



IAAO Certification of Excellence in Assessment Administration Submission

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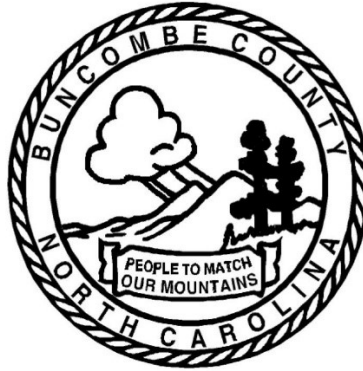


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Chapter 1: Environment

1. What distinguishes the jurisdiction by geography, economy and market situation?

Provide a brief narrative backed by statistics for the most recent five years for the following:

- Population and demographic trends
- Economic trends by major sector or industry
- The trend and current number of assessable real and personal properties and total valuations (with breakdowns by major categories, such as residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural)
- Numbers of sales, new properties, and appeals by major property categories
- Land area
- The fiscal importance of the property tax in each tax district and for the jurisdiction as a whole
- Recent extraordinary events such as natural disasters

Explain the assessment cycle if it falls outside of the calendar year.

(Coordinate the responses to this question with question one in Chapter 2, Management and Staffing.)

Buncombe County is situated in the western part of North Carolina and has the largest population of the western most counties with the city of Asheville as its county seat. Buncombe County has the 7th largest population in North Carolina with an estimation as of July, 2017 to be 257,607. Since 2010 Buncombe County has grown at an approximate 1.16% annual rate. The city of Asheville has grown at an increased rate of 1.46% annually. The following table indicates population trends in Buncombe County and the city of Asheville.

Table 1-1

Population Trends				
Area	2000	2010	2017 (est.)	Percent Change
Buncombe County	206,330	238,318	257,607	8.09%
City of Asheville	68,889	83,393	91,902	10.20%

Source: US Bureau of Census

The following table shows recent unemployment trends in North Carolina, Buncombe County and the United States between 2013 and 2017.

Table 1-2

Unemployment Trends			
Year	North Carolina	Buncombe County	United States
2013	7.99%	5.98%	7.40%
2014	6.31%	4.70%	6.20%
2015	5.74%	4.36%	5.30%
2016	5.08%	3.86%	4.90%
2017	4.55%	3.49%	4.40%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics (compiled by Texas A&M Real Estate Center)

As can be seen from the preceding table, the unemployment rate has continued to decrease in the Buncombe County area and is currently below both the North Carolina and U.S rates.

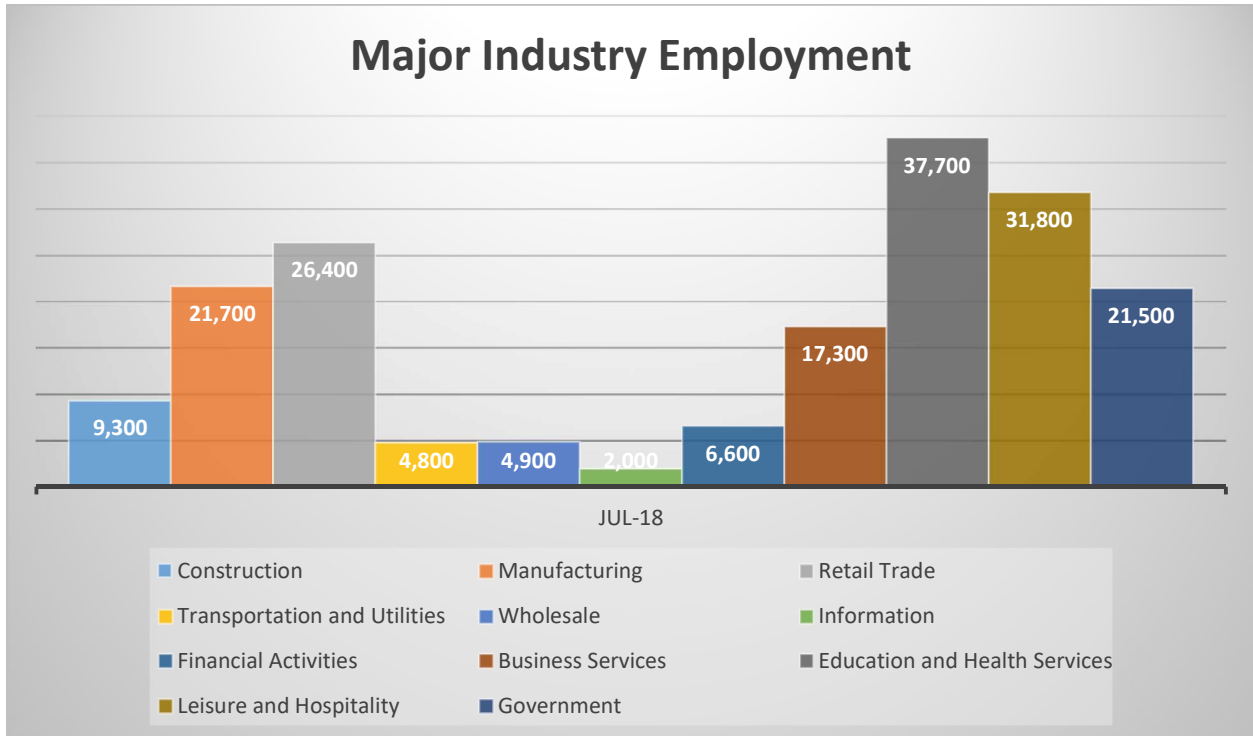
According to the United States Census Bureau from 2012- 2016 Buncombe County had 102,100 total households with a \$46,902 median annual income.

The Education and Health Services Industry is the largest employment industry in Buncombe County, with Memorial Mission Hospital Inc. and Buncombe County Board of Education being the two [largest individual employers](#). Buncombe County also has a strong Leisure and Hospitality, and Retail Trade industry which are fueled by Buncombe County's tourism. The following table and chart show employment by the major industries within the greater Buncombe County area.

Table 1-3

Employment per Industry			
Major Industry	July 2017	July 2018	Percent Change
Construction	8,900	9,300	4.5%
Manufacturing	20,700	21,700	4.8%
Retail Trade	26,100	26,400	1.1%
Transportation and Utilities	4,700	4,800	2.1%
Wholesale	4,800	4,900	2.1%
Information	2,000	2,000	0.0%
Financial Activities	6,500	6,600	1.5%
Business Services	17,300	17,300	0.0%
Education and Health Services	37,400	37,700	0.8%
Leisure and Hospitality	30,400	31,800	4.6%
Government	21,200	21,500	1.4%

Table 1-4



Source: Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce

As can be seen from the preceding chart, employment by the major industries continues to rise. This would indicate steady growth in the Buncombe County area.

All property in Buncombe County can be broken down into four major categories. These categories include residential, commercial, vacant land, and exempt properties. Residential properties would include properties classified as single family residential, condominiums, townhomes, manufactured homes and multiple residential structures on a single parcel. Commercial properties would include several different property classifications such as retail sales, service stations, restaurants, apartments and industrial properties. Vacant land would include all property both commercial, residential, and government owned that are classified as unimproved. Vacant land would also include minor uninhabited improvements as well as roadways and common areas. The Exempt property category would include special use properties such as churches, government owned property, and community centers. This category also contains parcels that are considered state assessed such as utility services.

Table 1-5

Total Parcel Number per Major Property Class						
Property	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Percent Change
Residential	87,001	86,987	87,176	89,160	89,862	3.29%
Commercial	6,000	5,977	5,971	5,988	6,014	0.23%
Vacant Land	27,460	28,193	28,234	28,013	28,049	2.14%
Exempt	1,916	1,933	1,993	2,063	2,048	6.89%
Total	122,377	123,090	124,104	125,234	125,973	2.94%

Total Appraised Value per Major Property Class						
Property	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Percent Change
Residential	\$18,454,825,050	\$18,756,220,143	\$23,110,283,050	\$23,651,663,925	\$24,359,286,525	31.99%
Commercial	\$5,891,342,850	\$6,162,287,250	\$7,336,290,486	\$7,666,656,794	\$7,903,558,566	34.16%
Vacant Land	\$1,997,829,100	\$2,036,840,100	\$2,424,307,030	\$2,456,109,830	\$2,383,503,580	19.30%
Exempt	\$4,571,403,500	\$4,578,489,600	\$5,110,720,400	\$5,525,212,300	\$5,424,448,800	18.66%
Total	\$30,915,400,500	\$31,533,837,093	\$37,981,600,966	\$39,299,642,849	\$40,065,875,671	29.60%

As can be seen from the preceding tables, Buncombe County has seen growth in all major property categories in both number of parcels and total appraised value. There was a slight decline in both residential and commercial properties for 2016. This is contributed to a large number of properties being reclassified. Many properties had small uninhabitable structures which were considered improved and were changed to vacant land. The large increase in total appraised value in 2017 is due to a complete revaluation in an appreciating market.

The following tables show the number of verified sales, new parcels and appeals which occurred in previous years. Appeals were only able to be calculated for 2017 and 2018 due to the change in CAMA systems which occurred in 2017.

Table 1-7

Verified Sales					
Property	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Residential	4,620	4,982	4,783	4,565	18,950
Commercial	214	179	179	174	746
Vacant Land	510	703	1065	847	3,125
Exempt	5	11	16	8	40
Total	5,349	5,875	6,043	5594	

New Parcels					
Property	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total
Residential	-14	889	1284	702	2,861
Commercial	-23	-6	17	26	14
Vacant Land	733	71	-251	36	619
Exempt	17	60	70	-15	132
Total	713	1014	1120	756	

Appeals			
Property	2017	2018	Total
Residential	4,910	237	5,147
Commercial	672	32	704
Vacant Land	1624	113	1,737
Exempt	9	2	11
Total	7215	384	

Overall, verified sales have increased since 2015. This is primarily due to the market demand for the Buncombe County area. According to Carolina MLS the median days on market for single family homes decreased approximately fifty six percent from 2013 to 2017. This demand created a decline in inventory which is seen in the number of residential sales from 2016 to 2018. This also created an increase in vacant land sales in 2017 and 2018 for new construction purposes. The large number of appeals in 2017 was due to a complete revaluation. The total number of appeals for 2018 would represent more of a typical number. No appeals could be extracted from 2015 and 2016 due to the new CAMA (Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal) software being installed in 2017.

Buncombe County is approximately 660 square miles with rolling topography. The city of Asheville is located in central Buncombe County and is approximately 45.3 square miles and has an elevation of 2,100 square feet. The Asheville Area has good accessibility to the interstate highway system with convenient access to Interstate 240, I-240 and I-26. The area has good access to freight rail service and the region is served by the Asheville Regional Airport.

For tax year 2019, property tax represented 62.27% of the Buncombe Count revenue. Buncombe County does not keep all of the property tax it collects. Buncombe County has a total of seven individual taxing districts, twenty fire service districts and one special school district. Properties receiving benefits from any other district are assigned different rates accordingly. This streamlines the billing and collection process.

Buncombe County has seen no major extraordinary event which has had significant impact within the last five years.

Buncombe County's assessment cycle falls within the calendar year.

2. What are the functions of the assessment agency, and what assessment-related functions (if any) are carried out by other agencies?

Briefly describe the functions of the office and the support it receives from outside agencies and contractors. Focus on functions that are covered in later chapters of this Guide. Identify the agencies and contractors that provide services or support. Include services provided by provincial and state supervisory agencies.

The Buncombe County Assessor's Office primary responsibility is to estimate the value of both real and personal property for taxation purposes. North Carolina is a one hundred percent fair market value state which means all properties are valued at market value with few exceptions.

All of the valuations are completed in house by staff appraisers. Buncombe County currently has fourteen staff appraisers recognized by the North Carolina Department of Revenue. The staff appraisers do receive assistance from other departments within Buncombe County.

Buncombe County has a professional Information Technology (IT) Department which assists the staff appraisers with all technology needs. This department makes sure all of the appraisal tools such as software and hardware are functional and up to date. The IT Department gives workshops on new software updates as well as acts as a liaison between the software providers and the software users.

Buncombe County has an independent Land Records Department which is considered a division of the Assessor's Office. The Land Records Department is responsible for updating and entering all changes in ownership and physical characteristics of property in the jurisdiction. The Land Records Department has an extensive cadastral mapping database which is vital in identifying properties for valuations. The Land Records and Appraisal Departments are located in the same building for ease of communication between the departments.

3. Does the law contain features conducive to current-market-value assessment?

Does the property tax system contain	Yes	No	Comments/Citation
1. A law expressly requiring that most or all property be valued on the basis of current market value? If 'no,' state the basis of assessments. Provide a link to each law or decision.	X		North Carolina General Statute §105-283 states both real and personal property to be valued at its true value. True value is later defined as market value.
2. A law (or regulation) requiring independent ratio studies (such as by an oversight agency) measuring the level and uniformity of values within and among classes of property in accordance with the <i>Standard on Ratio Studies</i> ? Provide a link to each law or decision.	X		North Carolina General Statute §105-284 requires the DOR to conduct annual ratio studies of every jurisdiction.
3. A law requiring revaluations and re-inspections on a specified schedule or when performance standards are not met, in accordance with the current IAAO standards? If 'no,' describe the jurisdiction's practice regarding reassessments. Provide a link to each law or decision.	X		North Carolina General Statute §105-286 states all counties must reappraise all real property every eight years.
4. A law requiring buyers and sellers to disclose prices and terms of sales to assessing officers? (a) If "no," provide a link to legal citation that does not allow for acquiring these data. (b) If "no", in Chapter 7 provide an explanation of how these data are collected.	X		North Carolina General Statute §105-228.30 requires an excise tax to be levied on real property transfers at a rate of one dollar per every five hundred dollars conveyed.

Does the property tax system contain	Yes	No	Comments/Citation
5. A law requiring taxpayers to furnish assessing jurisdictions with statements of income and expense. (a) If “no,” provide a link to legal citation that does not allow for acquiring these data. (b) If “no” in Chapter 10 provide an explanation of how these data are collected.		X	There is no current law that requires taxpayers to furnish statements of income and expense.
6. Laws or regulations that provide special treatment for classes of properties or owners. Provide description and link to legal references. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property assessed at a percent of market value <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All property at the same percent ○ The percent varies by class • Exemptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Homesteads (seniors, veterans, disabled) ○ Non-profit (charitable, religious, educational) ○ Personal Property ○ Other (specify) • Special provisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tax increment financing districts (TIFs) ○ Use-value assessments (agricultural land, timber) ○ Minerals • Valuation caps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Base year (values set as of a fixed past date, as of the time of transfer, or both) ○ Value may not increase at a percentage greater than the rate of inflation ○ Value may not increase each year by more than a fixed percentage 	X		There are several state statutes described in detail under the explanation of question 6 that provide special treatment for classes of properties or owners.
7. A law requiring that education aid payments and similar intergovernmental transfer payments be based on credible estimates of actual taxable wealth (that is, equalized values) rather than on un-equalized or poorly equalized local assessed values? If ‘yes,’ describe the features of the law. Discuss any problems. Provide a link to each law or decision.		X	There is no law that education aid payments and similar intergovernmental transfer payments be based on credible estimates of actual wealth rather than on un-equalized or poorly equalized local assessed values.
8. Other laws that reinforce or undermine market value assessment? If ‘yes,’ describe the purpose and features of each law. Provide a link to each law or decision.	X		NCGS §105-283 reinforces a market value assessment while NCGS §105-277.16 undermines market value assessments.

1. Does the property tax system contain a law expressly requiring that most or all property be valued on the basis of current market value?

Current North Carolina law requires both real and personal property to be valued at market value. North Carolina General Statute [§105-283](#) states the appraised value should be true value and that true value shall be interpreted as meaning market value. Market value is also defined in this statute as “the price estimated in terms of money at which the property would change hands between a willing and financially able buyer and a willing seller, neither being under any compulsion to buy or to sell and both having reasonable knowledge of all the uses to which the property is adapted and for which it is capable of being used”.

2. Does the property tax system contain a law (or regulation) requiring independent ratio studies (such as by an oversight agency) measuring the level and uniformity of values within and among classes of property in accordance with the Standard on Ratio Studies?

The North Carolina Department of Revenue conducts a ratio study in all counties in North Carolina which is [published annually](#). These studies are required under North Carolina General Statute [§105-284](#) and are used by the DOR to help allocate a percentage of assessed value of public service companies which are assessed annually by the DOR. If any county has a median ratio for real property below 90% the DOR will apply a weighted average percentage to the public service company’s assessed value. The weighted average percentage is based on the counties ratio and can be applied on reappraisal years and in the fourth and seventh years thereafter. Since public service companies are reappraised annually this allows for equality.

3. Does the property tax system contain a law requiring revaluations and re-inspections on a specified schedule or when performance standards are not met, in accordance with the current IAAO standards?

North Carolina General Statute [§105-286](#) requires a reappraisal of all real property as of January 1st of the eighth year after the last reappraisal. The IAAO standard on the frequency of reappraisals states reappraisals should be completed every 4-6 years. Under statute §105-286 there is an optional advancement and a mandatory advancement which would supersede the eight year requirement.

The mandatory advancement is for counties who have a population greater than 75,000 and who have a real property sales ratio of less than 0.85 or greater than 1.15 based on an annual sales ratio study conducted by the NCDOR. This advancement would require those counties to reappraise the third year following the notice or the eighth year following the last reappraisal.

The optional advancement allows counties to reappraise real property earlier than the required eight year. Counties who utilize this opinion have to have it approved by the board of county commissioners and notify the Department of Revenue. Buncombe County's last reappraisal was completed in 2017. An optional advancement was approved by the county commissioners which will advance the next reappraisal to 2021.

4. Does the property tax system contain a law requiring buyers and sellers to disclose prices and terms of sales to assessing officers?

There is no law requiring buyers and sellers to disclose prices and terms of sales. North Carolina General Statute [§105-228.30](#) requires an excise tax to be levied on the instrument of transfer when real property is conveyed. This excise tax can be converted into sales price at a rate of one dollar per five hundred dollars. Once the deed is recorded the land records department enters the sale into the CAMA system for a staff appraiser to verify.

Staff appraisers verify or "qualify" sales through various methods including the Multiple Listing Service and conversations with buyers and sellers. The NCDOR has a list of acceptable conditions which [disqualify](#) a sale. Sales that are qualified are used in annual ratio studies conducted by the NCDOR as well as interdepartmental ratio studies.

5. Does the property tax system contain a law requiring taxpayers to furnish assessing jurisdictions with statements of income and expense?

There is currently no law requiring taxpayers to furnish statements of income and expense. Buncombe County uses a [questionnaire](#) that is sent out after transfers of income producing properties to collect this information. Once this information is obtained by the county it becomes confidential under North Carolina General Statute [§160A-208.1](#) and not as public record.

6. Does the property tax system contain laws or regulations that provide special treatment for classes of properties or owners?

There are several North Carolina State statutes providing special treatment for classes of properties and owners. All of the properties in Buncombe County receiving special treatment fall under one of the exemptions listed below.

North Carolina has homestead exemptions for elderly or disabled individuals under North Carolina General Statute [§105-277.1](#). To qualify for the elderly exemption an individual must be at least 65 years of age or totally and permanently disabled. There is also an income limit of the preceding year of \$30,200. The amount of reduction is the greater amount of 50 percent or \$25,000 of market value. Buncombe County currently has [4,700 properties](#) listed as elderly or disabled with a total appraised value of \$825,855,100.

North Carolina General Statute [§105-277.1C](#) gives permanently and totally disabled veterans a homestead tax exclusion of up to \$45,000 off appraised value. In order to

qualify for this exemption the individual has to have received benefits under [38 U.S.C §2101](#), have received a certification from the United States Veterans Affairs that they are disabled or have been deceased by a service-connected condition certified by a federal agency. Buncombe County currently has [572 properties](#) listed with a disabled veteran exemption with a total appraised value of \$134,760,500.

North Carolina also gives a complete tax deferment for improvements of real property to builders who have built a residence intended to be sold and is unoccupied. North Carolina General Statute [§105-277.02](#) also states any deferred taxes that have accrued within five years from the time when the improvements were listed or three years from the time the improvements received the deferment are due preceding a disqualifying event such as a sale. Buncombe County currently has only [59 properties](#) in this deferment totaling \$5,057,900 in appraised value.

North Carolina has a use-value program for real property classified as agricultural, horticultural and forestland as defined in North Carolina General Statute [§105-277.2](#). If real property meets requirements in ownership, size, income and management per General Statute [§105-277.3](#) a different value rate can be applied based on its ability to produce income. The rates that apply to agriculture and horticulture would use the capitalization of the cash rent typical for that type of land while forestland uses the capitalization of the expected net income. A rate of 9 percent is used to capitalize the expected net income of forestland while the rate that is applied to agriculture and horticulture is determined by a Use-Value Advisory Board. The Use-Value Board is formed under General Statute [§105-277.7](#) and submits recommended rates to the North Carolina Department of Revenue. Buncombe County currently has [2,146 properties](#) in the present use value program totaling \$1,157,952,600 in appraised value.

North Carolina General Statute [§105-277.8](#) addresses property owned by a nonprofit homeowners association. If all members of the association have a right to use the property then the value of the property is allocated to the member's property and becomes exempt from taxation to the homeowners association. This "common area" can be included within larger tracts and has a separate [land designation](#) in the CAMA system which removes the appraised value. Buncombe County currently has [1256 properties](#) which are classified as common area or contain common area.

Improvements on brownfields receive an exclusion under North Carolina General Statute [§105-277.13](#). A decreasing percentage of exclusion of appraised value is placed on these properties for five years after the improvements become taxable. Currently Buncombe County only has [48 properties](#) that would be considered brownfields.

North Carolina General Statute [§105-277.15](#) gives a tax deferment for land that would be classified as wildlife conservation land. The property has to be at least twenty acres and no more than one hundred acres in size and must be found to protect an animal species or an animal habitat. A written conservation agreement with the Wildlife Resources Commission must be in place by January 1 of the deferment year. Taxes for the previous

three years are due when the property loses its status. Buncombe County currently has only [16 properties](#) under this deferment with a total appraised value of \$69,329,000.

Low-income housing properties receive a special appraised value under North Carolina General Statute [§105-277.16](#). This value is based on the actual rents of the property and not market value which reduces the value. Buncombe County currently has [253 properties](#) considered low income and they have a total appraised value of \$131,714,400.

North Carolina General Statute [§105-278](#) is a law that grants a 50 percent reduction in market value to historic properties. These properties have to be designated as a historic landmark by a local ordinance. Buncombe County currently has [125 properties](#) listed as historical with a total appraised value of \$142,679,200.

All properties both real and personal owned by a unit of government are completely exempt under North Carolina General Statute [§105-278.1](#). There are currently [1520 real property](#) parcels in Buncombe County appraised at \$2,615,601,700.

All properties both real and personal used for religious purposes are exempt from taxation under North Carolina General Statute [§105-278.3](#). The property must be wholly and exclusively used by its owner for religious purposes and an application must be submitted. There are currently [354 properties](#) that would be considered exempt for religious purposes with a total appraised value of \$539,197,700.

Currently there are no valuation caps in North Carolina due to all property in the state being valued at 100% market value.

7. Does the property tax system contain a law requiring that education aid payments and similar intergovernmental transfer payments be based on credible estimates of actual taxable wealth (that is, equalized values) rather than on un-equalized or poorly equalized local assessed values?

No. The County schools are funded by the state based on Full Time Equivalency (FTE) and a percentage of the state lottery funds. Each budget year Buncombe County determines the amount of supplemental revenue allocated to the schools which is not based on the taxable value or a percentage of taxable value. Structures for the schools are provided by Buncombe County and is accomplished by issuing bonds for the financing tool.

There currently is no law existing that determines educational payments to the county or municipal schools related to taxable wealth. Although Buncombe County and the City of Asheville can levy a special tax for schools or school districts that could be generated using the actual taxable value. The City of Asheville is currently the only school district in the taxing jurisdiction that is levying a school tax.

8. Does the property tax system contain other laws that reinforce or undermine market value assessment?

North Carolina General Statute [§105-283](#) clearly states both real and personal property be valued at “true value” which is considered market value. The most defining case is the [Appeal of Bosley, 224 S.E.2d 686](#). This case defines both G.S. §105-283 and G.S. [§105-317.1](#) “provide that all property shall be appraised at market value, and that all the various factors which enter into the market value of property are to be considered by the assessors in determining this market value for tax purposes”.

A law that undermines a market value assessment is G.S. [§105-277.16](#) which is the taxation of low income housing. This law states that the actual income should be used when appraising the property. In determining market value an appraiser should consider the highest and best use of the property which would take market rents into consideration. By using the actual reduced rents the overall appraised value would be considered less than market value.

4. Does the law contain features detrimental to current-market-value assessment?

Does the property tax system contain	Yes	No	Comment/Citation
1. A law or regulation that limits the discretion the assessor has in using a generally accepted valuation methodology (such as in valuing shopping centers) or in considering the probable use of a property in the near future (such as a firm requirement to consider only the current use)? If ‘yes,’ describe how each law interferes with current-market-value assessment.	X		North Carolina General Statute §105-277.2 allows for a use-value assessment when certain criteria are met.
2. A classified property tax system with numerous classes, extreme rate (or ratio) differentials (that is, the highest rate being 250 percent or more than the lowest)? If the jurisdiction operates under a classified property tax system, identify the classes and the legal assessment ratios or tax rate for each class.		X	North Carolina does not use a classified property tax system.
3. A partial exemption that shields many properties from taxation? Identify the main types of partial exemptions and provide information on the percentage or monetary amount of each exemption and the number of properties receiving it.	X		North Carolina has numerous exemptions which shield many properties from taxation.
4. A limit on how much the appraised value of a property can be increased or decreased? If there are assessment change limits, describe them.		X	There are no limits on the change in appraised value of property.
5. Another law or regulation that interferes with current-market-value assessment? If yes, describe the features of each such law.		X	No other regulations interfere with current-market-value assessments.

- 1. Does the property tax system contain a law or regulation that limits the discretion the assessor has in using a generally accepted valuation methodology (such as in valuing shopping centers) or in considering the probable use of a property in the near future (such as a firm requirement to consider only the current use)?**

North Carolina General Statute [§105-277.2](#) limits the discretion the assessor has in using a generally accepted valuation methodology. This statute allows properties to be valued at their current use. By definition, market value takes into consideration the properties highest and best use which brings maximum productivity to the property. By valuing a property at its present use, highest and best use is not considered and the property has a possibility of being undervalued or not used to potential.

- 2. Does the property tax system contain a classified property tax system with numerous classes, extreme rate (or ratio) differentials (that is, the highest rate being 250 percent or more than the lowest)?**

No, North Carolina does not operate under a classified property tax system. All property both real and personal are assessed at 100% market value per North Carolina General Statute [§105-283](#).

- 3. Does the property tax system contain a partial exemption that shields many properties from taxation?**

Yes, there are several partial exemptions and deferments that shield many properties from taxation. These are listed above under question 3-6.

- 4. Does the property tax system contain a limit on how much the appraised value of a property can be increased or decreased?**

No, since North Carolina assesses all properties at market value, there are no limits placed on how much the appraised value of a property can be increased or decreased. North Carolina General Statutes [§105-286](#) and [§105-287](#) dictates when property value can be changed and under what circumstances.

- 5. Does the property tax system contain another law or regulation that interferes with current market value assessments?**

Other than North Carolina General Statutes [§105-277.16](#) which allows low income housing to use current rents instead of market rents, North Carolina has no laws that would interfere with a current market value assessment.

5. Does the property tax system have measures that ensure that the jurisdiction has the capacity to perform its assessment functions effectively?

	Indicate whether any of the following apply. If an item applies, describe briefly how it affects assessment operations and how the jurisdiction is still able to function effectively.	Yes	No	N/A	Comments/Citation
1.	The jurisdictional framework provides little support to local assessment districts, either from the [state] property tax supervisory agency or a county-level agency		X		The jurisdictional framework provides substantial support.
2.	The lack of legal authorization to join cooperatively with another assessment district or to contract for assessment services		X		Jurisdictions can contract a variety of experts.
3.	The low reliance on property taxes by the governments that the assessment district serves, such that the cost of funding assessment administration is deemed too high in relation to the revenues generated		X		Property taxes currently represent 62.3 percent of the jurisdictions revenue.
4.	The mechanism for funding assessment administration does not take into account the fiscal importance of the function		X		Several governmental units rely on property tax.

1. Does the jurisdictional framework provide little support to local assessment districts from the (state) property tax supervisory agency?

No. The jurisdictional framework provides a substantial amount of support to local assessment districts from the state property tax supervisory agency. North Carolina General Statute [§105-288](#) creates a Property Tax Commission who’s main responsibility is to hear property taxation appeals. This Commission is composed of five members of which two are appointed by the General Assembly and three of which are appointed by the Governor. This Commission is required to meet at least once each quarter.

North Carolina General Statute [§105-289](#) requires the North Carolina Department of Revenue (NCDOR) to assist individual taxing jurisdictions in a variety of tasks. Under this statute the NCDOR is to “exercise general and specific supervision over the valuation and taxation of property by taxing units throughout the State.” In doing this the NCDOR is require to:

- a. Provide a continuing program of education and training for local tax officials
- b. Provide a program for testing the qualification of an assessor and other persons engaged in the appraisal of property for a county or municipality.

- c. Provide a certification program for an assessor and other persons engaged in the appraisal of property for a county or municipality.

The NCDOR also can provide information to a taxing jurisdiction to assist in a variety of tasks such as appraising or assessing, listing, and collecting. Any information provided by the NCDOR for these tasks it to be used only by the jurisdiction and nor for public use.

Annual ratio studies are also to be provided by the NCDOR. These studies are to be establish for all of the counties and are to be published by April 15 of the following year.

2. Does the jurisdiction lack the legal authority to join cooperatively with another assessment district or to contract for assessment services?

No. Under North Carolina General Statute [§105-299](#) individual jurisdictions can employ a variety of experts to assist the assessor in performing duties. These experts can be appraisal firms, mapping firms, or any firm having expertise in any duty of the assessor. Any individual who will assist in the appraisal of property will have to pass a comprehensive examination provided by the NCDOR. In employing these firms the jurisdiction must give primary consideration to firms registered with the NCDOR under North Carolina General Statute [§105-289\(i\)](#).

3. Does the jurisdiction have a low reliance on property taxes by the governments that the assessment district serves, such that the cost of funding assessment administration is deemed too high in relation to the revenues generated?

No. Currently property taxes make up approximately 62.3 percent of the overall [county revenue](#) or approximately \$197,300,000.

4. The mechanism for funding assessment administration does not take into account the fiscal importance of the function.

No. Buncombe County is not the only governmental unit that receives revenues produced by the assessment jurisdiction. There are several other [governmental units](#) such as towns and cities, fire districts, and school districts that receive revenues. Each district sets an individual rate annually that reflects the needs of the district. The Buncombe County Assessors Office's budget reflects this importance.

Buncombe County Assessor's Office

Certificate of Excellence Submission- List of Exhibits, Chapter 1

Exhibit 1-1.1	Largest Individual Employees
Exhibit 1-1.2	Days on Market
Exhibit 1-1.3	Tax Rates
Exhibit 1-3.1	NCGS §105-238
Exhibit 1-3.2	NCGS §105-284
Exhibit 1-3.3	NCGS §105-286
Exhibit 1-3.4	NCGS §105-228.30
Exhibit 1-3.5	NCGS §105-277.16
Exhibit 1-3.6	Annual County Wide Ratios
Exhibit 1-3.7	Sales Qualification Rejections
Exhibit 1-3.8	Commercial Questionnaire
Exhibit 1-3.9	NCGS §160A-208.1
Exhibit 1-3.10	NCGS §105-277.1
Exhibit 1-3.11	Elderly Exempt Properties
Exhibit 1-3.12	NCGS §105-277.1C
Exhibit 1-3.13	Title 38- Veterans Benefits
Exhibit 1-3.14	Disable Veterans Properties
Exhibit 1-3.15	NCGS §105-277.02
Exhibit 1-3.16	Builders Deferment Properties
Exhibit 1-3.17	NCGS §105-277.2
Exhibit 1-3.18	NCGS §105-277.3
Exhibit 1-3.19	NCGS §105-277.7
Exhibit 1-3.20	Agricultural Properties
Exhibit 1-3.21	NCGS §105-277.8
Exhibit 1-3.22	Common Area Designation Tab
Exhibit 1-3.23	Nonprofit HOA Properties
Exhibit 1-3.24	NCGS §105-277.13
Exhibit 1-3.25	Brownfield Properties
Exhibit 1-3.26	NCGS §105-277.15
Exhibit 1-3.27	Wildlife Properties
Exhibit 1-3.28	Low Income Properties
Exhibit 1-3.29	NCGS §105-278
Exhibit 1-3.30	Historic Properties
Exhibit 1-3.31	NCGS §105-278.1
Exhibit 1-3.32	Government Exempt Properties
Exhibit 1-3.33	NCGS §105-278.3
Exhibit 1-3.34	Religious Exempt Properties
Exhibit 1-3.35	Appeal of Bosley
Exhibit 1-3.36	NCGS §105-317.1
Exhibit 1-4.1	NCGS §105-287
Exhibit 1-5.1	NCGS §105-288
Exhibit 1-5.2	NCGS §105-289
Exhibit 1-5.3	NCGS §105-299
Exhibit 1-5.4	NCGS County Revenue

Chapter 2: Management and Staffing

1. Does the jurisdiction keep abreast of changes in laws, regulations, and court decisions?

Yes. Buncombe County keeps up with all of the changes in laws, regulations, and court decisions which involve property assessment.

	Practice	Yes	No	Comment/citation
1.	The jurisdiction has ready access to an up-to-date compilation of property tax laws and regulations.	x		Yes. The Machinery Act of North Carolina is published annually with any changes made to the state statutes concerning tax laws. This covers all of chapter 105 which is taxation. This publication is issued by the North Carolina Department of Revenue and is readily available in the Buncombe County Assessor's Office.
2.	The jurisdiction has ready access to, a service reporting property tax cases.	x		All of the Buncombe County appraisers are members of an email service called ptax. Ptax is a service from the University of North Carolina School of Government regularly sending emails addressing any change in taxing laws. This service also is a way for jurisdictions to communicate with each other concerning problems with laws and regulations.
3.	The jurisdiction regularly monitors news of legal developments affecting it.	x		Several appraisers in the jurisdiction are member of the North Carolina Association of Assessing Officers (NCAAO). This organization has several resources allowing its members to regularly monitor news of legal developments. https://www.sog.unc.edu/resources/microsites/nc-association-assessing-officers
4.	The jurisdiction regularly briefs the staff (and other interested parties) on recent legal developments affecting it.	x		The staff is regularly briefed in any legal development affecting them. This briefing occurs regularly in department meetings which typically occur on a weekly basis.

5.	The jurisdiction actively participates in critical reviews of current legislation and in the development of legislative proposals.			The North Carolina Department of Revenue keeps all jurisdictions knowledgeable on any development of legislative proposals. The NCDOR also accepts feedback from all jurisdictions.
6.	The jurisdiction regularly meets with and participates in groups concerned with improved legislation.			Several members of the jurisdiction are members of the NCAAO who meet annually to discuss improved legislation.

2. Does the jurisdiction regularly monitor the local economy, development patterns, and property market trends?

As requested in Chapter 1, question 1, provide examples of analyses produced by the office or others concerning general trends in markets, the economy, and demography. Statistics should cover the most recent five years. Coordinate answer with question 13 of Chapter 6.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor’s Office regularly monitors the local economy, development patterns, and property market trends. As seen in Chapter 1 employment trends and unemployment rates are checked to see overall market stability and any potential population migration. The table below shows Buncombe Counties population and unemployment rates.

Table 2-1

Year	Population	Unemployment Rate
2010	238,318	8.56%
2011	241,224	7.94%
2012	243,741	7.24%
2013	246,948	5.98%
2014	249,302	4.7%
2015	252,149	4.36%
2016	255,334	3.86%
2017	257,607	3.49%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics (compiled by Texas A&M Real Estate Center)

Chart 2-2

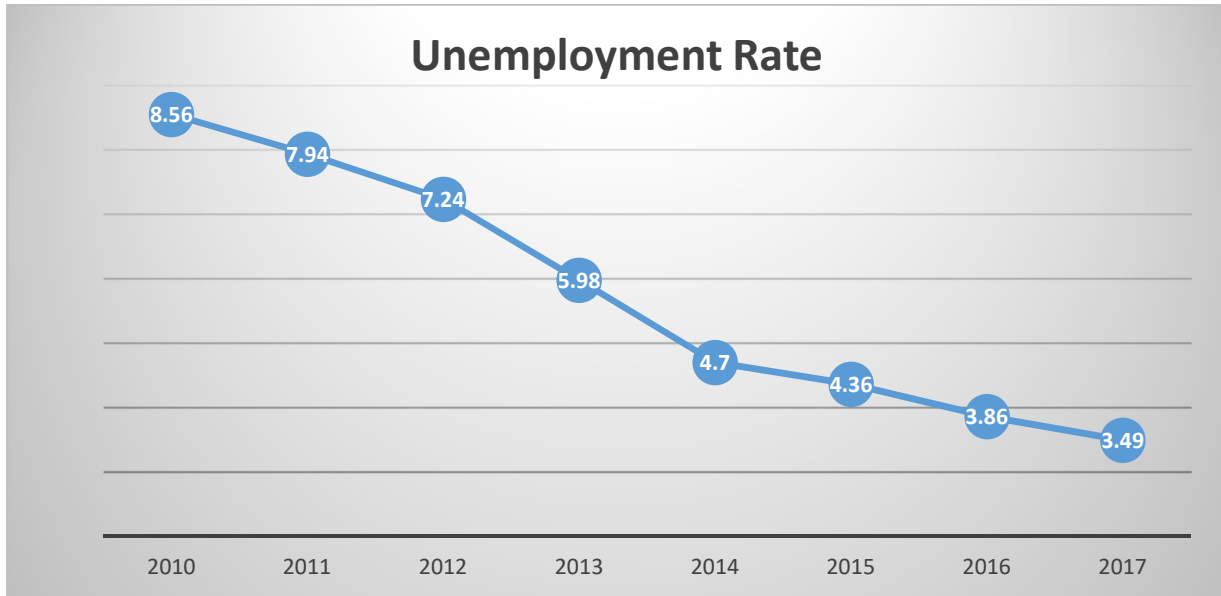
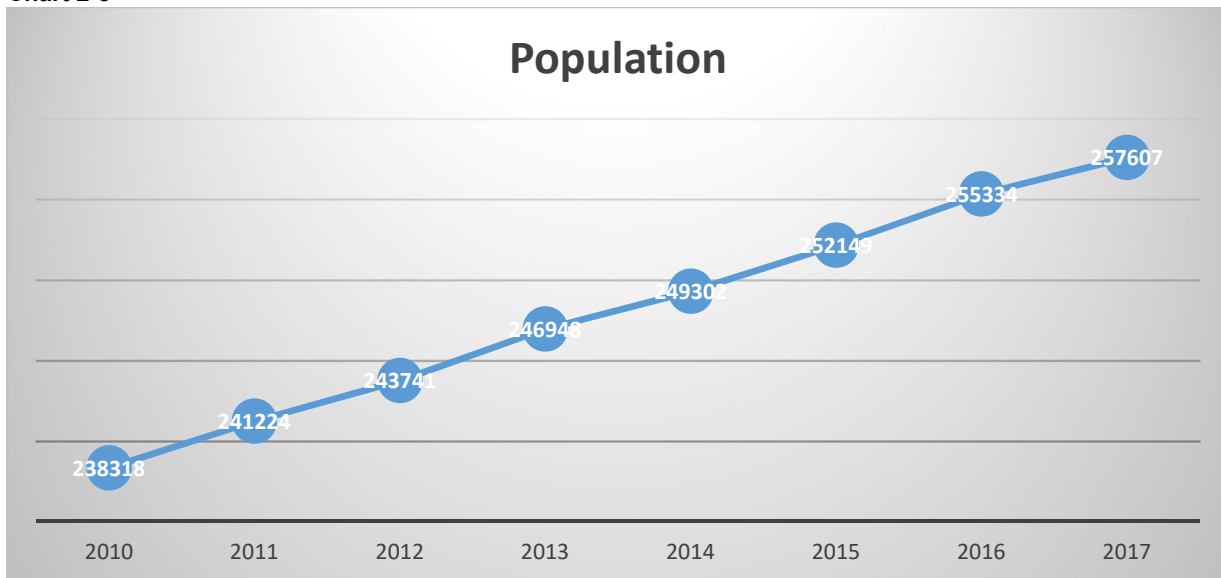


Chart 2-3



As can be seen on the charts above, the Buncombe County unemployment rate has been declining and the population has been increasing since 2010. This indicates stable growth for the county.

