

**MINUTES
BURKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BUDGET / STRATEGIC PLANNING**

The Burke County Board of Commissioners held a Budget / Strategic Planning (regular) meeting on Thursday, March 6, 2025, at 8:00 a.m. at the NC School of Science and Mathematics Barn, located on Burkemont Avenue in Morganton. The meeting was recorded and uploaded to the County's YouTube channel, BurkeCountyNC. The agenda, in its entirety, was posted to the County's website, www.burkenc.org, several days prior to the meeting. Pursuant to Resolution No. 2024-17, adopted and effective on August 20, 2024, the Burke County Board of Commissioners conferred upon itself all the power, duties and responsibilities of the Board of Health and the Social Services Board. Those present were:

COMMISSIONERS: Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
Phil Smith, Vice Chairman
Brian Barrier
Randy Burns
Mike Stroud

STAFF: Brian Epley, County Manager
Margaret Pierce, Finance Director/Deputy County Manager
Destin Hall, County Attorney
Kay Honeycutt Draughn, Clerk to the Board
Various Department Heads and Staff

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Brittain called the meeting to order at 8:07 a.m.

WELCOME

Kevin Baxter, Vice Chancellor & Chief Campus Officer, North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics (NCSSM), welcomed the Board. In appreciation, he was presented with a commemorative walking stick.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion: To approve the agenda as presented.

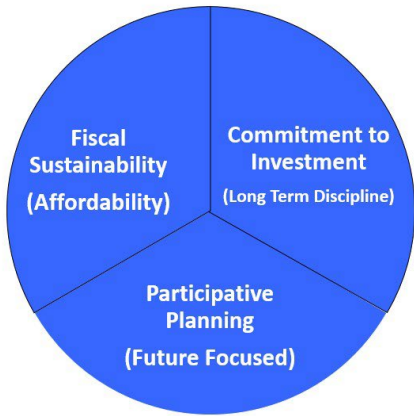
RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Mike Stroud, Commissioner
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Phil Smith, Brian Barrier, Randy Burns, and Mike Stroud

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE

CM - CIP UPDATE

Brian Epley, County Manager, provided a brief itinerary for the budget retreat, then presented a capital improvement plan update as follows:

	FY 2026-2030 Capital Improvement Planning County Commissioner Discussion Improving Lives in Burke County SERVICE SUPPORT ENHANCEMENT
	Comprehensive Capital Planning What is a Capital Improvement Plan? The capital improvement plan (CIP) outlines the County's plans for achieving the goals, objectives, and service delivery levels desired by the Board of County Commissioners. The purpose of this plan is to forecast and match projected revenues and major capital needs over a five (5) year period. Capital planning is an important management tool that strengthens the linkages between community infrastructure needs and the financial capacity of the County.
	Comprehensive Capital Planning <pre> graph TD A[Structural Infrastructure Assessment] --> C((Master Planning)) B[Space Needs] --> C D[Financing Policies] --> C </pre>

	Comprehensive Capital Planning 
	Comprehensive Capital Planning Impact of Out Year Operational Capital Planning: 1.) Manage Increasing Operational Costs: - A.) Utility Cost - B.) Life Cycle Management Plan - C.) Fleet Management 2.) Address Aging Infrastructure: - A.) Current Infrastructure is Made Up of Survivors • Aging • Failure Rate Increases as a Function of Age - B.) Replace versus Repair – R.O.L. 3.) Formalized Resource Utilization: - A.) Forward-Funded Concept
	Comprehensive Capital Planning  Identify Projects Cultivate a list of renewal projects with quick turnaround (3 to 6 months) Update List Regularly Revisit the project list and update it as conditions or priorities change Initiate Planning Plan out project details as much as possible (e.g., procurement, contractors) to maximize ease of execution Greenlight Preplanned Project Execute project using prepared plan, preventing lag time Maintain Curated List Keep the list current even when no funding arises to maintain preparedness

Recap from 2023 & 2024 Commissioner Policy

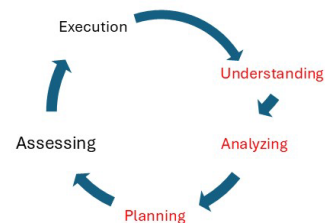
1. Identify and Prioritize Potential Capital Project Needs.....✓
 - A. Short Term.....Less Than 12 Months
 - B. Mid-Term.....12 – 48 Months
 - C. Long Term.....More than 48 Months
2. Recommendation of Capital Improvement Plan Financing Policies.....✓
 - A. Debt Management Policies
 - I. 10-Year Payout.....50%
 - II. Debt Service as a percentage of total expenditures.....15%
 - III. Debt to Assessed Value.....2.5%
 - B. Minimum Fund Balance Policy
3. Identify and Prioritize Funding Sources.....✓
4. Direct Budget Team to Develop & Present Plan for Approval.....✓

Burke County's Comprehensive Plan



Comprehensive Capital Planning

- A formal 5-year plan which identifies capital project and equipment needs, provides a planning schedule and identifies options for funding the plan
- Funding, Debt Position & Policies
- Non-Major Operational Capital
- Major Capital & Building Stock



Comprehensive Capital Planning

Revenue Sources: - Prioritized in this order:

Grant Funds: The County continues to aggressively pursue state and federal grant funding and has been successful in many of these efforts.

Capital Reserve Funds: The proposed funding for Capital Reserve Funds is a dedicated tax rate of 1.1 cents or approximately \$1.2 M annual re-occurring.

Pay-As-You-Go: Whenever possible, pay-as-you-go funding is the preferred method of funding CIP projects. For some large capital projects, this is not a feasible option.

Debt Proceeds: Some major capital projects are best funded through bank or bond borrowings that provide for a longer term pay back. These debt service payments would be paid from our debt service fund – which is funded from the general fund.

Comprehensive Capital Planning

BURKE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA DEBT ROLLFORWARD ANALYSIS FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2024

<u>Governmental Activities</u>	<u>Beginning Balance</u>	<u>Additions</u>	<u>Reductions</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
General Obligation Debt	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Notes from Direct Borrowings	38,815,000	1,818,315	(5,799,215)	34,834,100
Premium on Debt Issues	2,842,683	-	(211,485)	2,631,198
Other Post-Employment Benefits	16,213,337	1,174,086	-	17,387,423
Net Pension Liability	21,039,001	2,290,036	-	23,329,037
Net Pension Liability (LEOSSA)	2,842,161	-	(135,436)	2,706,725
Compensated Absences	2,412,641	6,501,325	(5,842,559)	3,071,407
Total Governmental Activities	\$ 84,164,823			\$ 83,959,890
<u>Business-Type Activities</u>				
Notes from Direct Borrowings	\$ 1,047,776	\$ -	\$ (68,772)	\$ 979,004
Landfill Closure & Postclosure	5,935,665	213,684	-	6,149,349
Net Pension Liability	457,096	371,511	-	828,607
Other Post-Employment Benefits	539,439	78,132	-	617,571
Compensated Absences	84,739	205,957	(190,035)	100,661
Total Business-Type Activities	\$ 8,064,715			\$ 8,675,192

Comprehensive Capital Planning

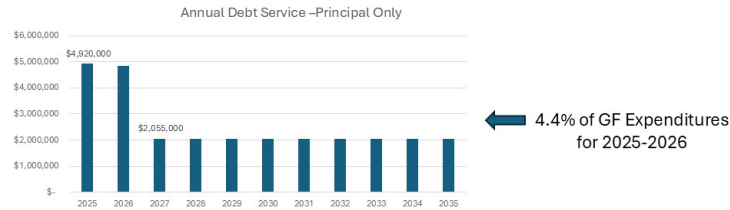
A. Debt Limits

- The County shall not exceed N.C.G.S. 159-55(c) Net debt as a percentage of the estimated market value of the taxable property shall not exceed [2.5%]. Net debt is defined as any and all debt that is tax-supported.
- The ratio of tax-supported debt service expenditures as a percent of total governmental fund expenditures shall not exceed [15.0%] with a minimum aggregate ten-year tax-supported principal payout ratio of [50%].
- The County Finance Director shall review other key debt ratios, see below, and inform the Board of Commissioners of any debt issuance/restructuring effects:
 - 10-year payout
 - Debt Service as a percentage of total expenditures
 - Debt to the assessed tax value

“In the event that the County anticipates exceeding the policy requirements stated above, Staff may request an exception from the Board stating the reason and length of time for the exception.”

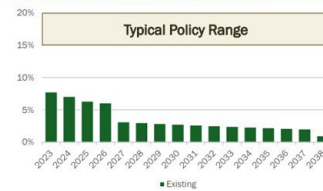
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Debt Item	Amount	Annual Debt Service (P&I)	Payoff Date
County Jail	\$ 13,710,000	\$ 1,606,750	2037
Total County Debt	\$ 13,710,000	\$ 1,606,750	
Patton High School	\$ 2,880,000.00	\$ 1,458,503.00	2026
Draughn High School	\$ 2,775,000.00	\$ 1,520,672.00	2026
Mountain View Elementary	\$ 14,010,000.00	\$ 1,646,938.00	2038
Total School Debt	\$ 19,665,000.00	\$ 4,626,113.00	



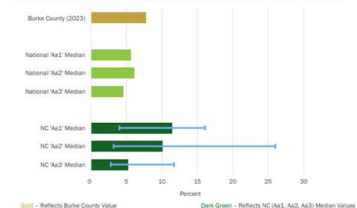
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Debt Service vs. Governmental Expenditures



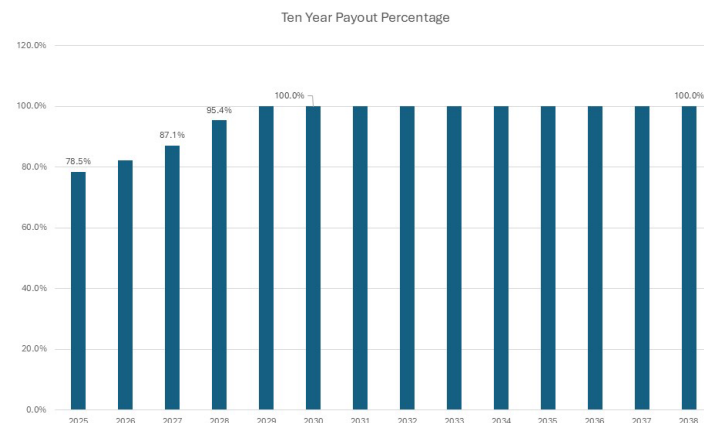
- Assumed Future Growth Rates
 - 2021 Adjusted Expenditures: \$88,617,570
 - 2022 & Beyond: 1.00%
- If not already in place, the County may consider adopting a policy establishing a maximum debt service vs. expenditures ratio.

Debt Service vs. Expenditures Peer Comparative



- Rating Considerations:
- S&P: The Debt and Contingent Liabilities section defines categories of Net Direct Debt as a % of Total Governmental Funds Expenditures as follows:
 - Very Strong: <8%
 - Strong: 8% to 15%
 - Adequate: 15% - 25%
 - Weak: 25% - 35%
 - Very Weak: > 35%

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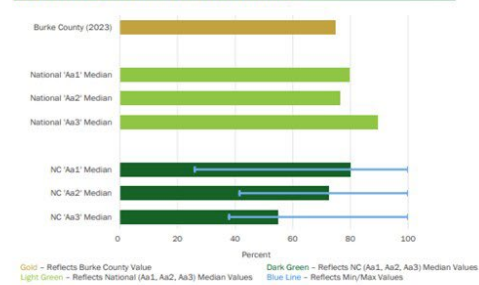


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10-Year Payout Ratio



10-year Payout Ratio Peer Comparative



- The 10-Year Payout Ratio measures the amount of principal to be retired in the next 10 years.
- This ratio is an important metric that indicates whether or not a locality is back-loading its debt.
- If not already in place, the County may consider adopting a policy establishing a minimum 10-year payout ratio.

Rating Considerations:

- S&P: A payout ratio greater than 65% results in a one point positive qualitative adjustment to the Debt & Contingent Liabilities section of S&P's General Obligation rating methodology.

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Non-Major Operational Capital

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Major Roofing Projects & HVAC:

Foothills (FHEC) HVAC Replacements: The 2023-2024 CIP plan included the replacement of the roof top HVAC units at the Foothills Higher Education Center (FHEC). The total project cost was \$407,000 and replaced 13 of the more than 20 rooftop units. The additional units will be evaluated and potentially replaced during 2025-2026.

Foothills (FHEC) Roof Replacements: Included in the five (5) year plan is \$1.2M for a complete roof replacement. Staff continue to monitor the building and roof for failures and plan to do full replacement in 2026-2027.

Courthouse – The County Commissioner's awarded a contract of approximately \$3.0M to BEAM construction for courthouse improvements during the 2024-2025 fiscal year. This major capital project is entirely funded through federal and state resources and is highly logistical to address operational space compression. The project, once concluded, will expand the clerk of court office, add an additional courtroom, and move the district attorney's office to the basement (which has not been utilized in the past). The project also make a major investment into the mechanical systems.

The roof of the courthouse is also compromised in limited areas. Evaluation of the flat membrane roof is underway and intended to funded as part of out year non major capital along with required "wiring" improvements to support the requirement of the OAC.

Morganton Senior Center Roof – The roof of the senior center is also compromised in limited areas. The 2024-2025 capital budget includes resources to cover the replacement. Total cost of the project is \$67,500 and includes the pitched shingled portion, the flat membrane portion, and all gutters.

There are other roof maintenance plans in the County's operational budgets – excluded from this CIP.

Comprehensive Capital Planning

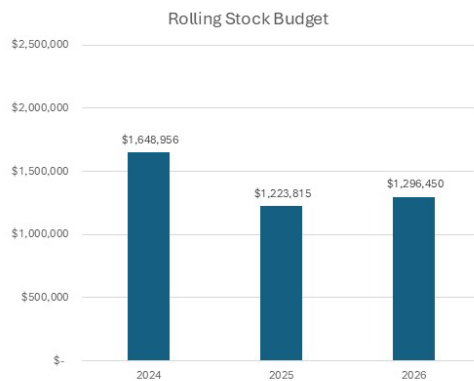
Major Rolling Stock: Burke County staff annually evaluate the condition and utilization of the rolling stock fleet. As of January 2025, the County's fleet was comprised of **256 vehicles** and the average miles were **105,473**. The Burke County budget team has completed a formal rolling stock replacement policy and a staggered replacement schedule to be included in the CIP plan moving forward. The policy, which will include an annual evaluation of each vehicle's condition and mileage, would be the predictive data analytic – which assumes mechanical and safety standards remain above level 3 on the County's condition rating scale (1 = bad / 5 =good).

FY 2025-2026 will be the third budget year of a 5-year capital lease obligation that provided for the replacement of five (5) ambulances – which were delivered earlier this year. The EMS department has a total fleet of 16 ambulances and utilizes 9 per shift – many of the existing fleets have more than 250,000 miles and are at end of life. The total lease amount is \$2,113,780 - \$422,756 payable over a five (5) year period. Other rolling stock such as Quick Response Vehicles (QRV) will be funded annually on a pay-as-you-go basis. The FY 2025-2026 budget will include two (2) interfacility wheelchair vans at an estimated total cost of \$125,000. The prior year's budget replaced one (1) QRVs at a cost of \$150,000.

