

Staff Responses to Commissioners Questions about FY2026 Recommended Budget

- 1. The budget for Cooperative Extension increased by \$259,000. Will this number adequately cover inflationary costs and threats of funding loss at the federal level?**

The FY26 Recommended Budget incorporates cost escalations for salaries, benefits and contracts in the Cooperative Extension budget. The budget does not include potential losses of funding.

- 2. What is the cost change to salaries and benefits, contracts, cost escalations and commitments for Public Health and Social Services as noted for other areas?**

With the Health and Human Services Department split into separate Public Health and Social Services departments, staff are refining the appropriate allocation of positions and budgets to the new departments. The figures may change some in the Adopted Budget document. The two tables below reflect the total change and split of the total Health and Human Services Department FY25 budget to the split budgets for FY26 for Social Services and Public Health and by the Health and Human Services divisions as budgeted in the FY25 budget. In total, the budget for these services increased by \$18 million due to adjustments for salaries and benefits, contracts, cost escalations and commitments, mid-year changes, contract and position expansions. Narratives will be updated in the FY26 Adopted Budget document to include the final allocations and associated resource descriptions as programs are separated and placed in each department.

Department Name	FY25 Adopted Budget	FY26 Recommended Budget	Delta
Social Services	-	162,855,574	162,855,574
Public Health	-	90,283,258	90,283,258
Health & Human Services	235,005,519	-	(235,005,519)
Total	\$235,005,519	\$253,138,832	\$18,133,313

Division	FY25 Adopted Budget	FY26 Recommended Budget	Delta
Economic Self Sufficiency	76,378,340	78,217,203	1,838,863
Child Welfare	50,930,720	54,604,775	3,674,055
Public Health	55,104,434	61,943,543	6,839,109
Health Clinics	26,356,609	28,339,715	1,983,106
Admin and Ops	26,235,416	30,033,596	3,798,180
Grand Total	\$235,005,519	\$ 253,138,832	\$18,133,313

3. Please provide more details on 11 FTE being repurposed for Health and Human Services.

Eleven FTE in Health and Human Services are repurposed and FTE and budget are reallocated for recommended positions across the organization, such as in Continuum of Care, Board of Elections, EMS, Environmental Services, Public Health. Days vacant and status of recruitment were factors in determining positions to repurpose.

Classification	FTE	Days Vacant
Economic Services On-Site Support Consultant	1.00	287
Adult Medicaid - Eligibility Team Lead	1.00	303
Advanced Practice Provider	1.00	325
Food & Nutrition Services - Eligibility Caseworker I	1.00	333
Family & Children Medicaid - Eligibility Caseworker I	1.00	351
Food & Nutrition Services - Eligibility Caseworker I	1.00	393
Adult Medicaid Long Term Care - Eligibility Caseworker III	0.50	455
Customer Service Representative	0.50	485
Pharmacy Technician	1.00	485
Adult Medicaid - Eligibility Caseworker II	1.00	561
Adult Medicaid Long Term Care - Eligibility Caseworker III	1.00	745
Physician	1.00	1,946

4. Please share more about contractual services from GSA, Administration and Support and Physical Plant, Libraries and Safety & Security.

County department operations are largely delivered through benefit-eligible county direct employees. The County department leaders consider their service delivery objectives when contracting for any portion of their programs. The County typically contracts for specialized services where the expertise is found in businesses or non-profits. This allows access to experts and resources and their tools. Utilizing contracts enables flexibility and agility to adapt to changing market conditions and challenges while providing cost savings and service level improvements.

Among other services, GSA contracts for housekeeping staffing; building security staffing; mail courier; audio/visual for Courts, Detention and County streaming; service desk software; specialized equipment maintenance - water chillers, HVAC, boilers, septic tanks, plumbing; elevator maintenance; building security systems; building automation systems (integrates and controls systems like HVAC, lighting, security).

5. How much funding for AmeriCorps VISTA is from the county vs federal? What are the concerns related to continued funding?

The FY26 Recommended Budget includes \$62,474 in expenditures, \$35,000 is federal, the balance is County funded. The budget does not include potential losses of funding. Staff is monitoring decisions at the federal level.

6. For child welfare, what are the factors that influence the percent of assessments completed within 45 days?

Factors influencing percent of assessment completed within 45 days include locating and scheduling with parents, staff turnover and increased workload distributed with that turnover, court delays, time to schedule interviews with approved family and community members. Pilot is underway to leverage staff talent and skillsets that allows some staff to perform the initial report and provide more time for others to conduct the assessment.

7. What concerns exist related to Federal funding for Capital Area Workforce Development? What are the barriers to reaching the target employment rate for youth services?

Funding: Staff is monitoring decisions at the federal level, including in workforce development Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds. We have not received specific information on changes to our federally funded programs. The State of North Carolina received a 10% reduction in funds and generally that means a 10% cut for Capital Area Workforce Development.

Barriers to reaching target employment for youth services include retention - keeping youth engaged after a major accomplishment continues to be a challenge. For example, if our provider works with a youth for their GED, engagement ends once they get their GED. Another is youth background - many of our youth are justice-involved and employers hesitate to hire them. For example, our youth are ages 16-24 and many of their charges are recent; where an employer may give an older person a chance, there is some resistance with the younger justice-involved individuals. Also, transportation is a barrier - counting on public transportation can be challenging because of the amount of time it takes to get to work, and dependability of the bus schedule.

8. What is the timeline for the development and implementation of the Master's in Public Administration program?

In 2023, staff initiated conversations with NCSU to serve as a partner in this initiative. Because of challenges with NCSU's internal capacity and funding, the County currently is looking for other university options that fit needs, budget, and timeline. We

are under initial negotiations and hope to formally announce the program in fall 2025 to launch in January 2026.

