



# Fiscal Year 2027

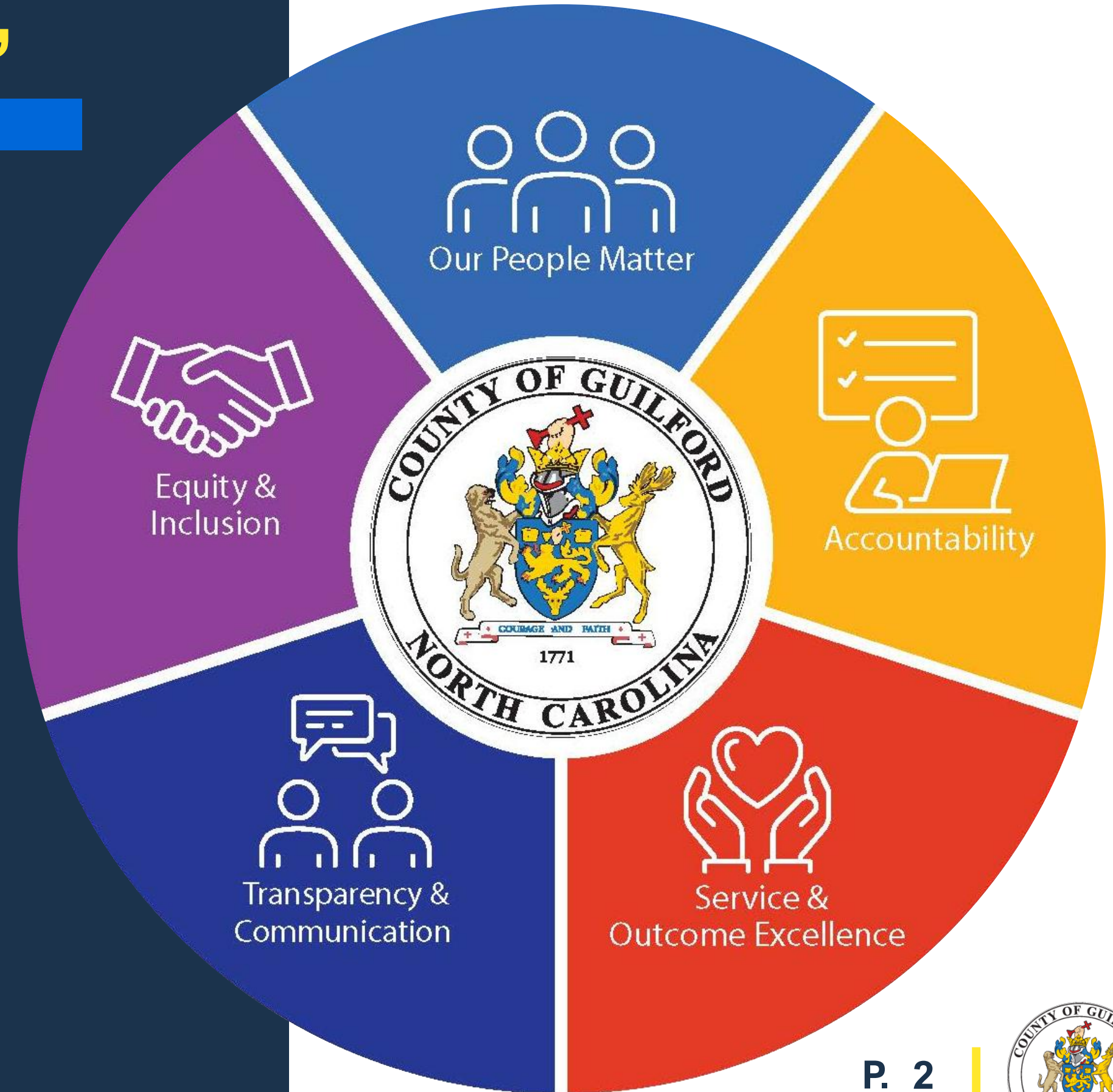
**Recommended Budget**

# Revisiting Our “Why”

Empowering **Successful People**

To thrive in a **Strong Community**

Supported by **Quality Government**



# Agreement & Alignment

*“A government that understands community pressures, prioritizes essential services, and makes reasonable fiscal decisions while preserving the community’s quality of life is modeling the fundamental purpose of local government.”*

**Victor Isler**

# Our Budget Priorities At-a-Glance

Fund Balance Management & Preservation

Maintain Employer Competitiveness

Multi-year Capital Planning

Smooth Technology Expenses

Collaborative School Funding Strategy

Sustain School Capital Debt Service Plan

Strengthen Key Strategic Priorities

Reasonableness: Promote Cost and Tax Controls

**Our FY27 Budget  
Priorities**



# Recommended Budget At-a-Glance

Fiscal Year (FY) 27  
**Recommended  
Budget**



**\$935,455,000**

Fiscal Year (FY) 27  
**Recommended  
Tax Rate**



**61.90 cents**

per \$100 of assessed value



# Why Not Revenue Neutral

<b>Revenue Neutral Tax Rate (Base Budget)</b>	<b>53.26¢</b>	<b>\$846,153,772</b>
Structural Balance	+1.14¢	\$11,768,162
County Operations/Core Services	+0.91¢	\$9,409,400
County Capital	+0.92¢	\$9,480,712
Strategic Priorities	+0.14¢	\$1,442,954
K-12 Education (operations & debt service)	+5.53¢	\$57,200,000
<b>Recommended Tax Rate</b>	<b>61.90¢</b>	<b>\$935,455,000</b>

# Building The Recommended Budget

**Budget Development**

**Community  
Context**

**County Operations**

**Strategy**



# Community Context

# Revisiting Our “Why”



## Guilford County

**#127**

largest county in the United States

**5% growth**  
since 2020

**558,000**  
residents

**86,000 residents**  
projected growth over next 20 years

# Revisiting Our “Why”

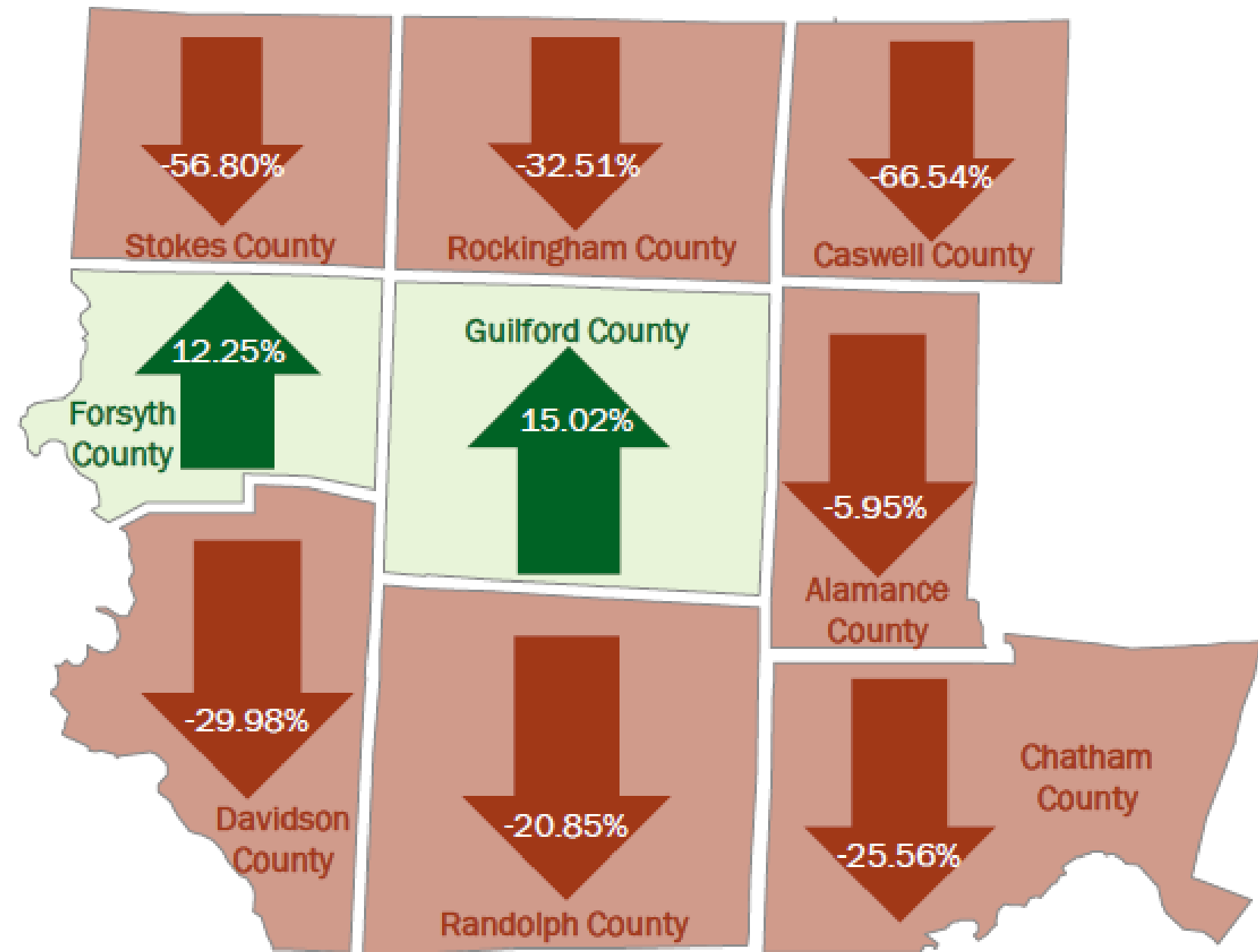
**138,629**  
daily inflow

This places a demand on:

- ▶ service deliver
- ▶ response capacity

**and a revenue source opportunity**

*“The center of it all.”*





# North Carolina Growth

Generated **\$1.8 billion** in tourism revenue in 2025

North Carolina Ranked Top State for **Domestic Migration**

Remains **Third-Fastest-Growing** State in the Nation

CNBC Names North Carolina the **#1 State for Business**

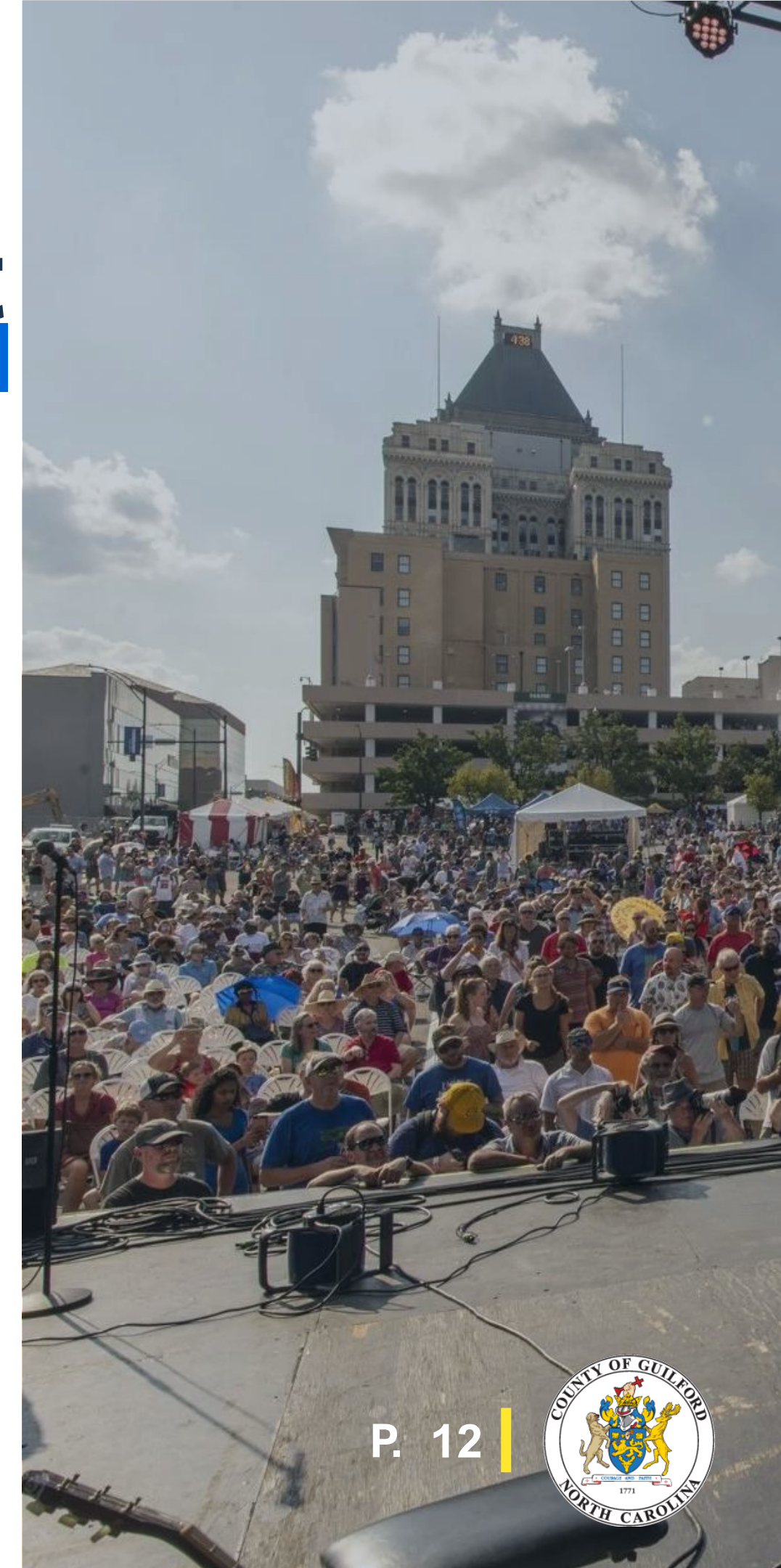
# Guilford County's Economic Development Forecast

2026 private sector wages in Guilford average **\$62,455**.

**Cross-sector collaboration** strengthens career pipelines in emerging opportunities like **advanced manufacturing, aerospace engineering, and life sciences**.

**21,304 new jobs** announced since 2023 from employers like JetZero, Ahold Delhaize, Lenovo, Lumentum, and Hoffman & Hoffman.

**\$17.1B in new capital investment** across Guilford County since 2023.



## Workforce

- In-migration
- Education/Skills
- Productivity
- Costs
- Quality of Life

## Business Climate

- Taxes
- Regulatory Climate
- Legal Climate
- Insurance
- Politicians

## Infrastructure

- Power
- Water & Sewer
- Transportation
- Broadband
- Housing & Childcare
- Buildings & Sites

## Innovation

- Advanced Industries
- Research & Development
- Start-up Ecosystem
- Automation



**Maintaining Our  
Economic  
Competitiveness**

# Growth Means ...

## Increased demand for services including:

- ▶ K-12 Education
- ▶ Water & Sewer Capacity
- ▶ Housing
- ▶ Law Enforcement
- ▶ Emergency Services
- ▶ Social Services
- ▶ Public Health



# An Uncertain Economy

- ▶ Inflation grew to 3.3%, a 0.9% increase
- ▶ Fuel costs up \$1.24 per gallon since last year, averaging \$4.158 per gallon
- ▶ Unemployment for Guilford County is 4.3%, higher than the state average of 3.8%
- ▶ Consumer confidence continues to show ongoing anxiety

# Key Considerations

**Economic uncertainty pushes more residents into situations where they need help:**

- Most vulnerable residents are impacted by inflation and cost of living
- Food insecurity rises
- Economic hardship increase reports of abuse or neglect, increasing caseload demand

**“No time to lean away from our core responsibilities.”**

# Data Informed Services & Cross-System Collaboration

**“Guilford County shows up in times of need while demonstrating cost efficiencies.”**

**Adult Resource Team (ART)** significantly reduced the number of routine 911 callers, by developing plans of care that resulted in ceasing the crisis cycle for 1,000 residents and approximate savings of \$1,500,000 in public safety related response expenses.

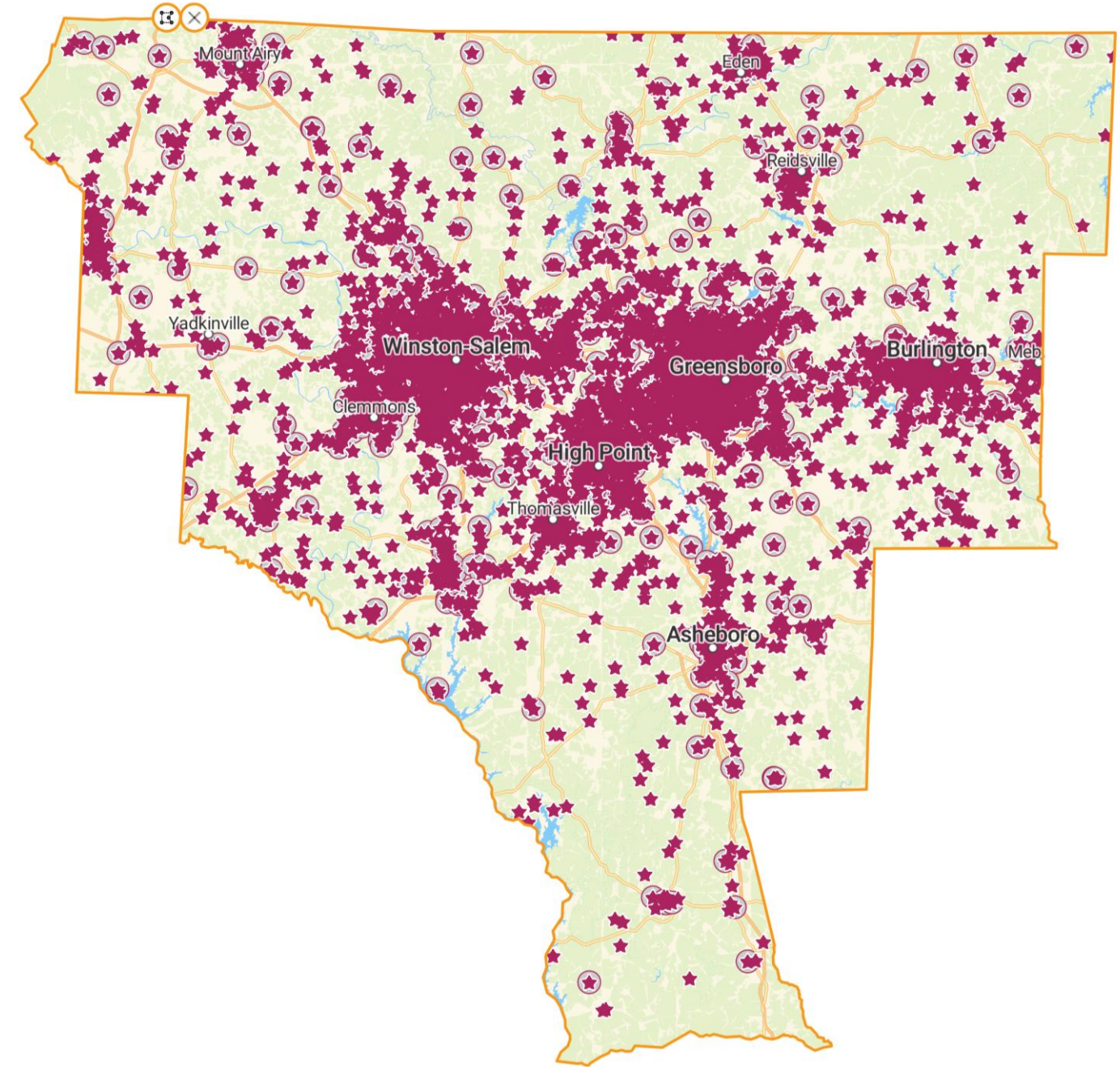
**One Guilford Support our Pantries** supported coordination between food partners to help residents in period of high stress.

**Data intelligence** will continue to guide resident engagement based on high utilization of services in the areas of emergency department visits (65+) and evictions (families).



# Diminishing Community Supports

- ▶ **1,989 non-profit organizations** in the Piedmont Triad Region provide key human services to support residents.
- ▶ The continual erosion of federal and state funding has placed **78% of nonprofits at risk**, as they do not have sufficient operating surplus to absorb the loss of grants.
- ▶ The safety net is being weakened, placing **greater need on county services.**



Source: NC Center for Nonprofits, 2025

# Economic Pressure + Fiscal Capacity

**The County must reasonably address key responsibilities, recognizing the economic pressure on residents.**

**Multi-year planning based on incremental investments is essential.**

A construction crane is shown lifting a white model of a house with a gabled roof and a circular window. The crane is positioned over a large stack of gold coins. The background is a solid grey color.

# Building the Budget

**Approach & External Conditions**

# Leadership & Budget Development Lens

## Responsibility

- Mandated vs. Non-Mandated
- Community Need
- Crisis
- Level of Engagement

## Reasonableness

- Readiness
- Resource Capacity<sup>21</sup>
- Timeframe

## Measurement

- End Goal
- CQI
- Pace & Impact

## Ethics & Values

- Alignment
- Commitment

# Financial and Operational Conditions

- Mindful of the impact of **inflation and cost of living** on residents, especially our senior population on fixed incomes.
- **Loss of federal and state revenue**, associated with changes in federal reimbursement rates, without a decrease in mandated responsibilities placed on the county.
- Address **compounded capital expenses** for county operations which will continue to grow until addressed based on ongoing inflationary factors.
- Ongoing need to **stabilize the county's workforce** with a specific focus on public safety and public health positions.
- **Regionalism and interlocal collaboration** to continue to address mobility and transportation, water and sewer, housing, serving the unhoused, and sustaining fire and rescue standard of coverage.
- Need to address **limited revenue sources** as urbanized county due to failed Article 46 sales tax referendums.