The annual appropriation to the Sheriff's Office, based on prior year experiences and predictive analytics on replace vs. repair indicates a needed total cost for FY 2025-2026 is to be approximately \$885,600 – up (4%) (*approximately 12 vehicles*) from \$850,000 in the prior year. Sheriff rolling stock is funded pay-as-you-go inside the Sheriff's department budget.

Approximately 57% of the total fleet is operated by either the Sheriff's office or Emergency Services departments. Other rolling stock investments include the replacement of several other departmental-use vehicles. See attached schedule:

Comprehensive Capital Planning



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Comprehensive Capital Planning

GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES OUT-YEAR NON-MAJOR									
Project	Total Project Cost	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030	PROJECT TOTAL
Clerk and Governing Board Facility Projects	75,000	-	-	50,000	25,000	-	-	-	75,000
ROD Indexing	170,000	-	-	75,000	75,000	-	-	-	150,000
I.T. Networking Capital	655,500	30,500	125,000	-	-	250,000	250,000	250,000	905,500
Jail network and wifi	50,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	5,000	-	-	-	50,000
Services building network replacement	80,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	-	-	-	80,000
BCCEC network replacement, radio network, wifi	150,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	-	-	-	-	150,000
FHEC - Roof Replacement	1,200,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	-	-	-	1,200,000
Courthouse Roofing	600,000	-	-	300,000	300,000	-	-	-	600,000
Courthouse - OAC Wiring Project	165,000	-	-	82,500	82,500	-	-	-	165,000
New EMS Base - Location TBD	625,000	-	-	125,000	250,000	-	250,000	-	625,000
Cooperative Extension - General Capital	75,000	-	-	-	-	25,000	25,000	25,000	75,000
I.T. Strategic Plan	125,000	62,500	62,500	-	-	-	-	-	125,000
Organizational Wide Public Safety Mobile Radio Replacement 212	1,347,000	295,000	442,000	205,000	205,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	1,447,000
Field J lights at Reep park	180,000	90,000	90,000	-	-	-	-	-	180,000
Paving of parking lots at Reep and Simpson	70,000	25,000	25,000	20,000	-	-	-	-	70,000
Replace two 20 year Kubota mowers	55,000	27,500	27,500	-	-	-	-	-	55,000
	\$ 5,622,500	\$ 915,500	\$ 1,157,000	\$ 1,242,500	\$ 1,262,500	\$ 375,000	\$ 625,000	\$ 375,000	\$ 5,952,500

Comprehensive Capital Planning

WATER/SEWER ACTIVITIES OUT-YEAR NON-MAJOR									
Project	Total Project Cost	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030	5 YEAR TOTAL
Water Sewer Infrastructure Improvements AIA	1,500,000	-	-	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	1,500,000
Creek Bank Stabilization	125,000	-	-	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	125,000
	\$ 1,625,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 325,000	\$ 325,000	\$ 325,000	\$ 325,000	\$ 325,000	\$ 1,625,000

SOLID WASTE ACTIVITIES OUT-YEAR NON-MAJOR									
Project	Total Project Cost	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030	TOTAL
Roll Off Truck Purchase	\$ 620,000	\$ 110,000	\$ 110,000	\$ 110,000	\$ 110,000	\$ 110,000	\$ 100,000	-	\$ 650,000
New Scale Replacement & Scale House	200,000	-	100,000	200,000	-	-	-	-	300,000
New Compactor	1,100,000	-	850,000	250,000	-	-	-	-	1,100,000
Cardboard Compactors	250,000	-	125,000	-	-	-	-	-	125,000
Other Major Equipment	500,000	-	-	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	400,000
MSW Analysis	1,500,000	-	-	-	500,000	500,000	500,000	600,000	1,500,000
Collection Site Offices	180,000	-	-	80,000	-	-	-	-	80,000
	\$ 4,330,000	\$ 110,000	\$ 1,185,000	\$ 740,000	\$ 710,000	\$ 710,000	\$ 700,000	\$ 700,000	\$ 4,155,000

Major Projects & Building Stock

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Comprehensive Capital Planning

FACILITIES ASSESSMENT PROCESS & NEEDS:

Building Condition Analysis 1-5 *(where 1 is poor)*

1. Structural
2. Interior Construction
3. Electrical System
4. Mechanical Systems
5. Plumbing Systems
6. Security Systems

Burke County Space Needs Assessment and Master Plan

General Facility Assessment

Address: 300 Avery Street, Morganton, NC

Date of Observation: 2/8/2022

Mechanical System 1				Overall Condition Rating:		1
HVAC System Type	Water Source Heat Pump	Controls	Thermostat			
Unit Type	Vertical Recessed	Refrigerant Type	R22			
Boiler	Well-McLean	System age	Could not verify			
Fuel Source	Gas Fire HW boiler	Pumps	HW and CHW pumps			
Cooling Tower	Black Closed Loop					
General comments: The WSP's age could not be determined but appear to be at the end of their service life. These units utilize R22 refrigerant that is no longer manufactured. The boiler and cooling tower age is also unknown. The boiler is aged as are associated HW pumps						

Mechanical System 2			Overall Condition Rating:		3
HVAC System Type	Roof Top Units (RTU) (Carrier)	Controls	Thermostat		
Quantity	4	Refrigerant Type	410A		
Secondary Systems		System age	7 years old (2015)		
Fuel Source	Gas Fire Heat in RTU's				
General comments: RTU's were installed approximately 7 years ago and have approximately 8 years of service remaining					

Mechanical System 3			Overall Condition Rating:		1
HVAC System Type	Split System Air Handling Units	Controls	Thermostat		
Quantity	6	Refrigerant Type	R22		
Secondary Systems		System age	15 years		
Fuel Source	Electric Heat	Toilet exhaust	Yes		
Smoke Control	None				
General comments: The split system AHU's are at the end of their service life utilize R22 refrigerant that is no longer manufactured.					

Comprehensive Capital Planning

Facilities Evaluated During Space Needs Assessment

Building	Location	City	Rating	Sq. Ft.	Yr. Built
Animal Shelter	425 Kirksey Drive	Morganton	1.00	4,000	1980
EMS Station #1: Hospital	2201 S Sterling Street	Morganton	1.00	5,000	1975
Landfill - Transfer Station	2500 Marsh Trail	Morganton	1.40	12,500	1997
Avery Building	200 Avery Avenue	Morganton	2.13	28,700	1923
Sheriff's Office (Sheriff side only)	150 Government Drive	Morganton	2.14	11,500	1993
Burke-Catawba District Confinement Facility (Old Jail)	148 Government Drive	Morganton	2.14	48,500	1993
Human Resources Center (HRC)	700 East Parker Road	Morganton	2.42	56,500	1979
EMS Station #2: Rutherford College <i>(Hospital Owns Property)</i>	90 Campus Street	Rutherford College	2.50	1,900	1975
Hildebran Building (Water & Sewer Office)	101 Main Ave West	Hildebran	2.58	7,100	1964/2016
Courthouse	201 South Green Street	Morganton	2.60	55,000	1974
EMS Station #4: Hildebran	705 US Highway 70W	Hildebran	2.83	2,200	2002
Landfill - Office/Garage	2500 Marsh Trail	Morganton	3.00	5,000	1988
Morganton Library	204 South King Street	Morganton	3.00	16,800	1995/2004
Morganton Senior Center	501 North Green Street	Morganton	3.00	17,600	1984
Burke Agricultural Building	130 Ammons Drive	Morganton	3.50	14,000	2002
Burke Services Building	110 North Green Street	Morganton	3.83	24,000	1954/2000
Valdese Library <i>(Share Ownership with Valdese)</i>	213 St. Germain Avenue	Valdese	3.83	9,000	1943/2004
Foothills Higher Education	2128 South Sterling Street	Morganton	4.00	130,000	1980/2004

*Building Condition Rating Scale 1 thru 5 where 1 is poor condition and 5 is new or excellent condition

Comprehensive Capital Planning

Short-Term Projects: Status:

1. Jonas Ridge Collection Site.....✓
2. East Buks Collection Site.....✓
3. Document Storage Policies..... In Process
4. Convenient Site Offices.....✓

Mid-Term Projects: Status:

1. Indian Hills Pump Station.....TBD – FEMA 404 Mitigation
2. Courthouse Improvements.....In Process
3. EMS Base #1.....In Process
4. Animal Services Building.....In Process

Long-Term Projects: Status:

1. Library Expansion.....TBD/Policy Direction/Unfunded
2. Solid Waste MSW Development.....TBD/Policy Direction/Unfunded
3. Water/Sewer Infrastructure..... TBD/Policy Direction/Unfunded
4. Public Health/Social Services..... TBD/Policy Direction/Unfunded
5. EMS Base Additions..... TBD/Policy Direction/Unfunded

Comprehensive Capital Planning

Public Health & Social Services Building

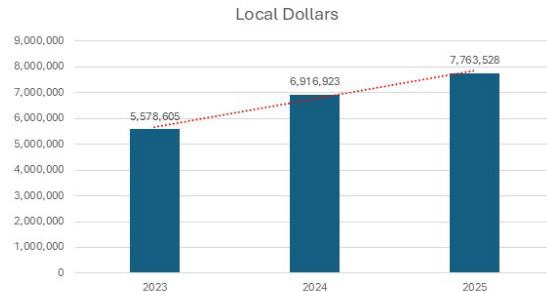
Department of Social Services

Personnel

Full-Time Employees – 199
Turn-Over - (+/-) 18%

Budget

Total Budget - \$ 21,640,540
Local Funding - \$ 7,763,528
Local Percentage - 36%



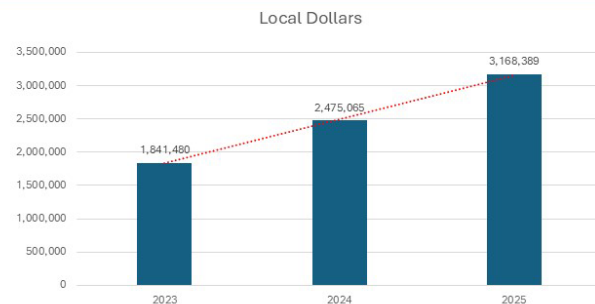
Public Health Department

Personnel

Full-Time Employees – 50
Turn-Over - (+/-) 12%

Budget

Total Budget - \$ 5,468,391
Local Funding - \$ 3,168,389
Local Percentage - 58%



Burke County Health & Human Services Project

- Space Program Complete
- Next Steps:
 - Finalize Building Scope & Envelope
 - Retain Design Team
 - Site / Civil Evaluation
 - Estimated Costs
 - Draft Renderings
 - Design/Development
 - Construction Documents
 - Financing Package
 - Begin Construction

BURKE COUNTY, NC HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT BUILDING SPACE PROGRAM DRAFT SUMMARY SPACE PROGRAM				
Comp. #	Facility Component	Total NSF Component	Grossing Factor	Total DG SF
1.000	Main Lobby/Shared Use/Meeting/ Staff and Building Support			
1.100	Main Lobby/Shared Use/Staff/Meeting/Support	8,634	25%	10,793
	Subtotal - Public Lobby/Administration			10,793
2.000	Health Department Space Program			
2.100	Health Department Lobby/Staff Support/Storage	2,256	30%	2,933
2.200	Administration and Operations	2,051	30%	2,666
2.300	Clinical	6,736	30%	8,757
2.400	Lab	960	25%	1,200
2.500	WIC	2,356	30%	3,063
2.600	Health Preparedness/Health Education	1,173	30%	1,525
2.700	Environmental Health	1,480	30%	1,924
2.800	Care Management	885	25%	1,106
	Subtotal -Health Department Space Program			23,174
3.000	Department of Social Services Space Program			
3.100	Department of Social Services Lobby/Staff Support/Storage	4,376	30%	5,689
3.200	Administration	2,578	30%	3,351
3.300	Legal	1,670	30%	2,171
3.400	Economic Services	12,684	35%	17,123
3.500	Child Protective Services	7,318	30%	9,513
3.600	Foster Care	4,108	30%	5,340
3.700	Adult Services	3,430	30%	4,459
	Subtotal - Department of Social Services Space Program			47,647
	TOTAL - FACILITY COMPONENTS DG SF			81,614
	Building Grossing Factor 20% (Includes: Mechanical/Electrical/Major Circulation Corridors/Walls/Wall Thickness)			16,323
	TOTAL - FACILITY COMPONENTS BUILDING GROSS SF			97,937

Comprehensive Capital Planning

Burke County HRC Building. 700 E Parker Rd Morganton

The Human Resources Center (DHHS) building is approximately 62,000 building gross square, with the floor plans shown below.



Existing Floor Plan Human Resource Center
Partial 1st Floor = 22,298 sf



Estimated Building Square Footage	
1 st Floor	52,573 sf
2 nd Floor	9,182 sf ?
Total Square Feet	61,755 sf

Developed Options to Consider.....

Option A: New Construction.....\$ 45,000,000 (LOBS)

Option B: Addition (+) Adaptive Reuse.....\$ 30,000,000 (LOBS)

Option C: Relocate Public Health to FHEC.....\$ 20,000,000 (Direct Installment)

Option D: Adaptive Reuse.....\$ 9,600,000 (Direct Installment)

Comprehensive Capital Planning

New Construction		Range:		
		Low		Average
Construction costs per square foot (sf)	Area (sf)	Cost/sf	Subtotal	Cost/sf
New construction	90,000	\$440	\$39,600,000	\$480
Allowances				
General contingency (median range)	3%		\$1,240,000	\$1,240,000
Construction costs subtotal			\$40,840,000	\$44,440,000
Professional services				
Architectural & engineering fees	4.80%		\$1,960,320	\$2,133,120
Special inspections (required by code)			\$150,000	\$150,000
Professional services subtotal			\$2,110,320	\$2,283,120
Total project cost			\$42,950,320	\$46,723,120
				\$44,836,720

Comprehensive Capital Planning

Addition / Alterations		Range:			
		Low		High	Average
Construction costs per square foot (sf)	Area (sf)	Cost/sf	Subtotal	Cost/sf	Subtotal
Building addition	33,000	\$440	\$14,520,000	\$480	\$15,840,000
Interior alterations	57,000	\$175	\$9,975,000	\$225	\$12,825,000
Allowances					
General contingency (median range)	4.25%		\$1,130,000		\$1,130,000
Construction costs subtotal			\$25,625,000	\$29,795,000	\$27,710,000
Professional services					
Architectural & engineering fees	6.50%		\$1,665,625		\$1,936,675
Special inspections (required by code)			\$50,000		\$50,000
Professional services subtotal			\$1,715,625	\$1,986,675	\$1,851,150
Total project cost			\$27,340,625	\$31,781,675	\$29,561,150

Comprehensive Capital Planning

Foothills Higher Education Center

- Lower Floor: 38,602 sf (excludes the main reception area, receiving area, and mechanical area)
- Upper Floor: 31,134 sf (all inclusive)
- Total: 69,736 sf.

