

TOWN OF GRANITE QUARRY NORTH CAROLINA



ADOPTED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 (FY25)

PREPARED BY:
JASON HORD
INTERIM TOWN MANAGER

June 10, 2024

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Town Manager's Budget Message FY 2024-2025

June 10, 2024

Mayor Brittany Barnhardt
Town Council
Town of Granite Quarry
143 N Salisbury Avenue
Granite Quarry, NC 28146

Honorable Mayor Barnhardt, Council Members, and community members of Granite Quarry:

I am pleased to present you with the following proposed FY25 budget. Over the past few years the Council has consistently discussed its desire to not just maintain, but to enhance the Town's levels of service and fiscal responsibility. A great amount of time, effort, and thought went into this FY25's planning, goal setting, and budget development to accomplish just that. I commend the Council's patience and guidance through the process.

Strategic Goals

At the Town's February 22, 2024, Planning Retreat Department Heads reported on progress with strategic goals, provided a preview of priorities and identified the resources needed to continue accomplishing them into this upcoming fiscal year. A great deal of community input was gathered by our Civic Park Master Plan community survey and through community events.

Growth continues to have significant impacts on the budget, operations, and long-term planning needs of the Town. Granite Quarry has completed an overhaul of its Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Unified Development Ordinance to help guide and protect both the existing community and ongoing development. Enhanced planning services and retaining qualified staff among all affected departments in FY25 are instrumental in its successful implementation and administration.

Personnel

We approached this FY with a priority emphasis on Retention, Succession Planning, and Recruitment.

1. Personnel Pay, Salary & Benefit Comparisons and Classification/Compression Analysis

We conducted a very thorough study and analysis of both statewide and local government peer groups. Ultimately, we determined our annual grade scale market adjustments have kept the town fairly competitive as they are. Four position classifications warranted grade adjustments (see

Attachment B). We also have a recruitment / retention bonus in effect for the Police Department. However, an updated third-party salary study will most likely be needed before the FY26 budget.

2. CPI/Market Adjustments and Merit Availability (“Performance Pay”)

We predict that those adjustments - along with the proposed performance pay (and merit tied to performance measurements), insurance, and benefits - will keep us competitive on the compensation front. Given the volatility of the market, we will keep an eye out for any mid-year changes and conduct another thorough analysis next year.

3. Organizational Culture / Climate Assessment

Pay keeps towns competitive. In the end, organizational culture keeps towns staffed.

The town conducted a climate assessment study from a third-party vendor to capture thoughts of current employees. This was centered around morale and what our team wants / needs. It was determined that continued emphasis on employee appreciation events is much desired. That is also addressed in this budget.

Debt Service

The town is currently debt free. However, the current need for a fire engine is addressed in this budget. Financing \$1,075,700 over 5 years is an approximate \$251,000 annual payment.

Capital Needs

The Town has done a phenomenal job of maintaining facilities and equipment to minimize and prolong the need for capital repairs or replacements.

The Fire Department commissioned refurbishments of several of our Fire Engines to keep them up to standards and prolong their need for replacement. One of the 1994 units is estimated to need replacing by around FY27 though, and the average cost of a new Engine currently looms around \$1,200,000. However, post-covid markets have changed and the lead time for a fire engine is 48 months. For this reason, the Fire Department is requesting the order / purchase of a replacement front line engine. This would put the in-service date around a year later than expected in the original 5-year plan.

The Public Works Department currently has a 1994 Ford F700 dump truck. While this has been a great asset, the time has come to upgrade/ replace this vehicle. The cost of repairs and safety concerns warrants the replacement of this vehicle. Staff has done their due diligence in considering the purchase of a used vehicle; however, staff has found that the market for a used dump truck is limited to those with much higher mileage and usage. For those reasons, this budget includes a new dump truck estimated at \$92,000.

Tax Rate and Assessed Tax Base

The Town has struggled to offer its desired level of service and cover inflationary costs at such a low tax rate for a number of years. The margin between GQ and our comparable peer group municipalities, who *were* adjusting more with such costs, grew. Ultimately GQ has remained the 3rd lowest tax rate among *all* units of local government within the County, and the lowest tax rate among our benchmark peer group by a staggering margin of 6 to 11 cents / \$100 of valuation (see Table 1 below).