# Community Assets, Limitations & Opportunities

The population density of Guilford County is approximately **860 residents per square mile** and unfavorably ranks us as the third lowest among peer counties

At 15%, Guilford County has the **3rd highest poverty rate**

Over **30% of our residents** receive Medicaid and/or Food and Nutrition Assistance

**65% of schools** are designated as Title I (77 out of 118)

Among peer counties, Guilford County is the only jurisdiction **without a voter approved revenue diversification strategy** for sales tax and/or prepared food tax

- Population Density
- Area median income
- Poverty rate
- Assessed Residential Value
- Alternative Revenue Sources



# Building the Budget

**Fiscal Health**

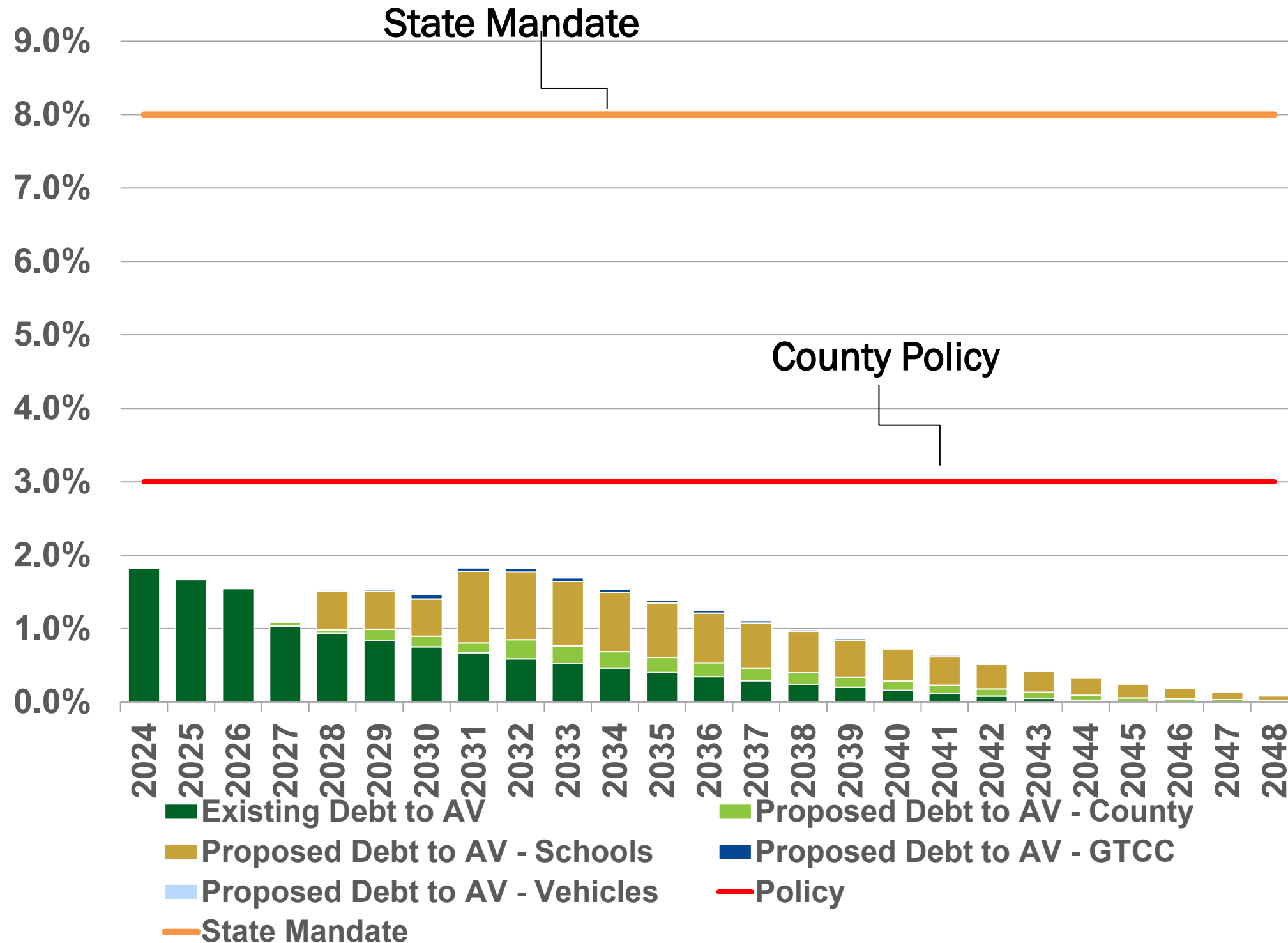


# Guilford County is a financially well-managed organization

Guilford County maintains the **highest credit ratings**, AAA from S&P Global Ratings and Aaa from Moody's Investors Service, on all outstanding general obligation debt.

- ▶ **Strong debt ratios**
- ▶ **Strong total fund balance**
- ▶ **Promoting opportunities to improve structural balance**

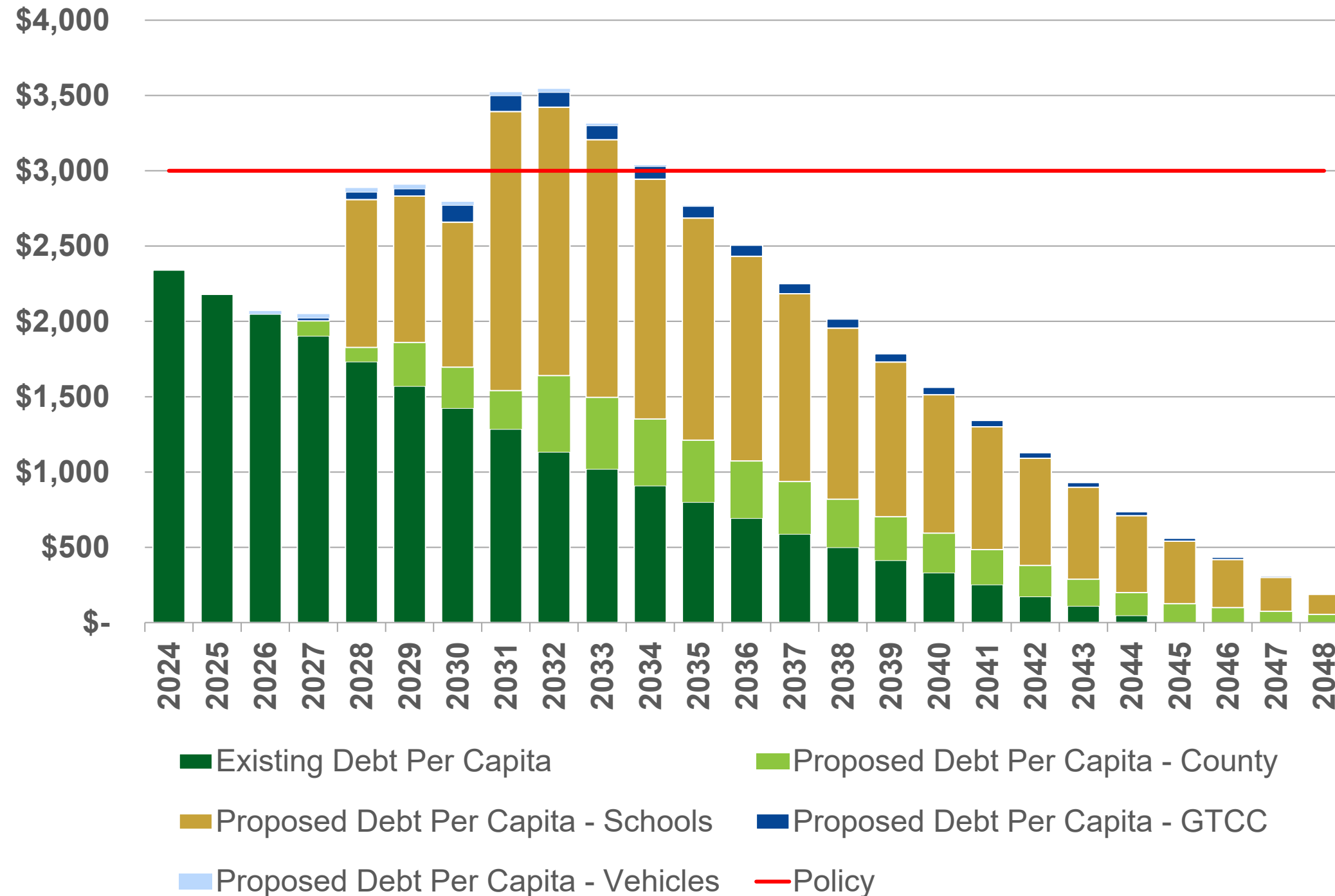
# Debt To Assessed Value



The County's existing and proposed debt is well below both the State cap and the County's more restrictive policy.



# Debt Per Capita

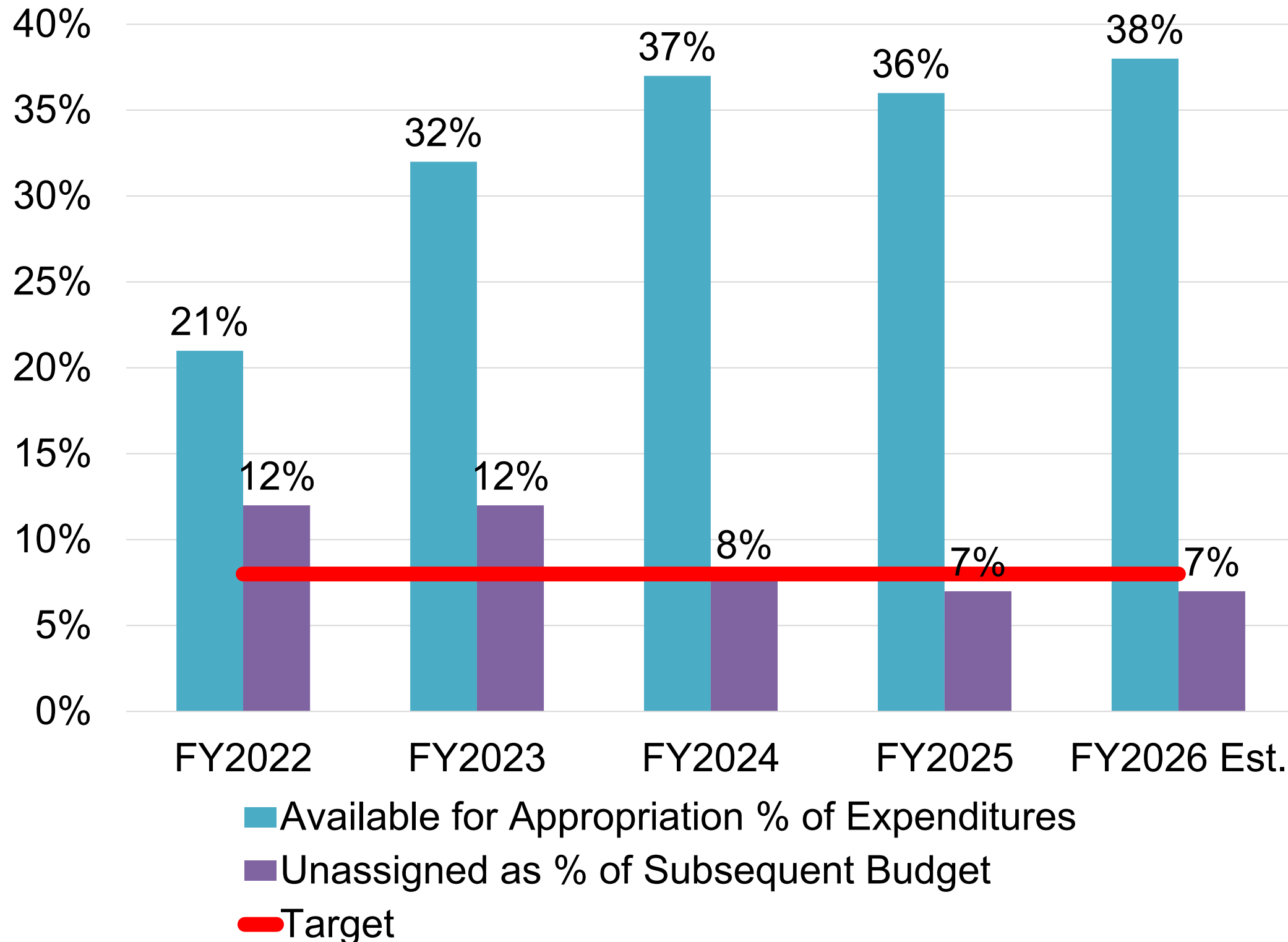


Debt exceeds per capita target for 4 years (based on 1% population growth).