The remaining usable area is: 38,900 sf (excludes stairs)

Adaptive Re-Use DHHS

BURKE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA	
DHHS SPACE / FTE ALLOCATION	
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025	
Total square footage	62,000
Less BCPS	(14,000)
Available to Burke County	48,000
Total DSS FTEs	199
Total Health FTEs	50
	249 A
Less: Adult Protective Services	(20)
Remote Workers	(29)
Total FTEs Currently In Building	200
Total FTE per Square Foot	240 B
Total Required Based on A & B	59,760
Total Available After BCPS Vacates	62,000
Space Surplus	2,240
Space Requiring Upfit	48,000
Remodel Market Rate	\$ 200.00
Estimated Costs	\$ 9,600,000

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments directed to the County Manager. After a minor clarification on the DHHS space allocation, he invited Greg Melton to the podium to present an update on the County's ongoing capital improvement projects.

Greg Melton, Architect, Holland & Hamrick Architects, P.A., addressed the Board regarding the feasibility of renovating the HRC building, located at 700 East Parker Road, which houses the Health and Social Services departments. Based on multiple walkthroughs, Mr. Melton stated the HRC building appears well-suited for renovation, citing a major HVAC upgrade completed in 2013 and the building's structural attributes—such as its ceiling heights, column grid, and roof structure—as appropriate for continued use. He encouraged the Board to consider long-term departmental growth when planning renovations and suggested that any design should accommodate future expansions from the outset. He noted that limited exterior enhancements could be included in the first phase if improving the building's appearance is a goal of the Board.

Mr. Melton then provided updates on three (3) active projects: the courthouse renovation, the EMS Headquarters / base, and the new animal shelter. He reported that Phase I of the courthouse project, which involves renovating the previously unused lower floor for the District Attorney's Office, is on schedule for completion in late April. Subsequent phases will include renovating the former DA's area for the Estates Division, followed by the construction of a new courtroom in the current Estates space. He indicated that construction has gone smoothly with minimal unexpected issues despite the challenges of working within an existing building.

Regarding the EMS base on Highway 18, Mr. Melton noted that the masonry walls in the bay areas were nearly complete, reaching approximately 14 to 15 feet in height. Less shallow rock was encountered than anticipated, which has helped keep the project on track. The project remains scheduled for completion in December 2025. Regarding the animal shelter, Mr. Melton reported that foundation work is currently underway. That project is slightly behind the EMS project by design, as both were bid together to take advantage of cost efficiencies. He explained that staggering the schedules will allow construction crews to transition from EMS to the animal shelter, yielding over \$1 million in savings for the County. The animal shelter is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2026. Mr. Melton remarked that the EMS and animal shelter projects benefited from a stretch of favorable weather in late fall and early winter, which allowed critical grading work to be completed before the onset of the freeze-thaw cycle.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions or comments; there being none, he moved to the next item of business.

RESULT: NO ACTION TAKEN.

RECESS OF MEETING

Chairman Brittain called for a brief recess at 9:02 a.m., and the meeting resumed at 9:14 a.m.

WATER / SEWER ASSET INVENTORY ASSESSMENT PRESENTATION

CM – WATER/SEWER AIA PRESENTATION

Brian Epley, County Manager, kicked off the Water and Sewer AIA presentation with an introductory overview of the department, discussing infrastructure and outlining several key challenges needing to be addressed. Highlights of his presentation were as follows:



Water & Sewer Study

Burke County Government needs a Comprehensive Water Supply and Sewerage Systems Plan (Water and Sewer Plan) which provides a ten (10) year outlook on existing and future needs – Focused on the following priorities:

- Rate Stabilization and forecasting needs.
- Provides Detailed System Mapping, Infrastructure Conditions, and Evaluates expansion opportunities – In source / Outsource
- Is well integrated with land use planning efforts.
- Protects the health, safety, and welfare of residents, businesses, and institutions.
- Protects the quality of the environmental resources of Burke County and North Carolina.

Request for Qualifications

Engineering Services
For
Burke County Infrastructure Projects
Sewer System Design and Construction



200 Avery Avenue
Morganton, NC 28655
Phone: (828) 764-9650
Website: www.burke-nc.org

Burke County Water & Sewer Fund

Enterprise Fund - An enterprise fund is a type of fund used in local government to account for activities that provide goods or services to the public for a fee that is meant to make the entity self-sustaining. It operates in a manner similar to private business enterprise, supported by user fees (consumption).

Water	Gallons Billed	# of Customers	Revenue Per customer	Revenue Per Month	Fixed Cost Per Month	Loss per Month
2020	\$100,358,403.00	2,170	\$564.52	\$47.04	\$65.57	\$18.53
2021	\$101,371,892.00	2,162	\$566.60	\$47.22	\$62.40	\$15.18
2022	\$106,123,217.00	2,175	\$572.87	\$47.74	\$63.36	\$15.62
		6,507				
Sewer	Gallons Billed	# of Customers				
2020	\$123,659,517.00	198	\$3,409.09	\$284.09	\$375.60	\$91.50
2021	\$118,013,878.00	199	\$3,391.96	\$282.66	\$365.03	\$82.37
2022	\$111,632,130.00	211	\$3,199.05	\$266.59	\$363.13	\$96.54
		608				

Burke County Water & Sewer Fund

Enterprise Fund - An enterprise fund is a type of fund used in local government to account for activities that provide goods or services to the public for a fee that is meant to make the entity self-sustaining. It operates in a manner similar to private business enterprise, supported by user fees (consumption).

Water Sewer Fund					
	6/30/2019	6/30/2020	6/30/2021	6/30/2022	6/30/2023
Total Revenues	\$ (1,748,132)	\$ (1,589,127)	\$ (2,127,697)	\$ (1,960,383)	\$ (1,900,418)
Total Expenditures	\$ 2,029,367	\$ 2,045,512	\$ 2,626,970	\$ 2,490,580	\$ 2,549,756
Net Income	\$ 281,235	\$ 456,385	\$ 499,273	\$ 530,197	\$ 649,338

3 Phase System Evaluation Approach

Phase I – Pump Lift Station Replacement:

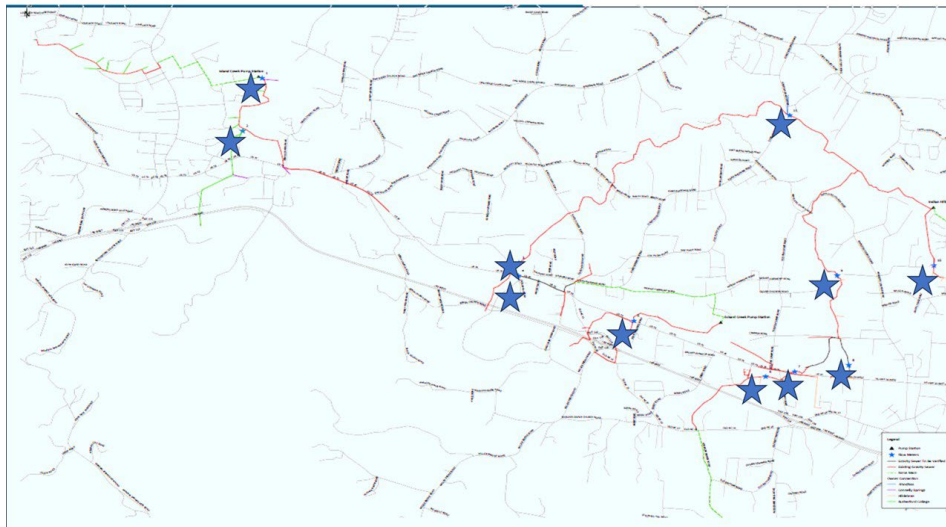
- Located in East Burke, the Indian Hills sewer pump station is subject to frequent stream flooding and experiences excessive peak flows.
- The pump station and force main need to be upgraded such that peak flows of up to 2,000 gpm can be handled.

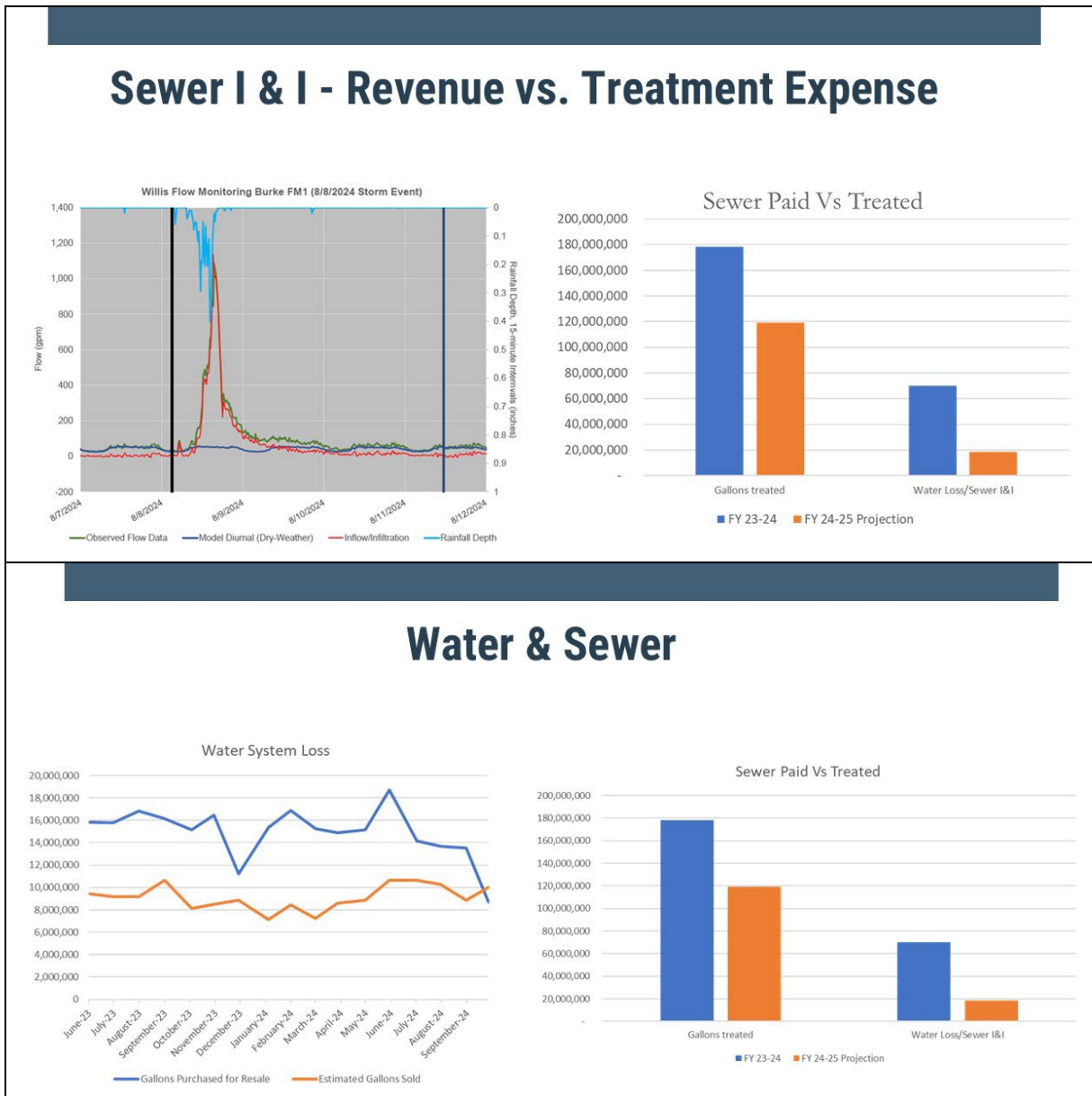
Phase II – Water & Sewer Asset Inventory Analysis (AIA):

- Complete assessment of existing water and sewer infrastructure – including all force main and pump stations.
- Planning, design, and permitting for the proposed sewer projects.
- Infrastructure Mapping and GIS Layering Coordination
- Prioritized listing of needed improvements, repairs, and enhancements
- Probable Cost Analysis
- Review of existing system purchase contracts

Phase II – Water & Sewer Asset Inventory Analysis (AIA):

- Rate Stabilization Analysis
- Expansion, Acquisition, and/or Regionalization Metrics
- In Source / Outsource Evaluation





Chuck Willis, Willis Engineering, presented the results of the Asset Inventory and Assessment (AIA) as follows:

Burke County  Water and Sewer System Asset Inventory and Assessment March 2025	Presentation Summary - Background - Water and Sewer Systems Overview - Asset Management Plan Framework - Work To Date - Findings - Next Steps
---	--

Background

About Willis Engineers

Why do Counties provide water and sewer service?

- No municipal service (no other option)
- Promote industrial development
- Allow higher residential density (affordable housing)

What is an Asset Inventory and why is the State funding it?

- Typically overlooked and underfunded
- NC DEQ priority in grant funding
- Burke Co. \$500,000 direct appropriation in 2023 State budget

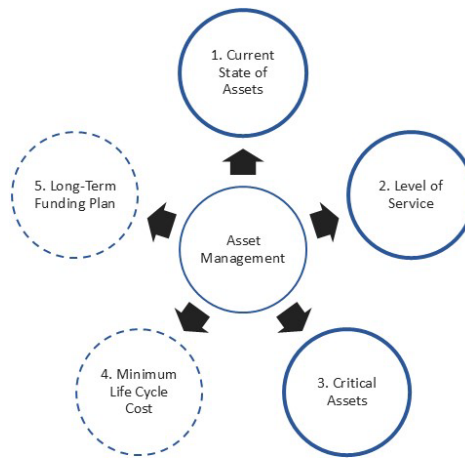
Definitions

Asset Inventory and Assessment (AIA) – Developing a tangible record of all system assets and their condition.

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) – A guide for future capital projects that will be required to best serve your customers.

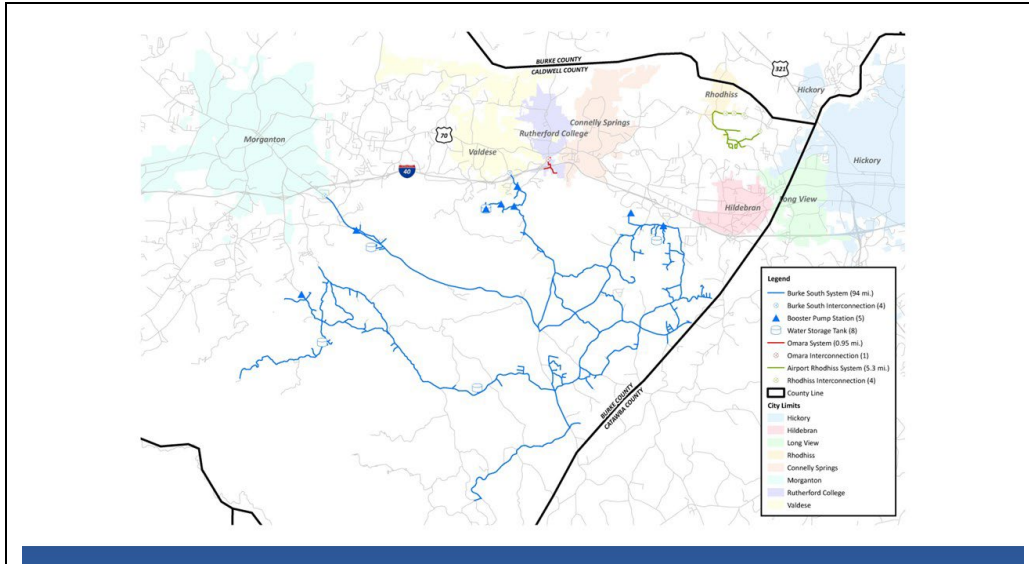
Asset Management Plan (AMP) – A tactical plan for managing infrastructure to minimize the total operation and maintenance costs while maintaining a desired level of service for your customers.

