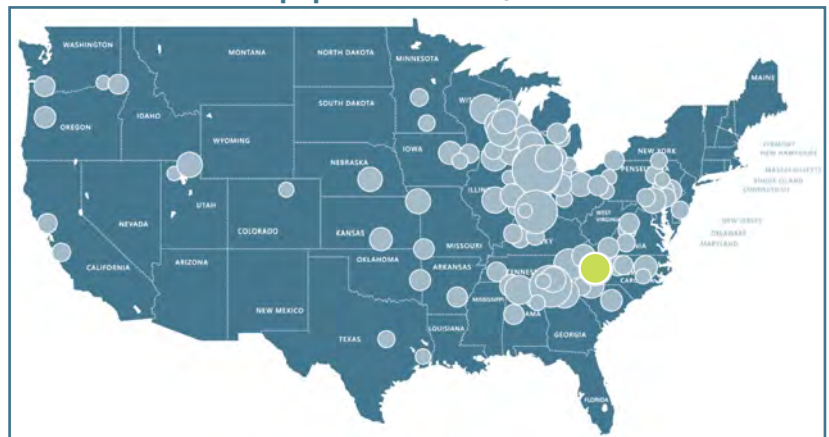




Manufacturing share of all jobs in 2019 MSAs with population of 100,000 and above



Hickory MSA has the highest percentage of employees in the manufacturing sector in NC and SC; more than 3 times as specialized in manufacturing as the national average.

- *Hickory Metro ranks **6th** in the nation for concentration of manufacturing—**428** manufacturers & **24,266** employees in Catawba County alone*
- ***28%** of the workforce is employed in manufacturing compared to the NC average of 11% and the national average of 9% (2019)*
- *Average manufacturing wage in the Hickory Metro is **below the US average** wage for all jobs and below the national manufacturing wage*

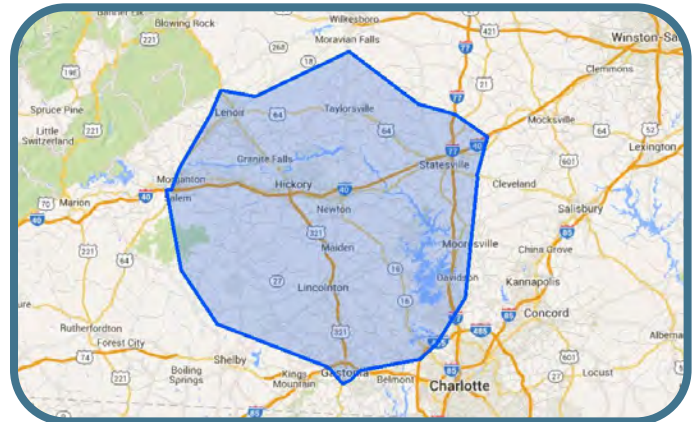
Other Competitive Advantages

- *Low Cost, Reliable and Redundant Electricity*
- *Low Cost/Abundant Water (up to 12mgd available capacity)*
- *Low Cost and Reliable Fiber and Network Infrastructure by multiple providers (AT&T/CenturyLink/Charter Business/others)*
- *Low property tax rates*
- *Lowest Unionization Rate in NC—Less than 1% unionization rate with only 1 of over 425 manufacturers unionized*
- *Insulated from Natural or Manmade Disasters*
- *Fast Track Local Permitting*
- *Extensive Training Assistance from the NC Community College System*
- *Manufacturing Assistance through the Manufacturing Solutions Center*
- *Manufacturing Assistance and Training by NC Center for Engineering Technologies*
- *Laborforce totals over 395,000 within a 45-minute drive*
- *Within 45 minutes of the Charlotte Douglas International Airport*

Forbes

*Hickory, NC MSA ranked
#1 in the US for
Cost of Doing Business since 2016
Ranked in the top 6 since 2006*

45-Minute Drive Time



807,414
population

391,189
civilian labor force

Demographics

	Catawba County	Greater Hickory MSA
<i>Population (2019):</i>	159,551	369,711
<i>Population Growth (2014-2019):</i>	3.2%	1.9%
<i>Households (2019):</i>	62,417	146,324
<i>Median Household Income (2019):</i>	\$52,436	\$50,631
<i>Per Capita Income (2019):</i>	\$29,126	\$27,348
<i>Unemployment Rate (March 2021):</i>	4.5%	4.6%
<i>Labor Force (March 2021):</i>	78,164	172,223
<i>Unemployed (March 2021):</i>	3,520	7,697
<i>Retail Sales: (*14th Highest in NC)</i>	\$2.49B*	\$4.19B
<i>Bank Deposits: (*10th Highest in NC)</i>	\$3.50B*	\$5.61B

