

*From County Budget
FY 2008*

Comparatively, using these figures as a baseline and adjusting for local variables and regional conditions, the County's Budget Review Team projects the following impact on the General Fund:

- A 3.5% general increase for county employee wages and salaries to compensate for limited increases granted to county employees for the last two years that have been at half the rate of employment cost indexes.
- A 10%+ increase in general liability insurance due to additional building coverage for jail and increase in claims (\$50,000).
- A 13% increase in employee health insurance coverage with 20% of that cost being passed on to employees (\$141,440).
- A 10% increase in utility prices due to market conditions and rate increases granted to Georgia Power by the Georgia Public Service Commission (\$25,000).
- Short-term spiking in petroleum prices prompts applying a hedge for a 10% increase in gasoline and related goods (\$110,000).
- Election costs will spike during a presidential election year (\$80,000).

Unincorporated Fire Tax District (UFTD) Issues: An approximate three-to-five mile rapidly urbanizing area extending from the city limits of Statesboro into unincorporated Bulloch County is provided fire protection by the Statesboro Municipal Fire Department (SFD). This service area pays additional ad valorem taxes for a faster first response time and higher level of service than offered by the rural volunteer districts. In turn, property owners in the UFTD realize lower hazard insurance rates that are similar to city residents. The proceeds from this tax district are reimbursed to the City of Statesboro to offset their additional costs of providing the service, thus equalizing the tax burden between city and county residents served by SFD. However, the City of Statesboro has petitioned the county to change the formula of reimbursement, which previously equaled 25% of the city fire department's annual budget. The City has requested the formula be changed to utilize percentage based tax digest allocations between the city and fire district residents. This would result in the UFTD residents contributing 43% of the city's fire department budget. In acknowledging the validity of the issue, the County Manager is proposing a phasing-in of the equity adjustment over a three-to-four year period which would result in an FY 2008 tax increase reflecting property re-assessment values, but either no millage increase or a slight rollback. The current property tax rate is 1.4 mills in the UFTD.

Other Major Funds Should Remain Financially Stable: Proprietary funds including Splash in the 'Boro and the Bulloch County Agricultural Office Complex should remain self-sufficient without needing a transfer from the General Fund. The various other special revenue funds should remain financially stable, and as applicable, self-sufficient.

- The Statesboro-Bulloch County Airport Fund remains in a financially strong position, with the help of capital grants and strong operating income. There is no impact upon the General Fund.
- The E-911 Communications Fund has become fully self sustaining. Now that Evans and Candler County are instituting wireless fees, this will improve cash flow and improve service to these participating counties. There is no impact upon the General Fund.
- The Hotel-Motel Tax Fund remains self-sustaining and proceeds collected are distributed to the Statesboro Convention and Visitors Bureau (80%) and the Averitt Center for the Arts (20%).
- The Keep Bulloch Beautiful Fund remains self-sustaining and proceeds are generated from earnings of the Joint Statesboro-Bulloch County Solid Waste Fund, primarily managed by the City of Statesboro.
- The Streetlight Tax Districts Fund remains self-sustaining and proceeds collected are distributed to electric utilities serving various residential subdivisions within the unincorporated areas.