



**Winston-Salem**

**CITIZENS' BUDGET ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**Annual Work Plan Report – Fiscal Year 2022-23**

**May 2023**

**Staffed by: Budget and Performance Management Department**

## **CITIZENS' BUDGET ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORT ON FY 2022-23 WORK PLAN**

### Introduction and Work Plan

The Citizens' Budget Advisory Council (CBAC) met monthly between November of 2022 and May of 2023 to review information and formulate recommendations for review by the Mayor and City Council related to its FY 2022-23 work plan. That work plan included items related to collaboration between City and County work groups and the budget development process for the FY 2023-24 operating and capital budgets.

*City/County Collaboration* – The CBAC's work plan included a review of the areas where the City and County currently have consolidated operations, but the work plan predominantly focused on areas where the City and County could collaborate further. This included researching what other cities and counties are doing in the areas of:

- Affordable Housing Renovation and Production
- Emergency Mental Health Response
- Direct Support of Social Service Programs
- Other Areas Identified by the CBAC

*FY 2023-24 Operating and Capital Budget Development* – Each year, the CBAC reviews the City Manager's operating and capital budget recommendations as provided to the Mayor and City Council. For FY 2023-24, there were several strategic investments and policy decisions within the budget recommendations. The CBAC's work plan included a review of the following areas related to the FY 2023-24 budget:

- Operating Budget – Taxes, Personnel, and Policy Changes
- Capital Budget – Prioritization, Funding Mechanisms, and Staff Capacity

### Meetings and Information Review Summary

The CBAC met a total of eight times to review specific areas of City/County collaboration and review research conducted by staff. The CBAC was also given briefings on the early budget forecast and trial balanced budget presentation to the Mayor and City Council. Brief summaries of the meetings are outlined below. Minutes from the meetings can be found in the appendix to this report.

*November 30, 2022* – CBAC Members were greeted by the City Manager, Lee Garrity, and County Manager, Dudley Watts, who introduced City/County collaboration by discussing areas where the City and County currently have joint operations (through "interlocal" agreements) and areas that could include more collaboration. Both managers reminded the CBAC that Winston-Salem and Forsyth County have more shared resources than most other major metro areas in the state. Budget and Performance Management (BPM) staff provided a presentation on the other areas staff would research for potential collaboration.

*January 18, 2023* – Marla Newman, the City's Community Development Director, began the meeting by discussing the housing programs offered by the City and County. She elaborated on areas where the City and County could collaborate better, particularly with respect to funding. BPM staff provided information on how other cities and counties in the state are working together to solve affordable housing issues.

Specifically, staff provided information on how Durham County and City work together and how Wake County and the City of Raleigh work together. Research included joint-funded projects and areas where cities and counties collaborated to create similar unified development ordinances to encourage housing production. Generally, housing projects were shown to be jointly funded on an ad hoc basis. No cities and counties were found to have written agreements for jointly funding a housing program (other than programs for the underhoused). Although no formal agreements for multi-project funding were found, staff did note that other cities and counties appear to have more regular discussions about collaboration and funding.

*February 15, 2023* – The CBAC received information on emergency mental health responder services. Denise Price, Forsyth County Behavioral Health Services Director, presented on the various initiatives Forsyth County has related to behavioral health services, including areas where City and County staff work together. She also covered the Mobile Integrated Health Unit that provides first responder mental health services. BPM staff then presented on topics related to City-funded social service provision. Staff noted that counties generally provide social, mental, and health services as they are required to do so by law. However, many cities have begun supplementing county functions either through direct service provision, as is the case with city mental health response in larger cities, or through appropriations for non-profit organizations to provide services. BPM staff showed that in many cases, cities and counties (including Forsyth and Winston-Salem) are funding the same non-profits. Research also showed that cities are providing more services adjacent to law enforcement and court services (e.g., expungement services).