The Buncombe County economy is largely based on tourism due to the areas art scene as well as a mild year round climate. A strong indicator of an active tourism market can be analyzed with indicators such as [lodging sales](#) as well as [airport activity](#). These figures are gathered by the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA) and can be found on line at <https://www.ashevillecvb.com>. As of October 2018 the Asheville Regional Airport as seen a 17.6% annual growth rate. The

Buncombe County lodging sales have increased from \$92,182,177 in 2012 to \$171,889,473 in 2017 which represents an approximate 86% gain.

3. Does the jurisdiction engage in formal planning?

Furnish a copy of the jurisdiction's current strategic plan. Briefly describe how the jurisdiction implements the plan. (CEAA applicants that do not have a strategic plan at the time of submission will not pass this part of the question.)

If the jurisdiction has an operational plan in force, furnish a copy. If the jurisdiction currently has one or more project plans in force (such as for the implementation of a revaluation or the installation of a new computer system), attach a copy of each plan and briefly describe the progress toward realizing it.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office engages in formal planning. The Assessor's Office consists of five individual departments each with [individual strategic plans](#). Typically strategic plans are created to assess each department's major needs through a revaluation cycle. Throughout the revaluation cycle steps are taking by each department to accomplish the goals laid out in the strategic plan.

Currently the Buncombe County Assessor's Office has a [project plan](#) in place for the revaluation taking place in 2021. This project plan outlines any additional budgetary needs as well as additional staffing requirements. The project plan also contains a Gant Chart which shows revaluation tasks over a period of time. This project plan is submitted to the North Carolina Department of Revenue before each revaluation.

4. Has the jurisdiction prepared a written estimate of necessary human resources?

Attach copies of recent staffing needs analyses, benchmarks used, including supporting documentation such as benchmark production rate tables or internal analysis for several key, high-volume, labor-intensive tasks.

Include a statement indicating the size of the staff over the previous 5 years and where in the office the growth or reduction of staff has occurred and why.

Prepare a brief description of the current personnel resources for each major function identified in the formal plan (question 3), specify whether these resources are adequate for the tasks, and identify plans for rectifying any deficiencies.

Describe how the reappraisal cycle affects the level of staffing.

Yes. The jurisdiction has prepared a [written estimate](#) of necessary human resources. This estimate is shown in the project plan submitted to the NCDOR before complete revaluations occur. This estimate takes the total number of available work days and factors in the average production rate per appraiser per day. Currently the jurisdiction is using fifty parcels per day for residential appraisal work and twenty five parcels per day for commercial appraisal work. The jurisdiction is adequately staffed with only seven additional work days needed to accomplish the next revaluation.

Over the last five years the overall staff size has relatively remained the same. There has been a gradual increase in the number of parcels appraisers are responsible for although the advancement in the CAMA software has increased productivity. The increase in productivity from the software upgrade has satisfied the need for additional appraisers.

The land records department has added a GIS position within the last five years. This position was added due to the growing need of GIS based projects for assessment solutions. This position was also added as the need for parcels to be added to the North Carolina State Plane Coordinate System has increased.

The Buncombe County Assessor’s Office consists of five independent departments with varying staff needs. The table below shows the current staff per department.

Table 2-4

Department	Number of Staff Members
Residential Property	8
Commercial Property	3
Land Records	5
Exemptions	3
Personal Property	8

The number of staff members per department is currently sufficient to accomplish the associated tasks.

Complete revaluations are completed in house. Staffing levels typically do not increase during a revaluation. Occasionally part time employees will be hired to collect field data or assist in data entry. The Assessor’s Office tries to begin the revaluation tasks well before the actual revaluation date to spread the work load among staff.

5. Has the jurisdiction prepared an estimate of necessary physical resources?

Briefly describe the jurisdiction's office facilities, noting the adequacy of office space for staff, the public, and other needs, such as housing mapping and computer equipment.

Briefly describe physical and electronic library resources available to the staff, including textbooks, professional journals, and market surveys and data sources.

An estimate of necessary physical resources was prepared in 2015 when the Assessor's Office moved to the current location at 94 Coxe Avenue. At that time the building floor plan was analyzed and changed to meet the needs of the office. Currently all appraisal departments, land records, and exemptions are located on the second floor while personal property is located on the first floor. Collections is also located on the first floor although is not considered part of the Assessor's Office. All of the Buncombe County Assessor's Office is located in the same building.

All of the departments located on the [second floor](#) have ample space to perform their responsibilities. The second floor consists of nine offices for the Assessor, all supervisors, and special project employees who see little field time. There are seven cubicles located in an open work area for the residential appraisers as well as two offices for the Chief Appraiser and the Data Analyst. The exemptions department has two cubicles and an office for the supervisor. The commercial appraisal department contains two offices as well a single cubicle. Land Records contains four cubicles for employees and an office for the supervisor. The Assessor and administrative assistant have individual offices. There are two conference rooms located on the second floor which have plenty of room for departmental meetings, public meetings, and presentations. There are also adequate restroom and breakroom facilities. A single large storage room provides adequate storage for any excess computer equipment and maps.

The [first floor](#) of the building contains eight cubicles occupied by personal property and one office for the supervisor. The remaining offices and work areas on the first floor are occupied by the Collections Department which is not a part of the Assessor's Office. There is also a large meeting room located on the first floor used by both the Assessor's Office and the Collections Department.

The tax department building has an adequate amount of [parking](#) with twenty six lined parking places in the rear of the building and thirty four lined parking places in the front. The thirty four parking places in the front of the building also act as public parking while three assigned visitor parking places are located in the rear.

One of the conference rooms on the second floor contains bookshelves with textbooks that have been acquired. The Assessor's Office has a departmental [electronic drive](#) that

can be accessed by any member of the Assessor's Office which contains digital manuals, market surveys, and other data sources.

6. Does the budgeting process employed by the jurisdiction explicitly consider outputs in addition to inputs so that the prospects of obtaining adequate funding are improved?

Provide copies of approved operating and capital budgets for the jurisdiction for the three most recent years and include the documents that the jurisdiction submitted to budgeting officials and governing bodies justifying funding requests.

Briefly describe whether and how program and performance budgeting concepts were used.

Discuss whether approved budgets are considered adequate, and discuss perceived inadequacies.

If budgetary needs fluctuate with the revaluation cycle, discuss the needs.

Yes. The budgeting process employed by the jurisdiction considers outputs in addition to inputs so the prospects of obtaining adequate funding are improved. For the previous three years the Buncombe County Assessor's Office has always had excess funds in the budget at the end of the fiscal year. Approved budgets have always been adequate. As more advanced software is being implemented and appraiser requirements are rising, one perceived inadequacy in upcoming budgets would be employee compensation. In order to hire and keep qualified employee's, salaries and other benefits have to remain competitive within the market.

Buncombe County operates on program based budgeting which allocates needed funds to specific departments within the county. Each department within the county submits [budget requests](#) to the county manager who submits a [proposed budget](#) to the county commissioners for approval. Once the budget is approved tax rates are set accordingly. For the [last three years](#) the Assessor's Office have seen minimal increases in the budget needs.

Budgetary needs fluctuate slightly with the revaluation cycle. As of January 2nd 2019 the Buncombe County Commissioners adopted a special [reserve fund](#) for the reappraisal taking place in 2020. This reserve fund will cover other expenditures such as aerial photographs, street level photographs, and software upgrades. The budget for this reserve fund will be approximately 1.1 million dollars and will distributed over the next three years.

7. Is the jurisdiction well-organized?

Provide the jurisdiction's organizational plan, including a current organization chart, position descriptions, and other documentation describing lines of communication, responsibilities, and authority. Describe when and how these materials are reviewed and updated.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's office is well organized. The office consists of the Assessor which has an administrative assistant and five supervisors. Supervisors are in land records, commercial appraisal, residential appraisal, personal property appraisal, and exemptions. Each supervisor has employees assigned to specific tasks associated with their department. The administrative assistant assists the Assessor as well as assists department supervisors in various tasks.

Land Records currently has four employees plus a supervisor. There are two GIS technicians and two land records technicians. The land records technicians are responsible for analyzing property transfers as well as parcel splits and combinations. The GIS technicians primarily responsible is mapping parcels to the North Carolina State Plane Coordinate System as well as other special GIS projects.

The commercial appraisal department consists of a supervisor and two additional appraisers. This department is responsible for assessing all of the commercial property in the taxing jurisdiction. This includes analyzing building permits as well as qualifying transfers.

The residential appraisal department consists of the chief appraiser as well as six appraisers and a data analyst. Each appraiser is responsible for qualifying all property transfers, analyzing all parcel splits and combinations, and all building permits in a specific revaluation area. The data analyst works with the chief appraiser as well completes any value related special projects.

Personal property currently has a supervisor and seven employees. This departments' responsibility is to assess all personal property in the taxing jurisdiction. This includes all non-real manufactured homes as well as business personal property.

The exemptions department handles all property exemptions and deferments. Any property receiving tax relief must be approved by this department. It currently consists of a supervisor and two exemption specialists. The exemption specialists make sure individuals meet state requirements associated with the specific type of tax relief.

An [organizational chart](#) shows the lines of communication within the department. All of the employee responsibilities and lines of communication can be updated and changed as needed. Formal reviews of the organization chart typically take place when there is a change in supervision.

8. Is the staff well-managed?

Briefly discuss the agency's approach to the following practices, and provide policy and procedural documentation.

- Merit-based selection and promotion
- Up-to-date written procedural documentation
- A workflow management system (see Chapter 3)
- Up-to-date, written personnel policies
- Regular management and staff meetings
- Regular performance reviews
- Evenhanded administration of progressive disciplinary procedures
- Compliance with equal employment opportunity (EEO) laws
- Sexual harassment policies.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office is well managed.

Merit based selection and promotion:

All Buncombe County employees receive promotions associated with years of experience. No merit based promotions are available. This is a county wide policy which the Assessor's Office cannot change.

Up to date written procedural documentation:

All Buncombe County employees have access to the most current [Schedule of Values](#) which is created before each revaluation. This document shows the step by step procedure in valuing all property in the jurisdiction. The document also contains definitions and descriptions of various elements used in the valuations of property.

A workflow management system:

The jurisdiction has a workflow management system in place providing a smooth transition of all information to reach the property value. A [workflow chart](#) was created to show how information travels to reach the final product of assessed value.

Up to date written personnel documentation:

Buncombe County has an up to date written [Personnel Ordinance](#) document available to all Buncombe County employees. The document was revised in October of 2018 and lays out all employee benefits and standard procedures.

Regular management and staff meetings:

Supervisors meet with staff on a regular basis. These meetings typically occur once a week although they can occur whenever needed. Any issues concerning workload or overall office function are discussed. These meetings are also an opportunity for supervisors to convey any new change in statute or policy.

Regular performance reviews:

Every week appraisers receive a [spreadsheet](#) with activities completed the previous week and the amount of work remaining for the calendar year. After a six month introduction period new employees receive a performance review based on their strengths and weaknesses.

Evenhanded administration of progressive disciplinary procedures:

Section 7 of Article 8 in the [Personnel Ordinances](#) describes the procedure for all disciplinary actions taken by supervisors. Disciplinary Action falls under two types of employee action; unacceptable personal conduct and unsatisfactory job performance. The disciplinary actions that can take place are suspension without pay, demotion, or dismissal.

Compliance with equal employment opportunity laws:

Buncombe County is an equal opportunity employer. Practices and employment decisions regarding recruitment, hiring, assignment, promotion and compensation are not based on any individual's race, color, religion, sex, national origin, political affiliation, physical or mental disability, age, veteran status, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity or any other legally protected class under federal or NC state law.

Sexual harassment policies:

Appendix F of the [Personnel Ordinances](#) covers unlawful workplace harassment. This appendix defines all types of harassment including sexual harassment. It also explains the county policy associated with harassment and the appropriate way to report harassment.

9. Do the members of the staff have the right set of skills and experience?

Provide position descriptions that include professional education and experience requirements

Provide budgetary evidence of support for appropriate continuing education and training for staff.

Provide data on the average length of service and the range of service for different types of employees.

(Jurisdictions seeking recertification need to meet the educational requirements outlined in the CEAA Program General Procedures.)

Yes. All of the employees in the Buncombe County Assessor's Office have the appropriate set of skills and experience. New hires are also expected to meet all of the requirements set forth in the [job description](#) posted with every job. Several new hires also have previous knowledge and skills relating to the job.

All of the property appraisers in the jurisdiction have [certifications](#) from the North Carolina Department of Revenue. These certifications are for both real and personal property and require a specific number of courses and workshops to be taken per level. Currently the Buncombe County Assessor's Office has twenty three NCDOR certified appraisers or approximately 79% of the total employees.

The Buncombe County Assessor's Office also has four North Carolina Appraisal Board certified appraisers and one Appraisal Qualifications Board (AQB) certified USPAP instructor. There is also a NC Certified Property Mapper on staff who is certified through the NC Department of the Secretary of State.

The following is a list showing the average length of service, range of service, and number of employees per department. Supervisors are included in these totals.

Land Records

Total number of staff:	5
Average years of service	8.8 years
Range of service	9 months thru 19 years

Commercial Appraisal

Total number of staff	3
Average years of service	12 years
Range of service	3 months thru 32 years

Residential Appraisal

Total number of staff	8
Average years of service	7.75 years
Range of service	10 months thru 20 years

Personal Property

Total number of staff	8
Average years of service	7.5 years
Range of service	2 years thru 21 years

Exemptions

Total number of staff	2
Average years of service	12 years
Range of service	8 years thru 16 years

The Tax Assessor who oversees all of the departments has been working with the Buncombe County Assessor's Office for 23 years and the Administrative Assistant has worked with the Assessor's Office for 2 years.

All employees are encouraged throughout their employment to attend courses for continuing education or to advance certifications. The annual budget contains [a line](#)

[item](#) set up to accommodate all education and travel expenses. For the fiscal year 2019 there is \$23,500 set aside for this purpose.

10. Are salaries and benefits competitive?

Provide a salary schedule and any analyses of how jurisdiction salaries compare with those of comparable jurisdictions. Discuss how the salary levels are compared. Provide evidence of the adequacy of salaries and benefits with recent human resource, consultant, or professional organization surveys.

State any salary incentives for professional certifications, designations, or other ways to improve technical proficiency.

Provide the annual turnover ratio for the past five years for each class of employee. Discuss any reasons for loss of staff.

Yes. The salaries and benefits for the Buncombe County Assessor's Office are competitive relative to the market peers. In November of 2018 Buncombe County contracted with Evergreen Solutions LLC to conduct a [pay study](#) including all of the Buncombe County employees. During this study, salaries of 18 peers were surveyed in 85 classification to see the competitiveness of Buncombe County. The survey found that overall, Buncombe County has a competitive salary range and, on average, compensates at higher rates. The survey was broken up in three different salary rates per classification. At the minimum salary range per classification Buncombe County was on average overcompensating 9%. At the midpoint salary range there was an overcompensation of 5.1% and at the maximum salary range there was an overcompensation of 2.7%.

Every full time employee who works at least 1,000 hours per year becomes a member of the NC Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System. As members of the retirement system employees can invest in a 401K program in which the county contributes 8% of the employees overall salary annually. Buncombe County also has a longevity compensation system in place to reward employees for their service. The longevity compensation is based on current salary and years of service. The following table shows the annual compensation.

Table 2-5

Total Years of Service	Pay Rate
Less than 1 year	\$100.00
1 year but less than 2 years	1.00%
2 years but less than 5 years	3.00%
5 years but less than 10 years	4.00%
10 years but less than 15 years	5.00%
15 years but less than 25 years	6.00%
25 years plus	7.00%

Buncombe County employees who work at least 1,560 hours per year or 30 hours a week are eligible for a group hospitalization and [medical care plan](#) after the first 90 days of employment. This coverage varies depending on individual elections.

Buncombe County employees in regular positions are also covered with basic life and accidental death and dismemberment insurance which is 100% covered.

All of the benefits associated with employment through Buncombe County are similar or superior to all peers.

Currently Buncombe County is not on a merit based pay system. All salary incentives come from employment longevity or change of position. All positions have a salary range and each employee's start salary is determined by pre-employment experience. Employees can change positions based on certifications. For example, if an NCDOR Appraiser II completes the educational requirements to meet the Appraiser III certification then the employee can move positions when the position is vacant.

The majority of the employee turnover Buncombe County Assessor's Office sees is through retirement. Only one employee has been dismissed due to disciplinary actions within the last five years. The following table shows the turnover ratio per department in the Assessor's Office within the last five years.

Table 2-6

Department	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Residential	1:8	0	0	1:8	1:4
Commercial	0	0	0	1:2	0
Exemptions	0	0	0	0	1:3
Land Records	0	1:4	0	0	1:5
Personal	0	0	1:8	1:8	1:8

11. Are skills in procurement and contract management sufficient?

List any services that are contracted.

Describe and provide evidence that demonstrates the office management's procurement and contracting skills.

If internal sources are insufficient, describe how the assessment office acquires contracting and procurement services.

Yes. The skills in procurement and contract management are sufficient. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office completes the majority of its valuation services in house with very little contracting. The only contractual services used by the Assessor's Office is with the Patriot Properties which provide the software for the CAMA system and Tax Management Association (TMA) which provide business personal property audits.

The Buncombe County Assessor's Office has contracted with Patriot Properties (<http://www.patriotproperties.com>) which provides Assess Pro software since 2017. This decision to change CAMA systems was made by upper management in an attempt to keep up with the growth of Buncombe County. Extensive research was completed and test systems were implemented before the final decision was made. Patriot Properties Assess Pro was chosen due to the ease of use and overall capability of the software.

The Tax Management Association (TMA) is a business personal property audit group contracted for five years to audit all of the business personal property in the jurisdiction containing a value of \$50,000 or more. TMA was selected by upper management due to a bidding process with two other audit companies. When this contract ends a rebidding process will occur.

12. Are exemption and other property tax reduction measures well-managed?

Briefly describe the jurisdiction's programs administering exemptions and other property tax reduction measures.

Note any particular challenges and successful initiatives.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office has a department of two employees and a supervisor handling all exemptions and other property tax reduction measures. This department is responsible for making sure all tax payers applying for tax relief are qualified under North Carolina General Statute. This department also is tasked to remove exemptions on properties when the property or property owner no longer qualifies.

The exemption department has had good success in communicating to the public through [informational brochures](#) as well as online information.

All of the exemption employees are classified as appraisers through the NCDOR. The exemptions supervisor currently has a level III classification which is the highest obtainable.

13. Is the quality assurance program of the jurisdiction adequate?

Briefly discuss whether and how the jurisdiction approaches the following quality assurance measures. A not applicable answer may be acceptable if a reasonable explanation is provided as to why the program or practice is not applicable to the jurisdiction. Include statistical reports and any other documentation that are a part of these programs or practices as exhibits. Describe how the adequacy of quality assurance program is evaluated.	
1.	Staff recruitment, selection, and training reinforce quality assurance.
2.	Staff is required to adhere to ethical standards. The office provides needed guidance and deals promptly and effectively with ethical problems.
3.	The office's organization reinforces quality assurance.
4.	The office's computer system design reinforces quality assurance.
5.	Standards of performance are formalized.
6.	Procedures are documented.
7.	Data maintenance programs reinforce quality assurance.
8.	Data security procedures reinforce quality assurance.
9.	The valuation program reinforces quality assurance.
10.	Valuation accuracy is monitored regularly using a flexible ratio study program.
11.	Procedures for administering exemption and relief measures reinforce quality assurance
12.	Management communicates quality assurance expectations.
13.	Management takes appropriate corrective action when potential or actual quality problems surface.
14.	The office listens to taxpayers and other stakeholders.
15.	Management periodically assesses risks.
16.	Management periodically commissions procedural audits.

Yes. The quality assurance program of the jurisdiction is adequate. The table below explains

Program or Practice		Applicable (Y/N)	Present (Y/N)	Adequate (Y/N)	Comment
1.	Staff recruitment, selection, and training reinforce quality assurance.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Job postings provide adequate job descriptions and skill requirements. All

					staff are adequately trained. Staff members are encouraged to participate in professional education throughout their career. Several members of the staff have additional certifications through other state programs and licensing boards.
2.	Staff is required to adhere to ethical standards. The office provides needed guidance and deals promptly and effectively with ethical problems.	Yes	Yes		All employees of the Assessor's Office are required to follow the Buncombe County Personnel Ordinance which describes ethical standards. Any ethical problem is handled promptly by the appropriate supervisor.
3.	The office's organization reinforces quality assurance.	Yes	Yes	Yes	The Assessor's Office has a clear organizational chart as well as an adequate facility . Operating procedures are clearly defined and performance reviews are given periodically.
4.	The office's computer system design reinforces quality assurance.	Yes	Yes	Yes	The Assessor's Office has a good computer system design which

					allows for daily updates and satellite access for employees. The Assess Pro software allows for on the fly audits and ease of workflow to all users. There is also a test environment which is a copy of the CAMA database used for experimental procedures.
5.	Standards of performance are formalized	Yes	Yes	Yes	Appraisers are given a weekly performance query generated by the CAMA system showing all activities completed by the individual appraiser. All revaluation areas typically produce a similar amount of activities. All activities should be completed for the listing year by February.
6.	Procedures are documented.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Both the Schedule of Values and the Personnel Ordinance documents all procedures of the Assessor's Office. The Schedule of Values is updated before every revaluation while

					the Personnel Ordinance is updated as needed.
7.	Data maintenance programs reinforce quality assurance.	Yes	Yes	Yes	In house audits are in place and ran periodically to reinforce quality assurance. Procedures in Access and Microsoft SQL are ran periodically.
8.	Data security procedures reinforce quality assurance.	Yes	Yes	Yes	CAMA system users are assigned specific roles which limit access to job specific features. This reinforces quality assurance by allowing only qualified personal to make system changes.
9.	The valuation program reinforces quality assurance.	Yes	Yes	Yes	The Assess Pro software allows for accurate application of assigned values to be placed on all parcels. Adjustments can be made to individual parcels and numerous audits can be ran on any number of potential inequities.
10.	Valuation accuracy is monitored regularly using a flexible ratio study program	Yes	Yes	Yes	Ratio studies can be ran by any appraiser for any strata of parcels in question. The Data Analysis

					periodically runs random ratio studies to ensure valuation accuracy and to identify outliers. Ratio studies typically include all of the statistical measures described in the <u>IAAO Standard on Ratio Studies</u> .
11.	Procedures for administering exemption and relief measures reinforce quality assurance	Yes	Yes	Yes	The Assessor's Office has an individual exemptions department with specialists qualifying all relief measures.
12.	Management communicates quality assurance expectations.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Quality assurance is communicated by management continually. This communication can be verbal, through email, or given in a presentation to the entire staff.
13.	Management takes appropriate corrective action when potential or actual quality problems surface.	Yes	Yes	Yes	When quality assurance issue arise they are immediately addressed and monitored for reoccurrence. These issues are also conveyed to employees to stop additional occurrences.
14.	The office listens to taxpayers and other stakeholders.	Yes	Yes	Yes	The Assessor's Office relies on property tax

					<p>appeals for the most accurate information. Appeals are accepted anytime the property value changes. These appeals can be filed online or through a written request. Taxpayers are also encouraged to call the Assessor's Office with any concern about property value.</p>
15.	Management periodically assesses risks.	Yes	Yes	Yes	<p>Management periodically assesses risks through internal audits. Buncombe County also has risk management personal who periodically provide risk management workshops.</p>
16.	Management periodically commissions procedural audits.	Yes	Yes	Yes	<p>Business personal property contracts an external vender to conduct audits on all business personal property greater than \$50,000. Real property audits are ran internally before all listing notices are mailed or bills are issued. The NCDOR conducts an annual ratio study</p>

					for state assessed property equalization and overall jurisdiction equity.
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Buncombe County Assessor's Office

Certificate of Excellence Submission- List of Exhibits, Chapter 2

Exhibit 2-2.1	Lodging Sales
Exhibit 2-2.2	Airport Activity
Exhibit 2-3.1	Strategic Plan
Exhibit 2-3.2	Revaluation Project Plan
Exhibit 2-4.1	Human Resource Needs
Exhibit 2-5.1	Second Floor Plan
Exhibit 2-5.2	Main Floor Plan
Exhibit 2-5.3	Parking
Exhibit 2-5.4	Tax Assessment Folder
Exhibit 2-6.1	Assessor Budget Request
Exhibit 2-6.2	Proposed Budget
Exhibit 2-6.3	Assessor's Budget
Exhibit 2-6.4	Revaluation Reserve Fund
Exhibit 2-7.1	Organizational Chart
Exhibit 2-8.1	Schedule of Values
Exhibit 2-8.2	Workflow Chart
Exhibit 2-8.3	Personal Ordinance
Exhibit 2-8.4	Performance Review
Exhibit 2-9.1	Appraiser Job Description
Exhibit 2-9.2	Appraiser Certification Levels
Exhibit 2-9.3	Education Budge
Exhibit 2-10.1	Pay Study
Exhibit 2-10.2	Medical Car Plan
Exhibit 2-12.1	Exemption Brochure
Exhibit 2-13.1	Complete Floor Plan
Exhibit 2-13.2	Internal Audits

Chapter 3: Information Technology

1. Does a modern database management system with its expected services and interfaces underlie the assessment system?

1. Describe how procedural and systems documentation relate to one another and provide samples including at least the tables of contents.
2. Characterize the automated edits in place in the jurisdiction, including range edits, cross-field edits, required entries, forced choices, and any other notable features.
3. Indicate whether other software systems or subsystems e.g. for statistics, sketching, GIS, reporting, government revenue management, document management, or scheduling, are present and either part of or integrated with the database system. List them and note any procurement issues in this regard.
4. Describe the backup and recovery provisions in place for the office's systems.
5. Briefly summarize the extent to which staff in various roles and other offices of government are authorized access to the system for purposes of creating, reading, updating or deleting information of various types.
6. Indicate whether information is received from sources outside the office in an optimally efficient way and whether any steps are underway to improve such transfers, either in batch mode or real time.
7. Provide a network diagram and indicate the annual systems maintenance costs and what percentage of the budget is earmarked for IT.
8. Describe any virtualization or cloud services being considered or contracted, the vendors involved, and the motivation for such initiatives.

Yes. The CAMA system is built on a SQL server back end. A fully functional TEST system is maintained and updated with data from our production servers when needed. All updates are run through the TEST system and validated by our appraisal team before being pushed to production. All of these servers are in-house virtual servers although not cloud based. There are SQL jobs enabled for full backup daily with transaction log backups every fifteen minutes during business hours.

The system forces the use of normalized lookup tables on many of the attributes assigned to parcels and buildings. Those lookup tables are populated by the appraisal managers and the editing of those table are restricted to those groups. There is also the ability to designate which of those lookups are mandated to be set and which ones can remain blank. We use a variety of audits that come with the system as well as many developed in house both within the filtering tool included with the CAMA system as well as scripts directly executed on the SQL back end to identify areas that we need to evaluate.

The CAMA system has integrated GIS (ESRI based), sketching, Pictometry oblique imagery, reporting (Crystal) and ad hoc filtering tools included.

The appraisers are broken out into one of several roles depending on their duties. As mentioned above, only appraisal managers can set up any of the lookup tables. We have roles for:

- creating and updating owners and owner mailing addresses
- present use value and exemptions
- commercial appraisals
- view only role for those that don't need to change any data
- specific QA/QC role
- residential appraisal

Access to see/update certain data is restricted based on the role you are in.

The land records department currently works all deeds coming from the Register of Deeds, including splits, merges, transfers, discoveries and retires. As parcels are created and updated in the GIS system a transaction record is recorded and those transactions are processed in bulk into the appraisal system at the end of every business day. Once that data is processed in the appraisal system it is made available on both internal public access systems as well as external websites (<https://www.buncombecounty.org/>). Any work finished on a specific day will be available to the public the next day, other than appraisal activity for the upcoming tax years which remain private until released by the appraiser.

2. Does the database improve quality and minimize potentially inconsistent redundancies?

1. Provide evidence from the data dictionary of data normalization and standardization.
2. Identify any standards to which the database schema deliberately conforms, including those from IAAO standards and those promulgated by oversight agencies, GIS agencies, or other bodies.
3. If applicable, note any areas in which it would be beneficial to develop further database standards.

Yes. The database improves quality and minimizes potentially inconsistent redundancies. The appraisal database includes around [250 lookup tables](#). Many of the attributes assigned to either parcels or structures are forced to the values in these look up tables. Restricting available values and removing free text fields ensures that data remains as consistent and correct as possible. Each record in the lookup tables include an ID, a code, and both short and long descriptions to ease its use in both internal

queries as well as human readability. Many also contain foreign keys for linkage into other lookup tables.

The [Buildings](#) and [Building Depreciation](#) screens are great examples of how many fields are controlled by dropdowns instead of free text input.

3. Does the database enable added functionality?

1. Briefly describe what modules interact with the data management system, including how the functions in the standards on Mass Appraisal of Real Property, Verification and Adjustment of Sales, and Ratio Studies are performed.
2. Indicate whether such modules are provided from third party sources and the cost/benefit considerations involved in opting to integrate or forego such capabilities for the office.
3. If outside modules are used, indicate whether their acquisition was influenced by the Standard on Contracting for Assessment Services.

Yes. The database enables added functionality. The database system (Assess Pro) includes a Marshall Swift module and the ability to value property using Marshall Swift methodology. It also provides modules for sketching and adding images of the parcel. There are GIS modules and links to [Pictometry](#). Being in a SQL compliant database also gives the ability to create our own modules and custom programming. We currently have web applications that take in data on appeals and writes that information directly to the database so that the appraiser can verify it without any data entry.

There are also third party modules such as Spatialest and Comper that can be integrated. All of the statistical measures outlined in the Standard on Ratio Studies can be extracted through the [Spatialest](#) software. The functionality and ease of use of these third party modules heavily outweighs the acquisition cost. The Standard on Contracting for Assessment Services was minimally used when acquiring the third party modules.

4. Do the database tools provide for modern support for temporal and spatial variables?

1. Characterize the ability of the database to transparently handle data entry and updating for past, current, and upcoming tax years and the need of the users to separately activate separate tables to do so.
2. Indicate how readily queries can be made to retrieve data based on locational/spatial relationships, such as buffers or travel times, rather than being limited to predefined neighborhoods previously coded in the database.
3. Explain how the requirements of the relevant IAAO standards are met.

Yes. The database tools provide for modern support for temporal and spatial variables. Assess Pro allows the user to open as many [tax years](#) as we would like to work in at any one time. Data then can be filtered up from the last year it was changed. Exemptions are an exception to this and are rolled over on a year by year basis. Every year has an individual [color scheme](#) to help the user to identify the appropriate year. In practice, all years are open until our next scheduled revaluation which allows our appraisal managers to work on changing those appraisal methods for the complete revaluation without making any changes to current status. This is always completed in the “test” environment before being implemented in the production system.

Assess Pro does not make use of spatial data in SQL. However, we do capture centroid coordinates for use in integration with Pictometry. Also, Assess Pro has a [GIS viewer](#) that can display parcel data as well as any other overlay data that an appraiser may want to see.

The database also contains a category call the [parcel group field](#). This field allows the appraisers to streamline field work by grouping a larger number of parcels based on travel time. Typically appraisers will work within a single parcel group on daily field visits.

Outside of the standard Assess Pro functionality we use spatial queries to prepare data for appraisal functionality. Assess Pro is built on an SQL back end which gives the ability to insert or update the parcels based on new data. A problem that has been encountered is that municipalities will update zoning without appropriate communication. Often the Assessor’s Office will not be informed that updates have happened until after the fact and will not know how many parcels are affected. When zoning updates are received, spatial SQL functions such as STIntersects() or STIntersection().STArea are used to create zoning designations datasets. Once those datasets are prepared they can be pushed into the Assess Pro database at the same time without any manual work from the appraiser.

5. Does the database provide support for parcel aggregates and sub-parcel records?

Describe how economic aggregates of parcels are identified and handled for valuation.
Describe how tax liabilities are allocated among them if they are not valued individually.
If the database design reflects taxable objects rather than the more traditional parcels, provide documentation.
Address how leasehold and possessory interests are handled.

Yes. Support for parcel aggregates and sub-parcel records are supported by the database. Buncombe County treats leaseholds, condominiums and use rights ownership as parcels for taxation purposes. There is nothing in Assess Pro that necessitates that a parcel have geometry or acreage. Most parcels in Buncombe County are identified by a ten digit PIN number followed by an extension of '00000'. For the other parcel types that extension becomes an L (leasehold), [C \(condo\)](#) or R (use rights) followed by four characters to maintain uniqueness. These parcels are then valued individually based on appraisal standards found in *Mass Appraisal of Real Property* and USPAP.

Condominiums typically are identified by the condominium declaration or submitted plans. All condominium units have an individual parcel number and valued individually. All common areas associated with condominiums are non-taxable per North Carolina General Statute and all value associated with the common area is assumed in the individual condominium values.

Leaseholds are first identified by the original owner or lessor of the property. Once the leasehold is identified it is separated and given its individual parcel identification number. Leaseholds are only created in the CAMA system when the lessee is responsible for taxation. Taxes are then assigned based on the terms of the lease agreement and billed accordingly.

6. Does the valuation software allow for flexibility and adaptation?

1. Discuss whether the development of valuation models, including revisions of table parameters, can be done in a reproducible, iterative, and what-if context without any danger of jeopardizing the official roll in progress.
2. Briefly discuss any valuation modeling enhancements that may be under consideration, the anticipated costs and expected benefits of implementing them, and any experience with alternative valuation modeling approaches and lessons learned.
3. Indicate how the system is used to meet the *Standard for Mass Appraisal* and the *Standard on Verification and Adjustment of Sales*.

Yes. The valuation software allows for flexibility and adaptation. Assess Pro gives us the ability to assess parcels using many different methodologies (sales comparable based, manual override, income based, cost based etc.) One of these methods is marked as the [primary method](#) for each parcel and that is the value that gets seen and distributed. Thus, we can work on any number of methodologies listed in the *Standard for Mass Appraisal*, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and keep its results only available to the appraisers until we are happy with how the method is valuing property. At that point it is made as the primary method and its results will then be published.

In addition, we keep a production as well as TEST instance of the system running. In evaluating large or far reaching changes in valuation methodology the TEST environment is used first so that nothing will affect the current tax roll. Also, as mentioned above we can work in forward tax years to develop appraisal models in advance of that data being relevant to current taxation. This is used to work ahead on the next revaluation so the revaluation activities do not have to be completed in a compressed timeframe.

7. Does the valuation modeling software produce results capable of being timely applied?

Briefly discuss the process by which valuation models proceed from the development stage to production, any bottlenecks in the process, and how these have been addressed.

Indicate whether any service-level agreements are in place that govern response-time and data-governance issues arising from the jurisdiction's reliance on third-party interactions with its data.

Yes. The valuation modeling software is capable of being timely applied. As mentioned above, each parcel in Assess Pro can have multiple methods of valuation working at once. At any time a valuation method can be changed to the primary valuation method and the value it creates will be used and publish.

We have nightly jobs that automatically calculate and publish new values for all data changes that happen during a day. As an appraiser works on a parcel in the current valuation year that parcel gets a Change Flag placed on it. Nightly jobs are in place that recalculate value for all parcels with the Change Flag set. After that calculation happens, data is pushed to GIS layers and distribution on the tax website. All changes to the valuation for current tax year that are also to the primary method of valuation will be visible to the public within twenty four hours on multiple systems. Our nightly job that calculates all changes in value for each day tends to run about an hour every night. Calculations of the entire dataset are easily ran in one evening. The nightly calculations

could possibility be a bottleneck in larger jurisdictions although our current size does not produce any problems.

There are currently no service-level agreements in place that govern response time. The Buncombe County jurisdiction does not rely on any third party interactions with its data.

8. Can the valuation modeling software produce data on the confidence of its estimates?

1. Briefly discuss the ability of the modeling software to generate information on the accuracy of its estimates of value, both as a general matter pertaining to the mean and, if possible to diverse individual estimates.
2. If the latter is possible, comment on how the costs of producing them compare to the benefits of enabling more precise targeting of the efforts of the post-modeling review task force.
3. If produced, are they produced internally to the algorithm or do they derive only from external checks, such as absolute and percentage differences from the prior assessment?

Yes. The valuation modeling software can produce data on the confidence of its estimates. The accuracy on the estimates of value typically come from concentrated ratio studies which can be stratified by numerous criteria. Arms-length transaction prove to be the best indication of market value. When sales ratios for particular properties deviate greatly from the jurisdiction wide median ratio, a deeper corrective analysis is possible. There currently is no internal algorithm that filters properties that fall greatly outside the overall median ratio. These large ratio differences are found through external ratio checks when potential problem areas are found. These areas are then [flagged](#) for corrective measures during the next complete revaluation.

