

Wake County

Recommended Budget

July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020



Wake County

FY20 Recommended Budget

Wake County Manager David Ellis is proposing a **\$1.47 billion budget** for **FY20**. It includes major investments in education, public health and safety, and quality of life to help the county meet its growing service demands and achieve outcomes identified by the Wake County Board of Commissioners. Ellis presented his budget recommendation to the board on May 6.

“ My budget recommendation reflects the priority needs we must address to deliver services at the level our growing population expects and as state regulations require. ”



County Manager David Ellis

Ellis proposes funding these major investments with a **6.36-cent property tax increase**, which would bring the county's property tax rate to 71.8 cents for every \$100 of property value.

Of the 6.36-cent increase, **3.8 cents** will fund the three bonds voters approved in **November 2018**.

Without that 3.8 cents, we won't have the revenue necessary to respond to the will of the voters and move these bond programs forward.

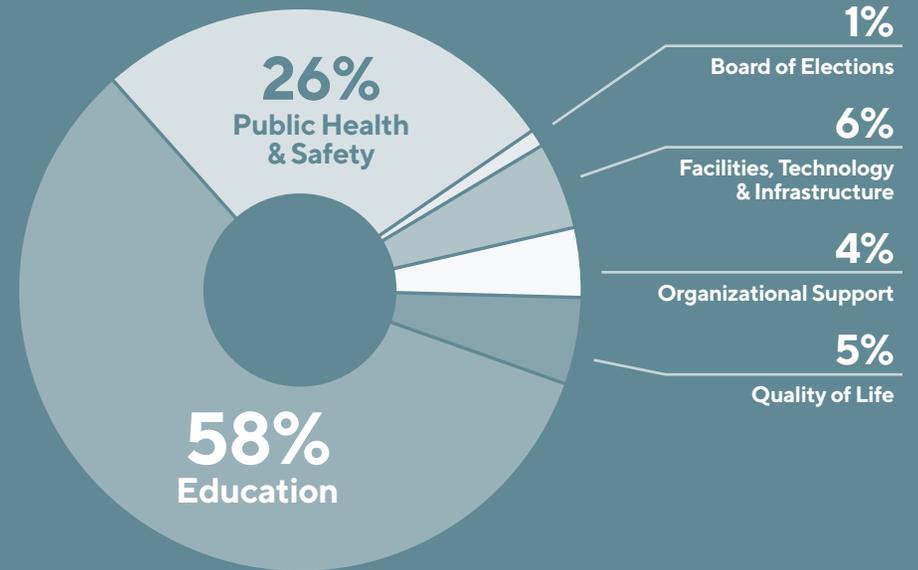
- **\$548 million** WCPSS construction bond (66.7% approval rate)
- **\$349 million** Wake Tech infrastructure improvements bond (65.1% approval rate)
- **\$120 million** Parks, Recreation, Greenways and Open Space bond (68% approval rate)

Of the remaining 2.56 cents, 1.39 cents would fund increases for WCPSS operating needs, and 1.17 cents would fund county operating expenses.

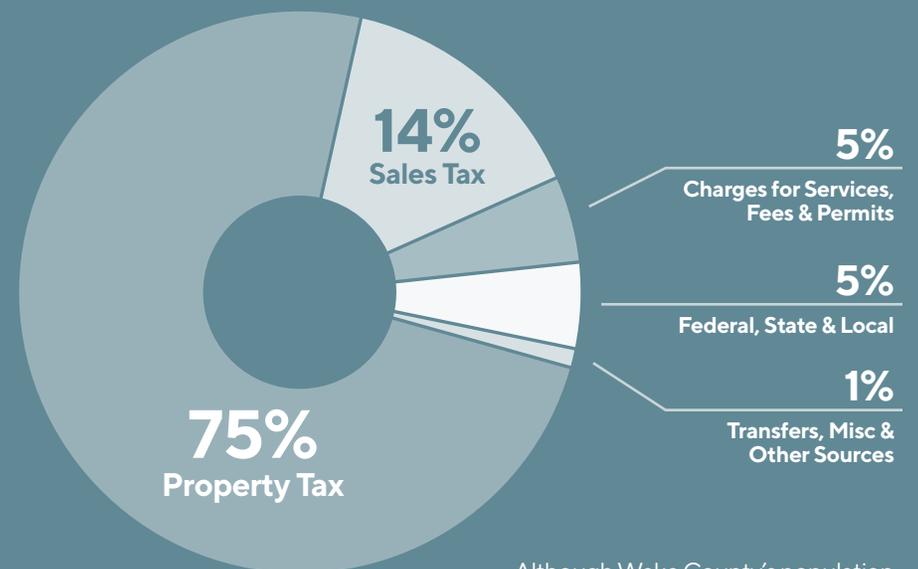
	3.45 ¢ WCPSS and Wake Tech Bonds	3.80 ¢ Voter-approved bond programs
+	0.35 ¢ Parks, Greenways and Open Space Bonds	
+	1.39 ¢ WCPSS operating	
+	1.17 ¢ County operating	
	6.36 ¢ total proposed tax increase	

