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## **BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS LEADS STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR CATAWBA COUNTY**

NEWTON, NC – The Catawba County Board of Commissioners is leading a coordinated, countywide strategic plan to drive economic growth and enhance quality of life in Catawba County.

The process, which began in early September, is engaging municipal leaders and community partners to identify and prioritize needs in key growth sectors, including economic development, education, infrastructure, technology, recreation, health and safety, and arts and culture. Workshop-style discussions related to these sectors will continue through early February.

As critical needs are identified, the Board is taking action to align current efforts, set policy, and guide resource allocation to boost and sustain economic prosperity over the long term.

The plan was initiated in response to demographic and job growth projections indicating a significant shortage of workers in Catawba County by 2035.

“Boosting economic growth in Catawba County has always involved creating viable employment opportunities and developing skilled workers,” said Randy Isenhower, Chairman, Catawba County Board of Commissioners. “If we want to remain competitive in today’s economy, we can’t stop there. We must also proactively recruit and retain those workers by making Catawba County a top choice for the workforce of today and tomorrow.”

“This plan is a true call to action,” added Board of Commissioners Vice Chair Barbara Beatty. “We have to look beyond traditional growth strategies and create compelling reasons for working-age adults to want to make a life for themselves and their families in Catawba County.”

Because the plan is a work in progress, the Board will seek public input as needed and share updates as decisions are made. Updates will also be posted on the County’s Facebook page and Twitter feed throughout the planning process. The plan is expected to be completed by early 2017.

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