9. Does the valuation modeling software support its estimate of a parcel's value with a small set of comparable properties, sold or unsold, that have had their estimates adjusted to reflect how they would compare to the subject property after adjusting for the differences between them?

Describe how grids of comparables are used in the valuation, quality assurance, and appeals-defense stages, how coefficients are developed or specified to determine comparability both for selection purposes and for adjusting for differences, the benefits and problems that arise in their use, and how the problems, if any, have been addressed.

Assess Pro includes a module to calculate comparable sales based on criteria that you set. You can create as many comparable models as needed and apply them to any parcel. In Assess Pro criteria is set for your comparable models based on over [100](#)

[fields](#). You can create as many different sets of criteria (models) as needed and any of these models can be applied.

There is also an integration with Spatialest's [Comper](#) offering. Currently the Comper software is being tested to analyze the cost vs benefit.

There are always problems with automated sales comparable selections. Subjective comparable elements are often overlooked with automated comparable sales. These could include things such as external obsolescence and locational appeal. The majority of the automated comparable models produce good comparable sales although it is up to the appraiser to accept or reject the results.

10. Can the valuation software permit the implementation of analyses not contemplated by the original design, either by customizing reserved variables and processes in the core DBMS, by facilitating third party interfaces, or both?

Describe the process by which system enhancements are prioritized, prototyped, developed, and implemented. Provide one such example, if applicable.

Yes. The valuation software can permit the implementation of analyses not contemplated by the original design. Assess Pro has additional data fields in every table use. They have fields for most of the data needed however no single system can plan for the variation in user's needs. Work is ongoing with Patriot to extend usage so that we can repurpose fields for things needed.

An example of this is the color field in the building table. Building color is not tracked for any appraisal purposes so that field has been re-used to hold the [building name](#) for condominiums. Also, the legal table has fields that we have re-used to track [brownfields](#), watersheds, flood hazard and conservation easements.

Also, as mentioned above, there are many different possibilities for appraising a property which include a manual override for the cases that there are extenuating circumstances that an appraisal model doesn't capture.

11. Can the system take advantage of the benefits of integrated CAMA/geographic information technology?

If the jurisdiction has integrated the GIS into the CAMA software to provide ready transitions between the two, cite the primary benefits of doing so. (Other stand-alone GIS questions appear in chapter 4.)

Yes. The current system does take advantage of integrated CAMA/geographic information technology. Assess Pro offers an integrated GIS solution called [GISPro](#). It updates as you move from parcel to parcel. There is also a standalone GIS viewers that is updated with new data on a daily basis. The primary standalone GIS view is ArcGIS which is commonly used. Shapefiles from exterior sources can be downloaded and mapping layers can be created to show locational influences related to value. These updates are also available to the public via the Buncombe County GIS website (<https://gis.buncombecounty.org/buncomap/>).

Assess Pro also provides an integration with Spatialest which has much more extensive GIS capabilities. Spatialest handles spatial analysis which create groups of parcels that can then be exported by way of excel to Access Pro to have batch updates completed.

12. Does the system provide advanced workflow processing and management, including those relevant for appeals documents at the various required levels?

Briefly describe your workflow capabilities, including what functions the software supports, and provide examples of key workflow reports.

No. Assess Pro uses activities to track what work has been completed and what work needs to be complete although there is no workflow involved. Assess Pro tracks work queues for all appraisers. This is completed via [activities assigned](#) on the parcel level. Many of these activities are automatically created either by the program itself or various integrations such as land records changes, appeals filed online, or exemptions. [Filters](#) are easily created to show the level of work being completed or is outstanding for each appraisal area. If there is more work in specific areas it allows for a redistribution of resources to make sure demand is being satisfied. Weekly [activity updates](#) are ran by the Chief Appraiser and distributed to appraisers.

Assess Pro allows the ability to access as many different levels of appeal process as is necessary. Existing appeals can be tracked that are open or closed but there is no in depth workflow.

13. Does the system provide advanced document management?

If applicable, briefly describe how documents, mapping, and photographic images are collected and used in the office.
Describe how Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests are handled and what technologies have been used to address such requests efficiently.

Yes. The current system provides advanced workflow processing and management. Assess Pro provides the ability to link documents to parcels. These documents can be either saved in the database or saved in the file system and accessed via hyperlink. A parcel can have any number of pictures or documents associated with it. These documents include [appeal documents](#) and well as scanned building plans. These documents are stored in the system for reference.

Historically, appraisers have taken pictures of parcels and upload during visits. The Assessor's Office is currently looking at getting pictures of the majority of structures in the county taken by a contractor and having them all loaded into the system programmatically. These images would be updated at a rate of about twenty five percent of the county per year. Appraisers would only be asked to take pictures of new developments or anything that would not necessarily show up in street level image found to be of interest.

Processes have also been created by which the system keeps a [versioned archive](#) of those documents so a record can be kept of how those have been changed as they are used during the assessment process

Any Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request is handled through management. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office strives for transparency and any information that does not compromise state statute or one of the nine FOIA exemptions can be requested. Typically the IT department will handle all large data files requested while individual employees of the Assessor's Office will handle all other requests.

14. Does the agency keep abreast of potentially relevant technological developments?

1. Describe how the jurisdiction evaluates the cost/performance characteristics of its present method of on-site data collection relative to other alternatives, including paper forms, electronic forms, and mobile devices.
2. Describe how the jurisdiction monitors the cost performance characteristics of its present communication methods relative to alternatives, including websites, for information dissemination and possibly collection.
3. Describe other steps taken to keep abreast of potentially relevant technological developments

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office keeps abreast of potentially relevant technological developments. The appraisal department and IT work together to help ease as many processes for our citizens as possible. Citizens can get all public data from the internet. Currently the Assessor's Office is pushing as many processes to the

web as possible. A tax payer can now apply for appeals online at the Buncombe County Assessors website (<https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/depts/tax/default.aspx>).

From an internal perspective the SQL server back end is used to create as many automations as possible. Appeals (whether filed online or on paper and then scanned) and exemptions are all processed programmatically and all data received is programmatically inserted into the parcel record. An activity is entered into the CAMA system so that the appraiser is notified of work to be done on the parcel.

The Buncombe County Assessor's Office is constantly keeping an eye on new technologies, both standalone and integrated, to use in conjunction with Assess Pro. In the past couple of years this has included Pictometry, Comper, Spatalest, iLookAbout, Marshall and Swift, and DeedSync. The jurisdiction will typically receive test versions to analyze the cost/performance of all new technology. The goal is always to have the appraisers spend as much of their time on appraisal functions instead of data entry functions.

The land records department has recently gone completely paperless. This was a cost savings project that was made possible by the advancement in technology. Approximately \$5,000 annually is saved in this process.

Both appraisal and IT staff attend educational seminars and conferences as the budget allows as well as making use of online educational opportunities.

15. Does the computer system maintain a frozen record of the property at the time of sale?

1. Provide system documentation on how property characteristics data and sales data are merged and saved.
2. Provide sample sales reports to support that this objective has been met. Explain how the system conforms to requirements of the Standard on Verification and Adjustment of Sales.

No. Grantee and Grantor addresses at time of sale are captured but status of the parcel at the time of sale is not. It is possible to recreate the property characteristics by looking at the [revisions](#) that occurred to a parcel after the transfer. Once the revisions are isolated the value changes due to the revisions can be backed out to create the property characteristics as of the transfer date. This is not an automated process and has to be completed manually.

When properties transfer an appraiser has to qualify the sale. Often when doing this changes in physical conditions are found. When this happens the appraiser will change the property in the CAMA system which will correct the property to give a more accurate description at the time of sale. The Standard on Verification and Adjustment of

Sales 5.10 states that matching the sales price to the characteristics at the time of sale is permitted.

Buncombe County Assessor's Office

Certificate of Excellence Submission- List of Exhibits, Chapter 3

Exhibit 3-2.1	Look Up Tables
Exhibit 3-2.2	Building Screen
Exhibit 3-2.3	Building Depreciation
Exhibit 3-3.1	Pictometry View
Exhibit 3-3.2	Spatial Ratio Study
Exhibit 3-4.1	Tax Year Change
Exhibit 3-4.2	Tax Year Color Scheme
Exhibit 3-4.3	GIS Viewer
Exhibit 3-4.4	Parcel Group Field
Exhibit 3-5.1	Condominium Extension
Exhibit 3-6.1	Primary Valuation Method
Exhibit 3-8.1	Revaluation Flag
Exhibit 3-9.1	Assess Pro Comparable Fields
Exhibit 3-9.2	Spatial Comper
Exhibit 3-10.1	Condominium Building Name
Exhibit 3-10.2	Brownfield Identification Field
Exhibit 3-11.1	GIS Pro
Exhibit 3-12.1	Field Work Filter
Exhibit 3-12.2	Activity Updates
Exhibit 3-13.1	Appeal Document
Exhibit 3-13.2	Document Archive
Exhibit 3-15.1	Revision Table

Chapter 4: Cadastral Mapping

- 1. Do the cadastral maps enable the jurisdiction to have reasonable assurance that all taxable parcels have been identified and no parcels have escaped inclusion in the system?**

Briefly describe how the cadastral map allows assessing jurisdictions to guarantee that no more than a small fraction of the potentially taxable land in the jurisdiction has escaped inclusion in the cadastral records. Specify the maximum fraction that could have escaped inclusion, and how that fraction was determined. An example might be an analysis of discrepancies following a reconciliation of the sum of the sizes of taxable parcels (and non-taxable features such as rights of way and water) with independent determinations of the size of the jurisdiction.

Yes, our Land Records Department maintains the cadastral map by performing all mapping operations using ESRI's ArcGIS suite as a base software and Farragut's ParcelSync as an extension. This software combination allows our mappers to map at a high-level of accuracy and to replicate the information given to us by recorded deeds and plats in an efficient manner. All of the parcels are mapped to North Carolina State Plane Coordinate system and the most up-to-date aerial imagery provided by the State of North Carolina is utilized to ensure they are placed spatially accurate. This method of mapping ensures parcels are mapped in the most accurate manner and are excluding non-taxable areas such as public right-of-ways.

[Analysis](#) of our entire parcel dataset has been performed comparing the assigned taxable acreages entered into our cadastral system by mappers against each parcel's actual mapped area using the SHAPE.Area field. This analysis is also performed every 6 months to ensure parcels mapped by current staff maintain the high-quality our Assessment department requires. In the end if a parcel taxed at five percent over or under the mapped area, these are put on a list to review and will be researched and eventually remapped by a mapper to ensure a zero percent discrepancy. When performing this audit it is uncertain whether the taxed acreage or the mapped acreage or either is correct, so a review process is essential.

The goal at all times is to maintain the mapped acreage and taxed acreage at a ratio of 100%, and while we aren't there just yet we have decreased the overall percentage of discrepancy to 1.5 percent. The long-term goal is to hit the one hundred percent ratio between mapped acreage and taxed acreage by the time the 2021 tax year begins, which is our next revaluation year.

2. Do the cadastral maps provide the basic information specified in the IAAO standard?

Provide one or more sample maps indicating how each shows that the criteria from the IAAO standards have been met. PDFs or letter or legal size reproductions or extracts are preferred in lieu of full size maps.

Yes, the printed cadastral maps and the digital cadastre dataset follow the general guidelines laid out by the IAAO standards. Both printed maps and the digital cadastre, feature the basic IAAO compliant features: parcels, dimensions, streets, bodies of water and streams, parcel identifiers, street names, and optional aerial imagery. Of course, the necessary data will change frequently as the requests / needs for custom data and custom maps come in. More advanced features available to staff and the public via GIS are: Taxing districts, 911 and situs addresses, school districts, neighborhoods, county and city/town zoning, soil types, conservation easements, etc.

The [printed map](#) sizes commonly used are 11" x 17" and 24" x 36", with the least common option being 36" x 48", which is the only size not listed as common by the IAAO. The commonly used map scales used are 1" = 100' for urban areas, 1" = 200' for suburban, and 1" = 400' to 1" = 800' for rural areas. All maps also have a "Date Printed" text string located on the title block, just in case a comparison to later or earlier data is needed by the party requesting the information.

All custom maps and custom data are created outside of the database which edits the parcel dataset. Every staff member generating public maps and data have been trained extensively in our GIS server and its databases to ensure that the integrity of our cadastre isn't accidentally compromised. There are also checks employed by our IT department to ensure a mapper cannot edit any cadastre data outside of their database and without an active session in the [Parcelsync](#) extension.

3. Does the jurisdiction maintain a complete set of cadastral maps showing the identity, size, shape, and location of each parcel in the jurisdiction as of each assessment date that remains subject to ongoing litigation?

Briefly describe the update and retention policy of the cadastral maps and the documents supporting them, and whether they support the functions cited above.

Describe their availability to support any tax-related legal issues that may arise in past or future periods. Indicate what mechanisms are in place to ensure that no elements of the tax base are lost as novel legal concepts of ownership rights come to be recognized, Examples which may force unanticipated changes in valuation and other assessment procedures include condominiums, co-ops, transferrable development rights, air rights, and mineral rights.

Yes, our GIS and Land Records Departments work together to maintain a dynamic and constantly updated parcel dataset which is easily viewed by the public (<https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/depts/gis/default.aspx>). The website is considered to be the most recent and up-to-date ownership and parcel data available, with a two to three week delay for subdivisions and combinations.

For historic parcel configurations a “[snapshot](#)” of the parcel dataset is taken at multiple times throughout the year. This snapshot includes all subparcels such as condominiums and leases as well. There is also a [Parcel Warehouse](#) which houses the configuration for every parcel in the dataset, this is extremely helpful for parcels that only had their line work adjusted due to inaccurate or old mapping, which does not necessitate assigning new parcel numbers.

This digital dataset and history is essential for research and litigation purposes for land parcels and sub-parcels like condominiums and leases. But it is only available for parcel configurations in the year 2000 to present. Any parcel older than the year 2000 must be researched using old tax maps, deeds, and plats available for free and for download on the Buncombe County Register of Deeds website (<https://www.buncombecounty.org/Governing/Depts/register-of-deeds/recording/default.aspx>). Typically upon request, a mapper or GIS technician will research a parcel, map the line work of each deed and plat researched, and then overlay the lines over aerial imagery to compare it to the current parcel configuration. This process aides Land Records with any issues/litigation regarding acreages, ownership, overlaps, gaps, and discovered parcels. The digital library at the Registrar’s office is a key component in maintaining the integrity of our parcel dataset and allows the staff to quickly address the lack of data available for older configurations in our digital historic dataset.

In cases where developer’s rights come into question, the Registrar’s office also maintains all of the restrictive covenants and any amendments for developments. A mapper can easily download the document and attach that file to any parcel account

within the CAMA system if needed or use it to quickly answer any questions a landowner or appraiser may have. However, our department does not currently track air and mineral rights in any way. The main reason is because there currently isn't a need for us to do so, we don't review or have been notified of any recorded documents or agreements pertaining to these matters within Buncombe County.

4. Are maps and related records maintained on a timely basis?

Specify the records-update timeline for routine splits and combinations, for subdivision packages, for tax-code-area maintenance, and the interval for producing maps and related documents in support of appeals/litigation.

Yes. All maps and related records are maintained on a timely basis. Once a citizen or entity has filed a plat or deed with the Register of Deeds our department will review that document the next day and then map them according to the recorded legal document. Typically the turnaround time for any size of subdivision or combination is two to three weeks. There are special cases where a rush request is placed via e-mail or phone call by Permits and Inspections for a particular deed or plat. If a rush is requested then the next available mapper will map that document within one or two business days.

When tax codes are adjusted via annexations, these areas mapped and published within a week of notifying the department. If no notification is sent, these annexations and adjustments are caught in a monthly Register of Deeds scrub and are then mapped immediately and published the next day.

In special cases, which are typically in support of appeals/litigation, the mapper will research and map the parcel within a day of receiving the request. Once research is complete the mapper and department supervisor will meet and discuss the issue, if legal counsel or opinions from the Assessor are required it will occur during this time. After a conclusion is met, the mapper will then complete their mapping and produce a presentation map for the customer, typically an appraiser or attorney. Special cases are usually fully addressed within one to three business days.

5. Are all parcels assigned a unique identifier that is associated with its current configuration and size?

Describe the parcel-numbering system, including how splits and combinations, subparcels (such as, condominiums, subsurface rights, air rights, and leased property), and easements are handled. If the parcel identifier used in the jurisdiction is not tied to a geographic location, describe what institutional changes would have to be made to bring the situation into concert with IAAO standards. Also describe what steps the valuation team and others have to take to work around the record-keeping deficiency.

Yes, all parcels within the county are associated with a unique parcel identifier. This number is generated using the Geographic Coordinate System (7.2.1 IAAO Standard on Digital Cadastral Maps and Parcel Identifiers) associated with Buncombe County which is the North Carolina State Plane Coordinate System (NAD 83). Each parcel identifier or PIN is a direct association to the centroid coordinates of each parcel. For example a centroid with the coordinates x: 929536.25, y: 670275.36 will assign 9627-90-5237-00000 as a PIN. See below for a breakdown of the PIN creation process:

Table 4-1

X Coordinate	9	2	9	5	3
Y Coordinate	6	7	0	2	7
Numerical Placement	100,000	10,000	1,000	100	10
Result (PIN)	96	27	90	52	37

As for subparcels, these are assigned by the last 5 digits of the 15 digit PIN. For example a typical condominium will have the following PIN: 9627-90-5237-C0001 and a lease will be L0001. Currently these are the only subparcel types that are assigned parcel identifiers in Buncombe County and there has not been an occurrence where air rights, mineral rights, etc. has needed to be identified. If the situation arises where a new subparcel needs to be identified our CAMA allows us to adapt such a change with relative ease.

Easements for private, commercial, and utility use are currently not mapped within the GIS system, however deeds and plats which reflect any kind of easements are linked to the parcel and can be easily viewed. [Conservation easements](#) are currently researched, mapped, and maintained within a separate database apart from the publicly viewed cadastral data. This data is essential to the appraisal department and is available on a map upon request.

6. Do cadastral maps include representations of improvements as well as the legal boundaries of the parcels?

Briefly describe and provide an example of the extent to which cadastral maps include, or can effectively integrate information on, building footprints and other improvement features. (A jurisdiction not required to include improvements on their maps will not be adversely evaluated.)

Yes, our cadastral maps are a mapping grade accurate representation of recorded legal documents. All pertinent improvements are also reflected on the map or GIS in three different ways: County-wide [aerial imagery](#) flown every three years, a [building footprint](#) GIS layer continuously updated by our GIS Department, and a link on each parcel to our CAMA generated property record card which describe all structures on the property and their dimensions.

7. Are maps spatially referenced and capable of meeting national map accuracy standards or IAAO standards, including those cited by reference such as the American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ASPRS) standards? Do they meet the standards when plotted at the scales cited in the IAAO standard?

Briefly describe the locational accuracy of the cadastral maps, what standards are required to be met, and how compliance has been ascertained. Provide links to examples.

Yes, the aerial imagery and [LiDATA data](#) used to generate base maps are provided by the State of North Carolina and abide by the ASPRS standards. The accuracy of this data is verified by GIS and land surveying professionals employed and contracted by the state to ensure compliance. The base maps generated from these aeriels are an essential tool during the processes of mapping parcels and generating new GIS data for Assessment and the public. For example, when North Carolina State Plane Coordinates are not provided for the control corners on surveys or deeds, aerial imagery and contour lines generated from the Lidar are used to map parcel data as accurately as possible.

When the cadastral maps are plotted and provided to the public for presentation or reference purposes, they follow the general guidelines laid out by the IAAO standards. The map sizes commonly used are 11" x 17" and 24" x 36", with the least common option being 36" x 48", which is the only size not listed as common by the IAAO. The commonly used map scales used are 1" = 100' for [urban areas](#), 1" = 200' for suburban, and 1" = 400' for [rural areas](#). All large maps are printed on 20 lb. bond paper with parcels, dimensions, parcel identifiers, street names, and optional aerial imagery. If any alterations to the above guidelines or additional information or layers are requested by the customer, the mapper will oblige and create a custom map as requested.

All of the maps that are edited and generated by the mappers are generated outside of the mapping documents which directly edit the CAMA. These mapping documents (.mxd) are dedicated to solely creating standard and custom maps for other departments and the public. There are four different .mxd files for each mapper to access, three of the .mxd files are set up by sheet size and then a fourth is meant to be customized according to the request.

8. Are maps (or a geographic information system) capable of significantly enhancing the mass appraisal system?

Briefly describe how the cadastral mapping system contributes to the valuation process and how such spatially referenced data are incorporated in the process. If applicable, identify the office's GIS software and broadly describe the applications for which it has been used (some potential details of which are separately identified below).

Yes, the GIS software used by Land Records to generate and maintain the parcel layer plays a key role in the appraisal process and general maintenance of our data. The Land Records staff uses a county-wide enterprise license of the [ArcGIS suite](#) (ESRI) along with a program which runs as an extension to ArcMap called ParcelSync (Farragut Systems). The combination of ArcMap and Parcelsync allows the mappers to efficiently subdivide, combine, transfer, and adjust acreages daily. Once a mapper performs one of those functions the data posts into the CAMA system overnight and alerts the appraisers of the changes the next morning. Parcelsync and the CAMA system join data via the parcel identifier in order to track the adjustments for existing parcels and also when a new parcel identifier is created due to subdivisions and combinations. It is essential that our data is spatially referenced correctly as well since every mapping function runs through an overlay analysis of tax districts, appraisal areas, [flood plain areas](#), and steep slope areas. Once this data is posted to the CAMA the overlay analysis aids the appraisers with location based value calculations that reference the districts, flood plains, etc.

9. Does the GIS or mapping system display and support valuation areas and identifiers?

Briefly describe the integration of valuation areas into the office's GIS or mapping system and provide one or more screen prints and maps illustrating how appraisers can display and utilize market areas and neighborhoods in valuation work.

Yes, the GIS system is linked directly to the CAMA system via parcel identifier. Each parcel has a "neighborhood code" associated with it which is an alphanumeric four character identifier for certain areas and types of areas. Neighborhood codes are updated daily and available in the parcel [attribute table](#). If any other valuation based attributes are needed for GIS analysis, the mappers can filter the necessary data from our CAMA system and link it directly to the parcel features via the parcel identifier. Maps can easily be created showing [neighborhood boundaries](#).

10. Can market areas and neighborhoods be updated with GIS?

Briefly describe how market area and neighborhood boundaries are maintained. Provide an example of how a recent addition or change was implemented. Comment on the frequency of boundary changes and the timeliness with which such changes can be accomplished.

Yes, market areas and neighborhoods are updated within the CAMA system while referencing a GIS map. After the Land Records mapper subdivides or combines a parcel of land the neighborhood code attached to the parent parcel(s) are inherited to the new or child parcels. One of the initial steps in the appraisers' workflow is to analyze the [delineation](#) of the neighborhood while viewing the newly created parcels using GIS. Once the appraiser determines the correct neighborhood, they then make their adjustment within the CAMA system for each affected parcel. The next day the parcel dataset within GIS will reflect the change and the new "neighborhood code" will be populated in that parcel's attribute table.

11. Does the jurisdiction perform advanced spatial analyses possible only with a GIS?

If applicable, provide examples of GIS-generated maps for sales analysis and comparable sales selections, and briefly describe and provide evidence of the jurisdiction's use of key GIS capabilities, such as those listed or any additional ones developed for the jurisdiction.

Yes, Assessment utilizes key GIS functions in order to create custom maps and generate analysis data for appraisers on a regular basis. One example is a year-to-year analysis on [value increase](#) in a specific area of the county. (EXAMPLE – WEST AVL) These maps are typically generated by joining [value tables](#) exported from the CAMA system with our parcel data, then that data is symbolized in GIS by the neighborhood and the percentage of change is specified on the maps. This type of analysis is best represented in a layer file (.lyr) and imported into the GIS map that the appraiser is using. Another common feature utilized in GIS that is created for appraisers is a routing layer, which allows them to better utilize their limited time in the field. For example, polygons are generated for areas designated by the appraiser in order to better organize their field work. Layers and paper maps are made of these areas and any WIP activities (field checks, permits, etc) that the appraiser needs to visit a parcel for can be populated on a map within their designated area and checked off.

Buncombe County Assessor's Office

Certificate of Excellence Submission- List of Exhibits, Chapter 4

Exhibit 4-1.1	Accuracy Audit
Exhibit 4-2.1	Printed Map
Exhibit 4-2.2	Parcel Sync Option
Exhibit 4-3.1	Parcel Snapshot
Exhibit 4-3.2	Parcel Warehouse
Exhibit 4-5.1	Conservation Easement
Exhibit 4-6.1	Aerial Imagery
Exhibit 4-6.2	Building Footprint
Exhibit 4-7.1	LiDAR Map
Exhibit 4-7.2	Urban Map
Exhibit 4-7.3	Rural Map
Exhibit 4-8.1	Arc GIS
Exhibit 4-8.2	Flood Plane Map
Exhibit 4-9.1	Attribute Table
Exhibit 4-9.2	Neighborhood Map
Exhibit 4-10.1	Neighborhood Delineation
Exhibit 4-11.1	Change in Value Map
Exhibit 4-11.2	Change in Value to Excel

Chapter 5: Property Use Codes, Market Areas, and Neighborhoods

1. Does the jurisdiction employ a logical property type classification scheme?

Provide a copy of the jurisdiction's property use codes demonstrating a top-down schema and a report showing the number of parcels of each type.

Describe how conversions are handled.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office has a logical property type classification scheme. Individual properties are identified by a Land Use Code (LUC) in the CAMA system. The LUC's range from 100 to 931 and are grouped in larger classes within the hundreds grouping. Below is a table showing the groups of land use codes per larger class.

Table 5-1

LUC	Class
100	Residential
300	Vacant Land
400	Commercial
500	Recreational
600	Community Services
800	Public Services
900	Parks

There are several smaller groups of properties within the larger classes. Buncombe County currently has [eighty five total LUCs](#). Single Family Residencies which is code 100 has the greatest number of parcels and occupies approximately fifty five percent of the [total parcel count](#).

All of the land use conversions are completed by the staff appraisers. This allows the appraisers to be more familiar with their revaluation areas. The conversions are handled in the CAMA system under the [land tab](#). The CAMA system contains hard stops that will not allow parcels with an LUC in the 300 class to have an improvement. This prevents false classification of property in the system.

Occasionally a parcel will change LUC from a residential class to a commercial class. When this happens the residential appraiser that was currently responsible for the property will communicate with the commercial appraiser that will take over the property to explain the change. When this occurs both the residential appraiser and the commercial appraiser will analyze the properties highest and best use to make sure that the LUC change is necessary.

2. Does the CAMA system provide for mixed use properties?

Describe several common mixed uses in your jurisdiction and how they are treated in the CAMA system.

Provide printouts of several properties illustrating how they are handled.

Yes. The CAMA system allows for mixed use properties. When creating the [sketch](#) of the improvements in the CAMA system the appraisers are able to assign a specific sub area to each enclosed area of the sketch. There are currently [358 different sub areas](#) that can be assigned to portions of the improvements. These include both finished area and unfinished areas. Each sub area has an individual value assignment which represents the contributory value of each unit of the sub area. The sketch as well as all sub areas are listed on the [property card](#) that can be printed from the CAMA system.

An example of this is a building with both retail or office areas and apartment units. This type of mixed use property is becoming more popular as the City of Asheville continues to grow.



In this example the apartment areas are considered CGAD which is Apartment Class D and contributes \$104.52 per square foot. The retail area is classified as CRSD which is Retail Class D and contributes \$93.01 per square foot. The contribution amount per unit is based on construction materials.

This type of sub area assignment system also allows for additional valued items such as swimming pools and elevators to be added as what is considered a yard tem or special feature. Yard items or special features are typically external structures or amenities that add value to the parcel. The contributory value of these [yard items or special features](#) are calculated by the unit. Yard item units can be a variety of things such as square footage, holes on a golf course, or gallons of water for a holding tank. Elevators for example, are valued based on the carrying weight and the number of stops including the lowest level. When utilizing the income approach to value these amenities do not contribute to value as the amenities are factored into the rents.

Occasionally improvements will have both residential and commercial condominium units. When this happens [individual accounts](#) are created in the CAMA system and are assigned to the appropriate appraiser.

3. Has the jurisdiction developed separate geographic areas and location identifiers for each major property type?

Provide copies of maps showing geographic delineations and identification codes for major property types in the jurisdiction.

Yes. The jurisdiction has developed separate geographic areas and location identifiers for each major property type. There are a few ways in which maps can be drawn that identify properties by their land use code. One way this is completed is through the Spatalest software. Through the [frequency script](#) all land use codes can easily be separated with a parcel count shown and percentages of the overall parcel count given. Any land use code can then be mapped using the “[show on map](#)” icon.

Major property types can also be identified and mapped using Arc GIS which has the capability to produce a variety of different maps. Arc GIS pulls information directly from the CAMA system which allows users to display maps of property type delineation or geographic area. Maps can be filtered to show a number of things such as [major land use](#) within a specific revaluation area or [neighborhoods](#) within revaluation areas. Zoning maps can also be overlaid to check use restrictions both in the [county](#) and within the [city limits](#).

4. Do appraisers determine geographic areas used for valuation purposes?

Describe how geographic boundaries used for valuation purposes are determined.

Provide an example of a map showing the overlay of political boundaries or school districts, subdivisions, and residential neighborhood boundaries.

Yes. Appraisers determine geographic areas used for valuation purposes. Buncombe County has seven geographic areas or “[revaluation areas](#)”. These areas are determined by analyzing all of the factors that affect value.

Physical forces play a large role in determining the revaluation areas. This is due to the varying topography of the county. Areas can be defined by mountain ridges as well as rivers or streams. Linkages are another physical factor that can help define an area. Revaluation [areas A and B](#) both have a central location which helps delineate those areas from the more rural areas such as 2 and 8.

Economic forces also play a role in determining the revaluation areas. Area B which is considered West Asheville has seen exponential growth due to the expansion of amenities such as restaurants and breweries. Keeping these types of areas together helps the appraiser understand market expectations. For example, a sales ratio of 0.80 would not be considered unusual for area B when qualifying a sale while this might cause the appraiser in area 5 to take a closer look.

Governmental forces also help determine the revaluation areas. This is mainly achieved through zoning and land use laws. Taxing districts such as [school districts](#) and fire districts can also be analyzed when determining revaluation districts. This is typically not a primary way to analyze areas and some districts are located in more than one revaluation area.

Another important factor that has to be considered when determining geographic boundaries is appraiser workload. The chief appraiser analyzes the workload per area and determines if an individual area is seeing an unequal amount of work. This can happen if an area sees an unusual amount of growth and can quickly result in an appraiser being overworked. If this happens, boundaries can be shifted to even the workload.

Individual appraisers also can further delineate their revaluation area by working with land records to create [field work zones](#). These zones help streamline the appraisers field work by creating logical routes that minimize travel time. The appraiser can quickly filter all field activities per zone to maximize the number of parcels visited.

All neighborhoods are completely located within an individual revaluation district. This creates a more uniform valuation of properties and eliminates any confusion due to communication that might occur between appraisers.

A variety of maps are able to be created through the ArcGIS system showing any number of overlays. Political boundaries, school districts and neighborhoods can all be displayed on a [single map](#).

5. Are geographic areas sufficiently large to afford adequate market data for analysis?

Provide a report showing the number of properties in each market area and neighborhood and, desirably, the number of sales used in valuation analyses in the most recent reappraisal.

Explain why some residential areas may have seemingly low property counts (for example, less than several hundred in a market area or less than 100 in a neighborhood) or atypically high counts.

Buncombe County contains a total of seven geographic [revaluation districts](#) with the commercial and exemption districts being mixed in all of the districts. The table below shows all of the revaluation districts with the number of neighborhoods and total parcels per district.

Table 5-2

Revaluation District	Neighborhood Count	Total Parcel Count
1	615	7773
2	268	16692
4	323	18078
5	461	19216
6	359	17323
7	519	2663
8	247	17199
A	332	13527
B	180	14914

Revaluation district 1 contains all of the commercial properties and does not have a specific geographical area, although some neighborhoods are entirely commercial property. District 7 are all tax exempt property and also do not have a geographical area. Buncombe County currently contains 2,484 neighborhoods with an average parcel number per neighborhood of approximately fifty with some neighborhoods containing as little as five parcels and some having over 200.

The majority of the low parcel count [neighborhoods](#) occur within the city limits in older established areas when developers create new blocks of homes on excess land. These properties typically do not conform with the older existing neighborhoods and need to be separated into their own neighborhood. These neighborhoods initially have a high transfer rate due to being builder spec homes and values can be set accordingly.

The larger parcel count neighborhoods typically are located in rural areas and parcels can greatly vary in size. These neighborhoods can be difficult to value due to this variation. Typically there is sufficient sales data in these larger neighborhoods due to the total number of parcels.

The last revaluation of all parcels in Buncombe County occurred on January 1, 2017. The revaluation before that occurred four years prior on January 1, 2013. All sales that occurred between those dates were analyzed for the last revaluation. A total of 19,641 [qualified transfers](#) occurred during that time frame. The table below shows the number of qualified sales used in each revaluation district during the last complete revaluation.

Table 5-3

Revaluation District	Qualified Sales Last Revaluation
1	902
2	2450
4	2226
5	3279
6	2570
7	40
8	2139
A	2938
B	3107

6. Does the jurisdiction validate the assignment of property use codes and geographic identifiers?

Describe quality control procedures utilized in the maintenance of property use codes and geographic identifiers.

Refer to the reports produced in response to questions 1 and 5 above and explain any blank or invalid categories.

Yes. The jurisdiction validates the assignment of property use codes and geographic identifiers. All parcels contain a specific land use code (LUC) and a specific revaluation and neighborhood identifier. The CAMA system only allows for a single value to be entered into any of [these identifiers](#). This prevents properties to be located in more than one geographical area and contain more than one land use.

[Filters](#) can be created in the CAMA system that check for null or blank entries in both the land use and neighborhood code. These filters are ran periodically although they rarely have any findings.

Buncombe County Assessor's Office

Certificate of Excellence Submission- List of Exhibits, Chapter 5

Exhibit 5-1.1	Total Land Use Codes
Exhibit 5-1.2	Total Parcel Count
Exhibit 5-1.3	Land Tab in CAMA
Exhibit 5-2.1	Improvement Sketch
Exhibit 5-2.2	Sub Area Description
Exhibit 5-2.3	Property Card
Exhibit 5-2.4	Yard Item Description
Exhibit 5-2.5	Condominium Unit
Exhibit 5-3.1	Spatialest Frequency Script
Exhibit 5-3.2	Show on Map Icon
Exhibit 5-3.3	Major Lane Use Area Map
Exhibit 5-3.4	Neighborhood with Revaluation Area
Exhibit 5-3.5	County Zoning Map
Exhibit 5-3.6	City Zoning Map
Exhibit 5-4.1	Revaluation Areas
Exhibit 5-4.2	Areas A and B Map
Exhibit 5-4.3	School District Map
Exhibit 5-4.4	Field Work Zones
Exhibit 5-4.5	Political Boundary Map
Exhibit 5-5.1	Low Parcel County Neighborhood
Exhibit 5-5.2	Qualified Transfers since Revaluation
Exhibit 5-6.1	Property Use Identifier
Exhibit 5-6.2	Property Use Filter

Chapter 6: Property Data Collection and Maintenance

1. Do computer records contain information on current property use, highest and best use, and indicators of legal uses, such as zoning?

Describe the jurisdictional requirements pertaining to valuation by property use. Describe what zoning and land use data is collected and maintained and how it is made available.

Yes. Buncombe County has an extensive [Property Record Card](#) (PRC) which identifies the current use, zoning and other important characteristics associated with highest and best use.

Buncombe County's zoning was first implemented in the 1970s in two communities and was expanded throughout the county in December of 2009. Zoning districts are identified through [zoning maps](#) from the online county GIS system (<https://gis.buncombecounty.org/buncomap/>). There are several mapping overlays that can be added to the aerial map with zoning being one of them. [Zoning ordinances](#) are found on the county Planning Department website (<https://www.buncombecounty.org/Governing/Depts/Planning/zoning-ordinance.aspx>) and describe legally permissible uses of real property.

North Carolina General Statute §[105-283](#) states that all property both real and personal shall be appraised or valued at its true value in money. The term true value in money is later defined in the statute as market value. According to [USPAP Standards Rule 1-3](#) an appraiser must identify and analyze the highest and best use of real estate when developing an opinion of market value. Analyzing the legally permissible uses by reviewing the zoning ordinances is one of the four tests for highest and best use. The four tests to determine highest and best use are 1) legally permissible, 2) physically possible, 3) financially feasible and 4) maximum productivity.

2. Does the jurisdiction have a documented rationale for the data it collects, including its decisions on interior vs. exterior inspections and the frequency of each type of inspection?

List each property characteristic that the office collects and maintains and specify whether it is primarily required for valuation, or for other uses. Indicate the reliability of each data element and the rationale for collecting and maintaining it.

The Buncombe County Assessor's Office collects and maintains a wide variety of property characteristics to use in the valuation process. These characteristics include but are not limited to building type, heat type, year built and [foundation type](#). Other objective information is also gathered by staff appraisers such as the physical size of

the [improvements](#). These objective characteristics are gathered by both submitted plans and specifications as well as physical inspections by the appraisers. Interior inspections are completed when permission is granted or requested by the property owner.

Subjective information such as quality and condition of properties are also collected by the appraisers. The quality of properties are categorized by the [Schedule of Values](#) and range from L, luxury to U, unsound. The condition of properties is also categorized by the [Schedule of Values](#) and includes condition codes such as R, renovated and U, unsound.

Both the subjective and objective information listed above are required for the valuation of properties. The objective information creates the base values for improvements on properties. The subjective information provides adjustments such as depreciation which is a function of quality, condition and age. The [calculations](#) are all visible on the CAMA system.

The objective information gathered on properties is reliable. The appraisers physically inspect any change in the physical attributes of properties. Buncombe County also has conducted [random sample](#) audits to check for accuracy.

3. Does the jurisdiction maintain computerized data on land attributes important in the local market?

List and briefly describe the land valuation characteristics maintained in the CAMA and/or GIS databases for valuation, highlighting any especially useful or innovative data elements and how such descriptors are standardized for ease of year-to-year updates.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office maintains computerized data on land attributes important in the local market. Each neighborhood has individual land units that are appropriately assigned. These units include commercial square feet, lot in acres, common area in acres, individual home sites, and wetlands in acres. Buncombe County currently has fifty six [land unit types](#) that can be applied. The CAMA system also has the ability to apply [percentage adjustments](#) to the appraised value of land for influences that effect value.

