

WAKE COUNTY

Recommended Budget

DAVID ELLIS

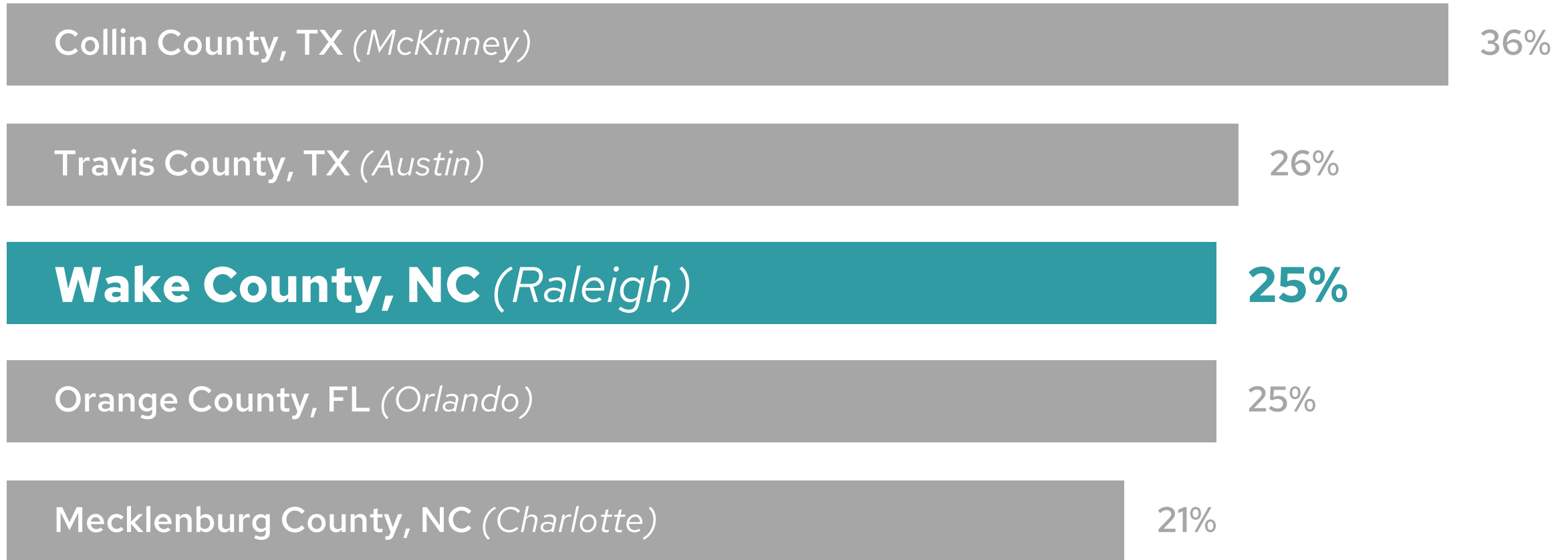
County Manager



Wake County is growing

62 → **22,000**
people per day people per year

We're the 3rd fastest growing county in the U.S.







That need for **more** is putting pressure on our services and the county employees who deliver them.

COVID-19
magnified
where we
couldn't meet
the needs of
every resident



The pandemic highlighted disparities in the county





- Strive to keep county tax burden low
- Demand for services is increasing
- Funding & staffing are not keeping pace
- Growing requests from WCPSS & Wake Tech

The Economy Dichotomy



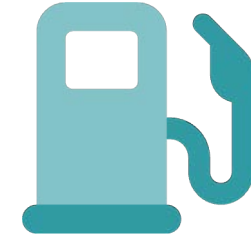
Economic trends



Retail sales
have increased
tremendously
since 2020



Inflation is at a
40-year high &
measures 9.1%
in the South



Gas prices
have risen
since the war in
Ukraine started

The cost of housing is rapidly increasing

↓ Supply is **low**

↑ Demand is **high**

Median real estate sale
price in March 2022 was
\$430,000



Rental costs are on the rise

Two-bedroom
apartment in Raleigh:
\$1,558/month

— Increase of **22%**
from last year



Economic shifts can happen in an instant



Our labor market is very competitive

Employees can **work from anywhere**



Employers are **restoring jobs** cut during the pandemic



New companies are coming here



The Great Resignation



The effects of burn out

Indeed survey:

52%

felt burned
out

67%

said it got
worse during
the pandemic

Annual financial costs of
job-related stress:

**550
million**

workdays
lost

**\$500
billion**

cost to the
U.S. economy

Burn out is not just a buzz word

It's a real problem.

Our turnover rate is at 16%, the highest it's been in decades.



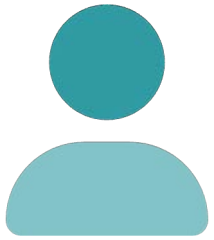
“ It would be nice to have only one job, my job here at Wake County, but I do not think that is in the cards anytime soon. However, the email you sent gave me a glimmer of hope!

