



Living & Working in Surry County

Discover why Surry County is a great place to live, work, and thrive.



Community Overview

Surry County is home to four unique municipalities — Dobson, Elkin, Mount Airy, and Pilot Mountain — each with its own personality and community spirit. The county's location along Interstate 77 and Interstate 74 offers seamless connections and commutes to Winston-Salem, Greensboro, Charlotte, and Raleigh, all within 2 hours, making it ideal for those who value both accessibility and a relaxed lifestyle.

Residents enjoy a 21.3% lower cost of living than the U.S. national average, while benefiting from strong local services, a strong economic center, quality schools, and an ever-growing arts and outdoor recreation scene.

[LEARN MORE HERE IN OUR HOUSING MARKET STUDY](#)

SMART ECONOMICS & VALUE

- Your dollar goes further in Surry. The cost of living index is 87–91, lower than the U.S. national average.
- The median home sale price is \$289,000, offering substantial value compared to major metros.
- Household incomes are trending upward, with a median household income of \$58,000.

REMOTE WORK & CONNECTIVITY

- Work From Anywhere: 100% of households have access to broadband speeds of at least 50 Mbps and higher.
- High-Speed Hubs: In the county seat of Dobson, 74% of homes have access to 1 Gig fiber internet.
- Located just over an hour from two international airports (Charlotte-Douglas and Piedmont Triad).

SAFETY, HEALTH, & EDUCATION

- Top-Tier Care: One of the few rural areas served by two excellent healthcare systems (Northern Regional and Hugh Chatham Memorial).
- Educational Excellence: The county maintains an impressive 89% high school graduation rate.
- Communities report low rates for both violent and property crime.

Career Opportunities

Surry County's economy is built on a diverse foundation of industries, offering stable employment and room for growth. Key sectors include advanced manufacturing, healthcare, construction, and infrastructure, with a growing number of small businesses and entrepreneurs contributing to the local economy.



MAJOR EMPLOYERS

- Altec
- Pike Electric
- Vitro Automotive
- Hugh Chatham Health
- Northern Regional Hospital
- Wayne Sanderson Farms
- Carolina Carports
- Renfro Brands

TOP CAREERS IN SURRY

Healthcare Practitioners
& Technical
Avg. Annual Wage: \$101,400

Registered Nurse
Avg. Annual Wage: \$81,000

Transportation &
Material Moving
Avg. Annual Wage: \$42,600

Production Workers
Avg. Annual Wage: \$45,700

Business & Financial Operations
Avg. Annual Wage: \$82,500

Construction & Skilled Trades
Avg. Annual Wage: \$52,000

EXPLORE MORE CAREERS HERE IN OUR OCCUPATION PACKET

Education & Training

Education is a cornerstone of Surry County's success. With 3 school systems that rank among the Top 20 school systems in North Carolina, Surry's school systems are recognized for academic excellence and career-focused learning. Students benefit from access to Career & Technical Education (CTE) programs and pre-apprenticeship initiatives that prepare them for local, high-demand careers.



ELKIN CITY SCHOOLS

- #1 in the Piedmont/Triad Region in 7 state testing areas
- 20th out of 115 in the state in overall testing results
- 2 out of 3 schools in the top 15% in the state in testing growth
- 3rd in the state in ACT scores
- Elkin High School has a greater than 95% graduation rate
- 94.19% proficient in all CTE Testing
- Offers a Dual Language Immersion Program in Grades K-5

MOUNT AIRY CITY SCHOOLS

- Strong academic performance districtwide
- High graduation rate
- Strong CTE credential attainment and course proficiency
- Solid AP performance
- Play-Based Learning, Dual Language Immersion, Somos UNO, AVID, dual enrollment, and career exploration (grades 5-12)
- High school courses available to 8th graders

SURRY COUNTY SCHOOLS

- Top 5 in NC for Work-Based Learning
- Top 5 in North Carolina for Graduation Rate (94.4%)
- Top 10 in NC for teacher retention
- 27th out of 115 LEAs in overall performance according to a report issued by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
- Strong Career & College Promise participation with nearly \$1M in annual tuition savings
- Multiple school options, Early College, magnet, and online learning

Quality of Life

HOUSING & COST OF LIVING

Affordable housing and a low cost of living make Surry County an ideal place to settle down. The Cost of Living Index for Surry County municipalities ranges from 87 to 91, compared to the national average of 100. The median monthly rent is \$1,050, and the median home listing price is \$289,000, offering accessible and affordable options.

COMMUNITY

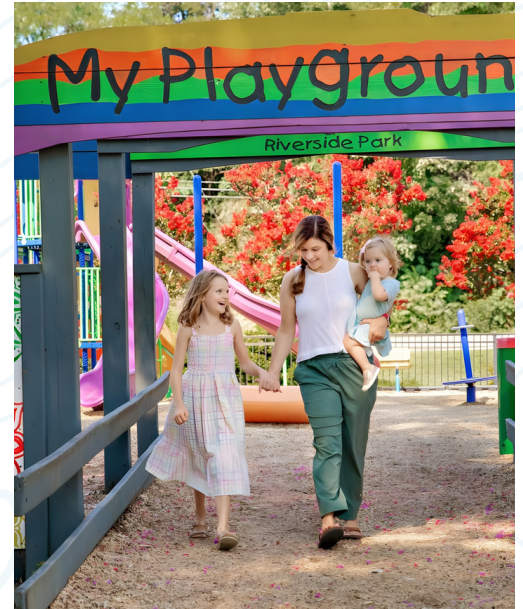
Surry County offers a welcoming, close-knit atmosphere. Downtown events, local festivals, and volunteer opportunities create strong connections and hometown pride. Surry County boasts an 89% high school graduation rate, and residents are supported by two top-tier healthcare systems (Northern Regional and Hugh Chatham).