Due to the varying topography of the market area Buncombe County has the ability to identify challenging terrain and apply a different rate per unit. By using a county specific website (<http://landlines.buncombe.org/>) land is categorized by the topography. The categories are L1 and L2 with L2 being land that has a 25.01 percent and greater [slope](#). Once the difference categories are assigned, a different price per unit is given based on utility.

4. Does the jurisdiction physically inspect properties at least every four to six years?

Briefly describe how frequently physical inspections are completed, how aerial photography is used in the inspection process, and whether all properties in a stratum are re-inspected or revalued when a sale of one or more unusually priced comparable properties is reported.

Buncombe County appraisers inspect all known changes that occur through maintenance work. Maintenance work includes qualifying transfers, entering and verifying permits, splitting and merging property, and verifying rechecks. All changes that take place through either a building permit activity or a recheck activity are physically inspected by a staff appraiser.

Buncombe County currently uses Eagle View, Pictometry Imagery for aerial photographic images. This imaging software allows for [oblique photographs](#) as well as [measurement verification](#). This assists in identifying changes to properties that have not been physically inspected within the last six years. Buncombe County also uses an aerial photography product from Eagle View called [Change Finder](#). Change Finder compares current aerial photos to older aerial's to detect changes that may have occurred by using the footprint of the improvement. Once a footprint change is detected a staff appraiser will physically inspect the property to verify the change.

5. Does the jurisdiction regularly obtain copies of building permits, occupancy permits, or both, and does it conduct physical inspections of affected properties?

Describe the jurisdiction's ability to obtain relevant information from other government agencies, the frequency and format in which it is received, and any noteworthy procurement issues.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office receives automatic updates in the CAMA system when new permits are applied for. Both Buncombe County and Asheville City Permits and Inspections Departments put all permit activity and inspection reports on an online [Accela](#) platform. This platform communicates with the CAMA system on a daily bases and places an [activity](#) under the parcel. Once the activity is added to the parcel it shows up in the appraiser's workload as a building permit activity. The appraiser is then able to go into the Accela platform and extract the [actual permit](#).

A copy of all plans and specifications are delivered to the Buncombe County Assessor's Office from the Permits and Inspections Department bi-weekly. The Asheville City Permits and Inspections Department has all plans and specifications available for pick up bi-weekly. Once received they are assigned to the appropriate appraiser for entry into the CAMA system. Larger plans can also be scanned into the CAMA system and

then be traced to scale by the appraiser for efficiency. Field checks are required on all permit activities to verify improvements.

The Town of Black Mountain which is located in Buncombe County does not use the Accela platform. Once a month the Town of Black Mountain Permits and Inspections Department sends a [spreadsheet](#) with all new permit activity to the chief appraiser accompanied with the actual permit. The Chief Appraiser then enters the permit activities in the CAMA system and sends the permits to the appraiser for that area. Plans and specifications are available from the Town of Black Mountain by request and usually are received the same day as the request.

Once permit activities are entered into the system reports can be generated showing all activities in specific areas or county wide. This allows for accurate up to date information.

6. Is the residential property record card designed to facilitate collection and review, and is it supported by a data-coding manual and training program?

Provide a copy of the primary data collection form(s), and data collection and training documents. Indicate how they promote clarity, good organization, integration between form and manual, and quality through training materials.

Yes. Buncombe County's [property record cards](#) are well organized with the properties identifying characteristics such as address, neighborhood, and ownership on the top of the first page. The first page also contains a summary of overall value as well as the properties fifteen digit identification number. The following pages contain physical information on the property as well as explanations of value conclusions.

Buncombe County produces a [Schedule of Values](#) every revaluation year that describes in detail property codes used on the PRC. This Schedule of Values is also used when training new appraisers in the field identify and classify things such as additional outbuildings as well as physical property characteristics.

7. Does the office use mobile electronic devices for field data collection?

Describe what steps are taken to maximize the efficiency and reliability of field data collection. If applicable, briefly describe your automated field data collection systems and operations, including initial and ongoing costs and benefits, how data are collected and validated, how sketching is handled, and the role, if any, field data collection devices play in the procurement of photographs, signatures, or other proofs-of-visit.

Yes. Buncombe County appraisers currently use Hewlett Packard revolve laptops that have touch screen capability. Buncombe County vehicles are also equipped with a

wireless signal boost which allows the appraisers computers to communicate with the database in the most rural areas. Changes made in the field are changed in the CAMA database in real time. This also assists the appraiser in property location through access to the GIS database.

It is the discretion of the appraiser as to how to measure and sketch properties. Some appraisers use laser measurement tools while others use standard tape measures. Some appraisers prefer to collect the physical data and enter it into the CAMA system later while others will enter data in the field. Photos are typically taken when a field visit occurs and entered in the CAMA system.

8. Does the assessment office have computerized edits that include both range and consistency checks?

List and briefly describe the jurisdiction's various computerized data edits and how they are updated.

Yes. The software used by the Buncombe County Assessor's office contains both range and consistency edits. Range checks allow only information that is included in that field to be entered into the database. If information is entered into a field that is not included in the database a window opens that informs the user of an [invalid entry](#). Typically these fields contain a drop box with the valid entries listed.

Consistency checks flag inputs that are uncommon and require an [additional verification](#). An example of this is when changes are made to a parcel retroactively. A window opens that asks the user if the changes should be updated for the [future year](#).

9. Are property data collected or at least reviewed by experienced appraisers?

Briefly describe the practices for data collection for residential, commercial, and industrial property, including requirements both for new-construction data collectors and for those involved in maintenance and sales verification. Describe the training received for each, the standards promulgated (see questions 11 and 12), and the steps taken to ensure consistency over time and across the jurisdiction.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's office has seven designated residential appraisers, two designated commercial appraisers, a real property data analyst, and a chief appraiser. All of the appraisers are classified with the North Carolina Department of Revenue (NCDOR) as Appraisers one, two, or tree. In order to be classified through the Department of Revenue appraisers have to take a select amount of [courses and workshops](#). Three of the current appraisers are currently certified appraisers through the North Carolina Appraisal Board. Buncombe County also has a certified USPAP

instructor on staff that handles any appraisal standards issues. In addition, Buncombe County also has two North Carolina Department of Revenue classified appraisers in the Exemptions Department as well as two appraisers in the land records Department.

All of the appraisers are assigned a geographical area in which they are responsible for all data collection as well as sales verifications. This allows for all new construction data to be collected by a professional appraiser. A selection of [audits](#) are ran before listing and billing by each appraiser to ensure consistency over time and across the jurisdiction.

10. Does the jurisdiction have explicit data accuracy standards?

Briefly describe the jurisdiction's data accuracy standards and how they are developed, revised over time, used throughout the office, and how they accord with the IAAO Standards.

According to the IAAO Standard on Ratio Studies 3.2.2.2 personnel involved in collecting, screening, and adjusting sales data or making appraisals should be familiar with real estate conveyance practices in their region. All of these activities are completed by NCDOR. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office also has three state certified appraisers who have all worked in the region and an Appraisal Qualifications Board USPAP instructor on staff to assist with these activities.

Appraisers are required to use the North Carolina Real Estate Commission's "[Residential Square Footage Guidelines](#)" when measuring improvements. These guidelines require the measurements to be within five percent of the actual area which is in line with the IAAO Standard on Mass Appraisal of Real Property guidelines 3.3.2.5. This also creates a consistent standard of measurement that is documented and can be referred to.

11. Does the jurisdiction have a data quality control program?

Briefly describe the jurisdiction's data quality control/quality assurance. Describe any special data review or collection activities undertaken for geographic areas with high CODs (Coefficient of Dispersion). If possible, note the impact of such reviews on the COD.

Yes. When property [transfers](#) through land records an activity is added to the parcel in the CAMA system. The appraiser then has to qualify the transfer and review all subjective and objective information associated with the parcel. When changes are found the parcel is updated in the CAMA system and values are adjusted in accordance with NC State Statute §[105-287](#).

The chief appraiser is also tasked with placing quality control checks on randomly selected parcels. This check creates a review activity within the parcel that needs to be completed by the appraiser. Approximately 3,800 parcels or three percent receive quality control checks

The Buncombe County Assessor's Office also completed a 1008 parcel [random audit](#) that was recommended by the Department of Revenue. This included a site visit and a re-measure of all improvements associated with the individual parcels.

Reports are ran periodically checking for ratios and other statistical measures such as CODs. These reports are typically separated by neighborhood to get a more accurate look of these measures. When problems are found such as a high COD the individual neighborhoods are further analyzed. If necessary a complete re-list and measure can be completed. Although it is not uncommon for a higher COD in the more rural neighborhoods that have very little conformity.

12. Does the jurisdiction avail itself of valuable third party data sources?

Briefly describe the jurisdiction's use of data from external sources and the extent to which it is used as received or as a flag to attempt to confirm changes with primary sources.

Yes. All of the Appraisers in the Buncombe County Assessor's Office have access to the local [Multiple Listing Service](#). The access to this information is vital in qualifying sales transfers, defending appeals, and establishing values during reevaluation years.

The [MLS sheet](#) contains information such as current quality, condition, and other characteristics that could help in creating a more accurate listing. Current photographs are typically included in the MLS sheet which gives the appraiser an interior look at the property. All disclosures are included such as the standard [Residential Property Disclosure](#) which helps the appraiser identify any deficiencies that could affect the properties condition. Property measurements are also typically included which helps the appraiser verify the physical size of the improvements.

Other websites such as Airbnb, Realtor.com and Zillow have also been helpful in identifying physical changes of property.

13. Does the jurisdiction obtain and make appropriate use of electronic photographs?

Briefly describe your office's procurement of photographs, their type(s), refresh cycle(s), irregular updating, and usage.

Yes. Buncombe County appraisers routinely take [digital photographs](#) of properties during site visits and store them in the CAMA system. These photographs are updated with each physical inspection and are used to analyze the properties quality, condition, and physical shape. The photographs are stored indefinitely in the database and are time stamped with an image date.

14. Does the jurisdiction capture property data available from marketing materials or blueprints?

Briefly describe the jurisdiction's acquisition of data from builders in the form of marketing materials and blueprints. Describe how the jurisdiction uses such data.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office receives a copy of all approved plans from Asheville City, Buncombe County, and the Town of Black Mountain Permits and Inspections Departments. This occurs bi-weekly for both Asheville City and Buncombe County and be request from the Town of Black Mountain.

Occasionally [marketing materials](#) are used when new developments are being created. Marketing materials can be found online as well as within the MLS listing information. These marketing materials can assist the appraiser in developing an opinion of quality for [new constructions](#). Marketing materials can also assist the appraiser in developing initial land values for the creation of new neighborhoods.

15. Does the jurisdiction capture information submitted during appeals?

Briefly describe the jurisdiction's use of data submitted upon appeal, how it is managed, and whether it is used beyond the specific circumstances of the appeal.

Yes. All the information that is submitted during the appeal process is used to create the most accurate listing of properties. If information is uncovered that could increase the value of a property it is applied to the property during the appeal. All pertinent information can be scanned and stored in the CAMA system.

Buncombe County Assessor's Office

Certificate of Excellence Submission- List of Exhibits, Chapter 6

Exhibit 6-1.1	Property Record Card
Exhibit 6-1.2	Zoning Map
Exhibit 6-1.3	Zoning Ordinances
Exhibit 6-1.4	North Carolina Statute 105-283
Exhibit 6-2.1	Property Characteristics
Exhibit 6-2.2	Improvement Area
Exhibit 6-2.3	Schedule of Values (Quality)
Exhibit 6-2.4	Schedule of Values (Condition)
Exhibit 6-2.5	Improvement Calculations
Exhibit 6-2.6	Random Sample Audit
Exhibit 6-3.1	Land Unit Types
Exhibit 6-3.2	Land Percentage Adjustment
Exhibit 6-3.3	Steep Slope Adjustment
Exhibit 6-4.1	Oblique Photograph
Exhibit 6-4.2	Measurement Verification Photograph
Exhibit 6-4.3	
Exhibit 6-5.1	Accela Building Permit Site
Exhibit 6-5.2	Building Permit Activity
Exhibit 6-5.3	Building Permit
Exhibit 6-5.4	Permits Spreadsheet
Exhibit 6-6.1	Full Property Record Card
Exhibit 6-6.2	Full Schedule of Values
Exhibit 6-8.1	Range Edit, Invalid Roof Cove Entry
Exhibit 6-8.2	Consistency Check, Living Units
Exhibit 6-8.3	Consistency Check, Future Year
Exhibit 6-9.1	NC DOR Appraiser Qualifications
Exhibit 6-9.2	Billing and Listing Audits
Exhibit 6-10.1	Residential Square Footage Guidelines
Exhibit 6-11.1	Transfer activity in CAMA
Exhibit 6-11.2	North Carolina Statute 105.287
Exhibit 6-11.3	DOR random audit results
Exhibit 6-12.1	Multiple Listing Service Membership
Exhibit 6-12.2	Multiple Listing Sheet
Exhibit 6-12.3	Residential Property Disclosure
Exhibit 6-13.1	Digital Photograph in CAMA

Chapter 7: Sales Data and Ratio Studies

1. Are all transfers of property (sales) uniquely identified and captured?

If the jurisdiction operates under a legal system that provides for mandatory disclosure of sales information to appraisers and their relevant oversight agency, explain the process, provide a copy of the sales disclosure document, and describe whether each sale is uniquely identified and accounted for in an auditable manner.

If the jurisdiction is currently working without sales disclosure, describe how sales are identified and processed and any efforts the jurisdiction is involved in to remedy the policy deficiency.

The state of North Carolina has no statute or law that requires the disclosure of sales information. Real property transactions are typically recorded through the Buncombe County Register of Deeds which records each document under a unique deed book and page number. The recording of the property transaction is not mandatory although legal ownership rights are not enforceable unless recorded. Very few transactions occur without a recorded deed book and page number for this reason.

North Carolina General Statute [§105-228.30](#) requires an excise tax be levied before the real property transfer instrument is recorded. The rate of the excise tax is directly related to the value of the interest conveyed. This allows for a sales price to be extracted from the recording of the instrument.

Buncombe County has a professional Land Records Department which analyze all new ownership transfer deeds and enters all relevant information including the sales price into the CAMA system on a [transfer tab](#) for the staff appraisers to review. The transfer activity is entered into the appropriate staff appraiser's workload and must be qualified as an arms-length transaction.

2. Are real estate sales properly screened and appropriate adjustments made?

Provide a description of the jurisdiction's validation procedures, including any written guidelines used for the validation process.

If applicable, describe how sale prices are adjusted for items such as personal property in the CAMA system and indicate whether the original price is preserved. Provide documentation with examples.

Discuss the coding system for sales validation, including what is done when more than one code is applicable, assuming the codes are not mutually exclusive.

Describe briefly how the jurisdiction processes multi-parcel commercial sales. Describe how sales valid for valuation purposes, but not for ratio study purposes (or vice versa), are handled and how they are retrieved for various purposes. Provide examples.

Yes, all real estate sales are identified through Land Records and are properly screened by staff appraisers. Staff appraisers have various tools to assist them in the verification of sales. All appraisers have access to the local multiple listing service ([MLS](#)) which provides third party information to assist in the process. The MLS card also provides contact information of real estate agents for further verification. Buyers and sellers are also occasionally contacted for sales verification. Buncombe County has a sales verification questionnaire that is sent to the buyers of property. This [questionnaire](#) attempts to verify the sales price and any condition which could disqualify the sale. These questionnaires are sent in accordance to the *IAAO Standard on Ratio Studies A.3.2*. A pre stamped envelope is included in the questionnaire for a higher rate of return.

Once a sale has been qualified a [verification code](#) is entered into the CAMA system for documentation. The qualification codes are listed in the table below.

Table 7-1

Code	Description
AGT	Agent
BYR	Buyer
MLS	Multiple Listing Service
OTR	Other
SLR	Seller
STP	Deed Stamps

If more than one of the verification codes are used to qualify a sale notes can be added in the CAMA system to explain. [An example](#) of this would be if an appraiser initially verified a sale through MLS and then spoke with an agent to verify a physical characteristic.

The NCDOR provides a [list of codes](#) which could potential disqualify a sale. If a sale is disqualified per NCDOR code, verifiable proof must be provided for documentation. The most common disqualification code is “C-transaction is \$3,000 or less”. This typically represents a transfer of ownership as a gift or for other non-quantifiable consideration. Other types of disqualifications include multi-parcel sales, transactions between relatives or related business and for changes made after the sale. Once transfers are disqualified they are not used in ratio studies of any kind. Only qualified sales are used for all ratio studies.

Adjustments can be made to the original sales price in the CAMA system. These [adjusted sales price](#) are used for valuation purposes only and are not used for ratio studies. For instance, if there was a transfer of two individual parcels of land under a

single deed and each parcel was marketed individually an adjustment could be made. This adjustment would represent the value allocated to each parcel. Multi-parcel commercial properties are processed in a similar way with adjusted sales price being used for valuation purposes only and not for ratio studies from NCDOR.

3. Are sales used in valuation analyses and ratio studies adjusted to the valuation date (time-trended)?

Describe what methods of time adjustment are used by the jurisdiction and how they correspond to the IAAO standard and the material in *Fundamentals of Mass Appraisal*.
Provide sample trend analysis reports and reports showing methods of time adjustment, along with a description of these reports.

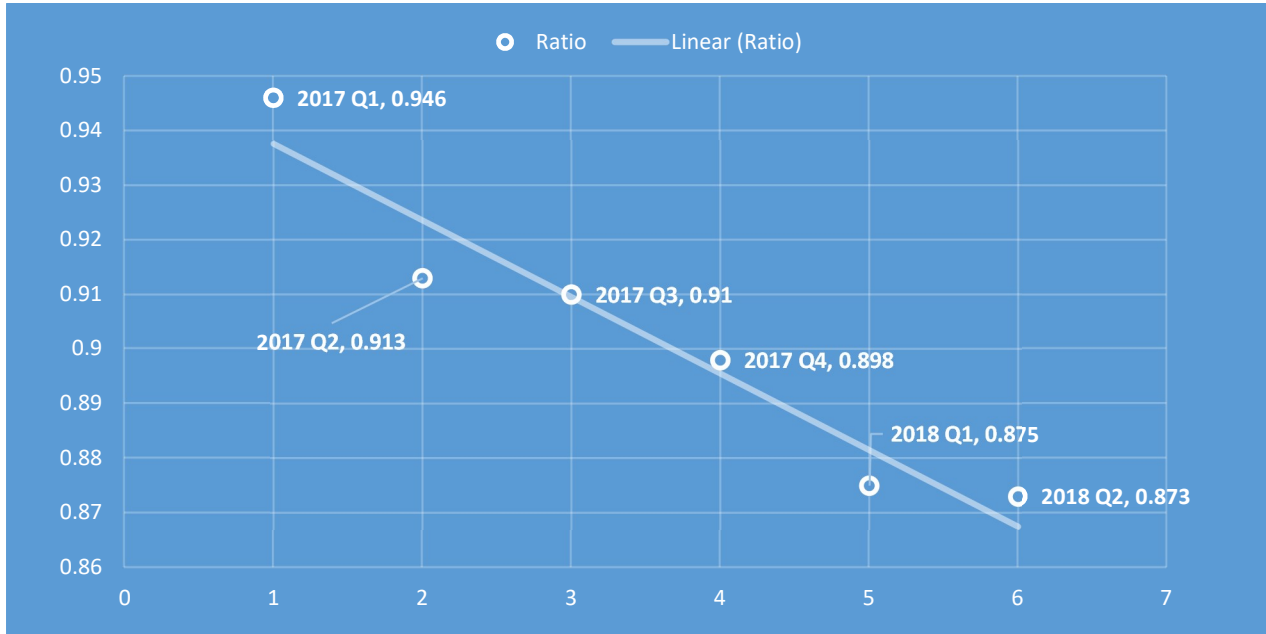
No, the Buncombe County Assessor’s Office does not adjust sales used in valuation analyses and ratio studies to the valuation date. The ratio study conducted by the NCDOR occurs annually and is used to fairly assess public utility companies that are valued annually by the NCDOR under North Carolina General Statute [§105-284](#). If a jurisdiction’s median ratio falls below ninety percent the NCDOR can apply a weighted average percentage based on the median ratio in the fourth and seventh year thereafter. This study relies on a current non-time trended ratio study for fair assessment. The NCDOR also has the authority to force jurisdictions to do a complete revaluation if the overall jurisdiction ratio falls below 0.85 or above 1.15.

Buncombe County uses ratio studies for various reasons including value trends for the market area. These projections assist the county commissioners in deciding when to conduct an area wide revaluation. State Statute requires each jurisdiction conduct a complete revaluation within eight years of the last revaluation although jurisdictions can conduct revaluations sooner if passed by the commissioners. The following charts represent jurisdiction wide ratio studies per quarter that show projected trends.

Table 7-2

Quarter	Median Ratio	COD
1 st quarter 2017	0.946	17.17
2 nd quarter 2017	0.913	16.25
3 rd quarter 2017	0.910	15.92
4 th quarter 2017	0.898	16.81
1 st quarter 2018	0.875	18.72
2 nd quarter 2018	0.873	17.85

Chart 7-3



These charts indicate an appreciating market which can also be confirmed with other third party [market reports](#). Third party market reports are often used to verify internal information. These reports can also be used to gather information such as market rents.

4. Are ratio studies conducted at timely intervals during the valuation process?

Describe how often ratio studies are used to monitor valuation accuracy. Provide examples of the types of ratio studies prepared. Describe the steps the jurisdiction follows if the ratio study results do not fall within the acceptable standards set by the Standard on Ratio Studies. Provide a sample to demonstrate various types of strata used in the ratio studies. Note whether the results of ratio studies conducted by the jurisdiction or by the state oversight agency are shown on assessment notices, and provide samples if so. (If there is no requirement for them, the jurisdiction will not be penalized for omitting them.)

Yes, ratio studies are conducted at timely intervals during the valuation process. Ratio studies are conducted on various types of properties and market areas to measure overall accuracy and analyze appraiser performance. These studies are easily

performed through the CAMA system as well as Spatialest. Spatialest is GIS based software that can quickly run all statistical measures set forth in the IAAO “[Standard on Ratio Studies](#)” part 1.5. County wide quarterly reports are compiled and broken down by appraisal revaluation area. Buncombe County currently has seven geographic [revaluation areas](#) which an individual staff appraiser is responsible for all residential activities. There are also two additional revaluation areas that do not have a geographic location. These are exemptions, and commercial [Ratio studies](#) are performed on overall revaluation districts which allows for an appraiser performance analysis as well as to identify problematic neighborhoods and property types for the appraiser. Once [typical neighborhood ratios](#) are identified the appraiser can use them as baselines for future transfer analysis.

Complete jurisdiction ratio studies are also conducted periodically to analyze the jurisdictions current state. These are typically ran through the CAMA system and can be grouped in a [variety of ways](#). The most common grouping is by [primary neighborhood](#) so staff appraisers can see trends and forecast change.

In accordance with North Carolina General Statutes [§105-286](#) and [§105-287](#) appraised value can change only under specific circumstances in a non-revaluation year. All ratio studies performed in non-revaluation years are typically for monitoring purposes. These studies can also be used as forecasting models for future reappraisals. In a revaluation year ratio studies are continuously ran to test for changes in valuation elements such as price per square foot and neighborhood adjustment codes.

The ratio study that is completed by the NCDOR is an [annual study](#) that analyzes the median ratio, COD, mean ratio, range, and PRD. At the beginning of each study period the NCDOR identifies a random selection of deed book and page numbers each jurisdiction may analyze. If a qualified sale did not occur on the specific page number then the next page number that contains a qualified sale is used. The NCDOR requires the jurisdictions to report this information on a modified quarterly basis and it is then compiled for annual figures. These studies are used by the NCDOR to equalize the assessed value of public utility companies which are appraised annually by the state in accordance with [NCGS §105-284](#). The result of these studies can also allow the NCDOR to force a jurisdiction to conduct a revaluation sooner than the eight year limit set by statute.

Due to the mandatory eight year revaluation cycle the NCDOR has set for all jurisdictions in North Carolina, it is not uncommon for certain strata to fall outside of acceptable standards set by the Standards on Ratio Studies. This typically happens the further the jurisdiction gets outside of the revaluation year. During the revaluation year all measures are taken to stay well within the standards set by the Standards on Ratio Studies. The NCDOR publishes an annual report with all the [jurisdictions results](#). Revaluation years are also given on the reported results for reference. Buncombe County's last revaluation occurred in 2017.

The Buncombe County Assessor's Office does not place any ratio study result on the assessment notices. The NCDOR posts all the jurisdictions on line at <https://www.ncdor.gov/documents/sales-assessment-ratio-studies-january-1-2018>.

5. Does the jurisdiction conduct ratio studies by property groups and subgroups?

Document the strata that the jurisdiction uses for performing ratio studies and provide sample ratio study results to demonstrate that IAAO standards have been met.
Note any rules the jurisdiction employs about what stratification bases are to be used in, in case of usual sample sizes and reliability statistics.

Yes, the Buncombe County Tax Assessor's Office conducts ratio studies by property groups and subgroups. The CAMA system and SpatialEst can produce various [types of ratio studies](#) on any property group or subgroup. Properties are stratified by both geographical locations and property use.

Geographical stratification is primarily classified by the revaluation area group and the neighborhood subgroup. Currently Buncombe County has seven geographical revaluation groups and two non-geographical revaluation groups, commercial and two exemptions groups. The exemption group sees very few transfers and is typically omitted from ratio studies. A total of 2,483 neighborhoods exist in Buncombe County and includes all of the current parcels. Ratio studies can be performed on a single neighborhood or all neighborhoods in a specific revaluation area. Neighborhood ratio studies typically extend the period in which sales are drawn to one year. This creates a larger sample size per neighborhood and is a better representation of the subgroup.

Property Use stratification is primarily classified by larger use groups such as [commercial](#), [residential](#), and [unimproved property](#). These studies are performed to get a general idea of how the jurisdictions models perform on a larger scale. Subgroups within the larger groups contain strata such as residential single family, residential vacant land and commercial industrial. These subgroup studies narrow the study even further and can be useful identifying changes within these groups.

Ratio studies are also performed on property use groups and subgroups within geographical groups. An example of this would be residential single family properties within the [revaluation area group B](#). This can be further delineated into neighborhoods within the [revaluation area](#). As can be seen on the previous ratio study report, most of the neighborhoods have met the IAAO standards in accordance with the "Standard on Ratio Studies" 9.2.2 which allows for a COD of up to 15.0.

6. Does the jurisdiction use ratio studies as a tool for planning both reappraisals and staff needs?

Describe and provide sample ratio reports and similar documents that show ratio study results in support of planned revaluation activities.
Provide ratio reports indicating the need for additional field appraiser training.
Provide evidence of the use of ratio studies for other purposes as well, such as correction, evaluation of performance, the conduct of reappraisals, and neighborhood definition.

Yes. Ratio studies are performed in all of the geographic strata to determine the importance of the revaluation. This study also indicates the areas of most concern which can be targeted. Once the areas of concern are found, neighborhood studies are conducted to show all statistical measures including the coefficient of dispersion (COD) and the price related difference (PRD). These statistical measures are greatly beneficial in determining the importance of the revaluation as well as finding the level of appraisal.

Ratio studies are also performed on specific land use codes (LUC) to assist in determining the importance of the revaluation. These studies also help appraisers to concentrated revaluation efforts according to the statistic measures.

Filters can also be ran in the CAMA system which analyzes properties with certain characteristics that could be effected by adjustment tables such as a size adjustment table and depreciation tables.

Ratio studies can also be used to audit and train staff appraisers. The COD is a statistical measure that can be used to check the quality of an appraisers work. A high COD could indicate inconsistent appraiser while a lower COD could indicate sales chasing. Some larger rural areas will naturally have a higher COD. Once areas with high COD's are identified the chief appraiser typically assists the appraiser in finding issues within that area that can be adjusted to lower the COD. Typically issues that need to be addressed are subjective in nature and the chief appraiser can help the appraiser be more consistent which will in turn lower the COD.

7. Can the jurisdiction perform ratio studies by combinations of property characteristics specified by staff on an ad-hoc basis?

Describe and provide examples of some of the user-defined reports designed for the jurisdiction.
Describe the ratio study software applications used in the jurisdiction.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office can perform ratio studies by any combination of property characteristics identified in the CAMA system. The CAMA system contains a [filter](#) that allows the user to identify any property characteristic to use

for a ratio study. The Spatialest software program also contains a [similar filter](#) with the most common property characteristics. All appraisers have the ability to perform ratio studies within the CAMA system. Buncombe County also has a Data Analyst who typically performs most ratio studies after gathering information from appraisers. The Data Analyst also reviews ratio studies and makes suggestions to the Chief Appraiser and staff appraisers.

Occasionally staff appraisers will need ratio studies performed on specific property types. An example of this would be all single family properties over [2,000 square](#) feet in a specific neighborhood. This could be helpful to the appraiser in understanding differences in sales price and appraised value when qualifying transfers for that property type. This type of ratio study can also be delineated by elements such as [grade](#) for further analysis.

The Spatialest software is the preferred software for running a wide variety of ratio studies due to its ability to separated and categorize various elements. Reports can be ran quickly and efficiently. Another benefit in the Spatialest software is that it is GIS based so if concerns come up they can be visually identified and checked for uniformity on an [aerial map](#).

Ratio studies are ran in the CAMA system when advanced filters are needed and not available in Spatialest such as parcel activity, building permits and [taxing districts](#). Filtering ratio studies by taxing districts can be helpful when analyzing all sales that have occurred in [Asheville City](#) limits which has an individual taxing code. Ratio studies produced in the CAMA system are more time consuming to create although can easily be moved to a Microsoft Excel [spreadsheet](#) for a detailed analysis.

8. Does the statistical program used to produce the ratio study compute the IAAO standard measures of level (median, mean, weighted mean ratio), horizontal uniformity [coefficient of dispersion (COD)], and vertical uniformity [price-related differential (PRD) and coefficient of price-related bias (PRB)]? (Note: Jurisdictions will enjoy a grace period for introducing the use of the PRB.)

Note whether the measures calculated comply with the requirements in the standard.
Provide computer-generated reports of all the statistics listed.
If extreme or outlier ratios are trimmed when computing measures of vertical equity (PRD and PRB) and horizontal uniformity (COD), explain the process.
Note whether field appraisers have access to software to perform ratio analysis on their assigned territories.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office has the capability to produce ratio studies that compute the IAAO standard measures of level (median, mean, weighted

mean ratio), horizontal uniformity (COD), and vertical uniformity (PRD). This can be performed in the CAMA system which contains an application that creates numerous [analytical reports](#). These reports can also be quickly ran in Spatialist using custom inputs from the user.

This is shown in a complete jurisdiction ratio study created in the CAMA system. The report contains all of the IAAO standard measures for the [complete jurisdiction](#) categorized by land use. This is a detailed report that gives all the properties included in the study with individual characteristics. This report also gives category totals.

A similar report can be generated through the Spatialist software. This [report](#) is abbreviated and does not contain the weighted average.

Occasionally outliers will be trimmed based on two standard deviation about the mean. This trimming occurs on a case by case basis determined by the data analyst and is for internal analysis only. The NCDOR does not allow any trimming to occur for their annual ratio study.

9. Does the jurisdiction compute confidence intervals for the statistics it computes as described in question 8 above?

Describe the various intervals used in judging the acceptability of the results calculated in the ratio studies, how each of them is specified and calculated, what level of confidence is used, and how the results are explained to a non-technical audience.

Indicate the standards with which the jurisdiction must comply.

Currently there is no standard on level of confidence that the jurisdiction must comply to. The NCDOR does not require any jurisdiction to report a specific confidence interval on any statistical measure associated with appraisal level.

A ninety five percent confidence interval can be tested although it is only for internal analysis and not measured by the NCDOR.

10. Does the jurisdiction compute additional study-validating measures for the statistics it computes as described in section 8 above?

Describe any tests that are used to address side issues such as the normality of the data, the representativeness of the sample, or other considerations.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office runs [internal audits](#) on a monthly basis that are designed to clean up representative data in the CAMA system. These audits

are performed by the data analyst and the chief appraiser. The audits not only serve as a way to correct any bad data in the CAMA system, they are also a way to check the quality of the staff appraisers work. These audits are also completed before tax bills and listing notices go out to insure that all the information in the CAMA system is free of error. This prevents bill adjustments and also reduces the number of value appeals received.

Other internal audits are often ran to catch outlier ratios. These [audits](#) typically are completed on individual revaluation areas to also check the quality of the staff appraisers work. Currently a ratio range of 0.6 to 1.25 is considered acceptable while anything outside of this range is reviewed by the data analysis.

11. Does the jurisdiction test that sold and unsold properties have been appraised similarly (to ensure sample representativeness)?

Describe how sold and unsold properties are analyzed to show equity between sold and unsold properties.

Describe any other analyses undertaken to address sample representativeness, including use of time-adjusted older sales, differential weighting of certain sales, or exclusion of first-time sales.

Provide sample reports that analyze the representativeness of the sales sample.

Indicate whether adjustments are made in the ratio studies to account for multiple tests.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office has tests to make sure that sold and unsold properties have been appraised similarly. Each revaluation area is checked to see if the individual appraiser for that geographic area is applying unnecessary value adjustments to sold parcels or "chasing sales".

When properties transfer the staff appraisers have to qualify the sales to ensure that they are arms-length. When this happens the appraisers analyze all pertinent information such as MLS reports and owner interviews. This also gives the appraiser a chance to change objective information associated with the parcel. North Carolina General Statute [§105-287](#) allows jurisdictions to change the appraised value of real property in non-revaluation years based on certain factors. When reviewing MLS and other property specific data it is not uncommon for property value to change.

The primary method used to check sample representativeness is using the average value changes in revaluation areas. [Ratio studies](#) are compiled from all qualified transfers of the revaluation areas and are compared to the median ratio of the jurisdiction. When revaluation areas show a large change from the overall median it could indicate a problem in that area.

Another way that appraisers are audited for sales chasing is by performing a ratio study on the individual revaluation areas on all qualified sales that received any value change from the previous listing period. This [study](#) will show the percent change in value of the individual parcels as well as the ratio. The average of both the percent change and ratio can be analyzed for patterns. If an appraiser has a high average percent change coupled with a high average ratio it could be an indication of sales chasing.

The percentage of net value change is also analyzed in this study. This number could indicate inequity in value changes if this number is too high or too low.

Time adjustments are typically not applied to any sales used in ratio studies used to ensure sample representativeness. First time sales are also included in these studies. In the current appreciating market first time sales represent a considerable amount of sales due to low inventory and cannot be omitted. All sales are given similar consideration when checking sample representativeness.

12. Do the ratio studies include appropriate graphics?

Provide examples with a description of the ratio study graphics and how the jurisdiction produces and uses them.

Yes. The CAMA system has the capability to produce graphics. The easiest way to create graphics is to pull filtered data into excel. Once the information is in Excel a number of [graphics](#) can be created. Ratio studies can be conducted for numerous areas and graphs can be produced for a visual analysis. Typically every quarter and half year ratio studies are conducted in each revaluation area and reported. These reports can be sectioned by revaluation area as well as land use with median ratios found for each category.

The Spatalest software can also produce graphics. These graphs typically do not analyze the ratio. These graphs analyze things such as frequency of certain items such as [grade](#). Other graphs could include pie charts with current property conditions or [land use](#).

13. Do the jurisdiction's ratio studies compare favorably with any the oversight agency may conduct, possibly an appraisal- rather than sales- ratio study?

Note whether the oversight agency conducts ratio studies and, if so, compare and contrast their methodologies and results, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of each. Describe whether the different sets of studies have benefitted from one another and whether their results have tended to converge over recent years.

The North Carolina Department of Revenue conducts ratio studies on all Counties in the state. These ratio studies serve as grounds for both forced reappraisal and equalization of public utilities under North Carolina General Statute [§105-284](#).

NCDOR sends every county a select number of deed book and pages numbers and every County analyzes either that book and page number if it is qualified or the next one that is a qualified sale. These qualified sales are [documented](#) in an online database and are published annually. Every County is responsible to have the required sales uploaded on a modified [quarterly](#) basis.

The NCDOR uses a random sample which is incomplete data. A solution to this would be to run a ratio study on the entire jurisdiction annually and report the results. The results of the annual ratio study would be a complete analysis of total jurisdiction and would give more accurate results. Historically the ratios that the NCDOR publish are similar to the complete jurisdiction ratio study although never the same.

Buncombe County Assessor's Office

Certificate of Excellence Submission- List of Exhibits, Chapter 7

Exhibit 7-1.1	NCGS §105-228.3
Exhibit 7-1.2	Transfer Tab in CAMA
Exhibit 7-2.1	MLS sheet
Exhibit 7-2.2	Residential Sales Questionnaire
Exhibit 7-2.3	Sales Verification Codes
Exhibit 7-2.4	Secondary Verification Codes
Exhibit 7-2.5	Sales Disqualification Codes
Exhibit 7-2.6	Adjusted Sales Price in CAMA
Exhibit 7-3.1	NCGS §105-284
Exhibit 7-3.2	Third Party Market Report
Exhibit 7-4.1	Revaluation Areas
Exhibit 7-4.2	Quarterly Ratio Study
Exhibit 7-4.3	Neighborhood Ratio Study
Exhibit 7-4.4	Ratio Study Grouping
Exhibit 7-4.5	Overall Jurisdiction Ratio Study
Exhibit 7-4.6	NCGS §105-286
Exhibit 7-4.7	NCGS §105-287
Exhibit 7-4.8	NCDOR Ratio Study
Exhibit 7-4.9	State Jurisdiction Ratio Study Results
Exhibit 7-5.1	Ratio Study Types
Exhibit 7-5.2	Commercial Ratio Study
Exhibit 7-5.3	Residential Ratio Study
Exhibit 7-5.4	Unimproved Ratio Study
Exhibit 7-5.5	Single Family Study in Area B
Exhibit 7-5.6	Neighborhood Study in Area B
Exhibit 7-7.1	CAMA System Filters
Exhibit 7-7.2	Spatialest Filter
Exhibit 7-7.3	Specific Neighborhood Filter
Exhibit 7-7.4	Specific Neighborhood by Grade Filter
Exhibit 7-7.5	Aerial Conformity Map
Exhibit 7-7.6	District Filter
Exhibit 7-7.7	City of Asheville Ratio Study
Exhibit 7-7.8	CAMA filter to Excel
Exhibit 7-8.1	Analytical Reports in CAMA
Exhibit 7-8.2	Jurisdiction Wide Ratio Study by LUC
Exhibit 7-8.3	Spatialest Jurisdiction Ratio Study
Exhibit 7-10.1	Internal Audits
Exhibit 7-10.2	Ratio Audits
Exhibit 7-11.1	Sales Chasing Ratio Study
Exhibit 7-11.2	Sales Chasing Analysis

[Exhibit 7-12.1](#)
[Exhibit 7-12.2](#)
[Exhibit 7-12.3](#)

Area 2 Ratio Graph
Grade Frequency
Land Use Graph

[Exhibit 7-13.1](#)
[Exhibit 7-13.2](#)

NCDOR Database Entry
NCDOR Ratio Guidelines

Chapter 8: Land Valuation

1. Is the land valuation process clearly documented?

Provide copies of manuals and guidelines related to land valuation.

