

FIRST BANCORP /NC/  
Form 10-K  
March 15, 2017

UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20549

**FORM 10-K**

ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the fiscal year ended December 31, 2016

Commission File Number 0-15572

**FIRST BANCORP**

(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in its Charter)

North Carolina 56-1421916  
(State of Incorporation) (I.R.S. Employer Identification Number)

300 SW Broad Street, Southern Pines, North Carolina 28387  
(Address of Principal Executive Offices) (Zip Code)

Registrant's telephone number, including area code: (910) 246-2500

Securities Registered Pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act:

<u>Title of each class</u>	<u>Name of each exchange on which registered</u>
Common Stock, No Par Value	The Nasdaq Global Select Market

Securities Registered Pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act: None

Edgar Filing: FIRST BANCORP /NC/ - Form 10-K

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act of 1933.  YES  NO

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.  YES  NO

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days.  YES  NO

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has submitted electronically and posted on its corporate Website, if any, every Interactive Data File required to be submitted and posted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to submit and post such files).  YES  NO

Indicate by check mark if disclosure of delinquent filers pursuant to Item 405 of Regulation S-K is not contained herein, and will not be contained, to the best of the registrant's knowledge, in definitive proxy or information statements incorporated by reference in Part III of the Form 10-K or any amendment to the Form 10-K.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of "large accelerated filer," "accelerated filer," and "smaller reporting company" in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act. (Check one)

Large Accelerated Filer  Accelerated Filer  Non-Accelerated Filer  Smaller Reporting Company

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act).  YES  NO

The aggregate market value of the Common Stock, no par value, held by non-affiliates of the registrant, based on the closing price of the Common Stock as of June 30, 2016 as reported by The NASDAQ Global Select Market, was approximately \$345,827,000.

The number of shares of the registrant's Common Stock outstanding on March 14, 2017 was 24,650,076.

DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

Portions of the Registrant's Proxy Statement to be filed pursuant to Regulation 14A are incorporated herein by reference into Part III.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Begins on Page(s)
<u>Forward-Looking Statements</u>	4
<u>PART I</u>	
<u>Item 1 Business</u>	4
<u>Item 1A Risk Factors</u>	22
<u>Item 1B Unresolved Staff Comments</u>	34
<u>Item 2 Properties</u>	34
<u>Item 3 Legal Proceedings</u>	34
<u>Item 4 Mine Safety Disclosures</u>	34
<u>PART II</u>	
<u>Item 5 Market for Registrant’s Common Stock, Related Shareholder Matters, and Issuer Purchases of Equity Securities</u>	35, 76
<u>Item 6 Selected Consolidated Financial Data</u>	37, 76
<u>Item 7 Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations</u>	
<u>Overview – 2016 Compared to 2015</u>	38
<u>Overview – 2015 Compared to 2014</u>	41
<u>Outlook for 2017</u>	43
<u>Critical Accounting Policies</u>	44
<u>Merger and Acquisition Activity</u>	46
<u>FDIC Indemnification Asset</u>	46
<u>Statistical Information</u>	
<u>Net Interest Income</u>	50, 77
<u>Provision for Loan Losses</u>	52, 87
<u>Noninterest Income</u>	53, 78
<u>Noninterest Expenses</u>	55, 79
<u>Income Taxes</u>	57, 79
<u>Stock-Based Compensation</u>	57
<u>Distribution of Assets and Liabilities</u>	59, 80
<u>Securities</u>	59, 80
<u>Loans</u>	61, 82
<u>Nonperforming Assets</u>	62, 84
<u>Allowance for Loan Losses and Loan Loss Experience</u>	64, 86
<u>Deposits</u>	66, 88
<u>Borrowings</u>	67
<u>Liquidity, Commitments, and Contingencies</u>	68, 90
<u>Capital Resources and Shareholders’ Equity</u>	69, 92
<u>Off-Balance Sheet Arrangements and Derivative Financial Instruments</u>	72
<u>Return on Assets and Equity</u>	73, 91
<u>Interest Rate Risk (Including Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosures about Market Risk)</u>	73, 89
<u>Inflation</u>	75
<u>Current Accounting Matters</u>	75
<u>Item 7A Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosures about Market Risk</u>	75
<u>Item 8 Financial Statements and Supplementary Data:</u>	

<u>Consolidated Balance Sheets as of December 31, 2016 and 2015</u>	94
<u>Consolidated Statements of Income for each of the years in the three-year period ended December 31, 2016</u>	95
<u>Consolidated Statements of Comprehensive Income for each of the years in the three-year period ended December 31, 2016</u>	96
<u>Consolidated Statements of Shareholders' Equity for each of the years in the three-year period ended December 31, 2016</u>	97

	Begins on Page(s)
<u>Consolidated Statements of Cash Flows for each of the years in the three-year period ended December 31, 2016</u>	98
<u>Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements</u>	99
<u>Reports of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm</u>	157
<u>Selected Consolidated Financial Data</u>	76
<u>Quarterly Financial Summary</u>	93
<u>Item 9 Changes in and Disagreements with Accountants on Accounting and Financial Disclosures</u>	160
<u>Item 9A Controls and Procedures</u>	160
<u>Item 9B Other Information</u>	161
 <u>PART III</u>	
<u>Item 10 Directors, Executive Officers and Corporate Governance</u>	161
<u>Item 11 Executive Compensation</u>	161
<u>Item 12 Security Ownership of Certain Beneficial Owners and Management and Related Shareholder Matters</u>	161
<u>Item 13 Certain Relationships and Related Transactions, and Director Independence</u>	161
<u>Item 14 Principal Accountant Fees and Services</u>	161
 <u>PART IV</u>	
<u>Item 15 Exhibits and Financial Statement Schedules</u>	162
 <u>SIGNATURES</u>	 166

Information called for by Part III (Items 10 through 14) is incorporated herein by reference to the Registrant's \*definitive Proxy Statement for the 2017 Annual Meeting of Shareholders to be filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on or before April 30, 2017.

Table of Contents

**FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS**

This report contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 and the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, which statements are inherently subject to risks and uncertainties. Forward-looking statements are statements that include projections, predictions, expectations or beliefs about future events or results or otherwise are not statements of historical fact. Further, forward-looking statements are intended to speak only as of the date made. Such statements are often characterized by the use of qualifying words (and their derivatives) such as “expect,” “believe,” “estimate,” “plan,” “project,” or other statements concerning our opinions or judgment about future events. Our actual results may differ materially from those anticipated in any forward-looking statements, as they will depend on many factors about which we are unsure, including many factors which are beyond our control. Factors that could influence the accuracy of such forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, the financial success or changing strategies of our customers, our level of success in integrating acquisitions, actions of government regulators, the level of market interest rates, and general economic conditions. For additional information about factors that could affect the matters discussed in this paragraph, see the “Risk Factors” section in Item 1A of this report.

**PART I**

**Item 1. Business**

**General Description**

First Bancorp (the “Company”) is a bank holding company. Our principal activity is the ownership and operation of First Bank (the “Bank”), a state-chartered bank with its main office in Southern Pines, North Carolina. The Company is also the parent to a series of statutory business trusts organized under the laws of the State of Delaware that were created for the purpose of issuing trust preferred debt securities. Our outstanding debt associated with these trusts was \$46.4 million at December 31, 2016 and 2015.

The Company was incorporated in North Carolina on December 8, 1983, as Montgomery Bancorp, for the purpose of acquiring 100% of the outstanding common stock of the Bank through a stock-for-stock exchange. On December 31, 1986, the Company changed its name to First Bancorp to conform its name to the name of the Bank, which had changed its name from Bank of Montgomery to First Bank in 1985.

The Bank was organized in 1934 and began banking operations in 1935 as the Bank of Montgomery, named for the county in which it operated. Until September 2013, the Bank’s main office was in Troy, North Carolina, located in the

center of Montgomery County. In September 2013, the Company and the Bank moved their main offices approximately 45 miles to Southern Pines, North Carolina, in Moore County. As of December 31, 2016, we conducted business from 88 branches covering a geographical area from Florence, South Carolina to the south, to Wilmington, North Carolina to the east, to Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina to the northeast, to Mayodan, North Carolina to the north, and to Asheville, North Carolina to the west. We also have loan production offices in Greensboro, North Carolina and Raleigh, North Carolina. Of the Bank's 88 branches, 82 branches are in North Carolina and six branches are in South Carolina. Ranked by assets, the Bank was the seventh largest bank headquartered in North Carolina as of December 31, 2016.

As of December 31, 2016, the Bank had three wholly owned subsidiaries, First Bank Insurance Services, Inc. ("First Bank Insurance"), SBA Complete, Inc. ("SBA Complete"), and First Troy SPE, LLC. First Bank Insurance's primary business activity is the placement of property and casualty insurance coverage. SBA Complete is a firm that specializes in providing consulting services for financial institutions across the country related to Small Business Administration ("SBA") loan origination and servicing. First Troy SPE, LLC, which was organized in December 2009, is a holding entity for certain foreclosed properties.



## Table of Contents

Our principal executive offices are located at 300 SW Broad Street, Southern Pines, North Carolina, 28387, and our telephone number is (910) 246-2500. Unless the context requires otherwise, references to the “Company,” “we,” “our,” or “us” in this annual report on Form 10-K shall mean collectively First Bancorp and its consolidated subsidiaries.

## **General Business**

We engage in a full range of banking activities, with the acceptance of deposits and the making of loans being our most basic activities. We offer deposit products such as checking, savings, and money market accounts, as well as time deposits, including various types of certificates of deposits (“CDs”) and individual retirement accounts (“IRAs”). We provide loans for a wide range of consumer and commercial purposes, including loans for business, agriculture, real estate, personal uses, home improvement and automobiles. We offer SBA loans to small business owners across the nation. We also offer credit cards, debit cards, letters of credit, safe deposit box rentals and electronic funds transfer services, including wire transfers. In addition, we offer internet banking, mobile banking, cash management and bank-by-phone capabilities to our customers, and are affiliated with ATM networks that give our customers access to thousands of ATMs across the country, with no surcharge fee. We also offer a mobile check deposit feature for our mobile banking customers that allows them to securely deposit checks via their smartphone. For our business customers, we offer remote deposit capture, which provides them with a method to electronically transmit checks received from customers into their bank account without having to visit a branch. We are a member of the Certificate of Deposit Account Registry Service (“CDARS”), which gives our customers the ability to obtain FDIC insurance on deposits of up to \$50 million, while continuing to work directly with their local First Bank branch.

Because the majority of our customers are individuals and small to medium-sized businesses located in the counties we serve, management does not believe that the loss of a single customer or group of customers would have a material adverse impact on the Bank. There are no seasonal factors that tend to have any material effect on the Bank’s business, and we do not rely on foreign sources of funds or income. Because we operate primarily within North Carolina and northeastern South Carolina, the economic conditions of these areas could have a material impact on the Company. See additional discussion below in the section entitled “Territory Served and Competition.”

Beginning in 1999, First Bank Insurance began offering non-FDIC insured investment and insurance products, including mutual funds, annuities, long-term care insurance, life insurance, and company retirement plans, as well as financial planning services (the “investments division”). In May 2001, First Bank Insurance added to its product line when it acquired two insurance agencies that specialized in the placement of property and casualty insurance. In October 2003, the “investments division” of First Bank Insurance became a part of the Bank and the primary activity of First Bank Insurance became the placement of property and casualty insurance products.

In 2016, we undertook several initiatives to grow and diversify our sources of noninterest income, which is discussed in the following three paragraphs.

On January 1, 2016, First Bank Insurance acquired Bankingport, Inc., an insurance agency based in Sanford, North Carolina, which provides First Bank Insurance with economies of scale and a larger platform for leveraging insurance services throughout the First Bank branch network. Bankingport had total annual insurance commissions of approximately \$1.2 million compared to our legacy agency operations, which total approximately \$0.8 million.

Table of Contents

On May 5, 2016, First Bank acquired SBA Complete. SBA Complete is a firm that specializes in providing consulting services for financial institutions across the country related to SBA loan origination and servicing. SBA Complete earned \$3.2 million in SBA consulting fees from the date of the acquisition through December 31, 2016.

In the third quarter of 2016, we leveraged the expertise of the personnel assumed in the SBA Complete acquisition and began providing loans guaranteed by the SBA for the purchase of businesses, business startups, business expansion, equipment, and working capital. Shortly after each origination, we typically sell the guaranteed portion of the loan for a premium and record the non-guaranteed portion to our loan portfolio. Since the launch in the third quarter of 2016 through year end, this division originated \$24.8 million of SBA loans and earned \$1.4 million from gains on the sales of the guaranteed portions of these loans.

First Bancorp Capital Trust II and First Bancorp Capital Trust III were organized in December 2003 for the purpose of issuing \$20.6 million in debt securities (\$10.3 million was issued from each trust). These borrowings are due on January 23, 2034 and are also structured as trust preferred capital securities in order to qualify as regulatory capital. These debt securities are callable by the Company at par on any quarterly interest payment date beginning on January 23, 2009. The interest rate on these debt securities adjusts on a quarterly basis at a weighted average rate of three-month LIBOR plus 2.70%.

First Bancorp Capital Trust IV was organized in April 2006 for the purpose of issuing \$25.8 million in debt securities. These borrowings are due on June 15, 2036 and are also structured as trust preferred capital securities that qualify as regulatory capital. These debt securities are callable by the Company at par on any quarterly interest payment date beginning on June 15, 2011. The interest rate on these debt securities adjusts on a quarterly basis at a rate of three-month LIBOR plus 1.39%.

Table of Contents**Territory Served and Competition**

Our headquarters are located in Southern Pines, Moore County, North Carolina, where we also have our highest concentration of deposits. At the end of 2016, we served primarily the south central region (sometimes called the Piedmont region), the central mountain region and the eastern coastal region of North Carolina, with additional operations in northeastern South Carolina. The following table presents, for each county where we operated as of December 31, 2016, the number of bank branches operated by the Company within the county, the approximate amount of deposits with the Company in the county as of December 31, 2016, our approximate deposit market share at June 30, 2016, and the number of bank competitors located in the county at June 30, 2016.

County	Number of Branches	Deposits (in millions)	Market Share	Number of Competitors
Anson, NC	1	\$ 14	5.7%	4
Beaufort, NC	2	48	5.0%	7
Bladen, NC	1	27	9.1%	5
Brunswick, NC	4	125	7.0%	11
Buncombe, NC	3	90	1.8%	16
Cabarrus, NC	2	40	1.9%	11
Carteret, NC	2	34	3.4%	8
Chatham, NC	2	53	7.9%	10
Chesterfield, SC	1	43	11.5%	6
Columbus, NC	2	41	5.8%	5
Cumberland, NC	1	13	0.3%	14
Dare, NC	1	21	2.0%	8
Davidson, NC	2	94	2.6%	10
Dillon, SC	3	63	23.1%	3
Duplin, NC	3	147	20.9%	6
Florence, SC	2	50	2.1%	12
Forsyth, NC	4	56	n/a	18
Guilford, NC	1	30	0.8%	19
Harnett, NC	3	109	11.1%	9
Iredell, NC	3	77	1.2%	20
Lee, NC	3	172	22.0%	9
Mecklenburg, NC	2	16	n/a	25
Montgomery, NC	4	117	42.4%	2
Moore, NC	10	478	28.0%	10
New Hanover, NC	5	172	3.0%	18
Onslow, NC	2	63	4.5%	10
Pitt, NC	1	0	n/a	15
Randolph, NC	3	87	5.3%	12
Richmond, NC	1	46	10.9%	5
Robeson, NC	4	183	19.0%	8
Rockingham, NC	1	24	2.6%	10
Rowan, NC	1	61	4.2%	13

Edgar Filing: FIRST BANCORP /NC/ - Form 10-K

Scotland, NC	2	77	21.0%	6
Stanly, NC	4	102	11.4%	6
Wake, NC	2	38	0.1%	29
Brokered Deposits	—	136		
Total	88	\$ 2,947		

n/a – not applicable as branch was not open at June 30, 2016

Historically, our branches and facilities have been primarily located in small communities whose economies are based primarily on services, manufacturing and light industries. Although these markets are predominantly small communities and rural areas, the market area is not dependent on agriculture. Textiles, furniture, mobile homes, electronics, plastic and metal fabrication, forest products, food products, and chicken hatcheries are among the leading manufacturing industries in the trade area. Leading producers of lumber and rugs are

7

Table of Contents

located in Montgomery County, North Carolina. The Pinehurst area within Moore County, North Carolina, is a widely known golf resort and retirement area. The High Point, North Carolina, area is widely known for its furniture market. New Hanover and Brunswick Counties, located in the southeastern coastal region of North Carolina, are popular with tourists and have significant retirement populations. Buncombe County, located in the western region of North Carolina, is a highly diverse area with industries in manufacturing, service, and tourism. Additionally, several of the communities served by the Company are “bedroom” communities of large cities like Charlotte, Raleigh and Greensboro, while several branches are located in medium-sized cities such as Albemarle, Asheboro, Fayetteville, Jacksonville, High Point, Southern Pines and Sanford. We also have branches in small communities such as Bennett, Polkton, Vass, and Harmony.

In recent years, we have implemented a branch strategy of expansion into larger, higher growth markets. In 2016, this expansion continued with additional investments in Charlotte, Raleigh and the Triad area of North Carolina. Several seasoned bankers joined the Bank and have led our expansion efforts in these markets. We opened our first full service branch in Charlotte in August 2016, after opening a loan production office there in 2015. In Raleigh, we opened a loan production office early in 2016 and are upgrading our capabilities there with a full service branch expected to open later in 2017. In the Triad, which includes Greensboro, High Point and Winston-Salem, experienced bankers joined us in early 2016 as we opened a loan production office in Greensboro. Our expansion into this market was enhanced by two strategic transactions discussed in the following paragraphs.

In March 2016, we announced an agreement to exchange our seven Virginia branches, with approximately \$151 million in loans and \$134 million in deposits, for six North Carolina branches of a community bank with a large Virginia presence that included approximately \$152 million in loans and \$111 million in deposits. Four of the six branches we assumed were in Winston-Salem, with the other two branches located in the Charlotte-metro markets of Mooresville and Huntersville. The Winston-Salem branches we assumed improved the Triad expansion initiative, while the Mooresville and Huntersville branches increased our Charlotte expansion. This transaction, which was completed in July 2016, resulted in our exit from Virginia, which was a good market for our Bank, but created challenges due to the distant proximity to our core market.

In June 2016, we announced an agreement to acquire Carolina Bank Holdings, Inc. (“Carolina Bank”), the parent company of Carolina Bank. Carolina Bank is a community bank headquartered in Greensboro with \$705 million in assets, with branches located in Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Burlington and Asheboro. This acquisition builds on the Winston-Salem expansion previously discussed and significantly accelerates our recent expansion initiative in the Greensboro market. We completed this transaction on March 3, 2017.

Approximately 16% of our deposit base is in Moore County. Accordingly, material changes in competition, the economy or population of Moore County could materially impact the Company. No other county comprises more than 10% of our deposit base.

We compete in our various market areas with, among others, several large interstate bank holding companies. These large competitors have substantially greater resources than our Company, including broader geographic markets,

higher lending limits and the ability to make greater use of large-scale advertising and promotions. A significant number of interstate banking acquisitions have taken place in the past decade, thus further increasing the size and financial resources of some of our competitors, some of which are among the largest bank holding companies in the nation. In many of our markets, we also compete against smaller, local banks. With interest rates on investment securities near historic lows and banks of all sizes attempting to maximize yields on earning assets, the competition for high-quality loans has become intense. Accordingly, loan rates in our markets continue to be under competitive pressure. The pricing competition for deposits has lessened in recent years, but at any given time in many of our markets, there are frequently smaller banks offering higher rates on deposits than we are willing to match. This has resulted in the loss of some deposits from price-sensitive

### Table of Contents

customers, which has been primarily responsible for the declines in our time deposit accounts that are discussed below in Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operation. It is not yet known what the competitive impact will be of the recent and expected interest rate increases initiated by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (the "Federal Reserve"). Moore County, which as noted above comprises a disproportionate share of our deposits, is a particularly competitive market, with at least ten other financial institutions having a physical presence within the county.

We compete not only against banking organizations, but also against a wide range of financial service providers, including federally and state-chartered savings and loan institutions, credit unions, investment and brokerage firms and small-loan or consumer finance companies. One of the credit unions in our market area is among the largest in the nation. Competition among financial institutions of all types is virtually unlimited with respect to legal ability and authority to provide most financial services. We also experience competition from internet banks, particularly in the area of time deposits.

Despite the competitive market, we believe we have certain advantages over our competition in the areas we serve. We are large enough to be able to more easily absorb higher costs being experienced in the banking industry, particularly regulatory costs and technology costs, than the smaller banks with which we compete. We are also able to originate significantly larger loans than many of our smaller bank competitors. At the same time, we attempt to maintain a banking culture associated with smaller banks – a culture that has a personal and local flavor that appeals to many retail and small business customers. Specifically, we seek to maintain a distinct local identity in each of the communities we serve and we actively sponsor and participate in local civic affairs. Most lending and other customer-related business decisions can be made without the delays often associated with larger institutions. Additionally, employment of local managers and personnel in various offices and low turnover of personnel enable us to establish and maintain long-term relationships with individual and corporate customers.

### **Lending Policy and Procedures**

Conservative lending policies and procedures and appropriate underwriting standards are high priorities of the Bank. Loans are approved under our written loan policy, which provides that lending officers, principally branch managers, have authority to approve loans of various amounts up to \$350,000 with lending limits varying depending upon the experience of the lending officer and whether the loan is secured or unsecured. We have seven senior lending officers that have authority to approve secured loans up to \$500,000 and each of our five Regional Presidents has authority to approve secured loans up to \$1,000,000. Loans up to \$3,000,000 are approved by the Bank's Regional Credit Officers through our Credit Administration Department. The Bank's President and Chief Credit Officer have authority to approve loans up to \$10,000,000 respectively, while the Chief Credit Officer and the Bank's President have joint authority to approve loans up to \$25,000,000. The Bank's board of directors maintains loan authority in excess of the Bank's in-house limit, currently \$25,000,000 and generally approves loans through its Executive Loan Committee. All lending authorities are based on the borrower's Total Credit Exposure ("TCE"), which is an aggregate of the Bank's lending relationship to the borrower. TCE is based on the borrower's total credit exposure with the Bank either directly or indirectly through loan guarantees or other borrowing entities related to the borrower through control or ownership.



The Executive Loan Committee reviews and approves loans that exceed the Bank's in-house limit, loans to executive officers, directors, and their affiliates and, in certain instances, other types of loans. New credit extensions are reviewed daily by our senior management and the Credit Administration Department.

We continually monitor our loan portfolio to identify areas of concern and to enable us to take corrective action. Lending and credit administration officers and the board of directors meet periodically to review past due loans and portfolio quality, while assuring that the Bank is appropriately meeting the credit needs of the communities

### Table of Contents

it serves. Individual lending officers are responsible for monitoring any changes in the financial status of borrowers and pursuing collection of early-stage past due amounts. For certain types of loans that exceed our established parameters of past due status, the Bank's Asset Resolution Group assumes the management of the loan, and in some cases we engage a third-party firm to assist in collection efforts.

The Bank has an internal Loan Review Department that conducts on-going and targeted reviews of the Bank's loan portfolio and assesses the Bank's adherence to loan policies, risk grading and accrual policies. Reports are generated for management based on these activities and findings are used to adjust risk grades as deemed appropriate. In addition, these reports are shared with the Company's board of directors. The Loan Review Department also provides training assistance to the Bank's Training and Credit Administration departments.

To further assess the Bank's loan portfolio and as a secondary review of the Bank's Loan Review Department, we also contract with an independent consulting firm to review new loan originations meeting certain criteria, as well as to assign risk grades to existing credits meeting certain thresholds. The consulting firm's observations, comments, and risk grades, including variances with the Bank's risk grades, are shared with the audit committee of the Company's board of directors and are considered by management in setting Bank policy, as well as in evaluating the adequacy of our allowance for loan losses. For additional information, see "Allowance for Loan Losses and Loan Loss Experience" under Item 7 below.

### **Investment Policy and Procedures**

We have adopted an investment policy designed to maximize our income from funds not needed to meet loan demand, in a manner consistent with appropriate liquidity and risk objectives. Pursuant to this policy, we may invest in federal, state and municipal obligations, federal agency obligations, public housing authority bonds, Federal Home Loan Bank bonds, Fannie Mae bonds, Government National Mortgage Association bonds, Freddie Mac bonds, Small Business Administration bonds, and, to a limited extent, corporate bonds. We may also invest up to \$60 million in time deposits with other financial institutions. Time deposit purchases from any one financial institution exceeding FDIC insurance coverage limits are evaluated as a corporate bond and are subject to the same due diligence requirements as corporate bonds (described below).

In making investment decisions, we do not solely rely on credit ratings to determine the credit-worthiness of an issuer of securities, but we use credit ratings in conjunction with other information when performing due diligence prior to the purchase of a security. Securities that are not rated investment grade will not be purchased. Securities rated below Moody's BAA or Standard and Poor's BBB generally will not be purchased. Securities rated below A are periodically reviewed for credit-worthiness. We may purchase non-rated municipal bonds only if such bonds are in our general market area and we determine these bonds have a credit risk no greater than the minimum ratings referred to above. Industrial development authority bonds, which normally are not rated, are purchased only if they are judged to possess a high degree of credit soundness to assure reasonably prompt sale at a fair value. We are also authorized by our board of directors to invest a portion of our securities portfolio in high quality corporate bonds, with the amount of such bonds not to exceed 15% of the entire securities portfolio. Prior to purchasing a corporate bond, the Company's

management performs due diligence on the issuer of the bond, and the purchase is not made unless we believe that the purchase of the bond bears no more risk to the Company than would an unsecured loan to the same company.

Our Chief Investment Officer implements the investment policy, monitors the investment portfolio, recommends portfolio strategies and reports to the Company's Investment Committee. The Investment Committee generally meets on a quarterly basis to review investment activity and to assess the overall position of the securities portfolio. The Investment Committee compares our securities portfolio with portfolios of other companies of comparable size. In addition, reports of all purchases, sales, issuer calls, net profits or losses and market appreciation or depreciation of the securities portfolio are reviewed by our board of directors. Once a

### Table of Contents

quarter, our interest rate risk exposure is evaluated by our board of directors. Each year, the written investment policy is approved by the board of directors.

## **Mergers and Acquisitions**

As part of our operations, we have pursued an acquisition strategy over the years to augment our internal growth. We regularly evaluate the potential acquisition of, or merger with, various financial institutions. Our acquisitions have generally fallen into one of three categories: 1) an acquisition of a financial institution or branch thereof within a market in which we operate, 2) an acquisition of a financial institution or branch thereof in a market contiguous or nearly contiguous to a market in which we operate, or 3) an acquisition of a company that has products or services that we do not currently offer. Historically, we have paid for our acquisitions with cash and/or common stock and any operating income or loss has been fully borne by the Company beginning on the closing date of the acquisition.

Since becoming a public company in 1987, we have completed numerous acquisitions in each of the three categories described above. We have completed several whole-bank traditional acquisitions in our existing and contiguous markets; we have purchased numerous bank branches from other banks (both in existing market areas and in contiguous/nearly contiguous markets) and we have acquired several insurance agencies, which has provided us with the ability to offer property and casualty insurance coverage.

In 2009, FDIC-assisted acquisitions began to occur frequently as banking regulators closed problem banks. In FDIC-assisted transactions, the acquiring bank often does not pay any consideration for the failed bank, and in some cases receives cash from the FDIC as part of the transaction. In addition, the acquiring bank usually enters into one or more loss share agreements with the FDIC, which affords the acquiring bank significant loss protection. As discussed below, we completed FDIC-assisted transactions in 2009 and 2011.

In addition to the traditional acquisitions discussed above, in both 2009 and 2011 we acquired the operations of failed banks in FDIC-assisted transactions. On June 19, 2009, we acquired substantially all of the assets and liabilities of Cooperative Bank in an FDIC-assisted transaction. Cooperative Bank operated through 21 branches in North Carolina and three branches in South Carolina in the same markets in which the Bank was already operating, as well as in several new, mostly contiguous markets. In connection with the acquisition, the Bank assumed assets with a book value of \$959 million, including \$829 million in loans and \$706 million in deposits. See the Company's 2009 Annual Report on Form 10-K for more information on this acquisition.

On January 21, 2011, we acquired substantially all of the assets and liabilities of The Bank of Asheville in an FDIC-assisted transaction. The Bank of Asheville operated through five branches in or near Asheville, North Carolina. This market was a new market for the Bank. In connection with the acquisition, the Bank assumed assets with a book value of \$190 million, including \$154 million in loans and \$192 million in deposits. See the Company's 2011 Annual Report on Form 10-K for more information on this acquisition.

The following paragraphs describe the other acquisitions that we have completed in the past three years.

In January 2016, we acquired Bankingport, Inc., an insurance agency based in Sanford, North Carolina. Although not material to the Company's consolidated operations, the acquisition provided us with the opportunity to enhance our product offerings, as well as expand our insurance agency operations into a significant banking market for our Company. Also this acquisition provides us a larger platform for leveraging insurance services throughout our bank branch network.

In May 2016, we completed the acquisition of SBA Complete. SBA Complete is a consulting firm that specializes in consulting with financial institutions across the country related to SBA loan origination and servicing. Many

Table of Contents

community banks do not have the in-house capability to comprehensively originate and service those types of loans, so they contract with SBA Complete for assistance. SBA Complete has 280 bank clients that it serves from its headquarters in California with 37 employees. SBA Complete generated fees of \$3.2 million for our Company from the May acquisition date through the end of the year. To learn more about this subsidiary of our Company, please visit [www.sbacomplete.com](http://www.sbacomplete.com). Information included on our Internet site is not incorporated by reference into this annual report.

Soon after the acquisition of SBA Complete, we leveraged its capabilities by launching our own SBA loan origination division. Through a network of specialized First Bank loan officers, this division offers SBA loans to small business owners throughout the United States. We typically sell the portion of each loan that is guaranteed by the SBA at a premium and record the non-guaranteed portion to our balance sheet. This division realized \$1.4 million in loan sale gains in the second half of the year. To learn more about this division of our Bank, please visit [www.firstbanksba.com](http://www.firstbanksba.com). Information included on our Internet site is not incorporated by reference into this annual report.

In July 2016, we completed a branch exchange with First Community Bank, headquartered in Bluefield, Virginia. In the branch exchange transaction, we acquired six of First Community Bank's branches located in North Carolina, while concurrently selling seven of our branches in the southwestern area of Virginia to First Community Bank. We entered Virginia in 2001 with a branch in Wytheville and had grown that presence to a total of seven branches. The distant proximity to our core market and the opportunity to assume what is essentially a banking franchise in markets where we have recently invested in human capital were the primary factors we considered in entering into the exchange agreement.

In addition to the acquisitions completed during 2016 discussed above, in June 2016, we announced that we had reached an agreement to acquire Carolina Bank Holdings, Inc., the parent company of Carolina Bank, headquartered in Greensboro, North Carolina, with approximately \$705 million in assets. Carolina Bank operates eight branches located in Greensboro, High Point, Burlington, Winston-Salem, and Asheboro, North Carolina and also operates three mortgage offices in North Carolina. The acquisition is a natural extension of our recent expansion into these high-growth areas. This transaction was completed on March 3, 2017.

There are many factors that we consider when evaluating how much to offer for potential acquisition candidates (including FDIC-assisted transactions) with a few of the more significant factors being projected impact on earnings per share, projected impact on capital, and projected impact on book value and tangible book value. Significant assumptions that affect this analysis include the estimated future earnings stream of the acquisition candidate, estimated credit and other losses to be incurred, the amount of cost efficiencies that can be realized, and the interest rate earned/lost on the cash received/paid. In addition to these primary factors, we also consider other factors including (but not limited to) marketplace acquisition statistics, location of the candidate in relation to our expansion strategy, market growth potential, management of the candidate, potential integration issues (including corporate culture), and the size of the acquisition candidate.

We plan to continue to evaluate acquisition opportunities that could potentially benefit the Company and its shareholders. These opportunities may include acquisitions that do not fit the categories discussed above.

For a further discussion of recent acquisition activity, see “Merger and Acquisition Activity” under Item 7 below.

## **Employees**

As of December 31, 2016, we had 806 full-time and 55 part-time employees. We are not a party to any collective bargaining agreements, and we consider our employee relations to be good.

Table of Contents

**Supervision and Regulation**

As a bank holding company, we are subject to supervision, examination and regulation by the Federal Reserve and the North Carolina Office of the Commissioner of Banks (the “Commissioner”). The Bank is also subject to supervision and examination by the Federal Reserve and the Commissioner. For additional information, see Note 16 to the consolidated financial statements.

**Supervision and Regulation of the Company**

The Company is a bank holding company within the meaning of the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956, as amended. The Company is also regulated by the Commissioner under the North Carolina Bank Holding Company Act of 1984.