Andrea

Wake County School Nurse

In an email to the County Manager

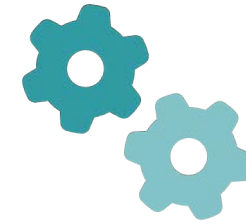
If we don't do more for our employees, we will...



Lose top
talent



**Do less
good** in our
community



**Slow
progress** on
board goals

**“ We have to put on our
own oxygen mask first.**

Must stabilize our organizational needs to better address our community's needs



Fiscal Year 2023 Recommended Budget

It will address:

- Population growth
- Inflation
- Affordable housing shortage
- Tight labor market
- Rising demand for our services

Public Safety: Wake EMS



Wake EMS saw record 911 calls after lockdown

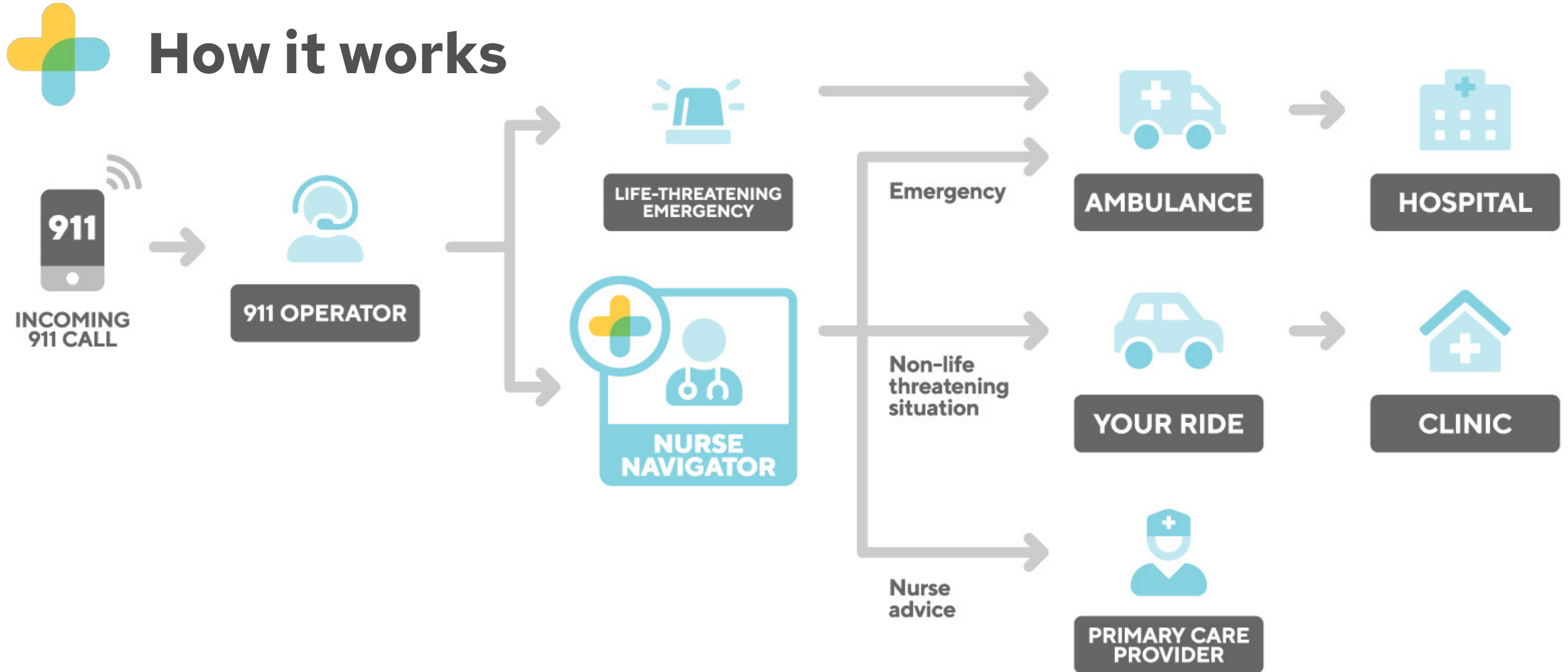
The “new normal”

Respond
to about
**10,000
calls**
per month

Increase
of about
**1,000
calls**
per month
from 2019



Launched Nurse Navigation Program to triage calls



Struggling to recruit and retain care providers

The causes

- The Great Resignation
- National EMS staffing shortage

Interested in applying?
wakegov.com/jobs



Investing in Wake EMS

Propose adding **new positions** to:



Increase
recruitment



Develop **new**
content for
training courses

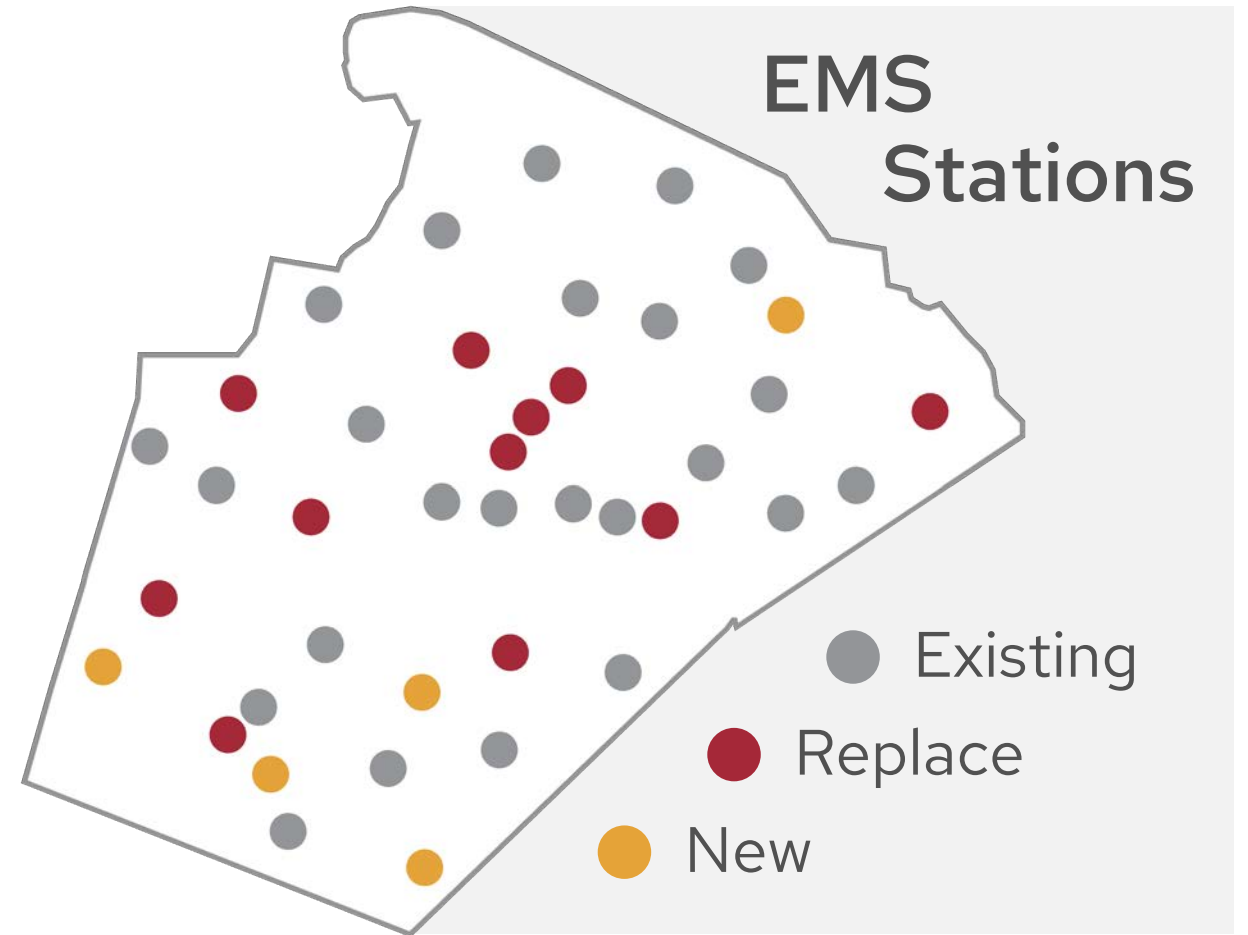


Reduce
downtime for
EMS vehicles

Investing in Wake EMS

Master Facilities Plan

- \$61 million over 7 years
- Upgrade and replace existing stations
- Build new stations in high-growth areas



Public Safety:

Wake County Sheriff's Office

Difficulty filling positions in the Wake County Sheriff's Office

Hardest to recruit and retain:

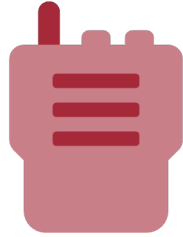
- Detention center officers and nurses



Investing in the Wake County Sheriff's Office



Add 4 nurses
to oversee
detainees with
mental health
needs



Replace safety
equipment for
deputies and
detention center
officers



Upgrade the
911 system in
the Wake County
Communications
Center

Investing in pre-trial services

Public Safety Assessment

- Uses 9 evidence-based questions to gauge if the person will re-offend and return to court
- May reduce the number of people in jail, saving money and resources



Public Safety: Fire Tax District

How the Fire Tax District works

It serves:

- Unincorporated areas of Wake County
- Town of Wendell

A tax is levied to pay for:

- Firefighters' salaries
- Safety gear and equipment
- Fire stations



**No Fire Tax increase in
Fiscal Year 2023**

Impacts of growth on call volume



911 calls
increased 17%
from 2020 to
2021 in the Fire
Tax District



Investing in the Fire Tax District



Propose adding **new positions** to address rising call volume and The Great Resignation



Will open **3 new fire stations** to serve areas outside of Apex, Garner and Fuquay-Varina

The Fire Tax District's long-range plan guides **analysis** and **decision-making**