Briefly describe the process for maintaining documentation and ensuring that appraisers are adequately trained in and familiar with land valuation policy and procedures.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office clearly documents the land valuation process. North Carolina General Statute [§105-317](#) requires each jurisdiction to create a schedule of values which acts as standards and rules to be used when valuing property for taxation. This statute also states that certain influences on the true value of land must be considered.

The Schedule of Values also is used as both a guideline for training new appraisers as well as guide for tax payers to understand the land valuation process. It goes into detail on land types and class as well as describes how adjustments are made to individual parcels in the CAMA system. The [Schedule of Values](#) also describes how the jurisdiction values non-mapped parcels such as condominiums and townhomes. The valuation of common areas is addressed per NCGS [§105-277.8](#) which states that the value of common areas of nonprofit homeowners association's will be included in the appraisals of property owned by members of the association if certain requirements are met. The Schedule of Values is updated before complete jurisdiction revaluations occur.

All documentation of the land valuation process is maintained in the CAMA system. The CAMA system contains a [land tab](#) which stores all information on land classifications and adjustments. [Notes](#) can be added to any parcel for elaboration on things such as adjustments or unit pricing.

Stratification and delineation of land is accomplished through land segments or unit types. These segments contain descriptions such as common area, house sites, and [lot based neighborhoods](#). Each neighborhood contains its own individual land segments which are all valued at different market derived rates. Parcels can have more than one land segment which depends on features such as topography and additional home sites.

All property in the jurisdiction is valued at market value and highest and best use is determined for each property. Highest and best use is derived from analyzing market data and is reflected in the CAMA system with the Land Use Code (LUC) as well as the application of the land segments to the individual parcels.

Each land segment contains an appropriate [unit of measure](#). Some segments are valued per square foot while others are value per acre. There are also segments such as a home site (HMS1) that are valued as a single unit. These units of measure are determined from the market and represent the most common description of the individual segment.

The sales comparison approach is the primary approach when valuing land. When values are entered into the individual land segments, either when creating the neighborhood or during revaluation, appraisers search the immediate market area for sales and use them to determine the unit value. Once the unit value is determined it is entered into the CAMA system and applied to the parcels within the neighborhood. All neighborhoods contain specific land segments that pertain to the potential use of the parcels within the neighborhood. Once a unit value is determined as of the date of revaluation, it cannot be changed until the next revaluation.

All adjustments applied to land are determined and applied by the appraisers. These adjustments are applied on an individual basis after the appraiser has researched the effect on value. Various methods are used for determining adjustments. Some methods considered are paired sales analysis and cost to cure. The adjustments are typically applied as percentage adjustments and are accompanied by notes explaining the adjustments.

Market value for all parcels is determined on January 1st of the revaluation year. Buncombe County's last revaluation occurred in 2017 which makes all values as of January 1st 2017. All information used for analysis on both unit values and adjustments are gathered previous to that date. The rate of market change also dictates the years of sales that can be used. Due to the appreciating market of 2017, Buncombe County tried to use data no older than 18 months. When using older sales in determine value market conditions adjustments can be applied to reflect the revaluation date.

Land in areas with few vacant land sales is typically appraised using the extraction method. This allows for the appraisers to extract the depreciated cost of a valid sale to determine the land value. Another way the jurisdiction values vacant land in areas with few sales is to extend the sales comparison search in both distance and time and adjust for differences.

2. Is all land assigned an appropriate unit of comparison?

Provide a report listing the number of properties appraised by unit of comparison for each property type (except condominiums). The report might, but need not, have the following format:

Property Type	Unit of Comparison	Number of Parcels
Single-family residential	Square feet	XXXXX
	Site or lot	XXXXX
Etc.		

Yes. All land is assigned an appropriate unit of comparison. Every parcel in the jurisdiction is assigned a [land unit type](#). Each land unit type is measured in either acreage, square feet, individual unit, or no land. Typically residential property is measured in acreage while interior commercial property is measured in square feet. The no land units are primarily condominium units which have no measureable real estate and the individual unit types are primarily home sites. The table below shows the individual parcel count of each major property class by unit of comparison with the exemption of condominiums.

Table 8-1

Parcel Count by Comparable Land Unit		
Major Property Class	Unit of Comparison	Parcel Count
Residential	Acreage	99,400
	Square Feet	135
	Individual Unit	26,081
Commercial	Acreage	3,359
	Square Feet	2,689
	Individual Unit	919
Vacant Land	Acreage	33,814
	Square Feet	785
	Individual Unit	862
Exempt	Acreage	1,749
	Square Feet	324
	Individual Unit	165

As seen on the table above acreage is the primary unit of comparison for residential properties at 79.1% of total land segments. Commercial property has the highest amount of square feet segments at 38.6% while the vast majority of vacant land is measured in acres.

3. Aside from areas with few sales, is land valuation based primarily on the sales comparison approach, using either a standard unit or base lot method?

Describe the method by which the sales comparison approach is applied to land appraisal.

Refer to relevant manuals or guidelines and provide examples of property records or reports illustrating the process.

Yes. The sales comparison approach is the primary land valuation method. During a revaluation or when creating new neighborhoods appraisers search for comparable sales to be used for land value. All of these land sales must be taken prior to the last revaluation date. Once a general value of land is found for a specific neighborhood it is entered into the CAMA system as a [base price](#) for a specific unit of land measure within the neighborhood. The base price is entered into the size adjustment calculation table which is applied to a unit range. The unit range is also derived from market data by identifying the most common site size of transactions within the neighborhood. Size adjustments are then applied taking economies of scale into consideration by applying a land factor and a size exponent.

All staff appraisers have access to local MLS. This is vital in finding comparable sales to establish base land unit prices to apply to neighborhoods. All sales used to determine the base unit price must be appropriately verified by the appraiser. Adjusted sales price can be used for valuation purposes although these sales cannot be used in the annual ratio study conducted by the NCDOR.

4. Are size adjustments regularly developed based on market analysis?

Describe how size adjustments are determined.

Refer to relevant documentation and provide formulas or adjustment tables illustrating the process.

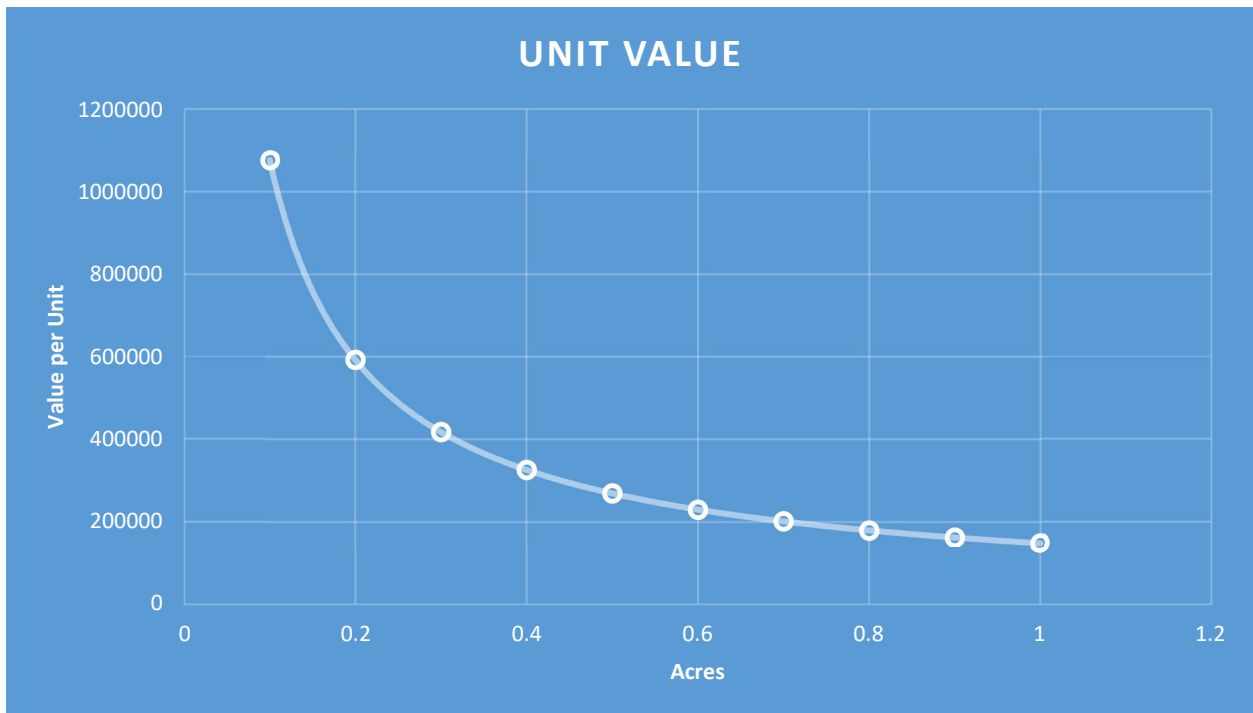
Yes. Size adjustments are regularly developed based on market analysis. Current land sales are analyzed and unit values are derived for various land sizes. Once the unit values are found the differences in the unit values based on land size are factored into an equation. There are two variables in the equation that determine the amount of adjustment made to the individual unit value. These variables are called the factor and the [size exponent](#). These variables change the curve of values within each land segment. The formula used in this calculation to determine the overall land value is (base rate x acreage amount) x (factor x (acreage amount^{size exponent})). The

following chart shows the change in unit value of a lot based land segment with a factor of 0.9865 and a size exponent of -0.862 and a base price of \$150,000.

Table 8-2

Acres	Unit Value	Overall Value
0.1	\$1,076,932	\$107,693
0.2	\$592,516	\$118,503
0.3	\$417,743	\$125,323
0.4	\$325,996	\$130,398
0.5	\$268,952	\$134,476
0.6	\$229,838	\$137,902
0.7	\$201,239	\$140,867
0.8	\$179,359	\$143,487
0.9	\$162,043	\$145,839
1.0	\$147,975	\$147,975

Chart 7-3



The CAMA system contains a [land price tab](#) which has all neighborhoods in the county listed. This tab shows all the land segments which can be applied in each neighborhood and shows the size adjustment information for each segment. The land factor and size exponent for each specific land segment is analyzed for accuracy during a revaluation.

Size adjustments can also be applied by the individual appraiser when there is an uncommon acreage amount within a specific neighborhood. The size adjustment would be applied using the SZE adjustment and would be a percentage of overall land value.

This size adjustment may also consider the overall shape of a parcel which could affect its utility.

5. Are adjustment factors regularly developed for relevant features based on market analysis?

Describe the process of developing and applying adjustment factors for relevant property features.

Cite available documentation and provide copies of formulas or valuation tables containing the adjustments.

Yes. Adjustment factors are regularly developed for relevant features based on market analysis. In the CAMA system several types of adjustments can be applied to land. These are considered [land influences](#) and there are currently thirty two different types described in the system. The adjustments to land are applied on an individual basis by the appraiser after they have analyzed the effect of the influence on value. These adjustments are all derived from market data in a number of ways. If sales are prevalent in the subject's area the adjustments can be found using a paired sales analysis for adjustments such as view and topography.

The CAMA system allows for multiple influences to be accounted for. Currently up to three influences can be applied to a single land segment. This would allow for an adjustment such as irregular shape to be added to a parcel with a superior long range view. All of the influence adjustments are applied to the overall land value.

Adjustment consistency can be checked through various [filters](#) in the CAMA system. These filters can be created to show various types of influences within neighborhoods and the amount applied. The data gathered from these filters can also be transferred to [Microsoft Excel](#) for further analysis.

6. Does land valuation employ spreadsheet or statistical software?

Describe the software used in land appraisal and provide examples of analyses conducted.

Yes. Spreadsheets and statistical software are used in land valuation. The sales comparison approach is the primary valuation method for land. Valid sales are gathered from the CAMA system and can be placed in Excel format for various statistical analysis. Once in Excel data can be placed in tables for filtering through neighborhoods and other grouping categories. Trend lines can be developed to identify patterns and median ratios can be identified.

7. Does land valuation employ computerized mapping or GIS software?

Describe how computerized maps or GIS software is used in land valuation.

Provide two or more examples of the analyses or output.

Yes. Land valuation employs computerized mapping and GIS software. The jurisdiction's GIS system is a powerful tool in assisting in the valuation of land. Several different layers can be used to determine factors that influence land value.

A common layer used by appraisers is a [topography layer](#). This can assist appraisers in determining utility issues that would be created by steep terrain. Steep terrain is challenging to build on and creates a negative effect on value. Once the steep terrain is identified, adjustments can be made to the parcel. Another example of how GIS is used to determine influences on land is through a [flood map](#) layer. This is a layer taken from FEMA and shows all land in the flood plan. Lying in the flood plan can affect the utility of the property which could affect the value.

There are also map layers that can detect possible external obsolescence. There is a map layer that shows all of the [brownfields](#) in the jurisdiction. Being close in proximity to a brownfield could affect value and should be considered in valuation. Brownfield areas are also eligible for a partial tax exemption.

8. When current year sales are insufficient for reliable analysis, does the office supplement them with prior sales and/or employ supplemental land valuation methods?

Explain measures taken to ensure that land value analyses are based on adequate sample sizes.

Provide samples of price trend analyses and adjustment factors used to convert prior sales prices to current value.

Describe supplemental methods used to value land for which adequate sales are not available. Provide one example of each such method.

Yes. When current year sales are insufficient for reliable analysis, the Assessor's Office supplements them with prior sales and employs supplemental land valuation methods. The table below lists all of the vacant land sales per revaluation area that occurred in the 2017 calendar year.

Table 7-4

Revaluation Area	Number of Land Sales	Percentage of Total Sales
A	87	8.98
B	144	20.08
2	116	18.38
4	193	26.26
5	196	19.27
6	112	13.66
8	181	23.51

As seen on the above table revaluation area A has a significantly less amount of land sales than the other areas. This is due to area A lying primarily in the Asheville City limits and the majority of the parcels having use restrictions that prevent subdivision. Area B also lies within the city limits although has few restrictions on subdivision and lot size which makes area B sought after for developers.

When trying to value land with an inadequate sample size it is necessary to extend the sales date range of comparables. When older comparable sales are analyzed for valuation purposes the appraisers can apply a time adjustment or market condition adjustment. This adjustment can be derived in a few different ways. The most common way is by analyzing the sales ratios and developing trends that can predict the change in value of specific areas. This change in value can then be applied to the older sale to reflect a current market value. This process can be completed in an [Excel workbook](#) and can be continually updated through the revaluation process. Any number of sales can be placed in the workbook and the sales price can be adjusted based on the trend of the ratios.

The [extraction method](#) can also be used when valuing land with insufficient sales. The value of the land is calculated by subtracting the depreciated value of the improvements from the total value. The remaining value is considered the land value. One of the main problems with this approach is in factoring depreciation. This method works more effectively when little to no depreciation is realized.

9. Are land valuation tables or models regularly updated?

Explain how often land values are updated and procedures for doing so.

Provide samples of both current and prior valuation rates.

Land values are updated every revaluation year. North Carolina General Statute [§105-285](#) dictates the timeframe of revaluations. Every jurisdiction in North Carolina must complete a revaluation every 8 years. All jurisdictions have an option to conduct a

revaluation sooner. During these revaluations all land values are updated to current market value.

During revaluation all base unit rates of all land segments are analyzed to see if they are up to current market standards. Typically this is accomplished through comparable sales analysis. If there are enough land sales in various neighborhoods to adjust the land factor and size exponent it is done at this time as well. Once the base unit rate, land factor, and size exponent are found and applied to the neighborhood they are not allowed to be adjusted until the next revaluation.

Land values are not trended in the Buncombe County Jurisdiction. All neighborhoods are individual analyzed.

10. Are sales ratio studies regularly conducted for vacant land?

Describe how often ratio studies are conducted for vacant land, how land sales are stratified for such studies, how many years of sales are used, and whether the sales are time-adjusted.

Provide examples of your most recent studies.

Yes. Ratio studies are regularly conducted for vacant land. The CAMA system has the ability to create ratio studies on demand. These studies are helpful in identifying market trends in [revaluation areas](#) as well as specific neighborhoods. Typically these are ran on a quarterly basis although they can be created at will. On revaluation years ratio studies are conducted on every neighborhood to ensure a current value within the neighborhoods. This is easily accomplished by creating a filter in the CAMA system and exporting the results to an [Excel table](#). Once in the table, neighborhoods can be filtered out and land ratios can be identified.

These ratio studies can be used in various ways. They assist in identifying areas where there is a low level of appraisal. They also can be used to help identify market conditions adjustments to apply to comparable sales that exceed a standard market time frame.

Ratio studies provide the most information in neighborhoods with an adequate number of sales. Some older neighborhoods location within the city limits typically have no land sales and other methods of analysis are applied.

11. Is agricultural and timber land appraised in compliance with legal requirements using appropriate methods and techniques?

Provide a copy of relevant statutes and state/provincial guidelines relating to the valuation of agricultural and timber land.

Indicate how these properties are appraised and include a copy of valuation tables or schedules used to do so.

Yes. Agriculture, horticulture, and forestland are assessed in North Carolina at different rates. The properties must meet the definitions described in North Carolina General Statute [§105-277.2](#). These properties also have to meet ownership, size, income, and management requirements described in NCGS [§105-277.3](#). If all the requirements are met the property can be valued using a different rate that is applied based on the ability to produce income. The rates that would apply to agriculture and horticulture use the capitalization of the cash rent typical for that type of land while forestland uses the capitalization of the expected net income. Currently a rate of nine percent is used to capitalize the expected net income of forestland. The rate that is applied to agriculture and horticulture land is determined by a Use-Value Board which is created under NCGS [§105-277.7](#) and recommends rates to the North Carolina Department of Revenue. The rates for agriculture and horticulture are just recommendations and every county has the ability to create their own.

There currently is no table that land values for forestland, agriculture, and horticulture draw from. These values are manually entered based on variables such as soil type and qualified acreage. These properties are entered into the system as present use and classified under the alternative neighborhood build code [PUSE](#) or present use.

12. Are mineral properties appraised in compliance with statutory requirements using appropriate methods and techniques?

Provide a summary of and a link to statutes and state/provincial guidelines relating to the valuation of mineral properties.

If the jurisdiction appraises mineral properties, indicate how it is done and include a copy of relevant valuation tables, schedules, or guidelines.

If valuation is contracted, indicate how the process conforms to the *Standard on Contracting for Assessment Services*.

Note: Applies only to jurisdictions with taxable timber or mineral properties.

Mineral properties are not taxed in the Buncombe County jurisdiction.

Buncombe County Assessor's Office

Certificate of Excellence Submission- List of Exhibits, Chapter 8

Exhibit 8-1.1	NCGS §105-317
Exhibit 8-1.2	Schedule of Values, Land
Exhibit 8-1.3	NCGS §1.5-277.8
Exhibit 8-1.4	CAMA System Land Tab
Exhibit 8-1.5	CAMA System Land Notes
Exhibit 8-1.6	Lot Based Neighborhoods
Exhibit 8-1.7	Unit of Measure
Exhibit 8-2.1	Land Unit Type
Exhibit 8-3.1	Land Base Price
Exhibit 8-4.1	Land Size Exponent
Exhibit 8-4.2	Land Price Tab
Exhibit 8-5.1	Land Influences
Exhibit 8-5.2	Influence Filter
Exhibit 8-5.3	Excel Land Influences
Exhibit 8-7.1	Topography Layer
Exhibit 8-7.2	Flood Layer
Exhibit 8-7.3	Brownfield Layer
Exhibit 8-8.1	Excel Land Ratios
Exhibit 8-8.2	Extraction Method
Exhibit 8-9.1	NCGS §105-285
Exhibit 8-10.1	Revaluation Areas
Exhibit 8-10.2	Excel Neighborhood Table
Exhibit 8-11.1	NCGS §105-2.77.2
Exhibit 8-11.2	NCGS §105-2.77.3
Exhibit 8-11.3	NCGS §105-2.77.7
Exhibit 8-11.4	Present Use

Chapter 9: Residential Valuation

1. Is primary reliance placed on the sales comparison approach in the appraisal of single-family homes, condominiums, and townhomes?

Indicate whether the cost approach, sales comparison approach, or both approaches are used in the appraisal of various types of residential properties.

If primary emphasis is not placed on the sales comparison approach, indicate why.

If the jurisdiction uses multiple regression analysis, explain its use and provide examples.

Yes. The sales comparison approach is the primary method used in the appraisal of single-family homes, condominiums, and townhomes. All single family homes, condominiums, and townhomes are stratified individually according to their [land use code](#) (LUC). This simplifies the sales comparable search.

All single family homes have a specific LUC of 100. This LUC can be used to filter comparable sales within geographic locations so that all relevant sales can be found. Several other comparable elements can be used to [filter comparables](#) through the CAMA system. Elements such as quality grade, improvement size, and site size are commonly used. When appropriate comparables are not found in the subjects immediate geographic location or neighborhood the comparable search can be changed to cover a larger geographic area and the date of transfer can be adjusted to cover a larger period of time. If the transfer date is extended beyond the current market conditions an adjustment can be applied.

Condominium and Townhome comparable searches are similar to single family homes. When searching for these types of comparables it is important to search the immediate neighborhood due to these sales having the same common areas and amenities. The CAMA system filter makes this process easy.

All staff appraisers have access to the local Multiple Listing Service (MLS) which also allows for comparable searches. The local MLS gives appraisers insight on the quality and condition of sales. The local MLS will also indicate the validity of the sale and shows any concessions made. These elements are all important when deriving a rate to apply to properties for revaluation.

Before a complete revaluation of the jurisdiction all relevant comparables are analyzed by the data analyst and the chief appraiser to determine applicable rates. North Carolina General Statute [§105-317](#) requires that a Schedule of Values be in place before

revaluation. The Schedule of Values publishes all county wide rates that apply to properties. The sales comparison approach is used to help determine these rates.

Another way in which the sales comparison approach is used is to determine neighborhood adjustment rates. Every neighborhood created contains a [neighborhood build code](#) (NBC) that is applied to all improvements in that specific neighborhood. This rate is based on the difference between the overall jurisdiction rates and specific neighborhood rates derived from the sales comparison approach. The NBC can only be modified on the creation of a new neighborhood or during revaluation.

2. Are sales used in residential valuation adjusted to the valuation date?

Indicate whether the jurisdiction tracks changes in price levels for residential properties, the method(s) employed, and the extent to which separate analyses are conducted by property type and market area.

Provide at least one example of the analyses conducted.

Provide a table of the adjustment factors used in the jurisdiction's latest revaluation

Yes. Sales used in residential valuations are adjusted to the valuation date. Buncombe County's last revaluation was on January 1, 2017. All values in the jurisdiction should reflect this date. Comparable sales were found leading up to the revaluation and some market conditions adjustments were needed. Market condition adjustments are also applied when changing values of current parcels. When doing this the current value should reflect the revaluation date of January 1, 2017.

An example of this is when new condominium neighborhoods are created within a revaluation period. In valuing the condominiums current sales can be analyzed although they should be adjusted to reflect the market conditions of January 1, 2017. One way to accomplish this is a ratio trend analysis. This can be completed by using Microsoft Excel.

In 2018 a new neighborhood was created called Southside Townhomes Condominium (SSTC). This neighborhood consisted of several higher end condominiums and some have transferred within the year. In order to accurately value the condominium units as of the date of the last revaluation, market conditions adjustments can be applied to current qualified sales. Similar condominium unit sales were found in the system and a [regression analysis](#) was performed on the ratio trend. Once the ratio trend was found the difference in the ratios from the revaluation date of January 1, 2017 and the sales date of the comparable sales were applied to the comparables. The [resulting amount](#) would be considered market value for the revaluation date and adjustments were applied in the CAMA system.

There are several [adjustment factors](#) available through the CAMA system. Not all that are available are used although the ones that are used are updated every revaluation.

3. Are residential valuation models, equations, and tables recalibrated each revaluation year?

Indicate whether the jurisdiction recalibrates residential valuation models, equations, or tables each revaluation year.

Provide two or more examples of the models or tables used in your two most recent revaluations for the same property type or market area.

Yes, residential valuation models, equations, and tables are recalibrated each revaluation year. North Carolina General Statute [§105-317](#) requires all jurisdictions to produce a Uniform Schedule of Values to be used in appraising real property. The Schedule of Values is updated before every revaluation occurs. All of the [codes and rates](#) applied to real property are described in detail. The current Schedule of Values includes adjustment tables such as residential size adjustments and depreciation.

The last revaluation occurred one year after changing CAMA software. The structure of several tables and valuation models changed at this time. The figures below show some changes of residential structure types between the 2013 revaluation and the 2017 revaluation. All of the changes to rates were market derived.

Table 9-1, 2013 Revaluation Rates

Table Info						
Code	Short Description	Full Description	Finished	Unit Factor	Sketch Factor	Use In Sub Area
REP	ENCLOSED PO...	ENCLOSED PO...	<input type="checkbox"/>	30.25	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
REPM	MULTI STORY EP	MULTI STORY EP	<input type="checkbox"/>	30.25	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RFBF	FUTURE BSMT...	FUTURE BSMT...	<input type="checkbox"/>	18.81	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RGAR	GARAGE	GARAGE	<input type="checkbox"/>	32.49	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RL05	1/2-STY LIVING...	1/2-STY LIVIN...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	73.32	0.50000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RLA1	LIVING AREA L...	LIVING AREA L...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	74.92	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RLA2	LIVING AREA L...	LIVING AREA L...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	73.32	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RLA3	LIVING AREA L...	LIVING AREA L...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	71.75	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RLA4	LIVING AREA L...	LIVING AREA L...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	69.21	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RMFG	MANUFACTUR...	MANUFACTUR...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	48.25	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RMHD	MFG HOME DO...	MFG HOME DO...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	42.11	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RMHS	MFG HOME SIN...	MFG HOME SI...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	40.70	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RMHT	MFG HOME TRI...	MFG HOME TR...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	45.72	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RMOD	CLASSROOM,O...	CLASSROOM,...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	43.94	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ROP	OPEN PORCH	OPEN PORCH	<input type="checkbox"/>	24.84	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ROPM	MULTI STORY OP	MULTI STORY...	<input type="checkbox"/>	24.84	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ROTR	FINISHED AREA	FINISHED AREA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	62.08	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RPOE	POOL ENCLOS...	POOL ENCLOS...	<input type="checkbox"/>	42.65	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RPT	PATIO	PATIO	<input type="checkbox"/>	8.05	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RREF	SKETCH ONLY	SKETCH ONLY	<input type="checkbox"/>	0.00	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RSP	SCREENED PO...	SCREENED PO...	<input type="checkbox"/>	25.72	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RSPM	MULTI STORY SP	MULTI STORY SP	<input type="checkbox"/>	25.72	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RSTA	STABLE	STABLE	<input type="checkbox"/>	26.50	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RSTP	MASONRY STO...	MASONRY STO...	<input type="checkbox"/>	10.45	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RSUN	SUNROOM	SUNROOM	<input type="checkbox"/>	56.50	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RTER	TERRACE	TERRACE	<input type="checkbox"/>	11.30	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RUBA	UNFINISHED B...	UNFINISHED B...	<input type="checkbox"/>	18.81	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RUR	UTILITY ROOM	UTILITY ROOM	<input type="checkbox"/>	28.25	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RURM	MULTI STORY UR	MULTI STORY...	<input type="checkbox"/>	28.25	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
UNKN	Unknown	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>

Table 9-2, 2017 Revaluation Rates

Table Info							
Code	Short Description	Full Description	Finished	Unit Factor	Sketch Factor	Use In Sub Area	U I S A
RDKM	MULTI STORY...	MULTI STORY...	<input type="checkbox"/>	15.45	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
REP	ENCLOSED PO...	ENCLOSED PO...	<input type="checkbox"/>	30.25	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
REPM	MULTI STORY EP	MULTI STORY EP	<input type="checkbox"/>	30.25	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RFBF	FUTURE BSMT...	FUTURE BSMT...	<input type="checkbox"/>	19.00	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RGAR	GARAGE	GARAGE	<input type="checkbox"/>	40.29	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RL05	1/2-STY LIVING...	1/2-STY LIVIN...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	79.42	0.50000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RLA1	LIVING AREA L...	LIVING AREA L...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	83.80	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RLA2	LIVING AREA L...	LIVING AREA L...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	79.42	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RLA3	LIVING AREA L...	LIVING AREA L...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	79.42	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RLA4	LIVING AREA L...	LIVING AREA L...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	79.42	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RMFG	MANUFACTUR...	MANUFACTUR...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	56.50	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RMHD	MFG HOME DO...	MFG HOME DO...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	46.22	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RMHS	MFG HOME SIN...	MFG HOME SI...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	42.00	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RMHT	MFG HOME TRI...	MFG HOME TR...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	46.22	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RMOD	CLASSROOM,O...	CLASSROOM,...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	43.94	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
ROP	OPEN PORCH	OPEN PORCH	<input type="checkbox"/>	25.84	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
ROPM	MULTI STORY OP	MULTI STORY...	<input type="checkbox"/>	25.84	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
ROTR	FINISHED AREA	FINISHED AREA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	62.08	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RPOE	POOL ENCLOS...	POOL ENCLOS...	<input type="checkbox"/>	42.65	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RPT	PATIO	PATIO	<input type="checkbox"/>	8.05	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RREF	SKETCH ONLY	SKETCH ONLY	<input type="checkbox"/>	0.00	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RSP	SCREENED PO...	SCREENED PO...	<input type="checkbox"/>	28.00	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RSPM	MULTI STORY SP	MULTI STORY SP	<input type="checkbox"/>	28.00	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RSTA	STABLE	STABLE	<input type="checkbox"/>	26.50	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RSTP	MASONRY STO...	MASONRY STO...	<input type="checkbox"/>	10.45	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RSUN	SUNROOM	SUNROOM	<input type="checkbox"/>	63.28	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RTER	TERRACE	TERRACE	<input type="checkbox"/>	15.00	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RUBA	UNFINISHED B...	UNFINISHED B...	<input type="checkbox"/>	19.00	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RUR	UTILITY ROOM	UTILITY ROOM	<input type="checkbox"/>	28.25	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RURM	MULTI STORY UR	MULTI STORY...	<input type="checkbox"/>	28.25	1.00000000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Table 9-3, 2013 Yard Item Rates

Proc Appr: \$48,100		In Proc Assd: \$48,100		Rol			
Account Detail	Buildings	Tax Rates	Time Adjustment	NBH Building Rate	Depreciation		
TableInfo							
Sfyi Code Quality							
TableInfo							
Xr SFYIID	Sfyi	Short...	Full...	Special...	Unit of Measure	Base...	Rate
3	SP3	WADING...	WADING...	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF - Square Feet	0.00	39.45
26	SP4	LAP POOL	LAP POOL	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF - Square Feet	0.00	79.45
81	SP5	INFINIT...	INFINITY...	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF - Square Feet	0.00	150.00
57	SP6	SPA POO...	SPA POO...	<input type="checkbox"/>	EA - Per Each	0.00	500.00
15	ST1	CONDO...	CONDO S...	<input type="checkbox"/>	EA - Per Each	0.00	150.00
70	ST2	CONDO...	CONDO S...	<input type="checkbox"/>	EA - Per Each	0.00	350.00
41	ST3	CONDO...	CONDO S...	<input type="checkbox"/>	EA - Per Each	0.00	700.00
2	STB	STABLE	STABLE	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF - Square Feet	0.00	40.83
18	STR	STORAG...	STORAGE...	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF - Square Feet	0.00	70.00
52	TB	2 ST UB...	2 ST UB O...	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF - Square Feet	0.00	9.59
11	TC1	TENNIS...	TENNIS C...	<input type="checkbox"/>	CO - Courts	0.00	205.00
16	TC2	TENNIS...	TENNIS G...	<input type="checkbox"/>	CO - Courts	0.00	257.00
66	TOW	CELL TO...	CELL TO...	<input type="checkbox"/>	EA - Per Each	0.00	500.00
69	UB	1 ST UB...	1 ST UB O...	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF - Square Feet	0.00	18.70
35	UBF	UB FINI...	UB FINIS...	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF - Square Feet	0.00	33.46
55	UNKN	Unknown	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>		0.00	0.00
17	WTK	WATER...	WATER T...	<input type="checkbox"/>	GAL - Gallon	0.00	0.85

Size Adjustment Detail

Table 9-4, 2017 Yard Item Rates

Proc Appr: \$48,100		In Proc Assd: \$48,100		Rd			
Account Detail	Buildings	Tax Rates	Time Adjustment	NBH Building Rate	Depreciation		
TableInfo Sfyi Code Quality							
TableInfo							
Xr SFYIID	Sfyi	Short...	Full...	Special...	Unit of Measure	Base...	Rate
4	SP1	POOL A...	POOL AV...	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF - Square Feet	0.00	35.25
13	SP2	POOL G...	POOL GO...	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF - Square Feet	0.00	52.60
3	SP3	WADING...	WADING...	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF - Square Feet	0.00	35.25
26	SP4	LAP POOL	LAP POOL	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF - Square Feet	0.00	35.25
81	SP5	INFINIT...	INFINITY...	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF - Square Feet	0.00	150...
57	SP6	SPA POOL	SPA POOL	<input type="checkbox"/>	EA - Per Each	0.00	500...
15	ST1	CONDO...	CONDO S...	<input type="checkbox"/>	EA - Per Each	0.00	300...
70	ST2	CONDO...	CONDO S...	<input type="checkbox"/>	EA - Per Each	0.00	500...
41	ST3	CONDO...	CONDO S...	<input type="checkbox"/>	EA - Per Each	0.00	100...
2	STB	STABLE	STABLE	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF - Square Feet	0.00	40.83
18	STR	STORAG...	STORAGE...	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF - Square Feet	0.00	70.00
52	TB	2 ST UB...	2 ST UB O...	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF - Square Feet	0.00	9.59
11	TC1	TENNIS...	TENNIS C...	<input type="checkbox"/>	CO - Courts	0.00	257...
16	TC2	TENNIS...	TENNIS G...	<input type="checkbox"/>	CO - Courts	0.00	320...
69	UB	1 ST UB...	1 ST UB O...	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF - Square Feet	0.00	9.59
35	UBF	UB FINI...	UB FINIS...	<input type="checkbox"/>	SF - Square Feet	0.00	33.46
17	WTK	WATER...	WATER T...	<input type="checkbox"/>	GAL - Gallon	0.00	0.85
Size Adjustment Detail							
Standard Size			Curve %				

4. Are single-family residential neighborhoods adequate in size?

Indicate how many residential neighborhoods or neighborhood groups were used in the most recent reappraisal and how many years of sales were used.

Indicate what is done when a neighborhood has few sales.

Provide a sales ratio or other report showing the number of single family residential sales used in each neighborhood or neighborhood group in the most recent revaluation.

Yes. Single-family residential neighborhoods in the jurisdiction are adequate in size. During the last revaluation that occurred in January of 2017 there were a total of 2,453 neighborhoods. Currently the neighborhood count is on the rise due to the popularity of the City of Asheville and the amount of parcel splits for new neighborhoods. The average parcel count per neighborhood in the jurisdiction is approximately fifty with some neighborhoods with as little as five and some neighborhoods containing over 200.

Sales were analyzed four years prior to the revaluation date of January 1, 2017. The most consideration was given to the more recent sales and some market condition adjustments were used on sales that were three or four years old.

There will be some neighborhoods with few to no sales during a revaluation. In this case the data analyst will search for sales in neighborhoods with similar amenities and linkages as the neighborhood in question. Neighborhoods that are close in proximity are typically given more consideration

5. Do residential sales comparison models include those property characteristics that contribute significantly to value?

Indicate whether the following characteristics are relevant in the various residential strata or market areas in the jurisdiction and whether they are represented in valuation models and tables.

- Living area
- Construction grade or quality
- Age, effective age, and/or condition
- Neighborhood
- Lot size (except for condominiums)
- Basement size and finish
- Garage type and area
- Location amenities such as water frontage, school districts, golf courses, and premium view
- Location decrements such as heavy traffic or nuisances
- Interior or exterior amenities such as porches, decks, balconies, bathrooms or bath fixtures, fireplaces, and swimming pools

Provide one or more examples illustrating the rates and adjustments applied.

Yes. Residential sales comparison models include property characteristics that contribute significantly to value. The CAMA system allows for numerous property characteristics to be entered into individual parcels. Physical characteristics such as living area, basement area, porches, and garages are all calculated in the [sub area tab](#) in the CAMA system while elements such as lot size and location influences are calculated in the [land tab](#). All physical characteristics such as quality, condition, bed and bath counts are factored into both the [exterior/interior](#) tab and the [condo/features/depreciation](#) tab.

Locational neighborhood adjustments are factored into the Neighborhood Build Code (NBC). This is a rate that is applied to all improved structures within a neighborhood based on the difference in applied rates to the entire jurisdiction and the individual neighborhood rates based on factors such as linkages and overall market appeal.

The CAMA system contains a [calculation ladder](#) tab that shows all of the contributory values applied to the building structure. This tab shows different adjustment factors as well as contributory amounts for items such as bathrooms and fireplaces.

6. How are atypical homes valued?

Indicate what types of atypical homes are found in the jurisdiction and how they are appraised.

Provide one or more examples.

The Buncombe County taxing jurisdiction has very few atypical homes. When an atypical home is appraised it is up to the appraiser and the data analyst to find a market derived adjustment for the property type. Once this adjustment is found it can be entered into the CAMA system as [depreciation](#) or a construction modifier. These adjustments are typically presented as a percentage adjustment and can be negative or positive.

The only regularly occurring atypical property that is located in the Buncombe County taxing jurisdiction is the Deltec style home or the “round house”. This style of home has its own building type in the CAMA system called [Rondete](#).

Adjustments can be made in the CAMA system due to unusual building types if information was found in the market although as of now all of these adjustments are considered depreciation or a construction modifier.

The structure shown below received a 25% design adjustment which shows as depreciation in the CAMA system. This adjustment was made due to the atypical style of the structure and reflects the marketability.



