

Community Services

Budget Summary

	FY 2003 Actual	FY 2004 Adopted Budget	FY 2004 Current Budget	FY 2005 Recommended
Personal Services	\$12,659,941	\$12,772,906	\$13,234,682	\$13,418,059
Operating Expenses	\$4,156,023	\$5,070,286	\$5,452,789	\$5,226,513
Capital Outlay	\$91,187	\$43,950	\$42,950	\$13,400
Expenditure Totals	\$16,907,151	\$17,887,142	\$18,730,421	\$18,657,972
Intergovernmental Revenue	\$528,130	\$521,300	\$523,366	\$525,716
Fees & Other Revenues	\$3,344,824	\$3,496,948	\$3,496,948	\$3,764,551
Revenue Totals	\$3,872,954	\$4,018,248	\$4,020,314	\$4,290,267
Number of FTEs	246.37	247.37	247.37	254.37

Department Description

Wake County Community Services administers five divisions: Cooperative Extension, Geographic Information Services, Inspections/Development Plans/Permits, Libraries, and Parks/Recreation/Open Space. The department is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life by promoting health, safety, environmental protection and leisure activities and providing the information and educational opportunities needed by citizens to make sound decisions.

List of Major Services

- Cooperative Extension
- Geographic Information Services
- Inspections/Development Plans/Permits
- Libraries
- Parks/Recreation/Open Space

Cooperative Extension is an educational partnership helping people put research-based knowledge to work to develop healthy youth, families, and communities; promote and improve self-sufficiency; and protect the environment for an improved quality of life. Cooperative Extension achieves its mission through a variety of programs that develop healthy youth, families and communities, promote healthy lifestyle choices, and provide up-to-date information, which encourages participants to set realistic goals and develop healthy habits.

Geographic Information Services strives to be a service-driven central resource of geographic information for Wake County, providing spatial data and solutions that enable customers to accomplish their business objectives. Wake County GIS provides services to two groups. The primary focus is to serve as an internal service agency to Wake County departments. A second focus is to provide extensive mapping-

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related services directly to other governmental jurisdictions and the public. As a result, internal and external customers drive the division's workload and priorities. Geographic Information Services serves as a clearinghouse/central distributor of geographic information for Wake County. To support this distribution effort GIS has a primary responsibility for developing and maintaining core geographic databases needed by our customers. In order to accomplish these two business services, GIS staff provides technical support ranging from needs analysis, programming/application development, software support, database development and project management. The technical support provided by staff is tightly integrated with the two business services in that staff must have the technical infrastructure, expertise, and support to provide and maintain the information, services, databases, and capabilities that are needed by our customers.

Inspection/Development Plans/Permits provides for the administration and enforcement of the North Carolina State Building Codes as adopted by the Building Code Council and enforced by State and Local Code Enforcement Officials. It provides staff, training, technology and physical facilities to bring the services closer to the customer. It develops partnerships for the sharing of resources, services and knowledge. It develops education and training programs for staff, internal and external county partners.

This program is mandated by the State of North Carolina. The purpose is to protect the public's life, safety, health and welfare in the built environment. All building, electrical, mechanical, and plumbing construction must be permitted and inspected. The North Carolina Building Code and North Carolina General Statutes regulate most functions of the inspections section. Records are kept in a manner prescribed by the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources and are maintained on a software program developed in-house. The County also provides inspections services through interlocal agreements to several municipalities, including Rolesville and Zebulon.

All construction plans are reviewed for life safety and structural integrity prior to the issuance of a permit. Commercial and residential plan reviewers are responsible for final approval of drawings, verification of contractor licenses, writing a detailed description of the work being permitted, and calculating permit fees. Both residential and commercial plans are being reviewed in each of the four contract municipalities and other satellite locations.

Wake County Public Libraries (WCPL) promote the love of reading and foster the pursuit of knowledge among County residents. Libraries provide services in places and at times that are convenient to citizens. Libraries partner with other agencies in ways that enrich the quality of life in the community. WCPL anticipates and responds to the needs of its customers while creating new generations of readers.

Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) acquires and maintains parks and natural areas that promote environmental and cultural resource stewardship and provide safe recreational and educational opportunities for all county citizens. Through cooperative partnerships, staff works to improve access to all existing and new school campuses for recreational activities and to ensure that public expenditures are reaching their fullest potential in meeting community needs. PROS continues to serve in a leadership role in advancing the consolidated open space initiative that all twelve municipalities have agreed to cooperate in achieving. The core business of PROS falls into five major service delivery areas: Regional Parks; Open Space Preservation; School/Parks; Grant-In-Aid / Technical Services, and Historic Preservation.

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Business Plan Priorities

Cooperative Extension

As Extension Educators, the main priority is to extend the educational service of North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University to Wake County citizens. Cooperative Extension delivers the latest research-based information that actively involves urban and rural citizens in solving complex and challenging problems within their communities. As the needs of our communities change, so does the work of Extension.

Geographic Information Services

The overarching concern of the division is to ensure that geographic information is available to customers and system users.

Inspections/Development Plans/Permits (IDPP)

IDPP strives to maintain and enhance the quality and efficiency of current inspections and permit programs, provide accurate and timely information of all public records as required by N.C. General Statutes and maintain those records in such a manner as to provide access to business partners and the public. The division provides educational opportunities for the design and development community and maintains a highly trained inspections/permitting staff. Also, it seeks to develop administrative and leadership skills in existing and new employees in order to facilitate program continuity and growth. Finally, the division provides for development of internal and external partnerships and information sharing systems.