We're growing our public safety teams to respond to the needs of our growing community

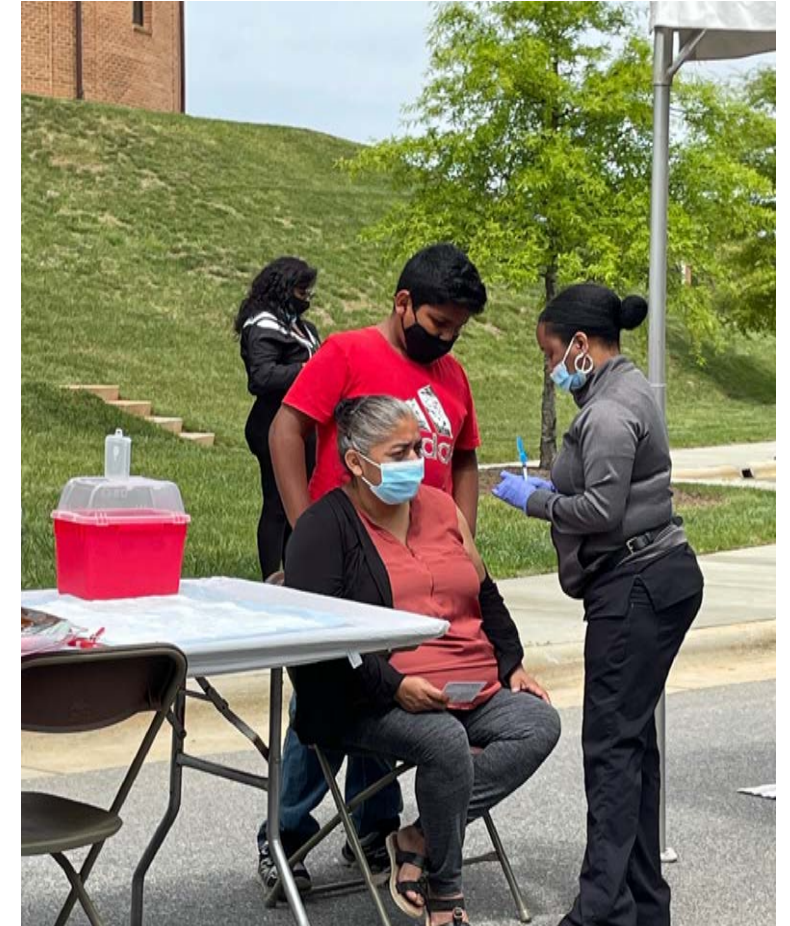


Health & Human Services



Access to quality health care is key to a long life

These community outreach efforts were successful, because the services we provided were **equitable** and **accessible**



Need to expand services at our regional centers

Propose adding new positions to expand:

- Family planning
- Pre-natal care
- Child health care
- Sexually transmitted infection services
- Immunizations

Benefits



Each clinical location will have a minimum of 6 care providers



Will increase efficiency and reduce transportation barriers

Investing in Social Services

Must protect children at risk of abuse and neglect

Propose expanding services to continue compliance with the **Family First Prevention Services Act**

Benefits

- Will meet the new requirements of the federal mandate
- Will improve family outcomes and reduce the number of children who enter the Child Welfare System

Investing in Public Health

Need to provide increased medical care

Propose adding:

- **2 school nurses** to serve the 4 new schools opening this fall
- **1 nurse supervisor** to create our own training programs for our nursing staff



Children are struggling with mental health issues

 **31%**

increase in ER visits for
suspected suicide attempts
among adolescents

 **51%**

increase in ER visits for
suspected suicide attempts
among girls ages 12-17

Investing in Behavioral Health

Must respond to rising referrals from WCPSS for student mental health care

Propose:

- Partnering with Alliance Health to add 2 members to the school-based mental health teams
- Will support students and their families



Investing in Behavioral Health

Need to provide mental health care for more adults in crisis

Propose continuing to fund and expand existing programs

- Example: Enhanced Mobile Crisis Response Team
- Will help provide faster, more efficient care



Investing in Social Services

Must protect growing number of adults at risk of abuse and neglect

Propose adding **more staff** to manage expanding caseload

- Will help keep residents healthy and safe

A large white upward-pointing arrow is positioned to the left of the text '46%', which is rendered in a very large, bold, white sans-serif font. The entire graphic is set against a dark blue rectangular background.

↑ 46%

increase in adult
protective services
cases since 2017

Housing Affordability



Investing in Housing Affordability

Add **\$4.2 million** in each fiscal year of our capital plan to preserve and add more housing units

Continue investing in the **Familiar Faces pilot program**, which provides short-term housing support

Continue our **partnerships** with:

- Alliance Health
- Resources for Human Development
- Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholars

In Wake County, we
truly believe that
housing is health.

