



Guilford County - Legislative Agenda

Advancing Livability as One Guilford

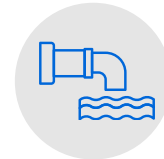
Regional Water and Sewer

Reliable regional water and sewer infrastructure supports Guilford County growth, protects public health, and prepares sites for jobs, housing, and future investment.



Why it matters to Guilford County

Regional water and wastewater infrastructure is essential to Guilford County because it supports economic growth, housing development, and reliable public services across a large, interconnected county. Strong regional systems help communities share costs, expand capacity efficiently, and ensure long-term readiness for jobs, residents, and future investment.



PTRWA plans to increase capacity from 14.7M gallons per day to 26.7M gallons per day to meet the region's growing demand.



Impact

Coordinated regional systems can reduce costs, strengthen readiness for future growth and emergencies, and protect public health and environmental quality.

1.6 M+ people in the Piedmont Triad rely on the region's rivers, lakes, and reservoirs to support clean drinking water.

150 contaminants routinely monitored and treated by PTRWA.



2027 State & Federal Legislative Ask

Advocate for the Piedmont Triad Regional Water Authority in efforts to develop a regional water and wastewater system serving Guilford and Randolph counties, including securing state funding to support implementation and advance the project.



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Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act

The federal government provides funding to state and local governments to support the construction, maintenance, and improvement of roads, bridges, transit systems, and other transportation infrastructure.



Why it matters to Guilford County

Guilford County's central location and connections to I-40, I-85, rail, transit, and freight corridors are essential to residents, employers, and the movement of goods. The legislation would reauthorize federal surface transportation programs, including funding for roads, bridges, multimodal infrastructure and rail safety.



1,883 miles of state maintained roads in Guilford County and 104 miles of interstate

550,000
residents.



Impact

Long-term federal transportation funding would support safer roads and bridges, improved mobility, reliable transit, freight access, and infrastructure investments needed to accommodate continued population and economic growth.

138,000
daily inbound commuters.

86,000
Projected population growth over next 20 years.



2027 Federal Legislative Ask

Support enactment of the Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act (BUILD America 250) to strengthen federal investment in roads, bridges, transit, and other transportation infrastructure that supports Guilford County's mobility and economic growth.



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Property Tax Relief

As home values rise across Guilford County, targeted property tax relief can help seniors, disabled residents, and veterans remain in their homes while protecting local stability.



Why it matters to Guilford County

Property tax relief programs must be authorized by the State. With legislative leadership, the County could provide additional property tax relief for seniors, disabled veterans, and fixed-income households.



A typical Guilford County homeowner pays about \$2,000 annually in property taxes.



Impact

Updating targeted relief programs helps longtime residents remain in their homes, preserve neighborhood stability, and protect vulnerable families from being priced out by rising assessments.

29K

Veterans call Guilford County home.

16%

of Guilford County residents are Seniors.

\$38,800

current
Elderly/Disabled
Homestead Exclusion
income limit.



2027 State Legislative Ask

Advocate for property tax relief through an increase in the income cap for the Elderly or Disabled Homestead Exclusion property tax program and a 100% property tax exemption for qualifying disabled veterans.



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Expanding Childcare Access

Childcare is essential infrastructure for economic development – it helps parents work, children learn, and Guilford County grow.



Why it matters to Guilford County

More than 44% of children in Guilford County live in households experiencing poverty or low income. Childcare costs can prevent parents and caregivers from participating fully in the workforce. At the same time, low wages and early childhood educator shortages have contributed to a 10% decline in licensed child care facilities in Guilford County, placing additional strain on the system.



The average annual cost of care for high-quality 2-year old care in Guilford County is **\$12,193**.

\$66,027
median household income.



Impact

High-quality childcare improves school readiness for children and empowers caregivers to work. A robust workforce is foundational for current and future economic development.

31%
of children age 0-5 are enrolled in early childcare.

\$13.50
average hourly wage for a Guilford County early childhood educator.



2027 State Legislative Ask

Support legislation similar to HB 1066 and HB 1086 to strengthen North Carolina's early childhood workforce, improve affordability, and expand child care capacity.



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SNAP/FNS Penalty Cost Sharing

SB 257 developed a cost share formula to spread the impact of North Carolina's FNS error rate to all 100 counties.



