

## **Balance Your Budget**

As County Commissioners, you have been presented with the first draft of next year's operating budget. The envelope includes the "Alachua County Bucks" needed to fund your draft budget of \$40,000, a budget sheet to tally your numbers, and all other materials needed to complete the Budget Simulation.

- The budget is separated by Core Service with related services and programs listed beneath. The color of your "Bucks" is the same as the color of the corresponding Core Service. Each program has been assigned a value relative to their costs to the organization.
- Each program has been assigned a number of units to reflect the proposed level of service for that program. Each program can only be adjusted by units and not partial units. For example, the Regional Bus Service has 3 units valued at \$100 each. You can choose to fund the service at \$100 (1 unit), \$200 (2 units) or keep the current service level at \$300 (3 units).
- In the case of fire stations, ambulance services, law enforcement patrol and park facilities, each unit represents staffing, operating costs and the facility.
- Mandatory Services are listed above the Core Services. Since these services are mandated by law, they generally cannot be reduced or eliminated. Governance, including Constitutional Offices (except for the Sheriff's Office) is detailed further in the descriptions and has been cut proportionately to the amount of total reductions to the budget.
- For purposes of this exercise, an "urban reserve area" is the unincorporated areas of the county that are immediately adjacent to incorporated cities and contain characteristics similar to a city such as high population, dense building structures, and commercial/ industrial properties.
- In the program descriptions that follow, you will find self-reported information on the impact of a level of service reduction. All budget reductions will impact the service levels offered and resulting outcomes.

**Your challenge is to reduce the budget by a total of \$3,000 in "Bucks".**

Note that this is an exercise in setting priorities which means that the numbers are general and may not necessarily represent the precise cost of each program, as the costs can vary from facility to facility. In addition, this exercise does not include all programs, mandated or not, that the County provides to our citizens. The most important thing is that you use the exercise to show the County Commission where you believe reductions in service levels are acceptable.

## **Mandatory Services**

**Governance** – Governance includes those services that are mandated by Florida Statutes such as Constitutional Offices (including Supervisor of Elections, Tax Collector, Clerk of Courts, Property Appraiser, and Court Administration) and other operating requirements such as facility maintenance and utilities, vehicles and fuel, purchasing, risk management, the Commission, County Attorney, County Manager, etc.

**Reserves** – Reserves are required by Statute and by financial policy to ensure that the County has sufficient funding to pay for unanticipated events such as a natural or man-made disaster.

**Inmate Medical Care** – Inmate Medical Care covers the cost of medical services that are required by Florida Statutes for medical treatment between the time of arrest and the time the inmate is booked into the County Jail. Medical services performed after booking are included in the Jail Management budget line item.

**Juvenile Detention Center** - Section 985.2155 of the Florida Statutes mandates that the County pay the costs of the Department of Juvenile Justice for providing detention care to juveniles in Alachua County. This program does not report performance measures to the County's Office of Management and Budget.

**Medical Examiner** - Administers mandated funds to the District Medical Examiner for autopsy services rendered to Alachua County residents. This program does not report performance measures to the County's Office of Management and Budget.

## **Managed Growth and Development**

**Regional Bus Service** – Additional level of service provided in the unincorporated urban reserve areas focused on more populated routes with highest number of riders. This is a contract through the City of Gainesville, performance measures for this service are not reported to the County's Office of Management and Budget. Cuts in this program would reduce the alternatives to personal vehicles and increase traffic congestion.

**Community Farmer's Market** - The County is responsible for maintaining the Farmer's Market in good condition including exterior, grounds, roof, plumbing, electrical systems, fire sprinkler system and fire protection equipment. Performance measures for this service are not reported to the County's Office of Management and Budget.

**Affordable Housing Program** - The program provides down payment and closing cost assistance to qualified low income first-time homebuyers. Last year, one component of this program assisted 39 families throughout the county to become homebuyers through the SHIP program, the goal next year is to help 12 families become homebuyers. The State of Florida legislature has reduced this funding in prior years, additional reductions would remove the economic benefit of injecting \$1,000,000 per year into the local economy.

**County Road Paving Program** – Provides for the safe operating condition of existing and future county roadways, bridges, and right-of-ways, including roadway beautification and storm water management. The program is projecting that next year they will resurface 34 road lane miles. This program is currently below annual funding needed to meet regulatory requirements. Additional cuts could result in increased chance of vehicle accidents, erosion & sediment control, bike/ped safety issues, and an increase in airborne particulate matter.