A bank holding company is required to file quarterly reports and other information regarding its business operations and those of its subsidiaries with the Federal Reserve. It is also subject to examination by the Federal Reserve and is required to obtain Federal Reserve approval prior to making certain acquisitions of other institutions or voting securities. The Federal Reserve requires the Company to maintain certain levels of capital - see “Capital Resources and Shareholders’ Equity” under Item 7 below. The Federal Reserve also has the authority to take enforcement action against any bank holding company that commits any unsafe or unsound practice, or violates certain laws, regulations or conditions imposed in writing by the Federal Reserve. The Federal Reserve generally prohibits a bank holding company from declaring or paying a cash dividend that would impose undue pressure on the capital of subsidiary banks or would be funded only through borrowing or other arrangements which might adversely affect a bank holding company’s financial position. Under the Federal Reserve policy, a bank holding company is not permitted to continue its existing rate of cash dividends on its common stock unless its net income is sufficient to fully fund each dividend and its prospective rate of earnings retention appears consistent with its capital needs, asset quality and overall financial condition.

The Commissioner is empowered to regulate certain acquisitions of North Carolina banks and bank holding companies, issue cease and desist orders for violations of North Carolina banking laws, and promulgate rules necessary to effectuate the purposes of the North Carolina Bank Holding Company Act of 1984.

Regulatory authorities have cease and desist powers over bank holding companies and their nonbank subsidiaries where their actions would constitute a serious threat to the safety, soundness or stability of a subsidiary bank. Those authorities may compel holding companies to invest additional capital into banking subsidiaries upon acquisitions or in the event of significant loan losses or rapid growth of loans or deposits.



The United States Congress and the North Carolina General Assembly have periodically considered and adopted legislation that has impacted the Company.

### **Supervision and Regulation of the Bank**

Federal banking regulations applicable to all depository financial institutions, among other things: (i) provide federal bank regulatory agencies with powers to prevent unsafe and unsound banking practices; (ii) restrict preferential loans by banks to “insiders” of banks; (iii) require banks to keep information on loans to major shareholders and executive officers; and (iv) bar certain director and officer interlocks between financial institutions.

As a state-chartered bank, the Bank is subject to the provisions of the North Carolina banking statutes and to regulation by the Commissioner. The Commissioner has a wide range of regulatory authority over the activities and operations of the Bank, and the Commissioner’s staff conducts periodic examinations of the Bank and its

### Table of Contents

affiliates to ensure compliance with state banking regulations and to assess the safety and soundness of the Bank. Among other things, the Commissioner regulates the merger and consolidation of state-chartered banks, the payment of dividends, loans to officers and directors, recordkeeping, types and amounts of loans and investments, and the establishment of branches. The Commissioner also has cease and desist powers over state-chartered banks for violations of state banking laws or regulations and for unsafe or unsound conduct that is likely to jeopardize the interest of depositors.

The dividends that may be paid by the Bank to the Company are subject to legal limitations under North Carolina law. In addition, under Federal Reserve regulations, a dividend cannot be paid by the Bank if it would be less than well-capitalized after the dividend. The Federal Reserve may also prevent the payment of a dividend by the Bank if it determines that the payment would be an unsafe and unsound banking practice. The ability of the Company to pay dividends to its shareholders is largely dependent on the dividends paid to the Company by the Bank.

The Federal Reserve is authorized to approve conversions, mergers, consolidations and assumptions of deposit liability transactions between insured banks and uninsured banks or institutions, and to prevent capital or surplus diminution in such transactions if the resulting, continuing, or assumed bank is an insured member bank. The Federal Reserve also conducts periodic examinations of the Bank to assess its safety and soundness and its compliance with banking laws and regulations, and it has the power to implement changes to, or restrictions on, the Bank's operations if it finds that a violation is occurring or is threatened. In addition, the Federal Reserve monitors the Bank's compliance with several banking statutes, such as the Depository Institution Management Interlocks Act and the Community Reinvestment Act of 1977.

### **Small Business Lending Fund**

In December 2010, the U.S. Treasury announced the creation of the Small Business Lending Fund ("SBLF") program, which was established under the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010. The SBLF was created to encourage lending to small businesses by providing capital to qualified community banks at favorable rates.

Interested financial institutions were required to submit an application and a small business lending plan. Less than half of the financial institutions that applied for the SBLF were approved. We were one of the institutions approved, and on September 1, 2011, we completed the sale of \$63.5 million of Series B Preferred Stock to the Treasury under the SBLF ("SBLF stock"). The initial dividend rate on SBLF stock was 5%. The terms of the stock provided that our dividend rate could decrease to as low as 1% for a period of time depending on our success in meeting certain loan growth targets to small businesses. Based on our increases in small business lending, we achieved the minimal dividend rate of 1% as of March 31, 2013. The increase in the amount of small business loans remained at a level corresponding to a 1% dividend rate at September 30, 2013, at which point the terms of the preferred stock provided that the dividend rate remained fixed until March 1, 2016. On March 1, 2016, the contractual dividend rate was set to increase to 9%. The Company redeemed \$32 million of the SBLF stock in June 2015 and the remaining \$31.5 million in October 2015, which ended our participation in the SBLF. See Note 19 to the consolidated financial statements for more information.

**FDIC Insurance**

As a member of the FDIC, the Bank's deposits are insured by the FDIC up to a maximum amount, which is currently \$250,000 per depositor. For this protection, each member bank pays a quarterly statutory assessment (which is currently based on average total assets less average tangible equity) and is subject to the rules and regulations of the FDIC.

## Table of Contents

We recognized approximately \$2.0 million, \$2.4 million, and \$4.0 million in FDIC insurance expense in 2016, 2015, and 2014, respectively. FDIC insurance expense includes deposit insurance assessments and Financing Corporation (“FICO”) assessments related to outstanding FICO bonds. As discussed in more detail below related to the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010 (“Dodd-Frank Act”), on April 26, 2016, the FDIC adopted a final rule that changed the way banks with less than \$10 billion in assets are assessed FDIC insurance once the Deposit Insurance Fund (“DIF”) reaches a ratio of 1.15%. The DIF reached 1.15% at June 30, 2016 and thus the rule was triggered. Accordingly, the Bank’s FDIC insurance expense assessment methodology changed in the second half of 2016 and resulted in a decrease in the Bank’s FDIC insurance expense of approximately 25% compared to the prior rate, or \$550,000 annually.

## **Legislative and Regulatory Developments**

The most significant recent legislative and regulatory developments impacting the Company are discussed below.

### *Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010*

On July 21, 2010, the Dodd-Frank Act became law. The Dodd-Frank Act has had and will continue to have a broad impact on the financial services industry, including significant regulatory and compliance changes including, among other things,

- enhanced authority over troubled and failing banks and their holding companies;
  - increased capital and liquidity requirements;
  - increased regulatory examination fees; and
- specific provisions designed to improve supervision and safety and soundness by imposing restrictions and limitations on the scope and type of banking and financial activities.

In addition, the Dodd-Frank Act established a new framework for systemic risk oversight within the financial system that will be enforced by new and existing federal regulatory agencies, including the Financial Stability Oversight Council (“FSOC”), the Federal Reserve, the Office of Comptroller of the Currency, the FDIC, and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. The following description briefly summarizes aspects of the Dodd-Frank Act that could impact the Company, both currently and prospectively.

*Deposit Insurance.* The Dodd-Frank Act made permanent the \$250,000 deposit insurance limit for insured deposits, which was an increase from the previous limit of \$100,000. Amendments to the Federal Deposit Insurance Act also revised the assessment base against which an insured depository institution’s deposit insurance premiums paid to the FDIC’s DIF will be calculated. Under the amendments, which became effective on April 1, 2011, the FDIC assessment base is no longer the institution’s deposit base, but rather its average consolidated total assets less its average tangible equity. The Dodd-Frank Act also changed the minimum designated reserve ratio of the DIF, increasing the minimum

from 1.15% to 1.35% of the estimated amount of total insured deposits, and eliminating the requirement that the FDIC pay dividends to depository institutions when the reserve ratio exceeds certain thresholds by September 30, 2020. On April 26, 2016, the FDIC adopted a final rule that would change the way banks with less than \$10 billion in assets are assessed FDIC insurance once the DIF reaches a ratio of 1.15%. It was estimated that the change would lower assessment rates for a significant majority of banks with less than \$10 billion in total assets. The DIF reached 1.15% at June 30, 2016 and thus the rule was triggered. Accordingly, the Bank's FDIC insurance expense assessment methodology changed in the second half of 2016. For the Bank, the changes resulted in a decrease in FDIC insurance expense of approximately 25% compared to the prior rate, or \$550,000 annually.

*Trust Preferred Securities.* The Dodd-Frank Act prohibits bank holding companies from including in their regulatory Tier I capital hybrid debt and equity securities issued on or after May 19, 2010. Among the hybrid

Table of Contents

debt and equity securities included in this prohibition are trust preferred securities, which we have issued in the past in order to raise additional Tier I capital and otherwise improve our regulatory capital ratios. Although we may continue to include our existing trust preferred securities as Tier I capital because they were issued prior to May 19, 2010, the prohibition on the use of these securities as Tier I capital may limit our ability to raise capital in the future.

*The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.* The Dodd-Frank Act created a new, independent federal agency called the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (“CFPB”), which is granted broad rulemaking, supervisory and enforcement powers under various federal consumer financial protection laws, including the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, Truth in Lending Act, Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act, Fair Credit Reporting Act, Fair Debt Collection Act, the Consumer Financial Privacy provisions of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act and certain other statutes. The CFPB has examination and primary enforcement authority with respect to depository institutions with \$10 billion or more in assets. Depository institutions with less than \$10 billion in assets, such as the Bank, are subject to rules promulgated by the CFPB but will continue to be examined and supervised by federal banking regulators for consumer compliance purposes. The CFPB will have authority to prevent unfair, deceptive or abusive practices in connection with the offering of consumer financial products.

The Dodd-Frank Act also authorized the CFPB to establish certain minimum standards for the origination of residential mortgages, including a determination of the borrower's ability to repay. Among other things, the rules adopted by the CFPB require banks to: (i) develop and implement procedures to ensure compliance with a “reasonable ability to repay” test and identify whether a loan meets a new definition for a “qualified mortgage,” in which case a rebuttable presumption exists that the creditor extending the loan has satisfied the reasonable ability to repay test; (ii) implement new or revised disclosures, policies and procedures for originating and servicing mortgages including, but not limited to, pre-loan counseling, early intervention with delinquent borrowers and specific loss mitigation procedures for loans secured by a borrower's principal residence; (iii) comply with additional restrictions on mortgage loan originator hiring and compensation; (iv) comply with new disclosure requirements and standards for appraisals and certain financial products; and (v) maintain escrow accounts for higher-priced mortgage loans for a longer period of time. It is our policy not to make predatory loans and to determine borrowers' ability to repay, but the law and related rules create the potential for increased liability with respect to our lending and loan investment activities. They increase our cost of doing business and ultimately, may prevent us from making certain loans and cause us to reduce the average percentage rate or the points and fees on loans that we do make.

The Dodd-Frank Act also permits states to adopt consumer protection laws and standards that are more stringent than those adopted at the federal level and, in certain circumstances, permits state attorney generals to enforce compliance with both the state and federal laws and regulations. Compliance with any such new regulations established by the CFPB and/or states could reduce our revenue, increase our cost of operations, and limit our ability to expand into certain products and services.

*Debit Card Interchange Fees.* The Dodd-Frank Act gave the Federal Reserve the authority to establish rules regarding interchange fees charged for electronic debit transactions by payment card issuers having assets over \$10 billion and to enforce a new statutory requirement that such fees be reasonable and proportional to the actual cost of a transaction to the issuer. Effective October 1, 2011, the Federal Reserve set new caps on interchange fees at \$0.21 per transaction, plus an additional five basis-point charge per transaction to help cover fraud losses. An additional

\$0.01 per transaction is allowed if certain fraud-monitoring controls are in place. While we are not directly subject to these rules so long as our assets do not exceed \$10 billion, our activities as a debit card issuer may nevertheless be indirectly impacted by the change in the applicable debit card market caused by these regulations, which may require us to match any new lower fee structure implemented by larger financial institutions in order to remain competitive in the future. Nevertheless, to date, the Company has not

Table of Contents

noted any significant indirect negative effects of the interchange fee caps that are applicable to the larger financial institutions.

*Increased Capital Standards and Enhanced Supervision.* The Dodd-Frank Act required the federal banking agencies to establish minimum leverage and risk-based capital requirements for banks and bank holding companies. These new standards are to be no less strict than existing regulatory capital and leverage standards applicable to insured depository institutions and may, in fact, become higher once the agencies promulgate the new standards. Compliance with heightened capital standards may reduce our ability to generate or originate revenue-producing assets and thereby restrict revenue generation from banking and non-banking operations. See discussion of the new capital requirements established by the federal banking agencies under “Recent Amendments to Regulatory Capital Requirement under Basel III” below.

*Transactions with Affiliates.* The Dodd-Frank Act enhances the requirements for certain transactions with affiliates under Section 23A and 23B of the Federal Reserve Act, including an expansion of the definition of “covered transactions,” and an increase in the amount of time for which collateral requirements regarding covered transactions must be maintained.

*Transactions with Insiders.* The Dodd-Frank Act expands insider transaction limitations through the strengthening of loan restrictions to insiders and the expansion of the types of transactions subject to the various limits, including derivative transactions, repurchase agreements, reverse repurchase agreements and securities lending and borrowing transactions. The Dodd-Frank Act also places restrictions on certain asset sales to and from an insider of an institution, including requirements that such sales be on market terms and, in certain circumstances, receive the approval of the institution’s board of directors.

*Enhanced Lending Limits.* The Dodd-Frank Act strengthens the existing limits on a depository institution’s credit exposure to one borrower. Federal banking law limits a national bank’s ability to extend credit to one person or group of related persons to an amount that does not exceed certain thresholds. The Dodd-Frank Act expands the scope of these restrictions to include credit exposure arising from derivative transactions, repurchase agreements and securities lending and borrowing transactions. It also will eventually prohibit state-chartered banks, including the Bank, from engaging in derivative transactions unless the state lending limit laws take into account credit exposure to such transactions.

*Corporate Governance.* The Dodd-Frank Act addresses many corporate governance and executive compensation matters that affects most U.S. publicly traded companies, including the Company. The Dodd-Frank Act:

- grants shareholders of U.S. publicly traded companies an advisory vote on executive compensation;
- enhances independence requirements for compensation committee members;
- requires companies listed on national securities exchanges to adopt clawback policies for incentive-based compensation plans applicable to executive officers; and
-



provides the SEC with authority to adopt proxy access rules that would allow shareholders of publicly traded companies to nominate candidates for election as directors and require such companies to include such nominees in its proxy materials.

*The Volcker Rule.* Section 619 of the Dodd-Frank Act, known as the “Volcker Rule,” prohibits any bank, bank holding company, or affiliate (referred to collectively as “banking entities”) from engaging in two types of activities: “proprietary trading” and the ownership or sponsorship of private equity or hedge funds that are referred to as “covered funds.” Proprietary trading is, in general, trading in securities on a short-term basis for a banking entity's own account. Funds subject to the ownership and sponsorship prohibition are those not required to register with the Securities and Exchange Commission because they have only accredited investors or no more than 100 investors. In December 2013, our primary federal regulator, the Federal Reserve, together with other federal banking agencies, the FDIC, the SEC and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission,

Table of Contents

finalized a regulation to implement the Volcker Rule. The Company has evaluated our securities portfolio and has determined that we do not hold any covered funds.

Many of the requirements of the Dodd-Frank Act remain subject to implementation over the course of several years. While we do not currently expect the final requirements of the Dodd-Frank Act to have a material adverse impact on the Company, we do expect them to negatively impact our profitability, require changes to certain of our business practices, including limitations on fee income opportunities, and impose more stringent capital, liquidity and leverage requirements upon the Company. These changes may also require us to invest significant management attention and resources to evaluate and make any changes necessary to comply with the new statutory and regulatory requirements.

*Incentive Compensation.* The Dodd-Frank Act requires the federal bank regulators and the SEC to establish joint regulations or guidelines prohibiting incentive-based payment arrangements at specified regulated entities having at least \$1 billion in total assets that encourage inappropriate risks by providing an executive officer, employee, director or principal stockholder with excessive compensation, fees, or benefits or that could lead to material financial loss to the entity. In addition, these regulators must establish regulations or guidelines requiring enhanced disclosure to regulators of incentive-based compensation arrangements. The agencies proposed such regulations in April 2011. However, the 2011 proposal was replaced with a new proposal in May 2016, which makes explicit that the involvement of risk management and control personnel includes not only compliance, risk management and internal audit, but also legal, human resources, accounting, financial reporting and finance roles responsible for identifying, measuring, monitoring or controlling risk-taking. A final rule had not been adopted as of December 31, 2016.

In June 2010, the Federal Reserve, along with other bank regulatory agencies, issued a comprehensive final guidance on incentive compensation policies intended to ensure that the incentive compensation policies of banking organizations do not undermine the safety and soundness of such organizations by encouraging excessive risk-taking. The guidance, which covers all employees that have the ability to materially affect the risk profile of an organization, either individually or as part of a group, is based upon the key principles that a banking organization's incentive compensation arrangements should (i) provide incentives that do not encourage risk-taking beyond the organization's ability to effectively identify and manage risks, (ii) be compatible with effective internal controls and risk management, and (iii) be supported by strong corporate governance, including active and effective oversight by the organization's board of directors.

Regulatory Capital Requirement under Basel III

In July 2013, the federal banking agencies approved amendments to their regulatory capital rules to conform U.S. regulatory capital rules with the international regulatory standards agreed to by the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision in the accord referred to as "Basel III." The revisions established new higher capital ratio requirements, narrowed the definitions of capital, imposed new operating restrictions on banking organizations with insufficient capital buffers and increased the risk weighting of certain assets. The new capital requirements applied to all banks, savings associations, bank holding companies with more than \$1 billion in total consolidated assets, such as the Company and the Bank, and all savings and loan holding companies regardless of asset size. The rules became

effective for institutions with assets over \$250 billion and internationally active institutions in January 2014 and became effective for all other institutions in January 2015. The following discussion summarizes the changes that had the most effect on the Company and the Bank.

*New and Increased Capital Requirements.* The regulations established a new capital measure called “Common Equity Tier I Capital” consisting of common stock and related surplus, retained earnings, accumulated other comprehensive income and, subject to certain adjustments, minority common equity interests in subsidiaries. Unlike the previous rules which excluded unrealized gains and losses on available-for-sale debt securities from regulatory capital, the amended rules generally require accumulated other comprehensive income to flow through to regulatory capital unless a one-time, irrevocable opt-out election is made in the first regulatory reporting period under the new rule. Depository institutions and their holding companies were required to maintain Common Equity Tier I Capital equal to 4.5% of risk-weighted assets starting in 2015.

Table of Contents

The regulations also increased the required ratio of Tier I Capital to risk-weighted assets from 4% to 6% effective January 1, 2015. Tier I Capital consists of Common Equity Tier I Capital plus Additional Tier I Capital which includes non-cumulative perpetual preferred stock. Cumulative preferred stock (other than cumulative preferred stock issued to the U.S. Treasury under the TARP Capital Purchase Program or the Small Business Lending Fund) no longer qualifies as Additional Tier I Capital. Trust preferred securities and other non-qualifying capital instruments issued prior to May 19, 2010 by bank and savings and loan holding companies with less than \$15 billion in assets as of December 31, 2009, such as the Company, may continue to be included in Tier I Capital, but these instruments will be phased out over 10 years beginning in 2016 for all other banking organizations. These non-qualified capital instruments, however, may be included in Tier II Capital which could also include qualifying subordinated debt.

*Changes to Prompt Corrective Action Capital Categories.* The Prompt Corrective Action rules, effective January 1, 2015, incorporated the Common Equity Tier I Capital requirement and raised the capital requirements for certain capital categories. In order to be adequately capitalized for purposes of the prompt corrective action rules, a banking organization is now required to have at least an 8% Total Risk-Based Capital Ratio, a 6% Tier I Risk-Based Capital Ratio, a 4.5% Common Equity Tier I Risk Based Capital Ratio and a 4% Tier I Leverage Ratio. To be well capitalized, a banking organization is required to have at least a 10% Total Risk-Based Capital Ratio, an 8% Tier I Risk-Based Capital Ratio, a 6.5% Common Equity Tier I Risk-Based Capital Ratio, a 5% Tier I Leverage Ratio, and is not subject to any order or written directive to meet and maintain a specific capital level for any capital measure.

*Capital Buffer Requirement.* In addition to increased capital requirements, depository institutions and their holding companies are required to maintain a capital buffer of at least 2.5% of risk-weighted assets over and above the minimum risk-based capital requirements. Institutions that do not maintain the required capital buffer will become subject to progressively more stringent limitations on the percentage of earnings that can be paid out in dividends or used for stock repurchases and on the payment of discretionary bonuses to senior executive management. The capital buffer requirement is being phased in over a four-year period beginning in 2016. The capital buffer requirement effectively raises the minimum required risk-based capital ratios to 7% Common Equity Tier I Capital, 8.5% Tier I Capital and 10.5% Total Capital on a fully phased-in basis. The capital buffer requirement for the Company began to be phased in beginning January 1, 2016, at 0.625% of risk-weighted assets, increasing each year until fully implemented at 2.5% on January 1, 2019.

*Additional Deductions from Capital.* Banking organizations are required to deduct goodwill and certain other intangible assets, net of associated deferred tax liabilities, from Common Equity Tier I Capital. Deferred tax assets arising from temporary timing differences that cannot be realized through net operating loss (“NOL”) carrybacks will continue to be deducted. Deferred tax assets that can be realized through NOL carrybacks are now not deducted but will be subject to 100% risk weighting. Defined benefit pension fund assets, net of any associated deferred tax liability, are now deducted from Common Equity Tier I Capital unless the banking organization has unrestricted and unfettered access to such assets. Reciprocal cross-holdings of capital instruments in any other financial institutions are now deducted from capital, not just holdings in other depository institutions. For this purpose, financial institutions are broadly defined to include securities and commodities firms, hedge and private equity funds and non-depository lenders. Banking organizations are now also required to deduct non-significant investments (less than 10% of outstanding stock) in other financial institutions to the extent these exceed 10% of Common Equity Tier I Capital subject to a 15% of Common Equity Tier I Capital cap. Greater than 10% investments must be deducted if they exceed 10% of Common Equity Tier I Capital. If the aggregate amount of certain items excluded from capital deduction due to a 10% threshold exceeds 17.65% of Common Equity Tier I Capital, the excess must be deducted.



## Table of Contents

*Changes in Risk-Weightings.* The amended regulations continue to follow the previous capital rules which assign a 50% risk-weighting to “qualifying mortgage loans” which generally consist of residential first mortgages with an 80% loan-to-value ratio (or which carry mortgage insurance that reduces the bank’s exposure to 80%) that are not more than 90 days past due. All other mortgage loans continue to have a 100% risk weight. The revised regulations apply a 250% risk-weighting to mortgage servicing rights, deferred tax assets that cannot be realized through NOL carrybacks and investments in the capital instruments of other financial institutions that are not deducted from capital. The revised regulations also created a new 150% risk-weighting category for nonaccrual loans and loans that are more than 90 days past due and for “high volatility commercial real estate loans,” which are credit facilities for the acquisition, construction or development of real property other than for certain community development projects, agricultural land and one- to four-family residential properties or commercial real projects where: (i) the loan-to-value ratio is not in excess of interagency real estate lending standards; and (ii) the borrower has contributed capital equal to not less than 15% of the real estate’s “as completed” value before the loan was made.

The final rules became effective for the Company and the Bank on January 1, 2015.

We believe that both the Company and the Bank will continue to meet all capital adequacy requirements under the fully phased-in final rules.

See “Capital Resources and Shareholders’ Equity” under Item 7 below for further discussion of regulatory capital requirements.

## Liquidity Requirements

Historically, the regulation and monitoring of bank and bank holding company liquidity has been addressed as a supervisory matter, without required formulaic measures. Liquidity risk management has become increasingly important since the financial crisis. The Basel III liquidity framework requires banks and bank holding companies to measure their liquidity against specific liquidity tests that, although similar in some respects to liquidity measures historically applied by banks and regulators for management and supervisory purposes, going forward would be required by regulation. One test, referred to as the liquidity coverage ratio (“LCR”), is designed to ensure that the banking entity maintains an adequate level of unencumbered high-quality liquid assets equal to the entity’s expected net cash outflow for a 30-day time horizon (or, if greater, 25% of its expected total cash outflow) under an acute liquidity stress scenario. The other test, referred to as the net stable funding ratio (“NSFR”), is designed to promote more medium- and long-term funding of the assets and activities of banking entities over a one-year time horizon. These requirements will incent banking entities to increase their holdings of U.S. Treasury securities and other sovereign debt as a component of assets and increase the use of long-term debt as a funding source.

In September 2014, the federal bank regulators approved final rules implementing the LCR for advanced approaches banking organizations (i.e., banking organizations with \$250 billion or more in total consolidated assets or \$10 billion

or more in total on-balance sheet foreign exposure) and a modified version of the LCR for bank holding companies with at least \$50 billion in total consolidated assets that are not advanced approach banking organizations, neither of which would apply to the Company or the Bank. The federal bank regulators have not yet proposed rules to implement the NSFR or addressed the scope of bank organizations to which it will apply.

Table of Contents

Financial Privacy and Cybersecurity

The federal banking regulators have adopted rules that limit the ability of banks and other financial institutions to disclose non-public information about consumers to non-affiliated third parties. These limitations require disclosure of privacy policies to consumers and, in some circumstances, allow consumers to prevent disclosure of certain personal information to a non-affiliated third party. These regulations affect how consumer information is transmitted through diversified financial companies and conveyed to outside vendors. In addition, consumers may also prevent disclosure of certain information among affiliated companies that is assembled or used to determine eligibility for a product or service, such as that shown on consumer credit reports and asset and income information from applications. Consumers also have the option to direct banks and other financial institutions not to share information about transactions and experiences with affiliated companies for the purpose of marketing products or services.

In March 2015, federal regulators issued two related statements regarding cybersecurity. One statement indicates that financial institutions should design multiple layers of security controls to establish lines of defense and to ensure that their risk management processes also address the risk posed by compromised customer credentials, including security measures to reliably authenticate customers accessing Internet-based services of the financial institution. The other statement indicates that a financial institution's management is expected to maintain sufficient business continuity planning processes to ensure the rapid recovery, resumption and maintenance of the institution's operations after a cyber-attack involving destructive malware. A financial institution is also expected to develop appropriate processes to enable recovery of data and business operations and address rebuilding network capabilities and restoring data if the institution or its critical service providers fall victim to this type of cyber-attack. The Company has multiple Information Security Programs that reflect the requirements of this guidance. If, however, we fail to observe the regulatory guidance in the future, we could be subject to various regulatory sanctions, including financial penalties.

Anti-Money Laundering and the USA Patriot Act

A major focus of governmental policy on financial institutions in recent years has been aimed at combating money laundering and terrorist financing. The USA PATRIOT Act of 2001 (the "USA Patriot Act") substantially broadened the scope of United States anti-money laundering laws and regulations by imposing significant new compliance and due diligence obligations on financial institutions, creating new crimes and penalties and expanding the extra-territorial jurisdiction of the United States.

On May 11, 2016, the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network ("FinCEN") issued new anti-money laundering ("AML") rules governing corporate entities doing business with banks and other financial institutions that are subject to the requirements of the USA Patriot Act. The AML rules impose significant due diligence obligations on financial institutions with respect to opening of new accounts and the monitoring of existing accounts. Under the AML rules, a financial institution must identify persons owning or controlling 25% or more of a "legal entity," whenever the legal entity opens a new account at the bank. The financial institution must also identify an individual who has substantial management authority at the legal entity, such as a CEO, CFO, or managing partner. These new AML rules become



effective in May 2018.

The AML rules codify within the FinCEN regulations the “pillars” that must be included in a financial institutions AML compliance program. Regulators previously communicated their expectations with respect to four of these pillars: (1) the development of internal policies, procedures, and control; (2) the designation of a compliance officer; (3) the establishment of an ongoing employee training program; and (4) the implementation of an independent audit function to test programs. The new beneficial ownership requirement establishes a fifth pillar. Among other things, this new pillar includes the necessity to monitor and update the beneficial ownership of a legal entity, including the need to subject corporate borrowers to due diligence requests from financial institutions for certifications with respect to their beneficial owners. Failure of a financial institution to maintain and implement adequate programs to combat money laundering and terrorist financing, or to comply with all of the relevant laws or regulations, could have serious legal and reputational consequences for the institution, including causing applicable bank regulatory authorities not to approve merger or acquisition transactions when regulatory approval is required or to prohibit such transactions even if approval is not required.

Table of Contents

Office of Foreign Assets Control Regulation

The United States has imposed economic sanctions that affect transactions with designated foreign countries, nationals and others which are administered by the U.S. Treasury Department Office of Foreign Assets Control (“OFAC”). Failure to comply with these sanctions could have serious legal and reputational consequences, including causing applicable bank regulatory authorities not to approve merger or acquisition transactions when regulatory approval is required or to prohibit such transactions even if approval is not required.

Neither the Company nor the Bank can predict what other legislation might be enacted or what other regulations or assessments might be adopted.

**Available Information**

We maintain a corporate Internet site at [www.LocalFirstBank.com](http://www.LocalFirstBank.com), which contains a link within the “Investor Relations” section of the site to each of our filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, including our annual reports on Form 10-K, our quarterly reports on Form 10-Q, our current reports on Form 8-K, and amendments to those reports filed or furnished pursuant to Section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. These filings are available, free of charge, as soon as reasonably practicable after we electronically file such material with, or furnish it to, the Securities and Exchange Commission. These filings can also be accessed at the Securities and Exchange Commission’s website located at [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov). Information included on our Internet site is not incorporated by reference into this annual report.

**Item 1A. Risk Factors**

An investment in our common stock involves certain risks. Before you invest in our common stock, you should be aware that there are various risks, including those described below, which could affect the value of your investment in the future. The trading price of our common stock could decline due to any of these risks, and you may lose all or part of your investment. The risk factors described in this section, as well as any cautionary language in this report, provide examples of risks, uncertainties and events that could have a material adverse effect on our business, including our operating results and financial condition. In addition to the risks and uncertainties described below, other risks and uncertainties not currently known to us, or that we currently deem to be immaterial, also may materially or adversely affect our business, financial condition, and results of operations. The value or market price of our common stock could decline due to any of these identified or other unidentified risks.

**Unfavorable economic conditions could adversely affect our business.**

Our business is subject to periodic fluctuations based on national, regional and local economic conditions. These fluctuations are not predictable, cannot be controlled, and may have a material adverse impact on our operations and financial condition. Our banking operations are primarily locally oriented and community-based. Our retail and commercial banking activities are primarily concentrated within the same geographic footprint. Our markets include most of North Carolina and parts of South Carolina. Worsening economic conditions within our markets could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition, results of operations and cash flows. Accordingly, we expect to continue to be dependent upon local business conditions as well as conditions in the local residential and commercial real estate markets we serve. Unfavorable changes in unemployment, real estate values, interest rates and other factors could weaken the economies of the communities we serve. In recent years, economic growth and business activity across a wide range of industries has been slow and uneven and there can be no assurance that economic conditions will continue to improve, and these conditions could worsen. In addition, oil price volatility, the level of U.S. debt and global economic conditions have had a destabilizing effect on financial markets. Weakness in any of our market areas could have an adverse impact on our earnings, and consequently our financial condition and capital adequacy.

Table of Contents

**If our goodwill becomes impaired, we may be required to record a significant charge to earnings.**

We have goodwill recorded on our balance sheet as an asset with a carrying value as of December 31, 2016 of \$75.0 million. Under generally accepted accounting principles, goodwill is required to be tested for impairment at least annually and between annual tests if an event occurs or circumstances change that would more likely than not reduce the fair value of a reporting unit below its carrying amount. The test for goodwill impairment involves comparing the fair value of a company's reporting units to their respective carrying values. We have three reporting units – 1) First Bank with \$67.5 million in goodwill, 2) First Bank Insurance with \$2.0 million in goodwill, and 3) SBA activities, including SBA Complete and the SBA lending division, with \$5.5 million in goodwill. The price of our common stock is one of several factors available for estimating the fair value of our reporting units and is most closely associated with our First Bank reporting unit. Although the price of our common stock is currently trading above the book value, for most of the last several years, it has traded below the book value of our Company. Subject to the results of other valuation techniques, if this situation were to return and persist, it could indicate that a portion of our goodwill is impaired. Accordingly, for this reason or other reasons that indicate that the goodwill at any of our reporting units is impaired, we may be required to record a significant charge to earnings in our financial statements during the period in which any impairment of our goodwill is determined, which could have a negative impact on our results of operations.