Asset Management Plan Framework

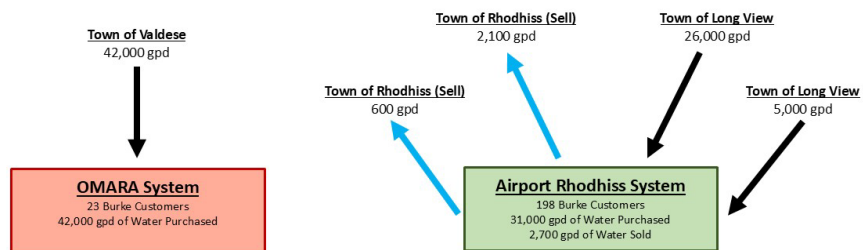


Water System Assets

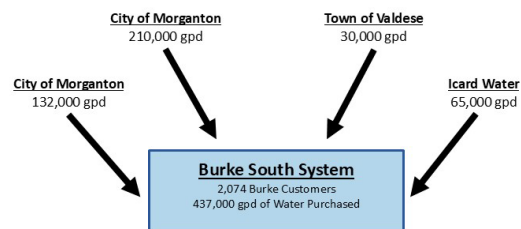
Asset	Summary
Customer Connections	2,342
Water Distribution Piping	103 miles
Valves	1,000
Fire Hydrants	386
Elevated Storage Tanks	5
Booster Pump Stations	8



Omara & Airport Rhodhiss Water

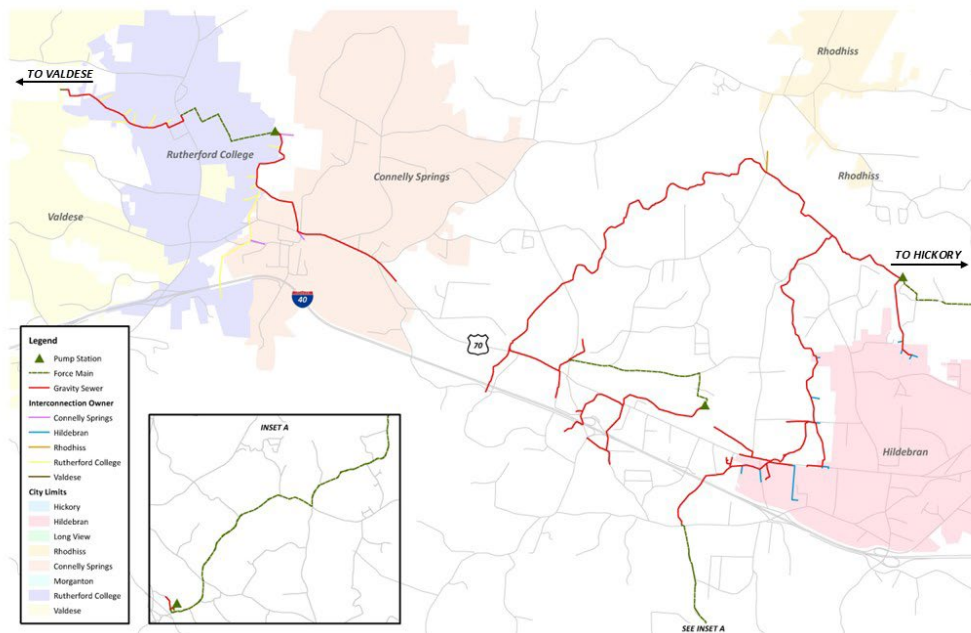


Burke South Water

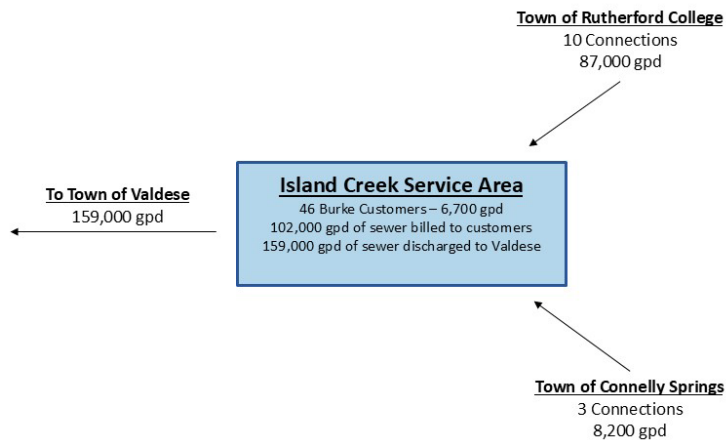


Sewer System Asset Summary

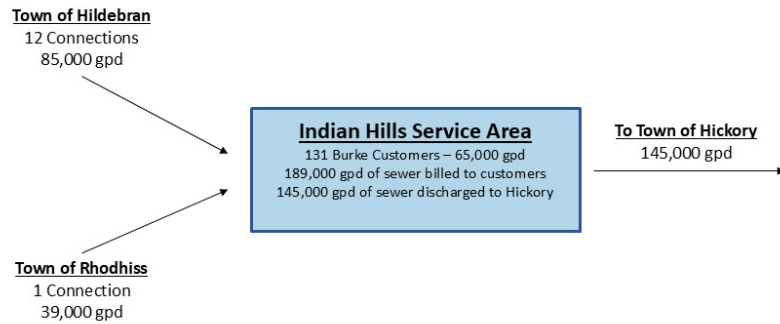
Asset	Summary
Customer Connections	185
Gravity Collection Sewer	19 miles
Manholes	429
Pump Stations	4
Force Main	12 miles
Air Relief Manhole	15



Island Creek Sewer



Indian Hills Sewer



Work to Date

Data Collection

GIS Mapping Updates

Field Program

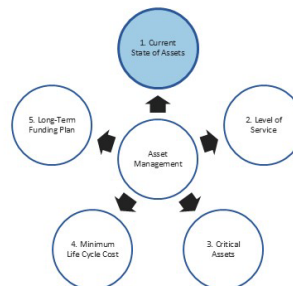
Hydraulic Modeling and Analysis

Critical Asset Analysis

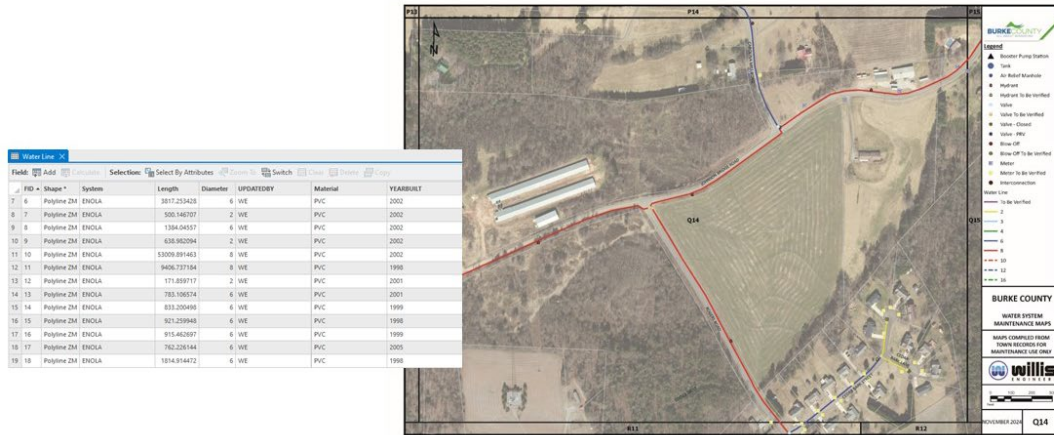
At this point, Ms. Sydnee Potter, Willis Engineering, took over the presentation, the highlights of which, were as follows:

1. Current State of Assets

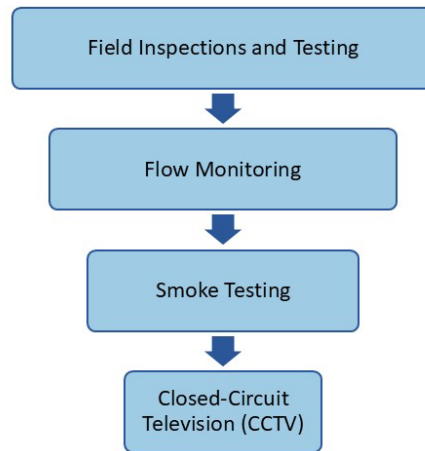
- What assets do I own?
- Where are they located?
- What condition are the assets in?
- System Mapping
- Field Investigations



Maintenance Maps and GIS Database

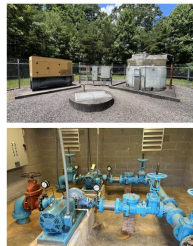


Field Investigations



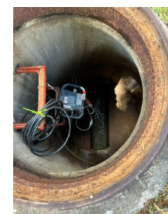
Inspections and Testing

- Drawdown Testing
- Condition Assessment
 - Mechanical
 - Electrical
 - Structures
- Site Safety (Access, Fencing, Locks, etc.)
- Other Site Components



Flow Monitoring

- Flow Meters
- Level Monitors
- Rain Gauges
- Quantifies Flows
- Guides Subsequent Investigations
- Used in Model Calibration

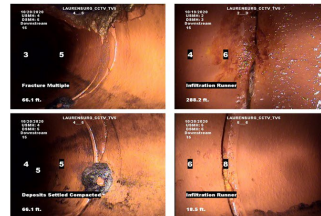


Smoke Testing

- Detects Manhole Leaks
- Defective Sewer Cleanouts
- Mainline Issues Including Cracks
- Sewer Lateral Deficiencies
- Storm Drainage Connections
- Unknown Connections



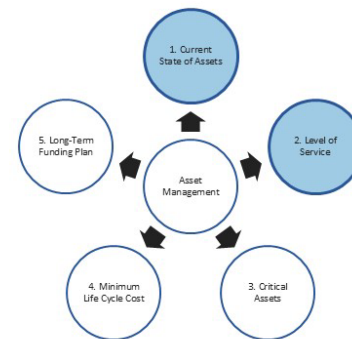
Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV)



2. Level of Service

- What level of service can the system provide?
- Can we meet the needs of current customers?
- Can we comply with Permit requirements?

- Water Distribution System Model
- Wastewater Collection Model
- Operational History



Water Distribution Model

- WaterGEMS Software
- Fire Hydrant Testing for Model Calibration
- Identify Potential Deficiencies
 - Normal Flow
 - Fire Flow
- Simulate Demand from Future Development



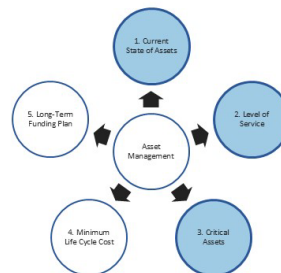
Sewer Collection Model

- Analyze Flow
- Calibrate Model
- Evaluate Potential Sources of Infiltration and Inflow
- Identify Deficiencies
- Simulate Future Development
- Assist in Development of Capacity Assurance Worksheets

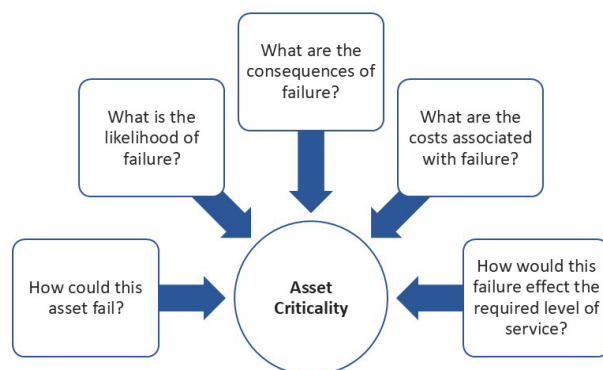


3. Critical Assets

- Bottom line – assets fail! The steps that come after failure are what is important.
- Not all failures are the same – some are more **critical** than others.
- Which assets are the most critical?



What Makes an Asset Critical?



At this point in the presentation, Mr. Willis resumed presenting as follows:

Findings – Data Review

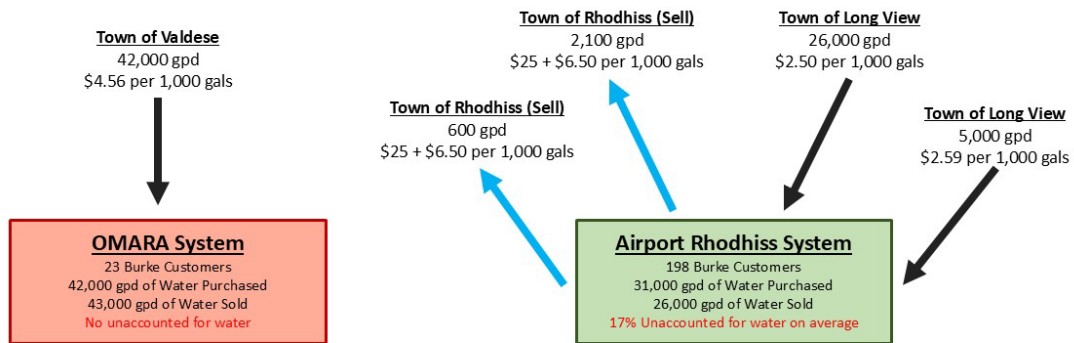
Interlocal Agreements

Disparities in Billing Rates

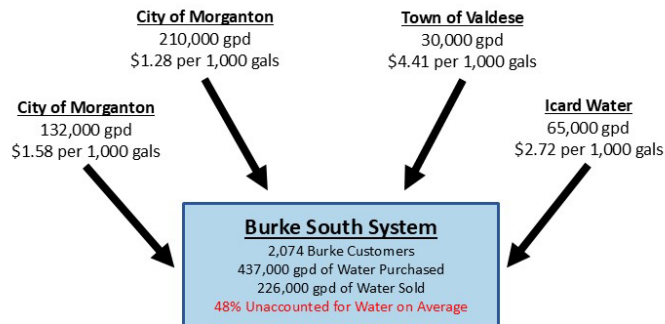
Excessive Unaccounted-for Water

Excessive Infiltration and Inflow

OMARA & Airport Rhodhiss Water



Burke South Water

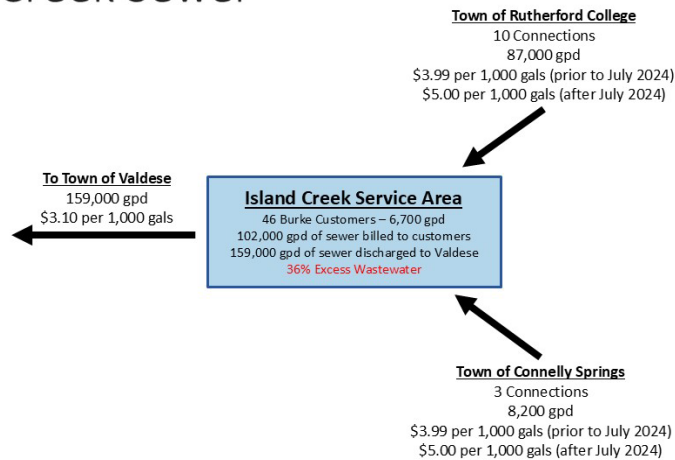


Unaccounted For Water Summary

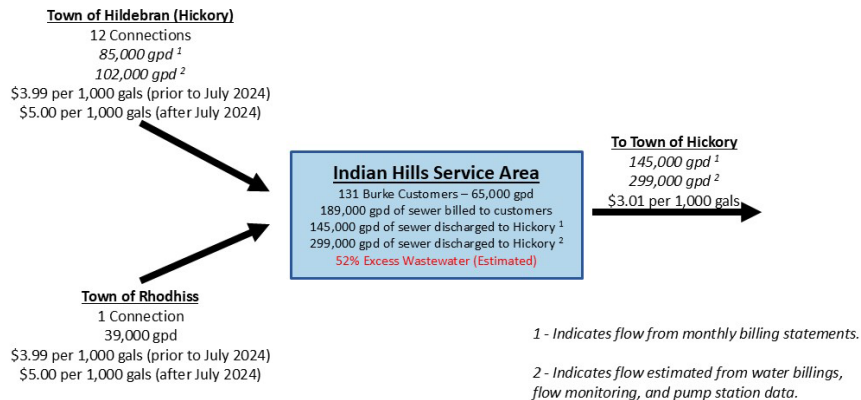
System	Purchased Water (MGD)	Water Sold to Customers (MGD)	Unaccounted For Water (MGD)	Unaccounted For Water (%)
OMARA	0.042	0.043	-0.001	-3%
Airport Rhodhiss	0.032	0.026	0.006	17%
Burke South	0.436	0.226	0.210	48%
Total	0.510	0.295	0.215	42%

Unaccounted For Water Summary based on water billings for Fiscal Year 2023 – 2024.

Island Creek Sewer

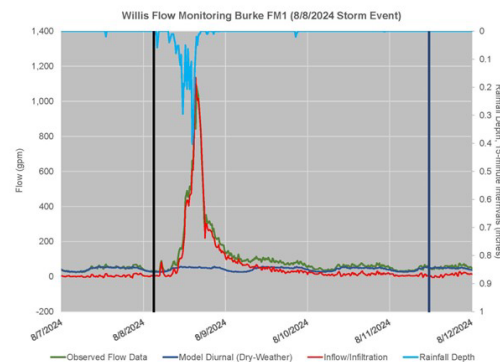


Indian Hills Sewer



Findings – Flow Monitoring

- 10 Flow Meters and 1 Level Monitor Installed
- May – August 2024
- Average Daily Flow Analysis
- Peak Flow Analysis – 5 Rain Events
- Identified locations for additional investigation (smoke testing)



Findings – GIS System

- All system assets incorporated
- Attributes
- Construction drawings versus as-built drawings
- Field verifications



Findings – Smoke Testing

- 81 Total Defects
 - 52 Manhole
 - 20 Cleanout
 - 5 Main Line
 - 1 Concrete Box
 - 1 Grease Trap
 - 1 Roof Downspout
 - 1 Abandoned Line



Findings – Visual Inspections

- Condition Assessment
- Risk Analysis
- Drawdown Testing
- Additional I&I Sources Identified



Mineral Springs Pump Station #3
5433 Mineral Springs Mtn Avenue
33° 42' 2" N, 81° 30' 4" W

Booster Pump Station Evaluations
Original Construction 1996

General Description – This is a duplex-style pump station with two vertical multi-stage pumps. The electrical equipment, pumps, and piping are located inside the pump station building. The pump station utilizes internet for communication with the County's SCADA system.

Service History – Installed replacement pumps (year unknown).

Pumping Equipment	Pump 1 (original)	Pump 2 (replacement)
Pump Manufacturer/Model	Grundfos CR 40-30U	Grundfos CR44
Pump Size	30 HP, 3525 rpm	40 HP, 3525 rpm
Estimated Pump Duty Point	340 gpm @ 330' TDH	338 GPM @ 290' TDH
Electrical Characteristics	230/460 V, 3 Phase, 60 Hz	230/460 V, 3 Phase, 60 Hz

Evaluation Scoring	Score	Comments
Site	8	No site fence
Structures	10	
Mechanical Equipment	8	Aging pipes
Electrical & Controls	6	Gear improperly sized
Overall Score	7.3	

Inspection Observations – Pump 2 has been replaced with a larger pump. The electrical gear at the station appears to be from the original construction and was not updated to accommodate the larger pump. Other minor deficiencies noted.

Wells Engineers
DRAFT

Bucks County, NC
Water System Asset Management Plan

Next Steps

Continue Analysis (7/1/25)

Unaccounted-for Water

- Accounting and Billing
- Meter Testing and Replacement

Excess Sewer Treatment

- Municipal System Discussion
- Flow Meter Evaluation

Next Steps

Continue Asset Analysis

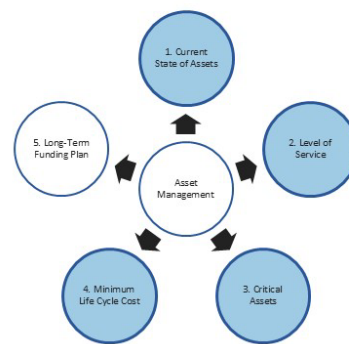
- Detailed Manhole Inspections
- Closed Circuit TV

Complete AMP Steps 4 - 5

Interlocal Agreements

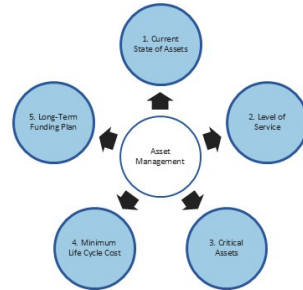
4. Minimum Life Cycle Cost

- Integrate the first three steps
- Identify maintenance programs/costs
- Capital Improvement Projects



5. Long-Term Funding Plan

- Includes O&M and Capital Improvement Projects
- Long-term sustainable operation of the system
- Long-term Rate Stabilization



Project Deliverables

GIS System

- Map Books
- Database

Asset Management Plan Report

Rates Analysis

The Board had their questions answered throughout the presentation by panelists, staff, and the County Manager as needed.

RESULT: NO ACTION TAKEN.

RECESS OF MEETING

Chairman Brittain called for a recess at 10:36 a.m., and the meeting resumed at 10:42 a.m.

Note: After the meeting resumed, Vice Chairman Smith asked a few more water / sewer related questions, and a short discussion ensued before the next item of business began.

CM – PUBLIC SAFETY STRATEGIC PLAN

Brian Epley, County Manager, presented some key public safety facts and figures as follows:

Focus Area 3



FOCUS AREA 3: PUBLIC SAFETY & WELL BEING

FY 24-25 GOALS

1. Effective use of opioid settlement funding, including collaborative partnerships to develop a regionally-based substance abuse resource center.
2. Proactive approach to cleaning up dilapidated properties and educating citizens on existing solid waste ordinances and policies.
3. Continued support for all VFDs, including strategies that lower DOI ratings. (i.e., daytime staffing, satellite stations, municipal hydrant expansion, etc.).
4. Promote innovative public health strategies that produce and improve overall community health ranking.

Public Safety Funding

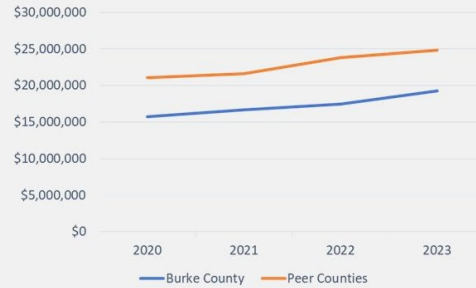
<u>Department</u>	<u>FY 23</u>	<u>FY 24</u>	<u>FY 25</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Detention Center	\$5,749,295	\$6,430,034	\$6,824,177	6%
Sheriff's Department	\$8,334,000	\$9,415,974	\$10,640,279	13%
Emergency Medical Services	\$7,713,065	\$8,639,608	\$8,562,050	-1%
Emergency Management	\$428,075	\$563,759	\$588,664	4%
E-911/Communications	<u>\$2,625,355</u>	<u>\$3,065,732</u>	<u>\$3,477,312</u>	<u>13%</u>
Total Public Safety Budget	\$24,829,790	\$27,999,945	\$30,092,482	7%

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Departments

	Total FTE
Sheriff & Detention	162
Emergency Medical Services	81
911 Communications	38
Emergency Management - Fire Marshal	4
Total	285

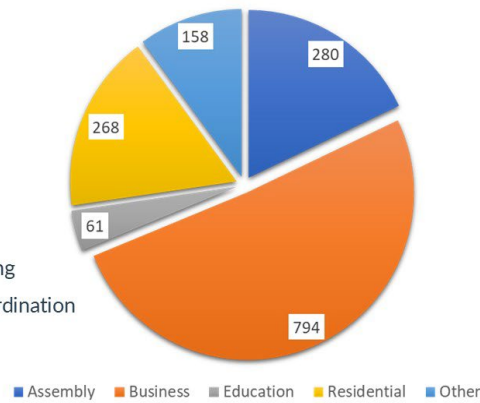
Public Safety Funding



Fire Marshal - Emergency Management

- Total Budget: \$406,106
- Total Positions: 4
- Key Functions:
- Fire Inspections
 - Emergency Management Planning
 - Volunteer Fire Department Coordination
 - Incident Management
 - Search and Rescue

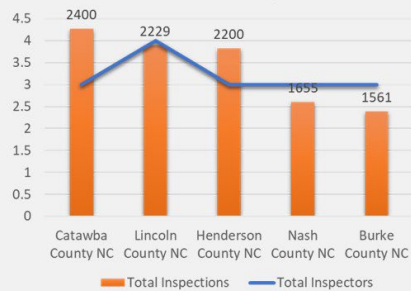
Fire Inspections by Type



Fire Marshal Staffing

- Programmed capacity for community response

Commercial Inspections



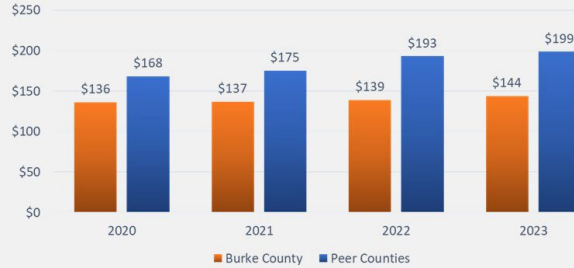
Fire Activities



Sheriff & Detention

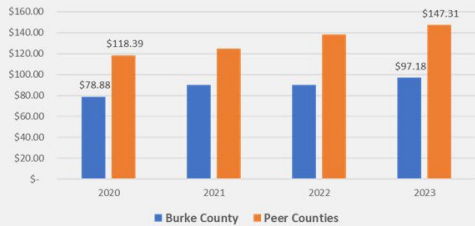
- Total Budget: \$12,618,532
- Total Positions: 162
- Key Functions:
 - Patrol
 - Detention
 - Criminal Investigations
 - Narcotics Division
 - School Resource Officers
 - Civil

Per Capita Spending

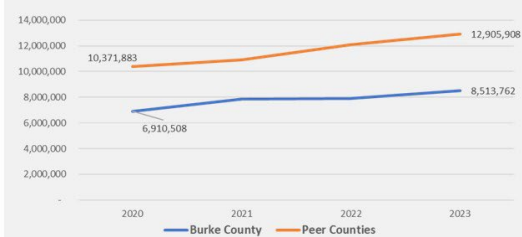


Law Enforcement Costs

Per Capita - Sheriff

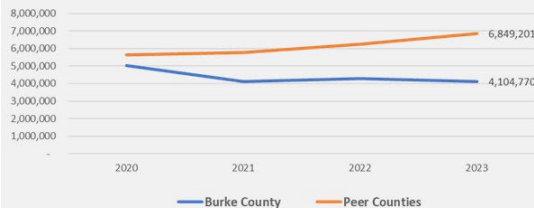


Sheriff Dept Peer Comparison - Total

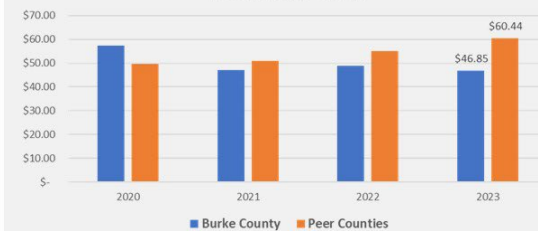


Detention Center Costs

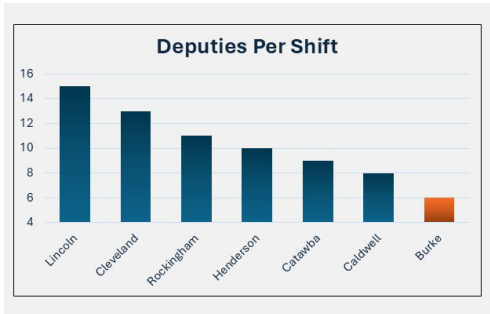
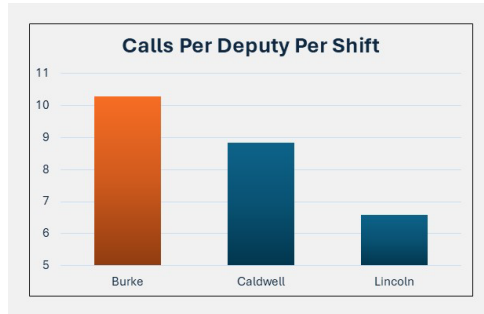
Detention Peer Comparison



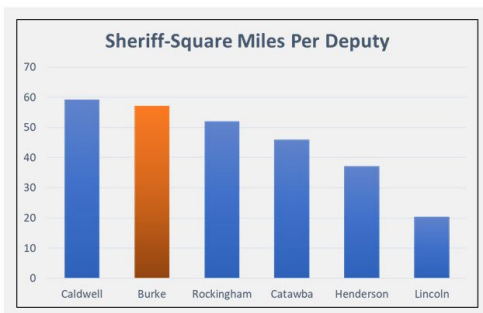
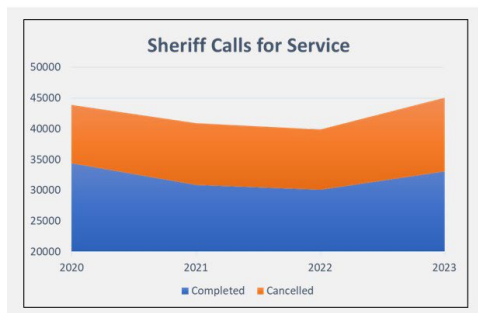
Detention Per Capita



