s Child Care

Health Consultants (CCHCs) collaborated with Immunization Program staff to organize a mobile immunization van, providing Tdap vaccinations to 120 childcare providers and significantly reducing the risk of pertussis transmission within Union County’s childcare facilities.

Performance Measure Name & Description	FY 2022 Actual*	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual
Communicable Disease *				
Measures the average number of communicable disease case reports per month	3,662	1,301	133	124
* Results include COVID-19 cases that are no longer reportable as of May 2023.				



Health and Welfare (Continued)

Environmental Health continues to enhance educational offerings to protect community health. In May 2025, Environmental Health staff offered a hands-on certification program over a one-and-a half-day period. This program, offered to local food workers, focuses on proper food storage and handling, kitchen cleaning and sanitation, and hand washing. These

efforts not only raise food safety scores but also increase community trust in local dining establishments. In addition to the programs currently offered to local food workers, Union County will be offering additional technical assistance to businesses in certain risk categories to reduce the number of food establishments below a certain score.

Performance Measure Name & Description	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual
Environmental Health Education & Outreach Efforts				
Measures the number of public/industry/community outreach and training efforts provided and number of Environmental Health staff training and development sessions provided	172	153	164	152

Preparedness & Security

Union County Emergency Management participates in and hosts multiple preparedness events, in conjunction with other agencies, to guarantee Union County is prepared to protect itself against, respond to, and recover from various types of disasters. Simulating exercises like this, throughout the year, enables our teams to respond appropriately should an incident arise. Additionally, Union County is prepared to respond to help our neighboring communities when there is a need. North Carolina Emergency Management recognized Union County for outstanding support in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, which caused widespread damage across the western part of the state. Union County’s Emergency Management coordinated the swift and impactful efforts of departments and agencies countywide.



Performance Measure Name & Description	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual
Requested Exercises Completed				
Measures the percent of requested exercises (table-tops, functional and full scale) completed by EM staff	N/A	100%	100%	100%



Public Safety

Preparedness & Security

Cyber attacks, attempts to disrupt, damage, or steal data from our systems, pose a growing threat to public services. Union County's Information Technology (IT) Department has implemented a variety of policies and practices to ensure our organization is prepared and protected. Union County's IT team was

nationally recognized for implementing innovative technology and cybersecurity practices. This is the seventh consecutive year the County has earned recognition from the Center for Digital Government (CDG) in partnership with the National Association of Counties (NACo).

Performance Measure Name & Description	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual
Cybersecurity - Remediated Findings				
Measures the percent of remediated findings of annual penetration tests & vulnerability scans	N/A	N/A	N/A	80%



Economic Development

Business and Industry Partnerships

In the fall of 2024, Union County established its own Economic Development Department, aiming to enhance the focus on countywide initiatives. In its commitment to collaborating with towns and identify community goals for economic development, the department hosted a Municipal Summit.

Additionally, Economic Development hosted Business France and the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC) during a recent tour of North Carolina's aerospace clusters. The meeting with French manufacturing firms offered a valuable opportunity to foster new business relationships and showcase our region's strong network of community partners.

The new department has established goals, moving into the next fiscal year, to continue outreach efforts for new businesses and strengthen relationships with existing industries and partners.





Economic Development



Supporting Local Agriculture

Each year, Union County Cooperative Extension delivers education programs that help local farmers increase productivity and profitability. The programs offer participants a firsthand look at research trials and best practices. One of this year’s many programs included the 2025 Small Grains Field Day, where farmers, researchers, and agricultural professionals gathered among small plots of wheat to explore the latest advancements in years of recent research.

These events reinforce Extension’s commitment to bridging research and real-world farming needs across the region. Year after year, the profitability to Union County farmers, through partnerships and programming with Cooperative Extension, continues to increase.

Performance Measure Name & Description	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual
Net Yield Increase of Crops				
Measures the increased profitability to Union County agriculture community benefiting from Union County programs; Increase from \$3,011,333 (3-year average) to \$3,312,466 by the end of FY26	\$2,809,000	\$3,050,000	\$3,175,000	\$3,411,537



Community Consensus

Building Trust in Civic Engagement

Each year, Board of Elections (BOE) staff process thousands of voter transactions (new registrations, address changes, etc.) to ensure accuracy of voter registration lists. During FY25, a general election year, Union County's BOE processed 175,163 maintenance transactions. This 129% increase in maintenance transactions reflects the dedication to maintaining accurate voter records and supporting a fair democratic process.