**New capital rules that were recently issued generally require insured depository institutions and their holding companies to hold more capital. The impact of the new rules on our financial condition and operations is uncertain but could be materially adverse.**

In July 2013, the federal banking agencies approved amendments to their regulatory capital rules to conform U.S. regulatory capital rules with the international regulatory standards agreed to by the Basel Committee on

Banking Supervision in the accord referred to as “Basel III.” The new rules substantially amended the regulatory risk-based capital rules applicable to us. The rules became effective on January 1, 2015 for the Company and the Bank and will be fully phased in by January 1, 2019.

The rules include certain new and higher risk-based capital and leverage requirements than those previously in place. Specifically, the following minimum capital requirements apply to us at December 31, 2016:

- a new common equity Tier 1 risk-based capital ratio of 5.125% (fully phased-in requirement of 7%);
- a Tier 1 risk-based capital ratio of 6.625% (fully phased-in requirement of 8.5%);
- a total risk-based capital ratio of 8.625% (fully phased-in requirement of 10.5%); and
- a leverage ratio of 4%.

In general, the rules have had the effect of increasing capital requirements by increasing the risk weights on certain assets, including high volatility commercial real estate, certain loans past due 90 days or more or in nonaccrual status,

mortgage servicing rights not includable in common equity tier 1 capital, equity exposures, and claims on securities firms, that are used in the denominator of the three risk-based capital ratios. In addition, in the current economic and regulatory environment, bank regulators may impose capital requirements that are more stringent than those required by applicable existing regulations. The application of more stringent capital requirements for us could, among other things, result in lower returns on equity, require the raising of additional capital, and result in regulatory actions if we were to be unable to comply with such requirements. Implementation of changes to asset risk weightings for risk-based capital calculations, items included or deducted in calculating regulatory capital or additional capital conservation buffers, could result in management modifying our business strategy and could limit our ability to make distributions, including paying dividends or buying back our shares.

Table of Contents

**We might be required to raise additional capital in the future, but that capital may not be available or may not be available on terms acceptable to us when it is needed.**

We are required to maintain adequate capital levels to support our operations. In the future, we might need to raise additional capital to support growth, absorb loan losses, or meet more stringent capital requirements. Our ability to raise additional capital will depend on conditions in the capital markets at that time, which are outside our control, and on our financial performance. Accordingly, we cannot be certain of our ability to raise additional capital in the future if needed or on terms acceptable to us. If we cannot raise additional capital when needed, our ability to conduct our business could be materially impaired.

**We may issue additional shares of stock or equity derivative securities that will dilute the percentage ownership interest of existing shareholders and may dilute the book value per share of our common stock and adversely affect the terms on which we may obtain additional capital.**

Our authorized capital includes 40,000,000 shares of common stock and 5,000,000 shares of preferred stock. As of December 31, 2016, we had 20,844,505 shares of common stock outstanding and had reserved for issuance 59,948 shares underlying options that are or may become exercisable at an average price of \$17.18 per share. In addition, as of December 31, 2016, we had the ability to issue 853,920 shares of common stock pursuant to options and restricted stock under our existing equity compensation plans and 261,446 contingently issuable shares that are tied to performance goals associated with a corporate acquisition. Our March 3, 2017 acquisition of Carolina Bank resulted in the issuance of approximately 3,800,000 common shares.

Subject to applicable NASDAQ rules, our board generally has the authority, without action by or vote of the shareholders, to issue all or part of any authorized but unissued shares of stock for any corporate purpose. Such corporate purposes could include, among other things, issuances of equity-based incentives under or outside of our equity compensation plans, issuances of equity in business combination transactions, and issuances of equity to raise additional capital to support growth or to otherwise strengthen our balance sheet. Any issuance of additional shares of stock or equity derivative securities will dilute the percentage ownership interest of our shareholders and may dilute the book value per share of our common stock. Shares we issue in connection with any such offering will increase the total number of outstanding shares and may dilute the economic and voting ownership interest of our existing shareholders.

**The soundness of other financial institutions could adversely affect us.**

Our ability to engage in routine funding transactions could be adversely affected by the actions and commercial soundness of other financial institutions. Financial services companies are interrelated as a result of trading, clearing, counterparty or other relationships. We have exposure to many different industries and counterparties, and we

routinely execute transactions with counterparties in the financial services industry, including brokers and dealers, commercial banks, and investment banks. Defaults by, or even rumors or questions about, one or more financial services companies, or the financial services industry generally, have led to market-wide liquidity problems and could lead to losses or defaults by us or by other institutions. We can make no assurance that any such losses would not materially and adversely affect our business, financial condition or results of operations.

Table of Contents

**We are subject to extensive regulation, which could have an adverse effect on our operations.**

We are subject to extensive regulation and supervision from the North Carolina Commissioner of Banks and the Federal Reserve. This regulation and supervision is intended primarily for the protection of the FDIC insurance fund and our depositors and borrowers, rather than for holders of our equity securities. In the past, our business has been materially affected by these regulations. This trend is likely to continue in the future.

Regulatory authorities have extensive discretion in their supervisory and enforcement activities, including the imposition of restrictions on operations, the classification of our assets and the determination of the level of allowance for loan losses. Changes in the regulations that apply to us, or changes in our compliance with regulations, could have a material impact on our operations.

**Financial reform legislation enacted by the U.S. Congress, and further changes in regulation to which we are exposed, will result in additional new laws and regulations that are expected to increase our costs of operations.**

The Dodd-Frank Act has and will continue to significantly change bank regulatory structure and affect lending, deposit, investment, and operating activities of financial institutions and their holding companies. The Dodd-Frank Act requires various federal agencies to adopt a broad range of new rules and regulations, and to prepare numerous studies and reports for Congress. The federal agencies are given significant discretion in drafting and implementing the rules and regulations, and consequently, many of the details and much of the impact of the Dodd-Frank Act may not be known for many months or years. See “Legislative and Regulatory Developments – Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010” above for additional information regarding the Dodd-Frank Act.

The Dodd-Frank Act also created the CFPB and gave it broad rule-making authority for a wide range of consumer protection laws that apply to all banks and savings institutions, including the authority to prohibit “unfair, deceptive or abusive” acts and practices. Additionally, the CFPB has examination and enforcement authority over all banks and savings institutions with more than \$10 billion in assets.

Proposals for further regulation of the financial services industry are continually being introduced in the United States Congress. The agencies regulating the financial services industry also periodically adopt changes to their regulations. It is possible that additional legislative proposals may be adopted or regulatory changes may be made that would have an adverse effect on our business. In addition, it is expected that such regulatory changes will increase our operating and compliance cost. We can provide no assurance regarding the manner in which new laws and regulations will affect us.



**We are subject to interest rate risk, which could negatively impact earnings.**

Net interest income is the most significant component of our earnings. Our net interest income results from the difference between the yields we earn on our interest-earning assets, primarily loans and investments, and the rates that we pay on our interest-bearing liabilities, primarily deposits and borrowings. When interest rates change, the yields we earn on our interest-earning assets and the rates we pay on our interest-bearing liabilities do not necessarily move in tandem with each other because of the difference between their maturities and repricing characteristics. This mismatch can negatively impact net interest income if the margin between yields earned and rates paid narrows. Interest rate environment changes can occur at any time and are affected by many factors that are outside our control, including inflation, recession, unemployment trends, the Federal Reserve's monetary policy, domestic and international disorder and instability in domestic and foreign financial markets.

Table of Contents

**Our allowance for loan losses may not be adequate to cover actual losses.**

Like all financial institutions, we maintain an allowance for loan losses to provide for probable losses caused by customer loan defaults. The allowance for loan losses may not be adequate to cover actual loan losses, and in this case additional and larger provisions for loan losses would be required to replenish the allowance. Provisions for loan losses are a direct charge against income.

We establish the amount of the allowance for loan losses based on historical loss rates, as well as estimates and assumptions about future events. Because of the extensive use of estimates and assumptions, our actual loan losses could differ, possibly significantly, from our estimate. We believe that our allowance for loan losses is adequate to provide for probable losses, but it is possible that the allowance for loan losses will need to be increased for credit reasons or that regulators will require us to increase this allowance. Either of these occurrences could materially and adversely affect our earnings and profitability.

In addition, the measure of our allowance for loan losses is dependent on the adoption of new accounting standards. The Financial Accounting Standards Board recently issued an Accounting Standards Update related to a new credit impairment model, the Current Expected Credit Loss ("CECL") model, which requires financial institutions to estimate and develop a provision for credit losses at origination for the lifetime of the loan, as opposed to reserving for probable incurred losses up to the balance sheet date. Under the CECL model, credit deterioration will be reflected in the income statement in the period of origination or acquisition of the loan, with changes in expected credit losses due to further credit deterioration or improvement reflected in the periods in which the expectation changes. Accordingly, the CECL model will require financial institutions like the Bank to increase their allowances for loan losses. Moreover, the CECL model will likely create more volatility in our level of allowance for loan losses.

**We may make future acquisitions, which could dilute current shareholders' stock ownership and expose us to additional risks.**

In accordance with our strategic plan, we evaluate opportunities to acquire other banks and branch locations to expand the Company. As a result, we may engage in acquisitions and other transactions that could have a material effect on our operating results and financial condition, including short and long-term liquidity. Our acquisition activities could require us to issue a significant number of shares of common stock or other securities and/or to use a substantial amount of cash, other liquid assets, and/or incur debt. In addition, if goodwill recorded in connection with our potential future acquisitions were determined to be impaired, then we would be required to recognize a charge against our earnings, which could materially and adversely affect our results of operations during the period in which the impairment was recognized.

Our acquisition activities could involve a number of additional risks, some of which are described in more detail elsewhere in this report and include:

- the possibility that expected benefits may not materialize in the timeframe expected or at all, or may be more costly to achieve;
- incurring the time and expense associated with identifying and evaluating potential acquisitions and merger partners
- and negotiating potential transactions, resulting in management's attention being diverted from the operation of our existing business;

Table of Contents

- using inaccurate estimates and judgments to evaluate credit, operations, management, and market risks with respect to the target institution or assets;
- incurring the time and expense required to integrate the operations and personnel of the combined businesses;
- the possibility that we will be unable to successfully implement integration strategies, due to challenges associated with integrating complex systems, technology, banking centers, and other assets of the acquired bank in a manner that minimizes any adverse effect on customers, suppliers, employees, and other constituencies;
- the possibility of regulatory approval for the acquisition being delayed, impeded, restrictively conditioned or denied due to existing or new regulatory issues surrounding the Company, the target institution or the proposed combined entity as a result of, among other things, issues related to anti-money laundering/Bank Secrecy Act compliance, fair lending laws, fair housing laws, consumer protection laws, unfair, deceptive, or abusive acts or practices regulations, or the Community Reinvestment Act, and the possibility that any such issues associated with the target institution, which we may or may not be aware of at the time of the acquisition, could impact the combined entity after completion of the acquisition;
- the possibility that the acquisition may not be timely completed, if at all;
- creating an adverse short-term effect on our results of operations; and
- losing key employees and customers as a result of an acquisition that is poorly received.

If we do not successfully manage these risks, our acquisition activities could have a material adverse effect on our operating results and financial condition, including short- and long-term liquidity.

**Future acquisitions may be delayed, impeded, or prohibited due to regulatory issues.**

Future acquisitions by the Company, particularly those of financial institutions, are subject to approval by a variety of federal and state regulatory agencies (collectively, “regulatory approvals”). The process for obtaining these required regulatory approvals has become substantially more difficult in recent years. Regulatory approvals could be delayed, impeded, restrictively conditioned or denied due to existing or new regulatory issues we have, or may have, with regulatory agencies, including, without limitation, issues related to anti-money laundering/Bank Secrecy Act compliance, fair lending laws, fair housing laws, consumer protection laws, unfair, deceptive, or abusive acts or practices regulations, Community Reinvestment Act issues, and other similar laws and regulations. We may fail to pursue, evaluate or complete strategic and competitively significant acquisition opportunities as a result of our inability, or perceived or anticipated inability, to obtain regulatory approvals in a timely manner, under reasonable conditions or at all. Difficulties associated with potential acquisitions that may result from these factors could have a material adverse effect on our business, and, in turn, our financial condition and results of operations.

**We may be exposed to difficulties in combining the operations of acquired businesses into our own operations, which may prevent us from achieving the expected benefits from our acquisition activities.**

We may not be able to fully achieve the strategic objectives and operating efficiencies that we anticipate in our acquisition activities. Inherent uncertainties exist in integrating the operations of an acquired business. In addition, the markets and industries in which the Company and our potential acquisition targets operate are highly competitive. We may lose customers or the customers of acquired entities as a result of an acquisition. We also may lose key personnel from the acquired entity as a result of an acquisition. We may not discover all known and unknown factors when

examining a company for acquisition during the due diligence period. These factors could produce unintended and unexpected consequences for us. Undiscovered factors as a result of acquisition, pursued by non-related third party entities, could bring civil, criminal, and financial liabilities against us, our management, and the management of those entities acquired. These factors could contribute to the Company not achieving the expected benefits from its acquisitions within desired time frames.

Table of Contents

**In the normal course of business, we process large volumes of transactions involving millions of dollars. If our internal controls fail to work as expected, if our systems are used in an unauthorized manner, or if our employees subvert our internal controls, we could experience significant losses.**

We process large volumes of transactions on a daily basis and are exposed to numerous types of operational risk. Operational risk includes the risk of fraud by persons inside or outside the Company, the execution of unauthorized transactions by employees, errors relating to transaction processing and systems and breaches of the internal control system and compliance requirements. This risk also includes potential legal actions that could arise as a result of an operational deficiency or as a result of noncompliance with applicable regulatory standards.

We establish and maintain systems of internal operational controls that provide us with timely and accurate information about our level of operational risk. Although not foolproof, these systems have been designed to manage operational risk at appropriate, cost-effective levels. Procedures exist that are designed to ensure that policies relating to conduct, ethics, and business practices are followed. From time to time, losses from operational risk may occur, including the effects of operational errors. We continually monitor and improve our internal controls, data processing systems, and corporate-wide processes and procedures, but there can be no assurance that future losses will not occur.

**We face a risk of noncompliance and enforcement action with the Bank Secrecy Act and other anti-money laundering statutes and regulations.**

The federal Bank Secrecy Act, the Patriot Act and other laws and regulations require financial institutions, among other duties, to institute and maintain effective anti-money laundering programs and file suspicious activity and currency transaction reports as appropriate. The federal Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, established by the U.S. Treasury Department to administer the Bank Secrecy Act, is authorized to impose significant civil money penalties for violations of those requirements and has recently engaged in coordinated enforcement efforts with the individual federal banking regulators, as well as the U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration and Internal Revenue Service. There is also increased scrutiny of compliance with the rules enforced by the OFAC. Federal and state bank regulators also have begun to focus on compliance with Bank Secrecy Act and anti-money laundering regulations. If our policies, procedures and systems are deemed deficient or the policies, procedures and systems of the financial institutions that we have already acquired or may acquire in the future are deficient, we would be subject to liability, including fines and regulatory actions such as restrictions on our ability to pay dividends and the necessity to obtain regulatory approvals to proceed with certain aspects of our business plan, including our acquisition plans, which would negatively impact our business, financial condition and results of operations. Failure to maintain and implement adequate programs to combat money laundering and terrorist financing could also have serious reputational consequences for us.

**Federal, state and local consumer lending laws restrict our ability to originate certain mortgage loans and increase our risk of liability with respect to such loans and increase our cost of doing business.**

Federal, state and local laws have been adopted that are intended to eliminate certain lending practices considered “predatory.” These laws prohibit practices such as steering borrowers away from more affordable products, selling unnecessary insurance to borrowers, repeatedly refinancing loans and making loans without a reasonable expectation that the borrowers will be able to repay the loans irrespective of the value of the underlying property. Over the course of 2013, the CFPB issued several rules on mortgage lending, notably a rule requiring all home mortgage lenders to determine a borrower’s ability to repay the loan. Loans with certain terms and conditions and that otherwise meet the definition of a “qualified mortgage” may be protected from liability to a borrower for failing to make the necessary determinations. We may find it necessary to tighten our mortgage loan underwriting standards in response to the CFPB rules, which may constrain our ability to make loans consistent with our business strategies. It is our policy not to make predatory loans and to determine borrowers’ ability to repay, but the law and related rules create the potential for increased liability with respect to our lending and loan investment activities. They increase our cost of doing business and, ultimately, may prevent us from making certain loans and cause us to reduce the average percentage rate or the points and fees on loans that we do make.

Table of Contents

**We are subject to federal and state fair lending laws, and failure to comply with these laws could lead to material penalties.**

Federal and state fair lending laws and regulations, such as the Equal Credit Opportunity Act and the Fair Housing Act, impose nondiscriminatory lending requirements on financial institutions. The Department of Justice, CFPB and other federal and state agencies are responsible for enforcing these laws and regulations. Private parties may also have the ability to challenge an institution's performance under fair lending laws in private class action litigation. A successful challenge to our performance under the fair lending laws and regulations could adversely impact our rating under the Community Reinvestment Act and result in a wide variety of sanctions, including the required payment of damages and civil money penalties, injunctive relief, imposition of restrictions on or delays in approving merger and acquisition activity and restrictions on expansion activity, which could negatively impact our reputation, business, financial condition and results of operations.

**Negative public opinion regarding our Company and the financial services industry in general, could damage our reputation and adversely impact our earnings.**

Reputation risk, or the risk to our business, earnings and capital from negative public opinion regarding our Company and the financial services industry in general, is inherent in our business. Negative public opinion can result from actual or alleged conduct in any number of activities, including lending practices, corporate governance and acquisitions, and from actions taken by government regulators and community organizations in response to those activities. Negative public opinion can adversely affect our ability to keep and attract clients and employees and can expose us to litigation and regulatory action. Although we have taken steps to minimize reputation risk in dealing with our clients and communities, this risk will always be present given the nature of our business.

**We could experience a loss due to competition with other financial institutions.**

We face substantial competition in all areas of our operations from a variety of different competitors, both within and beyond our principal markets, many of which are larger and may have more financial resources. Such competitors primarily include national, regional and internet banks within the various markets in which we operate. We also face competition from many other types of financial institutions, including, without limitation, savings and loans, credit unions, finance companies, brokerage firms, insurance companies and other financial intermediaries. The financial services industry could become even more competitive as a result of legislative and regulatory changes and continued consolidation. In addition, as customer preferences and expectations continue to evolve, technology has lowered barriers to entry and made it possible for nonbanks to offer products and services traditionally provided by banks, such as automatic transfer and automatic payment systems. Banks, securities firms and insurance companies can merge under the umbrella of a financial holding company, which can offer virtually any type of financial service, including banking, securities underwriting, insurance (both agency and underwriting) and merchant banking. Many of our competitors have fewer regulatory constraints and may have lower cost structures. Additionally, due to their size, many competitors may be able to achieve economies of scale and, as a result, may offer a broader range of products



and services as well as better pricing for those products and services than we can.

Table of Contents

Our ability to compete successfully depends on a number of factors, including, among other things:

the ability to develop, maintain, and build upon long-term customer relationships based on top quality service, high ethical standards, and safe, sound assets;

the ability to expand our market position;

the scope, relevance, and pricing of products and services offered to meet customer needs and demands;

the rate at which we introduce new products and services relative to our competitors;

customer satisfaction with our level of service; and

industry and general economic trends.

Failure to perform in any of these areas could significantly weaken our competitive position, which could adversely affect our growth and profitability, which, in turn, could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations.

**Failure to keep pace with technological change could adversely affect our business.**

The financial services industry is continually undergoing rapid technological change with frequent introductions of new technology-driven products and services. The effective use of technology increases efficiency and enables financial institutions to better serve customers and to reduce costs. Our future success depends, in part, upon our ability to address the needs of our customers by using technology to provide products and services that will satisfy customer demands, as well as to create additional efficiencies in our operations. Many of our competitors have substantially greater resources to invest in technological improvements. We may not be able to effectively implement new technology-driven products and services or be successful in marketing these products and services to our customers. Failure to successfully keep pace with technological change affecting the financial services industry could have a material adverse impact on our business and, in turn, our financial condition and results of operations.

**New lines of business or new products and services may subject us to additional risk.**

From time to time, we may implement new lines of business or offer new products and services within existing lines of business. There are substantial risks and uncertainties associated with these efforts, particularly in instances where the markets are not fully developed. In developing and marketing new lines of business and/or new products and services, we may invest significant time and resources. Initial timetables for the introduction and development of new lines of business and/or new products or services may not be achieved and price and profitability targets may not prove feasible. External factors, such as compliance with regulations, competitive alternatives, and shifting market preferences, may also impact the successful implementation of a new line of business and/or a new product or service. Furthermore, any new line of business and/or new product or service could have a significant impact on the effectiveness of our system of internal controls. Failure to successfully manage these risks in the development and implementation of new lines of business and/or new products or services could have a material adverse effect on our

business and, in turn, our financial condition and results of operations.

In May 2016, we completed the acquisition of SBA Complete. SBA Complete is a consulting firm that specializes in consulting with financial institutions across the country related to SBA loan origination and servicing. We leveraged the expertise assumed in the acquisition of SBA Complete to launch our own SBA lending division in the third quarter of 2016. These are both new lines of business for the Bank with unique operational, control and accounting risks, which if not properly managed, could result in losses for our Company.

Table of Contents

**Consumers may decide not to use banks to complete their financial transactions.**

Technology and other changes are allowing parties to complete financial transactions through alternative methods that historically have involved banks. For example, consumers can now maintain funds that would have historically been held as bank deposits in brokerage accounts, mutual funds or general-purpose reloadable prepaid cards. Consumers can also complete transactions such as paying bills and/or transferring funds directly without the assistance of banks. The process of eliminating banks as intermediaries, known as “disintermediation,” could result in the loss of fee income, as well as the loss of customer deposits and the related income generated from those deposits. The loss of these revenue streams and the lower cost of deposits as a source of funds could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations.

**Our reported financial results are impacted by management’s selection of accounting methods and certain assumptions and estimates.**

Our accounting policies and methods are fundamental to the way we record and report our financial condition and results of operations. Our management must exercise judgment in selecting and applying many of these accounting policies and methods so they comply with generally accepted accounting principles and reflect management’s judgment of the most appropriate manner to report our financial condition and results. In some cases, management must select the accounting policy or method to apply from two or more alternatives, any of which may be reasonable under the circumstances, yet may result in reporting materially different results than would have been reported under a different alternative.

Certain accounting policies are critical to presenting our financial condition and results. They require management to make difficult, subjective or complex judgments about matters that are uncertain. Materially different amounts could be reported under different conditions or using different assumptions or estimates. These critical accounting policies include: the allowance for loan losses; intangible assets; and the fair value and discount accretion of acquired loans.

**There can be no assurance that we will continue to pay cash dividends.**

Although we have historically paid cash dividends, there is no assurance that we will continue to pay cash dividends. Future payment of cash dividends, if any, will be at the discretion of our board of directors and will be dependent upon our financial condition, results of operations, capital requirements, economic conditions, and such other factors as the board may deem relevant.

**Future sales of our stock by our shareholders or the perception that those sales could occur may cause our stock price to decline.**

Although our common stock is listed for trading in The NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol FBNC, the trading volume in our common stock is lower than that of other larger financial services companies. A public trading market having the desired characteristics of depth, liquidity and orderliness depends on the presence in the marketplace of willing buyers and sellers of our common stock at any given time. This presence depends on the individual decisions of investors and general economic and market conditions over which we have no control. Given the relatively low trading volume of our common stock, significant sales of our common stock in the public market, or the perception that those sales may occur, could cause the trading price of our common stock to decline or to be lower than it otherwise might be in the absence of those sales or perceptions.

Table of Contents

**Our business continuity plans or data security systems could prove to be inadequate, resulting in a material interruption in, or disruption to, our business and a negative impact on our results of operations.**

We rely heavily on communications and information systems to conduct our business. Our daily operations depend on the operational effectiveness of our technology. We rely on our systems to accurately track and record our assets and liabilities. Any failure, interruption or breach in security of our computer systems or outside technology, whether due to severe weather, natural disasters, acts of war or terrorism, criminal activity, cyber-attacks or other factors, could result in failures or disruptions in general ledger, deposit, loan, customer relationship management, and other systems leading to inaccurate financial records. This could materially affect our business operations and financial condition. While we have disaster recovery and other policies and procedures designed to prevent or limit the effect of any failure, interruption or security breach of our information systems, there can be no assurance that any such failures, interruptions, or security breaches will not occur or, if they do occur, that they will be adequately addressed. The occurrence of any failures, interruptions or security breaches of our information systems could damage our reputation, result in a loss of customer business, subject us to additional regulatory scrutiny, or expose us to civil litigation and possible financial liability, any of which could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations.

In addition, the Bank provides its customers the ability to bank online and through mobile banking. The secure transmission of confidential information over the Internet is a critical element of online and mobile banking. While we use qualified third party vendors to test and audit our network, our network could become vulnerable to unauthorized access, computer viruses, phishing schemes and other security issues. The Bank may be required to spend significant capital and other resources to alleviate problems caused by security breaches or computer viruses. To the extent that the Bank's activities or the activities of its customers involve the storage and transmission of confidential information, security breaches and viruses could expose the Bank to claims, litigation, and other potential liabilities. Any inability to prevent security breaches or computer viruses could also cause existing customers to lose confidence in the Bank's systems and could adversely affect its reputation and its ability to generate deposits.

Additionally, we outsource the processing of our core data system, as well as other systems such as online banking, to third party vendors. Prior to establishing an outsourcing relationship, and on an ongoing basis thereafter, management monitors key vendor controls and procedures related to information technology, which includes reviewing reports of service auditor's examinations. If our third party provider encounters difficulties or if we have difficulty in communicating with such third party, it will significantly affect our ability to adequately process and account for customer transactions, which would significantly affect our business operations.

**We rely on certain external vendors.**

We are reliant upon certain external vendors to provide products and services necessary to maintain our day-to-day operations. Accordingly, our operations are exposed to risk that these vendors will not perform in accordance with applicable contractual arrangements or service level agreements. We maintain a system of policies and procedures designed to monitor vendor risks including, among other things, (i) changes in the vendor's organizational structure,

(ii) changes in the vendor's financial condition and (iii) changes in the vendor's support for existing products and services. While we believe these policies and procedures help to mitigate risk, and our vendors are not the sole source of service, the failure of an external vendor to perform in accordance with applicable contractual arrangements or the service level agreements could be disruptive to our operations, which could have a material adverse impact on our business and its financial condition and results of operations.

Table of Contents

**Our potential inability to integrate companies we may acquire in the future could expose us to financial, execution, and operational risks that could negatively affect our financial condition and results of operations. Acquisitions may be dilutive to common shareholders and FDIC-assisted transactions have additional compliance risk that other acquisitions do not have.**

On occasion, we may engage in a strategic acquisition when we believe there is an opportunity to strengthen and expand our business. In addition, such acquisitions may involve the issuance of stock, which may have a dilutive effect on earnings per share. To fully benefit from such acquisition, however, we must integrate the administrative, financial, sales, lending, collections, and marketing functions of the acquired company. If we are unable to successfully integrate an acquired company, we may not realize the benefits of the acquisition, and our financial results may be negatively affected. A completed acquisition may adversely affect our financial condition and results of operations, including our capital requirements and the accounting treatment of the acquisition. Completed acquisitions may also lead to exposure from potential asset quality issues, losses of key employees or customers, difficulty and expense of integrating operations and systems, and significant unexpected liabilities after the consummation of these acquisitions. In addition, if we were to conclude that the value of an acquired business had decreased and that the related goodwill had been impaired, that conclusion would result in a goodwill impairment charge, which would adversely affect our results of operations.

We may have opportunities to acquire the assets and liabilities of failed banks in FDIC-assisted transactions. Although these transactions typically provide for FDIC assistance to an acquirer to mitigate certain risks, such as sharing exposure to loan losses and providing indemnification against certain liabilities of the failed institution, we are (and would be in future transactions) subject to many of the same risks we would face in acquiring another bank in a negotiated transaction, including risks associated with maintaining customer relationships and failure to realize the anticipated acquisition benefits in the amounts and within the time frames we expect. Our inability to overcome these risks could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition and results of operations.

**We are subject to losses due to errors, omissions or fraudulent behavior by our employees, clients, counterparties or other third parties.**

We are exposed to many types of operational risk, including the risk of fraud by employees and third parties, clerical recordkeeping errors and transactional errors. Our business is dependent on our employees as well as third-party service providers to process a large number of increasingly complex transactions. We could be materially and adversely affected if employees, clients, counterparties or other third parties caused an operational breakdown or failure, either as a result of human error, fraudulent manipulation or purposeful damage to any of our operations or systems.

In deciding whether to extend credit or to enter into other transactions with clients and counterparties, we may rely on information furnished to us by or on behalf of clients and counterparties, including financial statements and other financial information, which we do not independently verify. We also may rely on representations of clients and



counterparties as to the accuracy and completeness of that information and, with respect to financial statements, on reports of independent auditors. For example, in deciding whether to extend credit to clients, we may assume that a client's audited financial statements conform with U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles ("GAAP") and present fairly, in all material respects, the financial condition, results of operations and cash flows of the client. Our financial condition and results of operations could be negatively affected to the extent we rely on financial statements that do not comply with GAAP or are materially misleading, any of which could be caused by errors, omissions, or fraudulent behavior by our employees, clients, counterparties, or other third parties.

Table of Contents

**Item 1B. Unresolved Staff Comments**

None

**Item 2. Properties**

The main offices of the Company and the Bank are owned by the Bank and are located in a three-story building in the central business district of Southern Pines, North Carolina. The building houses administrative facilities. The Bank's Operations Division, including customer accounting functions, offices for information technology operations, and offices for loan operations, are housed in two one-story steel frame buildings in Troy, North Carolina. Both of these buildings are owned by the Bank. At December 31, 2016, the Company operated 88 bank branches. The Company owned all of its bank branch premises except 10 branch offices for which the land and buildings are leased and nine branch offices for which the land is leased but the building is owned. The Company also leases two loan production offices and five other office locations for administrative functions. There are no options to purchase or lease additional properties. The Company considers its facilities adequate to meet current needs and believes that lease renewals or replacement properties can be acquired as necessary to meet future needs.

**Item 3. Legal Proceedings**

Various legal proceedings may arise in the ordinary course of business and may be pending or threatened against the Company and its subsidiaries. Neither the Company nor any of its subsidiaries is involved in any pending legal proceedings that management believes are material to the Company or its consolidated financial position. If an exposure were to be identified, it is the Company's policy to establish and accrue appropriate reserves during the accounting period in which a loss is deemed to be probable and the amount is determinable.

There were no tax shelter penalties assessed by the Internal Revenue Service against the Company during the year ended December 31, 2016.

**Item 4. Mine Safety Disclosure**

Not applicable.



Table of Contents**PART II****Item 5. Market for the Registrant's Common Stock, Related Shareholder Matters, and Issuer Purchases of Equity Securities**

Our common stock trades on The NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol FBNC. Table 22, included in "Management's Discussion and Analysis" below, sets forth the high and low market prices of our common stock as traded by the brokerage firms that maintain a market in our common stock and the dividends declared for the periods indicated. We paid a cash dividend of \$0.08 per share for each quarter of 2016. For the foreseeable future, it is our current intention to continue to pay regular cash dividends on a quarterly basis. See "Business - Supervision and Regulation" above and Note 16 to the consolidated financial statements for a discussion of other regulatory restrictions on the Company's payment of dividends. As of December 31, 2016, there were approximately 2,100 shareholders of record and another 3,100 shareholders whose stock is held in "street name."

**Additional Information Regarding the Registrant's Equity Compensation Plans**

At December 31, 2016, the Company had two equity-based compensation plans. The Company's 2014 Equity Plan is the only plan under which new grants of equity-based awards are possible.

The following table presents information as of December 31, 2016 regarding shares of the Company's stock that may be issued pursuant to the Company's equity-based compensation plans. At December 31, 2016, the Company had no warrants or stock appreciation rights outstanding under any compensation plans.

Plan category	As of December 31, 2016		
	(a) Number of securities outstanding to be issued upon exercise of outstanding options,	(b) Weighted-average exercise price of options, warrants and rights	(c) Number of securities available for future issuance under equity compensation plans (excluding securities reflected in column (a))

	warrants and rights			
Equity compensation plans approved by security holders (1)	59,948	\$	17.18	853,920
Equity compensation plans not approved by security holders	—		—	—
Total	59,948	\$	17.18	853,920

(1) Consists of (A) the Company's 2014 Equity Plan, which is currently in effect; and (B) the Company's 2007 Equity Plan, each of which was approved by our shareholders.

Table of Contents**Performance Graph**

The performance graph shown below compares the Company's cumulative total return to shareholders for the five-year period commencing December 31, 2011 and ending December 31, 2016, with the cumulative total return of the Russell 2000 Index (reflecting overall stock market performance of small-capitalization companies), and an index of banks with between \$1 billion and \$5 billion in assets, as constructed by SNL Securities, LP (reflecting changes in banking industry stocks). The graph and table assume that \$100 was invested on December 31, 2011 in each of the Company's common stock, the Russell 2000 Index, and the SNL Bank Index, and that all dividends were reinvested.