Libraries

The priorities of the libraries are: (1) Services to children; (2) Recreational reading; (3) Being a center of life-long learning; (4) Facilities serve as community centers; and (5) Help bridge the technology gap.

WCPL also participates in long-term planning and makes capital recommendations to maintain the integrity of existing facilities and build out proposed capital building program. These recommendations are presented to the Board of County Commissioners as part of the Libraries' Master Plan.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS)

Regional Parks: PROS is committed to maintaining and promoting existing Regional Park facilities by offering quality programs and services in well-maintained facilities. It will continue to work cooperatively with the Facilities Design and Construction department for the completion of Historic Yates Mill County Park and the American Tobacco Trail.

Open Space Preservation: PROS continues to work with the Partners for Open Space and the Environment (POSE) and is striving for this group to become a collaborative force in the preservation of open space in the county. PROS will use the proceeds from the 2000 Open Space bond referendum to leverage state, federal and other local money as it works towards its goal of protecting 30,000 acres across the county through targeted acquisitions. PROS also educates the public on the many benefits of open space.

School Parks: The division will continue to work cooperatively and collaboratively with the Wake County Public School System and municipal partners in the planning, design and construction of new schools that provide for quality educational and community programs. Also, it will continue to work cooperatively with

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the school system, General Services Administration, municipalities and nonprofit groups to assure that all the County's school parks are being programmed, used, and maintained to the highest level possible.

Historic Preservation: Staff will work with both internal and external agencies towards the preservation of historic Yates Mill. Also, the division will serve as a leader and advisor in the fields of historic preservation and interpretation and will work collaboratively with other historic providers to produce a brochure highlighting historical resources in the county.

Highlights

Cooperative Extension

- Collaborations with over 100 partners to bring positive changes within the community (partners include federal, state, local entities and private and non-profit sector organizations)
- Implemented the following programs with cooperation from partners: ServSafe, an 18-hour Food Safety Certification Course; SyberShop, a CD-ROM for children ages 13-19 focusing on physical activity and healthy eating; after-school programming for middle-school-aged youth (including the East Wake Youth Initiative (EWYI) and Fuquay Youth Initiative); community 4-H clubs; a community-based tobacco prevention initiative; the Teen Advisory Council (designed to provide meaningful and integrated leadership development programs for middle- and high-school aged youth); mentoring and peer education; adolescent pregnancy prevention; parenting education and support; and Community Voices for Children/ Voces de la Comunidad para los Ninos (a leadership development initiative supporting Hispanic families through training parents with small children).

Geographic Information Services (GIS)

- GIS continues to ensure that the geographic information system is highly reliable and designed to leverage new technology. Staff is committed to ensuring that the geographic information available through Wake County's system is efficiently updated, current and accurate. The division works to provide appropriate GIS information and functionality via the Internet.
- The division is challenged by continued increase in demand from other agencies and the public for information, products, data, and expertise to meet daily information needs. Staff continues to be involved in enterprise-wide system integration projects.
- The division is involved in developing and/or implementing the following to integrate new technology: Land Records/Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal project, land use classification standards and GIS/Land Records integration.
- The division is working to redesign and/or upgrade servers, applications and databases and to achieve tighter integration with Information Services' servers and disk storage devices; also, it is upgrading to a new version of Oracle's Relational Database Management System software.
- Finally, the division continues integration of GIS data and technology to support emergency dispatch system and is investigating new global positioning technology (GPS).

Inspections/Development Plans/Permits (IDPP)

- Education and training provide the tools necessary to enforce building codes; also, education and training help IDPP reduce its costs for enforcement and reduce the costs to the development community and the public for construction projects.

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- The division will review its business structure and staffing needs. Attrition will soon thin the ranks of a high percentage of experienced and knowledgeable staff requiring for the replacement of line staff and leadership roles.
- The division will continue to apply necessary enforcing practices mandated by the NC General Statutes that provide guidelines for structural design, life safety and energy efficiencies of all construction.

Libraries

- Data demonstrates there are unserved and under-served areas of the County. The system lacks space to house a collection sized to serve the growing population of the county as well as the space that would allow all residents of all ages to pursue lifelong learning activities. The current capital program tackles this issue, planning approximately \$42 million in investments over the next seven years to fund library construction and renovation and library materials (including audio books).
- Wake County continues to be able to compete in the world economy because of the literate citizens who make up the community and provide the educated workforce necessary to be competitive in that world economy. Already ranked number one in education by Places Rated Almanac (public library service is an important factor in that rating), the library system helps to maintain that rating and make the county number one in the global market.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

- The American Tobacco Trail opened as a new park. This trail, when completed, will be a 21-mile linear park accessible to hikers, bicycles, and horseback riding, going through three counties.
- In FY 2004, the Parks' system entertained an all-time high of almost one million visitors, programmed for more school children and adults than ever before, held more special events, and made plans to open two major new parks.
- Since 1990 Wake County has experienced a population increase of 48.3 percent while during that same ten-year period Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space has experienced a visitation increase of 375% to its County parks as new parks are added.
- The division hosts a number of programs at each of the parks throughout the year. These programs are listed in the Parks' quarterly newsletter as well as on the County's web page. General public program participation for fiscal year 2002 was 67,881. In addition to the general public programs, the staff conducts a considerable number of programs for organized groups such as the Wake County Public School System. Total attendance at these programs in fiscal year 2002 was 23,560.

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