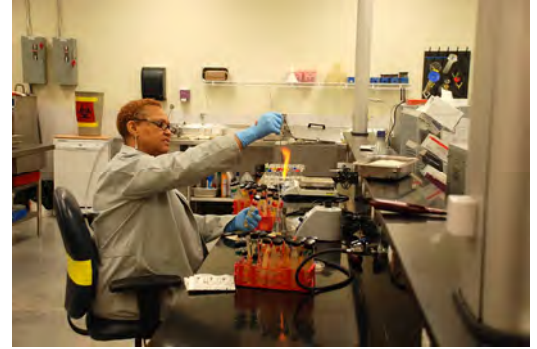
Catawba County Ethnicity (ACS 2019)	
<i>White, non Hispanic</i>	74.9%
<i>Black, non Hispanic</i>	8.9%
<i>Asian*, non Hispanic</i>	4.5%
<i>Other, non Hispanic</i>	1.5%
<i>Hispanic</i>	10.1%
* -5th largest Asian population in NC, 2019	
Catawba County Educational Attainment (ACS 2019)	
<i>High School Diploma or Higher</i>	86.5%
<i>High School Graduate</i>	28.8%
<i>Some College</i>	21.6%
<i>Associate Degree</i>	12.7%
<i>Bachelor's Degree</i>	16.6%
<i>Master's Degree & above</i>	6.8%

Manufacturing Solutions Center

Bringing manufacturing into the NEW ERA of changing technologies, global marketing and production innovations. The mission of the Manufacturing Solutions Center (MSC) is to help US manufacturers increase sales, improve quality and improve efficiency to create or retain jobs.

This is accomplished by:

- *Enhancing and improving products through research and development*
- *Assisting in creating prototypes for new, innovative offerings*
- *Analyzing new materials to enhance structure and programs*
- *Testing products for reliable content and quality*
- *Training personnel for lean manufacturing processes and supply chain efficiencies*
- *Providing a forum for rollout of new 21st century technologies*
- *Providing hands-on guidance for international marketing, sales and military procurement*
- *Providing photo-realistic renderings and visualizations*
- *Creating 3D rapid prototypes in a variety of materials*
- *Industry advocacy*



Our services include testing services, training, product development, marketing, engineering, assisting inventors & entrepreneurs.

Workforce Solutions Complex



*Catawba County is a community committed to the future of manufacturing and ensuring our manufacturers have a workforce pipeline for the future. This is evident by the county's investment in a new state-of-the-art Workforce Solutions Complex on the campus of CVCC. A culmination of many years of planning and collaboration with the three public school systems, **this \$26 million dollar, 80,400 square foot facility houses technology and engineering programs for college students, and junior & senior high school students from all schools in Catawba County.** Business-driven programs will include: Computer Engineering Technology, Electrical Engineering Technology, Computer Integrated Machining, Electronics Engineering Technology, Welding, Mechanical Engineering Technology, Mechatronics, and Robotics.*

NC Center for Engineering Technologies

The North Carolina Center for Engineering Technologies provides facilities for applied research in engineering related fields and serves as a conduit to baccalaureate education delivered by the University of North Carolina system schools. Conceived as a community supported higher education effort in technical and engineering disciplines, this Center was established through a collaboration of business, government and higher education organized as the Future Forward Economic Alliance. The Center may collaborate with other schools in bringing the best programs to the region to meet employment needs.



Labs include:

- *Rapid Product Realization Laboratory*
- *Engineering Design Laboratory*
- *Metrology & Reverse Engineering Laboratory*
- *Distance Education Lab*
- *Polymers Lab*
- *Patternmaking Laboratory*

Degree programs include:

- *Building Sciences (Appalachian State University)*
- *Engineering Technology (Western Carolina University)*
- *Industrial Technology (East Carolina University)*
- *Electrical Engineering Technology (UNC-Charlotte)*
- *Fire Safety Engineering Technology (UNC-Charlotte)*
- *Engineering Management (UNC-Charlotte)*

428 manufacturers · < 1% unionization rate · Only 1 unionized

Selected Recent Expansions

Company	Product	Investment	Jobs
Shurtape Technologies	Tape manufacturing & distribution	\$31,400,000	100
Corning Optical Communications LLC	Fiber optic cable	\$60,000,000	110
Prysmian Group	Cables for energy and telecom industries	\$53,800,000	50
GKN Driveline	Automotive driveline components	\$110,000,000	143
Corning Optical Communications LLC	Fiber optic cable	\$67,000,000	210

Selected Recent Announcements

Company	Product	Investment	Jobs
Crate & Barrel	Warehouse & distribution (Artisan-made home furniture)	\$38,500,000	150
MaxPax LLC	Packaging manufacturing	\$9,550,000	300
Arhaus	Warehouse & distribution (Artisan-made home furniture)	\$26,000,000	67
Cataler, NA	Automotive catalysts	\$42,000,000	151
Design Foundry	Retail furniture manufacturing	\$3,133,000	202
ITM Medical Isotopes	Pharmaceutical manufacturing	\$17,000,000	137
Room & Board	Warehouse & distribution (Artisan-made home furniture)	\$12,870,000	13
Dynamic Air Engineering	Specialty components and systems for aerospace	\$7,255,000	53

Some Catawba County Manufacturers

