

FY 2008-09 ZERO-TAX INCREASE DIRECTIVE
Possible Departmental Adjustments to Reduce Tax Rate Increase

TOTAL ADJUSTMENTS **\$ 23,683,475**

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

I. Elections

- A. Renegotiate municipal cost sharing agreements with Greensboro and High Point (\$560,000) – The County’s original contracts with Greensboro and High Point are more than 35 years old. In municipal election years, revised fee structures would generate approximately \$200,000-\$300,000 of additional revenue whereas, in non-municipal election years the full projected revenue would constitute new revenue for the county.

EDUCATION

I. Guilford County School System

- A. Reduce GCS Operating Allocation (up to \$12,500,000) – A reduction in the recommended funding level for FY 2009 (\$12.5M increase from FY 2008) would limit the System’s ability to meet maintenance, utilities, and fuel needs, and potentially, the County’s share of state salary increases.

II. Guilford Technical Community College

- A. Reduce GTCC Operating & Capital Allocations (up to \$1,461,362) – Reduced funding could curb GTCC’s efforts to expand education/training for the County’s growing Aviation and Transportation industries, and indirectly slow industry development.

HUMAN SERVICES

I. Transportation

- A. Reduce the number of trips offered (\$333,629) - The County does not provide shopping or recreational trips. Trips are provided for medical appointments, senior services and employment. If the number of trips are reduced, the department anticipates an increase in the waiting list for services.
- B. Defer Vehicle Acquisition (\$26,950) – The department is starting to purchase vehicles to develop a fleet of 48 transportation vehicles that can then be leased back to the contractor.
- C. Reduce Rural Operating Assistance Program and JARC grant-funded trips (\$221,848) – If these state grants are not continued in FY 2008-09, the County will assume the cost of service for the department’s estimated 11,010 trips.

II. Coordinated Services

- A. Reduce Program Support (\$153,785) – This funding is used to leverage state and federal funding. If this funding were eliminated, the County would have to fund the services provided by the grants or cease providing the service.

III. Social Services

- A. Eliminate County Financial Assistance (\$375,000) – This funds rent and utility assistance payments for people who fall within the gap. If this funding is eliminated, the County would no longer be able to provide emergency assistance payments.
- B. Eliminate funding for The Women’s Resource Center (\$15,000) – This funding functions as part of the Center’s match for accessing other funding sources. There is little impact if it is eliminated.

IV. Child Support Enforcement

- A. 19 Position staffing reduction (\$1,093,600) – The department has offered 19 non-specific staffing reductions. The department states that if the reduction is made, caseloads will increase by 200 per agent (from 425 to 625). Productivity will decrease with the increase in caseload; customer service response times will increase; fewer paternities would be established; fewer new orders would be established; and the amount of current support and arrears collections would likely decrease. IV-D offset and incentives revenues will also be reduced, since they are based on collections and performance.

V. Mental Health

- A. Eliminate residential substance abuse support (\$2,700,000) – Fewer substance abuse clients will be served and fewer types of services will be available.

VI. Public Health

- A. Increase the environmental health fee and fuel surcharge (\$225,000) – This option places more of the burden on users of this service to cover service cost. The fuel surcharge allows the County to recoup some of the increased mileage costs associated with service provision.
- B. Eliminate funding for Triad Health Project (\$50,000) – Elimination would limit the services the Triad Health Project can provide to the community.

PUBLIC SAFETY

I. Emergency Services

- A. Increase patient transport fees (\$275,000): Citizens would be charged an additional \$25/transport, and an additional \$1/loaded mile.
- B. Defer the purchase of an ambulance chassis and associated emergency communications equipment (\$84,000): This expense would be included in subsequent years’ budgets.

II. Law Enforcement

- A. Reduce Technical Maintenance (\$100,000): This reduction would impact service agreements and repairs to departmental data processing equipment.
- B. Reduce printing & office supplies (\$150,000): Department-wide reductions would be made for operating supplies and materials.
- C. Reduce part-time salary funds (\$100,000): This would limit the department's ability to address needs during peak periods, such as local sporting events (for example, the golf tournament) or visits by government officials/candidates that require additional security.
- D. Reduce operating funds at Prison Farm (\$91,000): Supplies and materials used in the farming operation, scheduled vehicle replacement, and the "trades" would be greatly reduced.
- E. Reduce advertising account (\$8,000): This would limit the department's ability to advertise for vacancies and for special events or promotions.
- F. Reduction in level of staffing (\$104,271): Elimination of personnel and associated equipment would seriously reduce the department's ability to deliver prompt and mandated services to the citizens.

III. Court Alternatives

- A. Elimination of funding for the One Step Further Program (\$60,000): The funding for this program is divided among the following components: Sentencing Services Program (\$2,000); Community Service/Restitution (\$10,604); Teen Court (\$10,692); and Mediation (\$36,704). These services are used by the courts as an alternative to detention. The elimination of funding could impact the Juvenile Detention Center population.