## First Bancorp

## Comparison of Five-Year Total Return Performances (1)

Five Years Ending December 31, 2016

	Total Return Index Values (1)					
	December 31,					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
First Bancorp	\$100.00	118.39	156.88	177.46	183.35	269.73
Russell 2000	100.00	116.35	161.52	169.43	161.95	196.45
SNL Index-Banks between \$1 billion and \$5 billion	100.00	123.31	179.31	187.48	209.86	301.92

## Notes:

Total return indices were provided from an independent source, SNL Securities LP, Charlottesville, Virginia, and (1) assume initial investment of \$100 on December 31, 2011, reinvestment of dividends, and changes in market values. Total return index numerical values used in this example are for illustrative purposes only.

Table of Contents**Issuer Purchases of Equity Securities**

Pursuant to authorizations by the Company's board of directors, the Company has from time to time repurchased shares of common stock in private transactions and in open-market purchases. The most recent board authorization was announced on July 30, 2004 and authorized the repurchase of 375,000 shares of the Company's stock. The Company did not repurchase any shares of its common stock during the quarter ended December 31, 2016.

## Issuer Purchases of Equity Securities

Period	Total Number of Shares Purchased (2)	Average Price Paid Per Share	Total Number of Shares Purchased as Part of Publicly Announced Plans or Programs (1)	Maximum Number of Shares That May Yet Be Purchased Under the Plans or Programs (1)
Month #1 (October 1, 2016 to October 31, 2016)	—	\$ —	—	214,241
Month #2 (November 1, 2016 to November 30, 2016)	—	—	—	214,241
Month #3 (December 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016)	—	—	—	214,241
Total	—	\$ —	—	214,241

## Footnotes to the Above Table

All shares available for repurchase are pursuant to publicly announced share repurchase authorizations. On July 30, 2004, the Company announced that its board of directors had approved the repurchase of 375,000 shares of the Company's common stock. The repurchase authorization does not have an expiration date. There are no plans or programs the Company has determined to terminate prior to expiration, or under which the Company does not intend to make further purchases.

The table above does not include shares that were used by option holders to satisfy the exercise price of the call options issued by the Company to its employees and directors pursuant to the Company's stock option plans. There were no such exercises during the three months ended December 31, 2016.

**Item 6. Selected Consolidated Financial Data**

Table 1 on page 76 of this report sets forth the selected consolidated financial data for the Company.





Table of Contents**Item 7. Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations**

Management's Discussion and Analysis is intended to assist readers in understanding our results of operations and changes in financial position for the past three years. This review should be read in conjunction with the consolidated financial statements and accompanying notes beginning on page 94 of this report and the supplemental financial data contained in Tables 1 through 22 included with this discussion and analysis.

**Overview - 2016 Compared to 2015**

We reported net income per diluted common share of \$1.33 in 2016, a 2.3% increase compared to 2015. The increased earnings were primarily due to the Company's growth, with loans increasing 7.6% and deposits increasing 4.8% year over year.

## Financial Highlights

<i>(\$ in thousands except per share data)</i>	2016	2015	Change
<b>Earnings</b>			
Net interest income	\$123,380	119,747	3.0%
Provision for loan losses - non-covered	2,109	2,008	5.0%
Provision (reversal) for loan losses - covered	(2,132 )	(2,788 )	(23.5%)
Noninterest income	25,551	18,764	36.2%
Noninterest expenses	106,821	98,131	8.9%
Income before income taxes	42,133	41,160	2.4%
Income tax expense	14,624	14,126	3.5%
Net income	27,509	27,034	1.8%
Preferred stock dividends	(175 )	(603 )	
Net income available to common shareholders	\$27,334	26,431	3.4%
<b>Net income per common share</b>			
Basic	\$1.37	1.34	2.2%
Diluted	1.33	1.30	2.3%
<b>Balances At Year End</b>			
Assets	\$3,614,862	3,362,065	7.5%
Loans	2,710,712	2,518,926	7.6%
Deposits	2,947,353	2,811,285	4.8%
<b>Ratios</b>			
Return on average assets	0.80%	0.82%	
Return on average common equity	7.73%	8.04%	
Net interest margin (taxable-equivalent)	4.03%	4.13%	

The following is a more detailed discussion of our results for 2016 compared to 2015:

For the year ended December 31, 2016, we reported net income available to common shareholders of \$27.3 million, or \$1.33 per diluted common share, an increase of 3.4% compared to the \$26.4 million, or \$1.30 per diluted common share, for the year ended December 31, 2015. The higher earnings were primarily the result of loan and deposit growth, as well as other initiatives that increased profitability.

Net interest income for the year ended December 31, 2016 amounted to \$123.4 million, a 3.0% increase from the \$119.7 million recorded in 2015. The higher net interest income was primarily due to growth in our loans outstanding. Also, see the section entitled “Net Interest Income” for additional information.

## Table of Contents

Our net interest margin (tax-equivalent net interest income divided by average earning assets) was 4.03% for 2016 compared to 4.13% for 2015. The lower margin in 2016 compared to 2015 was primarily due to lower loan yields, which have been impacted by the continued low interest rate environment.

We recorded a negative total provision for loan losses (reduction of the allowance for loan losses) on our covered and non-covered loans of \$23,000 in 2016 compared to a negative provision for loan losses of \$780,000 in 2015. For periods prior to the third quarter of 2016, our provision for loan losses was calculated separately between covered loans and non-covered loans, with covered loans being those loans subject to FDIC loss share agreements. Upon the termination of the FDIC loss share agreements on September 22, 2016, all loans became classified as non-covered. For the year 2016, the provision for loan losses on non-covered loans did not vary significantly from 2015, amounting to \$2.1 million in 2016 compared to \$2.0 million for 2015. For the portion of the year our loss share agreements were in effect in 2016, we recorded a negative provision for loan losses on covered loans of \$2.1 million compared to a \$2.8 million negative provision for loan losses in 2015. The lower negative provision for loan losses on covered loans in 2016 was due to lower covered loan recoveries.

Our overall provision for loan loss levels have been impacted by continued improvement in asset quality. Nonperforming assets amounted to \$59.1 million at December 31, 2016, a decrease of 33.8% from the \$89.3 million one year earlier. Our nonperforming assets to total assets ratio was 1.64% at December 31, 2016 compared to 2.66% at December 31, 2015. Annualized net charge-offs as a percentage of average loans for the twelve months ended December 31, 2016 was 0.14% compared to 0.46% for 2015.

For the year ended December 31, 2016, noninterest income amounted to \$25.6 million compared to \$18.8 million for the year ended December 31, 2015. The increases in noninterest income are primarily the result of the following strategic initiatives:

On January 1, 2016, we acquired Bankingport, Inc., an insurance agency located in Sanford, North Carolina, which is primarily responsible for the increases in commissions from financial product sales in the accompanying tables.

On May 5, 2016, we completed the acquisition of SBA Complete, a firm that specializes in providing consulting services for financial institutions across the country related to SBA loan origination and servicing. We recorded \$3.2 million in SBA consulting fees from the date of the acquisition through December 31, 2016.

In the third quarter of 2016, we leveraged the expertise assumed in our SBA Complete acquisition to launch a national SBA lending division. This division offers SBA loans to small business owners throughout the United States. Since the launch in the third quarter of 2016, this division originated \$24.8 million of SBA loans and earned \$1.4 million from gains on the sales of the guaranteed portions of these loans.

Partially offsetting the above-noted increases in noninterest income was higher indemnification asset expense in 2016 compared to 2015. Indemnification asset expense relates to write-offs of an indemnification asset associated with two FDIC loss share agreements. For 2016, the Company recorded \$10.3 million in indemnification asset expense compared to \$8.6 million in 2015. The 2016 amount includes a \$5.7 million charge associated with the early termination of the loss share agreements that occurred in September 2016.

Noninterest expenses for the year ended December 31, 2016 amounted to \$106.8 million compared to \$98.1 million recorded in 2015. The primary reason for the increase was the costs associated with the growth initiatives previously discussed.

Table of Contents

Total assets at December 31, 2016 amounted to \$3.6 billion, a 7.5% increase from a year earlier. Total loans at December 31, 2016 amounted to \$2.7 billion, a 7.6% increase from a year earlier, and total deposits amounted to \$2.9 billion at December 31, 2016, a 4.8% increase from a year earlier.

The \$192 million increase in our loans at December 31, 2016 compared to a year earlier is primarily related to ongoing internal initiatives to drive loan growth, including our expansion into higher growth markets.

Total deposits increased \$136 million at December 31, 2016 compared to December 31, 2015, which was driven by a \$175 million increase, or 8.3%, in checking, money market and savings accounts. Retail time deposits declined by \$99 million, or 15.8%, over this same period, while deposits obtained from brokers increased \$60 million, or 78.6%.

For the periods presented until the September 2016 termination of the FDIC loss share agreements, the Company's results of operations were significantly affected by FDIC loss share agreements related to two FDIC-assisted failed bank acquisitions. In the discussion above and in the accompanying tables, the term "covered" is used to describe assets that were included in FDIC loss share agreements, while the term "non-covered" refers to the assets not included in a loss share arrangement. As previously discussed, all loss share agreements were terminated in the third quarter of 2016 and thus the entire loan portfolio is now classified as non-covered. Certain prior period disclosures will continue to present the breakout of the loan portfolio between covered and non-covered.

Certain covered loans continued to have an unaccreted discount associated with them at the time of transfer to non-covered status. Such loans that experience favorable changes in credit quality compared to what was expected at the acquisition date, including loans that pay off, will continue to result in positive adjustments to interest income being recorded over the life of the respective loan – also referred to as loan discount accretion.

For periods prior to the termination, because favorable changes in covered assets resulted in lower expected FDIC claims, and unfavorable changes in covered assets resulted in higher expected FDIC claims, the FDIC indemnification asset was adjusted to reflect those expectations. The net increase or decrease in the indemnification asset was reflected within noninterest income, with the net impact being that pretax income was generally only impacted by 20% of the income or expense associated with provisions for loan losses on covered loans, discount accretion, and losses from covered foreclosed properties.

Table of Contents**Overview - 2015 Compared to 2014**

We reported net income per diluted common share of \$1.30 in 2015, a 9.2% increase compared to 2014. The increased earnings were primarily due to lower provisions for loan losses. Total assets increased by 4.5% year over year.

## Financial Highlights

<i>(\$ in thousands except per share data)</i>	2015	2014	Change
<b>Earnings</b>			
Net interest income	\$119,747	131,609	(9.0% )
Provision for loan losses - non-covered	2,008	7,087	(71.7%)
Provision (reversal) for loan losses - covered	(2,788 )	3,108	n/m
Noninterest income	18,764	14,368	30.6%
Noninterest expenses	98,131	97,251	0.9%
Income before income taxes	41,160	38,531	6.8%
Income tax expense	14,126	13,535	4.4%
Net income	27,034	24,996	8.2%
Preferred stock dividends	(603 )	(868 )	
Net income available to common shareholders	\$26,431	24,128	9.5%
<b>Net income per common share</b>			
Basic	\$1.34	1.22	9.8%
Diluted	1.30	1.19	9.2%
<b>Balances At Year End</b>			
Assets	\$3,362,065	3,218,383	4.5%
Loans	2,518,926	2,396,174	5.1%
Deposits	2,811,285	2,695,906	4.3%
<b>Ratios</b>			
Return on average assets	0.82%	0.75%	
Return on average common equity	8.04%	7.73%	
Net interest margin (taxable-equivalent)	4.13%	4.58%	

n/m – not meaningful

The following is a more detailed discussion of our results for 2015 compared to 2014:

For the year ended December 31, 2015, we reported net income available to common shareholders of \$26.4 million, or \$1.30 per diluted common share, an increase of 9.5% compared to the \$24.1 million, or \$1.19 per diluted common share, for the year ended December 31, 2014. The higher earnings were primarily the result of a lower provision for

loan losses.

Net interest income for the year ended December 31, 2015 amounted to \$119.7 million, a 9.0% decrease from the \$131.6 million recorded in 2014. The lower net interest income in 2015 was primarily due to a decrease in the amount of discount accretion recorded on loans purchased in failed bank acquisitions. For the full year of 2015, loan discount accretion amounted to \$4.8 million compared to \$16.0 million for 2014. The lower amount of accretion is due to the continued winding down of the unaccreted discount amount that resulted from failed-bank acquisitions in 2009 and 2011. As discussed below, the impact of the changes in discount accretion on pretax income is generally 20% of the gross amount of the change. Also, see the section entitled “Net Interest Income” for additional information.

Our net interest margin (tax-equivalent net interest income divided by average earning assets) was 4.13% for 2015 compared to 4.58% for 2014. The lower margin in 2015 compared to 2014 was primarily due to lower amounts of discount accretion on loans purchased in failed-bank acquisitions. Partially offsetting the effects of lower discount accretion was a decline in our cost of funds, which declined from 0.29% in 2014 to 0.24% in 2015.

Table of Contents

We recorded negative total provisions for loan losses (reduction of the allowance for loan losses) on our covered and non-covered loans of \$0.8 million in 2015 compared to provision for loan losses of \$10.2 million for 2014. The provision for loan losses on non-covered loans amounted to \$2.0 million in 2015 compared to \$7.1 million for 2014. The lower provision recorded in 2015 was primarily a result of continued favorable credit quality trends and generally improving economic trends. For the year ended December 31, 2015, we recorded a negative provision for loan losses on covered loans of \$2.8 million compared to a \$3.1 million provision for loan losses in 2014. The negative provision in 2015 primarily resulted from lower levels of covered nonperforming loans, declining levels of total covered loans, and net covered loan recoveries (recoveries, net of charge-offs) of \$2.3 million that were realized during the year ended December 31, 2015.

Our non-covered nonperforming assets declined 19.0% during 2015, amounting to \$77.2 million at December 31, 2015 (2.37% of total non-covered assets) compared to \$95.3 million at December 31, 2014 (3.09% of total non-covered assets). The decline in non-covered nonperforming assets was primarily due to on-going resolution of nonperforming assets and improving credit quality.

Total covered nonperforming assets also declined in 2015, amounting to \$12.1 million at December 31, 2015 compared to \$18.7 million at December 31, 2014. We experienced success resolving our covered loans, and property sales along the North Carolina coast were strong, which is where most of the Company's covered assets were located.

For the year ended December 31, 2015, noninterest income amounted to \$18.8 million compared to \$14.4 million for the year ended December 31, 2014. The increase in 2015 was primarily the result of lower FDIC indemnification asset expense, which is recorded as a reduction to noninterest income. FDIC indemnification asset expense amounted to \$8.6 million in 2015, a \$4.2 million decrease from the \$12.8 million recorded in 2014, with the lower expense being due to a lower amount of write-offs of the FDIC indemnification asset, which was associated with the continued winding down of the loss share assets.

Noninterest expenses for the year ended December 31, 2015 amounted to \$98.1 million, which was relatively unchanged from the \$97.3 million recorded in 2014.

Total assets at December 31, 2015 amounted to \$3.4 billion, a 4.5% increase from a year earlier. Total loans at December 31, 2015 amounted to \$2.5 billion, a 5.1% increase from a year earlier, and total deposits amounted to \$2.8 billion at December 31, 2015, a 4.3% increase from a year earlier.

Non-covered loans amounted to \$2.42 billion at December 31, 2015, an increase of \$147.7 million, or 6.5% from December 31, 2014, as a result of internal initiatives to drive loan growth. Loans covered by FDIC loss share agreements declined 19.6% in 2015 as those loans continued to pay down.



The increase in total deposits at December 31, 2015 compared to December 31, 2014 was primarily due to increases in checking, money market and savings accounts, which increased in total by \$236.5 million, or 12.6%, during 2015. Those increases were partially offset by decreases in time deposits, which declined a total of \$121.1 million, or 14.7%, during 2015. Time deposits are generally one of our most expensive funding sources, and thus the shift from this category benefitted our overall cost of funds.

On June 25, 2015, we redeemed \$32 million (32,000 shares) of Non-Cumulative Perpetual Preferred Stock, Series B (“SBLF Stock”) that had been issued to the United States Secretary of the Treasury in September 2011 related to our participation in the Small Business Lending Fund. On October 16, 2015, the remaining \$31.5 million of SBLF Stock was redeemed, which ended our participation in the Small Business Lending Fund.

Table of Contents

**Outlook for 2017**

The interest rate environment remains challenging. Historically, the interest rates we charge loan customers are correlated with long-term interest rates in the marketplace. While the Federal Reserve increased short-term interest rates by 25 basis points in late 2015 and by another 25 basis points in late 2016, long-term interest rates remain near historic lows. Additionally, interest rates on loans continue to be impacted downward by intense competition, and we expect continued declines in our loan discount accretion as our purchased loan portfolios wind down. Accordingly, we expect our overall loan yield to remain under pressure. As it relates to our funding costs, the yields on many of our deposits are already very low and the ability to lower them further is limited. Accordingly, we believe that a continued compression of our net interest margin is likely.

With four consecutive years of significantly improved trends of nonperforming assets and lower loan charge-offs compared to the recession years, we recorded low levels of provisions for loan losses in 2016, which brought our overall allowance for loan loss level down significantly following the elevated amounts we maintained during and immediately following the recession. In 2017, we expect it is likely that we will record a higher provision for loan losses than we did in 2016, as we provide for on-going loan charge-offs and expected new loan growth.

We experienced solid loan and deposit growth in 2016. Our local economies are generally improving and in 2016, we also continued to implement our plans to expand into larger and higher growth markets in North Carolina. Additionally, in the past two years we have hired a number of experienced bankers who have brought us business, and we expect they will continue to do so. Accordingly, we expect to experience continued loan and deposit growth in 2017.

Consistent with our initiative to expand into larger markets, in June 2016, we announced an agreement to acquire Carolina Bank Holdings, Inc., headquartered in Greensboro, North Carolina with eight branches and approximately \$705 million in assets. This acquisition will be a natural extension of our recent expansion into high-growth areas of North Carolina. We closed on this transaction on March 3, 2017. We continue to regularly seek and evaluate bank and non-bank acquisition opportunities, which could result in the issuance of additional capital.

Also, on September 22, 2016, we terminated our loss share agreements with the FDIC. As such, we expect our income statement volatility to decrease in 2017 as it relates to indemnification asset expense. We recorded \$10.3 million, \$8.6 million, and \$12.8 million of indemnification asset expense in 2016, 2015, and 2014, respectively. Absent a transaction that would give rise to a new indemnification asset, no indemnification expense will be recorded in the future.

Table of Contents

**Critical Accounting Policies**

The accounting principles we follow and our methods of applying these principles conform with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America and with general practices followed by the banking industry. Certain of these principles involve a significant amount of judgment and may involve the use of estimates based on our best assumptions at the time of the estimation. The allowance for loan losses, intangible assets, and the fair value and discount accretion of acquired loans are three policies we have identified as being more sensitive in terms of judgments and estimates, taking into account their overall potential impact to our consolidated financial statements.

Allowance for Loan Losses

Due to the estimation process and the potential materiality of the amounts involved, we have identified the accounting for the allowance for loan losses and the related provision for loan losses as an accounting policy critical to our consolidated financial statements. The provision for loan losses charged to operations is an amount sufficient to bring the allowance for loan losses to an estimated balance considered adequate to absorb losses inherent in the portfolio.

Our determination of the adequacy of the allowance is based primarily on a mathematical model that estimates the appropriate allowance for loan losses. This model has two components. The first component involves the estimation of losses on individually evaluated “impaired loans.” A loan is considered to be impaired when, based on current information and events, it is probable we will be unable to collect all amounts due according to the contractual terms of the loan agreement. A loan is specifically evaluated for an appropriate valuation allowance if the loan balance is above a prescribed evaluation threshold (which varies based on credit quality, accruing status, troubled debt restructured status, and type of collateral) and the loan is determined to be impaired. The estimated valuation allowance is the difference, if any, between the loan balance outstanding and the value of the impaired loan as determined by either 1) an estimate of the cash flows that we expect to receive from the borrower discounted at the loan’s effective rate, or 2) in the case of a collateral-dependent loan, the fair value of the collateral.

The second component of the allowance model is an estimate of losses for all loans not considered to be impaired loans (“general reserve loans”). General reserve loans are segregated into pools by loan type and risk grade and estimated loss percentages are assigned to each loan pool based on historical losses. The historical loss percentage is then adjusted for any environmental factors used to reflect changes in the collectability of the portfolio not captured by historical data.

The reserves estimated for individually evaluated impaired loans are then added to the reserve estimated for general reserve loans. This becomes our “allocated allowance.” The allocated allowance is compared to the actual allowance for loan losses recorded on our books and any adjustment necessary for the recorded allowance to absorb losses inherent

in the portfolio is recorded as a provision for loan losses. The provision for loan losses is a direct charge to earnings in the period recorded. Any remaining difference between the allocated allowance and the actual allowance for loan losses recorded on our books is our “unallocated allowance.”

Purchased loans are recorded at fair value at acquisition date. Therefore, amounts deemed uncollectible at acquisition date represent a discount to the loan value and become a part of the fair value calculation and are excluded from the allowance for loan losses. Subsequent decreases in the amount expected to be collected result in a provision for loan losses with a corresponding increase in the allowance for loan losses. Subsequent increases in the amount expected to be collected are accreted into income over the life of the loan and this accretion is referred to as “loan discount accretion.”

## Table of Contents

Although we use the best information available to make evaluations, future material adjustments may be necessary if economic, operational, or other conditions change. In addition, various regulatory agencies, as an integral part of their examination process, periodically review our allowance for loan losses. Such agencies may require us to recognize additions to the allowance based on the examiners' judgment about information available to them at the time of their examinations.

For further discussion, see "Nonperforming Assets" and "Summary of Loan Loss Experience" below.

## Intangible Assets

Due to the estimation process and the potential materiality of the amounts involved, we have also identified the accounting for intangible assets as an accounting policy critical to our consolidated financial statements.

When we complete an acquisition transaction, the excess of the purchase price over the amount by which the fair market value of assets acquired exceeds the fair market value of liabilities assumed represents an intangible asset. We must then determine the identifiable portions of the intangible asset, with any remaining amount classified as goodwill. Identifiable intangible assets associated with these acquisitions are generally amortized over the estimated life of the related asset, whereas goodwill is tested annually for impairment, but not systematically amortized. Assuming no goodwill impairment, it is beneficial to our future earnings to have a lower amount assigned to identifiable intangible assets and higher amount of goodwill as opposed to having a higher amount considered to be identifiable intangible assets and a lower amount classified as goodwill.

The primary identifiable intangible asset we typically record in connection with a whole bank or bank branch acquisition is the value of the core deposit intangible, whereas when we acquire an insurance agency or a SBA consulting firm, as we did in 2016, the primary identifiable intangible asset is the value of the acquired customer list. Determining the amount of identifiable intangible assets and their average lives involves multiple assumptions and estimates and is typically determined by performing a discounted cash flow analysis, which involves a combination of any or all of the following assumptions: customer attrition/runoff, alternative funding costs, deposit servicing costs, and discount rates. We typically engage a third party consultant to assist in each analysis. For the whole bank and bank branch transactions recorded to date, the core deposit intangibles have generally been estimated to have a life ranging from seven to ten years, with an accelerated rate of amortization. For insurance agency acquisitions, the identifiable intangible assets related to the customer lists were determined to have a life of ten to fifteen years, with amortization occurring on a straight-line basis. For the SBA consulting firm, the identifiable intangible asset related to the customer list was determined to have a life of approximately seven years, with amortization occurring on a straight-line basis.

Subsequent to the initial recording of the identifiable intangible assets and goodwill, we amortize the identifiable intangible assets over their estimated average lives, as discussed above. In addition, on at least an annual basis, goodwill is evaluated for impairment by comparing the fair value of our reporting units to their related carrying value, including goodwill. If the carrying value of a reporting unit were ever to exceed its fair value, we would determine whether the implied fair value of the goodwill, using a discounted cash flow analysis, exceeded the carrying value of the goodwill. If the carrying value of the goodwill exceeded the implied fair value of the goodwill, an impairment loss would be recorded in an amount equal to that excess. Performing such a discounted cash flow analysis would involve the significant use of estimates and assumptions.

In our 2016 goodwill impairment evaluation, we concluded that our goodwill was not impaired.

We review identifiable intangible assets for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying value may not be recoverable. Our policy is that an impairment loss is recognized, equal to the difference between the asset's carrying amount and its fair value, if the sum of the expected undiscounted future cash flows is less than the carrying amount of the asset. Estimating future cash flows involves the use of multiple estimates and assumptions, such as those listed above.

## Table of Contents

### Fair Value and Discount Accretion of Acquired Loans

We consider the determination of the initial fair value of acquired loans and the subsequent discount accretion of the purchased loans to involve a high degree of judgment and complexity. Substantially all of our acquired loans over the past ten years resulted from FDIC-assisted transactions of two failed banks, thus the initial fair value of the related FDIC indemnification asset also involved a high degree of judgment and complexity.

We determine fair value accounting estimates of newly assumed assets and liabilities in accordance with relevant accounting guidance. However, the amount that we realize on these assets could differ materially from the carrying value reflected in our financial statements, based upon the timing of collections on the acquired loans in future periods. Because of the inherent credit losses associated with the acquired loans in a failed bank acquisition, the amount that we record as the fair values for the loans is generally less than the contractual unpaid principal balance due from the borrowers, with the difference being referred to as the “discount” on the acquired loans. We have applied the cost recovery method of accounting to all purchased impaired loans due to the uncertainty as to the timing of expected cash flows. This will generally result in the recognition of interest income on these impaired loans only when the cash payments received from the borrower exceed the recorded net book value of the related loans.

For nonimpaired purchased loans, we accrete the discount over the lives of the loans in a manner consistent with the guidance for accounting for loan origination fees and costs.

### **Merger and Acquisition Activity**

As previously discussed, in January 2016, we acquired an insurance agency in Sanford, North Carolina, and in May 2016, we acquired a firm specializing in origination and servicing of SBA loans. In July 2016, we exchanged our seven bank branches located in Virginia to another community bank in return for six of their North Carolina branches.

See Note 2 to the consolidated financial statements for additional information regarding these acquisitions.

### **FDIC Indemnification Asset**

As previously discussed, on June 19, 2009 and January 21, 2011, we acquired substantially all of the assets and liabilities of Cooperative Bank and The Bank of Asheville, respectively, in FDIC-assisted transactions. For each transaction, we entered into two loss share agreements with the FDIC, which provided the Bank significant loss

protection from losses experienced on the loans and foreclosed real estate. Under the Cooperative Bank loss share agreements, the FDIC covered 80% of covered loan and foreclosed real estate losses up to \$303 million, and 95% of losses in excess of that amount. Under The Bank of Asheville loss share agreements, the FDIC covered 80% of all covered loan and foreclosed real estate losses. For both transactions, the loss share reimbursements were applicable for ten years for single family home loans and five years for all other loans. One of our Cooperative Bank agreements expired on July 1, 2014 and one of The Bank of Asheville agreements expired on April 1, 2016. On September 22, 2016, we reached a mutual agreement with the FDIC to terminate all loss share agreements. Under the terms of the agreement, the Bank paid \$2.0 million to the FDIC to terminate all rights and obligations associated with the agreements. As a result, all future losses and recoveries associated with failed bank assets will be borne solely by the Bank.

In connection with the two FDIC transactions noted above, we recorded an FDIC indemnification asset that represented payments expected to be received from the FDIC related to the loss share agreements. The carrying value of this receivable at each period end was the sum of: 1) actual claims that were incurred and were in the process of submission to the FDIC for reimbursement, but were not yet received and 2) our estimated amount of claimable loan and other real estate losses covered by the agreements multiplied by the FDIC reimbursement percentage. As a result of the termination of the loss share agreements, we no longer have an indemnification asset related to these agreements.



Table of Contents

At December 31, 2016 and 2015, the FDIC indemnification asset was comprised of the following components:

(\$ in thousands)	2016	2015
Receivable (payable) related to claims incurred (recoveries), not yet received (paid), net	\$ —	(633 )
Receivable related to estimated future claims on loans		— 8,675
Receivable related to estimated future claims on foreclosed real estate		— 397
FDIC indemnification asset	\$ —	8,439

Subsequent to the initial recording of the indemnification asset, we recorded adjustments to it as discussed below, the FDIC indemnification asset was generally adjusted in the following circumstances, with downward adjustments to the asset resulting in FDIC indemnification asset expense, and upwards adjustments resulting in FDIC indemnification asset income, or a reduction in collection expense, as discussed below:

1) Deterioration of credit quality of covered loans – As of the acquisition dates, we recorded the loans acquired from Cooperative Bank and The Bank of Asheville on our books at a fair value that was \$227.9 million and \$51.7 million, respectively, less than the contractual amounts due from the borrowers, which was our estimate of the loan losses inherent in the portfolio. As the credit quality of these portfolios changed and better information was obtained about likely losses, some loans had better repayment expectations than we originally projected and some loans had worse repayment expectations than originally projected. For loans with worse repayment expectations, we generally recorded provisions for loan losses with corresponding increases to the FDIC indemnification asset by recording noninterest income (indemnification asset income) in proportion to the 80% reimbursement percentage. In 2014, we recorded provisions for loan losses on covered loans amounting to \$1.7 million that resulted in a corresponding upward adjustment to the FDIC indemnification asset of \$1.4 million. We also recorded an additional \$1.4 million in provisions for loan losses in 2014 without corresponding increases to the indemnification asset because we believed certain loan losses would occur after the expiration of the loss share agreements. In 2015 and 2016, we recorded negative provisions for loan losses on covered loans as a result of loan recoveries that exceeded charge-offs by \$2.3 million and \$1.7 million, respectively.

2) Write-downs and losses on foreclosed properties – When we foreclose on delinquent borrowers, we initially record the foreclosed property at the lower of book or fair value, less costs to sell, (based on current appraisals), with any deficiency recorded as a loan charge-off. Subsequent to the foreclosure, we periodically review the fair value of the property through updated appraisals or independent market pricing, and if the appraisal or market pricing indicates a fair value lower than our carrying value, we must write the property down. We also sell foreclosed properties that frequently result in losses. Each of these situations generally resulted in the Company recording losses on covered foreclosed properties with a corresponding 80% increase to the FDIC indemnification asset. If we sold a foreclosed property that resulted in a gain, then we generally recorded a corresponding decrease to the FDIC indemnification asset to reflect the fact that we had to reimburse the FDIC 80% of any gains that related to prior claims. In 2016 and 2015, we recorded net gains on covered foreclosed properties amounting to \$0.9 million and \$1.0 million, respectively, which resulted in a downward adjustment to the FDIC indemnification asset of \$0.7 million and \$0.4 million, respectively. In 2014, we recorded net losses and write-downs on covered foreclosed properties amounting to \$1.9 million, which resulted in an upward adjustment to the FDIC indemnification asset of \$1.5 million.

3) Expenses incurred related to collection activities on covered assets – As a result of our collection efforts, we incurred expenses such as legal fees, property taxes and appraisal costs. Many of these expenses were reimbursable by the FDIC. These expenses were recorded as “other” noninterest expenses and a corresponding increase was made to increase the FDIC indemnification asset by reducing the gross collection expenses by the amount expected to be reimbursed by the FDIC for eligible expenses. In 2016, 2015, and 2014, we incurred \$0.4 million, \$1.2 million, and \$3.1 million, in gross collection expenses related to covered assets, respectively, and reduced that amount by \$0.3 million, \$1.2 million, and \$3.9 million, in FDIC reimbursements, respectively.

Table of Contents

4) Cash transactions with the FDIC related to claims – On at least a quarterly basis, we submitted eligible loss share claims or recoveries to the FDIC. After reviewing and approving the claims/recoveries, the FDIC wired us cash or we wired the FDIC cash, which reduced or increased the amount of the FDIC indemnification asset. In 2016, we paid approximately \$1.6 million in cash to the FDIC related to recoveries on loss share loans. In 2015 and 2014, we received \$6.7 million and \$17.7 million in FDIC reimbursements, respectively.

5) Accretion of discount on acquired loans – As noted above, we recorded the acquired loans of the two loss share transactions on our books at a fair value that was \$280 million (in total) less than the contractual amounts due from the borrowers (the “discount”), which were our estimate of the loan losses inherent in the portfolio. As the credit quality of this portfolio changed and better information was obtained about likely losses, some loans had better repayment expectations than we originally projected and some loans had worse repayment expectations than originally projected (as discussed above). For loans with improved repayment expectations, we are systematically reducing the discount over the life of the loan. For some loans, we have received complete payoffs at the contractual balance and the discount must be reduced to zero. When we reduce/accrete the discount, we do so by recognizing interest income in that same amount. When the expected losses became less than the original estimate, our expected reimbursement from the FDIC declined as well. Accordingly, we generally reduced the FDIC indemnification asset in correlation to the accretion of the loan discount. Prior to the termination of the loss share agreements, we recorded \$2.7 million in discount accretion in 2016, which resulted in a reduction to the FDIC indemnification asset and indemnification expense of \$2.0 million. In 2015 and 2014, we recorded discount accretion of \$4.8 million and \$16.0 million, respectively, which resulted in reductions to the FDIC indemnification asset and indemnification expense of \$5.6 million and \$15.3 million, respectively.

