

Supplemental Information

GLOSSARY

Account Number - the accounting designation for revenue and expenditure line items. The account number consists of a three digit fund number, a four digit division and a four or five digit object code number.

Accrual Basis - a basis of accounting in which transactions are recognized at the time they are incurred, as opposed to when cash is received or spent.

Ad Valorem Taxes - taxes levied on real and personal property based on assessed value.

Allocate - to set apart budgeted funds for specific purposes (i.e., capital outlay).

Annual Budget - a budget covering a single fiscal year (e.g., July 1-June 30).

Appropriation - a specified dollar amount earmarked for a projected expense legally authorized by the Board of Commissioners.

Assessed Valuation - the value of real estate and personal property as determined by tax assessors. This value is used as the basis for levying taxes.

Assessment - the process of determining the value of real and personal property for taxation purposes.

Assessment Roll - an official list of real and personal property containing legal descriptions, ownership and assessed values.

Asset - a resource owned or held by a government which has monetary value.

Authority - a municipal or other public agency that performs a specific function. An authority is usually financed from fees or service charges imposed and collected by a governing body but may otherwise function independently.

Authorized Bonds - bonds that have been legally authorized, but that may or may not have been sold. Authorized bonds may be issued or sold at any time.

Authorized Positions - employee positions which are authorized in the adopted budget, to be filled during the year.

Balanced Budget - current operating revenues will be sufficient to support current operating expenditures.

Bond - a written promise to pay a specific amount of money, called principal or face value at a specified future date, called the maturity date, along with periodic interest paid at a specified percentage of the principal (interest rate). Bonds are typically used for long-term debt to pay for specific capital expenditures.

Bond Refinancing - the payoff and re-issuance of bonds, to obtain better interest rates and/or bond conditions.

Budget - a proposed plan for raising and spending money for specified programs, functions, activities or objectives during a fiscal year.

Budget Document - a formal document presented to the Board of Commissioners containing the County's financial plan

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for a fiscal year. The budget document is presented in two phases -- preliminary and final. The final budget document reflects the budget as adopted by the Board of Commissioners.

Budget Message - the County Manager's written overview of the proposed budget addressed to the Board of Commissioners. The budget message addresses the major budget issues against the background of financial experience in recent years, and presents recommendations made by the County Manager.

Budget Ordinance - an ordinance that levies taxes and appropriates revenues for specified purposes, functions, activities or objectives during a fiscal year.

Budgetary Basis - refers to the basis of accounting used to estimate financing sources and uses in the budget. This generally takes one of three forms - GAAP, cash, or modified accrual.

Capital Asset - tangible property of significant value that has a useful life of more than one year. Includes such items as land, buildings, improvements other than buildings, and equipment.

Capital Budget - a financial plan for projected capital projects containing expenditures and resources covering a fiscal year.

Capital Improvement Program - a long-range plan of proposed capital improvement projects, which includes estimated project costs and funding over a specified period of years. The capital improvement program is updated annually to reassess capital needs during the preparation of the capital budget.

Capital Outlay - expenditures budgeted to purchase or add to fixed assets costing \$5,000 or more.

Capital Project - major construction, acquisition, or renovation activities which add value to a government's physical assets or significantly increase their useful life. (Also called capital improvements.)

Capital Reserve Fund - a fund established for the purpose of receiving transfers of monies from other funds in order to build fund balance for a future capital outlay or to set aside funds for future debt service payments.

Certificates of Participation - debt that is secured by the capital project itself and is issued without voter authorization.

Consumer Price Index (CPI) - a statistical description of price levels provided by the U.S. Department of Labor. The index is used as a measure of the increase in the cost of living (i.e., economic inflation).

Contingency - an appropriation to cover unanticipated events that may occur during the fiscal year. The Board of Commissioners must approve all contingency transfers.

Continuation - budget requests that indicate the spending level required to maintain service provision at its current level.

Cost-of-living Adjustment (COLA) - an increase in salaries to offset the adverse effect of inflation on employees' compensation.

County Appropriation - reflects discretionary general fund revenues used to meet an operating department's cost. Most revenues in the general fund are not program linked and can be used to fund all operations. Several examples are: Ad Valorem Taxes, Sales Taxes, Unrestricted Intergovernmental and Interest Earnings.