Why it matters to Guilford County

H.R. 1 established a potential federal cost-sharing obligation for Food and Nutrition Services benefits when a state's payment error rate exceeds the federal threshold. SB 257 created a mechanism for allocating a portion of any resulting state obligation to counties. The county assessment consists of a flat amount equal to 0.75% of each county's base-year sales tax allocation, plus a proportional amount based on the county's share of the statewide payment-error dollars.



The error rate must be below 6% to avoid a penalty.

\$175 million in SNAP/FNS benefits distributed in Guilford County during a 12-month period.

103,489 households served in Guilford County.

7.01% FY2025 payment error rate for NC.

2.2% Guilford County's payment error rate.



Impact

Based on current estimates, the statewide obligation could total approximately \$150 million, with Guilford County's share estimated at \$12.6 million.



2027 State Legislative Ask

Modify the SNAP/FNS payment error rate penalty distribution, included in SB 257, to ensure counties that maintain payment error rates below the 6% federal threshold are not assessed penalties.

2027 Federal Legislative Ask

Delay implementation of H.R.1 and the penalties for payment error rates to provide more time for counties to implement technology enhancements and oppose unfunded mandates and changes in eligibility for federal programs that shift costs to counties.



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Emergency Ambulance Reimbursement

HB489 makes emergency care "in-network" for insurers and does not allow the insurance companies to declare emergency care "out of network" for policy holders.



Why it matters to Guilford County

Residents and visitors rely on EMS services 24/7 and 365 days a year. When emergencies happen and EMS provides transportation for care, patients can be left with a surprise bill if the EMS service is out-of-network. Balance Billing requires insurers to pay for medically necessary EMS transportation and limits out of pocket expenses for patients.



7:12 is the average EMS response time in Guilford County.



Impact

More predictable reimbursement would strengthen the financial sustainability of EMS services while limiting patient out-of-pocket costs and reducing uncertainty about network status.

85k+
annual EMS calls.

62k+
annual EMS billable transports.

\$1,052
average cost of an ALS EMS transport.



2027 State Legislative Ask

Support HB 489, or similar legislation, to strengthen the financial sustainability of county emergency medical services by authorizing additional reimbursement mechanisms, including balance billing, while maintaining appropriate patient protections.



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First Responder Network Authority Reauthorization Act

The First Responder Network Authority Reauthorization Act extends and strengthens FirstNet to ensure continued development, oversight, and operation of the nationwide public safety broadband network used by first responders.



Why it matters to Guilford County

Guilford County's Sheriff, EMS, rural fire districts, and other public safety agencies rely on FirstNet's dedicated broadband network to maintain reliable, interoperable communications during emergencies and disasters.



Impact

Reauthorizing FirstNet will ensure continued access to a secure, resilient communications network that strengthens emergency response, enhances responder safety, and supports coordination among public safety agencies.

93,759
calls to EMS.

55,510
calls to the Sheriff's
Office.

17,908
calls to County Fire
Departments.



2027 Federal Legislative Ask

Support the long-term reauthorization of FirstNet to ensure Guilford County's Sheriff's Office, rural fire districts, EMS, and other public safety agencies maintain access to a reliable, resilient, and interoperable broadband communications network.



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First Responders Retirement Parity Act

The First Responders Retirement Parity Act would allow the state's retirement plan to include certain rural fire districts.



Why it matters to Guilford County

Guilford County relies on nonprofit fire and emergency service organizations to provide critical frontline response, particularly in rural fire districts. The County supports 17 rural fire departments, 11 of which do not participate in the state retirement system.



Impact

Allowing eligible nonprofit first responders to participate in governmental retirement systems would improve retirement security and benefit parity, help local departments attract and retain qualified personnel, reduce turnover, and strengthen the long-term reliability of fire and emergency response services throughout Guilford County.

17
rural fire districts.

11
rural fire districts are not
in the retirement system.



2027 Federal Legislative Ask

Support enactment of the First Responders Retirement Parity Act (H.R. 2382) to remove federal barriers that prevent eligible nonprofit fire and emergency service organizations from participating in governmental retirement systems, promoting retirement parity and strengthening recruitment and retention of first responders.



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Amend the Medicaid Inmate Exclusion Policy

The federal Medicaid inmate payment exclusion generally prevents federal Medicaid funds from paying for most services provided to people held in public institutions, including pretrial detainees, except for qualifying inpatient care.