In summary, circumstances that resulted in adjustments to the FDIC indemnification asset were recorded within the income statement line items noted without consideration of the FDIC loss share agreements. Because favorable changes in covered assets resulted in lower expected FDIC claims, and unfavorable changes in covered assets generally resulted in higher expected FDIC claims, the FDIC indemnification asset was adjusted to reflect those expectations. The net increase or decrease in the indemnification asset was reflected within noninterest income as indemnification asset income/expense.

The adjustments resulted in volatility within individual income statement line items. Because of the FDIC loss share agreements and the associated indemnification asset, amounts recorded as provisions for loan losses, discount accretion, and losses from foreclosed properties generally only impacted pretax income by 20% of those amounts, due to the corresponding adjustments that were made to the indemnification asset.

Table of Contents

The following presents a rollforward of the FDIC indemnification asset since the date of the Cooperative Bank acquisition on June 19, 2009 through the date of termination of the loss share agreements on September 22, 2016.

*(\$ in thousands)*

Balance at June 19, 2009	\$185,112
Decrease related to favorable change in loss estimates	(1,516 )
Increase related to reimbursable expenses	1,300
Cash received	(40,500 )
Accretion of loan discount	(1,175 )
Balance at December 31, 2009	143,221
Increase related to unfavorable change in loss estimates	30,419
Increase related to reimbursable expenses	2,900
Cash received	(46,721 )
Accretion of loan discount	(6,100 )
Balance at December 31, 2010	123,719
Increase related to acquisition of The Bank of Asheville	42,218
Increase related to unfavorable change in loss estimates	29,814
Increase related to reimbursable expenses	5,725
Cash received	(69,339 )
Accretion of loan discount	(9,278 )
Other	(1,182 )
Balance at December 31, 2011	121,677
Increase related to unfavorable change in loss estimates	16,984
Increase related to reimbursable expenses	6,947
Cash received	(29,796 )
Accretion of loan discount	(13,173 )
Other	(80 )
Balance at December 31, 2012	102,559
Increase related to unfavorable change in loss estimates	9,312
Increase related to reimbursable expenses	5,352
Cash received	(49,572 )
Accretion of loan discount	(16,160 )
Other	(2,869 )
Balance at December 31, 2013	48,622
Increase related to unfavorable change in loss estimates	2,923
Increase related to reimbursable expenses	3,925
Cash received	(17,724 )
Accretion of loan discount	(15,281 )
Other	104
Balance at December 31, 2014	22,569
Increase (decrease) related to unfavorable (favorable) changes in loss estimates	(3,031 )
Increase related to reimbursable expenses	1,232
Cash received	(6,673 )
Accretion of loan discount	(5,584 )
Decrease related to settlement of disputed claims	(406 )
Other	332

Edgar Filing: FIRST BANCORP /NC/ - Form 10-K

Balance at December 31, 2015	\$8,439
Increase (decrease) related to unfavorable (favorable) changes in loss estimates	(2,246 )
Increase related to reimbursable expenses	205
Cash paid	1,554
Amortization associated with accretion of loan discount	(2,005 )
Other	(236 )
Write-off of asset balance upon termination of FDIC loss share agreements	(5,711 )
Balance at December 31, 2016	\$—

Table of Contents**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS OF OPERATIONS**

Net interest income, the “spread” between earnings on interest-earning assets and the interest paid on interest-bearing liabilities, constitutes the largest source of our earnings. Other factors that significantly affect operating results are the provision for loan losses, noninterest income such as service fees and noninterest expenses such as salaries, occupancy expense, equipment expense and other overhead costs, as well as the effects of income taxes.

**Net Interest Income**

Net interest income on a reported basis amounted to \$123.4 million in 2016, \$119.7 million in 2015, and \$131.6 million in 2014. For internal purposes and in the discussion that follows, we evaluate our net interest income on a tax-equivalent basis by adding the tax benefit realized from tax-exempt securities to reported interest income. Net interest income on a tax-equivalent basis amounted to \$125.4 million in 2016, \$121.4 million in 2015, and \$133.1 million in 2014. Management believes that analysis of net interest income on a tax-equivalent basis is useful and appropriate because it allows a comparison of net interest amounts in different periods without taking into account the different mix of taxable versus non-taxable investments that may have existed during those periods. The following is a reconciliation of reported net interest income to tax-equivalent net interest income.

(\$ in thousands)	Year ended December 31,		
	2016	2015	2014
Net interest income, as reported	\$ 123,380	119,747	131,609
Tax-equivalent adjustment	2,054	1,634	1,502
Net interest income, tax-equivalent	\$ 125,434	121,381	133,111

Table 2 analyzes net interest income on a tax-equivalent basis. Our net interest income on a tax-equivalent basis increased by 3.3% in 2016 and decreased by 8.8% in 2015. There are two primary factors that cause changes in the amount of net interest income we record – 1) changes in our loans and deposits balances and 2)

our net interest margin. “Net interest margin” is a ratio we use to measure the spread between the yield on our earning assets and the cost of our funding and is calculated by dividing tax-equivalent net interest income by average earning assets.

The increase in net interest income in 2016 compared to 2015 was primarily due to growth in our loans outstanding, the positive impact of which was partially offset by a 10 basis point decline in our net interest margin. The decrease in net interest income in 2015 compared to 2014 was due to a lower net interest margin caused primarily by lower loan discount accretion, as average loans and deposits were approximately the same for those years.

For 2016 average loans increased \$168.7 million, or 6.9%, with interest income earned on loans increasing by \$3.4 million over 2015, while average deposits also had good growth at 5.2%. For 2015, average loans outstanding amounted to \$2.43 billion, unchanged from 2014, while average deposits declined slightly by 1.3%.

Our net interest margin declined from 4.58% in 2014 to 4.13% in 2015 to 4.03% in 2016. Lower asset yields have been the primary factor causing the decline in the net interest margin. From 2014 to 2016, the yield we earned on our interest-earning assets declined from 4.86% in 2014 to 4.37% in 2015 to 4.28% in 2016. Steadily declining loan yields caused by the continued low interest rate environment and competition for loans have played a factor in this decline. Additionally in comparing 2014 to 2015, a significant factor in the lower loan yields was a lower amount of loan discount accretion on purchased loans purchased (see discussion below).

Table of Contents

The declines in asset yields were partially offset by lower liability costs, as we have been able to progressively lower interest rates on maturing time deposits that were originated in prior periods. The average interest rate paid on our interest bearing deposits declined from 0.32% in 2014 to 0.26% in 2015 to 0.24% in 2016. Also, shifts in the funding mix of our liabilities have had a positive impact on our net interest margin. As calculated from Table 2, the average amount of our lower cost deposits, comprised of checking accounts (non-interest bearing and interest bearing), money market accounts and savings accounts, steadily increased from \$1.8 billion in 2014 to \$2.2 billion in 2016, an increase of 20%, while the average amount of our higher cost funding, comprised of time deposits, decreased from \$0.9 billion to \$0.7 billion over that same period, a decline of 28%.

The net interest margin for all periods benefited, by varying amounts, from the net accretion of purchase accounting premiums/discounts associated with acquisitions, primarily the Cooperative Bank acquisition in June 2009 and The Bank of Asheville acquisition in January 2011. As can be seen in the table below, we recorded \$4.5 million in 2016, \$4.8 million in 2015, and \$15.9 million in 2014, in net accretion of purchase accounting premiums/discounts that increased net interest income.

(\$ in thousands)	Year Ended December 31, 2016	Year Ended December 31, 2015	Year Ended December 31, 2014
Interest income – reduced by premium amortization on loans	\$ —	—	(98 )
Interest income – increased by accretion of loan discount	4,451	4,751	16,009
Interest expense – reduced by premium amortization of deposits	77	—	7
Impact on net interest income	\$ 4,528	4,751	15,918

The biggest component of the purchase accounting adjustments in each year was loan discount accretion, which amounted to \$4.5 million in 2016, \$4.8 million in 2015, and \$16.0 million in 2014. In 2016, 2015 and 2014, lower amounts of remaining unaccreted loan discount resulted in lower amounts of loan discount accretion – unaccreted loan discount has declined from \$39.6 million at January 1, 2014 to \$12.7 million at December 31, 2016. We expect loan discount accretion to continue to decline as a result of the continued decline in remaining unaccreted discount.

Table 3 presents additional detail regarding the estimated impact that changes in loan and deposit volumes and changes in the interest rates we earned/paid had on our net interest income in 2015 and 2016. For 2016, higher loan volume positively impacted interest income by \$8.0 million, while lower loan interest rates negatively impacted interest income by \$4.6 million, with the net effect driving the total increase in interest income of \$4.8 million. A higher level of borrowings in 2016 was the primary factor causing the \$0.7 million increase in interest expense. The higher level of borrowings was necessary in 2016 in order to fund the loan growth, which outpaced deposit growth. Overall, as the table indicates, net interest income on a tax-equivalent basis grew \$4.1 million in 2016.

For 2015, Table 3 shows that changes in loan rates reduced interest income by \$15.8 million, with \$11.3 million of that decrease being the lower loan discount accretion discussed above. A \$2.7 million positive impact of having a



higher volume of taxable securities partially offset the lower loan interest income, which resulted in 2015 having an interest income decline of \$13.0 million. Lower volumes and lower rates paid on deposits drove a decline of \$1.3 million in interest expense, which, overall, resulted in tax-equivalent net interest income declining by \$11.7 million in 2015 compared to 2014.

See additional information regarding net interest income in the section entitled “Interest Rate Risk.”

Table of Contents

**Provision for Loan Losses**

The provision for loan losses charged to operations is an amount sufficient to bring the allowance for loan losses to an estimated balance considered appropriate to absorb probable losses inherent in our loan portfolio. Management's determination of the adequacy of the allowance is based on our level of loan growth, an evaluation of the loan portfolio, current economic conditions, historical loan loss experience and other risk factors.

For 2016 and 2015, we recorded total negative provisions for loan losses (reduction of allowance for loan losses) of \$23,000 and \$780,000, respectively. For 2014, our total provisions for loan losses were \$10.2 million. The total provision for loan losses is comprised of provision for loan losses for non-covered loans and provision for loan losses for covered loans, as discussed in the following paragraphs.

For periods prior to the third quarter 2016 termination of our loss share agreements, we computed and presented the provision for loan losses related to covered loans separately from that of our non-covered loans. Generally, we had recorded provisions for loan losses on non-covered loans as a result of net charge-offs and loan growth, while significant recoveries in our previously covered loan portfolios resulted in negative provisions for loan losses. Upon the termination of the loss share agreements, all loans became classified as non-covered and the allowance for loan losses balances were combined into a single amount and no longer computed separately.

We recorded \$2.1 million, \$2.0 million, and \$7.1 million in provisions for loan losses related to non-covered loans for the years ended December 31, 2016, 2015, and 2014, respectively. In 2015, a prolonged period of stable and improving loan quality trends resulted in lower provision for loan losses that was needed to adjust our allowance for loan losses to the appropriate amount. This was because our allowance for loan loss model utilizes the net charge-offs experienced in the most recent years as a significant component of estimating the current allowance for loan losses that is necessary. Thus, older years (and parts thereof) systematically age out and are excluded from the analysis as time goes on. In 2015, periods of high net charge-offs we experienced during the peak of the recession dropped out of the analysis and were replaced by the more modest levels of net charge-offs recently experienced. This had the impact of bringing our overall allowance for loan loss level down to a more normalized level following the elevated amounts we maintained during and immediately following the recession and was the primary reason for the provision for loan losses on non-covered loans declining from \$7.1 million in 2014 to \$2.0 million in 2015. This same situation continued in 2016 and was further impacted by net charge-offs that declined significantly. These factors combined to result in a provision for non-covered loan losses that increased only slightly to \$2.1 million in 2016 despite higher loan growth. The factors just noted resulted in our non-covered allowance for loan losses to total loans ratio declining from 1.69% at December 31, 2014 to 1.11% at December 31, 2015 to 0.88% at December 31, 2016. In 2017, it is likely that we will record a higher amount of provision for loan losses than we did in 2015 and 2016, as we provide for on-going loan charge-offs and expected new loan growth.

As it relates to covered loans, we recorded a negative provision for loan losses (reduction of allowance for loan losses) of \$2.1 million in 2016 and \$2.8 million in 2015 and a provision for loan losses of \$3.1 million in 2014. The negative provisions in 2015 and 2016 resulted from lower levels of covered nonperforming loans, declining levels of total covered loans, and several large recoveries received that resulted in having net loan recoveries (recoveries, net of charge-offs) of \$1.7 million in 2016 and \$2.3 million in 2015. We recorded provisions for loan losses on covered loans of \$3.1 million during 2014 to provide for loans that showed signs of collection problems during the year, as well as to provide for collateral dependent nonaccrual loans for which we received updated appraisals during the year that reflected lower collateral valuations.

Total net charge-offs (covered and non-covered) for the years ended December 31, 2016, 2015, and 2014, were \$3.7 million, \$11.3 million, and \$18.1 million, respectively.

## Table of Contents

Net-charge offs of non-covered loans were \$5.4 million, \$13.6 million, and \$14.7 million for 2016, 2015, and 2014, respectively. The declining amount of non-covered net-charge offs in recent years is reflective of improving economic conditions and lower levels of our highest-risk loans.

Net charge-offs (recoveries) of covered loans were (\$1.7 million), (\$2.3 million), and \$3.3 million in 2016, 2015, and 2014, respectively, with several large recoveries significantly impacting 2015 and 2016.

As seen in Table 14, in 2016 and 2015, net charge-offs were highest in our residential first mortgages, which is reflective of these loans comprising approximately 30% of our total loans, as well as continued challenging economic conditions in some of our more rural market areas. In 2012-2014, net charge-offs were highest in loans classified as “real estate – construction, land development & other land loans.” This category of loans is primarily comprised of land acquisition and development loans and other types of lot loans. These types of loans were particularly hard hit by the decline in real estate development and property values that occurred in the recession.

See “Nonperforming Assets” below for further discussion of our asset quality, which impacts our provisions for loan losses.

See the section entitled “Allowance for Loan Losses and Loan Loss Experience” below for a more detailed discussion of the allowance for loan losses. The allowance is monitored and analyzed regularly in conjunction with our loan analysis and grading program, and adjustments are made to maintain an adequate allowance for loan losses.

## **Noninterest Income**

Our noninterest income amounted to \$25.6 million in 2016, \$18.8 million in 2015, and \$14.4 million in 2014.

As shown in Table 4, core noninterest income excludes gains from acquisitions, foreclosed property write-downs and losses, indemnification asset income (expense), securities gains or losses, and other miscellaneous gains and losses. Core noninterest income amounted to \$35.0 million in 2016, a 19.3% increase from the \$29.3 million recorded in 2015. The 2015 core noninterest income of \$29.3 million was a 3.8% decrease from the \$30.5 million recorded in 2014.

See Table 4 and the following discussion for an understanding of the components of noninterest income.

Service charges on deposit accounts amounted to \$10.6 million, \$11.6 million, and \$13.7 million in 2016, 2015 and 2014, respectively. In 2016 and 2015, fewer instances of fees earned from customers overdrawing their accounts have impacted this line item, as well as more customers meeting the requirements to have the monthly services charges waived on their checking accounts.

Other service charges, commissions and fees amounted to \$11.9 million in 2016, a 9.2% increase from the \$10.9 million earned in 2015. The 2015 amount of \$10.9 million was 8.9% higher than the \$10.0 million earned in 2014. This category of noninterest income includes items such as electronic payment processing revenue (which includes fees related to credit card transactions by merchants and customers and fees earned from debit card transactions), ATM charges, safety deposit box rentals, fees from sales of personalized checks, and check cashing fees. The growth in this category for both years was primarily attributable to increased debit card usage by our customers, as we earn a small fee each time our customers make a debit card transaction. Interchange income from credit cards has also increased due to growth in the number and usage of credit cards, which we believe is a result of increased promotion of this product.

Table of Contents

Fees from presold mortgages amounted to \$2.0 million in 2016, \$2.5 million in 2015, and \$2.7 million in 2014. Fewer mortgage loan originations resulted in decreases in these fees in 2016 and 2015. Also, fewer mortgage loans were sold to the secondary market in 2016 and 2015 compared to 2014 due to our decision to hold more loans for investment in order to offset declines in our residential mortgage loan portfolio.

Commissions from sales of insurance and financial products amounted to \$3.8 million in 2016, \$2.6 million in 2015, and \$2.7 million in 2014. This line item includes commissions we receive from three sources - 1) sales of credit life insurance associated with new loans, 2) commissions from the sales of investment, annuity, and long term care insurance products, and 3) commissions from the sale of property and casualty insurance. The following table presents the contribution of each of the three sources to the total amount recognized in this line item:

(\$ in thousands)	For the year ended December 31,		
	2016	2015	2014
Commissions earned from:			
Sales of credit life insurance	\$ 15	26	43
Sales of investments, annuities, and long term care insurance	2,027	1,934	2,028
Sales of property and casualty insurance	1,748	620	662
Total	\$ 3,790	2,580	2,733

As can be seen in the above table, sales of property and casualty insurance increased significantly in 2016 compared to 2015, which is due to our January 1, 2016 acquisition of Bankingport, Inc., an insurance agency located in Sanford, North Carolina (see Note 2 to the consolidated financial statements for additional information). Sales of investments, annuities and long term care insurance did not vary significantly among the years presented.

The largest reason for the increases in core noninterest income in 2016 was the addition of SBA consulting fees and SBA loan sale gains during the last half of 2016. As previously discussed, on May 5, 2016, we completed the acquisition of a firm that specializes in consulting with financial institutions across the country related to SBA loan origination and servicing (see Note 2 to the consolidated financial statements for additional information). We recorded \$3.2 million in SBA consulting fees related to this business from the date of the acquisition through December 31, 2016. In the third quarter of 2016, we leveraged the expertise we gained from personnel assumed in the SBA Complete acquisition and launched a national SBA lending division offering SBA loans to small business owners throughout the United States. The SBA division originated \$24.8 million in loans in 2016 and earned \$1.4 million from gains on the sales of the guaranteed portions of these loans for the year.

Table 4 shows earnings from bank-owned life insurance income were \$2.1 million in 2016, \$1.7 million in 2015, and \$1.3 million in 2014. In the fourth quarters of 2015 and 2014, we purchased \$15.0 million and \$10.0 million, respectively, in bank-owned life insurance on certain officers of our Company, which increased our income for this line item.

Noninterest income not considered to be “core” resulted in net reductions to total noninterest income of \$9.4 million in 2016, \$10.6 million in 2015, and \$16.1 million in 2014. The components of non-core noninterest income are shown in Table 4 and the significant components thereof are discussed below.

We recorded net losses on non-covered foreclosed properties of \$1.5 million in 2016, \$2.5 million in 2015, and \$1.9 million in 2014. These losses have resulted from ongoing declines in property values for certain types of properties. Additionally, in order to dispose of certain of our foreclosed properties that we held for an extended period of time, it became necessary to accept sales offers that resulted in losses.

Table of Contents

We recorded \$0.9 million and \$1.0 million of net gains on covered foreclosed properties in 2016 and 2015, respectively, and \$1.9 million of net losses on covered foreclosed properties in 2014. Most of our covered foreclosed properties were along the coast of North Carolina. The market value for properties in that area recovered significantly following the recession and resulted in the gains experienced in 2015 and 2016.

Indemnification asset expense amounted to \$10.3 million, \$8.6 million, and \$12.8 million, for the years ended December 31, 2016, 2015, and 2014, respectively. Historically, indemnification asset income (expense) was recorded to reflect additional (or decreased) amounts that were expected to be received from the FDIC during the period related to covered assets. The three primary items that resulted in recording indemnification asset income (expense) were 1) loan discount accretion resulting from improved borrower repayment prospects, which generally resulted in indemnification expense, 2) provisions (reversals) for loan losses on covered loans, which resulted in indemnification income (expense) and 3) foreclosed property gains (losses) on covered assets, which resulted in indemnification expense (income). Lower indemnification asset expense realized in 2015 compared to 2014 was primarily correlated with the significantly lower loan discount accretion income recorded in 2015. The higher indemnification asset expense in 2016 resulted from the write-off of the remaining indemnification asset of \$5.7 million when we terminated the FDIC loss share agreements. The following table presents the sources of indemnification income (expense) for the periods noted.

(\$ in millions)	For the year ended		
	December 31,		
	2016	2015	2014
Indemnification asset expense associated with loan discount accretion income	\$ (2.0 )	(5.6 )	(15.3 )
Indemnification asset income (expense) associated with loan losses (recoveries), net	(1.6 )	(2.3 )	1.4
Indemnification asset income (expense) associated with foreclosed property losses (gains)	(0.7 )	(0.4 )	1.5
Indemnification asset expense associated with termination of loss share agreements	(5.7 )	—	—
Other sources of indemnification asset income (expense)	(0.3 )	(0.3 )	(0.4 )
Total indemnification asset income (expense)	\$ (10.3 )	(8.6 )	(12.8 )

Securities gains (losses) were insignificant for 2016 and 2015. We recorded \$0.8 million in securities gains during 2014, related to sales of \$47.5 million in available for sale securities.

In 2016, we recorded a \$1.5 million gain in the branch exchange with First Community Bank (see Note 2 of the consolidated financial statements for additional discussion). In 2015, "Other gains (losses)" was primarily comprised of a \$0.4 million write-off of an FDIC loss share claim associated with a dispute settlement, whereas in 2014, the net loss was caused primarily by write-downs and losses on sales of vacated branch buildings.

**Noninterest Expenses**



Total noninterest expenses totaled \$106.8 million, \$98.1 million, and \$97.3 million for 2016, 2015 and 2014, respectively. Table 5 presents the components of our noninterest expense during the past three years. The primary reason for the growth in noninterest expense in 2016 was associated with our growth initiatives, including acquisitions and market expansion. Line items with the largest fluctuations are further discussed below.

Total personnel expense increased from \$56.8 million in 2015 to \$62.1 million in 2016, an increase of \$5.3 million, or 9.3%. Within personnel expense, salaries expense increased \$3.6 million in 2016 and employee benefits expense increased by \$1.7 million in 2016. The primary reason for these increases in personnel expense is the aforementioned growth initiatives in 2016, including acquisitions of an insurance agency and an SBA consulting firm, as well as the creation of an SBA lending division and our expansion into Greensboro, Raleigh and Charlotte, all in North Carolina.

Table of Contents

Total personnel expense increased from \$55.2 million in 2014 to \$56.8 million in 2015, an increase of \$1.6 million, or 3.0%. Within personnel expense, salaries expense increased \$1.6 million, of which \$0.9 million related to higher amounts of incentive compensation expense earned by employees in 2015. Also, we recorded \$0.6 million in stock-based compensation expense in 2015 compared to \$0.1 million in 2014, primarily related to retention-based stock grants made in 2015. Employee benefits expense for 2015 remained unchanged from 2014 at \$9.1 million.

Net occupancy expenses amounted to \$7.8 million in 2016, \$7.4 million in 2015, and \$7.4 million in 2014. The increases in 2016 were related to the aforementioned acquisitions and expansion initiatives.

Equipment related expenses remained relatively stable over the past three years, amounting to \$3.6 million, \$3.7 million, and \$3.9 million, in 2016, 2015, and 2014, respectively.

Merger and acquisition expenses amounted to \$1.4 million in 2016 compared to none in 2015 and 2014. The 2016 amount was primarily comprised of professional fees incurred in our acquisitions of Bankingport and SBA Complete, our branch exchange, and our agreement to acquire Carolina Bank.

Intangible amortization expense increased from \$0.7-0.8 million in 2014 and 2015 to \$1.2 million in 2016. The increase was due to the additional amortizable intangible assets recorded in connection with the acquisitions of Bankingport and SBA Complete and the branch exchange transaction with First Community Bank.

FDIC insurance expense amounted to \$2.0 million in 2016, \$2.4 million in 2015, and \$4.0 million in 2014. The insurance premium rate charged by the FDIC is based on several variable factors that can result in fluctuations from year to year. As previously discussed, a change in the methodology for assessing banks with \$10 billion or less in total assets was implemented as of July 1, 2016 due to the deposit insurance fund reaching a targeted minimum level. This change was the biggest factor in the lower expense in 2016.

Collection expenses related to non-covered assets amounted to \$2.1-\$2.2 million in 2014 and 2015 and declined to \$1.8 million in 2016. With the lower levels of nonperforming assets, we expect this expense to continue to decline.

Collection expenses on covered assets, net of FDIC reimbursements, amounted to a net expense of \$0.1 million in 2016, and net reimbursements of \$0.1 million in 2015 and \$0.9 million in 2014. This expense has generally been low in recent years due to low levels of covered nonperforming assets. Additionally, in the fourth quarter of 2014, we determined that approximately \$1.0 million in collection expenses incurred in prior years associated with covered assets were eligible to be claimed for reimbursement with the FDIC. All loss share agreements with the FDIC were terminated in 2016, and all collection expenses will be combined for future periods.

Telephone and data line expense amounted to \$2.3 million in 2016, \$2.1 million in 2015, and \$2.0 million in 2014. The higher levels in 2015 and 2016 are due to costs associated with upgrades in the quality of our data lines at many of our branches.

Legal and audit expense amounted to \$1.4 million in 2016, \$1.7 million in 2015 and \$2.0 million in 2014. The decrease in 2015 and 2016 is primarily due to the resolution of various legal matters.

Non-credit losses increased from \$0.3 million in each of 2014 and 2015, to \$1.2 million in 2016. The increase in 2016 is primarily due to higher debit card and credit card fraud losses.

In 2014, we also recorded \$1.0 million in expenses related to the consolidation and closure of nine of our branches. The branches that were consolidated were generally smaller in size with relatively low staff counts.

Table of Contents

**Income Taxes**

Table 6 presents the components of income tax expense and the related effective tax rates. We recorded income tax expense of \$14.6 million in 2016, \$14.1 million in 2015, and \$13.5 million in 2014. Our effective tax rates were 34.7% for 2016, 34.3% for 2015, and 35.1% for 2014. The slight increase in effective tax rate in 2016 was due to nondeductible intangible and merger and acquisition expenses incurred related to corporate acquisitions and the branch exchange transaction. Excluding those items, our effective tax rate has generally declined in recent years due to higher amounts of tax-exempt income, primarily bank-owned life insurance income, and lower statutory income tax rates in North Carolina. North Carolina implemented decreases to its state income tax rate for corporations from 6.0% in 2014 to 5.0% in 2015 to 4.0% in 2016. The North Carolina state income tax rate further declines to 3% in 2017.

**Stock-Based Compensation**

We recorded stock-based compensation expense of \$0.7 million, \$0.7 million, and \$0.3 million, for the years ended December 31, 2016, 2015, and 2014, respectively. The increase in this expense from 2014 to 2015-2016 was due to retention-based restricted stock grants made to certain officers during the year. See Note 15 to the consolidated financial statements for more information regarding stock-based compensation.

Table of Contents**ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL CONDITION AND CHANGES IN FINANCIAL CONDITION****Overview**

At December 31, 2016, our total assets amounted to \$3.6 billion, a 7.5% increase from 2015. As previously discussed, all FDIC loss share agreements were terminated in September 2016 and, accordingly, assets previously covered under those agreements become non-covered on that date. The following table presents detailed information regarding the nature of changes in our loans and deposits in 2015 and 2016:

(\$ in thousands)	Balance at beginning of period	Internal growth, net (1)	Net Impact of Branch Exchange (2)	Transfer due to Expiration & Termination of Loss Share Agreements	Balance at end of period	Total percentage growth	Internal percentage growth (1)
<b>2016</b>							
Loans – Non-covered	\$2,416,285	196,789	1,514	96,124	2,710,712	12.2%	8.1%
Loans – Covered	102,641	(6,517 )	—	(96,124 )	—	-100.0%	-6.3%
Total loans	2,518,926	190,272	1,514	—	2,710,712	7.6%	7.6%
Deposits – Noninterest-bearing	659,038	90,807	6,158	—	756,003	14.7%	13.8%
Deposits – Interest-bearing checking	626,878	12,793	(4,240 )	—	635,431	1.4%	2.0%
Deposits – Money market	636,692	55,987	(8,999 )	—	683,680	7.4%	8.8%
Deposits – Savings	186,616	14,263	8,195	—	209,074	12.0%	7.6%
Deposits – Brokered time	76,412	60,054	—	—	136,466	78.6%	78.6%
Deposits – Time >\$100,000 – retail	329,819	(33,164 )	(8,716 )	—	287,939	-12.7%	-10.1%
Deposits – Time <\$100,000 – retail	295,830	(41,751 )	(15,319 )	—	238,760	-19.3%	-14.1%
Total deposits	\$2,811,285	158,989	(22,921 )	—	2,947,353	4.8%	5.7%
<b>2015</b>							
Loans – Non-covered	\$2,268,580	147,705	—	—	2,416,285	6.5%	6.5%
Loans – Covered	127,594	(24,953 )	—	—	102,641	-19.6%	-19.6%
Total loans	2,396,174	122,752	—	—	2,518,926	5.1%	5.1%
Deposits – Noninterest-bearing	560,230	98,808	—	—	659,038	17.6%	17.6%
Deposits – Interest-bearing checking	583,903	42,975	—	—	626,878	7.4%	7.4%
Deposits – Money market	548,255	88,437	—	—	636,692	16.1%	16.1%
Deposits – Savings	180,317	6,299	—	—	186,616	3.5%	3.5%
Deposits – Brokered time	88,375	(11,963 )	—	—	76,412	-13.5%	-13.5%
Deposits – Internet time	747	(747 )	—	—	—	-100.0%	-100.0%
Deposits – Time >\$100,000 – retail	384,127	(54,308 )	—	—	329,819	-14.1%	-14.1%

Edgar Filing: FIRST BANCORP /NC/ - Form 10-K

Deposits – Time <\$100,000 – retail	349,952	(54,122 )	—	—	295,830	-15.5%	-15.5%
Total deposits	\$2,695,906	115,379	—	—	2,811,285	4.3%	4.3%

(1) Excludes the impact of the transfer of loans from covered status to non-covered status on April 1, 2016 due to the expiration of one loss-sharing agreement and the termination of all remaining loss share agreements on September 22, 2016. Also, excludes the impact of acquisitions in the year of acquisition, but includes growth or declines in acquired operations after the date of acquisition.

(2) On July 15, 2016, we completed a branch exchange with First Community Bank, headquartered in Bluefield, Virginia. We exchanged our seven branches in Virginia for six of First Community Bank’s branches in North Carolina, acquiring \$152.2 million in loans and \$111.3 million in deposits, while selling \$150.6 million in loans and \$134.3 million in deposits. This columns represents the net difference in what we received compared to what we sold.

In 2016, our total loan growth was 7.6%. As derived from the table above, we experienced internal growth in our non-covered loan portfolio of \$196.8 million, or 8.1%. We terminated our FDIC loss share agreements on September 22, 2016 and thus, all loans were transferred to non-covered status on that date. In 2015, as derived from the table above, our total loans increased by \$122.8 million, or 5.1%. During that period, we experienced internal growth in our non-covered loan portfolio of \$147.7 million, or 6.5%, while our covered loans declined by \$25.0 million, or 19.6%.

## Table of Contents

We expect continued growth in our loan portfolio in 2017, as we have recently expanded into higher growth market areas, and we had experienced bankers join our Company over the past few years.

During 2016, we experienced a net increase in total deposits of \$136.1 million, or 4.8%. Net internal deposit growth amounted to \$159.0 million, or 5.7%, which was partially offset by the impact of our branch exchange in which we sold \$23 million more in deposits than we purchased. Our internal growth arose from significant growth in our low-cost core deposit accounts (checking, money market and savings), which was partially offset by declines in our time deposit accounts. We experienced internal growth of \$173.9 million in our core deposit accounts, compared to net declines of \$74.9 million in retail time deposits, excluding brokered deposits. Total brokered deposits amounted to \$136.5 million at December 31, 2016, which is a 78.6% increase from the \$76.4 million outstanding a year earlier. We increased our holding of brokered deposits in 2016 in order to fund the strong loan growth experienced.

During 2015, we experienced a net increase in total deposits of \$115.4 million, or 4.3%, which resulted from significant growth in our low-cost core deposit accounts offsetting declines in our time deposit accounts. We experienced growth of \$236.5 million in our core deposit accounts, compared to declines of \$121.1 million in all time deposits.

Our overall liquidity remained stable in 2016 compared to 2015. Our liquid assets (cash and securities) as a percentage of our total deposits and borrowings was 19.8% at December 31, 2016 compared to 19.7% at December 31, 2015.

At December 31, 2016, our nonperforming assets to total assets ratio was 1.64% compared to 2.66% at December 31, 2015. The decrease is primarily due to improved economic conditions, on-going resolution of nonperforming assets and improving credit quality.