ARTS & CULTURE

Experience Downtown Mount Airy and the Yadkin Valley Wine Region, home to 44 wineries in the Yadkin often called the "Napa of the East". Festivals, live music, and local art also make Surry County rich in culture and community.

OUTDOOR RECREATION

Enjoy the natural beauty of Pilot Mountain State Park, the Blue Ridge Parkway, and the Yadkin River. With trails, parks, and greenways throughout the county, outdoor adventure is always close to home.



Surry County's charm lies in its balance — a place where community, opportunity, and natural beauty, come together.





Connected & Convenient

Surry County's location provides the best of both worlds — the peace of rural living and easy access to major markets.

TRANSPORTATION

Direct access to I-77, I-74, and US-52 connects residents to Winston-Salem, Greensboro, and Charlotte in just over an hour.

AIR TRAVEL

The Piedmont Triad International Airport (GSO) and Charlotte Douglas International Airport (CLT) are both within easy reach just over an hour.

BROADBAND & CONNECTIVITY

Ongoing broadband expansion ensures that residents and businesses have reliable high-speed internet with 100% of households in Surry having access to broadband speeds of at least 50 Mbps.

Community & Resources



Surry County thrives on connection, collaboration, and care. Our communities are supported by strong networks that help residents grow, stay healthy, and get involved.

FOOTHILLS YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

The Foothills Young Professionals network connects emerging leaders through career development, community service, and local events — helping young professionals grow their skills while making a positive impact.

[Learn More about the FYP](#)

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

The Mount Airy Chamber of Commerce as well as the Yadkin Valley Chamber of Commerce help businesses and aid in fostering community connection through networking, advocacy, and events that strengthen the regional economy.

[Learn More | Mount Airy Chamber](#)

[Learn More | Yadkin Valley Chamber](#)



Experience life Everyday Elevated. Visit our talent attraction website for an immersive look at careers, community, and what makes Surry County a place to belong.





What It's Like to Live, Work, and Thrive in Surry

A DAY IN THE LIFE: MEET JOSH & EMILY

Josh and Emily live in Pilot Mountain with their two kids. Josh commutes 30 minutes to Winston-Salem for a corporate finance role, enjoying big-city career growth without big-city costs. Emily stays home with the kids and starts her day with school drop-off at Pilot Mountain Elementary School and a workout at Ridzo in Mount Airy, often meeting friends afterward in downtown. They purchased an affordable three-bedroom home with a large yard, something that would have cost double in Winston. Afternoons includes hikes at Pilot Mountain State Park, or playtime at the local parks. Weekends mean taking the kids to the Kaleideum Children's Museum in Winston Salem , a round of golf, or backyard cookouts with the neighbors.

A DAY IN THE LIFE: MEET SARAH

Sarah works as a Physician Assistant in Elkin, enjoying a short commute that gives her more time for life outside of work. She recently purchased a new-build townhouse close to downtown, made possible by Elkin's affordability, allowing her to live steps away from the places she loves most. On her lunch breaks or after work, Sarah takes walks through downtown or along the Mountains-to-Sea Trail to unwind. Evenings often include meeting friends at local vineyards or breweries, kayaking on the Yadkin River, or catching live music at the RailYard. On weekends, she enjoys quick trips to Charlotte to cheer on the Panthers, balancing small-town living with easy access to big-city experiences.

A DAY IN THE LIFE: MEET DAVID AND MAYA

David works as a mechanical engineer at Altec Industries, collaborating on advanced manufacturing projects. His wife, Maya, teaches elementary school in the Surry County Schools system. Her school is just minutes from home, giving her predictable hours and a strong connection to the community. Their mornings start together with school drop-off—Maya heads straight to her classroom, while David continues on to Altec. Their four-bedroom home offers space for hosting, hobbies, and family life at a price far below larger metro areas. Evenings are spent on the granite city greenway for bike rides and runs with their dogs, or downtown for dinner and community events. Weekends include vineyards, a sunset drive on the Blue Ridge Parkway, or taking the kids to soccer practice.

Learn More & Get Connected

Surry County isn't just a place to live — it's a place to belong.

Whether you're exploring career opportunities, considering a move, or looking to get involved, Surry County is ready to welcome you. Our team at the Surry County Economic Development Partnership (SCEDP) is here to help you discover what makes this region a great place to live, work, and thrive.



VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.surryedp.com



VISIT OUR TALENT ATTRACTION WEBSITE

www.everydayelevatedsurry.com

CONNECT WITH US

For questions or relocation assistance, reach out to the Surry County Economic Development



Email: blake@surryedp.com



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