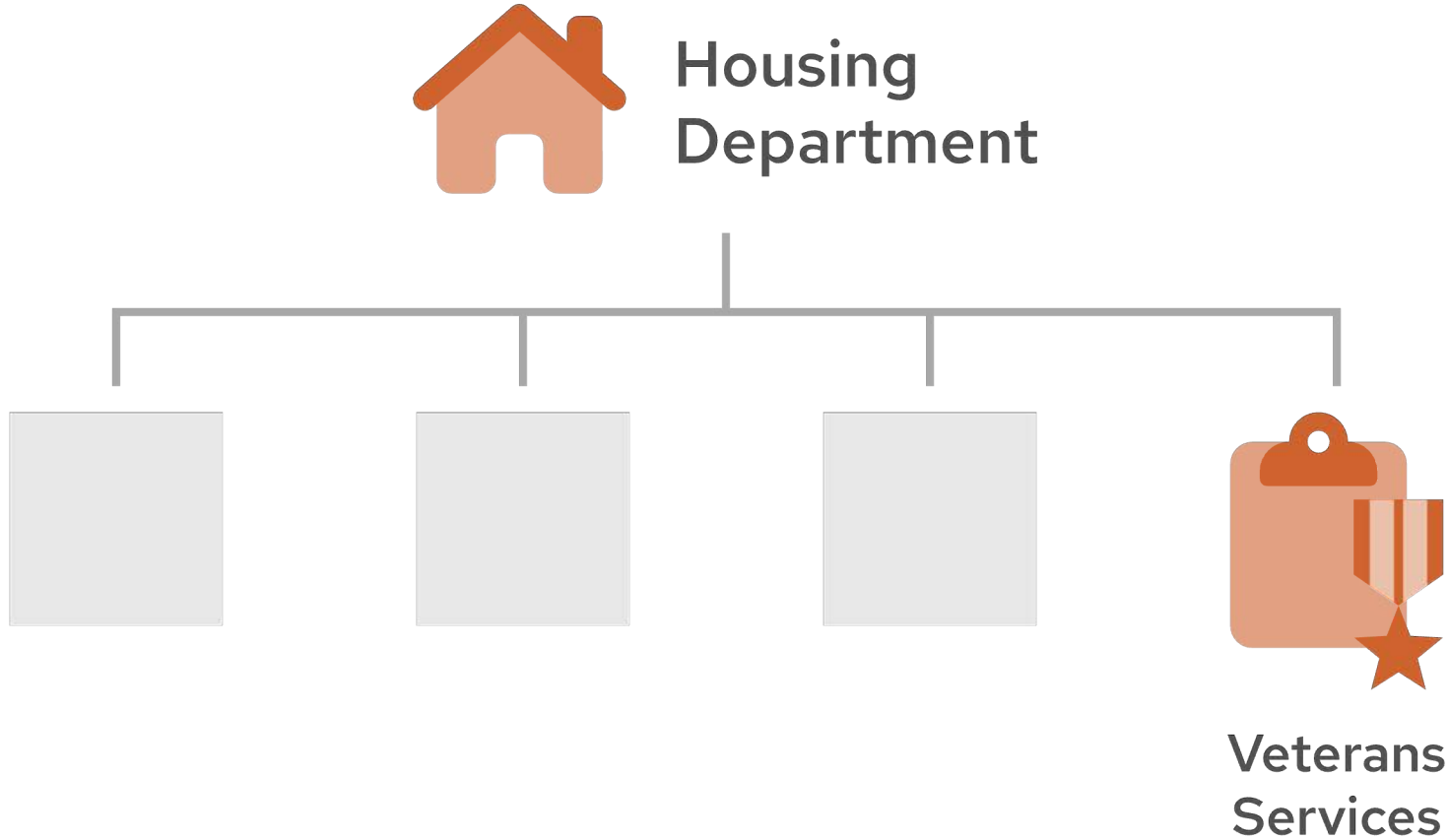


We're home to the most military veterans in NC

54,000
veterans in
Wake County



Realigning Veterans Services



- Will review the results of the board-initiated **Veterans Services Task Force**
- Determine how to provide **even better service** to those who have served all of us

Environmental Services & Development Needs



Construction projects are on the rise



It's creating greater demand for our services

We conduct inspections in:

- Knightdale
- Rolesville
- Wendell
- Zebulon
- Unincorporated areas



↑ 15%

increase in building
plan reviews over
the past year

Investing in development needs

Propose adding:

- **More inspectors** to ensure efficient plan review for builders
- **Staff and software** to improve access to spatial data and more quickly map properties



Investing in environmental services

Propose adding:

- **More positions** for septic system inspections and on-site wastewater permitting to meet demand
- A new **post-construction stormwater team** to ensure control measures are properly maintained



Increasing tip fees to fund solid waste operations

South Wake Landfill

- Increase \$5 to \$37/ton
- First increase in 14 years

East Wake Transfer Station

- Increase \$8 to \$49/ton
- First increase in 9 years





Investing in Wake County's open space

Propose:

- Creating a **farmland preservation program**
- Adding a position to lead the program