## **Distribution of Assets and Liabilities**

Table 7 sets forth the percentage relationships of significant components of our balance sheet at December 31, 2016, 2015, and 2014.

Our balance sheet mix has remained relatively stable over the past three years. On the asset side, there have been no significant changes, with net loans comprising 73%-74% of total assets and interest-earning assets ranging from 89%-91%.

On the liability side, as previously discussed, in 2015 and 2016, we experienced shifts from time deposit categories to our transaction account categories, with noninterest-bearing checking accounts increasing from 17% of total liabilities and shareholders' equity at December 31, 2014 to 21% at December 31, 2016. We also obtained additional borrowings in 2015 and 2016 to help fund the loan growth that we experienced during those years that increased its percentage from 4% to 7%.

Shareholders' equity decreased from 12% of total liabilities and shareholders' equity at December 31, 2014 to 10% at December 31, 2015 and 2016 as a result of redeeming \$63.5 million in SBLF stock during 2015.

## **Securities**

Information regarding our securities portfolio as of December 31, 2016, 2015, and 2014 is presented in Tables 8 and 9.

The composition of the investment securities portfolio reflects our investment strategy of maintaining an appropriate level of liquidity while providing a relatively stable source of income. The investment portfolio also provides a balance to interest rate risk and credit risk in other categories of the balance sheet while providing a vehicle for the investment of available funds, furnishing liquidity, and supplying securities to pledge as required collateral for certain deposits. We obtain fair values for the vast majority of our investment securities from a third-party investment recordkeeper, who specializes in securities purchases and sales, recordkeeping, and valuation. This recordkeeper provides us with a third-party report that contains an evaluation of internal controls that includes testwork of securities valuation. We further test the values we receive by comparing the values for a significant sample of securities to another third-party valuation service on a quarterly basis.



Table of Contents

Total securities amounted to \$329.0 million, \$320.2 million, and \$336.7 million at December 31, 2016, 2015, and 2014, respectively. The increase in securities in 2016 was primarily due to purchases of mortgage-backed securities. The decrease in securities in 2015 was primarily due to normal paydowns, maturities, and calls of mortgage-backed securities.

The majority of our “government-sponsored enterprise” securities carry one maturity date, often with an issuer call feature. At December 31, 2016, of the \$17.5 million (carrying value) in government-sponsored enterprise securities, \$11.5 million were issued by the Federal Home Loan Bank system, \$3.0 million were issued by Freddie Mac, and the remaining \$3.0 million were issued by the Federal Farm Credit Bank system.

Our \$228.7 million in total mortgage-backed securities have all been issued by Freddie Mac, Fannie Mae, Ginnie Mae, or the Small Business Administration, each of which are government-sponsored corporations. We have no “private label” mortgage-backed securities. Mortgage-backed securities vary in their repayment in correlation with the underlying pools of mortgage loans.

At December 31, 2016, our \$33.6 million investment in corporate bonds was comprised of the following:

*(\$ in thousands)*

Issuer	Issuer Ratings	Maturity Date	Amortized Cost	Fair Value
Bank of America	BBB+	(1) 1/11/2023	\$ 7,000	6,955
Goldman Sachs	BBB+	(1) 1/22/2023	5,108	5,054
JP Morgan Chase	A-	(1) 1/25/2023	5,027	4,995
Citigroup	BBB+	(1) Various	6,042	6,000
Wells Fargo	A-	(1) 2/13/2023	3,100	3,053
Financial Institutions, Inc.	BBB-	(2) 4/15/2030	4,000	3,983
Eagle Bancorp, Inc.	BBB	(2) 9/1/2024	2,556	2,625
First Citizens Bancorp (South Carolina) Trust Preferred Security	Not Rated	6/15/2034	1,000	935
Total investment in corporate bonds			\$ 33,833	33,600

(1) Ratings issued by S&P

(2) Rating issued by Kroll Bond Rating Agency

We have concluded that any unrealized losses associated with our corporate bonds are due to interest rate considerations and not due to credit concerns.

We held \$129.7 million in securities held to maturity at December 31, 2016, which had a fair value that exceeded their carrying value by \$0.5 million. Approximately \$80.6 million of the securities held to maturity are mortgage-backed securities that have been issued by either Freddie Mac or Fannie Mae. The remaining \$49.1 million in securities held to maturity are comprised almost entirely of municipal bonds issued by state and local governments throughout our market area. We have only two municipal bonds with a denomination of \$2 million or greater and we have no significant concentration of bond holdings from one government entity, with the single largest exposure to any one entity being \$3.6 million. Management evaluated any unrealized losses on individual securities at each year end and determined them to be of a temporary nature and caused by fluctuations in market interest rates, not by concerns about the ability of the issuers to meet their obligations.

Table of Contents

At December 31, 2016, 2015 and 2014, net unrealized losses of \$3.1 million, \$1.2 million and \$0.7 million, respectively, were included in the carrying value of securities classified as available for sale. Management evaluated any unrealized losses on individual securities at each year end and determined them to be of a temporary nature and caused by fluctuations in market interest rates and the overall economic environment, not by concerns about the ability of the issuers to meet their obligations. Net unrealized losses (net of applicable deferred income taxes of \$1.1 million, \$0.5 million, and \$0.3 million) have been reported as part of a separate component of shareholders' equity (accumulated other comprehensive income) as of December 31, 2016, 2015, and 2014, respectively.

The weighted average taxable-equivalent yield for the securities available for sale portfolio was 2.26% at December 31, 2016. The expected weighted average life of the available for sale portfolio using the call date for above-market callable bonds, the maturity date for all other non-mortgage-backed securities, and the expected life for mortgage-backed securities, was 4.9 years.

The weighted average taxable-equivalent yield for the securities held to maturity portfolio was 3.25% at December 31, 2016. The expected weighted average life of the held to maturity portfolio using the call date for above-market callable bonds, the expected life for mortgage-backed securities, and the maturity date for all other securities, was 3.0 years.

The following table provides the names of issuers for which the Company has investment securities totaling in excess of 10% of shareholders' equity and the fair value and amortized cost of these investments as of December 31, 2016. All of these securities are issued by government sponsored corporations.

(\$ in thousands)

Issuer	Amortized Cost	Fair Value	% of Shareholders' Equity
Freddie Mac	\$ 79,161	77,789	21.5%
Fannie Mae	79,105	77,446	21.5%
Small Business Administration	40,315	39,576	11.0%
Total	\$ 198,581	194,811	

**Loans**

Table 10 provides a summary of the loan portfolio composition of our total loans at each of the past five year ends.

The loan portfolio is the largest category of our earning assets and is comprised of commercial loans, real estate mortgage loans, real estate construction loans, and consumer loans. Virtually all of our current loan portfolio is within our 35 county market area, which is located in western, central and eastern North Carolina and three counties in northeastern South Carolina. The diversity of the region's economic base has historically provided a stable lending environment.

As previously discussed, in our acquisitions of Cooperative Bank in 2009 and The Bank of Asheville in 2011, we entered into loss share agreements with the FDIC, which afforded us significant protection from losses on all loans and other real estate acquired in those acquisitions. Because of the loss protection provided by the FDIC, the financial risk of the Cooperative Bank and The Bank of Asheville loans became significantly different from assets not covered under the loss share agreements, and accordingly, they were presented as "covered loans." Loans that were not subject to the loss share agreements were presented as "non-covered loans." All loss share agreements were terminated in 2016 and thus the entire loan portfolio is now classified as non-covered. Certain disclosures will continue to present the historical breakout of the loan portfolio between covered and non-covered.

## Table of Contents

In 2016, loans outstanding increased \$192.7 million, or 7.6% to \$2.7 billion. The growth in 2016 can be attributed to the recent hiring of experienced lenders, our expansion into high-growth markets, and higher loan demand associated with a growing and recovering economy. In 2015, loans outstanding increased \$122.8 million, or 5.1% to \$2.5 billion. The 2015 increase was primarily due to improved loan demand in our market areas, as well as the hiring of several experienced bankers during the year.

The majority of our loan portfolio over the years has been real estate mortgage loans, with loans secured by real estate consistently comprising 89% to 91% of our outstanding loan balances. Except for construction, land development and other land loans, the majority of our “real estate” loans are personal and commercial loans where cash flow from the borrower’s occupation or business is the primary repayment source, with the real estate pledged providing a secondary repayment source.

Table 10 presents a five-year history of loans outstanding by type. Residential real estate loans have declined from 34% of total loans at December 31, 2012 to 28% of total loans at December 31, 2016, as many customers have taken advantage of the historically low level of interest rates and refinanced their home loans with long term fixed rate loans, which we typically sell in the secondary market. Commercial real estate loans as a percentage of total loans has increased steadily over the past five years and amounted to 39% of all loans at December 31, 2016. Consistent with our community banking strategy, we have placed emphases on this type of loan growth and hired a number of experienced community bankers, who have originated a significant amount of business loans secured by real estate.

Table 11 provides a summary of scheduled loan maturities over certain time periods, with fixed rate loans and adjustable rate loans shown separately. Approximately 14% of our accruing loans outstanding at December 31, 2016 mature within one year and 54% of total loans mature within five years. As of December 31, 2016, the percentages of variable rate loans and fixed rate loans as compared to total performing loans were 35% and 65%, respectively. We intentionally make a blend of fixed and variable rate loans so as to reduce interest rate risk. The mix of fixed rate loans has generally increased over the past several years because many borrowers desire to lock in an interest rate during the historically low interest rate environment that has been in effect. While this presents risk to our Company if interest rates rise, we measure our interest rate risk closely and, as discussed in the section “Interest Rate Risk” below, we do not believe that an increase in interest rates would materially negatively impact our net interest income.

## **Nonperforming Assets**

Nonperforming assets include nonaccrual loans, troubled debt restructurings, loans past due 90 or more days and still accruing interest, nonperforming loans held for sale, and foreclosed real estate. As a matter of policy we place all loans that are past due 90 or more days on nonaccrual basis, and thus there were no loans at any of the past five year ends that were 90 days past due and still accruing interest.

Nonaccrual loans are loans on which interest income is no longer being recognized or accrued because management has determined that the collection of interest is doubtful. Placing loans on nonaccrual status negatively impacts earnings because (i) interest accrued but unpaid as of the date a loan is placed on nonaccrual status is reversed and deducted from interest income, (ii) future accruals of interest income are not recognized until it becomes probable that both principal and interest will be paid and (iii) principal charged-off, if appropriate, may necessitate additional provisions for loan losses that are charged against earnings. In some cases, where borrowers are experiencing financial difficulties, loans may be restructured to provide terms significantly different from the originally contracted terms.

Table of Contents

Table 12 summarizes our nonperforming assets at the dates indicated. Prior to September 2016, we presented nonperforming assets that were subject to the loss share agreements as “covered” and nonperforming assets that were not subject to the loss share agreements as “non-covered.” Our loss share agreements with the FDIC were terminated in 2016, and as such, all assets are now presented as a singled “non-covered” amount.

Due largely to the economic downturn that began in late 2007 and continued to worsen over succeeding years, we experienced significant increases in our non-covered nonperforming assets, with total non-covered nonperforming assets rising steadily from \$11 million at December 31, 2007 to a peak of \$146 million at September 30, 2012. Nonperforming covered assets assumed from two bank failures amounted to an additional \$114 million at September 30, 2012, which resulted in a total of \$260 million in nonperforming assets.

Since that time, we have benefited from improving economic conditions and also implemented a combination of strategies to reduce nonperforming assets including a 2013 loan sale, loan restructurings, discounted payoffs, and other collection strategies. As a result, we have steadily reduced our level of nonperforming assets over the years, with nonperforming assets amounting to \$59 million at December 31, 2016. At December 31, 2016, the ratio of nonperforming assets to total assets was 1.64% compared to 2.66% and 3.54% at December 31, 2015 and 2014, respectively.

Table 12a presents our nonperforming assets at December 31, 2016 by general geographic region.

The following is the composition, by loan type, of all of our nonaccrual loans at each period end, as classified for regulatory purposes:

(\$ in thousands)	At December 31, 2016	At December 31, 2015 (1)
Commercial, financial, and agricultural	\$ 1,842	2,964
Real estate – construction, land development, and other land loans	2,945	4,704
Real estate – mortgage – residential (1-4 family) first mortgages	16,017	23,829
Real estate – mortgage – home equity loans/lines of credit	2,355	3,525
Real estate – mortgage – commercial and other	4,208	12,571
Installment loans to individuals	101	217
Total nonaccrual loans	\$ 27,468	47,810

(1) Includes both covered and non-covered loans.

The nonaccrual table above generally indicates that we experienced decreases in all categories of nonaccrual loans, with the “real estate – mortgage – commercial and other” category experiencing the largest decline. The decline in nonaccrual loans is due to our on-going focus to resolve our nonperforming loans and improving credit quality.

At December 31, 2016, there were no covered nonaccrual loans due to the termination of the loss share agreements. The following segregates our nonaccrual loans at December 31, 2015 into covered and non-covered loans, as classified for regulatory purposes:

(\$ in thousands)	Covered Nonaccrual Loans	Non-covered Nonaccrual Loans	Total Nonaccrual Loans
Commercial, financial, and agricultural	\$ —	2,964	2,964
Real estate – construction, land development, and other land loans	52	4,652	4,704
Real estate – mortgage – residential (1-4 family) first mortgages	5,007	18,822	23,829
Real estate – mortgage – home equity loans/lines of credit	383	3,142	3,525
Real estate – mortgage – commercial and other	2,374	10,197	12,571
Installment loans to individuals	—	217	217
Total nonaccrual loans	\$ 7,816	39,994	47,810



Table of Contents

Management routinely monitors the status of certain large loans that, in management's opinion, have credit weaknesses that could cause them to become nonperforming loans. In addition to the nonperforming loan amounts discussed above, management believes that an estimated \$5 million of loans that were performing in accordance with their contractual terms at December 31, 2016 have the potential to develop problems depending upon the particular financial situations of the borrowers and economic conditions in general. Management has taken these potential problem loans into consideration when evaluating the adequacy of the allowance for loan losses at December 31, 2016 (see discussion below).

Loans classified for regulatory purposes as loss, doubtful, substandard, or special mention that have not been disclosed in the problem loan amounts and the potential problem loan amounts discussed above do not represent or result from trends or uncertainties that management reasonably expects will materially impact future operating results, liquidity, or capital resources, or represent material credits about which management is aware of any information that causes management to have serious doubts as to the ability of such borrowers to comply with the loan repayment terms.

We provide additional information regarding the classification status of our loans in tables contained in Note 4 to our consolidated financial statements. Those tables indicate that from December 31, 2015 to December 31, 2016 our asset quality improved, with total classified and nonaccrual loans decreasing from \$125.7 million at December 31, 2015 to \$98.5 million at December 31, 2016. This is consistent with our generally improving asset quality trends.

Foreclosed real estate includes primarily foreclosed properties. Total foreclosed real estate amounted to \$9.5 million, \$10.0 million, and \$12.1 million at December 31, 2016, 2015, and 2014, respectively. Generally, we have experienced decreases in foreclosed real estate over the past several years primarily due to increased property sales activity, particularly along the North Carolina coast, which is where a significant portion of our foreclosed properties are located, and the improvement in our overall asset quality.

The following table presents the detail of our foreclosed real estate at each of the past two year ends:

	At December 31, 2016	At December 31, 2015 (1)
Vacant land	\$ 3,221	3,867
1-4 family residential properties	4,345	3,789
Commercial real estate	1,966	2,338
Total foreclosed real estate	\$ 9,532	9,994

(1) Includes both covered and non-covered real estate.

The following segregates our foreclosed real estate at December 31, 2015 into covered and non-covered:

	Covered Foreclosed Real Estate	Non-covered Foreclosed Real Estate	Total Foreclosed Real Estate
Vacant land	\$ 277	3,590	3,867
1-4 family residential properties	247	3,542	3,789
Commercial real estate	282	2,056	2,338
Total foreclosed real estate	\$ 806	9,188	9,994

### **Allowance for Loan Losses and Loan Loss Experience**

The allowance for loan losses is created by direct charges to operations (known as a “provision for loan losses” for the period in which the charge is taken). Losses on loans are charged against the allowance in the period in which such loans, in management’s opinion, become uncollectible. The recoveries realized during the period are credited to this allowance. We consider our procedures for recording the amount of the allowance for loan losses and the related provision for loan losses to be a critical accounting policy. See the heading “Critical Accounting Policies” above for further discussion.

## Table of Contents

The factors that influence management's judgment in determining the amount charged to operating expense include recent loan loss experience, composition of the loan portfolio, evaluation of probable inherent losses and current economic conditions.

We use a loan analysis and grading program to facilitate our evaluation of probable inherent loan losses and the adequacy of our allowance for loan losses. In this program, credit risk grades are assigned by management and tested by an independent third-party consulting firm. The testing program includes an evaluation of a sample of new loans, loans we identify as having potential credit weaknesses, loans past due 90 days or more, loans originated by new loan officers, nonaccrual loans and any other loans identified during previous regulatory and other examinations.

We strive to maintain our loan portfolio in accordance with what management believes are conservative loan underwriting policies that result in loans specifically tailored to the needs of our market areas. Every effort is made to identify and minimize the credit risks associated with such lending strategies. We have no foreign loans, few agricultural loans and do not engage in significant lease financing or highly leveraged transactions. Commercial loans are diversified among a variety of industries. The majority of loans captioned in the tables discussed below as "real estate" loans are personal and commercial loans where real estate provides additional security for the loan. Collateral for virtually all of these loans is located within our principal market area.

The total allowance for loan losses amounted to \$23.8 million at December 31, 2016 compared to \$28.6 million at December 31, 2015 and \$40.6 million at December 31, 2014. At December 31, 2015 and 2014, \$1.8 million and \$2.3 million, respectively, of the total allowance for loan losses was attributable to covered loans.

Our allowance for loan loss model utilizes the net charge-offs experienced in the most recent years as a significant component of estimating the current allowance for loan losses that is necessary. Thus, older years (and parts thereof) systematically age out and are excluded from the analysis as time goes on. In 2015, a prolonged period of stable and improving loan quality trends following the recession resulted in generally lower provisions for loan losses that were needed to adjust our allowance for loan losses to the appropriate amount. This had the impact of bringing our overall allowance for loan loss level on covered loans down to a more normalized level, amounting to 1.11% at December 31, 2015, following the elevated amounts we maintained during and immediately following the recession. This was the primary reason for the provision for loan losses on non-covered loans declining from \$7.1 million in 2014 to \$2.0 million in 2015. This same situation continued in 2016 and was further impacted by net charge-offs that declined significantly. These factors combined to result in a provision for non-covered loan losses that increased only slightly to \$2.1 million in 2016. When combined with a negative provision for loan losses for covered loans of \$2.1 million for 2016, the total provision for loan losses was negative \$23,000 for the year and the resulting allowance for loan losses declined from \$28.6 million at December 31, 2015 to \$23.8 million at December 31, 2016.

The ratio of the total allowance for loan losses to total loans was 0.88%, 1.13%, and 1.70%, as of December 31, 2016, 2015, and 2014, respectively. The decline in this ratio during 2015 and 2016 was the result of the factors noted above and additionally, in 2016 we removed approximately \$1.1 million in allowance for loan losses associated with loans

that were sold in our branch exchange transaction. In 2017, it is likely that we will record a higher provision for loan losses than we did in 2015 and 2016, as we expect higher net charge-offs, primarily as a result of lower recoveries, and to provide for expected new loan growth.

## Table of Contents

Table 13 sets forth the allocation of the allowance for loan losses at the dates indicated. The amount of the unallocated portion of the allowance for loan losses did not vary materially at any of the past three year ends. The allowance for loan losses is available to absorb losses in all categories.

Management considers the allowance for loan losses adequate to cover probable loan losses on the loans outstanding as of each reporting date. It must be emphasized, however, that the determination of the allowance using our procedures and methods rests upon various judgments and assumptions about economic conditions and other factors affecting loans. No assurance can be given that we will not in any particular period sustain loan losses that are sizable in relation to the amount reserved or that subsequent evaluations of the loan portfolio, in light of conditions and factors then prevailing, will not require significant changes in the allowance for loan losses or future charges to earnings.

In addition, various regulatory agencies, as an integral part of their examination process, periodically review the allowance for loan losses and losses on foreclosed real estate. Such agencies may require us to recognize additions to the allowance based on the examiners' judgments about information available to them at the time of their examinations.

For the years indicated, Table 14 summarizes our balances of loans outstanding, average loans outstanding, and a detailed rollforward of the allowance for loan losses.

Net loan charge-offs of total loans amounted to \$3.7 million in 2016, \$11.3 million in 2015, and \$18.1 million in 2014. Net loan charge-offs of non-covered loans amounted to \$5.4 million in 2016, \$13.6 million in 2015, and \$14.7 million in 2014. The trend of lower net charge-offs is associated with lower levels of nonperforming loans that have been impacted with improvements in the economy and real estate prices.

We recorded (\$1.7 million), (\$2.3 million), and \$3.3 million in net charge-offs (recoveries) of covered loans during 2016, 2015, and 2014, respectively.

## **Deposits**

At December 31, 2016, deposits outstanding amounted to \$2.947 billion, an increase of \$136 million from the \$2.811 billion at December 31, 2015. During 2016 we experienced strong growth in our noninterest-bearing and interest-bearing checking accounts, and declines in our higher cost retail time deposits. Total brokered deposits amounted to \$136.5 million at December 31, 2016, which is a 79% increase from the \$76.4 million outstanding a year earlier. The increased usage of brokered deposits was necessary because of loan growth that has exceeded this deposit

growth. This imbalance of growth is largely associated with our recent growth and expansion into the larger markets of North Carolina – Charlotte, Greensboro and Raleigh. When initially entering markets such as these, our experience has been that we are able to capture loan market share faster than deposit market share.

At December 31, 2015, deposits outstanding amounted to \$2.811 billion, an increase of \$115 million from the \$2.696 billion at December 31, 2014. Similar to 2016, during 2015 we experienced strong growth in our noninterest-bearing and interest-bearing checking accounts, and declines in our higher cost time deposits.

Table of Contents

The nature of our deposit growth is illustrated in the table on page 58. The following table reflects the mix of our deposits at each of the past three year ends:

	2016	2015	2014
Noninterest-bearing checking accounts	26%	23%	21%
Interest-bearing checking accounts	21%	22%	22%
Money market deposits	23%	23%	20%
Savings deposits	7%	7%	7%
Brokered deposits	5%	3%	3%
Time deposits > \$100,000 – retail	10%	12%	14%
Time deposits < \$100,000 – retail	8%	10%	13%
Total deposits	100%	100%	100%

Our deposit mix has shifted over the past few years to a heavier concentration in transaction accounts and less concentration in time deposits. The percentages for retail time deposits have declined because of a combination of 1) customers shifting their matured time deposits into checking accounts because of a steadily shrinking gap between the interest rates that the two products pay and 2) because of satisfactory levels of liquidity, we have chosen not to match certain promotional time deposit interest rates being offered by local competitors.

We routinely engage in activities designed to grow and retain deposits, such as (1) emphasizing relationship banking to new and existing customers, where borrowers are encouraged and normally expected to maintain deposit accounts with us, (2) pricing deposits at rate levels that will attract and/or retain deposits, and (3) continually working to identify and introduce new products that will attract customers or enhance our appeal as a primary provider of financial services.

Table 15 presents the average amounts of our deposits and the average yield paid for those deposits for the years ended December 31, 2016, 2015, and 2014.

As of December 31, 2016, we held approximately \$422.7 million in time deposits of \$100,000 or more. Table 16 is a maturity schedule of time deposits of \$100,000 or more as of December 31, 2016. This table shows that 74% of our time deposits greater than \$100,000 mature within one year.

At each of the past three year ends, we have no deposits issued through foreign offices, nor do we believe that we held any deposits by foreign depositors.

## **Borrowings**

Our borrowings outstanding totaled \$271.4 million at December 31, 2016, \$186.4 million at December 31, 2015, and \$116.4 million at December 31, 2014. In 2016 and 2015, we obtained new borrowings of \$85 million and \$70 million, respectively, from a low cost funding source to help support our loan growth experienced during the years.

Table 2 shows that average borrowings were \$209.7 million in 2016, \$149.8 million in 2015, and \$99.4 million in 2014.

At December 31, 2016, the Company had three sources of readily available borrowing capacity – 1) an approximately \$707 million line of credit with the FHLB, of which \$225 million and \$140 million was outstanding at December 31, 2016 and 2015, respectively, 2) a \$35 million federal funds line of credit with a correspondent bank, of which none was outstanding at December 31, 2016 or 2015, and 3) an approximately \$101 million line of credit through the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond’s (“FRB”) discount window, of which none was outstanding at December 31, 2016 or 2015.



## Table of Contents

Our line of credit with the FHLB can be structured as either short-term or long-term borrowings, depending on the particular funding or liquidity need, and is secured by our FHLB stock and a blanket lien on most of our real estate loan portfolio. For the year ended December 31, 2016, the average amount of FHLB borrowings outstanding was approximately \$163 million with a weighted average interest rate for the year of 0.75%. The maximum amount of short-term FHLB borrowings outstanding at any month-end during 2016 was \$225 million. For the year ended December 31, 2015, the average amount of FHLB borrowings outstanding was approximately \$103 million with a weighted average interest rate for the year of 0.54%. The maximum amount of short-term FHLB borrowings outstanding at any month-end during 2015 was \$180 million.

In addition to any outstanding borrowings from the FHLB that reduce the available borrowing capacity of the line of credit, our borrowing capacity was further reduced by \$193 million at both December 31, 2016 and 2015, as a result of our pledging letters of credit backed by the FHLB for public deposits at each of those dates.

Our correspondent bank relationship allows us to purchase up to \$35 million in federal funds on an overnight, unsecured basis (federal funds purchased). We had no borrowings under this line at December 31, 2016 or 2015. There were no federal funds purchased outstanding at any month-end during 2016 or 2015.

We also have a line of credit with the FRB discount window. This line is secured by a blanket lien on a portion of our commercial and consumer loan portfolio (excluding real estate loans). Based on the collateral that we owned as of December 31, 2016, the available line of credit was approximately \$101 million. At December 31, 2016 and 2015, we had no borrowings outstanding under this line.

In addition to the lines of credit described above, we also had a total of \$46.4 million in trust preferred security debt outstanding at December 31, 2016 and 2015. We have initiated three trust preferred security issuances since 2002 totaling \$67.0 million, with one of those issuances for \$20.6 million being redeemed in 2007. These borrowings each have 30 year final maturities and were structured in a manner that allows them to qualify as capital for regulatory capital adequacy requirements. We may call these debt securities at par on any quarterly interest payment date five years after their issue date. We issued \$20.6 million of this debt on October 29, 2002 (which we called in 2007), an additional \$20.6 million on December 19, 2003, and \$25.8 million on April 13, 2006. The interest rate on these debt securities adjusts on a quarterly basis at a rate of three-month LIBOR plus 2.70% for the securities issued in 2003, and three-month LIBOR plus 1.39% for the securities issued in 2006.

## **Liquidity, Commitments, and Contingencies**

Our liquidity is determined by our ability to convert assets to cash or to acquire alternative sources of funds to meet the needs of our customers who are withdrawing or borrowing funds, and our ability to maintain required reserve levels, pay expenses and operate the Company on an ongoing basis. Our primary liquidity sources are net income

from operations, cash and due from banks, federal funds sold and other short-term investments. Our securities portfolio is comprised almost entirely of readily marketable securities which could also be sold to provide cash.

As noted above, in addition to internally generated liquidity sources, at December 31, 2016, we had the ability to obtain borrowings from the following three sources – 1) an approximately \$707 million line of credit with the FHLB, 2) a \$35 million federal funds line with a correspondent bank, and 3) an approximately \$101 million line of credit through the FRB's discount window.

Our overall liquidity remained stable in 2016 compared to 2015. Our liquid assets (cash and securities) as a percentage of our total deposits and borrowings amounted to 19.7% at December 31, 2015 to 19.8% at December 31, 2016.

Table of Contents

We continue to believe our liquidity sources, including unused lines of credit, are at an acceptable level and remain adequate to meet our operating needs in the foreseeable future. We will continue to monitor our liquidity position carefully and will explore and implement strategies to increase liquidity if deemed appropriate.

In the normal course of business we have various outstanding contractual obligations that will require future cash outflows. In addition, there are commitments and contingent liabilities, such as commitments to extend credit, that may or may not require future cash outflows.

Table 18 reflects our contractual obligations and other commercial commitments outstanding as of December 31, 2016. Any of our \$225 million in outstanding borrowings with the FHLB may be accelerated immediately by the FHLB in certain circumstances, including material adverse changes in our condition or if our qualifying collateral is less than the amount required under the terms of the borrowing agreement.

In the normal course of business there are various outstanding commitments and contingent liabilities such as commitments to extend credit, which are not reflected in the financial statements. The following table presents a summary of our outstanding loan commitments as of December 31, 2016:

(\$ in millions)

Type of Commitment	Fixed Rate	Variable Rate	Total
Outstanding closed-end loan commitments	\$ 139	237	376
Unfunded commitments on revolving lines of credit, credit cards and home equity loans	116	256	372
Total	\$ 255	493	748

At December 31, 2016 and 2015, we also had \$12.7 million and \$13.1 million, respectively, in standby letters of credit outstanding. We had no carrying amount for these standby letters of credit at either of those dates. The nature of the standby letters of credit is that of a guarantee made on behalf of our customers to suppliers of the customers to guarantee payments owed to the supplier by the customer. The standby letters of credit are generally for terms of one year, at which time they may be renewed for another year if both parties agree. The payment of the guarantees would generally be triggered by a continued nonpayment of an obligation owed by the customer to the supplier. The maximum potential amount of future payments (undiscounted) we could be required to make under the guarantees in the event of nonperformance by the parties to whom credit or financial guarantees have been extended is represented by the contractual amount of the financial instruments discussed above. In the event that we are required to honor a standby letter of credit, a note, already executed by the customer, becomes effective providing repayment terms and any collateral. Over the past two years, we have had to honor only a few standby letters of credit, none of which resulted in any loss to the Company. We expect any draws under existing commitments to be funded through normal operations.

It has been our experience that deposit withdrawals are generally able to be replaced with new deposits when needed. Based on that assumption, management believes that it can meet its contractual cash obligations and existing commitments from normal operations.

We are not involved in any legal proceedings that, in management's opinion, are likely to have a material effect on the consolidated financial position of the Company.

### **Capital Resources and Shareholders' Equity**

Shareholders' equity at December 31, 2016 amounted to \$368.1 million compared to \$342.2 million at December 31, 2015 and \$387.7 million at December 31, 2014. The two basic components that typically have the largest impact on our shareholders' equity are net income, which increases shareholders' equity, and dividends declared, which decreases shareholders' equity. Additionally, any stock issuances (redemptions) can significantly increase (decrease) shareholders' equity.

## Table of Contents

In 2016, the most significant factors that impacted our equity were 1) the \$27.5 million net income reported for 2016, which increased equity, 2) common stock dividends declared of \$6.5 million, which reduced equity, and 3) issuances of \$5.5 million of common stock in connection with two acquisitions, which increased equity. See the Consolidated Statements of Shareholders' Equity within the consolidated financial statements for disclosure of other less significant items affecting shareholders' equity.

Also, on December 22, 2016, we exchanged 728,706 shares of preferred stock for the same number of shares of our common stock, which resulted in \$7.3 million in shareholders' equity shifting from preferred stock to common stock, but did not affect our total amount of equity. At December 31, 2016, we have no shares of preferred stock outstanding.

In 2015, the most significant factors that impacted our equity were 1) the \$63.5 million redemption of our Series B Preferred Stock issued to the U.S. Treasury in 2011 under the Small Business Lending Fund, which reduced equity (see Note 19 to our consolidated financial statements), 2) the \$27.0 million net income reported for 2015, which increased equity, 3) common stock dividends declared of \$6.3 million, which reduced equity. Another factor negatively impacting equity in 2015 was a \$2.7 million decrease in accumulated other comprehensive income that was caused primarily by an increase in our pension liability. The increase in the pension liability was primarily due to underperformance of our pension plan assets during 2015 (see Note 12 to the consolidated financial statements).

In 2014, the most significant factors that impacted our equity were 1) the \$25.0 million net income reported for 2014, which increased equity, 2) common stock dividends declared of \$6.3 million, which reduced equity, 3) preferred stock dividends declared of \$0.9 million, which reduced equity. Another factor negatively impacting equity in 2014 was a \$3.3 million decrease in accumulated other comprehensive income that was caused by an increase in our pension liability. The increase in the pension liability was primarily due to the impact of lower interest rates on the actuarial calculations involved in determining the liability. Our policy is to use the Citigroup Pension Index yield curve in the computation of the pension liability. At December 31, 2014, that index had a weighted average rate of 3.82%, which was a decline from the rate of 4.78% at December 31, 2013.

