



Leadership, Partnership, Stewardship

Wake County Business Plans *FY 2007 - 2009*

Budget and Management Services

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Mission Statement

The Budget and Management Services Department will support Wake County's fiscal integrity, accountability and performance by providing budgeting, analytical, policy and management support to the County Manager, Commissioners and departments.

Department Overview

Budget and Management Services (BMS) assists the County Manager in budgeting and planning operational and capital needs. The department is the lead agency for countywide management analysis and program evaluation, providing research and analysis for any department requesting assistance. The department's main responsibility is to organize the annual budget process and compile the annual budget information for all Wake County government services. Additional duties include providing financial information and policy analysis to the Board of Commissioners and County Manager, assist departments with financial and managerial challenges, and manage the County's intergovernmental and legislative initiatives. BMS staff frequently lead or assist with major projects, such as school system funding, inpatient mental health facility planning, legislative changes to revenue laws, solid waste operations planning, and a County-wide prioritization of services.

BMS is one of the smallest departments in the County government. The department's FY 2006 budget is approximately \$783,000, of which 95% is for personnel costs. BMS has nine FTEs, including five Budget and Management Analysts, a Director, a Budget Manager, an Intergovernmental Relations Manager, and an Administrative Services Coordinator. In FY 2007, BMS has a tenth person through a new "Fellowship Program" created to increase analytical capacity and better distribute the department's workload.

Budgeting Environment in Wake County

Wake County will face a number of budget challenges in the next few years. Most of these challenges stem from the County's rapid growth:

- The current population of 774,000 (2006 forecast) will grow by nearly 25,000 each year,
- The Wake County Public School System continues to grow at an exceptional pace, and,
- Developers convert 27 acres of land from a natural state to a human-built environment each day.

The tax base is growing as well—County revenues are expected to increase by nearly \$32.5 million in FY 2007 without a tax increase. Unfortunately, the demands for funding consistently exceed the available resources. The FY 2007 budget includes a 3 cent tax

increase that will yield roughly \$21 million. Despite the revenue increase from normal growth and a tax increase, the budget did not fund nearly \$11 million in requests. The County's Community Improvement Plan (CIP) also faces challenges, primarily in funding school construction and criminal justice facilities.

Major Accomplishments in FY 2006

- Evaluated the department's need for staff and successfully requested additional staffing resources through the budget process.
- Assembled and produced the FY07 budget document in a timely manner. Received the GFOA Distinguished Budget Award for FY06 budget document.
- Implemented a County-wide prioritization of services that involved front-line staff and senior managers in ranking 50 general fund programs.
- Engaged the services of a contract lobbyist and hired an Intergovernmental Relations Manager to promote the County's legislative agenda before the General Assembly
- Provided staff support for the Blue Ribbon Committee on Infrastructure, a citizen committee that identified infrastructure needs for the next 25 years and potential revenue sources.
- Managed agenda items and budget changes for WCPSS Plan 2000 and Plan 2004 building programs. Established process to effectively audit expenditures for Plan 2004 building program.
- Analyzed and "modeled" school construction program in anticipation of the November 2006 bond referendum. Analysis included projections of state lottery proceeds and analysis of potential changes to state and local sales taxes.

Conceptualizing Our Goals and Services

Goals. BMS organizes its work around its mission statement, and a hierarchy of goals, services, and objectives (See **Figure 1**). To achieve its mission, BMS pursues five goals:

1. *Efficient and Effective Use of Resources*—Taxpayer dollars should be used in an efficient and effective manner. BMS applies this principle as it scrutinizes operating budgets, evaluates new program proposals, and monitors existing programs.

2. *Building Capacity*—BMS strives to build the analytical capacity of staff in other departments to promote informed decision-making, make departments more accountable, and enable departments to address more issues.
3. *Support Policy Decision-making*—Almost every policy decision made by the County Manager and the Board of Commissioners has a budgetary or financial aspect. Therefore, BMS strives to provide information, analysis, and recommendations to policy makers in a clear, concise manner.
4. *Long-Range Planning / Leading Organization-wide Issues*—Long-range planning is a value applied to nearly every budgetary and policy decision in Wake County. BMS supports this value by assisting in the development of long-range plans for County programs. Also, BMS often leads organization-wide issues that have a long-range financial impact.
5. *Facilitate Understanding of the County*—Through the budget document, workshops and other products, BMS promotes greater understanding of County programs among County staff, elected officials, and the public.

Services. BMS achieves these five goals by providing three services: 1) budgetary and fiscal services, 2) long-range planning, and 3) policy analysis.