7. How are homes subject to flooding, tornados, hurricanes, contamination, or other external obsolescence issues valued?

Describe external obsolescence issues encountered in the jurisdiction and how they are handled.

Provide at least one case study or example.

The Buncombe County jurisdiction is lucky enough to have very little damage to real property from flooding, tornados, hurricanes and contamination. Buncombe County does have some parcels that are fully or partially in the FEMA designated flood zone. Currently there are a total of 3259 partials that are located within a flood zone. These partials typically have [adjustments](#) placed on the land that takes the overall utility of the property into consideration. [GIS mapping](#) is used to determine which properties fall within the flood zone.

Other external obsolescence are found within the jurisdiction. An example of this would be environmental concerns from brownfield and superfund areas. These areas receive a similar percentage based adjustment as the flood zone adjustment although it is labeled [EPA \(environmental\)](#) or EHS (environmental health). These parcels can easily be view in the [GIS system](#) and analyzed for uniformity.

Most adjustments that are made for any external obsolescence are placed on the value of the land itself and not the improvements. If any external obsolescence adjustment is need on the improvements they can be added under depreciation in the [condo/features/depreciation](#) tab.

8. How are condominiums and townhomes valued?

Indicate how the jurisdiction appraises condominiums and townhomes.

If there are complexes in which rental units are common, describe how units in those complexes are appraised.

Explain how home owner association (HOA) amenities, fees, and restrictions are considered in the valuation process.

Condominiums and townhomes are valued similar to single family homes in the Buncombe County jurisdiction. There are some differences in the way that land is value as well as some ownership differences.

Condominiums are valued in this jurisdiction as the area that is contained within the walls of the unit. There is no land value associated with any condominium. When

parcels are first designated as a condominium the land unit type should be changed to the unit type "[no land](#)". Once the land unit type is designated as no land, the land will have no value and no total area associated with it. Condominiums are also given a difference finished area unit rate or [sub area](#) rate which was derived from market data and published in the Schedule of Values. Additional features can be added to the condominium under the condo/features/depreciation tab similar to single family homes. Due to similar contributory value of these features the adjustments typically are drawn from the same tables as single family homes. The CAMA system does have the capability of creating new value tables for condominiums if market data was found to support the change. Currently there are 4,305 condominium parcels in the Buncombe County taxing jurisdiction.

Occasionally condominiums will have [individual storage](#) areas which can be bought and sold without being attached to a unit. When this happens a separate account is created in the CAMA system and tax accordingly. These items are classified in the system as yard items and given an appropriate unit code and value.

There are some condominium complexes in the jurisdiction that have rental units. The rental information can be analyzed if available to the appraiser or data analysis. Gross rent multipliers (GRM) can be applied although this is typically a supportive measure. There are usually enough transactions in the complexes to rely on the sales comparison approach as the main approach to value.

The main difference in valuing townhomes from condominiums is the ownership of land. Townhomes contain a small piece of land which typically lies directly under the unit. Townhomes are generally given just a [home site](#) value in the CAMA system and no residual land value is calculated due to the small size of the real estate. The home site value for townhomes is usually developed using the extraction method. This is due to little to no arms-length transfers occurring of townhome building sites. Townhome [sub area](#) unit rates fall in line with single family and are classified as residential living areas and given the same rate per unit as single family. There are currently 2,579 townhome parcels in the Buncombe County taxing jurisdiction.

North Carolina General Statute [§105-277.8](#) states that all property owned by a nonprofit homeowners association and is held for the use and benefit of the association members is exempt from taxation. The value of this property is allocated to the associations' members. This is reflected in the neighborhood build code (NBC) in the CAMA system.

9. Are condominium and townhome neighborhoods adequate in size?

Describe the jurisdiction's stratification approach for condominiums and townhomes and indicate the time span of sales used for valuation.

Provide a report showing the neighborhoods or project groups created for condominiums and townhomes and either (a) the number of parcels in each or (b) the number of sales used for each during the most recent revaluation.

Yes. Condominium and townhouse neighborhoods are adequate in size. Currently there are [130 neighborhoods](#) containing townhomes and [202 neighborhoods](#) containing condominiums.

Condominium developments are typically self-contained neighborhoods. When new condominium buildings are developed they are assigned a new neighborhood and valued accordingly. Different phases of condominium developments can be given different neighborhood codes although typically the first three digits are the same for ease of identification. This delineation based on development phase allows for different adjustment rates to be applied due to size and quality of improvements.

10. Are appropriate procedures in place for the valuation of mobile/manufactured homes?

Provide a copy of statutes, guidelines, and procedures for classification and assessment of mobile/manufactured homes.

Explain how the jurisdiction values mobile/manufactured homes that are affixed to land, as well as those mobile/manufactured homes that are situated on rental sites or pads.

Describe any outside sources of information that are used.

Yes. Appropriate procedures are in place for the valuation of manufactured homes. The Buncombe County taxing jurisdiction values model homes based on the [Schedule of Values](#) that is published during every revaluation. Manufactured homes are given their own land use code in the CAMA system for stratification purposes. Manufactured homes are appraised similar to standard residential structures with some small differences. Manufactured homes are given a different unit rate based on comparable sales in the market area. Due to the little difference in room counts on similar sized manufactured homes, there is no contributory value associated with bathrooms and kitchens. The value of these rooms are assimilated in the unit rate.

Manufactured homes can be either real property or personal property. There are two North Carolina General State Statutes that define a manufactured home as well as determine if it is real property or personal property.

NCGS [§143-143.9](#) is the general definition of a manufactured home. This statute states that in order to be considered a manufactured home the structure needs to be transportable in one or more sections, be at least eight feet wide or forty feet long, contain at least 320 square feet, be built around a permanent chassis, and designed to be used as a dwelling when connected to required utilities.

NCGS [§105-273](#) defines real property and when a manufactured home should be considered tangible personal property. According to the statute a manufactured home should be considered real property when it meets the following requirements:

1. It is a residential structure
2. It has the moving hitch, wheels and axles removed
3. It is placed upon a permanent foundation either on land owned by the owner of the manufactured home or on land in which the owner of the manufactured home has a leasehold interest pursuant to a lease with a primary term of at least 20 years and the lease expressly provides for disposition of the manufactured home upon termination of the lease.

If a manufactured home is considered tangible personal property it is taxed accordingly and the real property that the manufactured home occupies is given a different land use code (173 personal property manufactured home site) and is assessed on the neighborhood land rate.

11. Are appropriate procedures in place for the valuation of cottage and recreation properties?

Indicate whether the jurisdiction contain cottages or other residential recreation properties, such as summer homes and cabins?

If so, explain how they are valued and provide copies of relevant guidelines and valuation tables or equations.

No. Buncombe County has no classification or alternative taxing structure for cottages and recreational properties.

12. Do construction costs manuals reflect the local market?

Describe the source of construction cost rates within the jurisdiction, any adjustments, and steps taken to ensure that they reflect the local market.

Indicate the date of construction costs used in the most recent revaluation and what factors, if any, were applied to adjust them to current costs.

Yes. Construction costs manuals reflect the local market. The Schedule of Values is published before a revaluation and shows the [codes and rates](#) given to each building type. Before the schedule of values is published several local builders and contractors are contacted for information on current cost figures. The Marshall and Swift Costing Guide is also taken into consideration when developing the jurisdiction cost manual.

The effective date of the construction cost rates used in the jurisdiction is always the date of the revaluation. The last revaluation took place on January 1, 2017 and the construction costs reflect this date.

13. Are depreciation schedules market-derived?

Indicate the source of the jurisdiction's residential depreciation schedules.

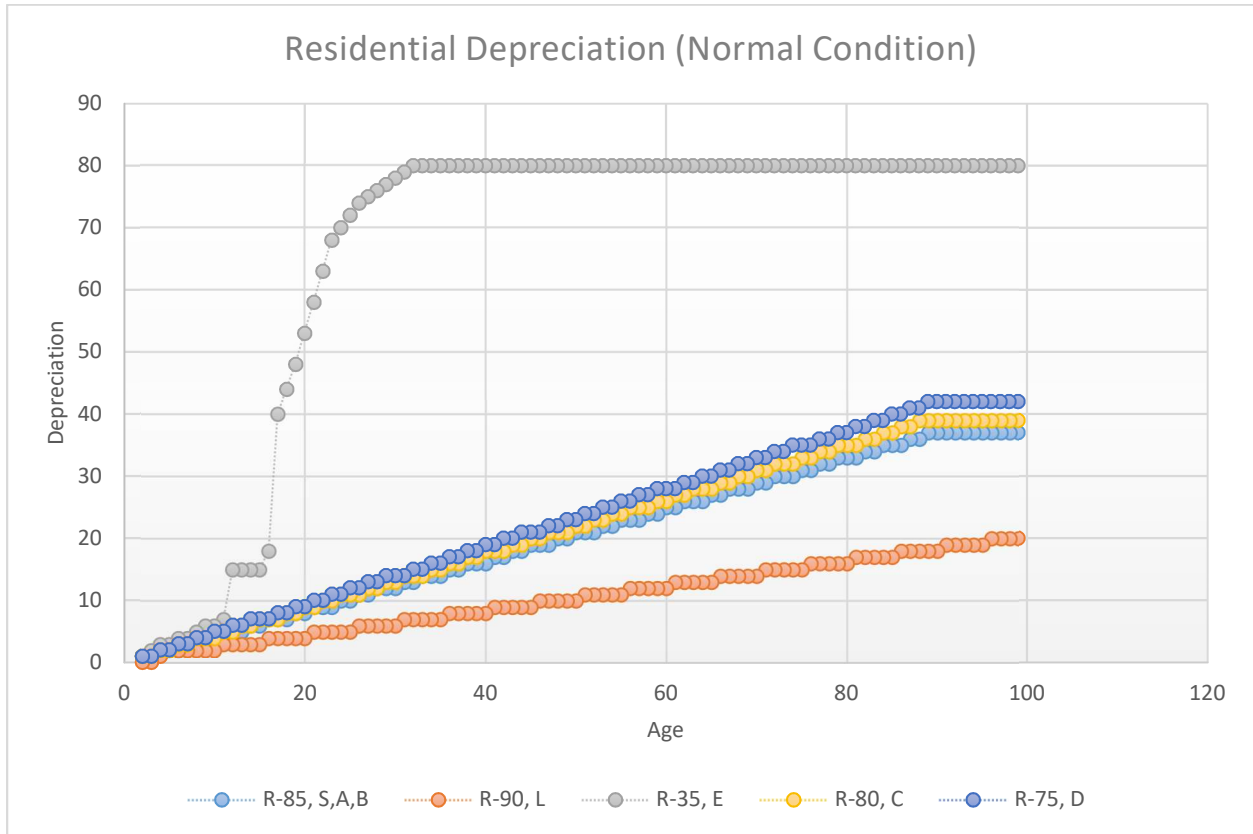
Explain how depreciation schedules are derived from or checked against the local market.

Provide an example of the process.

Yes. The Buncombe County depreciation tables are market derived. There are a total of fifty three [depreciation tables](#) that are applied to real property. Nineteen of these tables are for residential structures.

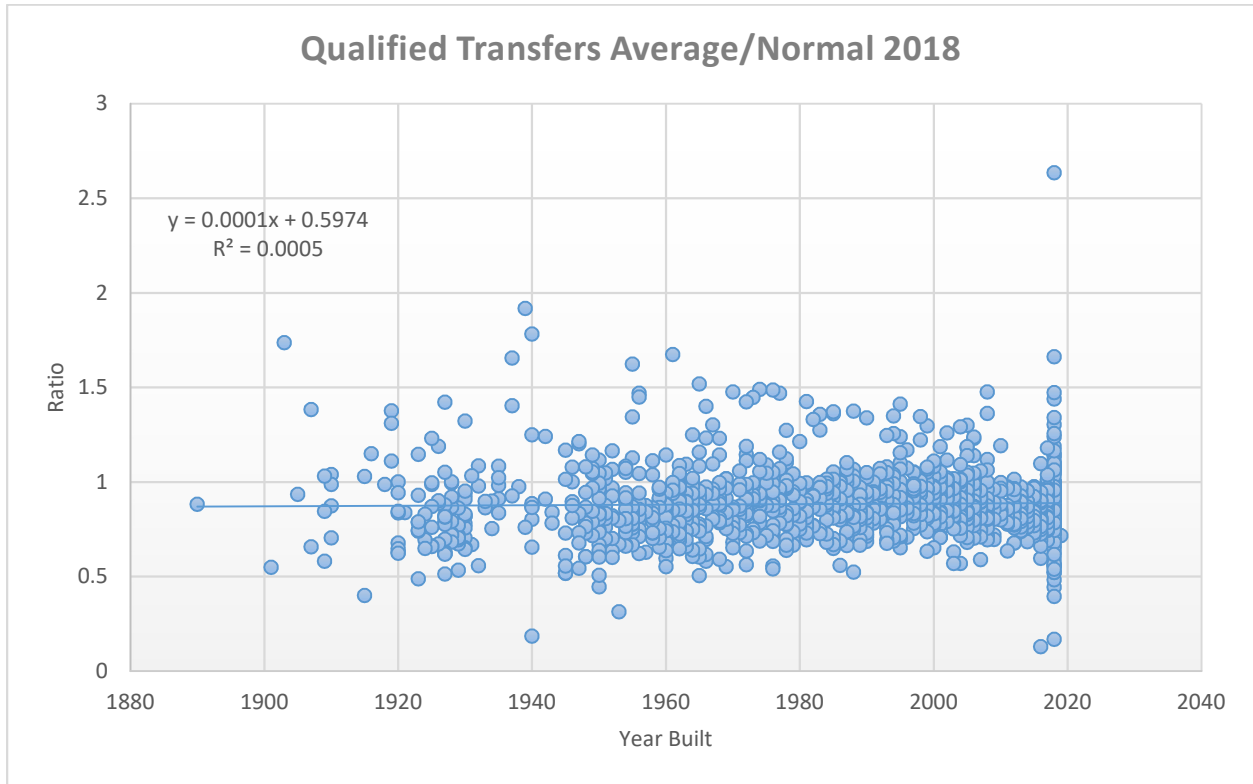
The depreciation tables are applied to individual improvements based on the quality of the improvement. Additional factors that affect depreciation are age and condition. The following graph shows depreciation of a normal condition property. Each line represents a different quality of construction.

Chart 9-5



There are a few ways in which the depreciation tables can be checked against the local market. One way is to compare the ratio trend per year of a property with a specific quality and condition. If the trend line of the ratios show a large shift up or down it could be contributed to an inaccurate depreciation schedule. The graph below shows all qualified sales of residential properties with an average quality and a normal condition.

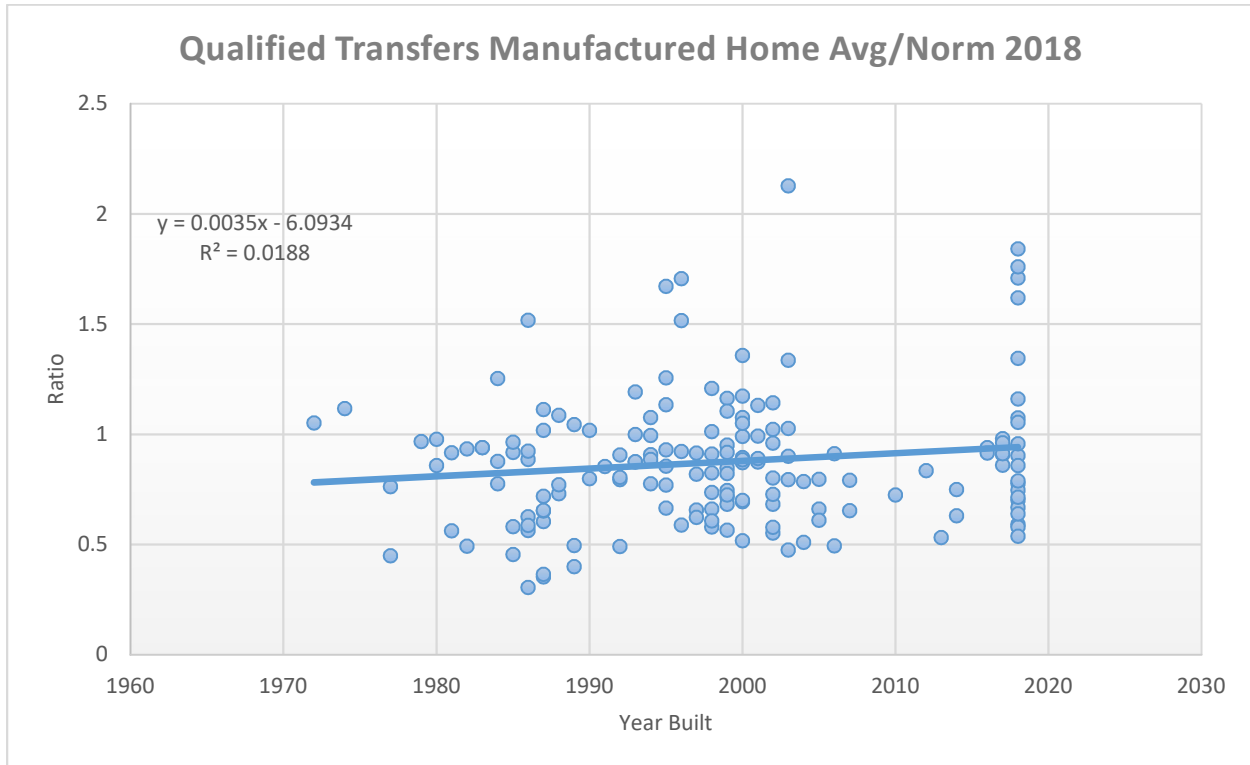
Chart 9-6



As shown in the graph above the trend line is relatively straight which could indicate an accurate depreciation schedule.

The graph below shows all qualified sales of manufactured home properties with an average quality and a normal condition.

Chart 9-7



As shown on the graph above the trend line tends to drop as the buildings get older. This could be an indication of an inaccurate depreciation schedule and should be analyzed during the next revaluation.

14. Are cost values reconciled to the market?

Explain how residential RCNLD estimates are reconciled to the local market.

Provide an example of the process.

Yes. Cost values are fully reconciled to the market. The [Marshall and Swift](#) Cost Guide is typically used to create a base value for cost. Before every revaluation local builders and contractors are surveyed for average construction costs of various types of construction and reconciled against Marshall and Swift.

When permits are issued for new construction, improvements, and additions they are entered directly into the [CAMA system](#). The estimated cost of construction is also entered along with several other pertinent information such as the total heated square feet of the new construction or addition. These numbers can be compared with the actual change in value to check for [accuracy in established rates](#).

Another way in which cost values can be reconciled to the market is a value comparison at the time of sale. Recent transfers can be analyzed and the total improved value can be extracted from both the transfer amount and the appraised amount. The appraised land value should be the same for both the transfer and the appraised amount. The percentage of difference between the extracted sales price and extracted appraised value indicates where the current cost numbers stand against the market. This study can be filtered through the CAMA system and put in [Excel format](#).

15. Are values checked for accuracy, uniformity, and compliance with IAAO ratio study standards?

Provide samples of sales ratio analyses conducted for residential properties in the latest revaluation.

Explain what remedial action is taken when problems are found.

Yes. Values are continuously checked for accuracy, uniformity, and compliance with IAAO ratio study standards. Ratio studies can be ran on an ad hoc basis for any type of stratification. Typically these studies are conducted on revaluation areas as well as individual neighborhoods.

During the last revaluation ratio reports were ran on revaluation areas as well as neighborhoods and various [other stratum](#). These [reports](#) produce most of the measures described in the IAAO Ratio Study Standards. The measures included in the ratio reports included median ratio, standard deviation, coefficient of dispersion (COD), and price-related differential (PRD).

16. When multiple approaches are used, how are values reconciled?

Where multiple approaches or methods are used for a given residential property type or market area, explain the process by which the jurisdiction reconciles the estimates or determine which will be used for assessment purposes.

Currently the sales comparison approach and cost approach are used in valuing residential properties. The reconciliation of these two approaches occurs in the establishment of rates during a revaluation. The typical rates that are established would be considered a market adjusted cost approach. Comparables sales and cost figures are analyzed before establishing the jurisdiction wide rates.

Buncombe County Assessor's Office

Certificate of Excellence Submission- List of Exhibits, Chapter 9

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Exhibit 9-1.2	Comparable Filter
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Exhibit 9-15.2	Ratio Report

Chapter 10: Commercial Valuation

1. Does the jurisdiction have a commercial cost manual that is up to date and rooted in the local market?

Indicate the source of the jurisdiction's commercial cost manual and valuation tables.

Indicate when they were last updated and, if trend factors are applied, the base date to which they are applied.

Explain how depreciation and, if applicable, market adjustment factors are determined.

Provide a copy of the commercial depreciation schedules.

Yes. The jurisdiction has a commercial cost manual that is up to date and rooted in the local market. The jurisdiction utilizes Marshall & Swift Valuation Service for commercial building cost analysis in conjunction with local cost multipliers. Overall building cost trends are also monitored through local media, national trade journals, and [email subscriptions](#). This information is rooted to the local market through interviews with contractors and builders during site inspections, scheduled interviews with contractors, or during an appeal process for a construction project. Building cost factors are established for commercial building types and for certain high cost items. Elevators, sprinklers, and HVAC are some examples of items that are separated and given [individual contribution values](#) to the overall cost of the improvements. These items are not included in the building cost factor. The building cost data becomes most relevant during the four year revaluation cycle. Costs are monitored during this time and are updated prior to revaluation. The next revaluation will be for the year 2021.

The building cost data is also fixed to the start of this revaluation cycle and will not be adjusted as per the Schedule of Values. This cycle term is also subject to change depending on market conditions, ratio studies, and county commissioner approval.

[Depreciation tables](#) utilize a straight line formula as illustrated in the Schedule of Values. These tables factor the building type, useful life, and condition of the building to arrive at the depreciation schedule. In addition, building depreciation can be further modified with the addition of an effective age or a [depreciation modifier](#) if needed.

2. Does the jurisdiction have a program for the routine capture of income and expense data?

Describe your efforts (and challenges) in collecting income and expense data.

Provide examples of forms used.

Indicate response rates, whether you consider them sufficient, and what steps are taken to increase responses

Also indicate where the data obtained are entered and stored, e.g., in the CAMA system, in auxiliary spreadsheets, or both.

Yes. The jurisdiction has a program that attempts to capture income and expense data. On an annual basis the jurisdiction mails out questionnaire style [survey forms](#) to commercial property owners requesting income and expense data, occupancy or vacancy levels, rent rolls and profit & loss statements. The survey forms are customized in questioning and format for each specific commercial property type and the mailings include a self-addressed prepaid postage return envelope to encourage submittal.

The success rate of these returned mailings was typically poor with less than 10% response rate. This was likely due to taxpayer apathy, suspicion, or lack of time and convenience associated with filling out and return of the survey forms. Due to this low response rate, the jurisdiction is implemented new strategies to increase the mailing response rate and make the process as simple and trustworthy to the taxpayer as possible. This resulted in a response rate of 20%. Our long term goal is to achieve a 25% response rate employing targeted mailings and online strategies.

With the jurisdiction's more recent addition of a new CAMA system, new strategies have also been initiated to capture income and expense data. A strategy to improve response success rates that is currently being put into practice is a carefully crafted cover letter included with the survey form that is worded in a way to gain taxpayer trust and to explain what the submitted information collected in the survey will be used for and why. The letter also emphasizes there is confidentiality with the information that is submitted by the taxpayer. The letter is designed to ease taxpayer distrust and increase the taxpayer's confidence in how the jurisdiction handles the information, thus helping prompt a returned survey.

Instead of having one generic survey questionnaire form as most jurisdictions do, the Buncombe County jurisdiction created survey forms to be property type specific. For example, survey forms for hotels request different information than for a [mini storage facility](#). This helps the respondent have more clarity and understanding of the information that is asked for with regard to that particular property type and also aids in preventing the frustration factor that a respondent may encounter when filling out survey

forms. All survey forms have also been reconstructed to a fillable tabled form resulting in better information flow and elimination of repetitious and unnecessary questioning.

Another strategy recently implemented is to include a survey questionnaire form in each sale verification letter sent to those taxpayers who have recently purchased property. With the sale and the income information a local capitalization rate can then be determined.

Yet another strategy to collect income and expense information is to gather this information during the yearly appeal process. The jurisdiction encourages appellants to send in their information. During the appeal process financial data is collected from the owners who have filed an appeal. This information is good in the fact that it is actual data from the local market. The jurisdiction has found this to be the best time and source to acquire this information.

These survey strategies are predicted to be an aid in the ease of use and understanding of the survey and will further assist in gathering required information requested from the taxpayer.

Until the recent purchase of the CAMA software that could digitally retain and model income and expense information, the data was typically stored in Excel files for analysis. The jurisdiction has just begun to transition to CAMA based storage of this data but in the future we may perhaps find that it is easiest to analyze mass data on a spreadsheet and then implement within the CAMA income models.

3. Do commercial appraisers screen and validate commercial market data?

Indicate what staff positions are responsible for screening commercial income and sales data.

Describe the validation and screening process.

Yes. The commercial appraisers screen and validate commercial market data. The commercial staff consists of a Supervising Commercial Appraiser, a Commercial Appraiser and a Level 1 Property Appraiser. The responsibility for screening lies solely with the commercial appraisers. Analysis of income and expenses involves scrutinizing and evaluating this data for suitability for the market valuation process. This data is compared with the normal range and any variances must be verified by staff or justified with the owner before it can be validated for use.

Rents are typically compared with reasonable market rents of similar properties and suitable comparable types. Leases are also analyzed and adjustments made to be comparable with similar properties. Occasionally an owner or tax representative will submit incomplete or questionable data and the owner will be contacted for clarification

or further elaboration. The commercial appraisers are very thorough and take the valuation process very seriously in order to be fair and equitable to all property owners in the jurisdiction.

Property sales are analyzed and verified through [MLS listings](#), deeds, Pictometry, GIS, news articles, broker web sites, and by contacting the listing/selling broker. This scrutiny will determine if the sale is qualified for valuation and ratio studies or the sale will have to be disqualified for a variety of [other reasons](#). A disqualified sale does not necessarily mean it cannot be utilized for valuation purposes. If it is determined that market value can be extracted or the sale adjusted these disqualified sales will be flagged for use during revaluation. Additionally during the sales verification process the property details are checked and the sketch is compared and updated if needed. This is only done if the appraiser can determine that the new data is more accurate than current records on file. Some of the best sources of information are commercial fee appraisals that are submitted by the tax payer.

4. Does the jurisdiction obtain and utilize information on typical income and capitalization rates available from third party sources?

Indicate what commercial data services and publications are utilized in the jurisdiction.

Describe the use made of data from these sources.

Provide at least one example.

Yes. The jurisdiction obtains and utilizes information on typical income and capitalization rates that are made available by third party sources. The jurisdiction utilizes several sources for capitalization rates and income data. These include: LoopNet, Multiple Listing Service, Smith Travel Research, Host, Realty Rates, [CBRE Cap Rate Survey](#), National Real Estate Investor online, Appraisal Institute library resources, IAAO library resources, submitted appeal data, etc. The jurisdiction is currently evaluating the addition of Costar and has made a budget request for the tax year 2020.

This data is then utilized for income approach modeling, appeal justifications, and valuation of income property on the CAMA system. Building costs utilized in the CAMA software relies on costs derived from Marshall and Swift Valuation Services. The jurisdiction also utilizes the depreciation tables that relate to each specific building type (fireproof steel, masonry, wood frame) found in [Marshall and Swift](#). This cost data and corresponding depreciation tables are utilized in the CAMA software.

5. Are spreadsheet and/or statistical packages used in analyses?

Describe the use the jurisdiction makes of spreadsheet and/or statistical software in the appraisal of commercial properties.

Describe the interface with the CAMA system, that is, how income rates and adjustments developed outside the CAMA system are put into the CAMA system for application to the inventory of properties.

Yes. Spreadsheets and statistical packages are used in analyses of commercial property. Currently the jurisdiction does not utilize any formal specialized statistical software. Data is exported from the CAMA system into a spreadsheet for analysis utilizing the built in statistical functions in Microsoft Excel and other developed formulas. It is within these [spreadsheets](#) that data can be analyzed for use within the CAMA system. The updates are usually manually entered back into our CAMA system. Currently there is not an interface available for most functions to automatically be entered in the CAMA system.

Some data can be re-imported depending of the type of function. [Income models](#) are one example. These models are developed utilizing spreadsheet data. The calibration of these models is a lengthy process of compiling data from various sources to a usable format for income generation. The model updates can then be applied with a simple calculation function by individual property or by filtering for a group of properties or class and then completing a mass calculation of this group/class of properties. Once complete this new data can then again be exported to a spreadsheet for re-analysis and cycled back into the CAMA system.

6. Are multi-family properties appraised by the sales comparison or income approach?

Describe how the jurisdiction appraises multi-family properties.

Provide examples of income or sales analyses conducted for such properties.

Indicate how the office appraises properties for which insufficient sales or income data are available.

Multi-family properties in the jurisdiction are appraised by the income approach unless they are under construction whereby the cost approach is then utilized. Quantitative and qualitative information such as unit mix and amenities on each particular apartment complex is gathered from plans during construction and then by field inspection of the property. Rental income and expense information is then obtained from apartment rental websites, from survey responses, from information gathered from current

appeals, from other commercial appraisers, or by phone interviews with property owners. This information is entered into [spreadsheets](#) for analysis, comparison, and income modeling based on property quality, number and type of units in the complex.

When a property's income and expense information is not available or unattainable, information from similar unit or property types where known income and expense information is used. [Benchmarking data](#) such as that found in the Institute of Real Estate Management's conventional apartment income/expense analysis are also analyzed. Typical rents per square foot, vacancy and collection losses, expense percentages and ratios obtained from these publications are utilized when little or no data can be found on a subject property. The property's net operating income is then calculated based on these income and expense values. Since local capitalization rates are rarely obtained, multi-family rates found in national publications such as CBRE cap rate survey are used. Sales of multi-family properties in the jurisdiction are also gathered and entered into spreadsheets. Similar properties that have sold are then compared to values derived from the income approach to verify validity of the value that has been calculated from the projected income, expenses and application of an appropriate cap rate.

7. Do multi-family valuation models recognize features important to renters and investors in such properties?

Indicate what specific features are accounted for in the jurisdiction's multi-family income and/or sales comparison models.

If the income approach is used, specify what characteristics or variables drive potential gross income (PGI), vacancy rates, expense ratios, and capitalization rates.

If the sales comparison approach is used, specify what features are recognized in sales comparison models.

Include examples of valuation models or tables that show how valuation rates and adjustments vary by property type, geographic area, and other relevant features.

Yes. Multi-family valuation models recognize features important to renters and investors. The jurisdiction gives primary emphasis to the income approach when valuing multi-family properties. The sales comparison approach is given secondary consideration. Sales of these types of properties are very limited but are analyzed as confirmation and support of the income valuation models. The analysis of these sales can also be an indicator of market demand. Additional value is given for amenities such as pools, clubhouses, exercise buildings, car washes, elevators, garages, pets, etc. and

is reflected in the higher rental rates and lower vacancy of newer and larger multi-family housing complexes that have sprung up in the last decade.

[Income models](#) are developed and implemented utilizing similar property types for equitable valuation and allows for fair comparison of like properties that would appeal to both tenants and investors. Some tenants only give consideration to the rent in their apartment search, while others are interested in amenities such as location, condition, quality, parking, clubhouse, pool, etc., and will pay for these in exchange for higher rent. For this reason income models are created based on property type. The typical apartment investor is interested in a steady stream of income with a consideration for risk. Vacancy rates and expenses are also factors which can have a major impact on NOI.

In summary, by grouping similar properties together when creating an income model, all these different investment factors can be addressed. Potential gross income is driven by rent and other minor income sources. Rents and vacancy are justified by age, quality, amenities, location, etc. and are readily evidenced in the market. Expense ratios typically correlate to property age, repairs, amenities and competent management. Capitalization rates are directly related to the future stream of income the property will generate and is also reflected through market supply and demand by tenants and investors. The sales comparison approach is inherently market driven therefore will incorporate all the above mentioned factors when the property is sold in a qualified arms-length transaction.

8. Are office buildings appraised based on capitalized net income?

Indicate how the jurisdiction appraises office properties.

Assuming the income approach is used, provide a copy of your current PGI, vacancy, expense, and cap rate tables.

If the sales comparison approach is used, provide a copy of your most recent model(s).

Yes. Office properties in the jurisdiction are appraised by the income approach unless they are under construction whereby the cost approach is then utilized. Surveys are sent to office and medical office property owners to collect information. This is where most good local rental information is obtained. Survey information is entered into spreadsheets which are then broken down into office class categories, Class A, Class B, Class C, Office Condo, Medical Office etc. [Gross leasable area, vacancy rates, expenses](#) are also recorded for model building. Net operating income can then be calculated. Available local office property listings on the market are also searched for size and asking rental rates. Cap rates are obtained from published cap rate surveys such as, [CBRE cap rate surveys](#), CoStar, or RERC cap rate surveys and utilized.

This information is entered into the CAMA system and an appropriate cap rate is applied yielding an indicated property valuation.

9. Are retail appraisals rooted in market data, and do they recognize variations in relevant location and building features?

Explain what approaches and methods are used in the appraisal of retail properties. Indicate which receives primary emphasis and why.

If the income approach is used, provide a copy of your current PGI, vacancy, expense, and cap rate tables.

If the sales comparison approach is used, provide a copy of your most recent model(s).

If the cost approach is used, provide a copy of relevant market adjustment factors.

Yes. Retail property appraisals are rooted in market data. The jurisdiction currently utilizes a market adjusted cost for the valuation of retail properties. The income approach is under development and will be added as a valuation method for the next county wide re-appraisal which will occur in 2021.

The market adjusted cost method calculates a depreciated value utilizing cost and market sales data. The jurisdiction utilizes Marshall and Swift Valuation Service for its base cost with the addition of a local cost modifier. [Building features](#) are reflected in the overall building cost. Once a cost is compiled the building is then adjusted for age and condition to produce a depreciated cost.

Land values can vary greatly depending on location, therefore a [locational factor](#) can be applied to the base rate of land. This rarely happens due to the delineation of neighborhoods within the market. [Land rates](#) are created for individual neighborhoods based on all influences. The base land rate typically captures all of the positive and negative land influences. The CAMA system does allow for [individual adjustments](#) when specific conditions exist that effect land values outside of the base value.

10. Do appraisals for warehouses and light industrial properties recognize the features that drive market value for such properties?

Explain how warehouse and light industrial properties are appraised.

Provide copies of relevant valuation models or tables.

Yes. Appraisals for warehouses and light industrial properties recognize the features that drive market value. The jurisdiction appraises these property types on a market adjusted [cost basis](#). Some of the market driven features include, size, location, and internal office space. Size is the largest contributing factor to appraised value per square foot. Larger spaces have a lower cost per square foot than a smaller space due to the Economies of Scale economic principle. The market for a large space is limited by size and needs. Typically, after a sale of a larger space the new owner will divide it into smaller leasable spaces that can be more readily absorbed in the market.

Location to a major highway or road also contributes to appraised value as it lowers transportation costs and creates better efficiencies for the tenant or owner. This is reflected in land values or [locational adjustments](#). Internal office space contributes to appraised value with a higher price per square foot for that particular area within the building. Flex space provides for office and warehouse/light industrial in a smaller space and carries the highest price per square foot for this related building type.

11. How are values reconciled?

Explain how the jurisdiction reconciles values estimates when multiple approaches or methods are used.

Provide a copy of sales ratio or other analyses conducted for this purpose.

The jurisdiction must consider all three approaches to value when appraising property. This is dictated by the county's published Schedule of Values. Appraised values are typically reconciled by first considering the most applicable approach and in some instances a weighted blend of two or more of the value approaches will be considered.

A majority of the [value reconciliations](#) for commercial property will use the income approach as the primary consideration. The income models are created through market analysis and assigned to a specific group of similar property types and characteristics. This ensures fair and equitable taxation. When the market adjusted cost is utilized the CAMA system uses defined values that are adjusted for each individual property depending on the specifics of that property. This process is primarily automatic but the system also allows for subjective override adjustments when required.

12. Does the jurisdiction have policies for the appraisal of mixed use properties?

Indicate what mixed use properties are common in the jurisdiction and how they are appraised.

Provide a copy of relevant policies, guidelines, or training manuals.

Mixed use properties in the jurisdiction are currently a very popular hybrid property type, especially in the central business district. Many have been constructed since the last revaluation and more are currently under construction. Mixed use properties that the jurisdiction appraises consist of different combination types: apartments/retail or office, residential condominium/hotel, residential condominium/retail or office condominium, urban village, live work space. The appraisal staff values these individual property portions separately as other commercial or residential properties are appraised.

Currently we do not have a written office guidelines on how these property types are appraised due to the smaller size of the department. Residential and commercial appraisers communicate and work together in unison on such projects. The unwritten but generally accepted department procedures on mixed use properties are to appraise the commercial portions of such projects by market lease rates and incomes within the project itself and/or from comparable units, while the residential portions are appraised by the schedule of values within the CAMA system and adjusted for market sales of the units themselves or similar comparable units. This active communication within the office on mixed use projects has worked very well for the jurisdiction.

13. How are special purpose properties appraised?

Indicate what type of special purpose properties are most common and command the highest value in the jurisdiction.

Describe how these properties are appraised and provide copies of relevant appraisal materials.

Indicate if any such properties are appraised by another assessment agency (e.g., the state or province) or by an outside contractor.

Provide at least one example of a special purpose property appraisal.

If the jurisdiction is responsible for the appraisal of utility and/or inter-jurisdictions transportation properties, describe how this task is addressed.

The most common type of special purpose property in the jurisdiction is a hotel. Over the last four years a total of [sixteen hotels](#) have been constructed or have had additions. This has created challenges for the jurisdiction as they have some of the highest valuations of any property type.

The jurisdiction will consider all 3 approaches to value but for a new hotel without any financial history the cost approach is generally the most applicable unless the jurisdiction has been provided a pro forma as a guide for the first year of operation. Once stabilized the jurisdiction will typically utilize the [income approach](#) as the primary approach to value.

The jurisdiction will appraise all hotels internally unless an external appraisal is required as a justification defense of a tax appeal. The jurisdiction is not responsible for the appraisal of public service type properties, these are completed by the Department of Revenue.

All public utility properties are annually appraised by the North Carolina Department of Revenue. The appraised values of these properties can be adjusted by the NCDOR due to variations in annual ratio study results.