Patrol Staffing

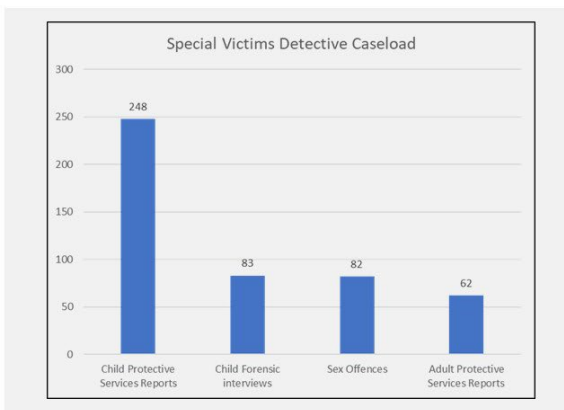
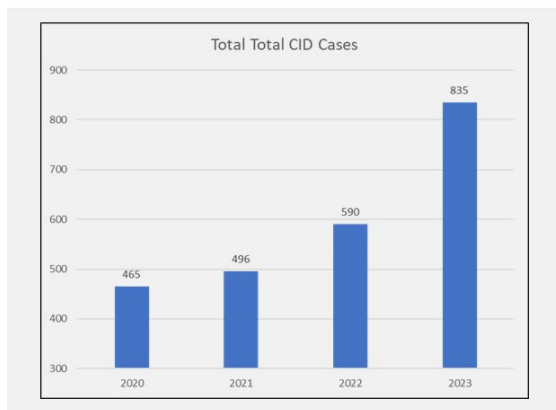


Patrol Workload

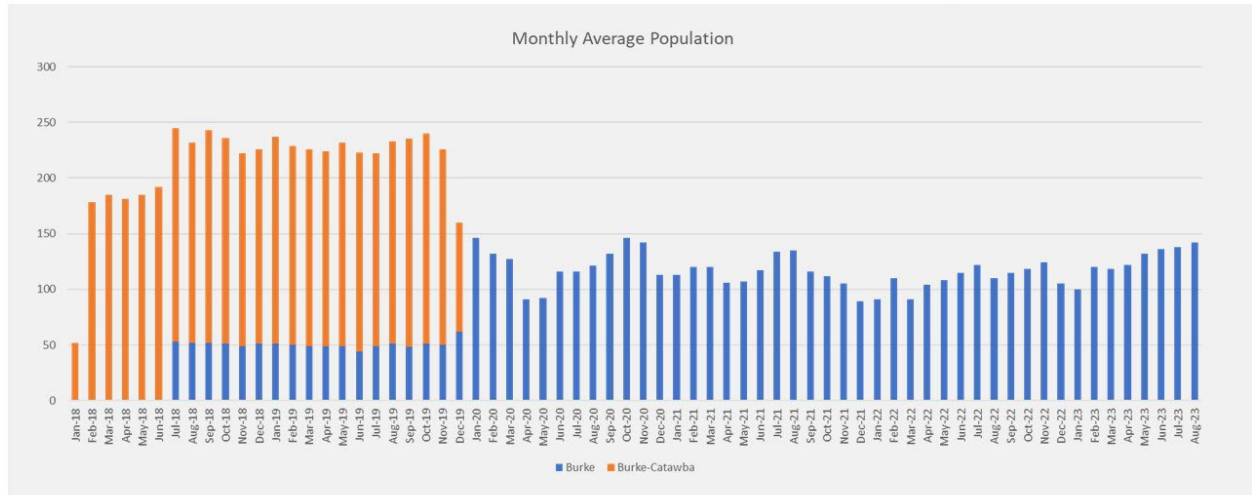


- Average of 123 calls per day

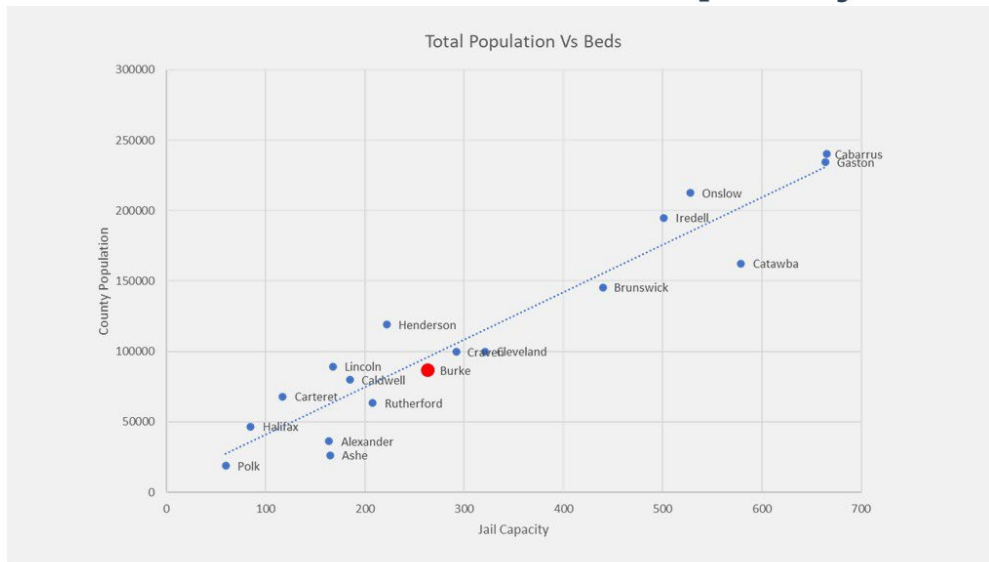
Special Investigations



Detention Center Historical Population

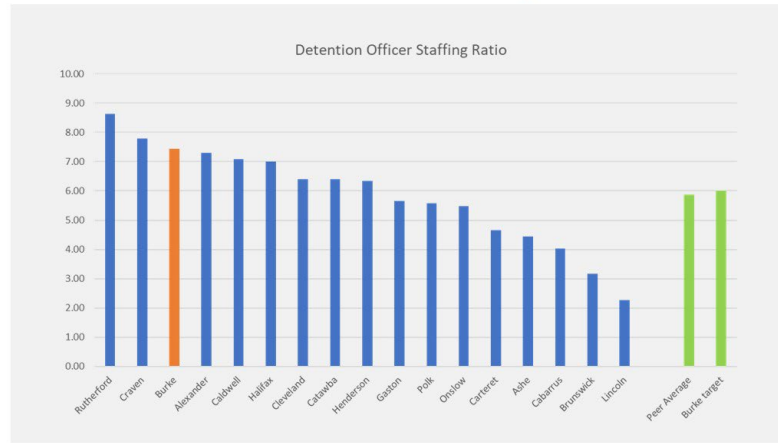


Peer Detention Capacity



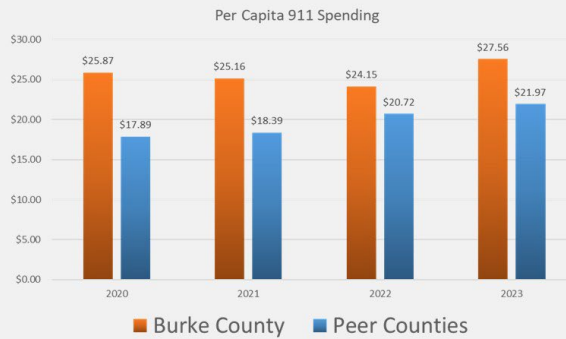
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Detention Staffing Ratios

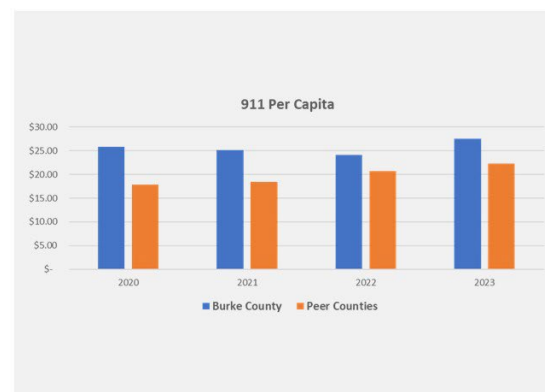
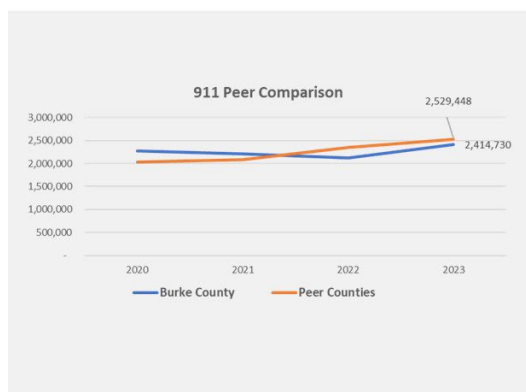


911 Communications

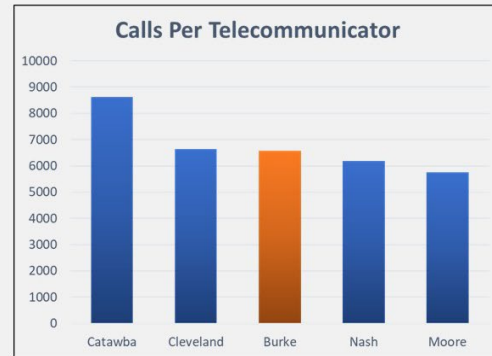
- Total Budget: 2,414,730
- Total Positions: 38
- Key Functions:
 - Emergency Dispatch
 - Non-emergency call routing



E-911 Costs

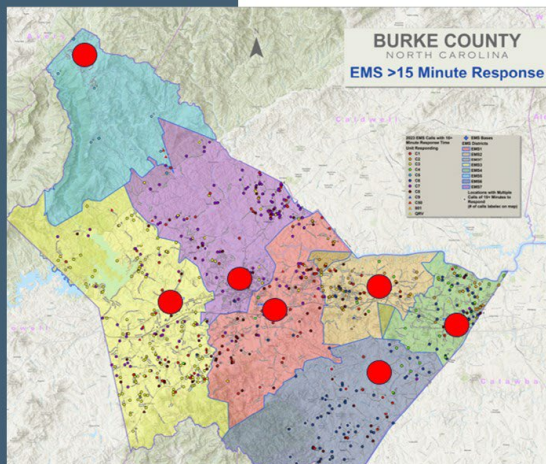
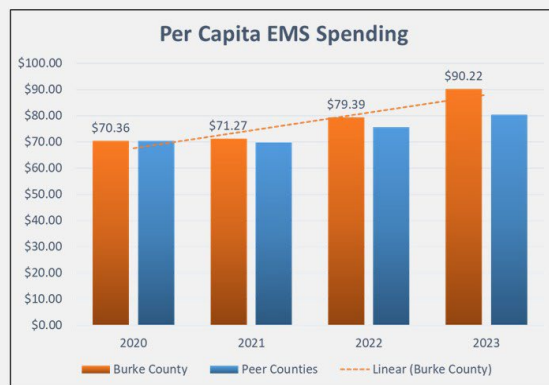


911 Staffing Metrics

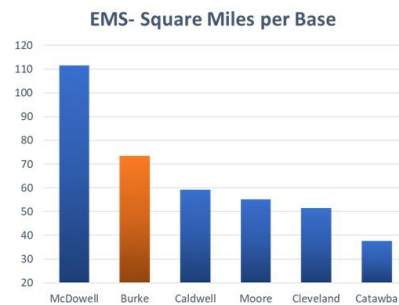


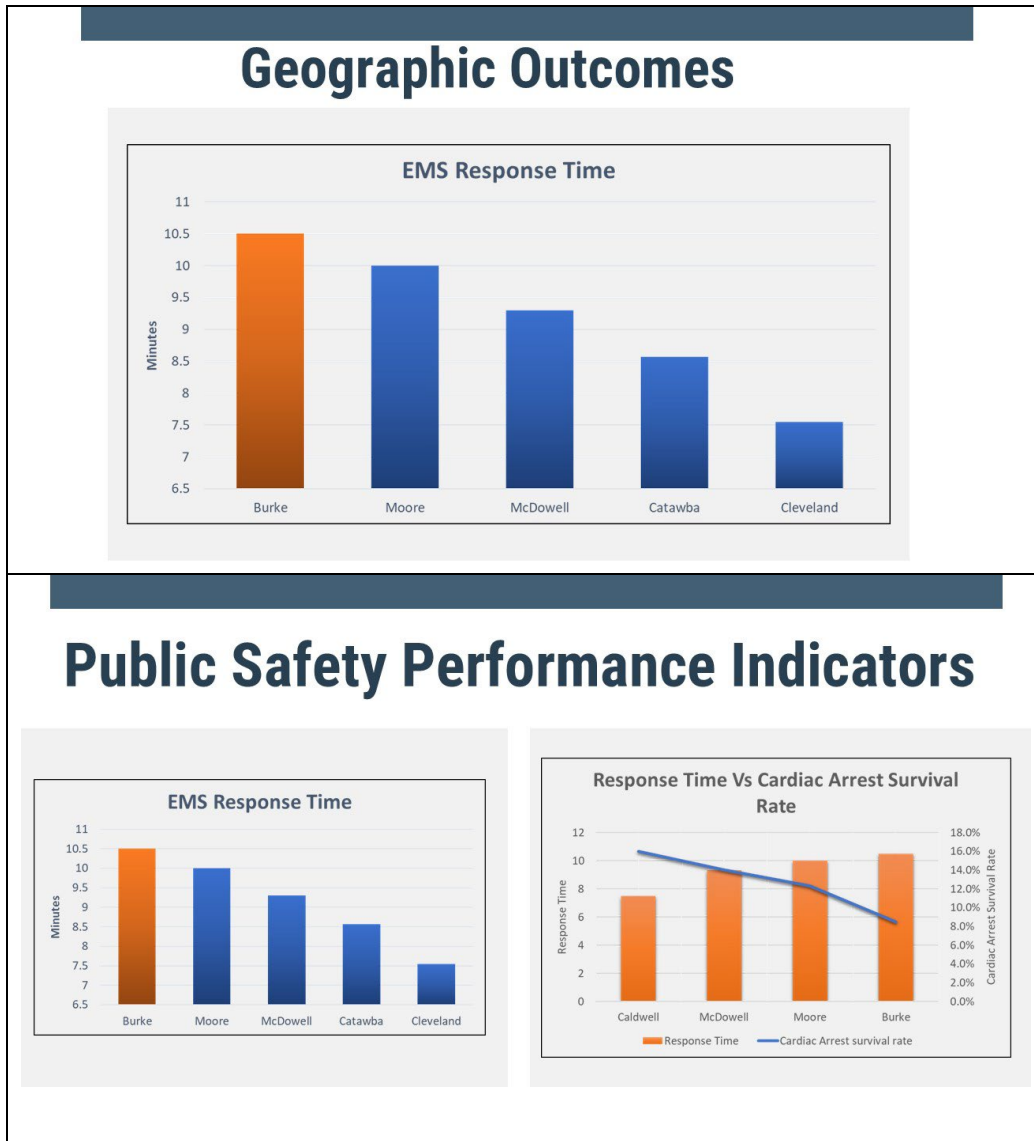
EMS

- **Total Budget: \$7,903,962**
- **Total Positions: 81**
- **Key Functions:**
 - Pre-hospitalization medical care
 - Interfacility transport
 - Community medicine



Geographic Impact





Greg Grayson, N.C. Fire Chief Consulting, presented the 911 portion of the Public Safety Strategic Plan as follows:



NCFCC Commitment to NC Local Governments

NC Fire Chief Consulting work is based on the principle of continuous improvement.