Alignment improves with stronger population growth from economic development.



# Fund Balance



Total fund balance remains healthy.

Structural balance in the budget will continue to strengthen our unassigned fund balance in future years.



# Building the Budget

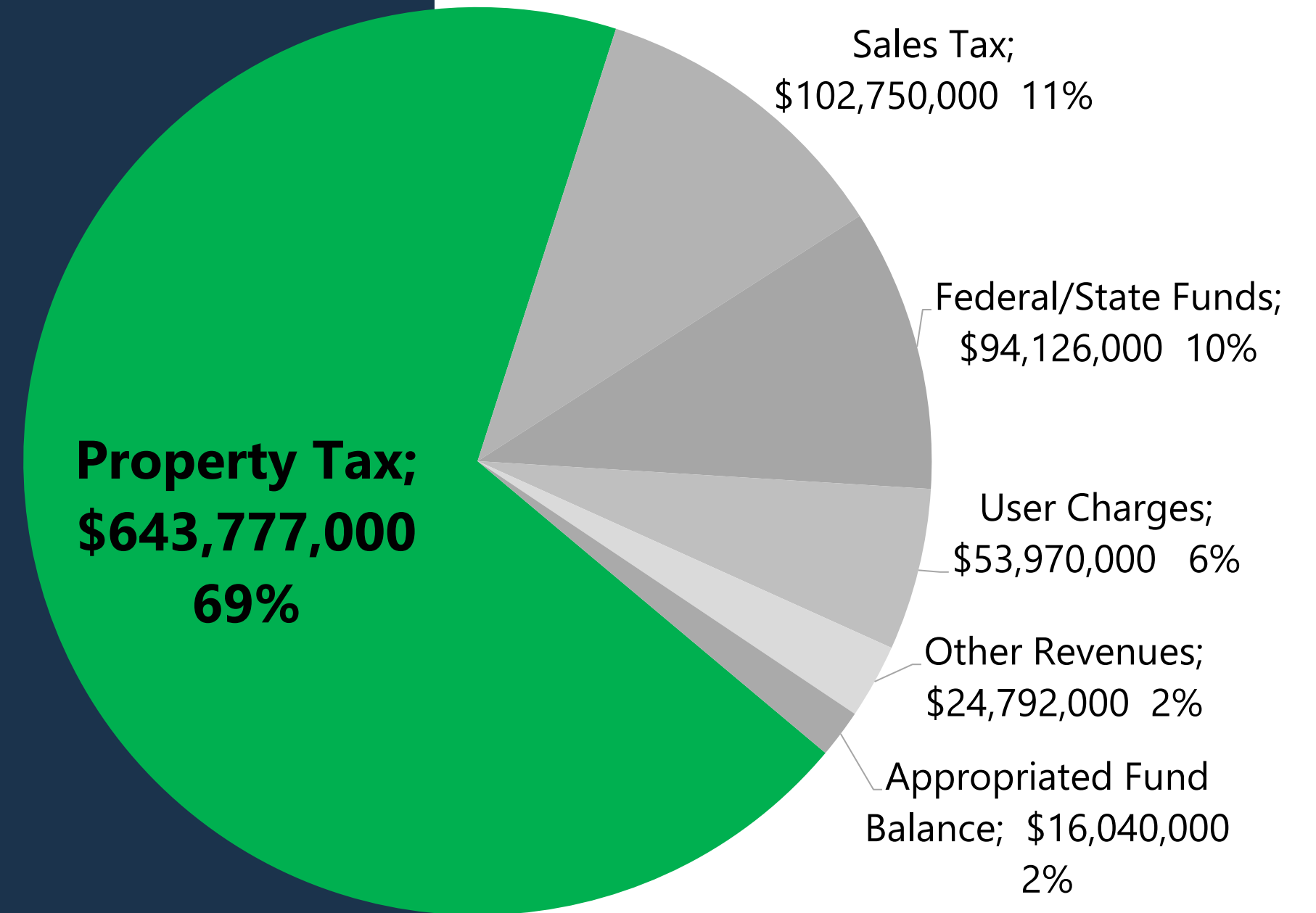
Revenue Forecast



# Revenue Outlook

## Property Tax Primary Revenue Source

- ▶ \$13 million of natural recurring growth
- ▶ \$89.3 million of additional revenue at the recommended tax rate

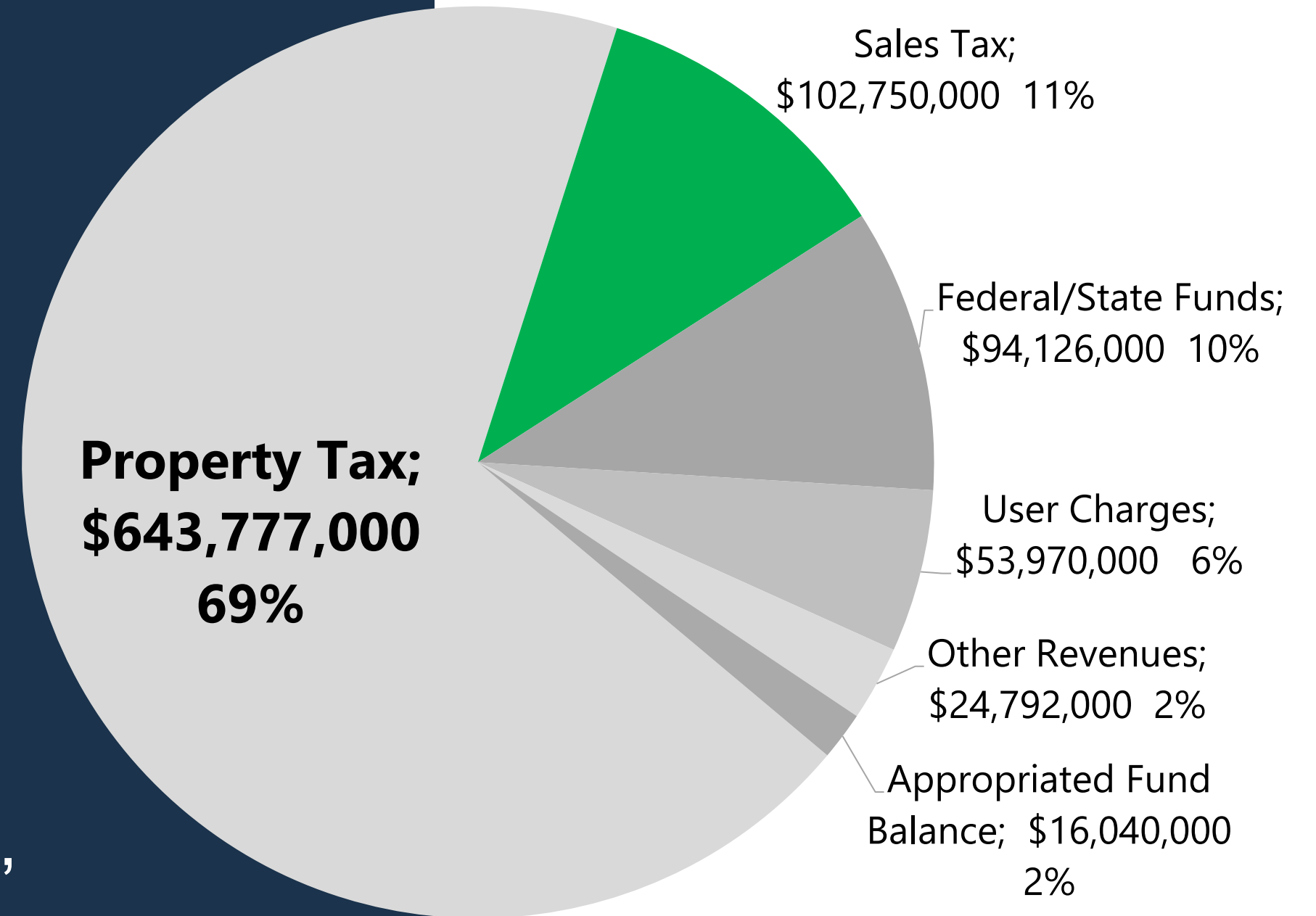


# Revenue Outlook

## Sales Tax

- ▶ 0% growth over prior year budget
- ▶ 3.5% estimated growth over current year-end projection