9. Is there a list of nonprofit requests that were not funded?

The African American Cultural Festival was funded over three years (2022-2024) at \$400,000 total with ARPA federal funding. All external organizations that were awarded this ARPA funding were informed this would be non-recurring funding. Thus, the \$480,000 over three-year (2025-2027) request shared and elevated to the Manager's Office and Budget and Management was evaluated with that past direction considered in decision making to decline the request.

10. Can you clarify – the WCPSS superintendent ask was \$40.3 million in additional funds over last year with operating expenses, correct? And the proposed budget is \$35 million over last year for operations. Does WCPSS make an "ask" for capital expenses, or is that assumed through the CIP plan with CORE input? I'm trying to understand to what degree is the budget for WCPSS capital needs meeting that need.

Yes, the Superintendent and Board of Education Proposed Budget ask is \$40.3 million, and the County Manager's recommended budget is \$35 million compared to the FY25 budget. The WCPSS Capital Improvement Program budget request is conveyed through the Wake County/WCPSS Facilities Core Team and is voted on by the Board of Education. The Seven Year CIP Plan was approved on April 8th, 2025, and sent to County staff for inclusion in the County Manager's Recommended Budget which includes appropriation of the first year of the seven-year plan, Fiscal Year 26 for this budget year. The WCPSS CIP summary is on page 353 of the Recommended Budget document.

11. Missing the section on what was requested that is not included in the budget.

The FY2026 budget development process was built on the Manager's message of limited expansion within the context of multi-year financial planning, departmental business planning and the advancement of the Strategic Plan. As such, the Budget Book sections of General Fund Requests Funded and General Fund Requests Not Funded were removed based on the process change. The County Manager only requested expansions for critical items. Summary of changes to departmental and partner budgets are on pages 55-60.

12. On page 11 under "Wake County Facts" in the last paragraph it says "they are elected county-wide" should that be changed now or after the next election?

Staff will update the budget document for the fiscal year when the adjustment to board composition is effective and in place.

13. On page 24 the first section refers to "WCPSS Fines & Forfeitures Fund" are we receiving everything that is due from this fund?

The purpose of the WCPSS Fines and Forfeiture special revenue fund is to account for fines and forfeitures collected related to North Carolina State Statute 115C-437, which are to be passed on to the Wake County Public School System. Under the State Statute 115C-437, clear proceeds in a county Court of Justice from all penalties, forfeitures, and fines collected for any breach of penal laws of the State should be remitted to the local school administrative unit. The Fines and Forfeiture special revenue fund remits payment to the Wake County Public School System on a monthly basis in compliance with the North Carolina State Statutes. Expenditures in the fund are completely reliant upon the funding from the court and may fluctuate with revenue. Court of Justice revenue is the sole revenue source for this fund and is reliant upon court activity.

14. On page 34 in the 2nd paragraph under Guideline 6 - "County and municipal debt should not exceed four percent of the countywide tax base" How do we track this?

This metric is tracked on our debt and capital model as well as reported to the Local Government Commission annually. Below reflects as of FY24.

Total Assessed Valuation	FY24ACFR p.175	\$211,571,788,821
4% limit of Total Assessed Valuation		\$8,462,871,553
<hr/>		
Total Direct & Overlapping Debt	FY24ACFR p.183	\$4,240,633,559

15. On page 36 under Financial Policies the "Updated September 3, 2019" I think we updated this policy since 2019.

Thank you. Last update was December 4, 2023. Language and date will be updated in the Adopted Budget book.

16. On page 75 under Total Revenue by Source what is "Proposed Future Funding" of \$456,215,913?

"Proposed Future Funding" is a descriptor for a combination of cash and limited obligation bonds supporting our capital improvement program.

17. On page 96 under Horizon Issues it states "Wake County growing by 51 people a day".

Thank you, this paragraph was prepared before the updated number was reported and was overlooked for revision. The figure is updated in the system to 66 for the Adopted Budget document.

18. On page 107 Finance the number of FTEs has 30 for FY 2025 Amended and FY 2026 Recommended at 63.50; is that a typo?

With the FY26 budget, 33.50 FTE from the Health and Human Services Finance team will be transferred to the Finance Department to support Social Services, Public Health and provide financial transaction and reporting capacity countywide. Positions from Health and Human Services will also be transferred to Communications (2.00) and Human Resources (1.00). With the Health and Human Services Department split into Public Health and Social Services, staff are refining the appropriate allocation of positions and budgets to the new and transferred departments, and final figures will be represented in the Adopted Budget document. These organizational changes were reviewed and approved by the County Manager's Office. The implementation team and internal supports have worked over the past few months to execute this reorganization; a significant task.

19. On page 156 Libraries - I was hoping for an update on when the new bookmobile will arrive.

The outreach van for seniors is planned to be in service in June and the bookmobile is due for delivery in Fall of 2026. Staff do not provide updates on projects and purchases in the budget document.

20. On page 165 Animal Care, Control and Adoption Center - How much additional operating cost will be associated with the new Animal Center?

Operating costs associated with the Animal Center are not yet estimated. As scope and design are completed, staff in Environmental Services, Facilities, Design and Construction and Budget and Management Services will collaborate to estimate any additional costs for future budget years.

21. On page 187 Public Health my copy does not have data for "Number of Drug Overdose Referrals Linked to Certified Peer Support" and "Percent of NFP Participants Who Initiate Breastfeeding"

Thank you, staff will investigate and adjust for the Adopted Budget document.