Unit of Government	FY24 Tax Rate
Salisbury	0.616
Rowan County	0.58
East Spencer	0.66
Spencer*	0.55
Kannapolis (Rowan)	0.63
China Grove*	0.50
Landis**	0.49
Rockwell	0.46
<u>Granite Quarry*</u>	<u>0.44</u>
Faith	0.41
Cleveland	0.3936 (0.3 city + 0.0936 community fire rate)

* Benchmark “peer group” municipalities (by composition, budget, and/or population standards).

** As a city with electric utility, Landis is actually not in our peer group for some benchmarking standards but is illustrated in Table 1 as such by population and levels of general services.

As one can deduce, the result has often been stretching the workload capacities of existing resources, the challenge to find or justify funding needed for more proactive goals, an increasing need to tap into fund balance for major (yet anticipated in municipal services) items and projects – if not simply postponing them from year to year.

While Table 1 in and of itself does not imply that Granite Quarry needs to be at the same tax rate as any particular municipality within our benchmark peer group, it does provide a good and simple illustration of the limitations behind these challenges. The Town Council and Administration are indeed on the same page about wanting to ensure that we *continue* offering the best possible services at the best value we can for the community we serve.

Executive Summary

This budget prioritizes funding into the areas established as the highest priorities by this administration and the Town Council. The Town is currently undertaking a large number of major, even transformational projects and goals. It has worked very hard to develop, retain, and attract talented staff dedicated to our core values and continuous improvement.

The following is a more-detailed overview of items by funded department.

Budget Overview

After careful consideration, the following budget recommendations represent Town Council goals, departmental input, and community needs within a tax rate of 44.00 cents per \$100 valuation. The total recommended budget is \$4,852,841.

General Fund:		\$ 4,852,841
Governing Body	\$ 106,585	
Contingency and Transfers	856,621	
Administration	668,192	
Police	1,036,733	
Fire	1,051,262	
Public Works	539,621	
Streets: Powell Bill	251,493	
Streets: Non-Powell Bill	60,790	
Parks and Recreation	94,025	
Environmental	187,519	
Total General Fund:		\$4,852,841

FY 2024-2025 Departmental Highlights

Governing Body: The recommended budget for Governing Body is \$106,585. It includes funding for the annual financial audit, increased attorney fees, additional training, and meetings.

Contingency and Transfers: The proposed budget for Contingency and Transfers is \$856,621. This includes \$788,146 in Transformational Project funds freed up from American Rescue Plan Act funding. These funds are being focused on transformational Parks and Town Square/Downtown infrastructure projects.

Administration: The proposed budget for Administration is \$668,192. This includes continuation of contracts for part-time code enforcement and planning services, funding to accomplish Governing Body communication/community engagement goals, increased bonding cost requirements for municipal finance officers, and increased interlocal agreement costs of tax collections. This also includes the above-mentioned pay class adjustments for the Clerk, Finance Director, and Office Assistant.

Police: The proposed budget for the Police Department is \$1,036,733. This includes continuing operational cost increases such as fuel, supplies, maintenance contracts, dues, and subscriptions. Full staffing and enhanced career development programs with police positions is part of the Town's priority goal strategy to increase police services including community policing initiatives.

Fire: The proposed budget for the Fire Department is \$1,051,262. This includes continued increases to normal public safety supplies and operational costs also. It includes funding for 3 new full-time Firefighter positions as we adapt to the nationwide diminishing volunteer base in fire service while proactively maintaining our ISO Class 1 rating - which not only reflects the highest quality of public protection we provide, but directly benefits our community with lower insurance rates as well. This also includes the debt service payment for the term of 5 years to replace the frontline fire engine. The town will not take delivery of the engine until 48 months after the order is placed.

Maintenance / Public Works: The proposed budget for Public Works is \$539,621. This includes funding for reclassification of position from Crew Leader to Assistant Public Works Director and additional part-time staffing to enhance parks maintenance and supplement general public works quality efforts. Also

included is the purchase of a new dump truck used in leaf and limb collection to replace the current one that is 30 years old.