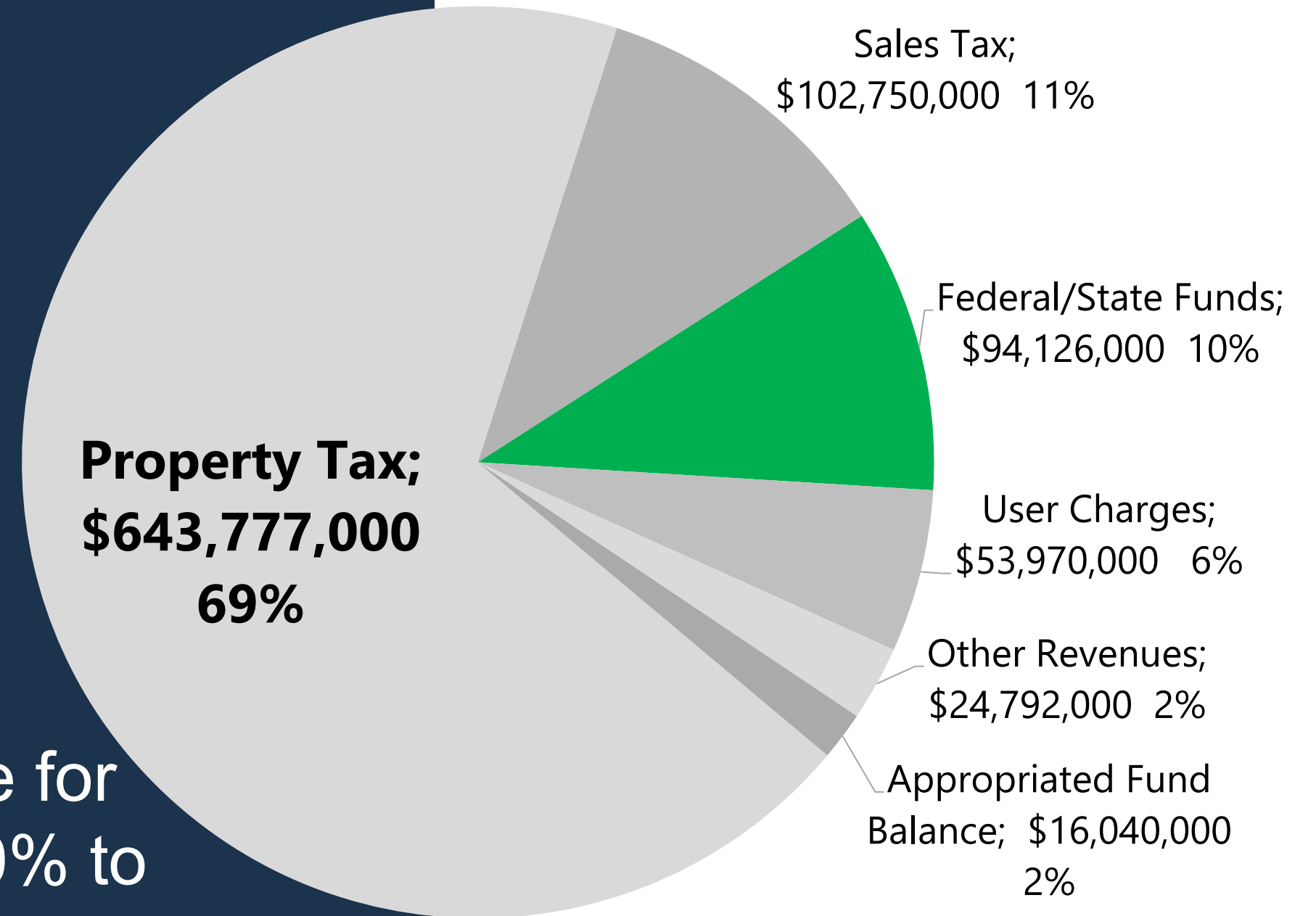
Several of the other top 10 counties are also anticipating a 0% growth in budgeted sales tax: Gaston, Forsyth, Cumberland, Buncombe



# Revenue Outlook

## Federal and State

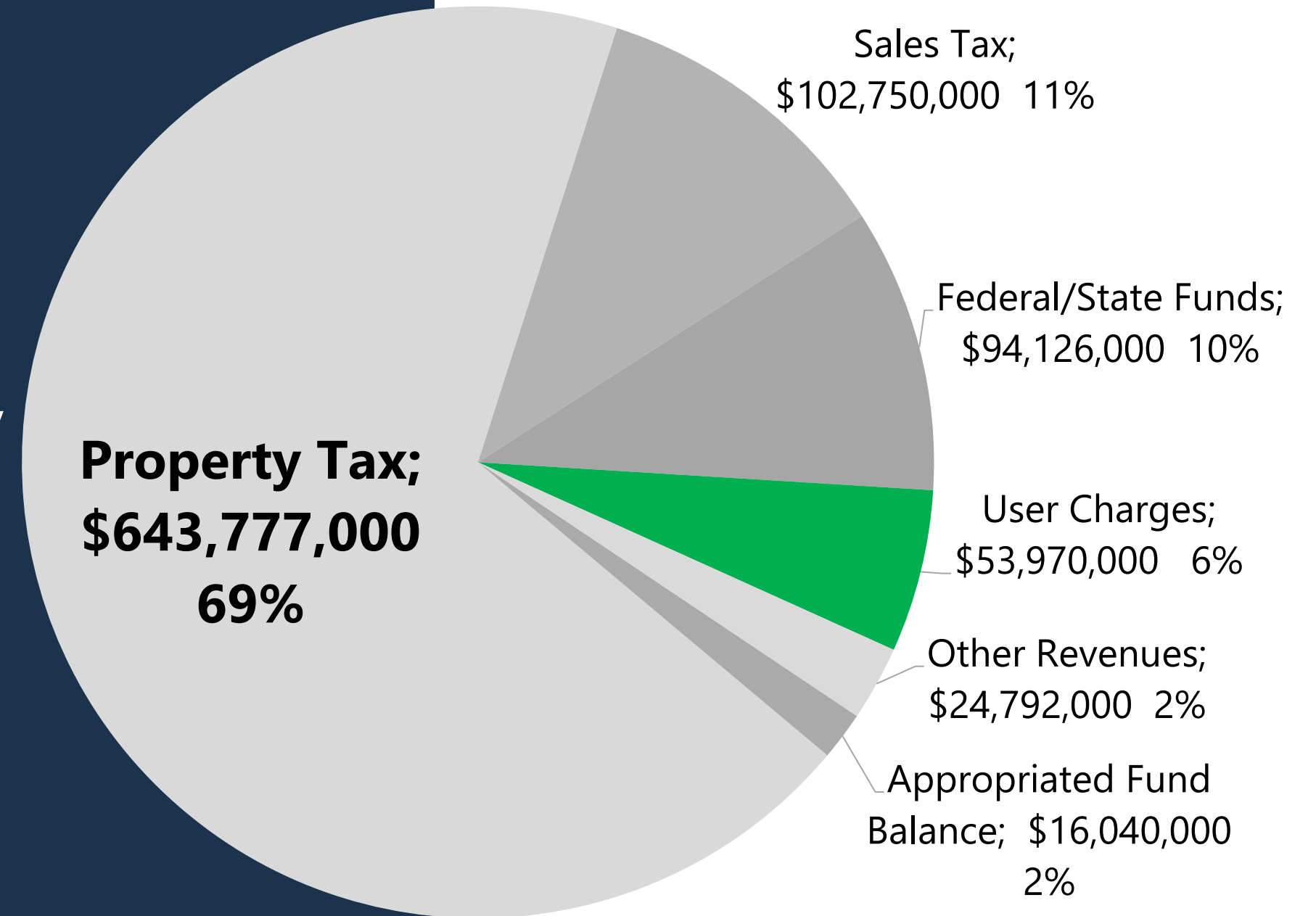
- ▶ 0.25% growth over prior year budget
- ▶ Mandates on county operations are growing, while funding is decreasing.
- ▶ HR-1 reduced the federal cost share for Food and Nutrition Services from 50% to 25%, a **\$3.1 million** shift in federal responsibility to Guilford County



# Revenue Outlook

## User Charges

- ▶ Generates \$54 million, a 0% change from prior year, with primary source being EMS Transports
- ▶ Growth is offset by reductions in Sheriff's Office programs (SRO & Federal Inmate) and Elections
- ▶ Fee adjustments recommended in Inspections, Environmental Health, EMS, and Solid Waste



# Fund Balance

- ▶ This budget reduces appropriated fund balance by **\$7.8 million**; ensuring the county has sufficient unassigned reserves to weather changes in federal funding or economic shocks.
- ▶ Appropriated fund balance is more in line with peer counties.



# Revenue Outlook for Key Interlocal Partners

**Guilford County Schools** – over the past four (4) years (FY23-FY26), state funding increased by 4.6%, while local funding increased by 15.4%

**Guilford Technical Community College** - over the past four (4) years (FY23-FY26), state funding increased by 20%, while local funding increased by 9%





# Budget Overview

## Maintaining Services

# Strong Continuation Budget

## Steps we took:

- ▶ Evaluated expense drivers and accounted for cost escalations
  - Jail Medical Services (\$12.6 million budgeted)
  - Foster Care Room & Board (\$18 million budgeted)
- ▶ Prioritized mandates and Board commitments
- ▶ Reduced operating expenses where possible, saving \$3.7 million



# Key Comparison: Mandated Services

- ▶ A majority of what county government does is mandated in some form by the state.
- ▶ We have a responsibility to align resources to meet these statutory obligations.
- ▶ Continued alignment with public good and purpose.

Service Index	Departments (Based on Primary funding)	% of Budget
<b>Mandated</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guilford County Schools</li> <li>• Board of Elections</li> <li>• Register of Deeds</li> <li>• Social Services</li> <li>• Public Health</li> <li>• Behavioral Health Services (LME/MCO)</li> <li>• Child Support</li> <li>• Clerk to Board</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GTCC</li> <li>• Tax</li> <li>• Sherrif's Office</li> <li>• Emergency Management/EMS</li> <li>• County Administration</li> <li>• County Attorney</li> <li>• Finance/Procurement</li> <li>• Inspections</li> <li>• Planning &amp; Development</li> </ul>	<b>86%</b>
<b>Non-Mandated – Internal</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Some of these department may provide mandated services</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Technology</li> <li>• Budget and Management</li> <li>• Facilities</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Resources</li> <li>• Fleet</li> <li>• Security</li> <li>• Internal Audit</li> </ul>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Non-Mandated – Strategic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperative Extension</li> <li>• Court Services</li> <li>• Family Justice Center</li> <li>• Soil and Water</li> <li>• Animal Services</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library Services</li> <li>• Economic Development</li> <li>• Veteran Services</li> <li>• Parks and Recreation</li> </ul>	<b>7%</b>





# Key Investment

## Core Services

# Key Investment: Planning For Future Growth

- ▶ Supporting regional collaboration to address water and sewer capacity
- ▶ Fire coverage through multi-year planning to support increased standard of coverage for rural fire protection.
  - Tax rates for rural fire districts capped at **16%** above revenue neutral as responsible measure to limit burden placed on property owners. This totals **\$4,686,914** of new revenue across the 23 rural fire districts.

# Key Investment: Planning For Future Growth

- ▶ **Three (3)** positions in Environmental Health to improve permit review timeliness and promote clean water through state mandated well inspections.
- ▶ **\$150,000** to complete area plans to ensure resident's voices are included in the planning processes.



# Key Investment: Planning For Future Growth & Promoting Desirability

Investment in the code compliance program of **\$238,014** to support removing dilapidated and dangerous structures to promote safety and desirability.