The staff provides *budgetary and fiscal services* year-round, but, generally, the annual budget process “ramps up” in February and continues until the Commissioners adopt a budget in late June. BMS leads the annual budget process and helps policy makers produce a balanced budget, as required by state statute. During these five months, analysts review and evaluate budget requests, assist departments in developing proposals for expansions, and convey budget information to policy makers and the public in a clear, concise manner.

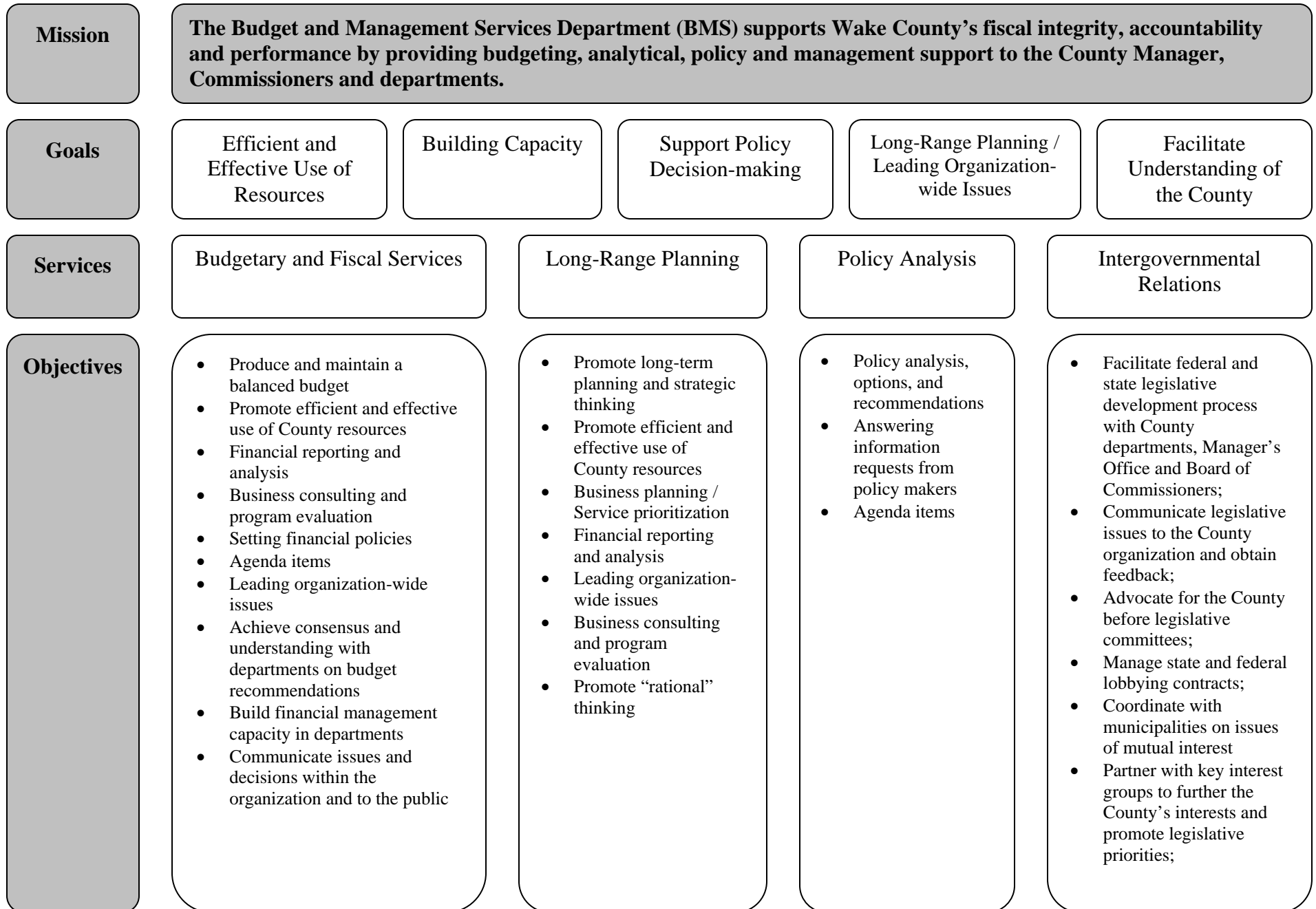
The services of *long-range planning* and *policy analysis* are also provided year-round. During the annual budget process, County staff and other stakeholders often identify issues to which BMS staff will provide planning and analysis services. Following adoption of the annual budget, BMS compiles a list of the identified issues and other projects important to the County Manager. Since staff time is a limited resource, the Director and staff identify those issues and projects that are the highest priority. These are selected using such criteria as County Manager priorities, Board priorities, departmental requests, financial impact and others. The selected issues and projects become “work objectives” in an employee’s work plan. Less important issues and projects may be postponed or assigned to other departments.