Why it matters to Guilford County

County jails are not designed to provide long-term mental health treatment, yet people in crisis may enter the justice system when community-based services are unavailable. Detention can also interrupt Medicaid-funded care, interrupt treatment, and make successful reentry more difficult, even for individuals who have not been convicted or sentenced.



Impact

The federal Medicaid exclusion shifts the cost of providing necessary physical and behavioral health care for people held in the Guilford County Detention Centers to the County and local taxpayers.

1,306

adults in county jail requiring access to medical services.

\$12 M+

spent in the prior year on medical services.



2027 Federal Legislative Ask

Support federal legislation to amend the Medicaid Inmate Exclusion Policy (MIEP) by allowing eligible pretrial detainees to maintain access to Medicaid benefits and supporting continuity of care before release, reducing the financial burden on counties while improving health and public safety outcomes.



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Educator Pay

According to the National Education Association's April 2026 data, North Carolina ranks 43rd in average teacher salary and 38th in average starting teacher salary.



Why it matters to Guilford County

The 2026 Appropriations Act provides state funding for FY 2026–27 to help eligible counties offer competitive teacher salary supplements. Counties with an adjusted market value of taxable real property below \$80 billion are eligible, bringing Guilford County into the program for the current fiscal year. Because future eligibility will be reconsidered by the General Assembly, continued access to this funding is not guaranteed.

The Appropriations Act also includes a 3% increase for classified pay.



How it's calculated:

- Taxable real property factor (65%)
- Median household income factor (25%)
- Effective tax rate factor (10%)

\$7,282 current average teacher supplement, ranked 23rd in the State.

\$5,000 maximum state-funded supplement per state-funded teacher.

62% of LEAs receiving the supplement report it supports teacher recruitment and retention.



Impact

The program is estimated to provide an additional \$750 to \$1,300 annually per eligible teacher for salary supplements; however, this funding may be temporary.



2027 State Legislative Ask

Support making Guilford County's eligibility for the Teacher Supplement Allotment secure by increasing the adjusted market value threshold to \$125 billion and continue annual pay adjustments for classified personnel.



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Lottery Funding for Schools

Increased funding and expand allowable uses of Education Lottery proceeds would help address classroom, facility, and student needs and lessen reliance on taxpayers.



Why it matters to Guilford County

Guilford County Schools is the third-largest school system in the state and has significant, much-needed capital projects planned and underway. Stronger Education Lottery support can help meet growing demands, improve long-term planning, and reduce pressure on local property taxpayers while supporting student success.



Stronger state lottery support can help reduce pressure on county capital and operating budgets.

\$31.7M
approximate lottery-funded education allocations went to Guilford County in FY2024.



Impact

Maximizing support from lottery proceeds, and increasing flexibility to use funds for items like classroom safety or technology, strengthens long-term budget planning, reduces pressure on local property taxes, and creates better learning environments that support student success.

67,000
GCS student population.

Grade 3-12
are required to take electronic testing, with limited state funding for technology.



2027 State Legislative Ask

Increase funding allocations to the Lottery Fund - Public School Building Repair and Renovation Fund from \$50 million to \$100 million, as well as expand allowable uses of Education Lottery proceeds to address capital, school safety, and technology needs.



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GTCC Aviation Building 2

State investment in GTCC Aviation Building 2 will strengthen Guilford County workforce readiness and regional economic competitiveness.



Why it matters to Guilford County

Completing Building 2 would expand aviation training capacity to more than 1,200 students, helping meet growing workforce demand from major regional employers such as Honda Aircraft, Boom Supersonic, JetZero, and other aerospace companies. By growing the local talent pipeline, this expansion supports high-wage job creation, economic competitiveness, and Guilford County's role as a leading aerospace hub.



17,000 new aviation jobs are expected in the region by 2035.

31,734
total student headcount 2025-2026.



Impact

Building Two would significantly expand workforce training capacity, strengthen the pipeline for high-demand aerospace careers, help local employers fill skilled positions with homegrown talent, and connect residents to high-wage careers.

70,000
square feet of instructional space for future aviation workforce training in advanced composites technologies.

1,200
expanded student enrollment capacity.



2027 State Legislative Ask

Provide an additional \$22.5 million in state funding for GTCC Aviation Building 2, bringing the total state commitment to \$30 million and matching the \$30 million allocated by the Guilford County Board of Commissioners.



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