Streets – Powell Bill: The proposed budget for Powell Bill is \$251,493. This includes a \$215,000 capital paving project and \$25,000 allotted for normal maintenance and repairs.

Streets – Non-Powell Bill: The proposed budget for Non-Powell Bill Streets is \$60,790.00. This includes the Utilities costs on streetlights.

Parks and Recreation: The proposed budget for Parks and Recreation is \$94,025. This includes normal operational upkeep of parks and their facilities, and increased costs of the Town’s signature Granite Fest event which has continued growing since the pandemic. This does not include the costs associated with the potential PARTF grant that could be funded in the fall of FY25.

Environmental: The proposed budget for Environmental costs is \$187,519. This includes increased area and costs associated with the Waste Management sanitation services contract, especially surcharges from the dramatic increase in fuel costs. The cost increase is addressed in the budget as a \$13.00 per month environmental fee, an increase from \$12.00 fee in FY 24.

The proposed General Fund budget is balanced with a tax rate of 44.00 cents per \$100 of valuation. Projected revenues and other funding sources are \$4,852,841 and projected expenditures are \$4,852,841.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jason Hord

Jason Hord
Interim Town Manager



TOWN OF GRANITE QUARRY, NORTH CAROLINA
Budget Ordinance No. 2024-03
Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (FY25)

**AN ORDINANCE CONCERNING APPROPRIATIONS AND THE RAISING OF REVENUE FOR THE
 FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2024**

BE IT ORDAINED by the Town Council of the Town of Granite Quarry, North Carolina that the following anticipated fund revenues and appropriations, certain fee and charge schedules, and with certain restrictions and authorizations, are hereby appropriated and approved for the operation of the Town Government and its activities for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, and ending June 30, 2025.

Section 1: General Fund

Anticipated Revenues

Ad Valorem Taxes	\$1,832,401
Unrestricted Intergovernmental	1,298,273
Restricted Intergovernmental	319,601
Permits and Fees	10,500
Sales and Services	200,070
Other General Revenues	<u>188,850</u>
Subtotal	3,849,695
Other Financing Sources and Uses	1,003,146
Total Anticipated Revenues	<u>\$4,852,841</u>

**Authorized Appropriations
 By Department**

Governing Body	\$106,585
Contingency and Transfers	856,621
Administration	668,192
Police	1,036,733
Fire	1,051,262
Public Works	539,621
Streets – Powell Bill	251,493
Streets – Non-Powell Bill	60,790
Parks and Recreation	94,025
Environmental	187,519
Total Authorized Expenditures / Transfers	<u>\$4,852,841</u>

Section 2: Levy of Taxes

There is hereby levied for FY25 an Ad Valorem Tax Rate of 44.00 cents (\$0.44) per one hundred dollars (\$100.00) valuation of property as listed for taxes as of January 1, 2024. This rate of tax is based on an estimated assessed valuation of **\$419,386,448** and an estimated collection rate of **98.0%**, yielding **\$1,832,401** in ad valorem tax revenues.

Section 3: Fees Schedule

There are hereby established for the FY25 various fees and charges as contained in **Attachment A**.

Section 4: Special Authorization - Budget Officer

- A. The Town Manager is hereby authorized to make any budget transfers as may be required within each department if the total appropriation for each fund does not change and contingency funds are not utilized to do so.
- B. Interfund transfers established in the Budget Ordinance or Capital Project Ordinances may be accomplished without additional approval from the Town Council.

Section 5: Restrictions - Budget Officer

- A. Interfund and interdepartmental transfer of monies except as noted in Sections 4 and 9 shall be accomplished by Town Council authorizations only.
- B. Utilization of appropriations contained in Contingencies and Appropriations from Fund Balance may be accomplished only with specific approval of the Town Council.