**Sidewalk/Bike Path Expansion** - Promotes multi-modal transportation by maintaining existing sidewalks & bike paths in good repair and constructing new sidewalks with available funds including Gasoline Tax which is dedicated to the priorities for additional resurfacing and repaving projects. This program wants to add 5 sidewalk miles and 28 miles of bike lanes to our new and existing county roadways.

**Development Planning & Review** - Manages the growth of the County through the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations; provides for community outreach and education, with municipalities and other governmental agencies and in accordance with professional standards. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 they reviewed 58 Development applications, in FY 2009 61 were reviewed, and in FY 2008 they reviewed over 160 applications. The developers of Spinghills, Santa Fe, Newberry Village, and Celebration Point have indicated that they plan to begin construction within the next fiscal year. A reduction in this area could impact compliance review related to the County's Comprehensive Plan and could impact community features such as subdivision standards, stormwater design, natural and historic resources, and special area plans.

## **Environmental Stewardship**

**Land Management – Wildlife Habitat Protection** - Protects environmental lands and wildlife habitat by purchasing lands through the Land Conservation program and by the monitoring and regulation of development in sensitive environmental areas. Last year these programs were able to acquire 1,234 acres of land with 64.5% paid for from non-County sources and respond to over 600 requests for information. A reduction to these programs could result in losses to strategic ecosystems, wetlands, and habitat and could result in a failure to meet obligations under existing state and federal grants.

**Clean Water Program** - Protects the health of our citizens by ensuring an adequate supply of clean water. Last year the water quality program completed seven (7) special studies and over 90 educational and outreach activities. Reduction of this program could result in degradation of local water resources, including surface waters, groundwater, and the springs.

**Energy Conservation Initiatives** - Works to reduce the County's contribution to global climate change through policies which promote energy conservation in County operations and in the community. The Sustainability Program is actively monitoring and/or managing more than 40 county programs focusing on the reduction of water and energy consumption and promoting green jobs and technology.

## **Economic Development**

**Public Infrastructure and Tax Incentives** – Public Infrastructure and Tax Incentives support new job growth and encourage new business to relocate to Alachua County. Tax incentives are for a limited period of time and promote development of business that offer higher than average wages for local workers. The measures for this program are reported to the State which matches financial support for businesses that meet identified standards.

**Urban Redevelopment (CRA)** – County match to city's contribution for property improvements in blighted areas. The hosting city manages all redevelopment activity under the CRA and reports that information to their respective city commissions. Performance reports are maintain by each city.

**Fairgrounds/Industrial Park Development** - County is preparing the final plans for the new Fairgrounds site and for the redevelopment of the existing site to include a business and commerce park infrastructure adjacent to the airport. This program is in its initial stages.

## **Health and Human Services**

**Park Facilities** – The County currently manages and maintains park facilities for both active and passive recreation opportunities. We currently have 1.68 acres of activity based recreation sites per 1000 unincorporated residents, our requirement as stated in the Comprehensive Plan is .5 acres per 1000 unincorporated residents. A reduction to this program could result in deterioration of park infrastructure and parks being closed. Unincorporated citizens would have reduced opportunity for recreational activities and would have to travel further to reach a city park or a park in a neighboring county.

**Homeless One Stop Center** – This new facility includes several supporting programs to assist homeless citizen transition back to self-sufficiency in one centralized site in Gainesville. This program is in its initial stages, and therefore, there are no performance measures to report.

**Animal Services – Basic and Enhanced Adoption** - The shelter attempts to minimize euthanasia for healthy animals through an aggressive adoption program. The adoption program is conducted in partnership with the area animal welfare agencies. Last year the shelter was able to return or adopt out 46.33% of the animals received at the shelter. A reduction to this program could result in over 1,000 additional animals being euthanized annually.

**Senior Citizen Services** – This office is responsible for coordinating the services for the County's eligible low income aging population by providing such things as primary care, prescription assistance, housing assistance and referrals. Last year this program coordinated senior volunteers that assisted in providing 79,891 meals to seniors and 28,419 senior volunteer hours at local hospitals. Reduction or elimination of this program could result in the loss of \$460,000 in Federal grant match funds and place additional burden on local nonprofits.