Elections



Nearly 800,000 people are registered to vote in Wake County

↑ 24%

increase over the
past 6 years



Investing in the 3 ways to cast a ballot



Funding **absentee voting by mail** to meet demand



Funding **early voting** for the November election to increase access



Adding **2 new precincts** to decrease lines and wait times on Election Day

Investing in secure elections

It takes about 2,400 workers and 540 voting machines to hold an election

Propose:

- **Adding positions** to oversee training and equipment management



Investing in temporary election workers

Propose:

- **Increasing pay** for agency administrative staff from \$15/hour to \$18/hour
 - Will help attract skilled staff in this tight labor market



Parks & Libraries







Investing in our parks and preserves

Propose:

- Moving forward with construction of Beech Bluff County Park
- Developing plans for 3 new nature preserves
 - Will protect 7,500 acres



Expanding access to our libraries

Propose:

- Adding **10 hours/week** to the schedule
- Will restore the hours cut in FY 2021 due to the pandemic



Investing in library renovations

Propose:

- Devoting **\$20.5 million** over the next 7 years to updating and maintaining library facilities
- These include:
 - Library Administration Building
 - West Regional Library
 - Holly Springs Community Library
 - Oberlin Regional Library



Facilities, Fleet & Digital Infrastructure



The cost of maintaining our infrastructure is rising

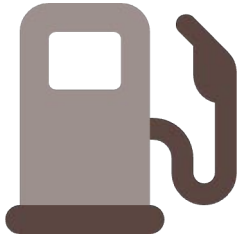


5+ million

square feet of
buildings in our
portfolio county-wide

- Must keep them safe, secure and well maintained
- More expensive due to inflation, supply chain issues and the war in Ukraine

Filling the budgetary gaps caused by increased costs

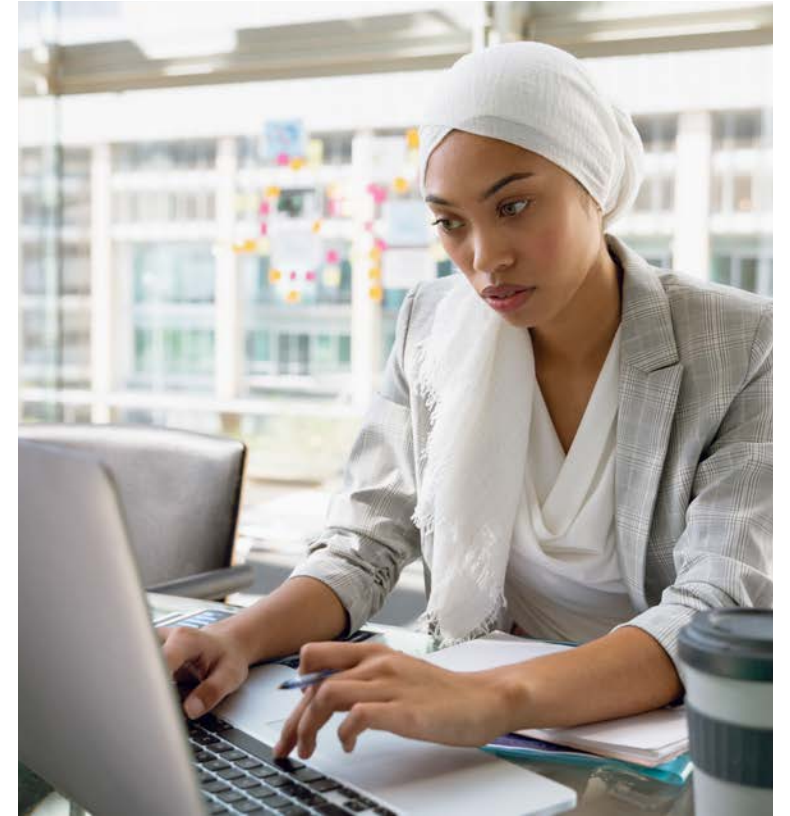
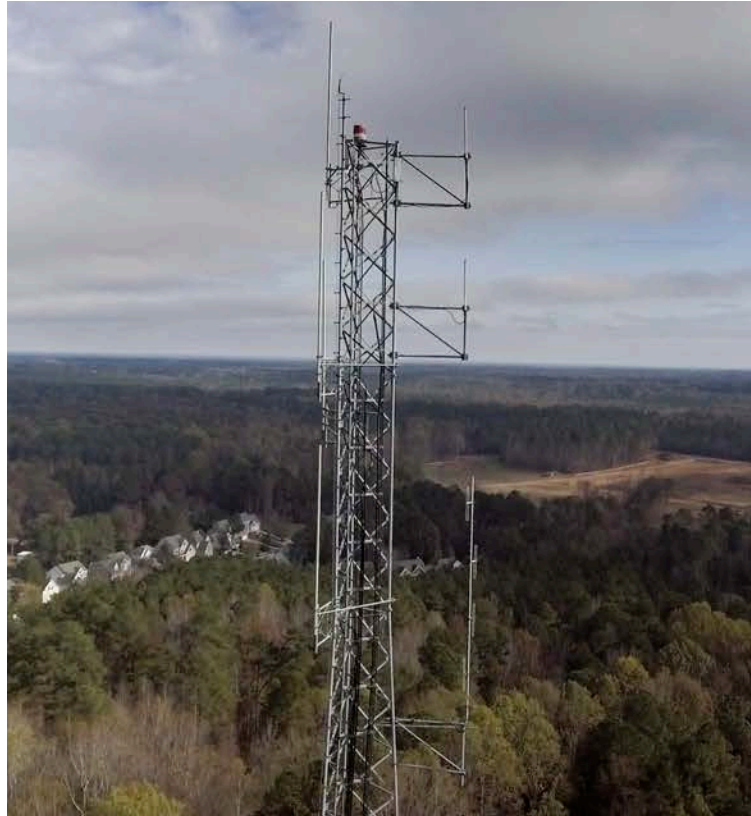