Under this recommendation, a property owner would pay an extra \$64 per year in property taxes for every \$100,000 of assessed value.

Expenditures



Revenue



Although Wake County's population is growing by 56 people per day, that growth doesn't generate enough revenue to fund the needs of WCPSS, Wake Tech and the county.

Property tax makes up 75% of our total revenue and is the only revenue source we control. That makes it our best tool for bridging the gap between the needs of our community and our base revenue growth.

Investing in Education

Wake County Public School System

- ▶ In the proposal, \$507.5 million would fund the Wake County Public School System's operating needs – a \$36.5 million increase from FY19. This marks the **first time** the county's annual contribution to the WCPSS operating budget would **exceed half a billion dollars**.



The operating dollars, combined with the capital funds we will contribute for school construction and renovation, would bring our total investment in WCPSS to \$789.5 million.

Wake Technical Community College

This budget recommends investing an additional \$1.7 million in Wake Tech in FY20, which would bring our operating investment in the community college to nearly \$25 million.



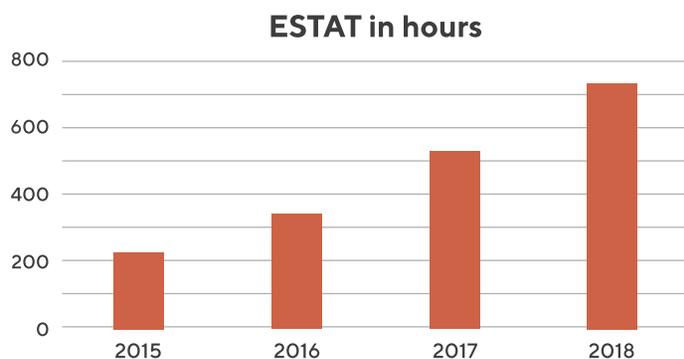
When you add in the capital dollars we'll contribute in this budget for new campus construction, maintenance of existing facilities and infrastructure, and support for a strong online curriculum, our total investment would equal \$64.4 million.

Investing in Public Health & Safety

EMS

In 2014, EMS received nearly 90,000 calls for service. In 2018, that number rose to more than 106,000 – an 18% increase.

The rising call volume means more ambulances must respond at the same time, leaving fewer ambulance units available for incoming calls. When there are too few ambulances available countywide, our EMS staff call this ESTAT.



ESTAT events are occurring more often and for longer periods of time. To lower the incidence of ESTAT and provide a quick response, this budget recommends **adding five ambulance shifts** and **hiring 20 EMTs and paramedics** to operate them.

Child Welfare

In FY18, our Child Protective Services staff received more than 10,000 reports of suspected child abuse or neglect, and they worked with 800 families to create collaborative work plans, so the children could remain safely in their own homes.

Meanwhile, our Foster Care staff placed another 800 children in alternative care, while their caregivers received specialized services, aimed at establishing a permanent housing solution – like reunification or adoption – for the children.



Recommendation Add 14 positions to Child Welfare

- Lower caseloads
- Protect children from harm
- Help children find permanent, loving homes

This budget recommends **adding 14 new positions** to our Child Welfare Division to lower the average caseloads for our social workers and enhance their ability to protect our youngest residents. Adding staff will also strengthen our efforts to help children in our care find permanent, loving homes.

Economic Self Sufficiency

In Wake County today, we serve nearly 170,000 Medicaid recipients and help administer Food and Nutrition Services – what we used to call “food stamps” – for more than 120,000 people. These programs help reduce poverty and food insecurity, increase access to medical care, and over the long-term, they lead to better health and better economic outcomes.

By **adding 6.5 new positions** in this area, we can meet state requirements for timeliness and accuracy, and help our growing population become more self sufficient.

Inspections

In FY18, county staff conducted more than 60,000 building inspections and provided more than 9,000 permits for projects that involved residential and commercial development, as well as plumbing, mechanical and electrical work.



