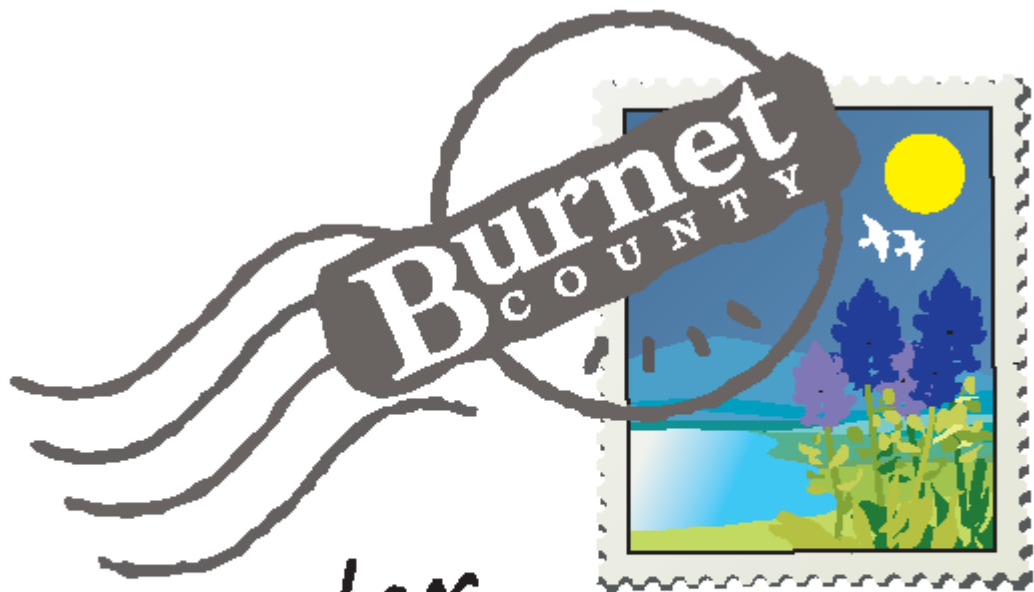


Burnet County 101



*Relax.
You're finally here.*



Dear Burnet County Residents:

Thank you for taking time to get to know your county government better. I encourage you as a Burnet County resident to take advantage of all the assistance our county has to offer. County government is the government “closest to the people,” and provides many services that affect your lives every day.

As a citizen in our community, your participation in our county government is vital to its success. We depend on you to help mold the future of our county, and ensure that this continues to be a wonderful place to live, raise a family, and do business.

We hope that this information serves as a helpful guide to Burnet County government. Please feel free to access any of the contact numbers listed if you have further questions. We are here to serve you!

And, as we like to say, “Relax, you’re finally here!”

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donna Klaeger". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D".

Donna Klaeger
Burnet County Judge

Burnet County's Mission Statement: The mission of Burnet County is to maintain overall efficient and effective management of county resources while providing the services mandated by state and federal law and desired by the citizens of Burnet County.

Some Facts about Burnet County

- Burnet County was organized in 1852.
- The local granite quarry, Granite Mountain, provided the granite to build the Texas State Capitol.
- Burnet County currently has an estimated population of 43,000 within our almost 1,000 square miles. Our next census will be in 2010, when we are expected to have even larger population numbers.
- In 2007, Burnet County was named as one of the top ten fastest growing counties in the state of Texas, and one of the top 100 in the United States.
- Burnet County was recently named by *The Progressive Farmer* magazine as one of the best places to live in rural America.
- Burnet County employs 272 people. This includes not only courthouse administrative staff, but correctional officers and deputies, road and bridge crews, attorneys, librarians, auditors, and many others that make the operation of the county run smoothly. Of those 272 people, 61 have worked for Burnet County for at least ten years.

About County Government

County government structure is spelled out in the Texas Constitution, which makes counties functional agents of the state. Thus, counties, unlike cities, are limited in their actions to areas of responsibility specifically spelled out in laws passed by the Legislature.

At the heart of each county is the commissioners court. Each Texas county has four precinct commissioners and a county judge who serve on this court. Although this body conducts the general business of the county and oversees financial matters, the Texas Constitution established a strong system of checks and balances by creating other elective offices in each county. The major elective offices found in most counties include county attorneys, county and district clerks, county treasurers, sheriffs, tax assessor-collectors, justices of the peace, and constables. As a part of the checks and balances system, counties have an auditor appointed by the district courts.

