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Gaston County is strategically located just west of Charlotte in the southern Piedmont of North Carolina, approximately halfway between Atlanta and Washington, D.C., and New York and Miami.

As one of the fastest growing counties in the Charlotte region, Gaston has experienced an 8 percent gain in population over the past 10 years, with approximately 22,000 newcomers in the past two years. Gastonia, Gaston's county seat once named "All-American City" by Look magazine, is North Carolina's 13th largest municipality, with a population increase of 17 percent over the last decade.

While Gaston County's industrial base has historically comprised traditional industries, such as furniture and textiles, the county has used its manufacturing strength, talented work force and top-notch educational centers to capitalize on a transitional economy.

Today, Gaston is the second-largest county in the Charlotte region, with a population of about 200,000. It has 16 fully equipped business parks with a site to fit any project and enjoys a diverse industrial base with over 4,000 businesses employing nearly 95,000 workers. Thirty-five percent of the employment is in the service sector, 21 percent in manufacturing, 16 percent in retail and wholesale trade and 9 percent in construction.



Two of Gaston County's most recently located and expanded companies are Dole Foods and National Gypsum. Dole Foods' salad packaging plant eventually will employ 525 workers and is expected to ultimately bring \$60 million in new investment to Gaston County. The company has already announced plans for adding two new lines to the production floor.

National Gypsum, manufacturer of gypsum wallboard, has invested \$125 million in its new wallboard plant in Mount Holly. The facility will bring 100 direct job and 100 indirect jobs to the area.

Among the county's notable assets is the Gastonia Technology Park, a Class A 350-acre North Carolina certified site. The park has campus-like setting with natural tree buffers, attractive landscaping, winding roads and sidewalks to create a pedestrian-friendly environment. Heavy utilities for a wide range of needs include a fiber optic vault.



Total Population, 2010	210,477
Total Households, 2010	82,349
Median Age, 2010	39.1
Projected Population, 2015	224,723
Educational Attainment, 2010	
Population 25 and Older	143,586
High School Diploma	30.7%
Some College	22.3%
Associate's Degree	8.7%
Bachelor's Degree	12.3%
Graduate or Professional Degree	5.2%
2008 SAT score, county average	1,432
2008 SAT score, state average	1,485

Income, 2010

Median Household Income	\$50,335
Per Capita Income	\$23,407

Employment by Industry, 2010

Agriculture, Mining	0.3%
Construction	8.0%
FIRE	6.2%
Manufacturing	19.0%
Public Administration	4.1%
Retail Trade	11.0%
Wholesale Trade	4.4%
Services	38.4%
Transportation, Utilities	7.0%
Total Employment, 16+	87,506

Labor Force, 2009

Labor Force	98,708
Unemployment Rate	14.0%

Source: ESRI 2010, NC Dept of Public Education, NC ESC

MAJOR EMPLOYERS (non government/retail)

Company	Major Product	Employees
FKA Wix Filtration Group	Filtration Systems	1,000+
Pharr Yarns, Inc.	Yarn Mfg	1,000+
American & Efird, Inc	Thread Mills	1,000+
Dole Fresh Foods	Food Processing	500-999
Daimler North America (2 locations)	Auto Parts	500-999



Announced Jobs & Investments

Jobs announced, 2008	300
Total investment announced, 2008	\$43,000,000

Accessibility

Nearest Major City	Charlotte
Distance to Nearest Major City	20 miles
Nearest Commercial Airport	CLT
Runway Length	10,000 ft
Distance to Nearest Airport	20 miles
Nearest Interstate	I-85
Distance to Nearest Interstate	0 miles
Nearest Deepwater Port	Port of Charleston
Distance to Nearest Deepwater Port	227 miles
Foreign Trade Zone Accessibility	Yes
Population within 50 mile radius, 2009	2,861,155

Development Capacity

Wastewater Treatment Capacity Available	Yes
Natural Gas Available	Yes

Taxes, Sales & Service

Property Taxes/\$100 value (10-11)	\$0.8350
Taxable Retail Sales (Mil\$, 2008)	\$1,465
Number of Physicians, 2007	364
Physicians per 10,000 population, 2007	18
RN per 10,000 population, 2007	75
Dentists per 10,000 population, 2007	4

Sources: County data and NC Department of Revenue

Average Weekly Wage 2009

Utilities	\$1,237
Construction	\$710
Manufacturing	\$778
Wholesale Trade	\$876
Retail Trade	\$433
Transportation & Warehousing	\$784
Information	\$636
Finance & Insurance	\$824
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	\$558
Professional & Technical Services	\$737
Management of Companies & Enterprises	\$1,375
Administrative & Waste Services	\$474
Educational Services	\$647
Health Care & Social Assistance	\$808
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	\$278
Accommodation & Food Services	\$249
Public Administration	\$797
Average Weekly Wage	\$649

Unemployment Insurance

New Employers (per \$100)	1.2%
Deficit Employers (max rate)	6.84%
Minimum Tax Rate	0.0%
Taxable Base	\$19,700

Inventory Tax

Finished Goods	none
Raw Materials	none
Goods in Process	none
Mat'l consumed in Mfg.	none

Sales Tax, General

State	5.75%
Local	2.0%

Sales Tax, Special Provisions

Electricity (farms and manufacturing exempt)	3.0%
Natural Gas	% of receipts
Manufacturing Fuels	none
Manufacturing Equipment	none
Telecomm Service: Intrastate (state + county)	8%

Education

Public Schools	55
Private Schools	16
School Districts	1
Colleges & Universities	3