Propose adding
\$1.6 million for
escalating fuel costs



Recommend restoring
funding cuts made in FY
2021 to **equipment and
facility maintenance**

Using alternative funding sources to pay for eligible infrastructure projects



Restoring funding for debt and capital projects

Propose:

- Shifting **0.21 cents** of the property tax back to debt and capital
- Moved it to the operating budget in FY 2021 as a short-term strategy to meet needs



Expanding our digital infrastructure

Propose:

- Modernizing workspaces
- Funding the technology needed for hybrid and remote work
- Adding systems to eliminate paper and manage documents



Investing in our digital infrastructure



Adding **new systems** to automate and modernize workflows



Purchasing **new tools** to make data easier to find, use and export



Increasing **funding for cyber security** to protect the county and our information

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion



Need to build internal capacity to implement our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion plan



This is about creating **big changes** over time by taking **small steps** every day



Investing in diversity, equity and inclusion

Propose:

- **Adding positions** to support our DEI office and its efforts
 - Will collaborate with the Chamber on the Blueprint for Dismantling Systemic Racism
 - Will support our Government Alliance on Race and Equity employee survey



Investing in Employees







Committed to making Wake County the Employer of Choice

**We must
increase pay
to recruit
and retain
top talent**

Propose:

- **3.1% cost-of-living increase**
- **Performance pay**
 - At least an additional **2% pay increase** for successful contributors
 - Up to a **4-to-6% pay increase** for outstanding contributors

Wake EMS: A pay increase success story

In March 2022

- Shifted pay ranges for EMTs and paramedics
- Boosted salaries for most EMS employees

Results



Wake County is now a **leader in pay** for EMS personnel in NC



Applications are coming in at a **pace we haven't seen in years**

Bringing stability to our organization



Adding **213.4 positions** across all departments to meet increased demand for service



Will **reduce employee workloads** and relieve pressure and stress

GOAL: Better serve our community

Investing in our team's professional development

Propose:

- Funding programs to help the county grow its own talent pipeline
- Gaining skills and knowledge will advance employees' career paths and help retain them



Education



Pre-school gives children an academic advantage



Investing in Wake County Smart Start

Propose:

- Adding **\$2.6 million** to support Pre-K for income-eligible 4-year-olds
 - \$840,000 funding increase
 - Smart Start will use their additional funds to pay their Pre-K teachers more



Investing in Wake ThreeSchool

Propose:

- Providing **\$2 million** to Smart Start
- Will use the funding to serve 100 income-eligible 3-year-olds at multiple pilot sites



About
160,000
students in the
Wake County
Public School
System



Investing in WCPSS

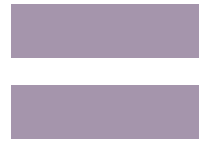
Propose:

- Providing **\$582.25 million** to the school district
- **\$38 million increase** from FY 2022
- This amount is well above what Wake County is statutorily required to fund



Investing in WCPSS

\$582.5 million
for operations



\$302.5 million
for debt and capital

\$885 million
or **52%** of our
budget

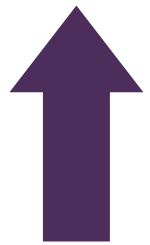
Wake Tech serves 70,000+ students at 9 locations



Investing in Wake Tech

Propose:

- Providing **\$29 million** to the community college



A **\$1.4 million increase** from FY 2022



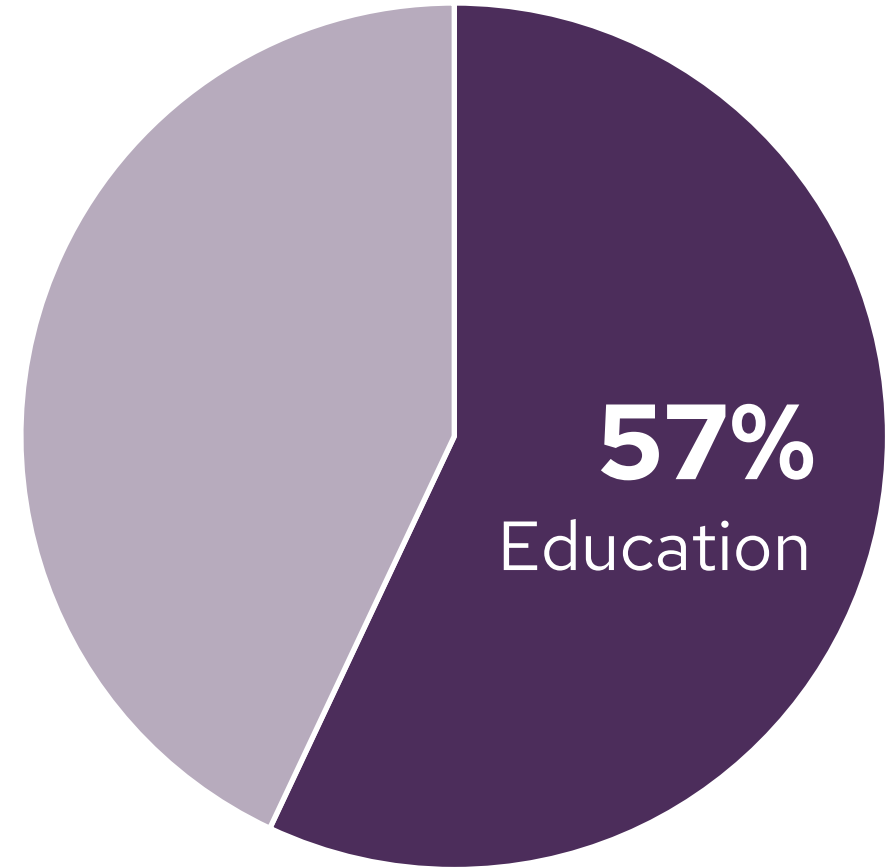
Investing in Wake Tech



Investing in education

\$968.1 million

for operating and
debt and capital



Fiscal Year 2023 Recommended Budget

\$1,705,950,000

- Includes a **1.5-cent** property tax increase in the General Fund, bringing the property tax rate to **61.5 cents**
- First proposed property tax increase in 3 years

Fiscal Year 2023 Recommended Budget



The property tax increase will generate an additional **\$29.2 million** for the General Fund



About **\$50 more per year** for an average assessed home value of \$337,000

Want to work for Wake?

Come join our team!

Scan the QR code to easily access the many positions we have available on our website.

wakegov.com/jobs

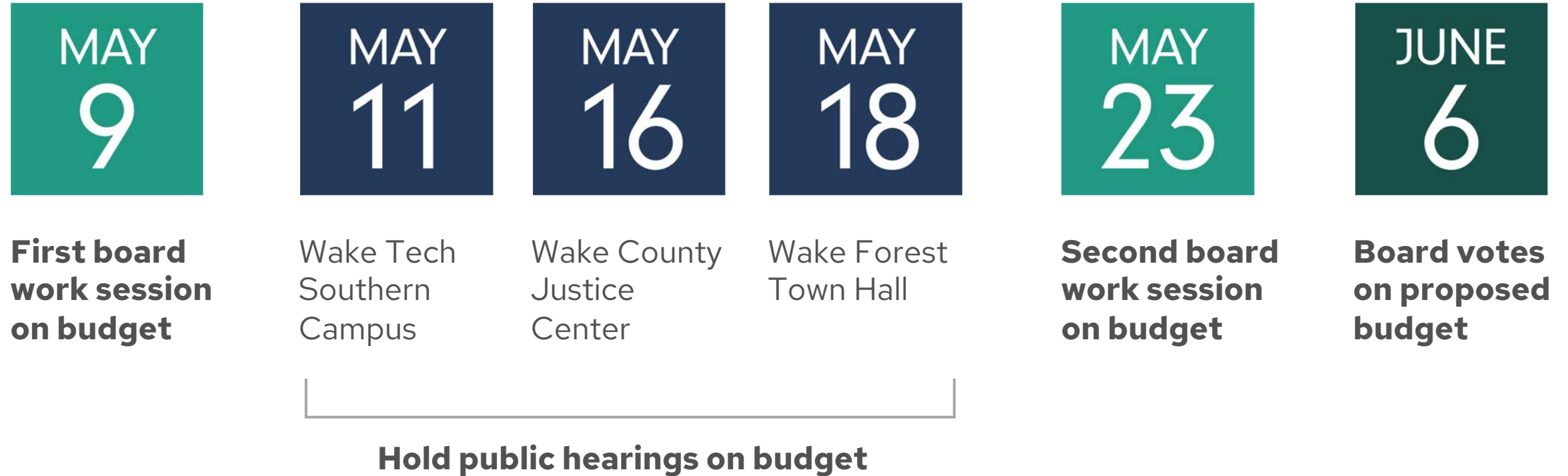


NEXT STEPS

We're now accepting comments about the proposed budget until May 18 via our website, wakegov.com/budget



Fiscal Year 2023 Recommended Budget Schedule



For more information on
the FY23 Recommended
Budget, visit:

wakegov.com/budget