- ▶ Enforcement Funding
- ▶ Staffing: One (1) FTE Inspection Lead

# Key Investment: Supporting Our Residents

**Eight (8)** new positions in social services, partially offset by federal/state revenues to support:

- ▶ Reducing stays in foster care and a return to permanency
- ▶ Supporting growing aging population
- ▶ Supporting aging and disabled adults find living and health care arrangements
- ▶ Supporting guardianship





# OneGuilford: Support Our Pantries

## Key Investment: Supporting Our Residents

Sustaining effective  
**ARPA programs** including:

- ▶ DSS/FJC Navigation Team
- ▶ Food Security Program





# Key Investment: Supporting Our Residents

- ▶ Incremental investment in library support to Greensboro, High Point, Gibsonville, and Jamestown
- ▶ Age Friendly coordination
- ▶ Supporting early childcare child subsidy program (no county dollars)

LOCAL  
EARLY CHILDHOOD  
EMPLOYMENT  
OPPORTUNITIES

[GuilfordChildren.org/employment-rfps](https://GuilfordChildren.org/employment-rfps)

GUILFORD  
PARTNERSHIP  
FOR

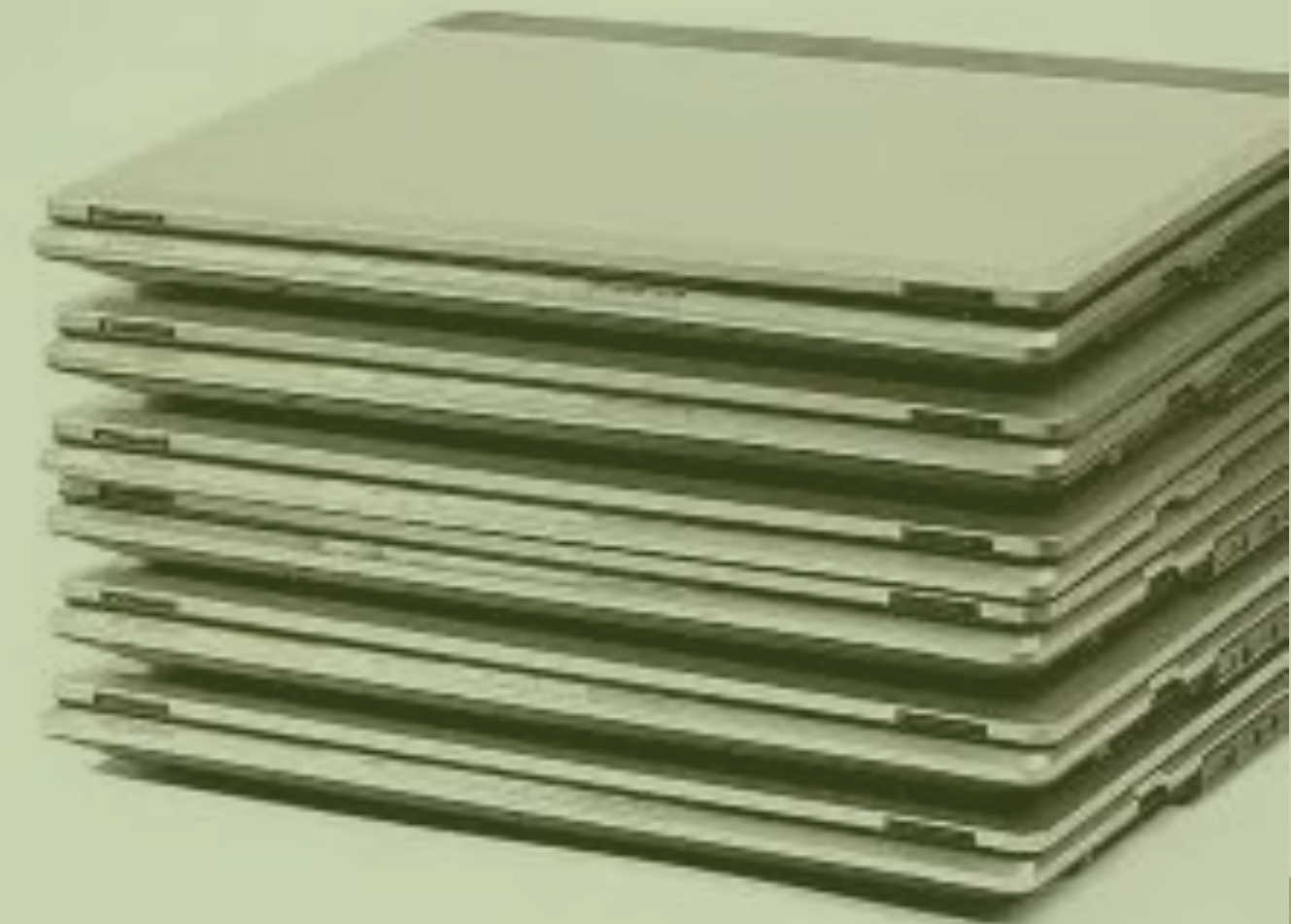
# Key Investment: Supporting Our Residents

- ▶ **Attorneys** to support contract review, planning & development cases, tax, and employment law.
- ▶ Information Technology **help desk support** to maintain stable operations (no additional county funds)
- ▶ Analysts in Human Resources to support **benefits management**
- ▶ A position to support the **Clean Energy Program** approved by the Board at the March retreat.
- ▶ **Grants specialists** to support offsetting county funds by seeking federal/state grants. Positions offset by anticipated administrative overhead reimbursement



# Key Investment: Technology Modernization

- ▶ Modernizing and streamline technology systems to improve data quality and efficiency
  - **\$3 million**
- ▶ Replacement schedules for core technology infrastructure
  - **\$1.5 million**
- ▶ Improved technology to support Sheriff's Office through enhanced body cameras.
  - **\$800,000**





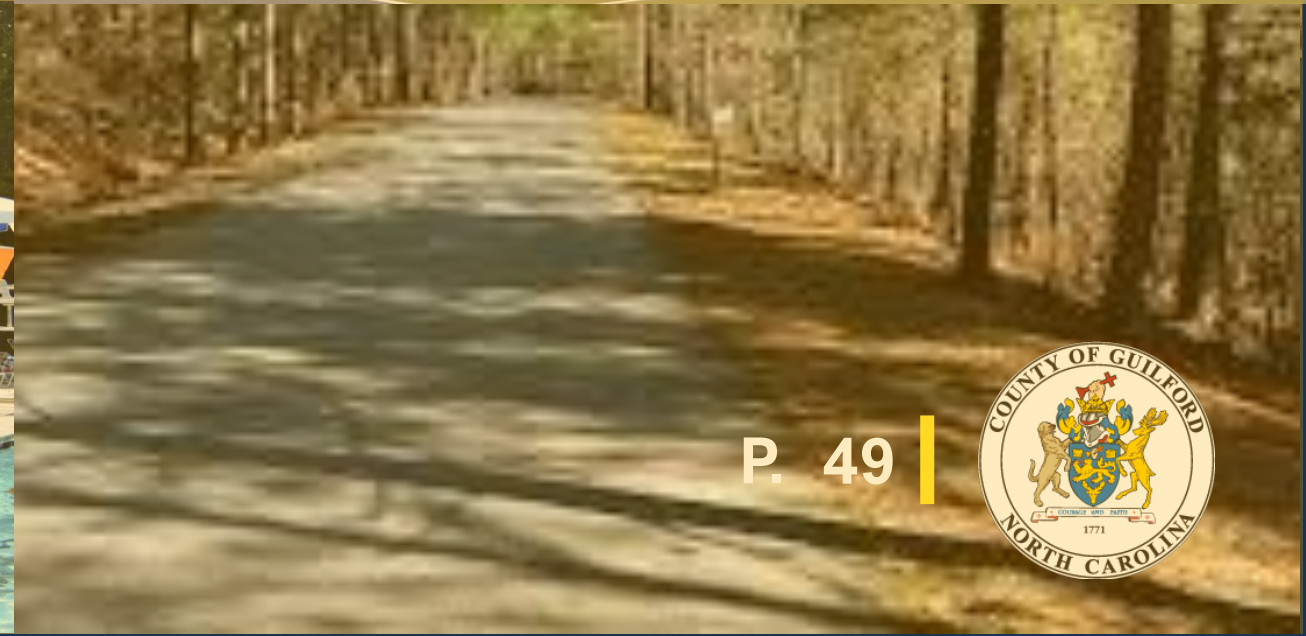
# Key Investment

**County Capital**



# Key Investment: County Capital

- ▶ Develop an effective 5-year (rolling) capital improvement plan based on a space study from CPL Architects.



# County Capital Key Principles

Reduce long-term costs  
by limiting reliance on  
leased space

Phase investments

Improve operational  
efficiency

Access essential county  
services effectively

Prioritize essential  
building repairs

Reduce city-center  
footprint



# Key Investment

## Strategic Priorities



# Key Investment: Support the Unhoused

- ▶ \$1.0 million to enhance street outreach and emergency sheltering.
- ▶ Continue eviction mediation and landlord engagement program with additional \$0.4 million in county funds.



# What You Are Not Getting In This Budget

- ▶ **51 positions** requested by county departments are not funded including positions in the Clerk's Office, Information Technology, Sheriff's Office, Veteran's Services, Planning & Development, Tax, Social Services, Family Justice Center, and Public Health
- ▶ **\$6.2 million** in additional operating funding
- ▶ **\$9.6 million** in additional vehicle funding requests from Emergency Services and Sheriff's Office
- ▶ **\$2.6 million** in additional opportunities to enhance technology infrastructure





# Key Investment

Education



# Key Investment: K-12 Education

- ▶ Funded construction of over **20 schools**
- ▶ **Improved safety and security** at all 122 schools
- ▶ **5<sup>th</sup>** in state in principal supplements, **3<sup>rd</sup>** in assistant principal supplements, and **23<sup>rd</sup>** in teacher supplements
- ▶ **9<sup>th</sup>** in state in relative funding effort



# Key Investment: K-12 Education

- ▶ **\$7.9 million** for local current operating expenses (a 2.8% increase)
- ▶ **\$9 million** in recurring funding to fund a 5-year phased pay plan for classified staff
- ▶ **\$1.8 million** in recurring funding for safety and security enhancements
- ▶ **\$5 million** in recurring funding to support a 1:1 technology program
- ▶ **\$1.3 million** in recurring funding to support non-bond eligible capital needs
- ▶ **\$33.5 million** in recurring funding to prepare for upcoming debt service obligations



