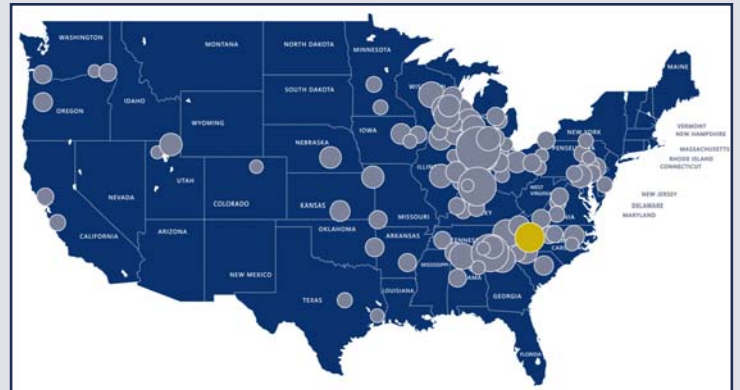




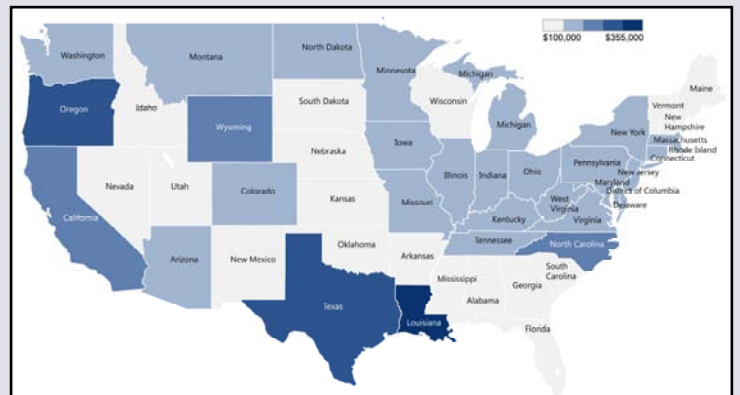
Hickory MSA has the highest percentage of employees in the manufacturing sector in NC and SC; 3 times as specialized in manufacturing as the national average.

- Hickory Metro ranks 6th in the nation for concentration of manufacturing—420 manufacturers in Catawba County alone
- 29% of workforce is in manufacturing compared to the NC average of 11% and the national average of 9% (2018)
- Average manufacturing wage in the Hickory Metro is below the US average wage for all jobs and below the national manufacturing wage

Manufacturing share of all jobs in 2016
MSAs with population of 100,000 and above



Manufacturing value added per employee in 2015

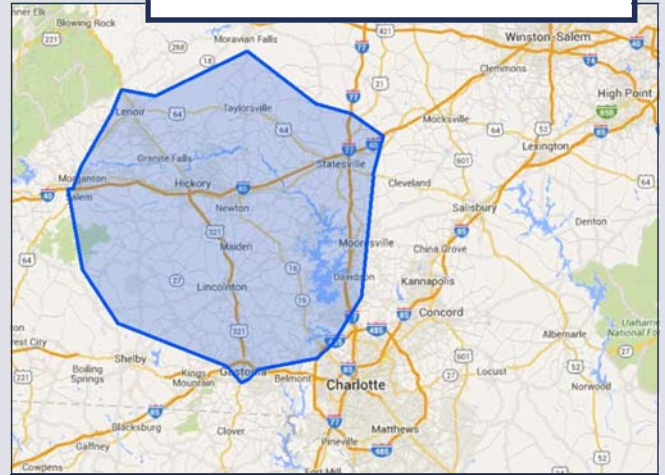


Other Competitive Advantages

- 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 420 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 ranked
#1 in the US for
Cost of Doing Business in 2017
Ranked in the top 6 since 2006**



45-minute drive time from center of Catawba County

Demographics

	Catawba County	Greater Hickory MSA
Population (2017):	157,974	366,534
Population Growth (2000-2010):	9.2%	7.8%
Households (2017):	61,828	141,250
Median Household Income (2017):	\$55,539	\$48,079
Per Capita Income (2017):	\$29,099	\$25,996
Unemployment Rate (July 2018):	3.7%	3.7%
Labor Force (July 2018):	79,199	175,660
Unemployed (July 2018):	2,929	6,551
Retail Sales: (*11th Highest in NC)	\$2.37B*	\$3.86B
Bank Deposits: (*11th Highest in NC)	\$2.72B*	\$4.52B

Catawba County Ethnicity (ACS 2017)	
White, non Hispanic	75.4%
Black, non Hispanic	6.9%
Asian*, non Hispanic	4.5%
Other, non Hispanic	3.4%
Hispanic	9.8%
*-6th largest Asian population in NC, 2016	
Catawba County Educational Attainment (ACS 2017)	
High School Diploma or Higher	83.4%
High School Graduate	30.5%
Some College	21.1%
Associate Degree	10.2%
Bachelor's Degree	14.7%
Master's Degree & above	6.9%

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
- Inventors & Entrepreneurs



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 the 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)

420 manufacturers · < 1% unionization rate · Only 1 unionized manufacturer

Selected Recent Expansions

Company	Product	Investment	Jobs
Progressive Furniture	Furniture	\$6,500,000	50
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
Room & Board	Warehouse & distribution (Artisan-made home furniture & accessories)	\$12,870,000	13
Carolina Nonwovens	Thermo-bonded nonwovens	\$13,000,000	62
Dynamic Air Engineering, Inc.	Specialty components and systems for aerospace and defense industries	\$7,255,000	53
Minelli USA	Specialty wood products	\$2,000,000	12

Some Catawba County Manufacturers

Catawba County EDC

Julie Pruett, Director of Recruitment

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