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Debt Service - the sum of money required to pay installments of principal and interest on bonds, notes, and other evidences of debt accruing within a fiscal year.

Deficit - an excess of expenditures over revenue receipts.

Department - an organizational unit responsible for carrying out a major government function.

Depreciation - the expiration of service life of capital assets due to wear and tear, deterioration, inadequacy or obsolescence.

Disbursement - expenditure of monies from an account.

Distinguished Budget Presentation Awards Program - a voluntary, annual awards program administered by the Government Finance Officers Association to encourage governments to prepare effective budget documents.

Encumbrance - a financial commitment for services, contracts, or goods, which have not, as yet, been delivered or performed. Normally found in the form of a purchase order, contract, or formal agreement that is chargeable to an appropriation and for which a part of the appropriation is reserved.

Enterprise Fund - a fund established to account for operations that are financed and operated in a manner similar to private business. The intent is that the full cost of providing goods or services be financed through charges and fees, thus removing the expense from the tax rate. The Landfill fund is an example.

Expenditures - amount of money actually paid or obligated for payment from County funds.

Expense - charges incurred (whether paid immediately or unpaid) for operations, maintenance, interest, or other charges.

Fiscal Year (FY) - an annual accounting period for the compilation of fiscal operations. As defined by North Carolina General Statutes G.S. 159-8, the fiscal year begins on July 1 and ends on June 30.

Fixed Assets - assets of a long-term character that are intended to continue to be held or used, such as land, buildings, improvements other than buildings, machinery and equipment.

Forecast - an estimation of revenues and expenses for the current fiscal year to be used to determine the expected balances at the end of the year.

Full-time Equivalent Position (FTE) - the unit of accounting for employee positions where part-time positions are converted to the decimal equivalent of a full-time position based on 2,080 hours per year.

Fund - a fiscal and accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts recording cash and other resources, together with all related liabilities and residual equities or balances, and changes therein, for the purpose of carrying on specific activities or attaining certain objectives in accordance with special regulations, restrictions or limitations.

Fund Balance - represents the excess of fund current assets over current liabilities. For accounting purposes, fund balance is calculated as of year-end and is based on the difference between actual revenues and expenditures for the fiscal year. If revenues exceed expenditures, fund balance is positive. Fund balance may be carried forward and appropriated to finance expenditures in the next fiscal year.

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Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) - uniform minimum standard of and guidelines for financial accounting and reporting. These standards govern the form and content of an entity's basic financial statements. GAAP encompasses the conventions, rules and procedures necessary to define acceptable accounting practices at a particular time.

General Fund - a fund which provides for the accounting of all financial resources except those designated for other funds. Most basic government services, such as public safety, tax administration, personnel and finance are accounted for in this fund.

General Obligation Bonds (GO) - bonds issued by a government that are backed by the full faith and credit of its taxing authority.

Goal - a statement of broad direction, purpose or intent based on the needs of the community.

Grants - a contribution or gift of cash or other assets, in most cases from another government, to be used for a specific purpose. For example, a grant from the State of North Carolina may be made to finance a public health program.

Interest and Penalties Receivable on Taxes - uncollected interest and penalties on property taxes.

Interfund Accounts - accounts that reflect transfers between funds.

Intergovernmental Revenues - revenues from other governments (state, federal, other local) that can be in the form of grants, shared revenues or entitlements.

Internal Service Fund - a fund established from the financing of goods or services provided by one department or agency to other departments or agencies on a cost reimbursement basis.

Lease-Purchase Agreement - a contractual agreement by which capital assets are acquired over a period of time through lease payments.

Levy - the amount of tax, service charges and assessments imposed by a government.

Liability - debt or other obligations arising out of transactions in the past which must be liquidated, renewed, or refunded at some future date. The term does not include encumbrances.

Long-term Debt - debt with a maturity of more than one year after the date of issuance.

Mandate - any responsibility, action or procedure that is imposed by one government on another through constitutional, legislative, administrative, executive or judicial action as a direct order, or that is required as a condition of aid.