# Multi-year plan to address K-12 priorities

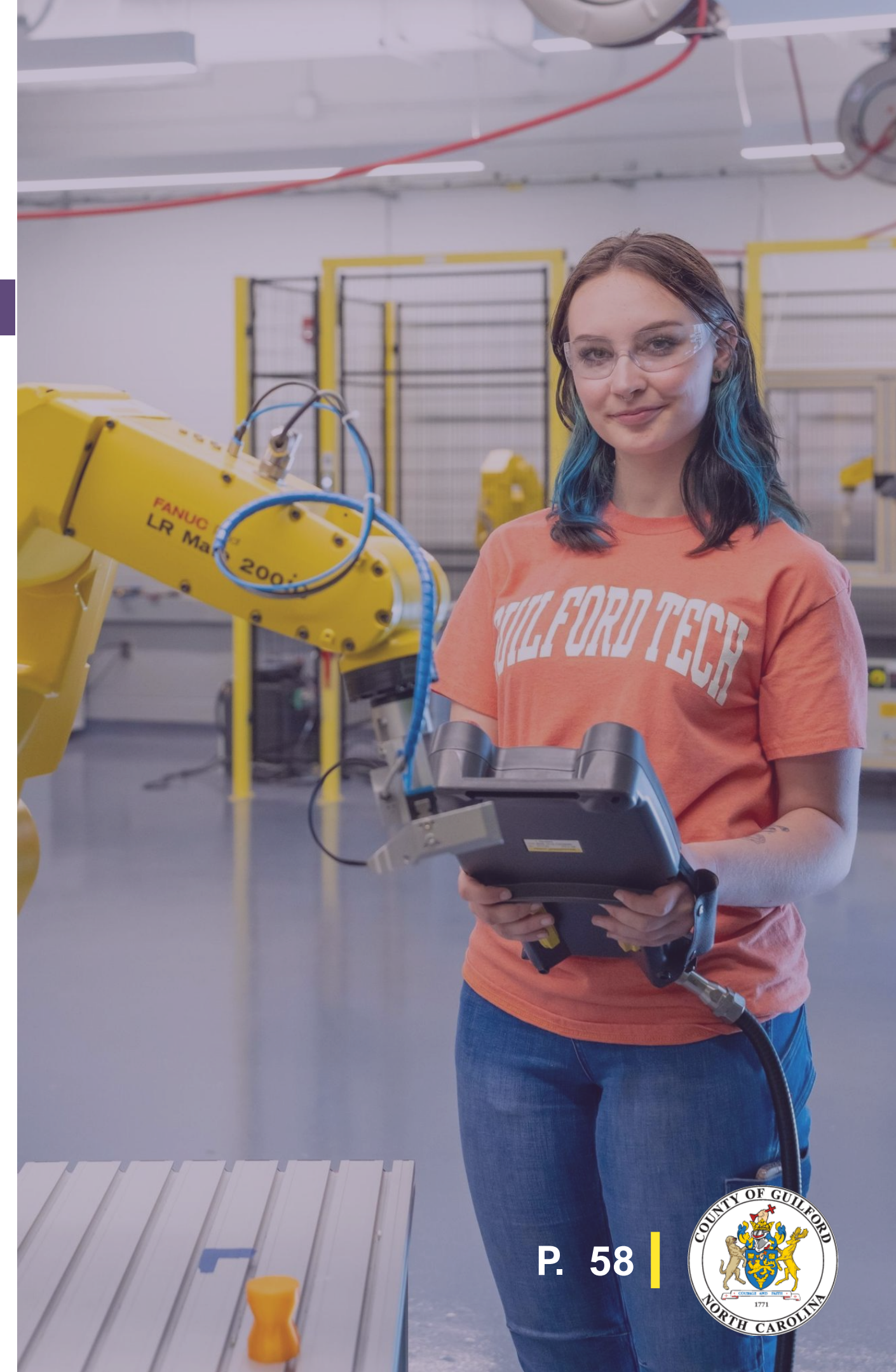
	Fiscal Year 2027	Fiscal Year 2028	Fiscal Year 2029	Fiscal Year 2030	Fiscal Year 2031
Operating Baseline	\$282,506,000	\$295,206,000	\$326,414,000	\$338,342,000	\$350,672,000
Continuation Budget	7,900,000	8,208,000	8,528,000	8,861,000	9,207,000
Classified Employee Pay	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000
Teacher Pay – Article 46	-	20,000,000	400,000	408,000	416,000
Safety & Security	1,800,000	-	-	61,000	75,000
<b>Local Current Expense</b>	<b>\$295,206,000</b>	<b>\$326,414,000</b>	<b>\$338,342,000</b>	<b>\$350,672,000</b>	<b>\$363,370,000</b>
<b>Year-Over-Year Increase</b>	<b>\$12,700,000</b>	<b>\$31,208,000</b>	<b>\$11,928,000</b>	<b>\$12,330,000</b>	<b>\$12,698,000</b>
<b>Restricted Balance</b>	<b>\$6,000,000</b>	<b>\$3,000,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
Technology Replacement	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000
GCS Capital	1,300,000	1,300,000	1,300,000	1,300,000	1,300,000
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$307,506,000</b>	<b>\$335,714,000</b>	<b>\$344,642,000</b>	<b>\$356,972,000</b>	<b>\$369,670,000</b>
<b>Year-Over-Year Increase</b>	<b>\$25,000,000</b>	<b>\$28,208,000</b>	<b>\$8,928,000</b>	<b>\$12,330,000</b>	<b>\$12,698,000</b>
<b>Year-Over-Year % Change</b>	<b>8.8%</b>	<b>9.2%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>3.6%</b>
<b>Property Tax - Debt Service</b>	<b>\$80,773,000</b>	<b>\$82,388,460</b>	<b>\$84,036,229</b>	<b>\$85,716,954</b>	<b>\$87,431,293</b>

\$58 million investment represents +5.53¢ above revenue neutral



# Key Investment: Community College (GTCC)

- ▶ **\$1.5 million** to support local operating expenses
  - **5 new positions** to support the Aviation Building
  - Lease for **Union Square**
- ▶ **\$1.2 million** in recurring revenue to support ongoing deferred capital needs



# Key Investment: Community College (GTCC)

- ▶ Supports capital expansion to prepare workforce for economic development successes.
- ▶ Initial funding included with budget:
  - Health Sciences (\$16.5m)
  - Skilled Trades (\$5m)
  - Bioprocess Manufacturing Technology (\$4m)
- ▶ Future funding dependent upon other federal/state funding matches:
  - Aviation Building 2 (\$30m)
  - Center for Advanced Manufacturing (\$1.9m)



# GTCC'S Multi-Year Budget Plan

	Fiscal Year 2026	Fiscal Year 2027	Fiscal Year 2028	Fiscal Year 2029	Fiscal Year 2030	Fiscal Year 2031
Operating Support	\$19,728,000	\$21,275,000	\$22,189,425	\$23,106,054	\$23,962,669	\$24,738,435
Capital Pay Go	-	1,200,000	1,200,000	1,200,000	1,200,000	1,200,000
Debt Service	10,210,200	7,463,200	7,612,464	7,764,713	7,920,007	8,078,407
<b>Recurring Support</b>	<b>\$29,938,200</b>	<b>\$29,938,200</b>	<b>\$31,001,889</b>	<b>\$32,070,767</b>	<b>\$33,082,676</b>	<b>\$34,016,842</b>
Y-o-Y Increase		-	\$1,063,689	\$1,068,878	\$1,011,909	\$934,166
Y-o-Y % Change		0%	3.6%	3.4%	3.2%	2.8%



# Building The Budget

## Next Steps

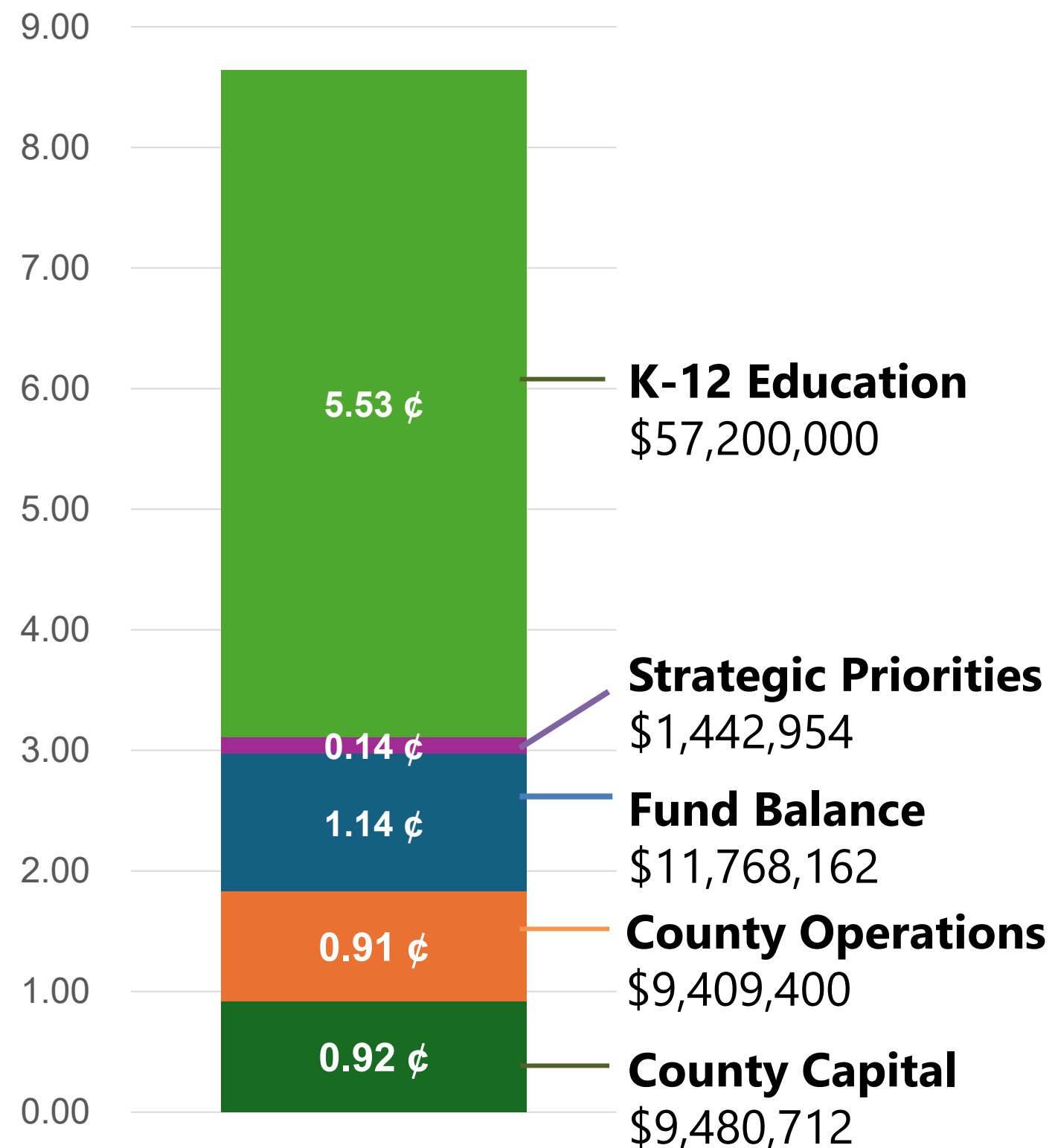


# Revisiting Our Budget Priorities

- ✓ Cost control measures
- ✓ Fund balance management & preservation
- ✓ Strengthen mandated and non-mandated services
- ✓ Maintain market competitiveness as an employer.
- ✓ Establish a multi-year capital improvement plan (5yr/rolling)
- ✓ Control for technology expense spikes
- ✓ Develop an Enterprise Resource Planning strategy
- ✓ Establish a collaborative public school funding plan
- ✓ Support Guilford Technical Community College growth needs due to economic development plans
- ✓ Securing a funding plan & policies to promote board established priorities
  - ✓ Active Parks and Recreation
  - ✓ Services for the Unhoused
  - ✓ Low Income Homeowner's Assistance Program
  - ✓ Residential Code Compliance
  - ✓ Women and Children Recovery Services
- ✓ Tax Rate Control and Reasonableness
- ✓ Tax Rate Stabilization