At December 31, 2014, we had \$63.5 million in Series B Preferred Stock that was issued in 2011 to the U.S. Treasury. This stock qualified as Tier I capital under all current and proposed regulatory rules. For 2014 and part of 2015, we paid preferred dividends on that stock at an annual rate of 1%. In June 2015, we redeemed \$32.5 million in the Series B Preferred Stock and in October 2015, we redeemed the remaining \$31 million outstanding (see additional discussion in Note 19 to the consolidated financial statements).

In addition to shareholders' equity, we have supplemented our capital in past years with trust preferred security debt issuances, which because of their structure qualify as regulatory capital. This was necessary in past years because our balance sheet growth outpaced the growth rate of our capital. Additionally, we have frequently purchased bank branches over the years that resulted in our recording intangible assets, which negatively impacted regulatory capital ratios. As discussed in "Borrowings" above, we currently have \$46.4 million in trust preferred securities outstanding, all of which qualify as Tier I capital under both current and forthcoming regulatory standards.

We are not aware of any recommendations of regulatory authorities or otherwise which, if they were to be implemented, would have a material effect on our liquidity, capital resources, or operations.

## Table of Contents

The Company and the Bank must comply with regulatory capital requirements established by the Federal Reserve. Failure to meet minimum capital requirements can initiate certain mandatory, and possibly additional discretionary, actions by regulators that, if undertaken, could have a direct material effect on the Company's financial statements.

In 2013, the Federal Reserve approved final rules implementing the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision capital guidelines, referred to as "Basel III." The final rules established a new "Common Equity Tier I" ratio; new higher capital ratio requirements, including a capital conservation buffer; narrowed the definitions of capital; imposed new operating restrictions on banking organizations with insufficient capital buffers; and increased the risk weighting of certain assets. The final rules became effective January 1, 2015 for the Company.

Common Equity Tier I capital ("CET1") is comprised of common stock and related surplus, plus retained earnings, and is reduced by goodwill and other intangible assets, net of associated deferred tax liabilities. Tier I capital is comprised of CET1 capital plus Additional Tier I capital, which for the Company includes non-cumulative perpetual preferred stock and trust preferred securities. Total capital is comprised of Tier I capital plus certain adjustments, the largest of which for the Company and the Bank is the allowance for loan losses. Risk-weighted assets refer to the on- and off-balance sheet exposures of the Company and the Bank, adjusted for their related risk levels using formulas set forth in Federal Reserve regulations.

Under the Basel III Capital Rules, the following are the initial minimum capital ratios applicable to the Company and the Bank as of January 1, 2015:

- 4.5% CET1 to risk-weighted assets;
- 6.0% Tier I capital (that is, CET1 plus Additional Tier I capital) to risk-weighted assets;
- 8.0% total capital (that is, Tier I capital plus Tier II capital) to risk-weighted assets; and
- 4.0% Tier I leverage ratio (that is Tier I capital) to quarterly average total assets.

The Basel III Capital Rules also introduce a new "capital conservation buffer," composed entirely of CET1, on top of these minimum risk-weighted asset ratios. The capital conservation buffer is designed to absorb losses during periods of economic stress. Banking institutions with a ratio of CET1 to risk-weighted assets above the minimum but below the capital conservation buffer will face constraints on dividends, equity repurchases and compensation based on the amount of the shortfall. The implementation of the capital conservation buffer began on January 1, 2016 at 0.625% and will be phased in over a four-year period (increasing by that amount on each subsequent January 1, until it reaches 2.5% on January 1, 2019). Thus, when fully phased-in on January 1, 2019, the Company and the Bank will be required to maintain this additional capital conservation buffer of 2.5% of CET1, resulting in the following minimum capital ratios:

- 4.5% CET1 to risk-weighted assets, plus the capital conservation buffer, effectively resulting in a minimum ratio of CET1 to risk-weighted assets of at least 7%;

6.0% Tier I capital to risk-weighted assets, plus the capital conservation buffer, effectively resulting in a minimum Tier I capital ratio of at least 8.5%;

8.0% total capital to risk-weighted assets, plus the capital conservation buffer, effectively resulting in a minimum total capital ratio of at least 10.5%; and

4.0% Tier I leverage ratio

In addition to the minimum capital requirements described above, the regulatory framework for prompt corrective action also contains specific capital guidelines for a bank's classification as "well capitalized." The current specific guidelines are as follows –



Table of Contents

. CET1 Capital Ratio of at least 6.50%;  
. Tier I Capital Ratio of at least 8.00%;  
. Total Capital Ratio of at least 10.00%; and a  
. Leverage Ratio of at least 5.00%

If a bank falls below “well capitalized” status in any of these three ratios, it must ask for FDIC permission to originate or renew brokered deposits. The Bank’s regulatory ratios exceeded the threshold for “well-capitalized” status at December 31, 2016, 2015, and 2014 – see Note 16 to the consolidated financial statements for a table that presents the Bank’s regulatory ratios.

Table 21 presents our regulatory capital ratios as of December 31, 2016, 2015, and 2014. All of our capital ratios have significantly exceeded the minimum regulatory thresholds for all periods covered by this report.

In this economic environment, our goal is to maintain our capital ratios at levels at least 200 basis points higher than the “well capitalized” thresholds set for banks. At December 31, 2016, our total risk-based capital ratio was 13.36% compared to the 10.00% “well capitalized” threshold.

In addition to regulatory capital ratios, we also closely monitor our ratio of tangible common equity to tangible assets (“TCE Ratio”). Our TCE Ratio was 8.16% at December 31, 2016 compared to 8.13% at December 31, 2015.

See “Supervision and Regulation” under “Business” above and Note 16 to the consolidated financial statements for discussion of other matters that may affect our capital resources.

**Off-Balance Sheet Arrangements and Derivative Financial Instruments**

Off-balance sheet arrangements include transactions, agreements, or other contractual arrangements pursuant to which we have obligations or provide guarantees on behalf of an unconsolidated entity. We have no off-balance sheet arrangements of this kind other than letters of credit and repayment guarantees associated with our trust preferred securities.

Derivative financial instruments include futures, forwards, interest rate swaps, options contracts, and other financial instruments with similar characteristics. We have not engaged in significant derivatives activities through December 31, 2016 and have no current plans to do so.



Table of Contents**Return on Assets and Equity**

Table 20 shows return on average assets (net income available to common shareholders divided by average total assets), return on average common equity (net income available to common shareholders divided by average common shareholders' equity), dividend payout ratio (dividends per share divided by net income per common share) and shareholders' equity to assets ratio (average total shareholders' equity divided by average total assets) for each of the years in the three-year period ended December 31, 2016.

**Interest Rate Risk (Including Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosures About Market Risk – Item 7A.)**

Net interest income is our most significant component of earnings. Notwithstanding changes in volumes of loans and deposits, our level of net interest income is continually at risk due to the effect that changes in general market interest rate trends have on interest yields earned and paid with respect to our various categories of earning assets and interest-bearing liabilities. It is our policy to maintain portfolios of earning assets and interest-bearing liabilities with maturities and repricing opportunities that will afford protection, to the extent practical, against wide interest rate fluctuations. Our exposure to interest rate risk is analyzed on a regular basis by management using standard GAP reports, maturity reports, and an asset/liability software model that simulates future levels of interest income and expense based on current interest rates, expected future interest rates, and various intervals of "shock" interest rates. Over the years, we have been able to maintain a fairly consistent yield on average earning assets (net interest margin). Over the past five calendar years, our net interest margin has ranged from a low of 4.03% (realized in 2016) to a high of 4.92% (realized in 2013). Up until the end of 2015, the prime rate of interest had remained at 3.25% since 2008. In response to Federal Reserve actions, the prime rate increased to 3.50% on December 17, 2015 and to 3.75% on December 15, 2016. The consistency of the net interest margin is aided by the relatively low level of long-term interest rate exposure that we maintain. At December 31, 2016, approximately 75% of our interest-earning assets are subject to repricing within five years (because they are either adjustable rate assets or they are fixed rate assets that mature) and substantially all of our interest-bearing liabilities reprice within five years.

Table 17 sets forth our interest rate sensitivity analysis as of December 31, 2016, using stated maturities for all fixed rate instruments except mortgage-backed securities (which are allocated in the periods of their expected payback) and securities and borrowings with call features that are expected to be called (which are shown in the period of their expected call). As illustrated by this table, at December 31, 2016, we had \$945 million more in interest-bearing liabilities that are subject to interest rate changes within one year than earning assets. This generally would indicate that net interest income would experience downward pressure in a rising interest rate environment and would benefit from a declining interest rate environment. However, this method of analyzing interest sensitivity only measures the magnitude of the timing differences and does not address earnings, market value, or management actions. Also, interest rates on certain types of assets and liabilities may fluctuate in advance of changes in market interest rates, while interest rates on other types may lag behind changes in market rates. In addition to the effects of "when" various rate-sensitive products reprice, market rate changes may not result in uniform changes in rates among all products. For example, included in interest-bearing liabilities subject to interest rate changes within one year at December 31, 2016 are deposits totaling \$1.53 billion comprised of checking, savings, and certain types of money market deposits with

interest rates set by management. These types of deposits historically have not repriced with, or in the same proportion, as general market indicators.

Overall, we believe that in the near term (twelve months), net interest income will not likely experience significant downward pressure from rising interest rates. Similarly, we would not expect a significant increase in near term net interest income from falling interest rates. Generally, when rates change, our interest-sensitive assets that are subject to adjustment reprice immediately at the full amount of the change, while our interest-sensitive liabilities that are subject to adjustment reprice at a lag to the rate change and typically not to the full extent of the rate change. In the short-term (less than six months), this results in us being asset-sensitive, meaning that our net interest income benefits from an increase in interest rates and is negatively impacted by a decrease in interest rates. However, in the twelve-month horizon, the impact of having a higher level of interest-sensitive liabilities lessens the short-term effects of changes in interest rates.

## Table of Contents

The general discussion in the foregoing paragraph applies most directly in a “normal” interest rate environment in which longer-term maturity instruments carry higher interest rates than short-term maturity instruments, and is less applicable in periods in which there is a “flat” interest rate curve. A “flat yield curve” means that short-term interest rates are substantially the same as long-term interest rates. As a result of the prolonged negative/fragile economic environment, the Federal Reserve took steps to suppress long-term interest rates in an effort to boost the housing market, increase employment, and stimulate the economy, which resulted in a flat interest rate curve. A flat interest rate curve is an unfavorable interest rate environment for many banks, including the Company, as short-term interest rates generally drive our deposit pricing and longer-term interest rates generally drive loan pricing. When these rates converge, the profit spread we realize between loan yields and deposit rates narrows, which pressures our net interest margin.

While there have been periods in the last few years that the yield curve has steepened somewhat, it currently remains relatively flat. This flat yield curve and the intense competition for high-quality loans in our market areas have limited our ability to charge higher rates on loans, and thus we continue to experience downward pressure on our loan yields and net interest margin.

As it relates to deposits, the Federal Reserve made no changes to the short term interest rates it sets directly from 2008 until mid-December 2015, and since that time we have been able to reprice many of our maturing time deposits at lower interest rates. We were also able to generally decrease the rates we paid on other categories of deposits as a result of declining short-term interest rates in the marketplace and an increase in liquidity that lessened our need to offer premium interest rates. However, as short-term rates approached zero and with the Federal Reserve increasing short-term interest rates by 25 bps in December 2015 and by another 25 bps in December 2016, it is likely that our funding costs will not decline any further in the foreseeable future.

As previously discussed in the section “Net Interest Income,” our net interest income has been impacted by certain purchase accounting adjustments related primarily to our failed banks acquired through FDIC-assisted transactions. The purchase accounting adjustments related to the premium amortization on loans, deposits and borrowings are based on amortization schedules and are thus systematic and predictable. The accretion of the loan discount on acquired loans, which amounted to \$4.5 million, \$4.8 million, and \$16.0 million in 2016, 2015, and 2014, respectively, is less predictable and could be materially different among periods. This is because of the magnitude of the discounts that were initially recorded (\$280 million in total) and the fact that the accretion being recorded is dependent on both the credit quality of the acquired loans and the impact of any accelerated loan repayments, including payoffs. If the credit quality of the loans declines, some, or all, of the remaining discount will cease to be accreted into income. If the underlying loans experience accelerated paydowns or improved performance expectations, the remaining discount will be accreted into income on an accelerated basis. In the event of total payoff, the remaining discount will be entirely accreted into income in the period of the payoff. Each of these factors is difficult to predict and susceptible to volatility. However, with the remaining loan discount on acquired accruing loans having naturally declined since inception, amounting to only \$11.3 million at December 31, 2016, we expect that loan discount accretion will continue to decline. If that occurs, our net interest margin will be negatively impacted.

Based on our most recent interest rate modeling, which assumes either one or two interest rate increases for 2017 (federal funds rate = 0.75%, prime = 3.75%), we project that our net interest margin for 2017 will likely experience additional compression. We expect loan yields to be stable to down, while we expect that we will experience pressure to increase our deposit rates.

## Table of Contents

We have no market risk sensitive instruments held for trading purposes, nor do we maintain any foreign currency positions. Table 19 presents the expected maturities of our other than trading market risk sensitive financial instruments. Table 19 also presents the estimated fair values of market risk sensitive instruments as estimated in accordance with relevant accounting guidance. Our assets and liabilities have estimated fair values that do not materially differ from their carrying amounts.

See additional discussion regarding net interest income, as well as discussion of the changes in the annual net interest margin, in the section entitled “Net Interest Income” above.

## **Inflation**

Because the assets and liabilities of a bank are primarily monetary in nature (payable in fixed determinable amounts), the performance of a bank is affected more by changes in interest rates than by inflation. Interest rates generally increase as the rate of inflation increases, but the magnitude of the change in rates may not be the same. The effect of inflation on banks is normally not as significant as its influence on those businesses that have large investments in plant and inventories. During periods of high inflation, there are normally corresponding increases in the money supply, and banks will normally experience above average growth in assets, loans and deposits. Also, general increases in the price of goods and services will result in increased operating expenses.

## **Current Accounting Matters**

We prepare our consolidated financial statements and related disclosures in conformity with standards established by, among others, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (the “FASB”). Because the information needed by users of financial reports is dynamic, the FASB frequently issues new rules and proposes new rules for companies to apply in reporting their activities. See Note 1(v) to our consolidated financial statements for a discussion of recent rule proposals and changes.

## **Item 7A. Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosures About Market Risk.**

The information responsive to this Item is found in Item 7 under the caption “Interest Rate Risk.”

Table of Contents**Table 1 Selected Consolidated Financial Data**

(\$ in thousands, except per share and nonfinancial data)	Year Ended December 31,				
	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
<b>Income Statement Data</b>					
Interest income	\$ 130,987	126,655	139,832	147,511	152,520
Interest expense	7,607	6,908	8,223	10,985	17,320
Net interest income	123,380	119,747	131,609	136,526	135,200
Provision (reversal) for loan losses	(23 )	(780 )	10,195	30,616	79,672
Net interest income after provision	123,403	120,527	121,414	105,910	55,528
Noninterest income	25,551	18,764	14,368	23,489	1,389
Noninterest expense	106,821	98,131	97,251	96,619	97,275
Income (loss) before income taxes	42,133	41,160	38,531	32,780	(40,358 )
Income taxes (benefit)	14,624	14,126	13,535	12,081	(16,952 )
Net income (loss)	27,509	27,034	24,996	20,699	(23,406 )
Preferred stock dividends	(175 )	(603 )	(868 )	(895 )	(2,809 )
Net income (loss) available to common shareholders	27,334	26,431	24,128	19,804	(26,215 )
Earnings (loss) per common share – basic	1.37	1.34	1.22	1.01	(1.54 )
Earnings (loss) per common share – diluted	1.33	1.30	1.19	0.98	(1.54 )
<b>Per Share Data (Common)</b>					
Cash dividends declared – common	\$0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32
<b>Market Price</b>					
High	28.49	19.92	19.65	17.39	13.40
Low	17.15	15.00	15.55	11.98	7.68
Close	27.14	18.74	18.47	16.62	12.82
Stated book value – common	17.66	16.96	16.08	15.30	14.51
Tangible book value – common	13.85	13.56	12.63	11.81	11.00
<b>Selected Balance Sheet Data (at year end)</b>					
Total assets	\$3,614,862	3,362,065	3,218,383	3,185,070	3,244,910
Loans – non-covered	2,710,712	2,416,285	2,268,580	2,252,885	2,094,143
Loans – covered (1)	—	102,641	127,594	210,309	282,314
Total loans	2,710,712	2,518,926	2,396,174	2,463,194	2,376,457
Allowance for loan losses	23,781	28,583	40,626	48,505	46,402
Intangible assets	79,475	67,171	67,893	68,669	68,943
Deposits	2,947,353	2,811,285	2,695,906	2,751,019	2,821,360
Borrowings	271,394	186,394	116,394	46,394	46,394
Total shareholders' equity	368,101	342,190	387,699	371,922	356,117
<b>Selected Average Balances</b>					
Assets	\$3,422,267	3,230,302	3,219,915	3,208,458	3,311,289
Loans	2,603,327	2,434,602	2,434,331	2,419,679	2,436,997



Edgar Filing: FIRST BANCORP /NC/ - Form 10-K

Earning assets	3,108,918	2,936,624	2,907,098	2,805,112	2,857,541
Deposits	2,827,513	2,687,381	2,723,758	2,779,032	2,809,357
Interest-bearing liabilities	2,324,823	2,218,246	2,294,330	2,380,747	2,553,175
Shareholders' equity	360,715	376,287	383,055	362,770	345,981
Ratios					
Return on average assets	0.80%	0.82%	0.75%	0.62%	(0.79% )
Return on average common equity	7.73%	8.04%	7.73%	6.78%	(9.29% )
Net interest margin (taxable-equivalent basis)	4.03%	4.13%	4.58%	4.92%	4.78%
Tangible common equity to tangible assets	8.16%	8.13%	7.90%	7.46%	6.81%
Loans to deposits at year end	91.97%	89.60%	88.88%	89.54%	84.23%
Allowance for loan losses to total loans	0.88%	1.13%	1.70%	1.97%	1.95%
Allowance for loan losses to total loans – non-covered (1)	0.88%	1.11%	1.69%	1.96%	1.99%
Nonperforming assets to total assets at year end	1.64%	2.66%	3.54%	4.79%	6.24%
Nonperforming assets to total assets – non-covered (1)	1.64%	2.37%	3.09%	2.78%	3.64%
Net charge-offs to average total loans	0.14%	0.46%	0.74%	1.18%	3.06%
Nonfinancial Data – number of branches					
	88	88	87	96	97
Nonfinancial Data – number of employees (FTEs)					
	834	812	798	855	831

(1) Effective September 22, 2016, all FDIC loss share agreements were terminated, and accordingly, assets previously covered under those agreements became non-covered on that date.

Table of Contents**Table 2 Average Balances and Net Interest Income Analysis**

	Year Ended December 31,			2015		
	2016					
	Average Volume	Avg. Rate	Interest Earned or Paid	Average Volume	Avg. Rate	Interest Earned or Paid
<i>(\$ in thousands)</i>						
<b>Assets</b>						
Loans (1) (2)	\$2,603,327	4.66%	\$121,322	\$2,434,602	4.84%	\$117,8
Taxable securities	298,083	2.36%	7,034	296,181	2.13%	6,296
Non-taxable securities (3)	49,986	7.61%	3,802	52,449	6.60%	3,463
Short-term investments, primarily overnight funds	157,522	0.56%	883	153,392	0.43%	658
Total interest- earning assets	3,108,918	4.28%	133,041	2,936,624	4.37%	128,2
Cash and due from banks	59,835			61,212		
Bank premises and equipment, net	76,418			75,452		
Other assets	177,096			157,014		
Total assets	\$3,422,267			\$3,230,302		
<b>Liabilities and Equity</b>						
Interest-bearing checking accounts	\$583,786	0.06%	\$360	\$568,329	0.06%	\$335
Money market accounts	657,211	0.18%	1,160	582,407	0.13%	765
Savings accounts	200,093	0.05%	100	184,821	0.05%	92
Time deposits >\$100,000	405,220	0.65%	2,654	410,692	0.70%	2,856
Other time deposits	268,854	0.33%	896	322,205	0.39%	1,271
Total interest-bearing deposits	2,115,164	0.24%	5,170	2,068,454	0.26%	5,319
Borrowings	209,659	1.16%	2,437	149,792	1.06%	1,589
Total interest- bearing liabilities	2,324,823	0.33%	7,607	2,218,246	0.31%	6,908
Noninterest-bearing checking accounts	712,349			618,927		
Other liabilities	24,380			16,842		
Shareholders' equity	360,715			376,287		
Total liabilities and shareholders' equity	\$3,422,267			\$3,230,302		
Net yield on interest- earning assets and net interest income		4.03%	\$125,434		4.13%	\$121,3
Interest rate spread		3.95%			4.06%	
Average prime rate		3.51%			3.26%	

Average loans include nonaccruing loans, the effect of which is to lower the average rate shown. Interest earned (1) includes recognized net loan fees (costs) in the amounts of (\$457,000), (\$39,000), and \$143,700 for 2016, 2015, and 2014, respectively.

(2) Includes accretion of discount on covered loans of \$4,451,000, \$4,751,000, and \$16,009,000 in 2016, 2015, and 2014, respectively.

Includes tax-equivalent adjustments of \$2,054,000, \$1,634,000, and \$1,502,000 in 2016, 2015, and 2014, (3) respectively, to reflect the federal and state tax benefit of the tax-exempt securities (using a 37.6% combined tax rate), reduced by the related nondeductible portion of interest expense.

Table of Contents**Table 3 Volume and Rate Variance Analysis**

	Year Ended December 31, 2016			Year Ended December 31, 2015		
	Change			Change		
	Attributable to			Attributable to		
	Changes in Volumes	Changes in Rates	Total Increase (Decrease)	Changes in Volumes	Changes in Rates	Total Increase (Decrease)
<i>(\$ in thousands)</i>						
Interest income (tax-equivalent):						
Loans	\$ 8,016	(4,566 )	3,450	14	(15,783 )	(15,769 )
Taxable securities	43	695	738	2,687	148	2,835
Non-taxable securities	(175 )	514	339	(93 )	173	80
Short-term investments, primarily overnight funds	20	205	225	(375 )	184	(191 )
Total interest income	7,904	(3,152 )	4,752	2,233	(15,278 )	(13,045 )
Interest expense:						
Interest-bearing checking accounts	9	16	25	19	(6 )	13
Money market accounts	115	280	395	36	99	135
Savings accounts	8	—	8	4	—	4
Time deposits >\$100,000	(37 )	(165 )	(202 )	(988 )	(529 )	(1,517 )
Other time deposits	(194 )	(181 )	(375 )	(269 )	(119 )	(388 )
Total interest-bearing deposits	(99 )	(50 )	(149 )	(1,198 )	(555 )	(1,753 )
Borrowings	665	183	848	559	(121 )	438
Total interest expense	566	133	699	(639 )	(676 )	(1,315 )
Net interest income (tax-equivalent)	\$ 7,338	(3,285 )	4,053	2,872	(14,602 )	(11,730 )

Changes attributable to both volume and rate are allocated equally between rate and volume variances.

**Table 4 Noninterest Income**

(\$ in thousands)	Year Ended December 31,		
	2016	2015	2014
Service charges on deposit accounts	\$ 10,571	11,648	13,706
Other service charges, commissions, and fees	11,913	10,906	10,019
Fees from presold mortgages	2,033	2,532	2,726
Commissions from sales of insurance and financial products	3,790	2,580	2,733
SBA consulting fees	3,199	—	—
SBA loan sale gains	1,433	—	—
Bank owned life insurance income	2,052	1,665	1,311
Total core noninterest income	34,991	29,331	30,495

Edgar Filing: FIRST BANCORP /NC/ - Form 10-K

Foreclosed property (gains) losses, net – non-covered	(1,495 )	(2,504 )	(1,924 )
Foreclosed property (gains) losses, net – covered	870	1,018	(1,919 )
FDIC Indemnification asset income (expense), net	(10,255)	(8,615 )	(12,842)
Securities gains (losses), net	3	(1 )	786
Gain on branch exchange transaction	1,466	—	—
Other gains (losses), net	(29 )	(465 )	(228 )
Total	\$25,551	18,764	14,368

Table of Contents**Table 5 Noninterest Expenses**

(\$ in thousands)	Year Ended December 31,		
	2016	2015	2014
Salaries	\$51,252	47,660	46,071
Employee benefits	10,812	9,134	9,086
Total personnel expense	62,064	56,794	55,157
Occupancy expense	7,838	7,358	7,362
Equipment related expenses	3,608	3,749	3,931
Merger and acquisition expenses	1,431	—	—
Amortization of intangible assets	1,211	722	777
Telephone and data lines	2,311	2,133	1,988
Outside consultants	1,700	1,677	1,663
Stationery and supplies	2,066	2,039	1,710
Data processing expense	2,010	1,935	1,654
FDIC insurance expense	2,009	2,394	3,988
Marketing expense	1,999	1,674	1,487
Repossession and collection expenses – non-covered	1,842	2,167	2,092
Repossession and collection expenses – covered, net of FDIC reimbursements	92	(54 )	(861 )
Dues and subscription expense	1,604	1,710	1,717
Legal and audit	1,408	1,689	1,955
Non-credit losses	1,164	360	309
Branch consolidation expense	—	—	976
Other operating expenses	12,464	11,784	11,346
Total	\$106,821	98,131	97,251

**Table 6 Income Taxes**

(\$ in thousands)	2016	2015	2014
Current - Federal	\$12,827	9,149	1,316
- State	1,679	1,436	903
Deferred - Federal	16	3,205	10,104
- State	102	336	1,212
Total tax expense	\$14,624	14,126	13,535
Effective tax rate	34.7%	34.3%	35.1%

Table of Contents**Table 7 Distribution of Assets and Liabilities**

	As of December 31,					
	2016		2015		2014	
Assets						
Interest-earning assets						
Net loans	74	%	74	%	73	%
Securities available for sale	6		5		5	
Securities held to maturity	4		5		6	
Short term investments	6		7		5	
Total interest-earning assets	90		91		89	
Noninterest-earning assets						
Cash and due from banks	2		2		3	
Premises and equipment	2		2		2	
FDIC indemnification asset	—		—		1	
Intangible assets	2		2		2	
Foreclosed real estate	—		—		—	
Bank-owned life insurance	2		2		2	
Other assets	2		1		1	
Total assets	100%		100%		100%	
Liabilities and shareholders' equity						
Noninterest-bearing checking accounts	21	%	20	%	17	%
Interest-bearing checking accounts	17		19		18	
Money market accounts	19		19		17	
Savings accounts	6		5		6	
Time deposits of \$100,000 or more	12		12		15	
Other time deposits	7		9		11	
Total deposits	82		84		84	
Borrowings	7		5		4	
Accrued expenses and other liabilities	1		1		—	
Total liabilities	90		90		88	
Shareholders' equity	10		10		12	
Total liabilities and shareholders' equity	100%		100%		100%	

**Table 8 Securities Portfolio Composition**

	As of December 31,		
(\$ in thousands)	2016	2015	2014
Securities available for sale:			
Government-sponsored enterprise securities	\$17,490	18,972	27,521
Mortgage-backed securities	148,065	121,553	129,510
Corporate bonds	33,600	24,946	865

Edgar Filing: FIRST BANCORP /NC/ - Form 10-K

Equity securities	174	143	122
Total securities available for sale	199,329	165,614	158,018
Securities held to maturity:			
Mortgage-backed securities	80,585	102,509	124,924
State and local governments	49,128	52,101	53,763
Total securities held to maturity	129,713	154,610	178,687
Total securities	\$329,042	320,224	336,705
Average total securities during year	\$348,069	348,630	221,732

80

Table of Contents**Table 9 Securities Portfolio Maturity Schedule**

(\$ in thousands)	As of December 31, 2016		
	Book Value	Fair Value	Book Yield (1)
Securities available for sale:			
Government-sponsored enterprise securities			
Due after one but within five years	\$17,497	17,490	1.94%
Total	17,497	17,490	1.94%
Mortgage-backed securities (2)			
Due within one year	148	149	2.72%
Due after one but within five years	120,355	117,950	1.88%
Due after five but within ten years	24,302	23,853	2.04%
Due after ten years	6,196	6,113	3.29%
Total	151,001	148,065	1.96%
Corporate debt securities			
Due after five but within ten years	28,833	28,682	3.45%
Due after ten years	5,000	4,918	5.44%
Total	33,833	33,600	3.74%
Equity securities	83	174	1.15%
Total securities available for sale			
Due within one year	148	149	2.72%
Due after one but within five years	137,852	135,440	1.89%
Due after five but within ten years	53,135	52,535	2.81%
Due after ten years	11,196	11,031	4.25%
Equity securities	83	174	1.15%
Total	\$202,414	199,329	2.26%
Securities held to maturity:			
Mortgage-backed securities (2)			
Due after one but within five years	\$80,585	79,283	1.82%
Total	80,585	79,283	1.82%
State and local governments			
Due within one year	2,016	2,028	5.92%
Due after one but within five years	16,256	16,767	5.53%
Due after five but within ten years	29,690	30,981	5.66%
Due after ten years	1,166	1,136	4.05%



Edgar Filing: FIRST BANCORP /NC/ - Form 10-K

Total securities held to maturity	49,128	50,912	5.59%
-----------------------------------	--------	--------	-------

Total securities held to maturity

Due within one year	2,016	2,028	5.92%
Due after one but within five years	96,841	96,050	2.44%
Due after five but within ten years	29,690	30,981	5.66%
Due after ten years	1,166	1,136	4.05%
Total	\$129,713	130,195	3.25%

- (1) Yields on tax-exempt investments have been adjusted to a taxable equivalent basis using a 37.6% tax rate.
- (2) Mortgage-backed securities are shown maturing in the periods consistent with their estimated lives based on expected prepayment speeds.

Table of Contents**Table 10 Loan Portfolio Composition**

(\$ in thousands)	As of December 31, 2016		2015		2014	
	Amount	% of Total Loans	Amount	% of Total Loans	Amount	% of Total Loans
Commercial, financial, and agricultural	\$261,813	9%	\$202,671	8%	\$160,878	7%
Real estate – construction, land development & other land loans	354,667	13%	308,969	12%	288,148	12%
Real estate – mortgage – residential (1-4 family) first mortgages	750,679	28%	768,559	31%	789,871	33%
Real estate – mortgage – home equity loans / lines of credit	239,105	9%	232,601	9%	223,500	9%
Real estate – mortgage – commercial and other	1,049,460	39%	957,587	38%	882,127	37%
Installment loans to individuals	55,037	2%	47,666	2%	50,704	2%
Loans, gross	2,710,761	100%	2,518,053	100%	2,395,228	100%
Unamortized net deferred loan costs (fees)	(49 )		873		946	
Total loans (1)	\$2,710,712		\$2,518,926		\$2,396,174	

(1) Excludes loans held for sale at December 31, 2012

Table of Contents**Table 11 Loan Maturities**

(\$ in thousands)	As of December 31, 2016						Total Amount
	Due within one year		Due after one year but within five years		Due after five years		
	Amount	Yield	Amount	Yield	Amount	Yield	
<b>Variable Rate Loans:</b>							
Commercial, financial, and agricultural	\$50,333	4.62%	\$15,731	4.41%	\$17,957	2.90%	\$84,017
Real estate – construction only	44,387	4.78%	34,422	4.25%	36,842	3.02%	115,651
Real estate – all other mortgage	77,165	5.06%	132,276	4.76%	279,449	3.91%	488,990
Real estate – home equity loans/ line of credit	7,300	4.60%	39,173	4.37%	180,079	3.98%	226,552
Consumer, primarily installment loans to individuals	572	5.11%	23,272	8.57%	5,241	5.84%	29,085
Total at variable rates	179,757	4.85%	244,874	4.97%	519,568	3.86%	944,375
<b>Fixed Rate Loans:</b>							
Commercial, financial, and agricultural	22,916	5.98%	83,946	4.09%	67,992	2.79%	174,854
Real estate – construction only	35,915	3.69%	13,568	4.31%	47,541	4.00%	97,024
Real estate – all other mortgage	123,344	5.35%	708,549	4.72%	607,485	4.16%	1,439,378
Consumer, primarily installment loans to individuals	3,792	5.14%	16,024	5.17%	7,973	8.68%	27,789
Total at fixed rates	185,967	5.10%	822,087	4.66%	730,991	4.07%	1,739,045
Subtotal	365,724	4.98%	1,066,961	4.73%	1,250,559	3.98%	2,683,420
Nonaccrual loans	27,468		—		—		27,468
Total loans	\$393,192		\$1,066,961		\$1,250,559		\$2,710,888

The above table is based on contractual scheduled maturities. Early repayment of loans or renewals at maturity are not considered in this table.

