



Q1 ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Watauga County's Current Economic Conditions

April, 2021

*Data references found on page 2.



RESIDENTIAL HOME SALES

689 | **534** | **45%**
(HC 1Q 2021) | (HC 1Q 2020) | (% 1Q '21 Wat. CO)

NET SALES TAX COLLECTIONS

\$2,196,215.66 | **\$2,026,340.51** | **\$1,855,588.40**
FEB 2021 | JAN 2021 | FEB 2020

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

4.3% | **5.7%** | **6.2%** | **4.6%** | **5.9%** | **6.3%** | **3.2%** | **3.6%** | **3.5%**
(Watauga) (NC) (U.S) | (Watauga) (NC) (U.S) | (Watauga) (NC) (U.S)
FEB 2021 | JAN 2021 | FEB 2020

OCCUPANCY TAX COLLECTIONS

\$1,283,480.27 | **\$734,912.96**
(JAN + FEB 2021) | (JAN + FEB 2020)
74.64% CHANGE

NEW SINGLE FAMILY HOMES (APPLICATIONS RECEIVED)

60 | **24** | **150%**
(1Q 2021) | (1Q 2020) | (% Change)

“The real estate sector in the High Country is booming. Home sales set a record last year and the numbers are even better in the first quarter of this year.”



Watauga County's Current Economic Conditions April, 2021

DR. HARRY DAVIS, PHD

NCBA PROFESSOR OF BANKING, ECONOMIST


"The real estate sector in the High Country is booming. Home sales set a record last year and the numbers are even better in the first quarter of this year. Demand has clearly exceeded supply leading to a large increase in permit applications. Even so, the inventory of unsold homes is at a record low level of about two-months supply.

The sales tax figures further illustrate the booming tourism economy in our area. February 2020 was very strong, prior to the pandemic, and February 2021 was even stronger. Expect these numbers to surge through 2Q and 3Q.

In March, Watauga County's unemployment rate of 4.3% was 3rd lowest among the counties and considerably below the state rate. Expect that number to continue to decline as restaurants hire more workers.

Tourism flourished last year as witnessed by the traffic and the large increase in the occupancy tax. People did not need to get on a plane to come to the High Country. Expect this year to be even stronger.

Restaurant sales will surge this Spring and Summer. People are flush with cash and tired of eating out of Styrofoam boxes. Restaurants may actually have a problem finding enough workers."

- 
- Housing sales data provided by the High Country Association of Realtors, HC = Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, & Watauga Counties.
 - Sales Tax data provided by the North Carolina Department of Revenue.
 - Occupancy Tax data provided by the Watauga Co. TDA. Total includes Boone, Blowing Rock, and Watauga County.
 - Unemployment data reported by the NC Department of Commerce.
 - New Single Family Home Application data provided by Watauga County, Town of Beech Mountain, Town of Boone, Town of Blowing Rock, & Town of Seven Devils.