



Rutherford County Assessor's Office

Funding Proposal FY 2025–2026

Addressing the Challenges
Underfunding and Rapid Growth

Argument for Adequate Funding of the Rutherford County Assessor's Office

Presented by the Rutherford County Assessor of Property | FY 2025

As Rutherford County continues to experience unprecedented growth, the need for strategic investment in essential government services becomes critical. One such cornerstone is the Assessor of Property's Office—a constitutional office fundamental to fair taxation, fiscal stability, and responsible governance. With Rutherford County now officially surpassing Hamilton County in population size, the budget for the Assessor's Office must reflect this new reality.

1. Population Growth Demands Increased Capacity

Rutherford County's population has surged to 388,909, outpacing Hamilton County's 385,126. This growth directly translates into a larger property base, increased new construction, and more complex assessments. Every parcel must be assessed fairly and timely to ensure equitable taxation and to support essential county revenues. The volume of work continues to increase, yet our staffing and resources have not kept pace. Without adequate support, service quality, assessment accuracy, and public confidence are all at risk.

2. Budget Disparity Despite Larger Size

Despite being the larger county, Rutherford's Assessor's Office operates with a budget of \$3.63 million, nearly \$854,000 less than Hamilton County's \$4.49 million. This gap is not just a number—it represents fewer boots on the ground, less access to modern technology, and a greater strain on our current workforce. Aligning our budget with the realities of our county's size and growth is not a luxury; it is a fiscal necessity for maintaining operational integrity.

3. Staffing Shortages and Retention Challenges

Rutherford County funds 30 of 33 authorized positions, while Hamilton County funds 39 fully staffed positions. This discrepancy puts our office at a disadvantage in managing workloads and meeting statutory deadlines. Our salary budget of \$1.96 million lags significantly behind Hamilton's \$2.47 million, making it more difficult to attract and retain top-tier appraisal professionals. Investing in competitive compensation is not about excess—it's about ensuring we have the skilled personnel required to maintain excellence.

4. Correcting Historical Underfunding

Rutherford's rapid rise in population has not been matched with a corresponding rise in operational funding. This is not a reflection of inefficiency—it is a signal that our county has outgrown its current budgetary framework. In contrast, Hamilton County provides a model for how appropriate investment ensures accurate property assessments, fewer appeals, and smoother budget planning for the entire local government.

5. The Cost of Inaction

An underfunded Assessor's Office has serious ripple effects. Inaccurate assessments or delays not only compromise public trust but can also create budgetary instability across county services—from schools to public safety. Fair and equitable property valuation underpins the very foundation of our tax structure. Investing in this office safeguards the integrity of that system and ensures continued economic growth and accountability to taxpayers.

Conclusion: A Conservative Investment in Efficiency and Fairness

To maintain service levels, uphold public trust, and plan responsibly for our county's future, the Assessor's Office must receive a budget commensurate with the size and scope of Rutherford County. This includes funding for additional staff, competitive salaries, and modern technology solutions. As Assessor, I have led with fiscal restraint and operational transparency.

This request is not about excess, it is about making a smart, conservative investment in the tools and talent needed to serve nearly 389,000 residents with fairness and accuracy.

Just as a thriving business reinvests in its core operations to stay competitive, so too must Rutherford County reinvest in the foundational services that keep our economy strong and our citizens well-served. 389,000 residents. Support a budget that matches Rutherford's growth—invest in fairness and efficiency.

Rutherford County Assessor's Office: Funding Proposal Visual