Section 6: Utilization of Budget Ordinance

This ordinance shall be the basis of the financial plan for the Town of Granite Quarry Municipal Government during FY25. The Town Manager shall administer the budget and ensure that operating officials are provided guidance and sufficient details to implement their appropriate portion of the Budget. The Administration Department shall establish and maintain all records in consonance with this Budget Ordinance and the appropriate Statutes of the State of North Carolina.

Section 7: Salary Adjustments

- A. For FY25, funding for the necessary pay and grade adjustments concluded from the Town Manager’s annual pay and classification surveys analyses is authorized, effective July 1, 2024.
- B. A Market Adjustment of 4% will be available on July 1, 2024. Merit consideration of 0:4% will be available as part of performance pay consideration to classified employees at the time of their respective annual performance evaluations throughout the course of the year, if or as they merit according to the following schedule:

Performance Level	Market Adjustment	Merit Below Midpoint	Merit Above Midpoint
Does Not Meet Expectations	4.0%	No increase	No increase
Meets Expectations	4.0%	Up to 2.0%	No increase
Exceeds Expectations	4.0%	Up to 3.0%	Up to 1.0%
Exceptional	4.0%	Up to 4.0%	Up to 2.0%

C. Longevity pay authorization will be considered at the regular monthly meeting of the Town Council in November. Projected funding for longevity pay is according to the following schedule:

1. Currently active, full-time employees:
 - A. 6 months or more, less than 1 year \$ 150
 - B. 1 year or more, less than 5 years \$ 200
 - C. 5 years or more, less than 10 years \$ 250
 - D. More than 10 years \$ 300

2. Currently active, part-time employees:
 - A. Admin, PW, FD If over 500hrs, 1% of gross wages YTD up to \$200 maximum.
 - B. PD If consistently reported when called, \$50 flat rate.

3. Currently active FD volunteers with over 30% calls \$ 100

Section 8: Re-appropriation of Funds Encumbered in FY24

Appropriations hereinabove authorized and made shall have the amounts of the unearned portion of contracts on June 30, 2024 added to each appropriation as it applied in order to properly account for payment against the fiscal year in which it is paid.

Copies of this ordinance, the Town Manager’s budget message, and accompanying attachments shall be maintained in the office of the Town Clerk of the Town of Granite Quarry and shall be made available for public inspection.

Adopted June 10, 2024

Revenue Assumptions for FY 2024-2025 Budget

Ad Valorem Taxes

Property Taxes. Property tax values are provided by the Rowan County Tax Assessor's Office. Once expenditures and all other General Fund revenues were projected, the amount necessary to balance the budget was calculated. Using that figure as the target, a property tax rate applied to the assessed valuation was calculated that would result in that amount of revenue being generated. An uncollectable rate of 2.00% was factored into the calculations.

Tax Penalties and Interest. Based on historical trends.

Prior Year Taxes. Based on historical trends, economic forecasts, anticipated continuation of collection percentages, and adjusted by the size of the 2023 property tax receivable balance projected as of June 30, 2024.

Unrestricted Intergovernmental

Local Option Sales Tax. Based on estimates provided by the North Carolina League of Municipalities (NCLM), historical trends, State legislative changes, local conditions, and economic forecasts.

Solid Waste Disposal. Based on forecast projections and health trends of the construction sector. The State levies a \$2/ton "tipping tax" on municipal solid waste and construction / demolition materials deposited in all NC landfills (and/or passing through transfer stations for any out of state disposal). It applies proceeds to different programs and then distributes 18.75% of the proceeds back to municipalities and counties on a per capita basis.

Beer & Wine Tax. Based on national market research forecast projections of beer and wine sales, compared against state distribution formulas. These sales taxes are distributed from the NC Department of Revenue to municipalities based on population.

Utility Franchises. Based on estimates provided by the NCLM and historical trends of both distributions and auditing adjustment amounts. This category includes Electricity, Piped Natural Gas, Telecommunications, and Video Programming Franchise Taxes & Fees. Underlying factors such as policy changes, energy prices, weather, and changing technologies cause growth or decline in these revenues to swing dramatically in any given year.

Restricted Intergovernmental Revenues

Powell Bill Revenues. Based on estimates provided by the NCLM and the Office of State Budget and Management.