NC Fire Chief Consulting is a Full-Service Fire Consulting Provider

- Strategic Planning
- Service Delivery Needs Analysis
- Standards of Coverage Analysis
- Contract Development and Facilitation
- Fire District Transition
- Transition of Private, Non-Profit Fire Department to Municipal Fire Department
- Fire Station Placement
- Fire Chief Selection and Promotional Processes
- Human Resource Assistance
- Professional Development, Mentoring and Coaching
- Human Resource Based Causation Analysis
- Interim Chief Fire Officer Leadership
- Fire Apparatus Evaluation and Fire Station Facility Analysis
- Capital Improvement Plan Review and Analysis
- Emergency Operations Post Incident Analysis

Fire Management Core Team Capability












Why Ask for An Independent Third Party to Help with the Analysis?



NCFCC's Purpose:

- This **independent**, third party, analysis is to guide county staff and public safety leaders towards building the **strongest, most sustainable** service delivery systems possible that are in the best interest of **protecting and serving** the people of Burke County, North Carolina.



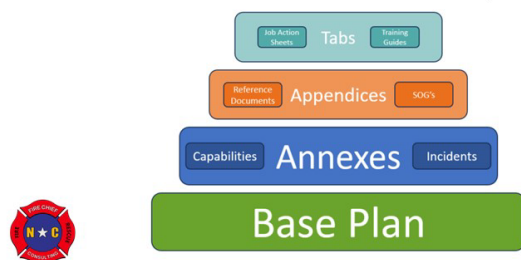
Burke County Strategic Plan Principal Process Components:

- Emergency Management
- 9-1-1
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
- Sheriff's Office
- Fire Marshal's Office
- Fire Services



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

- Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) Review
 - Crosswalk with 81 recommended points for consideration.
- Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) Review
 - Crosswalk with 42 recommended points.





Applying the Work....

Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) Review Crosswalk

Number	COOP Component	Page Number	Reviewer Notes
1	BASIC PLAN: The Basic Plan outlines the overarching framework for the COOP, including key information about scope, purpose, and key responsibilities.	COOP.1	Alignment: Aligns with CPG 101 and FCD 1. Ensure specific references to NIMS and ICS structure. Area for Future Development: Add how essential functions align with G.S. 166A responsibilities and Continuity Guidance Circular (CGC) principles. Comment: Include a preamble noting compliance with CGC guidelines.

From the EOP....

14	Primary and Alternate EOC: Indicates the location of both the primary and alternate EOC and what conditions would cause the alternate EOC to be activated.	BP.4, BP.19	Comment: Locations identified but lacking specific equipment readiness details. Include plans for cybersecurity at EOC sites. Future Development: Including a section for EOC activation triggers and detailed tech-readiness would improve this section's effectiveness. Ensure alignment with NIMS by specifying communication redundancies.
----	--	-------------	--

9-1-1

Observations of the Current Operation

Post Observation Debrief with the Director

9-1-1 Staff Survey

Peer Review Team Key Take Aways



11

Burke 9-1-1 Center Key Focus Areas:

Call Processing

- Focus on improving call processing times.

Better Utilize

- Better utilize the current CAD system, integrate the toning system with CAD and upgrade dispatch consoles.

Retention

- Focus on retention of 9-1-1 staff.

Strengthen

- Strengthen employee training and quality assurance initiatives

Backup Center

- Establish a backup 9-1-1 center.

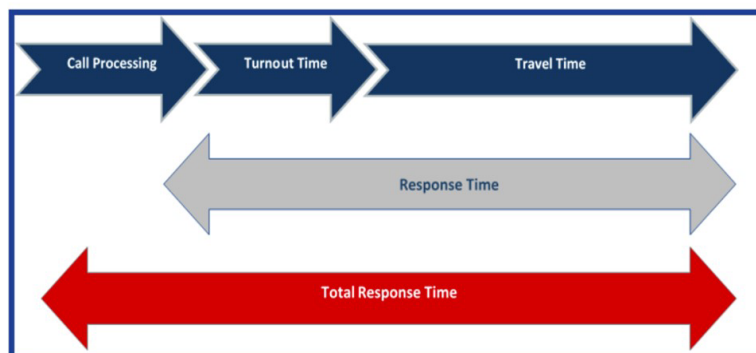
Relationships

- Focus on building relationships.



12

“Response Time From the Perspective of Ms. Smith”

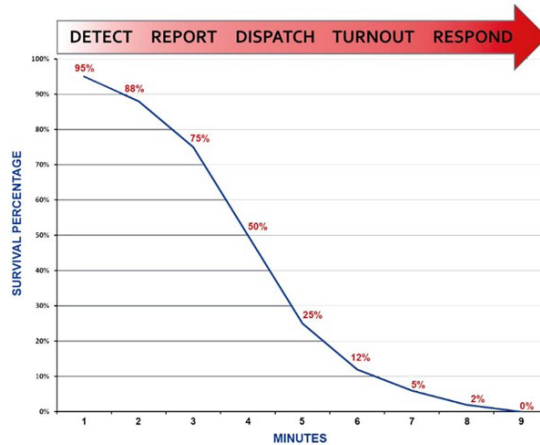


13

In Public Safety, Seconds Are Our Enemy

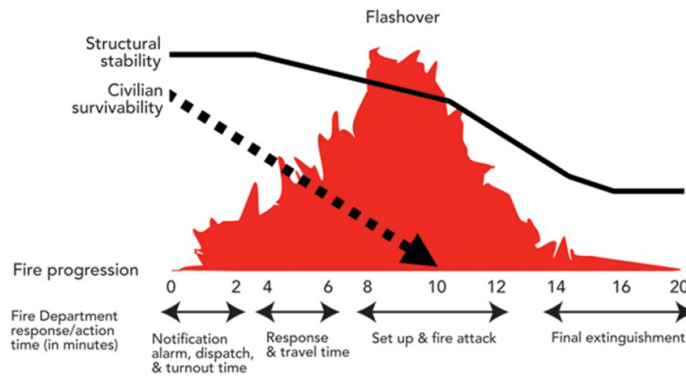
*Cardiac Survival
Is Greatly Impacted
By How Quickly
Patient Intervention
Occurs:*

*Within 1 Minute = 95%
Within 2 Minutes = 88%
Within 3 Minutes = 75%
Within 4 Minutes = 50%
Within 5 Minutes = 25%
Within 6 Minutes = 12%
Within 7 Minutes = 5%*



14

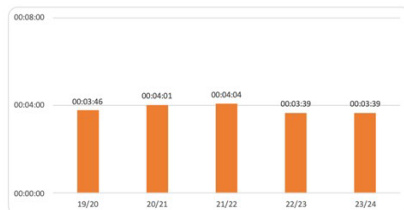
In Public Safety, Seconds Are Our Enemy



In Public Safety, Seconds are Our Enemy

EMS Call Processing Times

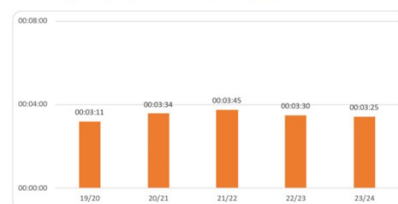
Figure 16: Call Processing Time by Fiscal Year



Overall, the 911 center has a Call Processing Time of 03 minutes, 50 seconds (03:50). This evaluation reviewed Charlie, Delta and Echo incidents, a total of 28,483 incidents. Improvements can be seen since the 21/22 fiscal year. Looking below at each month, call processing time improvements have kept times below the 4-minute mark since July 2023.

Fire Service Call Processing Times

Figure 13: Call Processing Time by Fiscal Year



Overall, the 911 center has a Call Processing Time of 3 minutes, 29 seconds (03:29) at the 80th percentile.



16

Chief Burnett, N.C. Fire Chief Consulting, presented the EMS portion of the Public Safety Strategic Plan as follows:

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS)

- EMS Staff One-on-One Sessions
- Internal Staff Survey
- External Partner Stakeholder Survey
- 5-Year Incident Analysis
- GIS System Overview
- EMS Baseline Facility Review
- Observations and Recommendations
- Baseline Strategic Plan Development

17

Burke EMS Key Focus Areas:

Collaborative Partnerships and Training Enhancements

Retention and Recruitment

Implement Department Strategic Plan, including planning for future EMS base locations.

18

EMS – Collaborative Partnerships and Training Enhancements:

Training personnel together builds relationships and trust.

Provide leadership training within EMS as well as to response partners, including volunteer providers.

Continue and expand technical training within EMS and with response partners.

Designating a training coordinator and form a training committee for greater inclusion and buy in.

19

EMS – Retention and Recruitment:

Competitive compensation is a central key issue for EMS personnel in retaining the strong team members you have and being able to recruit in today's market.

Outreach to partner agencies on volunteer recruitment to help the recruitment pipeline and form partnerships. This will bring more visibility to Burke EMS as well.

Experience has taught us that you get out of recruitment efforts what you put into it. A focused effort is beneficial for many public safety agencies.

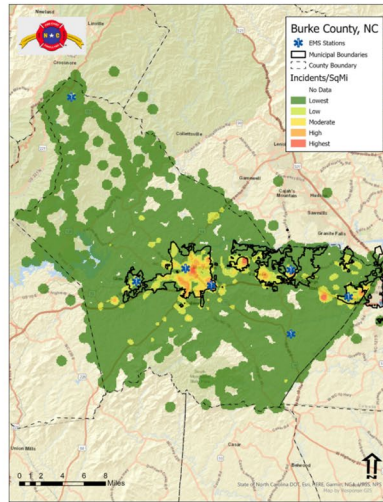


20

Competitive Pay and Recruitment



	TOP	#2	#3
Competitive pay.	84.62%	3.85%	7.69%
	22	1	2
Recruitment and retention.	12.00%	64.00%	12.00%
	3	16	3
Training.	8.70%	8.70%	17.39%
	2	2	4
Equipment reliability and maintenance.	4.17%	8.33%	25.00%
	1	2	6
Trucks.	0.00%	0.00%	10.53%
	0	0	2
Station Maintenance.	0.00%	4.17%	8.33%
	0	1	2
Hospital relationship with out-of-town transports.	0.00%	8.70%	13.04%
	0	2	3
Accountability.	0.00%	0.00%	17.39%
	0	0	4
Inter-facility transports	0.00%	9.09%	4.55%
	0	2	1
Internal/interpersonal Communication.	0.00%	9.52%	0.00%
	0	2	0



Burke's 7 EMS Bases

Warmer colors
Indicate a higher
EMS call volume.

21

EMS – Implement Department Strategic Plan, Including Planning for Future EMS Bases:

- **Burke EMS Strategic Initiative Areas:**
 1. Internal Engagement
 2. Current Program Service Delivery
 3. External Engagement
 4. Strategic Partnerships
 5. Medic Quality of Life
 6. Succession Planning
 7. Infrastructure Needs
 8. Health and Wellness



22

EMS Base Conditions



Base 6 – Connelly Springs - 2018

Base 7 – College Street – Morganton - 2015

EMS Base Conditions



Base 1 – Sterling Street – Morganton – 1974
Slated for replacement South of I-40 on Hwy. 18

Base 5 – Jonas Ridge – 2002

Future EMS Base Needs

Figure 1: Demand by Fiscal Year

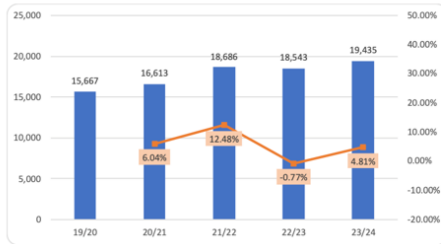
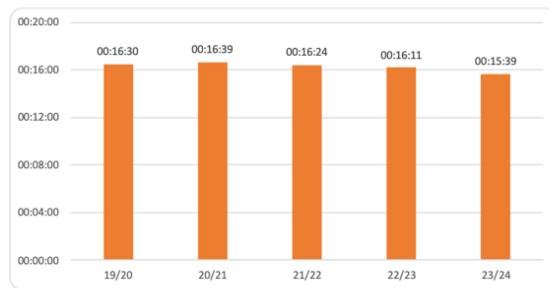


Figure 2: Demand by FY Year-Month

FY	Jun	Apr	Aug	Dec	Feb	Jan	Jul	Mar	May	Nov	Oct	Sep	Total
19/20	1,209	1,009	1,386	1,399	1,282	1,401	1,352	1,325	1,264	1,252	1,417	1,371	15,667
20/21	1,472	1,478	1,333	1,513	1,193	1,407	1,445	1,325	1,488	1,339	1,317	1,303	16,613
21/22	1,655	1,467	1,748	1,598	1,338	1,648	1,554	1,482	1,557	1,422	1,524	1,693	18,686
22/23	1,511	1,415	1,586	1,656	1,343	1,637	1,697	1,492	1,647	1,540	1,485	1,534	18,543
23/24	1,564	1,592	1,654	1,676	1,556	1,617	1,554	1,731	1,707	1,670	1,528	1,586	19,435
Total	7,411	6,961	7,707	7,842	6,712	7,710	7,602	7,355	7,663	7,223	7,271	7,487	88,944

EMS workload is increasing over this 5-year period.

Figure 23: Travel Time by Fiscal Year



Overall, Burke EMS has a **Travel Time for the first arriving unit of 16 minutes, 14 seconds (16:14)**. Small incremental improvements can be seen annually throughout the 5-years.

Sheriff Welch, N.C. Fire Chief Consulting, presented the Sheriff's portion of the Public Safety Strategic Plan as follows:

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

- Information/Data Review
- On-Site Review
- Facilities Review



Focus areas and recommendations:

Personnel	Facilities	Retention and Recruitment of Staff
- Implement a Canine Unit. - Investigator for Internet/Sexual Deviance/Predator Crimes. - Prepare for Long-Term Court Security Personnel Needs (Bailiffs). - Strengthen Patrol Staffing. - Establish an Incremental Four-Year Hiring Schedule.	- Make the Highest and Best Use for Space in the "Old Jail" Facility, such as critical record retention, freeing up space in other county facilities. - Courthouse Security Needs.	- Periodically Revisit the Pay and Compensation Package. - Consider Strengthening Equity within Ranks. - Increasing the Training Budget for the Sheriff's Office. - Adjust Clothing Allowance for Included Personnel.