*March 15, 2023* – Captain Katie Allen of the Winston-Salem Police Department provided a presentation on the roles and responsibilities of the Winston-Salem Police Department and Forsyth County Sheriff's Office. She noted areas of current collaboration in the interlocal agreement but also discussed increased "saturation" patrol areas where police and sheriff personnel work together. Captain Allen and BPM staff provided research on joint 911 centers and response. Many larger metro areas (e.g., Mecklenburg, Wake, Guilford) have consolidated emergency communications centers. The only known "joint response" in the State is the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department that operates in the City of Charlotte and the unincorporated areas of Mecklenburg County. BPM staff noted the complexity of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg agreement and that moving to joint response would take a significant amount of work both administratively and politically. Captain Allen also noted the significant number of City law enforcement vacancies (130+). The CBAC also received an update on the early budget forecast, which included information on capital projects, strategic plan action item completion, and resident survey data. The CBAC elected Member Salsbury as Committee Chair and Member Piacenza as Committee Vice Chair.

*April 19, 2023* – Human Resources Director Dr. Marquis Barnett provided information to the CBAC on steps taken by the City to fill positions. Those included, but are not limited to, additional benefits, cash incentives for referrals and "hard to fill" positions, and additional marketing strategies. The CBAC then reviewed potential recommendations for incorporation in the final report.

*May 17, 2023* – The CBAC met to adopt the final report for presentation to the Mayor and City Council.

### City/County Collaboration Recommendations

The CBAC, after reviewing research performed by staff, having conversations with City and County staff during their regular meetings, and having robust conversations about the topics between the members, provide the following recommendations related to potential City and County collaboration:

#### *Affordable Housing Recommendations*

1. Ensure City and County Unified Development Ordinances match community standards and desires for duplex and infill standards to encourage production.
2. Have formative discussion with County Board and/or management about City and County goals related to affordable housing and identify common priorities
3. Work with the County to identify funding methods to subsidize the production of new, affordable housing units in the city and the county. Review the potential for a board created via interlocal agreement to recommend jointly funded projects.

#### *Behavioral Health and Other Social Services Recommendations*

4. Explore opportunities for future collaboration between the City's Behavioral Evaluation and Response Team (BEAR) and the County's Behavioral Health Services Department and Mobile Integrated Health Unit (MIH) and other behavioral health services.
5. Explore opportunities for future growth for City behavioral health programs including the BEAR program, referral services for the underhoused population, and increased transportation opportunities to the Highland Avenue facilities. Explore potential budgetary offsets related to workload reductions in other areas.
6. Explore collaboration in City and County community agencies funding processes, through annual budget cycles, and review funding outcomes and potentially eliminate unnecessary duplication.

#### *Law Enforcement Services Recommendations*

7. Given the current consolidation of Fire dispatch services and the future placement of the City's emergency call center in the County Public Safety Building, the CBAC strongly urges the City and County to review opportunities for consolidation of this function to create efficiencies, reduce redundancies, and mitigate longer response times caused by call transfer activities.
8. Review other local and state law enforcement consolidation models outside of North Carolina to determine if a consolidated response service for the City and County would be feasible and serve all response areas equitably.

### Budget-Related Recommendations

9. The Budget and Performance Management Department, working with the Fire Department, should review the personnel requests from the Fire Department as it relates to safety, deployment, and response efficiency and provide a report to the City Council's Public Safety Committee during FY 2023-24. The review should include how increased staffing models could affect the Insurance Service Offices (ISO) rating for the City.

## Conclusion

The CBAC concluded its work on May 17, 2023 by adopting the recommendations in the report. The CBAC thanks staff from both the City and County for providing professional opinions on current collaboration and opportunities for enhanced City and County joint service provision. The CBAC hopes that these recommendations present sound advice in furthering discussions about collaboration to create better, more efficient services for City residents. The Chair of the CBAC, Fred Salisbury, will be available to present the recommendations noted above at the June 13, 2023 Finance Committee meeting of the City Council.