Buncombe County Assessor's Office

Certificate of Excellence Submission- List of Exhibits, Chapter 10

Exhibit 10-1.1	Email Subscription
Exhibit 10-1.2	Individual Commercial Items
Exhibit 10-1.3	Commercial Depreciation Table
Exhibit 10-1.4	Depreciation Modifier
Exhibit 10-2.1	Income Survey Letter
Exhibit 10-2.2	Mini Storage Income Survey
Exhibit 10-3.1	Commercial MLS Listing
Exhibit 10-3.2	Disqualification Codes
Exhibit 10-4.1	Marshall and Swift Depreciation
Exhibit 10-5.1	Income Worksheet
Exhibit 10-5.2	Income Model
Exhibit 10-6.1	Multi Family Benchmark Data
Exhibit 10-7.1	Income Model
Exhibit 10-8.1	Potential Gross Income Worksheet
Exhibit 10-9.1	Building Features
Exhibit 10-9.2	Location Factor
Exhibit 10-9.3	Base Land Rates
Exhibit 10-9.4	Land Adjustments
Exhibit 10-10.1	Market Adjusted Cost
Exhibit 10-11.1	Value Reconciliation
Exhibit 10-13.1	New Hotel List

Chapter 11: Personal Property Assessment

1. What personal property is assessable in the jurisdiction?

If no personal property is assessable in the jurisdiction, simply state that it is not and proceed to the next chapter.

If all or some personal property is assessable, prepare a table or matrix indicating what personal property is taxable.

Indicate whether any personal property is assessed by the state/province or other jurisdiction.

If private vehicles are assessed, provide a link to the appropriate legal requirements.

North Carolina law states all personal property is assessable per North Carolina General Statute [§105-274](#) unless excluded or exempt from taxation per NCGS [§105-275](#). The tables below show examples of assessable personal property.

Table 11-1

Assessable Personal Property
Manufactured Homes
Boats
Boat Motors
Jet Ski
Campers
Trailers
Aircraft
Motor Homes
Untagged Vehicles
Permanent tagged vehicles
Multiyear tagged vehicles
Utility Building

Assessable Business Personal Property
Machinery and Equipment
Furniture and Fixtures
Computers
Expensed Items
Leasehold Improvements
Other Items (golf carts, 4 wheelers, modular buildings etc)
CIP
Supplies
Untagged Vehicles
Permanent tagged vehicles
Multiyear tagged vehicles
Aircraft

In Buncombe County, personal property is assessed by the fair market value per NCGS [§105-283](#) and NCGS [§105-284](#). There are no different assessment ratios or rates for personal property specifically, but each tax payer's property has been placed in a

specific fire district for the location where it resides predominantly. The GIS system is used to determine the fire district based on the [situs address](#).

[Tax rates](#) are established by the individual districts as well as the county commissioners every July. These rates are based on the needs of the districts and the county.

In January of each year vehicles, RVs, and trailers are assessed by Tec Data Systems, a vendor for the North Carolina Department of Revenue. These values are based on the National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA) clean retail value, unless sales price is applicable. All watercraft, which includes boats, boat motors, and jet skis, are also assessed according to the [NADA book value](#).

The Buncombe County jurisdiction implements a uniform way to assess personal property by utilizing NADA values for most personal property. Since NADA is based on an estimate of other similar property with the same year, make and model, retrieving the sales price is the most accurate form of market value.

When a permanent tagged vehicle is listed with the county, we get notified through the quarterly “permanent tag report”, which is sent to us from NCDOR. We then can look on the North Carolina Vehicle Tax System (NCVTS) and use their initial assessed value or sales price if it was submitted. Homemade trailers are valued based on the price of materials to build the trailer. If no other form of value can be found, the cost comparison approach is used to identify a fair market value based on other trailers with a similar make, model, and age.

Beginning in 2013, North Carolina has implemented the Tag & Tax together program where all annually tagged vehicles are paid to one entity at the NC License Plate Agency. This system has now increased the percentage of vehicle tax collections by requiring the taxpayer to pay the taxes and registration fees at the time of renewal.

<https://www.ncdor.gov/taxes/north-carolinas-property-tax-system/tag-tax-together-project>

In Buncombe County, we have created an in house [depreciation schedule](#) to perform the most accurate but fair way to assess mobile homes and attachments to everyone in the county. The schedule is based on type of personal property, the size, the age of the property, as well as the lifespan until it reaches a residual value.

The annual listing period for personal property and business personal property is open until January 31. It is the individual or business owner’s responsibility to list all personal property. An extension is available to allow listings to be submitted until March 15th to avoid late list penalty per [NCGS §105-307](#) and [NCGS §105-308](#).

Public Service property is assessed by the NCDOR according to NCGS [105-335\(b\)\(1\)](#). The NCDOR then communicates these results to the jurisdiction which are appropriately applied to the properties

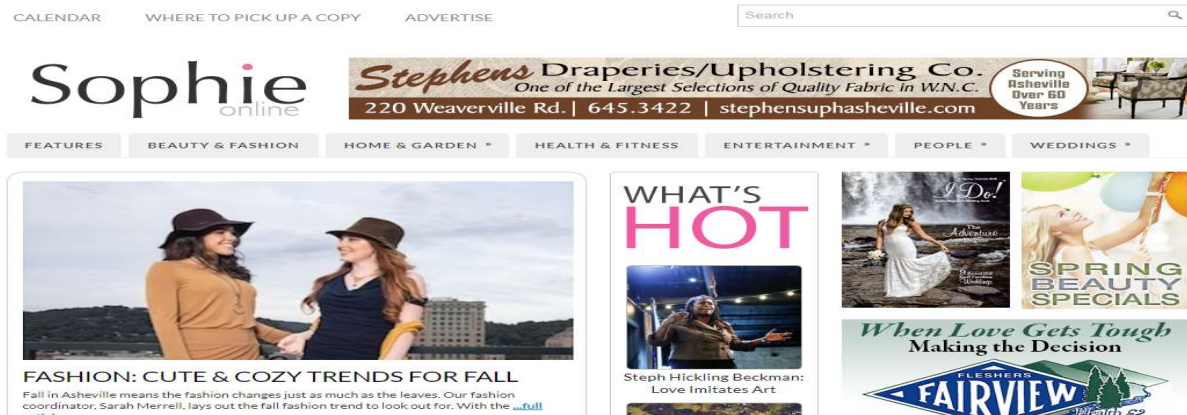
Business Personal property is assessed according to the [NCDOR schedule](#) of values. While listing Business Personal Property, items are often picked up from Permit reports, sales tax reports and newspaper articles. Businesses are often identified on the [ABC Permit](#) report.

The use of newspapers may help to assist in finding new businesses that may have opened recently that may not have been listed yet. They could emphasize special features that may be taxable. The following is a list of websites typically used for this purpose.

<https://www.citizen-times.com/>



<http://sophiemagazine.com/>



<https://mountainx.com/>



and <http://www.ashevillelifestylepubs.com/>



One of the most feasible way to find businesses within the county is from their sales tax reports. Sales tax reports show all the businesses that have paid sales tax in the county so you can compare which business has listed and which have not. This list is received from the NCDOR.

The NC Secretary of State site is also a great source to discover new businesses registered in Buncombe County and verify information.

https://www.sosnc.gov/online_services/search/by_title/Business_Registration_Changes

Signage, outdoor vendor, change of use permits and Asheville Fire permits are received from Buncombe County and the City of Asheville permit offices and are evaluated in the discovery of new property and businesses for assessment.

Currently the jurisdiction does not offer online listing.

Buncombe County has recently added a tool allowing the appraiser to compare similar businesses and their assets. The TMA Inc. program, Cost Analysis Valuation System (CAVS) is used to compare a business listing to a benchmark business with comparable assets. The appraiser logs into CAVS and chooses the type of business to list for taxation.

After completing the identifying information for the business, the appraiser may view and edit the pre-populated assets listed in CAVS for a typical but similar business.

The appraiser compares the assets for the business in CAVS to the business listing and analyzes the listing for missing assets. A phone call, email or letter is sent to the business when questions arise regarding the assets. This can also be used to benchmark a new business that is not listed for us to give an estimated value.

The CAVS system is also useful in educating businesses by providing examples of what business personal property is and how to list those assets on the listing form.

The individual or business owner must provide proper information for each abstract listed per NCGS [§105-309](#).

2. Is a thorough personal property discovery program in place?

Briefly describe each of the methods, sources, and procedures the jurisdiction uses to discover new or previously escaped personal property accounts.

Indicate which have proven most helpful.

Yes, Buncombe County Tax Office does employ a thorough discovery program for Business Personal Property and Personal Property. Per NCGS [§105-312](#), appraisers are charged with discovering personal property for taxation.

Personal Property Discovery

The most valuable discovery tool we use is the [Listing Form](#) that is mailed to citizens and businesses in January of each year. The personal property and business personal property departments use critical thinking in reviewing assets on the listing form determining if there are personal property assets missing from the Listing form. For example, a boat trailer is listed without a boat listed, or a restaurant neglects to list chairs and tables.

Personal Property Appraisers use numerous methods to accurately bill the legal owner and comprehensively assess personal property owned by the citizens of Buncombe County.

- New owner informs us they bought the property that year, or the seller reports sale of property to us, to prevent get future bills.
- Appraiser evaluates lists from NCDMV for mobile homes, trailers, untagged vehicles for transfer dates.
- Appraiser reviews mobile home moving permits.
- Appraiser analyzes Mobile Home Park reports from mobile home park owners. The Tax Department mails Mobile Home Park Reports to park managers of each mobile home park in December. The park manager advises who owns each mobile home on January 1st of that year, by completing and returning the park report to our office by January 15th.

Example: Park Report:

TOWN & COUNTRY 962847267600000				2	
Buncombe County Mobile Home Park Registrar Report					
2018		530 ANYWHERE ST UNIT 301 FAIRVIEW NC 28730		DONNA SMITH	
Example M H Park 444778267600000				530 ANYWHERE ST UNIT 301 FAIRVIEW NC 28730	
Abstract#	Owner Name and Owner Mailing Address	Lot #	January 1 st Owner and 911 Address if different	911 Address and Description	VIN#
0000697652-IND	JOHNSON, JOSE JOHNSTON BLVD LOT 1 ASHEVILLE NC 28806	01		210 JOHNSTON BLVD LOT 1 - 1984 14 X 72 CRIMSON	
0000710553-IND	JONES, JOHN 210 JOHNSTON BLVD LOT 2 ASHEVILLE NC 28806	02		210 JOHNSTON BLVD LOT 2 - 1988 14 X 70 PALM HARBOR	
0000697652-IND	SMITH, JOSEPH JOHNSTON BLVD LOT 1 ASHEVILLE NC 28806	03		210 JOHNSTON BLVD LOT 3 - 1963 10 X 48	

- Appraiser searches Register of Deeds to find heirs for deceased owners.
- Appraisers research personal property and verify ownership by identifying pertinent facts and making inferences regarding property.

Discovery Procedure Personal Property:

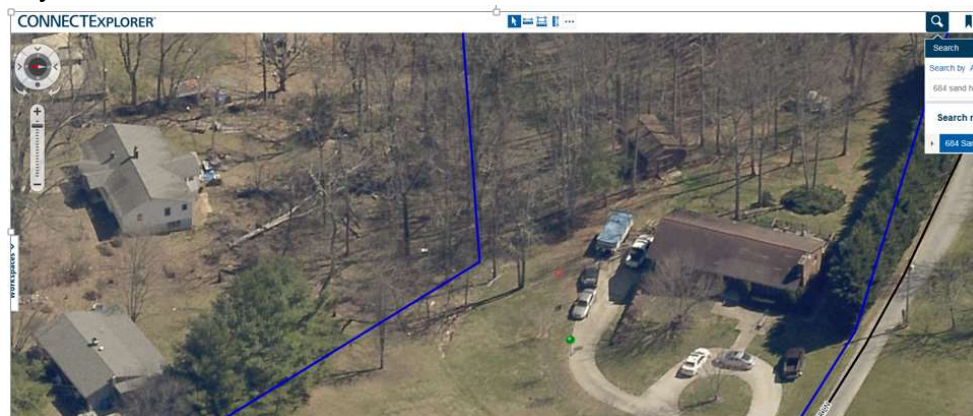
Many scenarios result in the discovery of personal property.

- In an instance where a former owner notifies the Tax Department that the property tax bill should have been in the new owner’s name. If the bill is the first one after the ownership transfer, upon verification of the information, we typically only have to discover the property for that year.
- If during the course of property discovery, we find that there are many years of delinquent taxes, appraisers then research to verify who the property owners

were during the discovery period. If someone else was the owner, then a thirty day discovery notice is made for each year they owned the property. Statute 105-312 (f) states that the taxing authority may discover property for the current year plus the five preceding years as applicable. Appropriate penalties are added per statute, NCGS [§105-312](#) which state ten percent per year.

- Regarding mobile homes and vehicles that are listed with the Tax Department, we make use of the NC DMV site to track VIN numbers, verify ownership transfers and discover new owners. The NC DMV could take time to update title transfers, so a bill of sale may also be used as proof of ownership. Discovery abstracts are created with the new owner's information. A discovery notice is mailed and the owner is billed after 30 days if no response to the discovery notification.
- In searching for watercraft, if a boat trailer is listed as personal property, it is presumed there is a boat owned by that owner as well. We often use Pictometry, which is a website that takes images at every angle of a home, as a discovery tool. Images from Pictometry assist in identifying any watercraft that may be sitting on a parcel of land. (<https://explorer.pictometry.com/login.php>) If a boat is visible on the property, we mail a thirty day discovery notice or call the owner and get the boat's information. The discovery bill is mailed to the owner after 30 days without dispute.

Pictometry- **Boat**



Once personal property is discovered and has a fair market value assessed, a thirty day [discovery notice](#) is mailed to inform the taxpayer of the discovered property, per NCGS [§105-312](#). The notice contains the owner's name, mailing address, the personal property we have discovered, penalties applied, and the bill total. The discovery notice gives the taxpayer thirty days to dispute this notice of value. If the taxpayer agrees with the notice, no response is necessary. The [discovery bill](#) is final after thirty days have passed. A bill is then generated and mailed to the taxpayer.

If a taxpayer disagrees with the thirty day discovery notice and responds within the designated time period, the appraiser reviews documentation provided by the taxpayer of ownership, location or value. A notice of the final decision of the appraiser is required


within fifteen days of review of the material. If the taxpayer and appraiser come to an agreement on the value of the property, a written notice is not required if the taxpayer signs the discovery notice in agreement of the value. NCGS [§105-312](#).

Business Personal Property Discovery

As previously stated, the listing form is our best resource for verifying assets are listed with the correct description, and accurately valued. Business personal property appraisers perform a desk audit on each business that returns a [listing form](#). The appraisers use critical thinking and investigative methods to locate assets owned by businesses.

Businesses that haven't listed personal property are found using a variety of methods.

- Schedule G is part of the listing form where businesses list property they are leasing from other businesses. The appraisers use the information provided on the Schedule G to research the assets, verifying assets are listed by the lessor.



0000795056201820180000

REPORT

**PROPERTY IN YOUR POSSESSION OWNED BY OTHERS JANUARY 1, 2018
(THIS PAGE SHOULD BE RETURNED BY JANUARY 15)**

MAIL TO:
BUNCOMBE COUNTY TAX DEPT
LISTING DIVISION
94 COXE AVENUE
ASHEVILLE, NC 28801

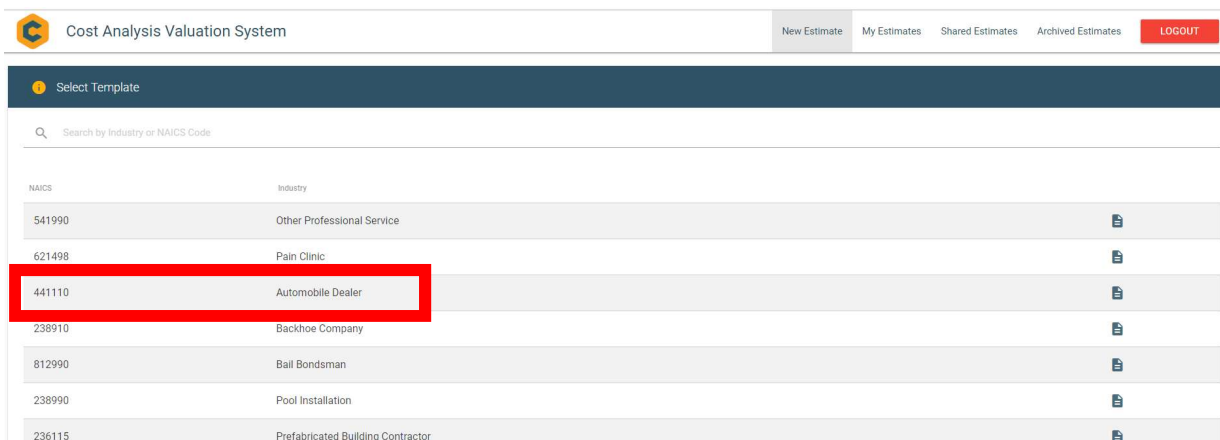
NAME ABSTRACT # 0000795056

SCHEDULE G – EQUIPMENT OWNED BY OTHERS IN YOUR POSSESSION ON JANUARY 1.						
IF YOU HAD IN YOUR POSSESSION ANY BUSINESS MACHINES, POSTAGE METERS, MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT, FURNITURE, FIXTURES, TOOLS, SIGNS, VENDING MACHINES, MUSIC MACHINES, BOATS, ETC., WHICH ARE LEASED, OR OTHERWISE HELD AND NOT OWNED BY YOU, THE VALUE OF WHICH DOES NOT APPEAR ON YOUR ASSET ACCOUNTS, SUCH PROPERTY SHOULD BE REPORTED BELOW. (ATTACH SCHEDULE IF NECESSARY) PLEASE READ INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING LEASES.						
PLEASE GIVE COMPLETE NAME, ADDRESS & TELEPHONE # OF OWNER	DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY	DATE OF LEASE	MONTHLY PAYMENT	LENGTH OF LEASE	ACCOUNT OR LEASE #	SELLING PRICE NEW
FIRST CITIZENS BANK 100 PATTON AVE ASHEVILLE NC 28801 WILLIAM W. NESBITT III 828-257-5813	SAW & SLABSAWTH	8/14/17	3000.00	5YR	2179 3006	1128,000
	WATER FILTER	7/8/17	945	5YR	2179 3004	48,000
	NO LIFT SYSTEM	3/16/17	30	1YR	2179 3005	9,000

- The NC Secretary of State site is a valuable source to discover new businesses registered in Buncombe County and verify information.
https://www.sosnc.gov/online_services/search/by_title/Business_Registration_Changes
- Signage, outdoor vendor, change of use permits and Asheville Fire permits are received from Buncombe County and the City of Asheville permit offices and are evaluated in the discovery of new property and businesses for assessment.

- Buncombe County Business Personal Property has developed a relationship with the Buncombe County Health Inspection Department to receive lists of business that have had health inspections completed.
- Buncombe County receives a sales tax report from the NC Department of Revenue to verify all businesses paying sales tax in the county are listing assets for taxation in Buncombe County.
- Business Personal Property appraisers review local business associations for businesses that haven't listed their assets for taxation. A few of these business organizations are listed below:
 - Asheville Chamber of Commerce new member directory <https://ashevillencoc.wliinc24.com/directory/results.aspx?NewMemberSearch=true&adkeyword=NewMember>
 - Asheville Downtown Association <https://www.ashevilledowntown.org/membership>
 - Asheville Grown Business Alliance <https://ashevilledgrown.com/directory>
 - West Asheville Business Association <http://west-asheville.com/>
- Business Personal Property appraisers also use Newspapers and local magazines to find businesses that haven't listed their personal property. <https://www.citizen-times.com/> , <http://sophiemagazine.com/> , <https://mountainx.com/>, and <http://www.ashevillelifestylepubs.com/> .
- On site audits of businesses to verify all taxable assets are accurately listed.
- Buncombe County has recently added a tool that allows the appraiser to compare similar businesses and their assets. The TMA Inc. program, Cost Analysis Valuation System (CAVS) is used to compare a business listing to a benchmark business with comparable assets.

The appraiser logs into CAVS and chooses the type of business to list for taxation.



After completing the identifying information for the business, the appraiser may view and edit the pre-populated assets listed in CAVS for a typical but similar business.

BUNCOMBE COUNTY
94 Coxe Avenue
Asheville, NC, 28801
828-250-4930

Buncombe Restaurant LLC
123 Main St
Asheville, NC, 28801
Great Food!

Business Contact:

Ronald McDonald

(828)444-1212

Estimate Year	Account #	Started On	NAICS Code	Map/Parcel Number	Business Type
2018	444555	01/01/2017	722511		Restaurant
ASSETS					COST
Phone System					5000
Microwave					3500
Furniture & Fixtures					60060
Credit Card Terminal					735
Copier & Fax					640
Computer Equipment					8960

The appraiser compares the assets for the business in CAVS to the business listing and analyzes the listing for missing assets. A phone call, email or letter is sent to the business when questions arise regarding the assets.

The CAVS system is also useful in educating businesses by providing examples of what business personal property is and how to list those assets on the listing form.

Just as in personal property, a thirty day discovery notice is mailed to inform the business owner of the discovered property, per [NCGS §105-312](#). The [discovery notice](#) gives the business owner thirty days to dispute this notice of value. If the business owner agrees with the notice, no response is necessary. The [discovery bill](#) is final after thirty days have passed. A bill is then generated and mailed to the taxpayer.

3. How is personal property appraised?

Explain how the jurisdiction appraises personal property.

Indicate the source of the cost schedules and provide copies.

Explain whether and how the sales comparison and income approaches are used for different types of personal property.

For taxation purposes, property owners are required by law to list all property, real and personal [per NCGS §105-274](#).

Personal Property is property owned by an individual, not classified as real property. Examples of personal property:

- Mobile or modular homes
- Decks and porches attached to the mobile home
- Outbuildings associated with the mobile home
- Permanently tagged trailers and vehicles
- Recreational vehicles
- Watercraft
- Aircraft not owned by a business

The goal of appraising personal property is to determine the fair market value of the property. The most accurate method of assessment is the sales price, year it was acquired, then applying a depreciation schedule. The sales price reflects the owner purchasing property with the belief they had negotiated a fair price. If a sales price is not obtainable, then comparing similar property and applying a depreciation schedule according to age of the property is the most uniform process to reach a fair appraisal.

Every January, [Personal Property Listing Forms](#) are mailed out requesting the property owner sign the form, agreeing that they still own the property, or make corrections to the property listed. If the property has been sold, the listing form asks for the new owner's information. This communication tool gives the appraiser the most accurate information regarding personal property. The taxpayer is the most well-informed in regards to the characteristics of their property and by providing a signed listing form, the most reliable source of information is used to value the property. At times, it is necessary to inspect personal property to determine the condition of the property for proper valuation. Adjustments may be made to the value upon physical inspection of the property. The Buncombe County Tax Department is very hands on with our taxpayers. If we don't have enough information to assess the property, we call or send a letter requesting more information from the owner.

In Buncombe County, the Tax Department has created an in house depreciation schedule for mobile homes by researching sales prices and onsite inspections of homes. This allows the appraiser to assess personal property accurately and fairly. Value is based on the type of personal property, the size, the age of the property, as well as the estimated years of useful life, depreciating the property until it reaches residual value.

Currently, we are using the depreciation schedule below to assess mobile homes and mobile home enhancements. As you can see, we have the type of property listed, the abbreviation, the dollar amount per square foot (\$/sq. ft.), and the number of years the depreciation schedule allows before the property reaches residual value. The County is in the process of updating the mobile home depreciation schedule at this time.

Abbreviation	Personal Property	\$/Sqft	Depreciation Schedule
Can	Frame/Alum Canopy	5.42	10
CP1	Carport	10.00	15
CPT	Carport CP	5.00	15
DK	Deck	10.80	15
EP	Enclosed Porch	21.25	20
OP	Open Porch	18.25	20
SP	Screened Porch	19.50	20
UT	Utility Building	14.75	20
UT1	Utility Bldg1	5.00	10
AD	MH Addition	31.78	25
B2S	2 Story Barn	28.10	20
GAR	Garage	28.50	20
MHD	MH Doublewide	34.00	30
MHS	MH Single Wide	33.00	30
MHT	MH Triple Wide	34.00	30
PT	Patio	8.05	10
STP	Stoop	6.50	10
SUN	Sunroom	31.78	25
UR	Utility Room	21.25	20

If a uniform value has been determined by comparison of similar mobile homes and you have obtained photos or have appraised the home in person, the appraiser may assess a condition code of A, B, or C to the home. Code A categorizes the property as above average, code B is average, and code C would be below average condition. Applying code A or C results in a twenty five percent difference (+/-), from the average condition value.

Example: If a home in *average condition* is \$7,500, the same home (make, size) elsewhere in *above average condition* has a value of \$10,000. The same home in *below average condition* is \$5,625.

The Tax Department mails Mobile Home Park Reports to park managers of each mobile home park in December. The park manager completes and returns the park report to our office by January 15th. In the report, the park manager advises ownership of each mobile home in their park as of January 1st of that year. Other pertinent details such as size and year of the mobile home are also provided in the report. If a taxpayer does not return a listing form, the home will be listed for taxation using the information provided in the Park Report.

Example: Park Report:

TOWN & COUNTRY 962847267600000						2
Buncombe County Mobile Home Park Registrar Report						
2018		530 ANYWHERE ST UNIT 301 FAIRVIEW NC 28730			DONNA SMITH	
Example M H Park 444778267600000					530 ANYWHERE ST UNIT 301 FAIRVIEW NC 28730	
Abstract#	Owner Name and Owner Mailing Address	Lot #	January 1 st Owner and 911 Address if different	911 Address and Description	VIN#	
0000697652-IND	JOHNSON, JOSE JOHNSTON BLVD LOT 1 ASHEVILLE NC 28806	01		210 JOHNSTON BLVD LOT 1 - 1984 14 X 72 CRIMSON		
0000710553-IND	JONES, JOHN 210 JOHNSTON BLVD LOT 2 ASHEVILLE NC 28806	02		210 JOHNSTON BLVD LOT 2 - 1988 14 X 70 PALM HARBOR		
0000697652-IND	SMITH, JOSEPH JOHNSTON BLVD LOT 1 ASHEVILLE NC 28806	03		210 JOHNSTON BLVD LOT 3 - 1963 10 X 48		

Mobile home permits are another tool the appraiser uses in listing mobile homes for taxation in Buncombe County. Mobile home owners apply for a mobile home permit from the Tax Department when they wish to move their mobile home from its current location. Appraisers review the mobile home permit report for new owners and locations of mobile homes.

For vehicles and RVs in Buncombe County, we assess value based on the clean retail value from the NADA guide.

- Once someone buys a new car from a dealer we have what is called the “RMV Sales Price”. If we do not have the sale price, we resort to the NADA value. Most values are set by the NCDOR (North Carolina Department of Revenue).
- If a taxpayer feels there is a discrepancy with the NC DOR assessed value, the appraiser verifies the NADA book value for the current year to see if it has been adjusted correctly.
- If the taxpayer still disagrees with the value assessed, the taxpayer may go to an authorized dealer and have a “Vehicle Appraisal Form” completed. This form must be completed in its entirety. The form requires the fair market value for that vehicle be listed, along with the conditions that affect that value. Severe body damage, interior damage, and flood damage are conditions that affect the value of the vehicle. An appraiser may adjust the taxable value of the vehicle within guidelines for damage.
- High mileage is considered when assessing value of the vehicle. A vehicle has high mileage if it has accumulated more than 15,000 miles per year. An adjustment in value may result from proof of mileage. Appraisers accept a current inspection or receipt from a current oil change as proof of mileage.
- We assess based on the fair market value on January 1 of each year, but if the renewal is after September, then we assess at the next January’s value since we

are working in the next tax year. Roughly on average, cars depreciate about ten percent each year.

As previously stated, sales prices are the most accurate value of all types of personal property, including vehicles and utility trailers.

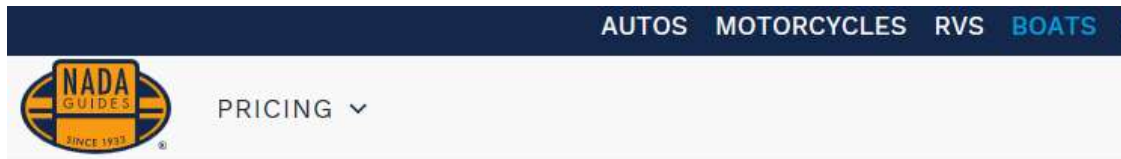
The Tax Department regularly receives a permanent tag report from the North Carolina Department of Revenue (NCDOR). The report lists newly obtained permanent tags on utility trailers and boat trailers to list as personal property for taxation. When listing an untagged vehicle or a permanent tagged vehicle for taxation, if a sales price is unavailable, the appraiser uses the North Carolina Vehicle Tax System (NC VTS) to find the last year the vehicle was tagged. The value at the time of the last registration or the purchase price, is used to depreciate the property to a fair value. NC VTS uses depreciation schedules developed by the NCDOR to assess vehicles.

A utility trailer is assessed by using the sales price. The sales price is the most accurate value as referenced previously. Cost Comparison is also used to compare trailers of the same make and year to determine value. For homemade trailers, appraisers use the total cost of materials to assess the value.

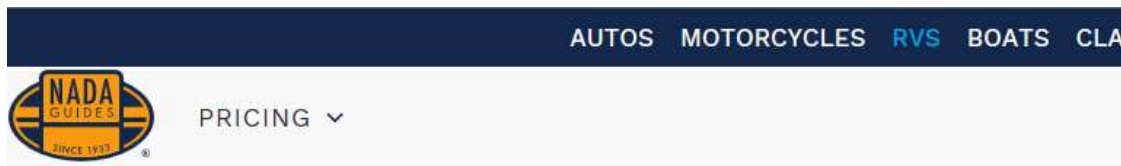
When assessing Aircraft, appraisers use sales price if available or, assess property by using values in the "Aircraft Bluebook". The Aircraft Bluebook is widely accepted as a reliable tool in assessing planes and other aircraft. The book is compiled by tracking trends in pricing of commercial and personal aircraft.



To assess watercraft and recreation vehicles, we require a bill of sale. Online resources of NADA guides for valuation of watercraft and recreation vehicles are a valuable and reliable source of values when no proof of purchase price is available. By gathering sales data from new, used and auction dealers, the guide is a comprehensive valuation tool for variety of personal property. The NADA guide is published by the National Auto Dealers Association and is trusted by insurance companies, auto finance companies, car dealers and taxing authorities for property valuation.



Personal Watercraft Manufacturers Directory



A banner with a background image of a desert landscape. The text reads: 'RV Prices and Values' in large white font, followed by 'Research new and used recreation vehicle pricing, specs, photos and more for everything from travel trailers to truck campers' in smaller white font. Below the text is an orange button with the text 'Start Here' and a right-pointing arrow.

Browse By RV Type

Find prices and values for all recreation vehicle (RV) types below



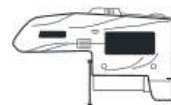
Travel Trailers/
5th Wheels



Motorhomes



Camping Trailers



Truck Campers

Business Personal Property is classified as assets owned by a business that are used to generate income but not classified as real property. The type of property is considered in choosing which method is the most appropriate and will result in a fair, equitable, and uniform assessment of the property. By reviewing business personal property listing forms, the County maintains compliance in regards to NCGS [105-312\(b\)](#).

Cost Method-

The cost method determines the value of the asset after noting original cost (including installation and freight costs), the useful life remaining of the asset, and applies a depreciation schedule to the asset. This method is used most often in evaluating business personal property. The cost method results in a value of replacement cost new less depreciation, or current market value.

The Cost Index and Depreciation Schedules are created and distributed by the NC Department of Revenue each year. The document is located at <https://www.ncdor.gov/documents/2018-cost-index-and-depreciation-schedules>. The schedule is the result of the NC DOR analyzing trend factors to determine price increase or decrease, and the length of useful life of assets in each asset category. The schedule is considered valid and has been accepted by the Courts of North Carolina. The business personal property appraisal process would be arduous and overwhelming without the NC DOR Cost Index and Depreciation Schedules.

Upon receipt of the Business Personal Property listing form-
(Listing Form example exhibit A)

- ✓ The appraiser reviews the assets to ensure assets are in the proper asset category.
- ✓ The appraiser lists reported assets in each asset category in the year that the asset was acquired. Assets are assigned a depreciation schedule provided to the Tax Office by the NC DOR.
- ✓ Verify unclear information on the listing form with the business. (If they purchased a new computer, did they dispose of the old one?)
- ✓ The result is the current fair market value of that asset.

Cost Method Example:

ABC Business Inc. has reported Machinery and Equipment and Improvements to Leased Property on their Listing form.

BUNCOMBE COUNTY TAX ASSESSOR
LISTING DIVISION
94 COXE AVENUE
ASHEVILLE, NC 28801
(828) 250-4930
www.buncombecounty.org

Return by
JANUARY 31, 2018
to avoid a 10% penalty
BUSINESS LISTING FORM

2018

ABSTRACT NUMBER	OWNER ID	LOCATION	DISTRICT CODES
123456	77789	90 Coxe Ave	

ABC BUSINESS, INC.
90 MAIN ST
ASHEVILLE NC 28801

Bus. Begin Date: _____ Bus. Yr End: _____

Type of Bus: RETAIL

Sole Prop: Partnership: Corp: LLP: LLC:

Person to contact for additional information

Phone: 828-333-1111 FAX# _____

E-Mail: info@abcbiz.com

OTHER NC COUNTIES WHERE PERSONAL PROPERTY IS LOCATED

Please make any corrections to name, address and location that are needed

SCHEDULE A PERSONAL PROPERTY - SEE INSTRUCTIONS									
MACHINERY & EQUIPMENT					IMPROVEMENTS TO LEASED PROPERTY				
ACQUIRED YEAR	PRIOR YR. COST	ADDITIONS	DELETIONS	TOTAL	ACQUIRED YEAR	PRIOR YR. COST	ADDITIONS	DELETIONS	TOTAL
2017		5,000		5,000	2017				
2016	10,000			10,000	2016				
2015	15,000			15,000	2015	25,000			25,000
2014					2014				
2013					2013				

Appraiser uses PTS to list assets- consults NC DOR Cost Index and Depreciation Schedule <https://www.ncdor.gov/documents/2019-cost-index-and-depreciation-schedules> to assign depreciation schedule.

QUEUES: Abstract Info (F2) Property (F3) Adjustments (F4) Change History (F5) Notes/Documents (F6)

View Voided Records Assd % Depreciable Cost Subtotal: \$0

Delete	Prp Id	Type	Description	Exemption	Listing Flag	Appraised Value	Override Value	Total Assessed Value
x		MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT		None	None	\$	\$ % None	

Group: [G1-MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT] Schedule/Category: [Schedule : B10-8] Add/Change

Year Acquired	Prior Year Cost (\$)	Addition (\$)	Deletion (\$)	Reported Cost (\$)	Current Year Cost (\$)	% Good	Value Good (\$)	Appraised Value (\$)	Assd (%)	Assessed Value (\$)
2017		5000			5000	90.00	4500	4500		4500
2016	10000				10000	81.00	8100	8100		8100
2015	15000				15000	71.00	10650	10650		10650
2014						62.00				
2013						53.00				
2012						43.00				
2011						33.00				
PRIOR						25.00				
Total	25000	5000	0	0	30000		23250	23250		23250

QUEUES: Abstract Info (F2) Property (F3) Adjustments (F4) Change History (F5) Notes/Documents (F6)

View Voided Records Assd % Depreciable Cost Subtotal: \$30000

Delete	Prp Id	Type	Description	Exemption	Listing Flag	Appraised Value	Override Value	Total Assessed Value
x		MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT		None	None	\$	\$ % None	
x		LEASEHOLD IMPROVEMENTS		None	None	\$	\$ % None	

Group: [G5-LEASEHOLD IMPROVEMENTS] Schedule/Category: [Schedule : K10-8] Add/Change

Year Acquired	Prior Year Cost (\$)	Addition (\$)	Deletion (\$)	Current Year Cost (\$)	% Good	Value Good (\$)	Appraised Value (\$)	Assd (%)	Assessed Value (\$)
2017					90.00				
2016					82.00				
2015	25000			25000	71.00	17750	17750		17750
2014					63.00				



The Income Approach – Leased Property

The Income Approach is most often used in valuing personal property that is leased, such as copiers, computers and machinery. The Income approach uses net income and the capitalization rate to determine the value of the equipment. This method accounts for economic conditions, and maintenance of the equipment.

Income/Rate= Value

Income Approach Example:

Copier \$1,375 per month; .016 per copy; 25,000 copies per month; 12 month lease.

Maintenance =12% of net income

Discount rate = 12.2 % Tax Rate = 1.20 per 100 = 1.20

Recapture Rate 10 years estimated economic life minus 3 years age = 7 (1/7) = .143

Capitalization rate (overall rate) = (.122+ .0120+.143) = .277

\$1,375 x 12 months= \$16,500;

(.016 x 25,000 copies) x 12 months = \$4,800

\$16,500 + \$4,800= \$21,300 income

Income Less Maintenance (less 12%) = \$21,300 x (.88) = \$18,744

Net Income \$18,744 / .277 Capitalization rate. = \$67,668 Value

In conclusion, whether it is personal or business personal property Buncombe County appraisers strive to use best practices when assessing property. The goal is equitable and fair taxation for all citizens of Buncombe County.

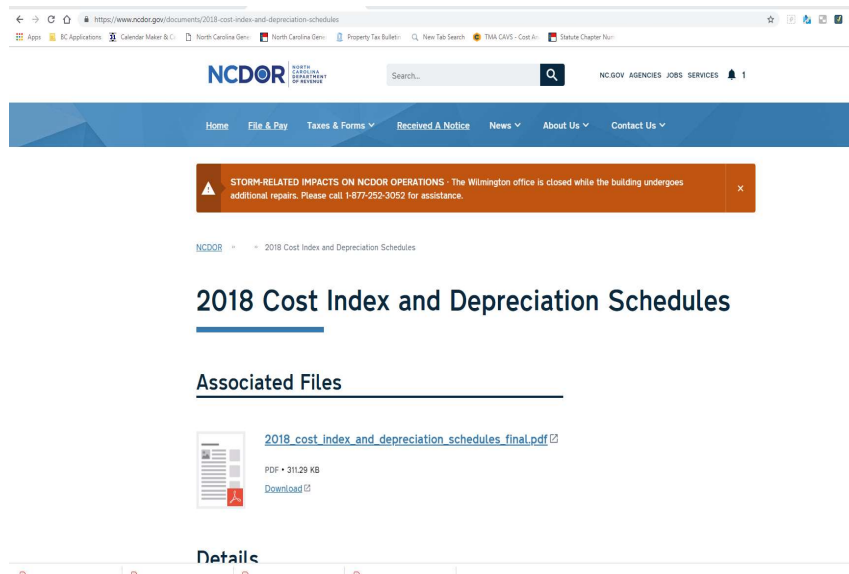
4. Is personal property valuation automated?