# Expenses Above Revenue Neutral



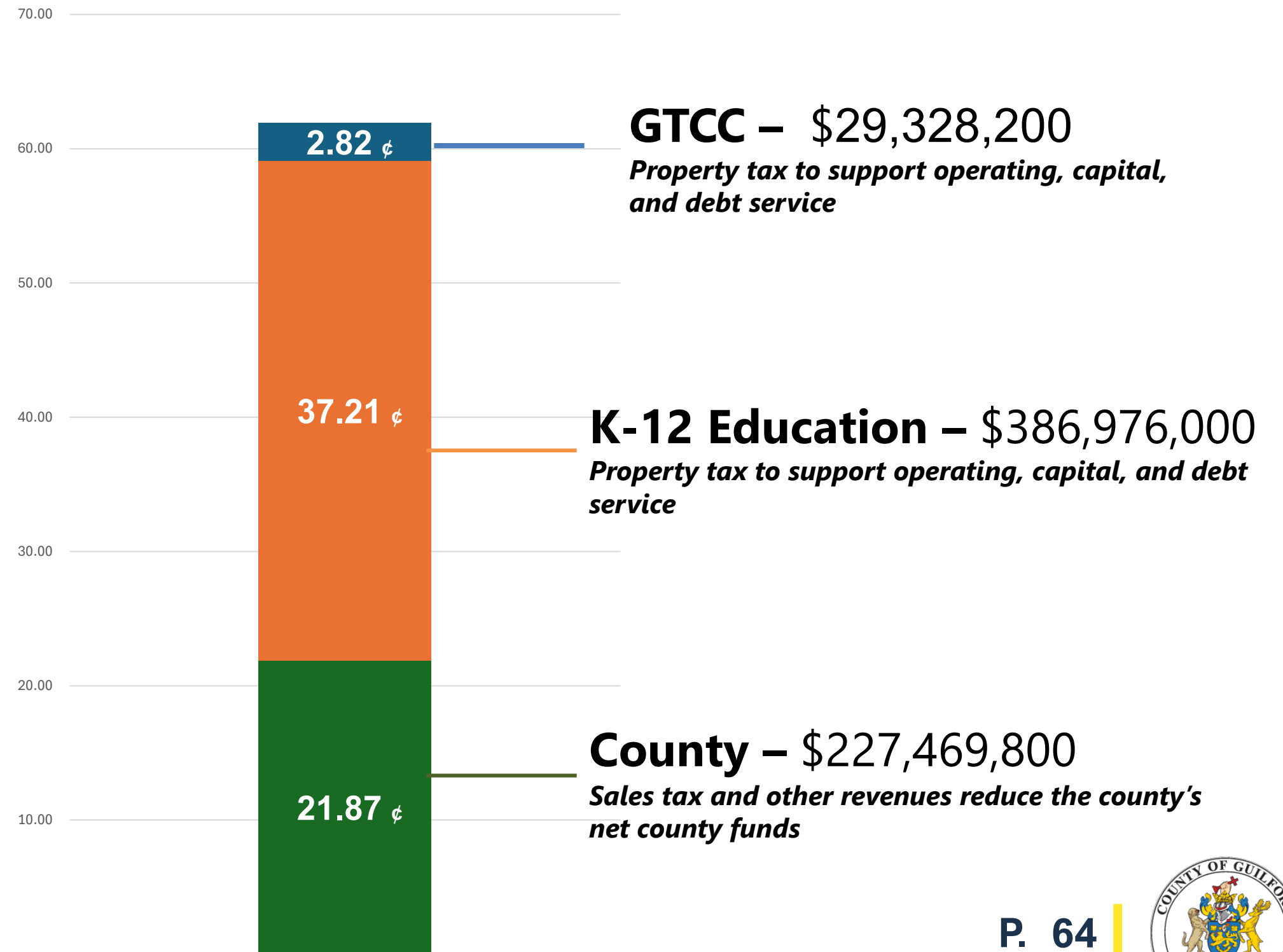
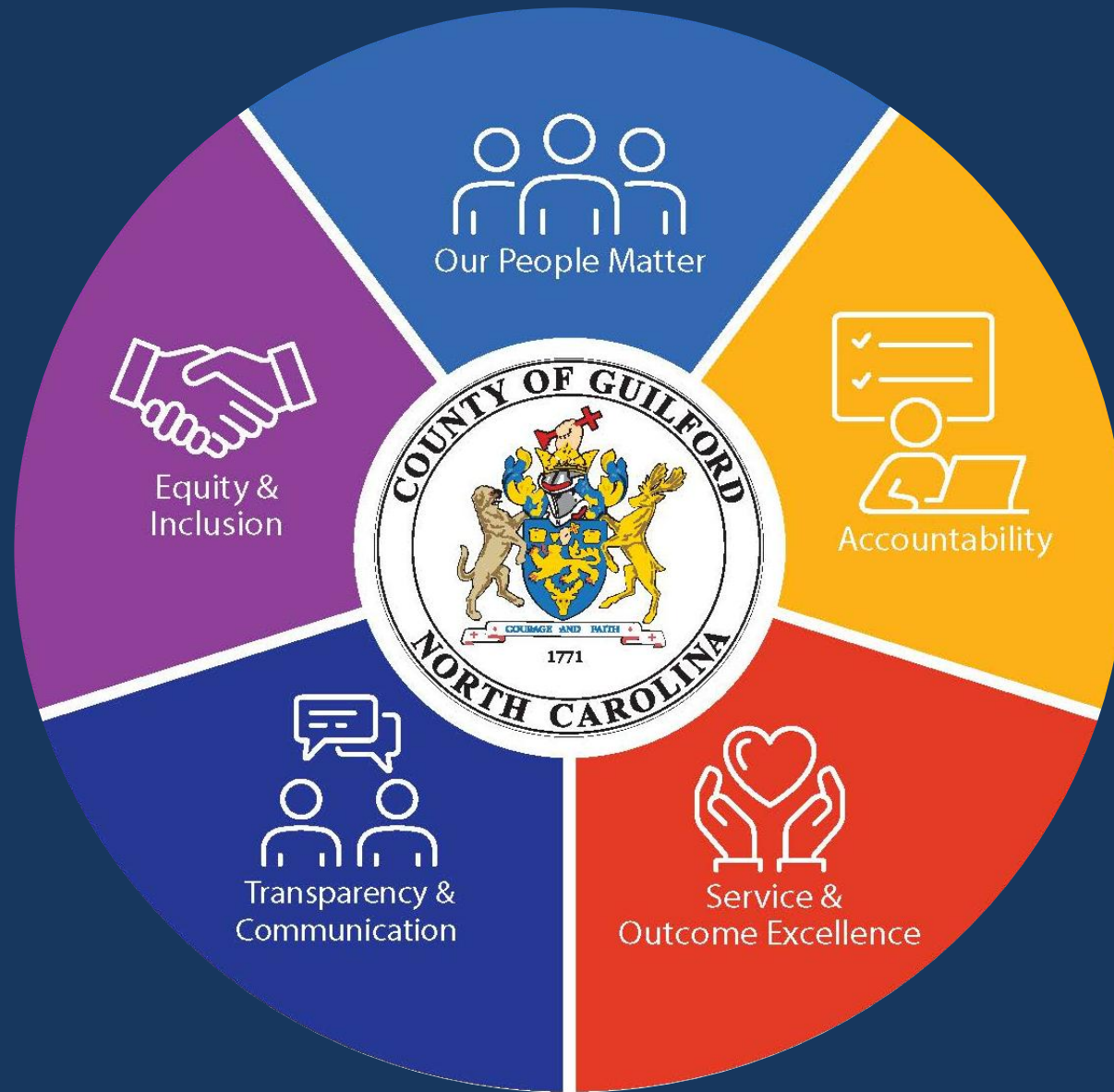
## 8.64 cents above revenue neutral will fund:

- **K-12 Education**
  - Base growth of 2.8%
  - \$9 million for classified employee pay
  - \$1.8 million for safety and security
  - \$1.3 million for activity buses (not state funded)
  - \$5 million for student and staff technology
  - \$33.5 million for school capital debt service plan
- **Stabilized, Responsive, & Strategic County Operations**
  - Structurally Balanced Budget
  - Technology Enhancements (ERP) & Replacements
  - Sheriff's Office Body Cameras
  - 28 New Positions
  - 5-Year Capital Plan
  - Sustaining Impactful ARAP Programs
  - Eviction Mediation & Landlord Engagement
  - Food Security Coordination
  - Adult and Child High-Risk, Multi-Disciplinary Services
  - Street Outreach & Family Shelter Supports
  - Code Compliance Program



# Tax Rate: 61.90 cent

## Total Budget: \$935,455,000



# Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 Recommended Budget

Fiscal Year (FY) 27  
**Recommended  
Budget**



**\$935,455,000**

Fiscal Year (FY) 27  
**Revenue Neutral  
Tax Rate**



**53.26 cents**

per \$100 of assessed value

Fiscal Year (FY) 27  
**Recommended  
Tax Rate**



**61.90 cents**

per \$100 of assessed value



# Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 Budget Impact

- Controls & incrementally plans for large scale cost
- Promotes fiscal health
- Addresses funding loss and increased cost from federal policy changes
- Aligns with our economic development growth
- Leverage resources to address foster care and detention services cost increases
- Supports strategic priorities
- Demonstrates collaborative and cost controlled funding plans with Guilford County Schools and Guilford Technical Community College



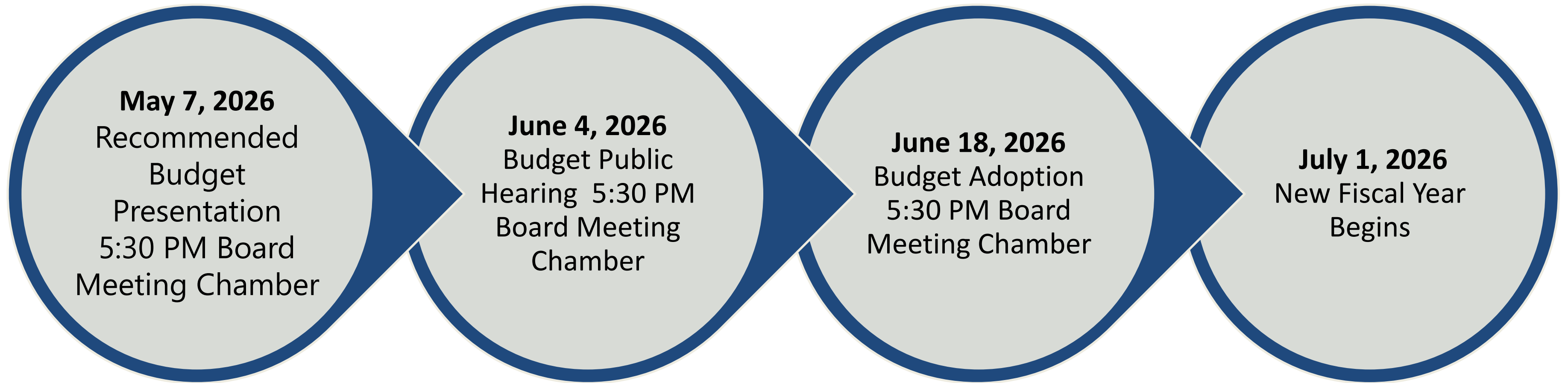
# Monitoring Property Tax Moratorium & Tax Levy Limits/Caps

## Budget & Operational Considerations

- ▶ Results in no new funding for Guilford County Schools, including technology, security, and classified staff
- ▶ Limited funding for the school capital debt service plan and increased probability of tax rate increases or program discontinuation
- ▶ Results in no merit or compensation adjustments for county staff, including public safety
- ▶ Results in flat tax rates for rural fire districts, meaning limited pay adjustments for first responders.
- ▶ Revise economic incentive participation



# Timeline And Next Steps





**Thank You**