**Social Service Agency Funding** - Provides basic needs assistance and access to health care services to low-income Alachua County residents who are not eligible for other government assistance programs. The program reports that 66.75% of the participants reported no emergency room visits while participating in the program and that 2,974 residents were provided utility or rental assistance. Reduction or elimination of this program could result in additional burden on the local ERs by indigent patients and an increase in homelessness.

**Mental Health Program** - Provides services to targeted individuals with mental health problems in an attempt to divert them from incarceration in the jail and to help them succeed in less restrictive environments. Currently the county contracts with a local mental health care provider to supplement Court Services goal to reduce jail population through jail diversion programs. Reduction or elimination of this program may result in mentally ill inmates remaining in custody without treatment for longer than necessary, thereby increasing the number of occupied beds at the jail.

**Partners for a Productive Community** - Revitalizes economically disadvantaged Alachua County communities by reducing crime, beautifying neighborhoods, increasing property values and promoting economic development and community self-sufficiency. This year the program utilized 1,520 volunteer hours. Elimination of funding for this program targeting 'at risk' neighborhoods in the east and southwest areas may result in the need for additional law enforcement activities in these same neighborhoods due to blight.

**Health Department Funding** – County discretionary funding for enhanced services to residents meeting poverty level requirements - provides over 30 programs in the areas of communicable disease, primary care, and environmental health to the citizens and visitors to Alachua County. This department reported 342,674 patient encounters this year which is approximately 6% greater than last year.

**Crisis Center** - Participates in the solution of any human problem through emotional support, education, counseling and crisis intervention, whenever and wherever it occurs in Alachua County. The County's Crisis Center answered 56,791 phone calls, utilized 43,325 volunteer hours, and provided 190 professional and community based programs. Reduction or elimination of this program could result in additional calls to 911, additional need for law enforcement and ambulance services, and the possible increase in local suicides.

**Veteran's Services** - Applies specialized knowledge by linking veterans and their dependents to available benefits and services and by providing counseling to deal with emotional issues related to the military experience. The Veteran's Services division reports attendance at 39 community planning meetings. Elimination of this program could result in local veterans not getting the assistance they need to process Federal benefits, resulting in an impact to our local economy.

**Enhanced Bus Service – Poverty Reduction** – Increased level of bus service provided in the unincorporated area of the County. Service lines enhanced are those generally ridden by low income citizens of the County. A reduction in this service could mean that some workers will not have transportation to their jobs/medical facilities or may have to wait much longer for service. This is a contract through the City of Gainesville.

## **Public Safety**

**Fire Station** – Each unit includes station, staff, fire trucks, and operating expenses. The elimination of a unit may result in longer fire response times and risk to life. This year, the fire department responded to 13,487 calls and completed 892 life safety inspections.

**Ambulance Services** – Each unit includes facility, staff, ambulances, and operating expenses. The elimination of a unit may result in longer response times and risk to life. This year the rescue department responded to 34,318 emergency and non-emergency calls resulting in 20,585 emergency and non-emergency transports. The average incidents per unit this year was 2,859.

**Jail Management** – This funds the County's detention center operated by the Alachua County Sheriff's Office. Each unit includes the required number of detention officers, facility space, and operating costs. Staffing levels and model jail standards should be met in order to ensure safety for all involved and to ensure that the jail is not in violation of any required standard. **You cannot reduce this program by more than one unit.** As a constitutional office, this program does not report performance measures to the County's Office of Management and Budget.

**Law Enforcement Road Patrol Units** – Part of the overall policing effort provided thru the Sheriff's Office - each unit includes officers, vehicles, and operating expenses. **You cannot reduce this program by more than one unit.** A reduction in this service level may result in an increase in the violent and non-violent crime rate. As a constitutional office, this program does not report performance measures to the County's Office of Management and Budget.

**Jail Diversion Programs** - Promotes the most efficient use of jail bed space through an assessment of offender needs and characteristics, provision and analysis of data, assists with the development of alternatives to incarceration, and conducts an evaluation of community based supervision and therapeutic services. The probation program collected \$378,238 in probation fees last year and the work release program averaged 60 participants per day. The community service program participants supplied 68,575 hours of community service last year. Reduction or elimination of these programs will result in additional persons staying incarcerated for longer periods of time and will result in additional costs to the Jail Management program to house the additional inmates.

**Wildfire Management** - Wildfire mitigation through planning, public education, and fuel (land) management activities to minimize community vulnerability to wildfire in an ecologically and economically acceptable manner. This program was restructured, reduced to one staff member, and moved under the Land Management program during the last budget year.