Joint Police Authority Revenues. Granite Quarry provides police services to the Town of Faith through an interlocal agreement between the two towns. The adopted FY25 payment amount for those services is \$175,797.00.

Permits and Fees

Local Revenues. Based on historical trends, economic forecasts, and known growth and development plans in queue within Town limits.

Sales and Services

Solid Waste/Recycling Collection. Based on the recommended environmental fee of \$13 per month per household and the anticipated collection rate through Salisbury-Rowan Utilities' (SRU) billing department.

Other General Revenues

Local Revenues. Based on fee schedule, and historic and current trends.

Investments Interest. Based on estimated cash balances & interest rate projections.

Surplus Items. Based on anticipated surplus items and their estimated market value

SCHEDULE OF FEES

ATTACHMENT A

**FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025
TOWN OF GRANITE QUARRY**

BUILDING AND RELATED ACTIVITIES			
Building Type	Rental Times and Description	Rental Fee	
		Residents	Non-Residents
Lake Park Shelter or Gazebo	Half Day (6 hours) 8am-2pm or 2pm-8pm	\$40	\$60
	Full Day (12 hours) 8am-8pm	\$75	\$100
Civic: Shelter	Kitchen rental	\$15	\$50
	Kitchen key deposit	\$25	
Civic: Ball Field	Up to 2 hours	\$10	
Civic: Tennis Courts	Up to 2 hours	\$10	
Legion Building	Half Day (7 hours) 8am-3pm or 3pm-10pm	\$100	\$250
	Full Day (14 hours) 8am – 10pm	\$150	\$350
	Rental deposit	\$150	
Legion Building: Civic Group or Church	Half Day (7 hours)	\$50	\$150
	Full Day (14 hours) 8am – 10pm	\$75	\$200
	Rental deposit (no discount)	\$150	
All	Grill Fryer Deposit	\$150	
ADMINISTRATIVE FEES			
Item Description		Fees	
Copies and Faxes		\$0.25 per page	
Plotted Maps, other oversized or specialized documents		Production cost	
Environmental Fee (resident and non-dumpster commercial)		\$13 per month	
Returned Check Fee		\$35	
FIRE DEPARTMENT FEES			
Fireworks Permit		\$130	
Fire Reports		\$5 per report	
POLICE DEPARTMENT FEES			
Peddler Permit		\$100 per person	
Police off-duty services (<i>entity pays the officer directly</i>)		\$30 per hour, 3 hour minimum	
Police Reports		\$5 per report	
Golf cart registration		\$10 per cart	
Golf cart violation		\$150 per violation	
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT FEES (including for Town abatements)			
Heavy equipment / tractors		\$150 per hour with operator	
Light equipment		\$100 per hour with operator	
Brush pickup, second load for residents		\$50 per load	
Mulch (Subject to availability as determined by Director. Call Town Hall for scheduling.)		\$10 per bucket (GQ residents)	
		\$25 per bucket (Non-residents)	
Memorial Bricks 4x8		\$34 each	
Memorial Bricks 8x8		\$45 each	
Food Vendor		\$50	
Craft or Sales Vendor		\$25 per 10x10 booth	