Performance Measure Name & Description	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual
Voter Maintenance Transactions				
Measures the number of voter transactions that occur each year	120,660	86,110	76,364	175,163



Community Consensus

New Digital Resources

Several departments enhanced digital tools in fiscal year 2025 to improve accessibility, transparency, and user experience.

Water

To enhance customer service and communication, Union County Water launched a new website this past fall. The website contains a customer portal, where customers can view & pay their bills, set up usage alerts to monitor & manage water usage, and access informative, money-saving tips.

Performance Measure Name & Description	FY 2022 Actual*	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual
Customer Interactions *				
Average number of Customer Service Touchpoints per Month	46,544	59,079	79,281	130,498
* Due to issues resulting from the implementation of a new customer portal, interactions with customers increased significantly.				

Planning

The Planning Department rolled out a new resource to help county residents find information on development activity within unincorporated areas of Union County. The online Development Project Map provides information about the size of sites, known plans, current stage of development, and more.

The map, which can be accessed through the Planning Department’s website, can help residents quickly and easily understand what residential or commercial projects are proposed or may be underway.

Performance Measure Name & Description	FY 2022 Actual*	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual
Zoning Permits Issued *				
Measures the number of zoning permits issued	1,696	1,149	1,190	1,346
* Union County began providing Land Use Administration services for the Town of Wingate in January 2025. In FY25, 79 zoning permits were issued for Town of Wingate's jurisdiction.				



Organizational Strengthening

Financial Stewardship

Union County's Budget & Grants Management Department received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for the County's annual budget document for the period beginning July 1, 2024. To receive the budget award, the County met nationally recognized guidelines for effective budget presentation.

These guidelines are designed to assess how well an entity's budget serves as a policy document, a financial plan, an operations guide, and a communications device. **This marks the 12th consecutive year Union County has received this award.**





Union County recently received AAA bond rating and stable outlook designations from all three major rating agencies for general obligation bonds.

The agencies attributed this to stable financial performance supported by strong management and ongoing economic development.

In addition to achieving these ratings, **Union County’s Finance Department was also awarded GFOA’s Excellence in Financial Reporting for FY2024 for the 13th year in a row.**

For the ninth year, Union County’s Procurement & Contract Management Department received the 2024 Sustained Professional Purchasing Award from the North Carolina Association of Governmental Purchasing for **demonstrating excellence in purchasing standards**, which supports the commitment to serve as good stewards of public funds.

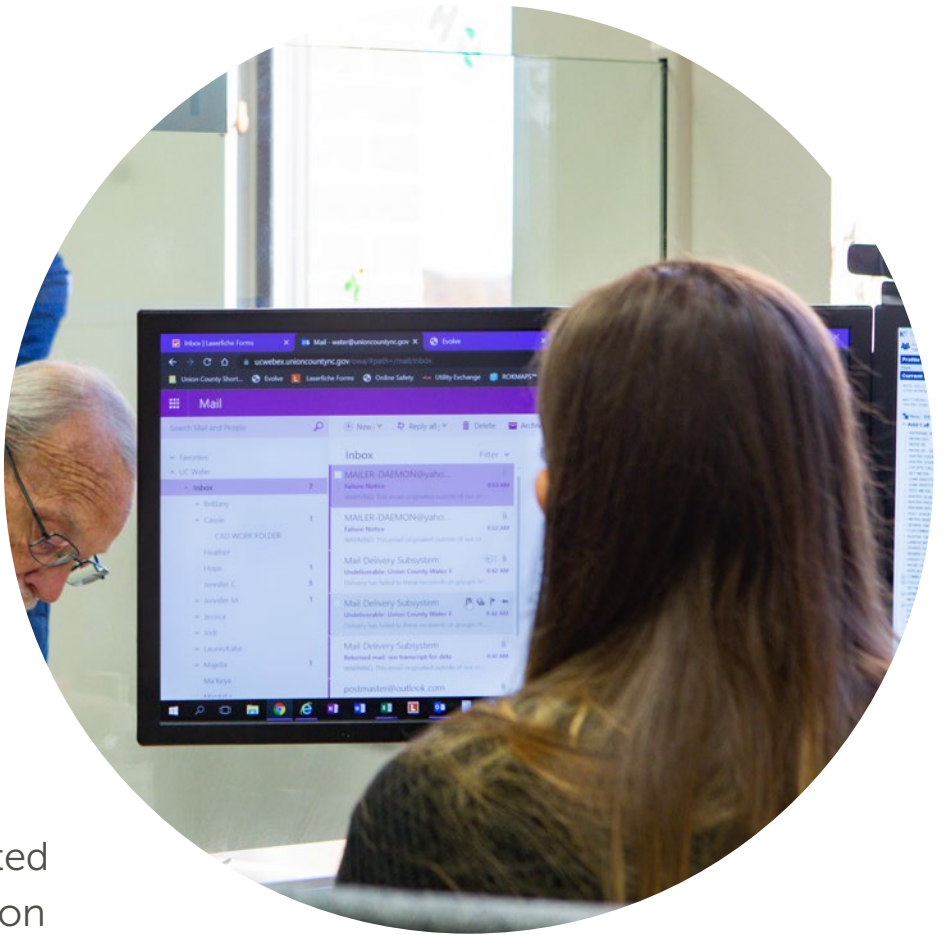
Performance Measure Name & Description	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual
Achieve Distinguished Budget Presentation Award				
Indicates if criteria for GFOA Distinguished Budget Presentation Award was met	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Annual Comprehensive Financial Report Compliance				
Indicates compliance with Annual Comprehensive Financial Reports standards	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes



Organizational Strengthening

Internal Process Improvements

The process of bringing new employees into Union County is now more efficient, thanks to the County's first significant process improvement initiative led by the Strategy & Innovation team, in collaboration with Human Resources and representatives from numerous departments. One key improvement, implemented in conjunction with Information Technology, was automating personnel action forms, leading to reduced approval time, minimizing manual errors, and improved tracking.



Performance Measure Name & Description	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual
Personnel Action Submissions				
Represents the number of personnel actions submitted to HR	2,956	3,142	4,917	4,029
Automated Business Process Usage				
Measures the percentage of stable and efficient automated business processes designed by the document imaging team in production	N/A	100%	100%	100%

Employee Health and Wellness

Opening in fiscal year 2026 is Union County's Employee Health & Wellness Center, a resource available exclusively to Union County employees. The center, operated by Atrium Health, represents the County's ongoing commitment to a healthy, supported workforce.





Sustainability

Volunteer Impact

Union County programs simply couldn't succeed without the dedication, passion, and hard work of our volunteers. While opportunities exist in multiple departments across the county, **Community Support & Outreach, alone, saved approximately \$477,125 during fiscal year 2025 with the utilization of volunteers. In just this one department, volunteers logged over 14,400 hours assisting various programs.**

Performance Measure Name & Description	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual
Volunteer Impact				
Measures the number of residents assisted by volunteer programs	9,481	9,513	9,465	9,300
Volunteer Hours & In-Kind Cost Savings Generated				
Measures the number of hours and cost savings generated by use of volunteers in various programs (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, Senior Nutrition, Christmas Bureau, etc.)	13,573 Hours \$375,027	13,385 Hours \$399,668	13,581 Hours \$429,688	14,454 Hours \$477,125

Environmental Stewardship

Union County's Solid Waste facilities collect hundreds of thousands of tons of waste each year. Most impressively, county employees collected more than two tons of waste from the streets surrounding Jesse Helms Park in Wingate during a one-day collaboration with North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). Union County offers supplies for community groups to

hold similar beautification events within the county in an effort to mitigate litter and protect our natural environment. Additionally, Union County collected more than 38,000 pounds of hazardous waste during the annual Household Hazardous Waste event, which encourages the safe and responsible disposing of hazardous materials.

Performance Measure Name & Description	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual
Average Monthly Volume - Inbound Yard Waste				
Measures the average monthly inbound tonnage of Yard Waste at Central Collection Site	404	385	410	473
Average Monthly Volume - Inbound C&D				
Measures the average monthly inbound tonnage of Construction & Demolition (C&D) material	6,265	7,564	8,159	8,240
Average Monthly Volume - Outbound MSW				
Measures the average monthly outbound tonnage of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW)	12,743	13,661	13,812	14,883



Sustainability

In an effort to preserve the rural character and agricultural heritage of our community, Union County's Soil & Water Conservation Department, in conjunction with other county departments and stakeholder groups, has implemented the Land Preservation and Easement Program.



The program allows landowners to voluntarily place a conservation easement on their property. This legal agreement permanently limits the use of the land to protect its agricultural and environmental value, while the landowner retains ownership. In return, landowners receive financial compensation for a portion of the land's value and may benefit from tax incentives.

Performance Measure Name & Description	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual
Total Acreage in Conservation Easements				
Measures the total number of acres held in conservation easements throughout Union County. The goal is to increase 20 acres or 2 new easements by the end of FY26.	N/A	N/A	N/A	150