27

Burke County Ratios Compared to Similar Counties

Jurisdiction	Sworn Officers Per 1,000 County Residents
Cleveland County Sheriff	2
Avery County Sheriff	1.8
Catawba County Sheriff	1.8
Caldwell County Sheriff	1.6
McDowell County Sheriff	1.6
Burke County Sheriff	1.5

Recommendation to Address Staffing Needs Over Several Years:

- Patrol deputies to help reduce response times.
- Courthouse security needs with the expansion.
- Investigator for sexual predator crimes.
- Implementing a canine unit.

The Board had their questions answered throughout the presentation by panelists, staff, and the County Manager as needed.

LUNCH

Motion: To recess the meeting for lunch at 12:12 p.m.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Randy Burns, Commissioner

AYES: Jeffrey C. Brittain, Phil Smith, Brian Barrier, Randy Burns, and Mike Stroud

The meeting resumed at 12:43 p.m.

CM – PUBLIC SAFETY STRATEGIC PLAN CONTINUED

Sheriff Welch provided a brief recap and then finished presenting the Sheriff's Public Safety Strategic Plan. Mr. Grayson then presented the Fire Marshal portion of the Public Safety Strategic Plan as follows:

FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

- Building Plan Review
- Fire and Life Safety Inspections
- Permitting and Fees
- Fire Investigations
- Fire and Life Safety Education Programs
- Current Workload Analysis
- Community Risk Reduction Programs



29

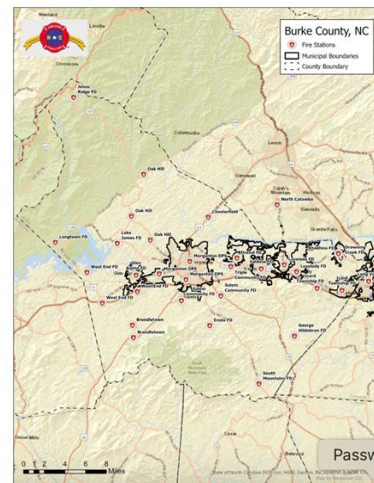
Burke Fire Marshal Key Take Away:

Strengthen Technology use with software compatible with building inspections staff and that will help integrate data into the hands of emergency responders.



FIRE SERVICES

- Analysis of Emergency Incident Dispatches
- Basic GIS Analysis
- Stakeholder Feedback
- Firefighter Survey
- Fiscal Analysis



31

Fire Services Key Focus Areas – Develop a Strategic Plan to Address:

Retention and Recruitment.

Available Funding Models.

Staffing Needs and Options.

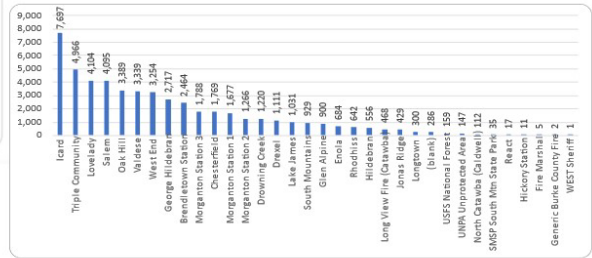
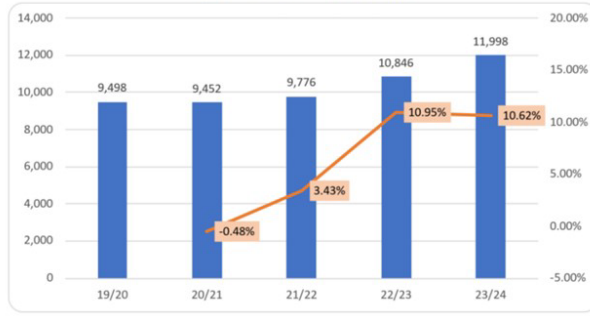
Contract Review and 9-1-1 Fire User Group.



32

Fire Service Demand is Increasing, Especially on the East Side of Burke County

Figure 1: Demand by Fiscal Year



33

Call Volume and Response Times:

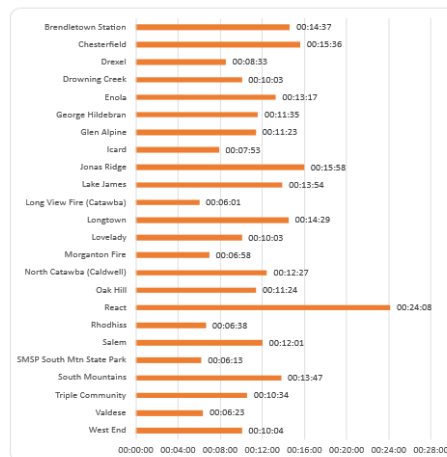
Figure 3: Demand by Alarm Hour

Alarm Hr	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Grand Total
00	196	146	149	161	162	150	169	1,133
01	163	147	103	136	127	129	145	958
02	135	119	112	102	111	111	147	838
03	144	137	98	112	98	123	126	838
04	123	129	113	121	101	116	95	796
05	134	125	117	116	118	131	109	872
06	144	190	152	183	172	171	186	1,180
07	215	243	257	242	274	256	185	1,672
08	232	308	310	345	343	316	263	2,117
09	256	376	314	350	357	354	305	2,310
10	330	377	374	401	402	380	321	2,835
11	360	403	396	397	440	429	423	2,848
12	402	443	387	412	431	426	441	2,942
13	389	443	460	444	399	471	444	3,054
14	360	474	402	489	477	485	488	3,194
15	387	485	482	468	496	478	486	3,202
16	411	503	460	464	532	470	483	3,328
17	443	522	460	442	472	476	444	3,261
18	449	434	492	438	505	492	432	3,241
19	412	466	391	390	422	382	472	2,935
20	389	337	381	328	387	396	636	2,854
21	333	331	294	280	317	365	379	2,301
22	258	244	234	231	277	296	257	1,857
23	190	186	187	177	207	216	232	1,395
Grand Total	6,859	7,564	7,145	7,249	7,677	7,621	7,455	51,578

The highest 8-hour period for call volume is Noon - 8pm. The highest 12-hour period is 9am - 9pm.



Turn Out and Travel Time by Fire Department



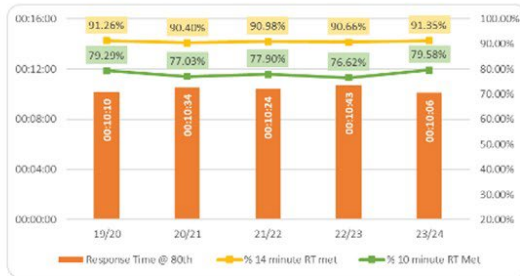
Over the 5-year Review period, the turnout and travel for Burke Fire Departments was 10 minutes, 23 seconds or less at the 80th percentile. The call processing adds an additional 3 minutes, 29 seconds.

34

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Burke County Compares Positively to the National Standard for Volunteer Fire Departments for Turn Out and Travel Times:

Figure 12: Response Times by Population Density



DEMAND ZONE	DEMOGRAPHICS	MIN. STAFF TO RESPOND	RESPONSE TIME (MIN.)	OBJECTIVE MET %
Urban zone	Greater than 1,000 people/sq.-mi.	15	9	90%
Suburban zone	500-1,000 people/sq.-mi.	10	10	80%
Rural area	Fewer than 500 people/sq.-mi.	6	14	80%
Remote area	Travel distance greater than or equal to 8 mi.	4	Dependent on travel distance	90%
Special risks	Determined by AHJ	Determined by AHJ based on risk	Determined by AHJ	90%



35

The Number of Firefighters on Scene Within the Time Parameters is Unknown:

Burke County, NC Changes in Firefighter Volunteerism in Recent Years
As of February 2025

Name of Department	FDID	Volunteers on Roster 2018	Volunteers on Roster 2019	Volunteers on Roster 2020	Volunteers on Roster 2021	Volunteers on Roster 2022	Volunteers on Roster 2023	Volunteers on Roster 2024
Brendletown	1275	30	35	35	34	31	24	25
Chesterfield	1276	32	27	26	30	28	27	23
Drexel	1266	28	28	21	21	20	23	22
Drowning Creek	1278	14	15	14	22	18	16	14
Enola	1259	25	23	24	22	25	27	29
George Hildebran	1273	26	30	29	26	28	36	38
Glen Alpine	1269	18	19	21	22	25	20	24
Icard	1264	36	34	36	34	36	38	29
Jonas Ridge	1258	26	21	24	27	25	23	21
Lake James	1268	25	24	23	21	20	19	26
Longtown	1255	26	26	16	19	17	12	14
Lovelady	1263	23	23	27	30	28	26	20
Oak Hill	1262	38	36	35	44	48	42	44
Salem	1274	42	36	42	44	46	45	47
South Mountains	1279	40	36	38	34	28	29	24
Triple Community	1267	34	28	29	28	33	31	24
Valdese	1260	6	7	4	4	4	0	0
West End	1277	36	42	37	37	37	34	34
		505	490	481	499	472	458	
			97.0%	98.2%	103.7%	99.6%	95.0%	97.0%
			-1.1%	1.1%	6.4%	-2.6%	-6.9%	-5.2%
								-8.30%
								Average loss of 1.4% per year

North Carolina has Experienced an average NET loss of approximately 3.5% per year of volunteer Firefighters, though 2024 showed a net loss of 2.5%. Burke County is significantly below those numbers with an average NET loss of approximately 1.4% per year.

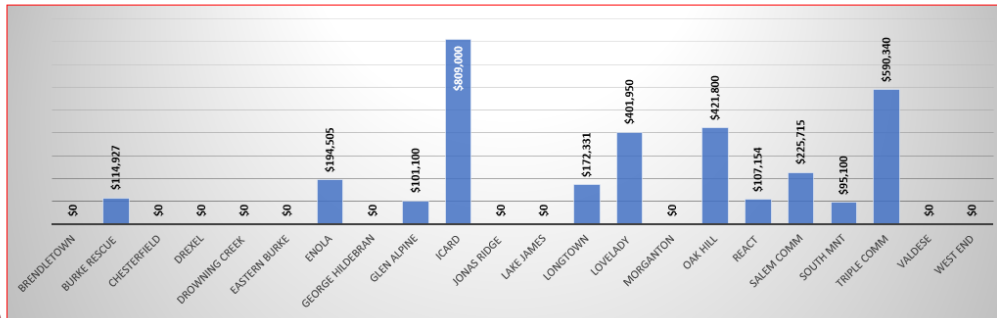


36

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Fiscal Analysis:

- Fiscal analysis was provided for Burke Rescue, Enola, Icard, Longtown, Lovelady, Oak Hill, REACT, Salem Community, South Mountain, and Triple Community.



37

Several inquiries were made concerning the outstanding data from the remainder of the volunteer fire departments.

NEXT STEPS

- Reviewing the written supporting documentation.
- Evaluating needs within public safety holistically and recognizing the interconnectivity of specialty areas.
- Attention across the board is needed relating to retention and recruitment of personnel, and volunteers.
- Continuing to update data periodically to keep a pulse on trends.



38

GGrayson@NCFireChief.com
SBurnette@NCFireChief.com



Questions?



THANK YOU!

North Carolina Fire Chief Consulting
 336-266-7998 ♦ www.NCFireChief.com



40

The Board had any additional questions answered throughout the presentation by panelists, staff, and the County Manager as needed.

RESULT: NO ACTION TAKEN.

CITIZENS ACADEMY FRAMEWORK

CM – CITIZENS ACADEMY FRAMEWORK

Brian Epley, County Manager, presented the framework options for the Burke County Citizens Academy as follows:

FY 2025-2026 Citizens Academy County Commissioner Discussion Improving Lives in Burke County SERVICE SUPPORT ENHANCEMENT	FY 24-25 Commissioners' Strategic Plan FOCUS AREA 1: COMMUNITY ADVANCEMENT To invest in cultural capital and advancement strategies that promote participative governance that elevates a community to live, work and play – while also positioning Burke County as a community of choice. FOCUS AREA 2: ECONOMIC GROWTH & SUSTAINMENT Promotion of Burke County as a business and economic center in the region through recruitment of new industry, creating a healthy business climate for existing businesses. FOCUS AREA 3: PUBLIC SAFETY & WELL BEING To ensure the safety of our residents through efficient and effective public safety agencies. FOCUS AREA 4: FISCAL STEWARDSHIP Pursuit of the high-performing organization model that ensures high quality, transparent and efficient use of public resources. FOCUS AREA 5: EMPLOYER OF CHOICE To promote a professional value-based employee-centric workplace that promotes innovation, performance, and integrity, and differentiation. BURKE COUNTY
Citizens Academy 2025-2026 A "citizens academy" is a program offered by local government agencies that allows community residents to learn about the operations and functions of the government agency through educational sessions, often including demonstrations, tours, and discussions, with the goal of building better understanding and trust between citizens and law enforcement	Citizens Academy 2025-2026 Program Goals: 1. Knowledge: <i>Improving citizens' understanding of local government while learning more about community issues and concerns.</i> •Citizens get a hands-on and behind-the-scenes look at how services and programs are provided. •Citizens better understand what is needed to run a municipality or county. •Staff members hear directly from citizens about the realities of programs and operations. •Staff members have the chance to hone their presentation skills.
Citizens Academy 2025-2026 Program Goals: 2. Involvement: <i>Improving the quality and quantity of citizen participation in local government.</i> •Citizens learn how they can be more involved. •Many citizens go on to become volunteers, including service on an appointed advisory board or committee.	Citizens Academy 2025-2026 Program Goals: 3. Public Relations: <i>Improving the lines of communication and relationship between citizens and their local government.</i> •Citizens <u>have the opportunity to</u> connect with other citizens. •Citizens and staff create relationships that foster enhanced communication. •Alumni become informal ambassadors for the local government.

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Citizens Academy 2025-2026

- | | |
|---------|--|
| Week 1: | Introduction to County Government |
| Week 2: | Public Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-911 • EMS • Law Enforcement • Etc. |
| Week 3: | Financial Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance, Budgeting & Taxes • Economic Development Policy • Information Technology |
| Week 4: | Community Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Development • Elections Processes • Parks & Recreation |
| Week 5: | Water / Sewer & Solid Waste Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System Design, Engineering & Cost |
| Week 6: | County Government Framework & Public Education |

Citizens Academy 2025-2026

Commissioner Direction: Consideration of adding
formalized citizens academy to FY 2025-2026 strategic plan

Commissioner Burns inquired if registration for the Citizens Academy could be run through WPCC's Continuing Education program.

RESULT: NO ACTION TAKEN.

ADJOURN

Motion: To adjourn at 1:55 p.m.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Brian Barrier, Commissioner

AYES: Jeffrey C. Brittain, Phil Smith, Brian Barrier, Randy Burns, and Mike Stroud

Approved this 16th day of June 2025.



Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
Burke Co. Board of Commissioners

Attest:



Kay Honeycutt Draughn, CMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board