PLANNING, ZONING, AND SUBDIVISION FEES

Item	Description	Fee
Subdivision Plats	Conveyance Plat	\$20 per new lot
	Exemption/Recombination Plat	\$20
	Sketch Plat Review	\$100 (1 acre or less) \$200 + \$5 per dwelling unit (over 1 acre)
	Preliminary Plat Review - less than 24 lots	\$750
	Preliminary Plat Review - 24 or more lots	\$3,000 + \$60 per lot over 100
	Preliminary Plat - Applicant Appeal	\$100
	Preliminary Plat - Minor Revision	\$250
	Preliminary Plat - Major Revision	\$700
	Final Plat Review - Major Subdivision <i>(If a third submittal is required an additional review fee will be charged)</i>	\$350 per map sheet
	Final Plat Review - Minor Subdivision <i>(If a third submittal is required an additional review fee will be charged)</i>	\$100 per map sheet
	Performance Guarantee Review <i>(Letter of Credit, Bond, etc. Also applies to revisions, replacements, and partial release requests)</i>	\$300 + engineer costs
	Time Extension for Plat Approval	\$500
	Zoning Amendments	Zoning Text Amendment
Zoning Map Amendment		\$875 + \$125 advertising charge
Zoning Permits	Single, Two-Family structures, Mobile Homes	\$50 + \$35 for permits subject to design review
	Single Family attached / multi-family <i>(condo, apartments, townhomes, etc.)</i>	\$50 + \$35 per unit
	Residential Addition / Accessory Structures	\$50
	Fences	\$10
	Home Occupation	\$75
	Non-residential	\$50 + Zoning Site Plan review fee if applicable
	Temporary Construction Trailers	\$75
	Temporary Use Permits	\$75
	Special Use Permit	\$1,500 + \$125 advertising charge and + Zoning Site Plan Review Fees below
	Zoning Verification Letter for Institutional Requests	\$175
	Certificate of Non-Conformity Adjustment	\$75
Sign Permits <i>(only when obtained separately from primary development permits)</i>		
	Permanent Sign	\$100
	Outdoor Advertising Sign (Billboard)	\$200
	Temporary Sign	\$25
Zoning Site Plan Review	Sketch Plat Review & Consultation	\$200 + \$5 per dwelling unit per session after initial concept review meeting
	Site Plan Review <i>(If a third submittal is required an additional review fee will be charged)</i>	\$300 + \$25 per acre
Zoning Board of Adjustment	Variance	\$300
	Appeal of Zoning Administrator Decision/ Interpretation Request	\$25 <i>(refunded if overturned)</i>
	Appeals	\$100 <i>(refunded if overturned)</i>
Double Permit	Where construction begins without the appropriate permits in place, the permit cost shall be doubled	
Plan Review and Construction Administration Fee Schedule		
Plan Review		Fee

Roadway (public and/or private)	\$1.25 per linear foot of street centerline
Parking/Loading Areas (including access)	\$0.05 per square foot
Storm Drainage	\$1.35 per linear foot of street centerline
Water Lines	\$0.80 per linear foot of pipe
Sewer Lines	\$1.10 per linear foot of pipe
Stormwater Quality and/or Stormwater Detention Facilities	\$5,000.00 per plan or per subdivision

If a third revision of plan(s) is required, an additional fee will be charged.

Plan Review Fees shall apply to the extent of any revisions made to plans previously reviewed.

Construction Administration

	<u>Fee</u>
Roadway (public and/or private)	\$1.60 per linear foot of street centerline
Storm Drainage	\$1.50 per linear foot of street centerline
Water Lines	\$0.95 per linear foot of pipe
Sewer Lines	\$1.15 per linear foot of pipe
Stormwater Quality and/or Stormwater Detention Facilities	\$5,000.00 per phase and/or sub-area

SALARY SCHEDULE

ATTACHMENT B

<p align="center">FY 2024-2025 Salary Schedule</p>						
Classification Title	Grade	# Positions	Hiring Rate	Minimum	Maximum	Notes
Town Clerk	19	1	60,109	63,114	93,169	Grade 18 to 19
Finance Officer	21	1	66,270	69,584	102,719	Grade 19 to 21
Office Assistant	9	1	38,440	40,361	59,581	Grade 8 to 9
Public Works Director	20	1	63,114	66,270	97,827	
Public Works Asst. Director	16	0	51,925	54,521	80,484	New Position
Public Works Crew Leader	10	1	38,747	40,684	60,058	Grade 9 to 10 Frozen in FY 25
Public Works Technician	6	1	31,877	33,471	49,409	
Police Chief	23	1	73,063	76,716	113,248	
Police Investigator	16	1	51,925	54,241	80,484	
Police Sergeant	16	2	51,925	54,241	80,484	
Police Officer	13	6	44,854	47,097	69,524	
Firefighter	11	3	40,684	42,718	63,060	New Positions
Fire Engineer	13	3	44,854	47,097	69,524	
Fire Captain	15	3	49,452	51,925	76,651	