Intergovernmental Relations (IRG) services are also provided year-round. In FY 2006, the County Manager’s Office transferred the IGR position and responsibilities to BMS to serve as the principal liaison for Wake County in legislative and other intergovernmental activities. Through this service, the department works directly with the County Manager and the Board of Commissioners to coordinate the federal and state legislative agendas

with all County departments, and partners in outside organizations, in order to leverage support for the County's initiatives. These partners include state and federal agencies, the Wake County Public School System, local area Chambers of Commerce, the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau, the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners and other local governments. Also through this service, the department advises the County Manager and Board of Commissioners on various intergovernmental relationships, and facilitates agreements between Wake County and other jurisdictions.

For each of the three goals, staff has identified specific objectives. These are listed in Figure 1.

**Figure 1.
Budget and Management Services
Department Mission, Goals, Services, and Objective**



Pursuing Our Goals in FY 2007 and Beyond

In FY 2007, most of the department's work will focus on departmental programs or organization-wide issues. Each analyst has several issues listed as work objectives in their individual work plan.¹ Attachment A lists all the work objectives in staffs' FY07 work plans. The listing includes XX separate objectives—all of which align with at least one department goal. This list may be updated throughout the fiscal year as work objectives are modified, added, or removed.

During the fiscal year, BMS will also focus on challenges and issues internal to the department. These include:

1. *Monitor Workload and Evaluate Current Staffing Level*—The department's primary internal goal during FY 2006 was to evaluate the need for additional staff. In previous years, the Manager's Office and County departments requested more services from the budget office than the staff could provide. As part of an expansion request, BMS identified the need for two additional FTEs. The FY07 budget funds one additional FTE (Budget Manager) and provides contract dollars for a new "Fellows" program. With the additional staff, BMS intends relieve the excessive workloads by distributing current assignments among more people.

During FY 2007, BMS will continue to monitor workload to determine whether the additional FTE and Fellow are sufficient to complete the department's mission, while minimizing the tendency to exceed work capacity. The department will continue using the Timetracker tool (an Access database) to record the hours worked by each analyst, the hours spent on each department goal and assignment.

In addition to monitoring workload, staff will take the following steps to reduce heavy workloads:

- Each individual's workplan will include excess capacity (unplanned time), which will serve as a contingency for unanticipated projects, Manager requests, and other unforeseen assignments.
 - Each individual will use the timetracker tool to monitor the number of hours spent on work, and on which assignments. If the amount of time spent on an assignment (or the total) becomes excessive, the individual will discuss alternatives for relief with the Budget Director.
2. *Successfully Transfer Assignments Among Staff*—With the two additional staff, and turnover in existing positions, most departmental and issue assignments will transfer to a new analyst. During FY 2007, the Director will transfer many duties and responsibilities to the new Budget Manager position. Turnover among

¹ Work objectives and work plans are elements of the County's PDMS system (Position Development and Management System), which is updated annually.

analyst positions means that most analysts will have new assignments. To ensure a successful transition, each analyst will plan for the necessary time in the FY 2007 workplan. BMS considers a transition successful when the new responsible analyst ...

- understands the major issues and challenges for the department
- knows the department's budget generally
- meets the key County staff and stakeholders, and
- receives and knows the contents of files collected by the previous analyst

3. *Train New Staff*—During FY 2007, BMS will welcome no less than four new persons to the department. In addition to a successful transition of assignments (discussed above), BMS will focus on training each individual to use various automated tools, such as FAMIS, BPREP, and Impromptu. In addition, all new staff will be trained to use the Lotus system, including the email, calendar, and timesheet elements.
3. *Adhere to Budget Document Deadlines*—The Budget Office typically relies on other County departments to produce much of the budget document text. This transfer of information affects how our internal deadlines are set and met. Our goal is to set “soft” deadlines for receiving information from departments at least one week before the information is needed and set a “hard” deadline of two days for receiving information from departments. This will enable staff to review the material and better prioritize, therefore meeting internal deadlines.

Related Business Plan Documents

Attachment A: Analysts' Workplan Summary

The table lists the major objectives included in each employee's PDMS workplan. Each objective furthers one of the department's overall goals

Attachment B: Service Matrix and Resource Summary

The service matrix summarizes each of the three services BMS provides. The resources summary shows the cost of these services in FY 2007, and projected costs for FY 2008 and FY 2009. These estimates assume that the department maintains the same service level and staffing. The services matrix will be updated following submission of its FY07 budget request.

Attachment C: Service Ranking and Funding by Choice Quadrant Level

Each department classifies its services into one of four quadrants based on programmatic and funding discretion. BMS classifies all three services as "green," indicating that Wake County has both program choice and funding choice in providing budget services. State statute (G.S. 159-8) requires Counties to adopt an annual budget and appoint a "budget officer," but does not require a budget staff.