Table of Contents**Table 12 Nonperforming Assets**

(\$ in thousands)	As of December 31,		
	2016	2015	2014
Non-covered nonperforming assets (1)			
Nonaccrual loans	\$27,468	39,994	50,066
Restructured loans - accruing	22,138	28,011	35,493
Accruing loans >90 days past due	—	—	—
Total non-covered nonperforming loans	49,606	68,005	85,559
Nonperforming loans held for sale	—	—	—
Foreclosed real estate	9,532	9,188	9,771
Total non-covered nonperforming assets	\$59,138	77,193	95,330
Covered nonperforming assets (1)			
Nonaccrual loans	\$—	7,816	10,508
Restructured loans - accruing	—	3,478	5,823
Accruing loans >90 days past due	—	—	—
Total covered nonperforming loans	—	11,294	16,331
Foreclosed real estate	—	806	2,350
Total covered nonperforming assets	\$—	12,100	18,681
Total nonperforming assets	\$59,138	89,293	114,011
Asset Quality Ratios – All Assets			
Nonperforming loans to total loans	1.83%	3.15%	4.25%
Nonperforming assets to total loans and foreclosed real estate	2.17%	3.53%	4.73%
Nonperforming assets to total assets	1.64%	2.66%	3.54%
Asset Quality Ratios – Based on Non-covered Assets only			
Non-covered nonperforming loans to non-covered loans	1.83%	2.81%	3.77%
Non-covered nonperforming assets to non-covered loans and non-covered foreclosed real estate	2.17%	3.18%	4.18%
Non-covered nonperforming assets to total non-covered assets	1.64%	2.37%	3.09%

(1) Covered nonperforming assets consisted of assets that were included in loss share agreements with the FDIC. In 2014, approximately \$9.7 million of nonaccrual loans, \$2.1 million accruing restructured loans and \$3.0 million of foreclosed real estate were transferred from covered to non-covered status upon a scheduled expiration of a FDIC loss-share agreement. In 2016, approximately \$7.0 million of nonaccrual loans and \$1.6 million of foreclosed real estate were transferred from covered to non-covered status upon expirations/terminations of FDIC loss-share agreements.

Table of Contents**Table 12a Nonperforming Assets by Geographical Region**

(\$ in thousands)	As of December 31, 2016		
	Total Nonperforming Loans	Total Loans	Nonperforming Loans to Total Loans
<b>Nonaccrual loans and</b>			
<b>Troubled Debt Restructurings (1)</b>			
Eastern Region (NC)	\$ 13,678	715,000	1.9%
Triangle Region (NC)	12,300	818,000	1.5%
Triad Region (NC)	10,993	438,000	2.5%
Charlotte Region (NC)	1,583	207,000	0.8%
Southern Piedmont Region (NC)	5,771	282,000	2.0%
Western Region (NC)	310	88,000	0.4%
South Carolina Region	1,646	131,000	1.3%
Virginia Region (2)	3,325	13,000	25.6%
Other	—	19,000	0.0%
Total nonaccrual loans and troubled debt restructurings	\$49,606	2,711,000	1.8%
<b>Foreclosed Real Estate (1)</b>			
Eastern Region (NC)	\$ 1,185		
Triangle Region (NC)	2,535		
Triad Region (NC)	390		
Charlotte Region (NC)	344		
Southern Piedmont Region (NC)	1,347		
Western Region (NC)	1,138		
South Carolina Region	527		
Virginia Region	2,066		
Other	—		
Total foreclosed real estate	\$9,532		

(1) The counties comprising each region are as follows:

Eastern North Carolina Region - New Hanover, Brunswick, Duplin, Dare, Beaufort, Pitt, Onslow, Carteret

Triangle North Carolina Region - Moore, Lee, Harnett, Chatham, Wake

Triad North Carolina Region - Montgomery, Randolph, Davidson, Rockingham, Guilford, Stanly, Forsyth

Southern Piedmont North Carolina Region - Anson, Richmond, Scotland, Robeson, Bladen, Columbus, Cumberland  
Western North Carolina Region - Buncombe

South Carolina Region - Chesterfield, Dillon, Florence

Virginia Region - Wythe, Washington, Montgomery, Roanoke

Charlotte North Carolina Region - Iredell, Cabarrus, Rowan, Mecklenburg

- (2) As part of the terms of the July 2016 branch exchange, loans classified as substandard or below were not exchanged between the banks.

85

Table of Contents**Table 13 Allocation of the Allowance for Loan Losses**

(\$ in thousands)	As of December 31,				
	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Commercial, financial, and agricultural	\$3,829	4,764	6,911	10,013	4,855
Real estate – construction, land development	2,691	3,790	8,520	11,373	14,103
Real estate – residential, commercial, home equity, multifamily	15,222	18,282	23,103	24,928	24,554
Installment loans to individuals	1,145	1,051	1,916	2,343	1,942
Total allocated	22,887	27,887	40,450	48,657	45,454
Unallocated	894	696	176	(152 )	948
Total	\$23,781	28,583	40,626	48,505	46,402
Allowance for loan losses related to covered loans included above (1)	\$—	1,799	2,281	4,242	4,759

(1) During 2016, all FDIC loss share agreements were terminated, and accordingly, there were no covered loans at December 31, 2016.

Table of Contents**Table 14 Loan Loss and Recovery Experience**

(\$ in thousands)	As of December 31,			
	2016	2015	2014	2013
Loans outstanding at end of year	\$2,710,712	2,518,926	2,396,174	2,400,000
Average amount of loans outstanding	\$2,603,327	2,434,602	2,434,331	2,400,000
Allowance for loan losses, at beginning of year	\$28,583	40,626	48,505	46,400
Provision for loan losses – non-covered	2,109	2,008	7,087	18,200
Provision (reversal) for loan losses - covered	(2,132 )	(2,788 )	3,108	12,300
Total provision (reversal) for loan losses	(23 )	(780 )	10,195	30,500
	28,560	39,846	58,700	77,000
Loans charged off: (1)				
Commercial, financial, and agricultural	(2,033 )	(3,039 )	(5,179 )	(4,600)
Real estate – construction, land development & other land loans	(1,101 )	(3,616 )	(6,071 )	(10,000)
Real estate – mortgage – residential (1-4 family) first mortgages	(3,894 )	(5,145 )	(4,050 )	(4,700)
Real estate – mortgage – home equity loans / lines of credit	(1,010 )	(1,117 )	(1,607 )	(3,100)
Real estate – mortgage – commercial and other	(1,088 )	(3,103 )	(4,405 )	(7,000)
Installment loans to individuals	(1,288 )	(2,411 )	(1,924 )	(2,200)
Total charge-offs	(10,414 )	(18,431 )	(23,236 )	(32,000)
Recoveries of loans previously charged-off:				
Commercial, financial, and agricultural	817	934	149	198
Real estate – construction, land development & other land loans	2,690	3,599	3,363	777
Real estate – mortgage – residential (1-4 family) first mortgages	1,207	678	646	595
Real estate – mortgage – home equity loans / lines of credit	279	143	100	199
Real estate – mortgage – commercial and other	1,286	1,390	446	1,500
Installment loans to individuals	406	424	458	623
Total recoveries	6,685	7,168	5,162	3,922
Net charge-offs	(3,729 )	(11,263 )	(18,074 )	(28,000)
Allowance removed related to sold loans	(1,050 )	—	—	—
Allowance for loan losses, at end of year	\$23,781	28,583	40,626	48,500
Covered net recoveries (charge-offs) included above (2)	\$1,714	2,306	(3,332 )	(12,000)
Ratios:				
Net charge-offs as a percent of average loans	0.14%	0.46%	0.74%	1.18%
Allowance for loan losses as a percent of loans at end of year	0.88%	1.13%	1.70%	1.97%
Allowance for loan losses as a multiple of net charge-offs	6.38	x 2.54	x 2.25	x 1.70
Provision (reversal) for loan losses as a percent of net charge-offs	-0.62%	-6.93%	56.41%	107.00%
Recoveries of loans previously charged-off as a percent of loans charged-off	64.19%	38.89%	22.22%	12.00%



- In the table above, for the period ended December 31, 2012, loan charge-offs include \$37.8 million in charge-offs related to loans that the Company held for sale as of year-end (and subsequently sold in January 2013). The
- (1) remaining balance of \$30.4 million after the charge-offs were recorded was classified as “Loans held for sale” on the Company’s consolidated balance sheet at December 31, 2012.
  - (2) On September 22, 2016, all FDIC loss-share agreements were terminated, and accordingly, assets previously covered under those agreements became non-covered on that date.

Table of Contents**Table 15 Average Deposits**

(\$ in thousands)	Year Ended December 31,		2015	Average Rate	2014	Average Rate
	2016	Average				
	Average Amount	Rate	Amount	Rate	Amount	Rate
Interest-bearing checking accounts	\$583,786	0.06%	\$568,329	0.06%	\$535,738	0.06%
Money market accounts	657,211	0.18%	582,407	0.13%	552,940	0.11%
Savings accounts	200,093	0.05%	184,821	0.05%	176,362	0.05%
Time deposits >\$100,000	405,220	0.65%	410,692	0.70%	542,303	0.81%
Other time deposits	268,854	0.33%	322,205	0.39%	387,607	0.43%
Total interest-bearing deposits	2,115,164	0.24%	2,068,454	0.26%	2,194,950	0.32%
Noninterest-bearing checking accounts	712,349	—	618,927	—	528,808	—
Total deposits	\$2,827,513	0.18%	\$2,687,381	0.20%	\$2,723,758	0.26%

**Table 16 Maturities of Time Deposits of \$100,000 or More**

(\$ in thousands)	As of December 31, 2016				Total
	3 Months or Less	Over 3 to 6 Months	Over 6 to 12 Months	Over 12 Months	
Time deposits of \$100,000 or more	\$118,073	71,104	122,777	110,733	422,687

Table of Contents**Table 17 Interest Rate Sensitivity Analysis**

(\$ in thousands)	Repricing schedule for interest-earning assets and interest-bearing liabilities held as of December 31, 2016			
	3 Months or Less	Over 3 to 12 Months	Total Within 12 Months	Over 12 Months
<b>Earning assets:</b>				
Loans (1)	\$785,315	186,721	972,036	1,738,677
Securities available for sale (2)	25,171	25,823	50,994	148,335
Securities held to maturity (2)	11,967	19,210	31,177	98,536
Short-term investments	236,464	—	236,464	—
Total earning assets	\$1,058,917	231,754	1,290,671	1,985,548
Percent of total earning assets	32.32%	7.07%	39.40%	60.60%
Cumulative percent of total earning assets	32.32%	39.40%	39.40%	100.00%
<b>Interest-bearing liabilities:</b>				
Interest-bearing checking accounts	\$635,431	—	635,431	—
Money market accounts	685,331	—	685,331	—
Savings accounts	209,074	—	209,074	—
Time deposits of \$100,000 or more	117,952	193,881	311,833	110,854
Other time deposits	78,080	119,760	197,840	40,987
Borrowings	146,394	105,000	251,394	20,000
Total interest-bearing liabilities	\$1,872,262	418,641	2,290,903	171,841
Percent of total interest-bearing liabilities	76.02%	17.00%	93.02%	9.21%
Cumulative percent of total interest-bearing liabilities	76.02%	93.02%	93.02%	100.00%
Interest sensitivity gap	\$(813,345)	(186,887)	(1,000,232)	1,813,700
Cumulative interest sensitivity gap	(813,345)	(1,000,232)	(1,000,232)	813,474
Cumulative interest sensitivity gap as a percent of total earning assets	(24.83%)	(30.53%)	(30.53%)	24.83%
Cumulative ratio of interest-sensitive assets to interest-sensitive liabilities	56.56%	56.34%	56.34%	133.03%

The three months or less category for loans includes \$335,866 in adjustable rate loans that have reached their (1) contractual rate floors. Thus, the interest rates on these loans will not decrease any further. For the majority of these loans, it will take an increase in prime rate of at least 200 basis points before the loans will reprice higher. Securities available for sale include government-sponsored enterprise securities, mortgage-backed securities, corporate bonds, and equity securities. Securities held to maturity include mortgage-backed securities and state and (2) local government securities. For fixed rate mortgage-backed securities, the principal is assumed to reprice equally over the average life of the underlying security. All other fixed rate securities are assumed to reprice based on maturity date or call date. Variable rate securities are included in the period in which they are subject to reprice.



Table of Contents**Table 18 Contractual Obligations and Other Commercial Commitments**

Contractual Obligations As of December 31, 2016	Payments Due by Period (\$ in thousands)				
	Total	On Demand or Less than 1 Year	1-3 Years	4-5 Years	After 5 Years
Borrowings	\$271,394	205,000	20,000	—	46,394
Operating leases	7,499	1,404	2,121	1,300	2,674
Total contractual cash obligations, excluding deposits	278,893	206,404	22,121	1,300	49,068
Deposits	2,947,353	2,793,804	103,952	47,860	1,737
Total contractual cash obligations, including deposits	\$3,226,246	3,000,208	126,073	49,160	50,805

Other Commercial Commitments As of December 31, 2016	Amount of Commitment Expiration Per Period (\$ in thousands)				
	Total Amounts Committed	Less than 1 Year	1-3 Years	4-5 Years	After 5 Years
Credit cards	\$ 86,578	43,289	43,289	—	—
Lines of credit and loan commitments	661,148	266,863	94,838	72,362	227,085
Standby letters of credit	12,738	11,956	782	—	—
Total commercial commitments	\$ 760,464	322,108	138,909	72,362	227,085

Table of Contents**Table 19 Market Risk Sensitive Instruments**Expected Maturities of Market Sensitive Instruments Held  
at December 31, 2016 Occurring in Indicated Year

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Beyond	Total
<i>(\$ in thousands)</i>							
Due from banks, interest-bearing	\$234,348	—	—	—	—	—	234,348
Presold mortgages in process of settlement	2,116	—	—	—	—	—	2,116
Debt Securities - at amortized cost (1) (2)	69,075	65,963	81,018	55,889	23,324	36,775	332,044
Loans – fixed (3) (4)	185,967	186,289	191,787	201,122	242,887	730,993	1,739,045
Loans – adjustable (3) (4)	179,758	71,006	59,766	58,058	56,041	519,570	944,199
Total	\$671,264	323,258	332,571	315,069	322,252	1,287,338	3,251,752
Interest-bearing checking accounts	\$635,431	—	—	—	—	—	635,431
Money market accounts	685,331	—	—	—	—	—	685,331
Savings accounts	209,074	—	—	—	—	—	209,074
Time deposits	507,965	83,954	19,998	25,442	22,418	1,737	661,514
Borrowings – fixed	205,000	20,000	—	—	—	—	225,000
Borrowings – adjustable	—	—	—	—	—	46,394	46,394
Total	\$2,242,801	103,954	19,998	25,442	22,418	48,131	2,462,744

(1) Tax-exempt securities are reflected at a tax-equivalent basis using a 37.6% tax rate.

Securities with call dates within 12 months of December 31, 2016 that have above market interest rates are  
(2) assumed to mature at their call date for purposes of this table. Mortgage securities are assumed to mature in the period of their expected repayment based on estimated prepayment speeds.

(3) Excludes nonaccrual loans.

(4) Loans are shown in the period of their contractual maturity.

**Table 20 Return on Assets and Common Equity**

	For the Year Ended		
	2016	2015	2014
Return on average assets	0.80%	0.82%	0.75%
Return on average common equity	7.73%	8.04%	7.73%
Dividend payout ratio – common shares	23.36%	23.88%	26.23%
Average shareholders' equity to average assets	10.54%	11.65%	11.90%



Table of Contents**Table 21 Risk-Based and Leverage Capital Ratios**

(\$ in thousands)	As of December 31,		
	2016 (under Basel III)	2015 (under Basel III)	2014 (pre-Basel III)
<b>Risk-Based and Leverage Capital</b>			
<b>Common Equity Tier I capital:</b>			
Shareholders' equity	\$368,101	342,190	387,699
Preferred stock	—	(7,287)	(70,787)
Intangible assets, net of deferred tax liability	(64,496)	(55,687)	(67,893)
Accumulated other comprehensive income adjustments	5,107	3,550	578
Total Common Equity Tier I capital	308,712	282,766	249,597
<b>Tier I capital:</b>			
Preferred stock	—	7,287	70,787
Trust preferred securities eligible for Tier I capital treatment	45,000	45,000	45,000
Deductions from Tier I capital	(349)	—	—
Total Tier I leverage capital	353,363	335,053	365,384
<b>Tier II capital:</b>			
Allowable allowance for loan losses	23,781	28,583	28,096
Other Tier II capital	703	489	—
Tier II capital additions	24,484	29,072	28,096
Total capital	\$377,847	364,125	393,480
Total risk weighted assets	\$2,828,118	2,519,193	2,235,143
Adjusted fourth quarter average assets	3,539,363	3,227,166	3,146,409
<b>Risk-based capital ratios:</b>			
Common equity Tier I capital to Tier I risk adjusted assets	10.92%	11.22%	11.17%
Minimum required under Basel III	5.125%	4.50%	4.50%
Fully phased-in minimum under Basel III	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%
Tier I capital to Tier I risk adjusted assets	12.49%	13.30%	16.35%
Minimum required under Basel III	6.625%	6.00%	4.00%
Fully phased-in minimum under Basel III	8.50%	8.50%	8.50%
Total risk-based capital to Tier II risk-adjusted assets	13.36%	14.45%	17.60%
Minimum required under Basel III	8.625%	8.00%	8.00%
Fully phased-in minimum under Basel III	10.50%	10.50%	10.50%
<b>Leverage capital ratios:</b>			
Tier I leverage capital to adjusted fourth quarter average assets	10.17%	10.38%	11.61%
Minimum required under Basel III	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%
Fully phased-in minimum under Basel III	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%



Table of Contents**Table 22 Quarterly Financial Summary (Unaudited)**

	2016				2015
	Fourth	Third	Second	First	Fourth
	Quarter	Quarter	Quarter	Quarter	Quarter
<i>(\$ in thousands except</i>					
<i>per share data)</i>					
<b>Income Statement Data</b>					
Interest income, taxable equivalent	\$33,834	32,789	33,896	32,522	32,230
Interest expense	1,997	1,901	1,841	1,868	1,754
Net interest income, taxable equivalent	31,837	30,888	32,055	30,654	30,476
Taxable equivalent, adjustment	544	534	517	459	423
Net interest income	31,293	30,354	31,538	30,195	30,053
Provision (reversal) for loan losses	—	—	(281	) 258	(43
Net interest income after provision for losses	31,293	30,354	31,819	29,937	30,096
Noninterest income	9,473	5,157	5,919	5,002	5,725
Noninterest expense	28,183	27,718	26,147	24,773	25,503
Income before income taxes	12,583	7,793	11,591	10,166	10,318
Income taxes	4,228	3,115	3,952	3,329	3,521
Net income	8,355	4,678	7,639	6,837	6,797
Preferred stock dividends	—	(58	) (59	) (58	) (37
Net income available to common shareholders	8,355	4,620	7,580	6,779	6,760
<b>Per Common Share Data</b>					
Earnings per common share – basic	\$0.41	0.23	0.38	0.34	0.34
Earnings per common share – diluted	0.40	0.23	0.37	0.33	0.33
Cash dividends declared	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08
<b>Market Price</b>					
High	28.49	20.33	21.94	19.59	19.92
Low	19.18	17.42	17.15	17.83	16.01
Close	27.14	19.79	17.58	18.85	18.74
Stated book value - common	17.66	17.78	17.64	17.24	16.96
Tangible book value - common	13.85	13.80	13.80	13.75	13.56
<b>Selected Average Balances</b>					
Assets	\$3,539,363	3,443,737	3,373,476	3,332,492	3,282,853
Loans	2,683,493	2,635,707	2,565,791	2,528,317	2,504,022
Earning assets	3,214,719	3,127,219	3,064,959	3,028,775	2,982,356
Deposits	2,905,501	2,823,255	2,805,905	2,775,391	2,732,231
Interest-bearing liabilities	2,380,614	2,319,008	2,296,225	2,303,445	2,258,911
Shareholders' equity	369,037	365,753	358,586	349,484	348,777
<b>Ratios (annualized where applicable)</b>					
Return on average assets	0.94%	0.53%	0.90%	0.82%	0.82%
Return on average common equity	9.17%	5.13%	8.68%	7.97%	7.96%
Equity to assets at end of period	10.18%	10.32%	10.43%	10.34%	10.18%
Tangible equity to tangible assets at end of period	8.16%	8.24%	8.39%	8.46%	8.35%
Tangible common equity to tangible assets at end of period	8.16%	8.03%	8.18%	8.24%	8.13%
Average loans to average deposits	92.36%	93.36%	91.44%	91.10%	91.65%
Average earning assets to interest-bearing liabilities	135.04%	134.85%	133.48%	131.49%	132.03%
Net interest margin	3.94%	3.93%	4.21%	4.07%	4.05%

Edgar Filing: FIRST BANCORP /NC/ - Form 10-K

Allowance for loan losses to gross loans	0.88%	0.93%	1.00%	1.05%	1.13%
Nonperforming loans as a percent of total loans	1.83%	2.27%	2.59%	2.83%	3.15%
Nonperforming assets as a percent of total assets	1.64%	1.98%	2.25%	2.43%	2.66%
Net charge-offs as a percent of average total loans	0.12%	0.06%	0.05%	0.35%	0.23%

Table of Contents**Item 8. Financial Statements and Supplementary Data**

## First Bancorp and Subsidiaries

**Consolidated Balance Sheets****December 31, 2016 and 2015**

(\$ in thousands)	2016	2015
Assets		
Cash and due from banks, noninterest-bearing	\$71,645	53,285
Due from banks, interest-bearing	234,348	213,426
Federal funds sold	—	557
Total cash and cash equivalents	305,993	267,268
Securities available for sale	199,329	165,614
Securities held to maturity (fair values of \$130,195 in 2016 and \$157,146 in 2015)	129,713	154,610
Presold mortgages in process of settlement	2,116	4,323
Loans – non-covered	2,710,712	2,416,285
Loans – covered by FDIC loss share agreement	—	102,641
Total loans	2,710,712	2,518,926
Total allowance for loan losses	(23,781 )	(28,583 )
Net loans	2,686,931	2,490,343
Premises and equipment	75,351	74,559
Accrued interest receivable	9,286	9,166
FDIC indemnification asset	—	8,439
Goodwill	75,042	65,835
Other intangible assets	4,433	1,336
Foreclosed real estate	9,532	9,994
Bank-owned life insurance	74,138	72,086
Other assets	42,998	38,492
Total assets	\$3,614,862	3,362,065
Liabilities		
Deposits: Noninterest-bearing checking accounts	\$756,003	659,038
Interest-bearing checking accounts	635,431	626,878
Money market accounts	685,331	639,189

Edgar Filing: FIRST BANCORP /NC/ - Form 10-K

Savings accounts	209,074	186,616
Time deposits of \$100,000 or more	422,687	403,545
Other time deposits	238,827	296,019
Total deposits	2,947,353	2,811,285
Borrowings	271,394	186,394
Accrued interest payable	539	585
Other liabilities	27,475	21,611
Total liabilities	3,246,761	3,019,875

Commitments and contingencies (see Note 13)

Shareholders' Equity

Preferred stock, no par value per share. Authorized: 5,000,000 shares		
Series C, convertible, issued & outstanding: none in 2016 and 728,706 in 2015	—	7,287
Common stock, no par value per share. Authorized: 40,000,000 shares		
Issued & outstanding: 20,844,505 shares in 2016 and 19,747,509 shares in 2015	147,287	133,393
Retained earnings	225,921	205,060
Accumulated other comprehensive income (loss)	(5,107 )	(3,550 )
Total shareholders' equity	368,101	342,190
Total liabilities and shareholders' equity	\$3,614,862	3,362,065

*See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.*

Table of Contents**First Bancorp and Subsidiaries****Consolidated Statements of Income****Years Ended December 31, 2016, 2015 and 2014**

(\$ in thousands, except per share data)	2016	2015	2014
<b>Interest Income</b>			
Interest and fees on loans	\$ 121,322	117,872	133,641
Interest on investment securities:			
Taxable interest income	7,034	6,296	3,461
Tax-exempt interest income	1,748	1,829	1,881
Other, principally overnight investments	883	658	849
<b>Total interest income</b>	<b>130,987</b>	<b>126,655</b>	<b>139,832</b>
<b>Interest Expense</b>			
Savings, checking and money market accounts	1,620	1,192	1,040
Time deposits of \$100,000 or more	2,654	2,856	4,373
Other time deposits	896	1,271	1,659
Borrowings	2,437	1,589	1,151
<b>Total interest expense</b>	<b>7,607</b>	<b>6,908</b>	<b>8,223</b>
<b>Net interest income</b>	<b>123,380</b>	<b>119,747</b>	<b>131,609</b>
Provision for loan losses – non-covered	2,109	2,008	7,087
Provision (reversal) for loan losses – covered	(2,132)	) (2,788)	) 3,108
<b>Total provision (reversal) for loan losses</b>	<b>(23)</b>	<b>) (780)</b>	<b>) 10,195</b>
<b>Net interest income after provision for loan losses</b>	<b>123,403</b>	<b>120,527</b>	<b>121,414</b>
<b>Noninterest Income</b>			
Service charges on deposit accounts	10,571	11,648	13,706
Other service charges, commissions and fees	11,913	10,906	10,019
Fees from presold mortgage loans	2,033	2,532	2,726
Commissions from sales of insurance and financial products	3,790	2,580	2,733
SBA consulting fees	3,199	—	—
SBA loan sale gains	1,433	—	—
Bank-owned life insurance income	2,052	1,665	1,311
Foreclosed property losses, net	(625)	) (1,486)	) (3,843)
FDIC indemnification asset income (expense), net	(10,255)	) (8,615)	) (12,842)
Securities gains (losses), net	3	(1)	) 786
Other gains (losses), net	1,437	(465)	) (228)
<b>Total noninterest income</b>	<b>25,551</b>	<b>18,764</b>	<b>14,368</b>
<b>Noninterest Expenses</b>			
Salaries	51,252	47,660	46,071
Employee benefits	10,812	9,134	9,086
<b>Total personnel expense</b>	<b>62,064</b>	<b>56,794</b>	<b>55,157</b>
Occupancy expense	7,838	7,358	7,362

Edgar Filing: FIRST BANCORP /NC/ - Form 10-K

Equipment related expenses	3,608	3,749	3,931
Merger and acquisition expenses	1,431	—	—
Intangibles amortization	1,211	722	777
Other operating expenses	30,669	29,508	30,024
Total noninterest expenses	106,821	98,131	97,251
Income before income taxes	42,133	41,160	38,531
Income tax expense	14,624	14,126	13,535
Net income	27,509	27,034	24,996
Preferred stock dividends	(175	) (603	) (868
Net income available to common shareholders	\$27,334	26,431	24,128
Earnings per common share: Basic	\$1.37	1.34	1.22
Earnings per common share: Diluted	1.33	1.30	1.19
Dividends declared per common share	\$0.32	0.32	0.32
Weighted average common shares outstanding:			
Basic	19,964,727	19,767,470	19,699,801
Diluted	20,732,917	20,499,727	20,434,007

*See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.*

Table of Contents**First Bancorp and Subsidiaries****Consolidated Statements of Comprehensive Income****Years Ended December 31, 2016, 2015 and 2014**

(\$ in thousands)	2016	2015	2014
Net income	\$27,509	27,034	24,996
Other comprehensive income (loss):			
Unrealized gains (losses) on securities available for sale:			
Unrealized holding gains (losses) arising during the period, pretax	(1,919 )	(473 )	2,115
Tax (expense) benefit	683	184	(825 )
Reclassification to realized (gains) losses	(3 )	1	(786 )
Tax expense (benefit)	1	—	307
Postretirement plans:			
Net gain (loss) arising during period	(557 )	(4,321 )	(5,171 )
Tax (expense) benefit	115	1,685	2,017
Amortization of unrecognized net actuarial (gain) loss	202	(79 )	(221 )
Tax expense (benefit)	(79 )	31	86
Other comprehensive income (loss)	(1,557 )	(2,972 )	(2,478 )
Comprehensive income	\$25,952	24,062	22,518

*See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.*

Table of Contents**First Bancorp and Subsidiaries****Consolidated Statements of Shareholders' Equity****Years Ended December 31, 2016, 2015 and 2014**

(In thousands)	Preferred Stock	Common Stock Shares	Common Stock Amount	Retained Earnings	Accumulated Other Comprehensive Income (Loss)	Total Share- holders' Equity
Balances, January 1, 2014	\$70,787	19,680	\$132,099	167,136	1,900	371,922
Net income				24,996		24,996
Stock option exercises		5	70			70
Cash dividends declared (\$0.32 per share)				(6,306 )		(6,306 )
Preferred dividends				(868 )		(868 )
Stock-based compensation		25	363			363
Other comprehensive income (loss)					(2,478 )	(2,478 )
Balances, December 31, 2014	70,787	19,710	132,532	184,958	(578 )	387,699
Net income				27,034		27,034
Preferred stock redeemed (Series B)	(63,500)					(63,500 )
Stock option exercises		7	112			112
Stock withheld for payment of taxes		(3 )	(54 )			(54 )
Cash dividends declared (\$0.32 per share)				(6,329 )		(6,329 )
Preferred dividends				(603 )		(603 )
Stock-based compensation		34	803			803
Other comprehensive income (loss)					(2,972 )	(2,972 )
Balances, December 31, 2015	7,287	19,748	133,393	205,060	(3,550 )	342,190
Net income				27,509		27,509
Conversion of preferred stock to common stock	(7,287 )	729	7,287			—
Equity issued pursuant to acquisitions		279	5,509			5,509
Stock option exercises		23	375			375
Stock withheld for payment of taxes		(6 )	(166 )			(166 )
Cash dividends declared (\$0.32 per share)				(6,473 )		(6,473 )
Preferred dividends				(175 )		(175 )
Stock-based compensation		72	889			889
Other comprehensive income (loss)					(1,557 )	(1,557 )
Balances, December 31, 2016	\$—	20,845	\$147,287	225,921	(5,107 )	368,101



*See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.*

Table of Contents**First Bancorp and Subsidiaries****Consolidated Statements of Cash Flows****Years Ended December 31, 2016, 2015 and 2014**

(\$ in thousands)	2016	2015	2014
Cash Flows From Operating Activities			
Net income	\$27,509	27,034	24,996
Reconciliation of net income to net cash provided by operating activities:			
Provision (reversal) for loan losses	(23 )	(780 )	10,195
Net security premium amortization	3,341	3,247	1,934
Loan discount accretion	(4,451 )	(4,751 )	(16,009 )
FDIC indemnification asset expense, net	10,255	8,615	12,842
Foreclosed property losses and write-downs, net	625	1,486	3,843
Loss (gain) on securities available for sale	(3 )	1	(786 )
Other (gains) losses	29	465	228
Decrease in net deferred loan costs	922	73	(17 )
Depreciation of premises and equipment	4,602	4,494	4,618
Stock-based compensation expense	714	710	270
Amortization of intangible assets	1,211	722	777
Fees/gains from sales of presold mortgages and SBA loans	(3,466 )	(2,532 )	(2,726 )
Originations of presold mortgages and SBA loans	(95,500 )	(97,118 )	(101,493)
Proceeds from sales of presold mortgages and SBA loans	101,148	101,315	103,773
Gain on sale of branches	(1,466 )	—	—
Decrease (increase) in accrued interest receivable	(120 )	(246 )	729
Decrease (increase) in other assets	(724 )	(5,062 )	2,164
Decrease in accrued interest payable	(4 )	(101 )	(193 )
Increase (decrease) in other liabilities	2,868	(222 )	2,675
Net cash provided by operating activities	47,467	37,350	47,820
Cash Flows From Investing Activities			
Purchases of securities available for sale	(114,396)	(95,822 )	(66,263 )
Purchases of securities held to maturity	—	(857 )	(125,377)
Proceeds from maturities/issuer calls of securities available for sale	76,939	86,238	30,332
Proceeds from maturities/issuer calls of securities held to maturity	23,368	23,203	453
Proceeds from sales of securities available for sale	8	—	47,473
Purchases of Federal Reserve and Federal Home Loan Bank stock, net	(3,933 )	(9,877 )	(2,122 )
Purchase of bank-owned life insurance	—	(15,000 )	(10,000 )
Net (increase) decrease in loans	(198,589)	(138,346)	52,157
(Payments) proceeds related to FDIC loss share agreements	(1,554 )	6,673	17,724
Payment to FDIC for termination of loss share agreements	(2,012 )	—	—
Proceeds from sales of foreclosed real estate	7,954	9,650	33,262
Purchases of premises and equipment	(8,689 )	(5,481 )	(4,751 )
Proceeds from sales of premises and equipment	2,025	1,621	1,309
Proceeds from branch sale	26,211	—	—
Net cash paid in acquisitions	(53,640 )	—	—
Net cash used by investing activities	(246,308)	(137,998)	(25,803 )
Cash Flows From Financing Activities			
Net increase (decrease) in deposits	158,989	115,379	(55,106 )

Edgar Filing: FIRST BANCORP /NC/ - Form 10-K

Net increase in borrowings	85,000	70,000	70,000
Cash dividends paid – common stock	(6,399 )	(6,309 )	(6,303 )
Cash dividends paid – preferred stock	(233 )	(796 )	