Indicate whether the personal property valuation process is fully automated.

Provide a copy of relevant valuation reports and the notice provided to taxpayers.

Yes. The Cost Index and Depreciation Schedules are created and distributed by the NCDOR each year. The document is located at <https://www.ncdor.gov/documents/2018-cost-index-and-depreciation-schedules>. The schedule is the result of the NCDOR analyzing trend factors to determine price increase or decrease, and the length of useful life of assets in each asset category. The schedule is considered valid and has been accepted by the Courts of North Carolina. The

business personal property appraisal process would be arduous and overwhelming without the NC DOR Cost Index and Depreciation Schedules.



[Personal Property](#) values are entered into the [PTS system](#) and the system auto depreciates them based on the schedule that is assigned to them according to the NCDOR schedule of values. A notice of value or work papers provide a breakdown of the totals for each category.

A taxpayer's notice value is their tax bill, in which the taxpayer will have thirty days for the date of notice to appeal each value.

[Registered motor vehicles](#) (yearly tagged vehicles) are also valued automatically based on VIN and average retail for your make and model. Occasional in office adjustments are made prior to billing as vehicle bills are sent to our office for finalizing due to exempt value, no value, vintage, etc.

For example: No value is a case where we are given a recommended DOR default value based on data they have pulled from the VIN number we also may have the purchase price. IF we have the purchase price the best solution is to use the purchase price and deduct ten percent for each year since purchase.

A taxpayer's notice of new value on the listed above items are their tax bill, in which the taxpayer will have thirty days for the date in which the notice is due to appeal the value.

5. Are the real and personal property systems linked to each other?

Indicate whether the office's real and personal property systems are linked so that it can access data on one while logged into the other.

Explain the linkage and provide a relevant screen print.

No. Currently there is not a direct link between the real property system, Assess Pro and the personal property system, NC PTS

There are two indirect links that are ran in order for these systems to communicate. The first process that the transfer of data from Assess Pro to NCPTS can occur is a land records transfer. During this process abstracts containing data such as the current owner, parcel number, address, deed book and page number, and values are extracted from Assess Pro. These abstracts are first placed in a test environment and audits are ran to find problems. Once all of the problems are corrected the abstracts are merged into the NCPTS system. This process can occur on demand or can be set up to occur automatically.

The second way that Assess Pro can communicate with NCPTS is through an ownership transfer process. This is a similar process as the land records transfer although it only extracts the current owner from Assess Pro and matches it to the parcel number associated in NCPTS. This process will change the ownership in the NCPTS system in order to send any delinquent bills to the actual owner.

6. Does the jurisdiction provide taxpayers with required reporting forms each year?

Indicate when personal property declarations are mailed and/or made available on-line.

Describe follow-up procedures if declarations are not returned by the requested due date.

Provide a copy of the forms and related instructions.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office provides taxpayers with the required reporting forms each year. Personal and Business property listing forms can be obtained at the Buncombe county tax and the county website at <https://www.buncombecounty.org/common/tax/personal-property-listing-form.pdf> by January 1st of each year. The Personal property listing sheets are modified per the needs of the local municipalities.

All personal property declarations are mailed by mailed by December 31 of each year. Follow ups typically do not occur although if there is any questions associated with the declarations they are answered with a phone call or letter.

It is the sole responsibility of the local departments to mail approved documents that record existing and discovered personal properties that can be calculated to the tax payer. It is also the responsibility of the local municipality to provide adequate instructions or assistance for completing these documents. The documents are to be labeled with return instructions so that the tax payer will not incur late charges.

7. Has the jurisdiction taken steps to facilitate reporting by taxpayers?

Describe how the office facilitates (eases) taxpayer reporting.

Note whether the steps undertaken have improved compliance or the efficiency of processing returns.

Yes. The jurisdiction has taken steps to facilitate reporting by taxpayers. The Buncombe County Tax Department uses a multitude of methods to facilitate the reporting of personal property. In addition to statute driven advertising, the county offers prepopulated listing forms for existing accounts, online tutorials explaining listing requirements and instructions, postcards explaining the listing requirements to businesses that are not in our system, and notifications posted in public spaces explaining the duty to list.

North Carolina General Statute [105-296\(c\)](#) instructs each county assessor to advertise in a [newspaper](#) having general circulation in that county that all persons who own property subject to taxation on January 1 are required to list that property with the Tax Department. The advertisement must be published at least ten days before the date on which the property is to be listed. This advertisement serves not only to notify property owners of their duty to list, but also encourages compliance by providing a description of property that should be listed, as well as contact information for the appropriate departments within the tax office, and a website for the required forms. This notice is also displayed at county libraries and fire stations for further opportunities to inform the public.

The business personal property staff routinely searches for businesses in the county that do not have a listing on file with the tax office. Businesses are contacted to explain the listing process, either by phone or by [postcard](#), the latter of which gives a brief description of the duty to list and a source for more information. We also proactively monitor local media publications for new businesses in order to reach out to those businesses.

For existing businesses, Buncombe County further facilitates the listing of personal property by mailing listing forms each January that are prepopulated with the information that the taxpayer reported the prior year. This enables the taxpayer to update the listing form by reporting any changes in the last year.

The Individual Personal Property [Listing Form](#) provides descriptions of items the taxpayer owned the prior year. These assets may include manufactured homes and their improvements, watercraft, aircraft, and vehicles that do not have an annual renewable license plate (permanent tags, International Registration Plates, and untagged vehicles). The taxpayer is instructed to mark through items they no longer own, and to add items they acquired in the past year. The form also displays the name and mailing address of the taxpayer, as well as the physical location of the assets. The taxpayer is instructed to cross out anything that needs updating and to provide the correct information. The one page listing is easily completed and provides clear instructions.

The [Business Personal Property Listing Form](#) is prepopulated with costs reported by the taxpayer the prior year. [Instructions](#) mailed with the form explain each asset category and give examples of what may be included in that category. The form is due by January 31, but gives clear instructions that an extension may be requested on our website before that date, which will give the taxpayer until March 15 to return the completed form. There is an [extension request](#) form included with the mailed listing for those taxpayers who do not have access to the internet. Listing forms include our web address as well as the phone number for the appropriate listing department should the taxpayer need assistance.

The online extension requests have enabled our office to begin processing listing forms several weeks earlier than was possible in the past. This is due to a decrease in the volume of mailed extension requests that require manual processing: <https://tax.buncombecounty.org/extensions/> . Our office implemented the program in December 2016 for the 2017 listing period. Since beginning the program, we have seen an increase in the number of extensions requested each year. In addition to online extensions, our county is actively researching and viewing demonstrations from vendors for an online personal property listing platform in an effort to offer more opportunity for efficiency and access to our taxpayers.

For taxpayers who are filing for the first time, our county website offers a detailed video explanation of both business personal property and Individual Personal Property.

<https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/depts/tax/news-detail-assessment.aspx?id=17757>

<https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/depts/tax/news-detail-assessment.aspx?id=17758>

The same webpage also includes links for the taxpayer to access the county's blank [Business Listing Form](#) with instructions, [Business Listing Extension](#) form, Business Property Exemption application and [Taxpayer Agent Authorization](#) forms. In addition to these forms, the site offers links to other relevant listing resources, such as the [North Carolina Department of Revenue](#), which offers a variety of information regarding property taxes. From this site, the taxpayer can access the [Statewide Uniform Abstract](#), which is the business personal property listing form offered by the NCDOR and accepted in all 100 counties within the state. The Statewide Uniform Abstract allows multi-jurisdictional businesses to list consistently throughout the state rather than attempting to conform to each county's modified version of the listing form. From our website, businesses can also access the annual [Cost Index and Depreciation Schedules](#) published by the North Carolina Department of Revenue to assist them in understanding depreciation schedules for particular asset types. In addition to Business Personal Property Forms, the county website offers links to a blank [Personal Property Listing](#) Form for new listings of non-business personal property, [Vehicle Appraisal Form](#), [Exempt Vehicle Application](#), and [Antique Vehicle Application](#).

NCGS [§105-315](#) instructs every person having custody of taxable tangible personal property "that has been entrusted to the person by another for storage, sale, renting, or any other business purpose" to provide a description of the property and the owner's name to the county in which the property is located. These reports are an invaluable resource in our efforts to ensure that we list all taxable tangible personal property in the county. Buncombe County facilitates the reporting of this information by providing forms that enable the appropriate party to provide the owner name and property description as of January 1. For example, Business Personal Property Listing Forms include a schedule for reporting contact information and a description of [leased equipment](#) owned by a lessor. For Individual Personal Property, each manufactured home park manager receives a [Mobile Home Park Registrar Report](#) in December that is prepopulated with the prior year's information so that the park manager can readily confirm the owners and manufactured homes that are in the park, and provide updates for any new owners, or homes that were added or removed. The county's airport authority is contacted each year to provide a [list of all aircraft](#) that is hangered at the airport.

8. Does the jurisdiction take remedial action when a taxpayer fails to respond?

Indicate legal remedies for failure to comply and provide a link to the relevant legislation.

Describe what steps the office takes when a taxpayer fails to submit a personal property declaration.

Provide at least one example.

Yes. NCGS [§105-308](#) states all persons must list their property for taxation accordingly. The deadline for listing in Buncombe County is Jan 31 unless they have requested an [extension](#), which grants until March 15th to list. Any person who willfully fails or refuses to list property within this time frame can be guilty of a Class two misdemeanor.

The steps the office takes when a taxpayer fails to submit a personal property declaration are as follows:

The first step is to send out [phone tree notifications](#) to businesses within the county. This is a courtesy to try to encourage true vs estimated values being listed

The business personal property department did this twice this year on May 10th and May 29th.

The second step in the process is to send out a [Notice of Value](#). This is an estimate and allows the citizen 30 days to appeal the value. If they do not appeal, the value becomes real after 30 days and they are billed based on this value.

The county has just recently started using a service from a third party vendor, Tax Management Association (TMA) which gives a [base value](#) for business assets by the business type.

The last step in this process is to contract with an audit firm to conduct an audit on the business in question.

9. Are personal property returns retained in a central repository?

Describe what steps are taken once a personal property return is received.

Indicate whether personal property data is maintained in central repository.

When declarations are returned by mail, indicate whether they are imaged and maintained in a document management or other on-line retrieval system.

Yes. The Buncombe County Tax Department uses an online software NCPTS. Within this software each property owner is given a unique owner ID and an abstract in which all business and personal property data is retained. New listing data is added yearly, as well as all of the previous year's data being stored in the abstract.

Upon receiving a listing by mail, the listings are sorted into stacks of 'business' and 'personal property'. NCGS [§105-311.1](#) requires the use of the postmark as the listing received date. The listings are then further subdivided into 'on-time' and 'late' based upon the date postmarked. After separating the listings they are then scanned and uploaded into the NCPTS software. The listing received date is placed in the box according to the postmark associated with the listing. The listings are imported by abstract number. The paper listings are then banded by personal and business and also by date scanned and placed in buckets which will be checked for completion by the individual appraisers. Once uploaded, the status of the individual abstracts changes automatically from 'mailed' to 'imaged' and assigned to the queue of an appraiser to then work the listing. The status of the abstract is listed at the top of the abstract. This status helps to track the progress of the listing during the billing process for all personal property appraisers. When the listing is completed by the appraiser, the status is then changed manually to 'Ready for Bill'. The listing will be retained in the system under the notes tab associated with the abstract number and the tax year.

10. Does the personal property system flag abnormal year-to-year changes?

Indicate whether the personal property system flags accounts with abnormal year-to-year changes or other irregularities.

If so, briefly describe the process.

Indicate whether edit thresholds are predetermined or can instead be customized to report atypical value changes.

Explain what action is taken when discrepancies are discovered.

No. Currently our NCPTS system does not flag abnormal year-to-year changes.

Internal audits are ran on a yearly basis that can flag accounts with abnormal changes. These audits can be ran on both [business personal property](#) and [personal property](#).

11. Does the office conduct routine audits?

Describe the office's personal property audit program and whether it complies with the *Standard on Valuation of Personal Property*.

Indicate the number and percentage of accounts that were audited over the past three years.

If available, provide statistics on the amount of personal property value added as a result of the audits.

Describe the background and training of personal property auditors.

Yes. Buncombe County's Business Personal Property appraisers perform an informal or desk audit on a routine basis when information provided in the listing form is insufficient. A desk audit consists of reviewing the listing form and any attachments for errors and consistency. When discrepancies are found, the appraiser requests additional information such as depreciation schedules, balance sheet and asset list from the taxpayer. These documents are reviewed to ensure the asset totals on the listing form are supported by the balance sheet, depreciation schedule and asset list.

To verify compliance in reporting and guarantee uniformity, businesses are randomly selected for audit of their business personal property approximately every four years. Due to the volume of businesses to be audited, the tax office often contracts with an outside agency to verify assets are being valued in a fair and equitable manner.

External agencies are bound by the same statutes the tax office follows, NCGS [§105-299](#).

External audit procedures:

- Random selection of the businesses to be audited.
- The tax office sends an [introduction letter](#) to the selected businesses advising the external agency will be auditing their business personal property.
- The auditor telephones the business to be audited. Information that will be used in the audit is requested and an appointment for the audit is scheduled. An [appointment letter](#) confirming the agreed upon meeting is mailed to the business.
- The auditor reviews the financial documents and verifies that the assets match the totals reported on the listing form(s). A physical inspection is performed at the location of the business.
- The auditor presents [preliminary findings](#) to the tax department for review. The County verifies the findings by analyzing [work papers](#) provided by the auditor. Corrections and questions are addressed to the auditor at this time.
- A [discovery letter](#) or [statement of compliance](#) is mailed to the business detailing results of the audit.

- After thirty days, if the tax department has not received an appeal of the audit findings, a [bill](#) is created and mailed to the business.

Buncombe County Assessor's Office

Certificate of Excellence Submission- List of Exhibits, Chapter 11

Exhibit 11-1.1	NCGS §105-274
Exhibit 11-1.2	NCGS §105-275
Exhibit 11-1.3	NCGS §105-283
Exhibit 11-1.4	NCGS §105-284
Exhibit 11-1.5	GIS Situs
Exhibit 11-1.6	Current Tax Rates
Exhibit 11-1.7	NADA Values
Exhibit 11-1.8	Depreciation Schedules
Exhibit 11-1.9	NCGS §105-307
Exhibit 11-1.10	NCGS §105-308
Exhibit 11-1.11	NCGS §105-335
Exhibit 11-1.12	NCDOR Values
Exhibit 11-1.13	ABC Permit
Exhibit 11-1.14	NCGS §105-309
Exhibit 11-2.1	NCGS §105-312
Exhibit 11-2.2	Listing Form
Exhibit 11-2.3	Discovery Notice
Exhibit 11-2.4	Discovery Bill
Exhibit 11-2.5	Business Personal Listing Form
Exhibit 11-2.6	Business Personal Discovery Notice
Exhibit 11-2.7	Business Personal Discovery Bill
Exhibit 11-3.1	Personal Property Listing Form
Exhibit 11-4.1	NCPTS Depreciation
Exhibit 11-4.2	Registered Motor Vehicles
Exhibit 11-5.1	Land Records Merge
Exhibit 11-5.2	Land Records on Demand
Exhibit 11-7.1	NCGS §105-296
Exhibit 11-7.2	Newspaper Article
Exhibit 11-7.3	Postcard Request
Exhibit 11-7.4	Listing Form
Exhibit 11-7.5	Business Listing Form
Exhibit 11-7.6	Listing Instructions
Exhibit 11-7.7	Extension Request
Exhibit 11-7.8	Agent Authorization
Exhibit 11-7.9	Uniform Abstract
Exhibit 11-7.10	Vehicle Appraisal Form
Exhibit 11-7.11	Exempt Vehicle Form
Exhibit 11-7.12	Antique Auto Exclusion
Exhibit 11-7.13	NCGS §105-315
Exhibit 11-7.14	Leased Property Form
Exhibit 11-7.15	Mobile Home Park Request
Exhibit 11-7.16	Aircraft Report

<u>Exhibit 11-8.1</u>	NCGS §105-308
<u>Exhibit 11-8.2</u>	Phone Tree Follow Up
<u>Exhibit 11-8.3</u>	Notice of Value
<u>Exhibit 11-8.4</u>	CAVS Estimate
<u>Exhibit 11-9.1</u>	NCGS §105-311
<u>Exhibit 11-9.2</u>	NCPTS Upload
<u>Exhibit 11-9.3</u>	NCPTS Status
<u>Exhibit 11-10.1</u>	Business Personal Audit
<u>Exhibit 11-10.2</u>	Personal Property Audit
<u>Exhibit 11-11.1</u>	NCGS §105-299
<u>Exhibit 11-11.2</u>	Letter of Introduction
<u>Exhibit 11-11.3</u>	Appointment Letter
<u>Exhibit 11-11.4</u>	Position Letter
<u>Exhibit 11-11.5</u>	Work Paper
<u>Exhibit 11-11.6</u>	Discovery Letter
<u>Exhibit 11-11.7</u>	Statement of Compliance
<u>Exhibit 11-11.8</u>	Discovery Bill

Chapter 12: Value Defense

1. Has the jurisdiction evaluated both the review and appeal system under which it operates and its role in the system?

Outline the appeal process in the jurisdiction. Briefly discuss any of the issues in Table 12-1 that are significant in the jurisdiction. Describe how the issues affect assessment operations and any steps the jurisdiction has taken to mitigate any adverse effects.

Table 12-1. Appeal System Issues and Practices

Issue	Yes	No	Comments/References
1. Do the assessment and tax calendars impose constraints on the time available for tasks crucial to developing defensible values or defending assessments, such as whether the time between the valuation date, deadlines for submitting income and expense information, the deadline for completing rolls and issuing notices, appeal deadlines, etc.? Is the calendar readily available to the public?	X	X	The assessment and tax calendars do not impose constraints on the time available for tasks crucial to developing defensible values or defending assessments. The calendar is readily available to the public.
2. Are taxpayers required to state the grounds for their appeals and to back up their complaints with evidence?	X		It is the responsibility of the tax payer to prove that an assessment is incorrect.
3. Do the reasons for appeals suggest problems with assessments that have a systemic cause (that is, outdated values or valuation methods that do not meet professional standards)?		X	Typically the reasons for appeals are due to an inadequate understanding of the appreciating market.
4. Do assessments have a presumption of correctness that must be overcome with evidence?	X		It is the responsibility of the taxpayer to prove that the assessment is incorrect.
5. Are members of formal appeal bodies required to have relevant experience?	X		All members of the County Board of Equalization and Review as well as the state Property Tax Commission are required to have relevant experience.

Issue	Yes	No	Comments/References
6. Are formal appeal bodies briefed on the current year's assessment program?	X		Formal appeal bodies are briefed on the current year's assessment program in order to get an overall view of the jurisdictions procedures.
7. Are appeal bodies required to give a reason for their decisions?	X		All decisions made by an appeal body are explained before the decision is made. These meetings are also recorded for future review.
8. Is there a common belief that the formal appeal process is biased or corrupt?		X	The formal appeal process is not biased or corrupt.

1. Do the assessment and tax calendars impose constraints on the time available for tasks crucial to developing defensible values or defending assessments, such as whether the time between the valuation date, deadlines for submitting income and expense information, the deadline for completing rolls and issuing notices, appeal deadlines, etc.? Is the calendar readily available to the public?

All of the appraisers have ample time to develop defensible values or defend assessments. Property appeals are accepted from January 1st until the first meeting of the Board of Equalization and Review which must be no earlier than the first Monday in April and no later than the first Monday in May. Typically all appraiser field work and prior year listing work will have been completed by the end of January which allows the appraisers to focus on value appeals.

The Buncombe County Assessor's Office does not have a single calendar that is made public with all of the important dates such as the next revaluation, deadlines for completing rolls and issuing notices, and appeals deadlines. All of these dates are independently listed on the Buncombe County website.

<https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/depts/tax/default.aspx>

2. Are taxpayers required to state the grounds for their appeals and to back up their complaints with evidence?

Yes. Taxpayers are required to state the grounds for their appeals and to back up their complaints with evidence. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office has an informal [appeal form](#) that clearly states that support of the alternate opinion is required. This support can come in several different forms such as an old appraisal, additional

comparable sales, or closing statements. Taxpayers are also ask what their opinion of market value is and if the property has sold or been for sale recently.

3. Do the reasons for appeals suggest problems with assessments that have a systemic cause (that is, outdated values or valuation methods that do not meet professional standards)?

No. Typically the reason for appeals are due to an inadequate understanding of the currently appreciating market. The majority of taxpayers do no keep up with current market conditions and do not understand the fluctuations in market value. These appeals are usually resolved by explaining the current market conditions to the taxpayer and showing relevant comparable sales.

Occasionally problems with the assessment system are found through appeals. These problems could include neighborhood factors that need adjusting or land rates that should be changed. Once these are found they are [flagged](#) to be changed at the next jurisdiction wide revaluation.

Other common reasons for property appeals are incorrect conditions and physical characteristics of properties. When taxpayers bring these errors to the jurisdictions attention they are immediately corrected.

4. Do assessments have a presumption of correctness that must be overcome with evidence?

Yes. All assessments are presumed correct until the value is challenged with appropriate evidence. It is the burden of the taxpayer to provide evidence that supports a change in value. Appeals that do not contain appropriate evidence for a change in value will not be heard.

5. Are members of formal appeal bodies required to have relevant experience?

Yes. The County Board of Equalization and Review currently consists of [five members](#) which are appointed by the County Commissioners under North Carolina General Statute [§105-322](#). The members are appointed to this position based on previous experience. Currently the Board of Equalization and Review has four real estate agents and one real estate lawyer.

The Property Tax Commission consists of five members, three of which are appointed by the Governor and two of which are appointed by the General Assembly under NCGS [§105-288](#).

6. Are formal appeal bodies briefed on the current year's assessment program?

Yes. Members of both the County Board of Equalization and Review as well as the Property Tax Commission are all briefed on the current year's assessment program. This is necessary for both Boards to get an overall position of the jurisdictions typical procedures.

Training sessions are held for all new Board of Equalization and Review members. This allows the new members to familiarize themselves with the assessment program as well as understand the process of the meetings.

7. Are appeal bodies required to give a reason for their decisions?

Yes. Appeal bodies are required to give a reason for their decisions. These reasons are typically expressed before any deliberation is given. All appeal body meetings are recorded and minutes are kept per NCGS [§105-322](#).

8. Is there a common belief that the formal appeal process is biased or corrupt?

No. There is no common belief that the formal appeal process is biased or corrupt. All members of these boards are appointed by publically elected officials. They all most take an oath under NCGS [§105-322](#).

2. Are taxpayers encouraged to discuss concerns with the jurisdiction informally before lodging a formal appeal?

Briefly describe and illustrate how the office is organized to handle informal appeals and how such appeals are conducted.

Provide data on typical numbers of appeals as a percentage of total parcels, by class.

Yes. All taxpayers are encouraged to discuss concerns with the jurisdiction informally before lodging a formal appeal. Under NCGS [§105-296](#) prior to the first meeting of the board of equalization and review, the assessor may, for good cause, change the appraisal of any property subject to assessment for the current year. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office as in informal appeal process that allows the tax payer to communicate to an individual appraiser to express concerns over value.

The informal appeal process begins with the taxpayer completing an informal [appeal form](#) and attaching any supporting documents to the form. This appeal form can be filed on line or a taxpayer can visit the Tax Department in person to file the appeal. Once all the documentation is complete it is uploaded to the CAMA system and an activity is created for the appraiser that handles the property. All the information that was submitted by the taxpayer is available to the appraiser under the [appeal link](#) in the CAMA system.

Once the appraiser has reviewed all relevant documents submitted by the taxpayer they have the option to keep the value the same, increase the value, or decrease the value. The CAMA system has [codes](#) associated with all of the appeal actions. After the final decision has been made by the appraiser, written notice of the change in assessment is sent to the taxpayer. Once the taxpayer receives the notice they have thirty days to file for a formal appeal.

During an informal appeal it is not uncommon for an appraiser to have contact with the taxpayer. Often the taxpayer will come to the Tax Department and discuss value issues with the appraiser as well as the Chief Appraiser. During the informal appeal process appraisers will also verify physical characteristics that have changed.

A typical non revaluation year will receive less than 1% of the total jurisdiction wide parcel count in appeals. For the tax year 2018 there were a total of 384 informal appeals or 0.3% of the total parcel count. During a revaluation year it will greatly increase the number of appeals received. For the tax year 2017, which was a revaluation year, there were a total of 6,982 appeals or 5.6% of the total parcel count. The follow chart shows the number of appeals by class for both a revaluation year (2017) and a non-revaluation year (2018).

Table 12-1

Property Type	2017 Total Parcel Count	2017 Total Parcels Appealed	2017 Percentage of Parcels Appealed
Residential	114,557	6,425	5.61%
Commercial	7,255	781	10.76%
Exempt	2,292	9	0.39%

Table 12-2

Property Type	2018 Total Parcel Count	2018 Total Parcels Appealed	2018 Percentage of Parcels Appealed
Residential	115,157	340	0.29%
Commercial	7,603	42	0.55%
Exempt	2,473	2	0.08%

3. Does the jurisdiction have documented procedures for handling taxpayer inquiries and formal appeals?

Explain the composition of the appeals body and how it is constituted.

Submit copies of documents describing how formal appeals of various types should be processed. Include relevant forms and screenshots.

Yes. The Buncombe County jurisdiction has documented procedures for handling taxpayer inquiries and formal appeals. The [appeal process](#) is summarized on the Buncombe County website and shows taxpayers the steps involved with the process.

After the informal appeal process a taxpayer can file for a formal appeal on the value of property. The taxpayer has thirty days from the time they received the results of the informal review to file for a formal review. To begin the process the taxpayer must sign and submit the [formal appeal form](#). Once the formal appeal form has been received the appraiser will meet with the taxpayer to discuss value. If no agreement can be reached the appeal goes before the Board of Equalization and Review. The taxpayer must first present their argument to the board and provide all supporting documents. After the taxpayer presents their case the county presents its defense.

4. Does the jurisdiction track the status of each formal appeal to ensure that proper preparations are made for the hearing, that it is appropriately disposed of, and that records are properly updated?

Briefly describe and illustrate how the jurisdiction tracks informal and formal appeals from filing through disposition.

Provide statistics and discuss trends.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office tracks the status of each formal and informal appeal. When appeals are filed on properties an [activity](#) is entered into the CAMA system. Once the activity is in the CAMA system they are easily filtered out for tracking. The table below shows the number of both informal and formal appeals since 2017.

Table 12-3

Year	Informal Appeal	Formal Appeal
2017	7,215	303
2018	384	12

As seen on the table above, the number of appeals greatly increases during a complete revaluation which occurred in 2017. Typically in an appreciating market the number of

appeals will decrease each year before a complete revaluation. This is due to the noticeable gap in value created due to the change in the market.

Before formal appeals go before the Board of Equalization and Review, presentations are created by the property appraiser, chief appraiser, and data analysis. There is no statute in North Carolina that requires documentation to be kept for a specific number of years. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office will keep formal appeal documentation for at least 5 years after the final value decision is made per USPAP Record Keeping Rule. When physical records are in need of disposal they are always shredded due to the risk of containing confidential information.

5. Does the jurisdiction take steps to present its case effectively?

Briefly discuss and illustrate how the jurisdiction presents its case in formal appeals. If necessary, distinguish between ordinary residential appeals and commercial and industrial appeals.

Explain how the jurisdiction uses guidance in both USPAP and IAAO standards.

Yes, The Buncombe County Assessor's office takes steps to present its case effectively. Typically the value defense consists of a [printed document](#) showing all evidence found by the jurisdiction. All research and information provided is gathered by the appraiser, chief appraiser, and data analysis. The defense document usually consists of the following information:

1. Timeline of Events
2. Facts, Department Position, and Recommendations
3. Neighborhood Orientation
4. Subject Property Information
5. All supporting information such as comparable sales

A [slide presentation](#) is also used to illustrate the value defense. The slide presentation summarizes the information in the printed document and allows the Board of Equalization and Review visually analyze all supporting documentation and present questions.

Buncombe County jurisdiction takes all steps to satisfy requirements set forth in USPAP. These requirements consist of but are not limited to a highest and best use analysis (Standard Rule 5-3) and reconciliation of all data used (Standard Rule 1-7).

6. When a formal appeal involves difficult appraisal issues and considerable value is at stake, can the jurisdiction obtain outside expert assistance?

Briefly describe the office's practices regarding outside assistance, how the need for assistance is determined, the typical number of engagements, and typical outcomes. How does the process conform to the Standard on Contracting for Assessment Services? Provide a sample contract.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office has the ability to obtain outside expert assistance on difficult appraisal issues involving formal appeals. This rarely happens due to the knowledge and experience of the appraisers in the office. The jurisdiction provides the appraisers with all of the tools necessary to handle the most difficult appraisal issues that are involved with formal appeals.

7. Does the jurisdiction allow—or have a strategy for allowing—online appeal filings?

Describe and illustrate appeal documents that can be filed online.

Discuss any plans for online filings.

Report on any problems with past efforts.

(Failure to have an on-line system does not result in an automatic failure of this question.)

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office allows for all appeals to be [filled online](#). The website for beginning the appeals process is <https://tax.buncombecounty.org/appeal>. The parcel identification number is entered which takes the taxpayer to a [parcel overview page](#) which confirms the beginning of the appeal. The next step in the process is to enter basic information associated with the property in the form of a basic [questionnaire](#). Once the questionnaire has been completed and submitted the taxpayer has the ability to upload all [supporting documentation](#) to the appeal. These documents should include comparable sales or photos of unknown depreciation. The taxpayer filing for an appeal will receive an [email acknowledgment](#).

Once all of the supporting documentation are uploaded an activity in the CAMA software is created on all documentation is attached in the [appeal links](#) tab. The appraiser for the property analyzes all uploaded data and makes a decision on any value decrease.

The online appeal filing system has experienced no problems and is an effective way for taxpayers to quickly file for an appeal.

8. Does a supervisory agency or review body have the power to review values and valuation methods on its initiative, or is the jurisdiction required to submit valuations to a regulatory body for approval before taxes can be levied?

If a supervisory agency requires submissions used to evaluate the operations of the jurisdiction, describe them, including the kinds of data and information that are submitted, whether any of the submissions are electronic, and how the agency uses them to evaluate performance.

The North Carolina Department of Revenue is the primary regulatory agency for assessment in North Carolina. Before any revaluation occurs the jurisdiction is required to submit the [Schedule of Values](#) that contains all rates and procedures that will be used in the upcoming revaluation. The NCDOR reviews this document and approves the document or requires changes. This is the primary way in which the NCDOR evaluates the operations of the jurisdiction.

The NCDOR also conducts an annual ratio study. This study is submitted to the NCDOR on a quarterly basis and is used for state assessed property equalization. The intent of the ratio study is not to evaluate the operations of the jurisdiction but to equalize the state assessed property that is revalued on an annual basis. If median ratios fall below 0.90 or above 1.1 the NCDOR can adjust the state assessed properties value accordingly.

Buncombe County Assessor's Office

Certificate of Excellence Submission- List of Exhibits, Chapter 12

Exhibit 12-1.1	Appeal Form
Exhibit 12-1.2	Revaluation Flag
Exhibit 12-1.3	Equalization and Review Members
Exhibit 12-1.4	NCGS §105-322
Exhibit 12-1.5	NCGS §105-288
Exhibit 12-2.1	NCGS 105-296
Exhibit 12-2.2	Appeal Link
Exhibit 12-2.3	Appeal Codes
Exhibit 12-3.1	Appeal Process
Exhibit 12-3.2	Formal Appeal Form
Exhibit 12-4.1	Appeal Activity
Exhibit 12-5.1	Appeal Document
Exhibit 12-5.2	Appeal Presentation
Exhibit 12-7.1	Online Appeal Filing
Exhibit 12-7.2	Appeal Overview
Exhibit 12-7.3	Appeal Questionnaire
Exhibit 12-7.4	Appeal Document Upload
Exhibit 12-7.5	Appeal Acknowledgement
Exhibit 12-8.1	Schedule of Values

Chapter 13: Communications and Taxpayer Assistance

1. Does the jurisdiction have an active public information and assistance program?

Briefly describe the jurisdiction's public information and assistance program, including its practices and activities in the following areas:

- Research, action planning, and evaluation
- Training backed up by documented procedures
- Policies regarding data access (including confidentiality policies)
- Data and service pricing policies

Attach copies of policy and practice memoranda, and manuals.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office has an active public information and assistance program. Currently there is no evaluation analysis that shows how the public perceives the Assessor's Office programs or policies. Buncombe County has a ["let's talk"](#) department which receives any questions or concerns directed toward any department in the Buncombe County government. The public can express concerns via numerous methods such as online submissions (<https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/depts/communications/lets-talk.aspx>), comment cards, and phone messages. Once these messages are received they are internally audited and appropriately communicated to the relevant department.

There is currently no written documentation on appropriately communicating with the public. Managers will conduct informal reviews of staff and go over appropriate ways to communicate both individually and in staff meetings.

The majority of the information obtained by the Assessor's Office is considered non confidential and available to the public. Only personal information such as social security numbers are held in confidentiality. The IT department typically handles any large file request such as the complete tax role. Individual staff members typically handle small requests such as physical characteristics of properties.

There are currently no pricing policies in place. All information given to the public is free of charge. There is a charge very various maps created by the land records department. A 25" by 36" map produced with aerial imagery is \$15 while the same map without aerial imagery is \$10.

2. Does the jurisdiction employ appropriate communications channels in addressing its constituents' concerns and needs?

Briefly describe how the jurisdiction uses media. List media appearances, speaking engagements, and meetings organized by the office. Attach copies of the media products that are used.

Yes. The Buncombe County jurisdiction employs appropriate communications channels in addressing its constituents' concerns and needs. The primary source of communication is through the tax department website.

<https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/depts/tax/>

The website gives the user the ability to find all of the content listed in the IAAO *Standard on Public Relations section* 12.1. The website gives complete contact information as well as links to all informal informational documents and other applications and forms.

The Buncombe County jurisdiction's "let's talk" department, as explained above, is designed to listen to any comments or concerns the citizens of Buncombe County have associated with local government and address the concerns or forward them to the appropriate department.

<https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/depts/communications/lets-talk.aspx>

3. Can property records be accessed online by parcel identifier, situs address, owner, and geographically?

Describe how the public can access property-specific information online.

Provide public screen shots and reports that show information retrieval and display by methods created for the general public.

Yes. Property records can be accessed only by parcel identifier, situs address, owner, and geographical location. There are two different ways in which property records can be accessed by the public. Access to records can be found through the [full GIS access](#) or through the [Buncombe County tax lookup](#).

GIS access allows the public to search for property information by parcel number, address, owner, or [street name](#). Once the property is identified an aerial map is visible with the properties primary information displayed. There are also [links](#) to the property card, deed book and page, plat book, and sales report. Several map layers can be selected to show things such as zoning, contour lines, and flood data. Aerial imagery is also available to be overlaid.

The Buncombe County tax lookup is more of a tax centered search which displays information that would be found on the [tax card](#). This information includes the area tax appraiser, the properties neighborhood, school district, and ownership history. This lookup also gives a direct link to the actual tax amount to be paid with payment history.

4. Does the jurisdiction have informational materials available for the public?

Provide examples of the kinds of information made available to the public, including such matters as:

- How to reach the jurisdiction—telephone numbers, address, contacts (including e-mail)
- How properties are assessed—ideally a USPAP-compliant mass appraisal report containing descriptions of how different types of properties are appraised (the specific methods and procedures used, not general descriptions of the three approaches to value) backed by data on price trends, etc.
- How frequently properties are reappraised.
- How to apply for an exemption or other relief measure.
- How to appeal an assessment.
- Important dates.

Provide the jurisdiction's web address, site map, and briefly describe the main features of the site. Attach copies of, or links to, available documents.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office has informal materials available for the public. On the county website there is a page called "Document Central" which contains 57 individual documents that include specific forms as well as informational documents such as the Schedule of Values. The "Document Central" page can be found at <https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/depts/tax/document-central.aspx>

One of the main informal documents used during the last revaluation was the [Citizens Reappraisal Guide](#). This document outlined the schedule of reappraisal activity, explained North Carolina general statutes, explained key property facts, and has an extensive question and answer section. This document also gives contact information as well as information on how to file for an appeal. Specific appraisal methods were also briefly mention in this document.

A more detailed explanation of appraisal methodology is found in the [Schedule of Values](#) which is also available on Document Central. The Schedule of Values goes into detail on the approaches to value as well as the mass appraisal process. It gives examples of the income approach application as well as explains how depreciation is calculated. The Schedule of Values is the most detailed document on the mass appraisal process the jurisdiction has for public use.

The Buncombe County Assessor's Office currently has a [Present- Use Value Guide](#) that explains in brief how to qualify for this type of tax exemption. This document also contains contact information for the exemptions department.

A [Budget in Brief](#) document is also available to the public. This document doesn't explain the appraisal process although it gives the tax payers an idea of the jurisdictions overall budget and where funds are obtained. This document is available for transparency of the county funding.

5. Does the jurisdiction have contingency plans for responding to crises and emerging issues?

Briefly describe the jurisdiction's contingency planning, using examples of responses if available.

Yes. The Buncombe County Assessor's Office has a contingency plan for responding to crises and emerging issues. "[The Continuity of Operations Disaster Readiness Plan](#)" provides a county wide plan for disasters and emergencies.

The tax and land records section of this plan outlines succession of leadership and preservation of records. This plan states that all important information such be backed up nightly with critical hardcopies scanned in on the same schedule.

This plan has never been used to date although the record preservation requirements are satisfied.

Buncombe County Assessor's Office

Certificate of Excellence Submission- List of Exhibits, Chapter 13

Exhibit 13-1.1	Let's Talk
Exhibit 13-3.1	Full GIS Access
Exhibit 13-3.2	Tax Lookup
Exhibit 13-3.3	Street Name Lookup
Exhibit 13-3.4	GIS Links
Exhibit 13-3.5	Public Tax Card
Exhibit 13-4.1	Citizens Reappraisal Guide
Exhibit 13-4.2	Schedule of Values
Exhibit 13-4.3	Use Value Guide
Exhibit 13-4.4	Budget in Brief
Exhibit 13-5.1	Continuity of Operations Disaster Readiness Plan