IV. Other Protection

- A. Alternative #1 - Eliminate funding for two of the CBO's in the Jail Reduction Pilot Project (\$187,615): Summit House and ADS have experienced difficulties in meeting their outcomes, though no fault of their own. The elimination of the funding for these agencies would exceed the reduction target amount, with the balance applied to other departments' reductions.
- B. Alternative #2 - Reduce Pre-Trial Services staffing level by two positions (\$76,065): This would translate into a reduction in the level of service. The elimination of the District Court Report would require the Sheriff's Department to transport all inmates scheduled for court, since there would be no research, information and coordination to identify the inmates who must come to court vs. inmates who have cases that cannot be moved at that time. This would result, due to department policy, in the need for additional staffing in the Sheriff's Department. Also, the screening of inmates for first appearance, normally done within 24 hours of arrest, would be done after 72 hours for those inmates still in custody. The net result of these reductions would be delays in moving cases, translating into longer jail stays for many defendants.

V. Security

- A. Eliminate one full-time security patrol in the Greensboro Courthouse (\$25,417) – The loss of one of the two patrols would result in less presence in the hallways and other common areas. It would lengthen response time to incidents and lessen the ability to deter problems and assist citizens.
- B. Elimination of one part-time x-ray/wanding officer in the Greensboro Courthouse (\$15,886): Waiting times would be lengthened, with fewer officers to process citizens and assign them to the appropriate courtroom. Less oversight could also increase the chance of a problem.
- C. Elimination of parking lot officers for night-time baseball games (\$4,002): Officers are hired to prevent citizens from parking in critical areas during night games. Emergency medical vehicles, law enforcement, and those needing mental health services require timely access. Access/response times could be hampered without parking enforcement.

VI. Animal Services

- A. Alternative #1 - Increase revenues by restructuring the reimbursement schedule to include the small towns not currently charged for this service (\$58,000): the towns that were not levying a property tax at the time the county switched from the per capita to the ad valorem sales tax distribution received a waiver from having to pay for these services. This waiver could be withdrawn, generating additional revenue to the County. There would be no impact on the operation of either the Shelter or Animal Control.
- B. Alternative #2a – Defer replacement of vehicles for one year (\$36,000): There are no reliable spare vehicles for the department. Deviation from the department's replacement schedule translates into more frequent repairs required, diminishing the department's response.
Alternative #2b – Reduce the allocation to the United Animal Coalition for Shelter operation (\$30,867): This reduction would impact the operation of the Shelter.

VII. Fire Districts

- A. Do not hold Fire Districts & Other Non-Municipal bodies harmless from sales tax reductions related to Medicaid Relief Legislation (\$175,000): Reductions would be needed in services and equipment purchases, or individual tax rates would need to be increased.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

I. Planning & Development

- A. Revise/increase planning fees (\$15,000): Revisit planning fees and adopt a new schedule that would generate \$15,000 in additional revenue for services rendered. A revised schedule could be presented to the Board of Commissioners at the start of the new fiscal year.
- B. Eliminate vacant Planner I position (\$55,809): Based on current service demand and staffing levels, service quality could be maintained without filling the position.

Combined with Greensboro's planned annexation (effective July 2008), the geographical area served by Guilford County Planning & Development would also decrease, possibly offsetting the need for this position

II. Inspections

- A. Close Oak Ridge Inspections Office (\$3,600): Close Oak Ridge satellite office, saving \$300/mo. in rental costs and allowing the full consolidation of permitting staff within the main office.
- B. Eliminate vacant Building/Zoning Tech. II position (\$45,654): Per closure of the Oak Ridge satellite office, this position would no longer need to be filled. While closure of the office would cause some inconvenience to customers in the Northwest area, the current permitting volume does not justify continued office staffing.

III. Culture & Recreation

- A. Reduce funding to the Greensboro Library System by 5% (\$106,115): The degree to which services may be adversely impacted is unknown. FY 2008 was the final year of a four-year commitment by the County to increase its funding of the Greensboro Library System by \$400,000, with an established maximum of \$2,122,300. Greensboro's planned annexation (effective July 2008) will also likely decrease the number of non-city users served. Currently, the System provides a full range of services at no additional charge to the citizens and taxpayers of Guilford County.
- B. Delay Southwest Park opening until Spring 2009 (\$125,000): An April 1, 2009 opening date assumes funding for three full months of operation. However, Facilities and Parks & Recreation must secure the property from trespassers and maintain the park during the interim – maintenance would consist of mowing and trail/road upkeep.
- C. Eliminate Greensboro differential-fee payment (\$50,000): Elimination of the differential-fee payment that allows non-city residents to pay city rates for sports, fishing, and other activities at facilities owned by the City. Although a contract is presently being circulated, there is no current obligation.
- D. Reduce parks operating budgets (\$15,000): Per examination, Parks & Recreation has identified an additional \$15,000 which should not jeopardize core operations. However, further reductions would necessitate re-negotiation of park services and operations.

IV. Economic Development & Assistance

- A. Release encumbered incentives payment (\$170,000): Release of funds carried forward for a dated project would reduce the annual buffer for payments under existing agreements and/or new projects.

ALL COUNTY DEPARTMENTS

- A. Reduce/eliminate merit compensation for County personnel (\$600,000 per percent) – The reduction or elimination of merit compensation for County personnel could adversely impact continuing employee recruitment, development, and retention efforts. Each percentage point represents approximately \$600,000 of County funding.