Recommendation Add 2 inspectors

- Meet construction industry demands
- Ensure projects are safe and meet codes

With the construction business booming, there's strong demand among developers and the business community for timely inspections, so their projects stay on schedule.

In response to this demand, this budget proposes **adding two inspectors** to our team. By expanding our staff, we can deliver the timeliness that the market needs while ensuring the homes, offices and stores being built in Wake County are safe and structurally sound.

Investing in Board of Elections

During the 2018 General Election, nearly 440,000 people went to the polls and cast their ballots – a 34% increase from the General Election in 2014.

Those who couldn't vote on Election Day asked for absentee ballots. From 2014 to 2018, the number of requests jumped nearly 50% during the mid-term elections.



This data shows we must be prepared for record-setting numbers again in FY20. This budget proposes **providing \$3.3 million** to the Wake County Board of Elections, so it can hold the March presidential primary election and operate 11 early voting sites across the county.

Facilities, Technology & Infrastructure

IT Security

- ▶ The county has more than 10,000 connected devices, more than 17,000 user accounts and 430 terabytes of data stored onsite, and the threat to them is real. Cities and counties nationwide have fallen victim to phishing and ransomware scams that compromised their information and cost them millions.



10,000
connected
devices

17,000



user accounts



430
terabytes
of data
stored onsite

There is no fail-safe option to prevent it, but we can mitigate our risk by adding more protections. In this budget, we recommend investing an **additional \$1.7 million** in IT security and network improvements.

▶ Project Management

This year, our Facilities Design & Construction Department estimates it will manage 110 projects and conduct nearly 300 real estate transactions – a 10% increase from FY18. It also anticipates a slate of new projects will come from the \$120 million parks bond passed in November and the \$106 million Human Services Facilities Plan. By **adding two project managers**, we ensure these construction projects will come in on time and on budget.

▶ Facility Maintenance

We maintain more than five million square feet of county buildings. Our facilities are where our residents go for services and where our employees go to work. In this budget, we recommend **adding three facility staff** to maintain our buildings and respond to occupants' needs.

Organizational Support

▶ DMV Administrative Fee Increase

Our Tax Administration Department not only collects the commercial and residential property taxes for the county, but it also partners with the N.C. Division of Motor Vehicles to collect vehicle property taxes.

DMV requires us to reimburse the state for fees related to the service. In FY20, the state is raising these mandated overhead fees, so we've included an **additional \$450,000** in this budget to cover the cost increase.



DMV requires us to reimburse the state for fees

▶ LGERS Contribution Increase

Another area where we must add funding in the budget to cover state requirements is LGERS, the Local Government Employees Retirement System. The state is raising the employer's contribution rate, and the impact is significant. We have **added \$1.56 million** to this budget to cover the mandated increase.

Quality of Life

▶ Parks, Greenways and Open Space

Every year, our parks, greenways and open space boast more than one-million visits. We want to protect these pristine places, so future generations can enjoy their beauty, as well. To do that, we recommend **adding two positions** to watch over our more than 7,600 acres of open space and make sure no one uses it for anything other than its intended purposes.



▶ Wake County Public Libraries



22 libraries

We operate 22 libraries countywide, and last year, they recorded nearly 3.4-million visits. We want to make the outstanding educational and cultural opportunities our libraries offer even more easily accessible to our residents.



3.4 million
visits in 2018

1.5 million
books and
online materials
available




10,000
programs
offered in 2018

This budget would **open new and improved libraries** in Cary, Fuquay-Varina and Morrisville. It would also **expand Sunday hours** to six more libraries, and it would **eliminate late fees** for all library patrons.

Board Goals

The Wake County Board of Commissioners' goal areas helped guide the development of this budget recommendation.



Community Health



Economic Strength



Education



Great Government



Growth and Sustainability



Public Safety



Social and Economic Vitality

Wake County Board of Commissioners



Jessica Holmes
Chair/District 3



Greg Ford
Vice Chair/District 6



Sig Hutchinson
District 1



Matt Calabria
District 2



Susan Evans
District 4



James West
District 5



Vickie Adamson
District 7

David Ellis
County Manager

Denise Hogan
Clerk to the Board

Scott W. Warren
County Attorney

Next Steps

The board is expected to consider adoption of the county's FY20 Recommended Budget at its 5 p.m. meeting on June 3. It will be held in Room 2700 on the second floor of the Wake County Justice Center, which is located at 301 S. McDowell St., Raleigh.

In the meantime, you can learn more about the proposal by visiting:

wakegov.com/budget