Modified Accrual Accounting Basis - basis of accounting whereby revenues are recorded when measurable and available, and expenditures, with few exceptions, are recorded when goods and services are received and the liabilities for them are created.

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Municipal Bond - a bond issued by a state or local government.

Non-operating Revenues - income received by a government not directly attributable to providing a service. An example would be interest on investments.

Objective - a specific statement about what is to be accomplished or achieved for a particular program during a given time period.

Operating Budget - a plan of financial operation which encompasses an estimate of proposed expenditures for the fiscal year and the proposed means of financing them (revenues).

Ordinance - a legislative enactment by the governing body of the County. It has the full force of law within the County if it is not in conflict with any higher form of law.

Performance Indicators - specific quantitative and qualitative measures of work performed as an objective of specific departments or programs.

Performance Measure - data collected to determine how effective or efficient a program is in achieving its objectives.

Personnel Services - items of expenditures in the budget for salaries and wages paid for services by County employees, including fringe benefit costs associated with County employment.

Productivity - maximizing the use of resources (personnel and dollars) to achieve an effective result at the least possible cost.

Program - a service or services for which expenditures are made from several general ledger accounts which are combined into a single budgetary unit.

Program Changes - budget requests that reflect funding requirements for a change in programs or service levels.

Proprietary Funds - funds operated like a business and charging user fees. Enterprise and Internal Service Funds fall within this classification.

Revenue Neutral Tax Rate - the rate estimated to produce revenue for the next fiscal year equal to the revenue that would have been produced for the next fiscal year by the current tax rate if no reappraisal had occurred.

Referendum - presenting an issue to the voters of the County where a majority of voters decide on the issue.

Reserve - an account designated for a portion of the fund balance to be used for a specific purpose.

Resources - total dollars available for appropriations including estimated revenues, fund transfers and beginning fund balances.

Revenue - income received by the County from various sources used to finance its operations.

Revenue Bonds - when a government issues bonds which do not pledge the full faith and credit of the jurisdiction, it issues limited liability revenue bonds. Typically, pledges are made to dedicate one specific revenue source to repay these bonds. Revenue bonds do not require voter approval under state law.

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Revenue Estimates - formal estimate of how much revenue will be earned from a specific revenue source from some future period.

Shared Revenues - revenues levied and collected by one government and shared with another on a pre-determined basis.

Service Area - a title for the grouping of departments according to common areas of service.

Special Assessment - a levy on certain properties to defray all or part of the costs associated with improvements or services that will benefit those properties.

Special Revenue Fund - a fund used to account for proceeds of specific revenue sources that are legally restricted to expenditures for specified purposes.

Statute - a written law enacted by a duly organized and constituted legislative body.

Tax Base - the total assessed valuation of real property within the County.

Tax Levy - the total amount of revenue to be raised from the property tax levied in the budget ordinance.

Tax Rate - the amount of tax levied per \$100 assessed valuation.

Taxes - compulsory charges levied by a government to finance services performed for the common benefit. This term does not include specific charges made against particular persons or property for current or permanent benefits such as special assessments. It does not include charges for services such as water and sewer service charges.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) – financing procedure used by many local governments for redevelopment and improvement projects on existing structures. The cost of the improvements is assessed to future tax revenues by each taxing unit that levies taxes against the property. The taxing unit at the local level is responsible for determining how much of the increase in property tax due to the improvement will be used to repay the construction costs. The property that is seeking to use tax increment financing must be located within the city's jurisdiction.

Trust and Agency Fund - a fund used to account for assets held by the County in a trustee capacity or as an agent for individuals, private organizations, other governments, and/or other funds.

Two-Thirds Bond - general obligation bonds that can be issued by local government without voter authorization under a formula set by the state allowing issuance of bonds equal to two-thirds of the previous year's net debt reduction.

Unencumbered Balance - the amount of an appropriation that is neither expended nor encumbered. It is basically the amount of money still available for future purposes.

Unreserved Fund Balance - the portion of a fund's balance that is not restricted for a specific purpose and is available for general appropriation.

User Charges - the payment of a fee for direct receipt of a public service by the person benefiting from the service, such as utility charges and emergency medical fees. Also known as user fees.