Elected officials serve four year terms of office. While many county functions are administered by elected officials, others are run by individuals employed by the commissioners court. They include such departments as the county libraries, environmental services, veterans' services, and indigent health services.

2007-08 Burnet County Elected Officials

Donna Klaeger, County Judge
Bill Neve, Commissioner, Pct. 1
Russell Graeter, Commissioner, Pct. 2
Ronny Hibler, Commissioner, Pct. 3
Joe Don Dockery, Commissioner, Pct. 4
Joe Pollock, County Sheriff
Betty Trapp, County Treasurer
Janet Parker, County Clerk
Eddie Arredondo, County Attorney
Dana DeBerry, District Clerk
Randy Savage, County Court-at-Law
Sheri Frazier, Tax Assessor-Collector
Wendel Gilmore, JP, Pct. 1
James McElroy, JP, Pct. 2
Peggy Simon, JP, Pct. 3
Ed Cutchin, JP, Pct. 4
Edward Brannan, Constable, Pct. 1
Chuck Caraway, Constable, Pct. 2
Jimmy Ballard, Constable, Pct. 3
Christopher Jett, Constable, Pct. 4

Burnet County's Budget

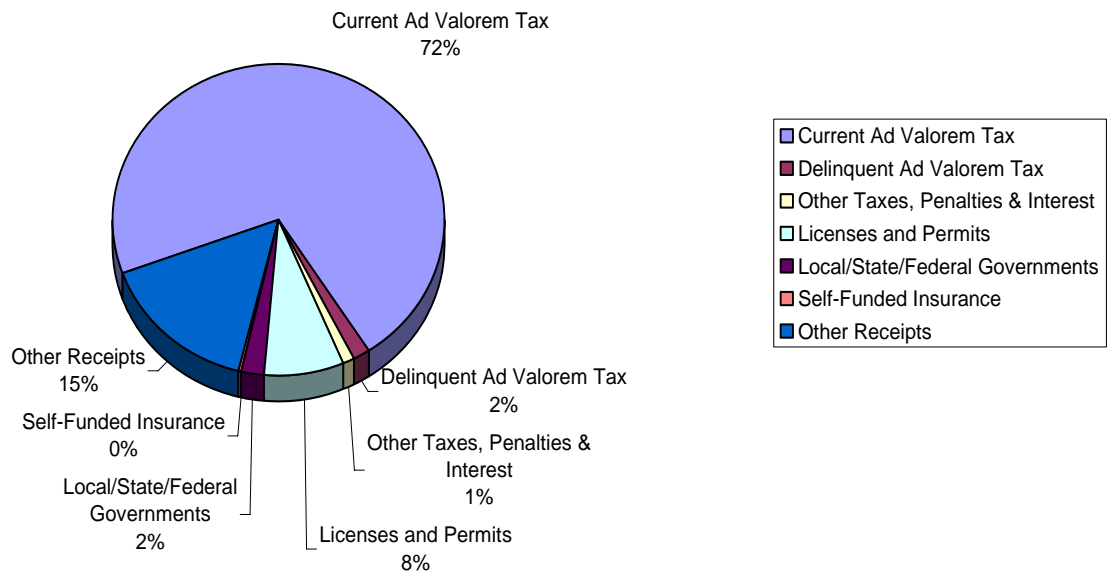
Burnet County operates under a fiscal year from October 1-September 30. The budget process begins each spring with meetings among county department heads, the County Judge, and the County Auditor. A proposed budget is drafted and reviewed. Then, the County Auditor prepares a list of projected revenues for the upcoming budget year. Budget workshops are held to evaluate expenditures and revenues, and consider any tax increases that may need to be made. These workshops are open to the public, and designed to encourage input from taxpayers. Once a final budget draft is prepared, it is placed on the Commissioners Court agenda for adoption.

Like most counties, Burnet County derives a majority of its revenue from property taxes. Seventy-two percent of Burnet County's revenue is property, or "ad valorem" tax. Other revenue comes from state and federal grants, fees from licenses and permits, court fees and fines, and other tax receipts.

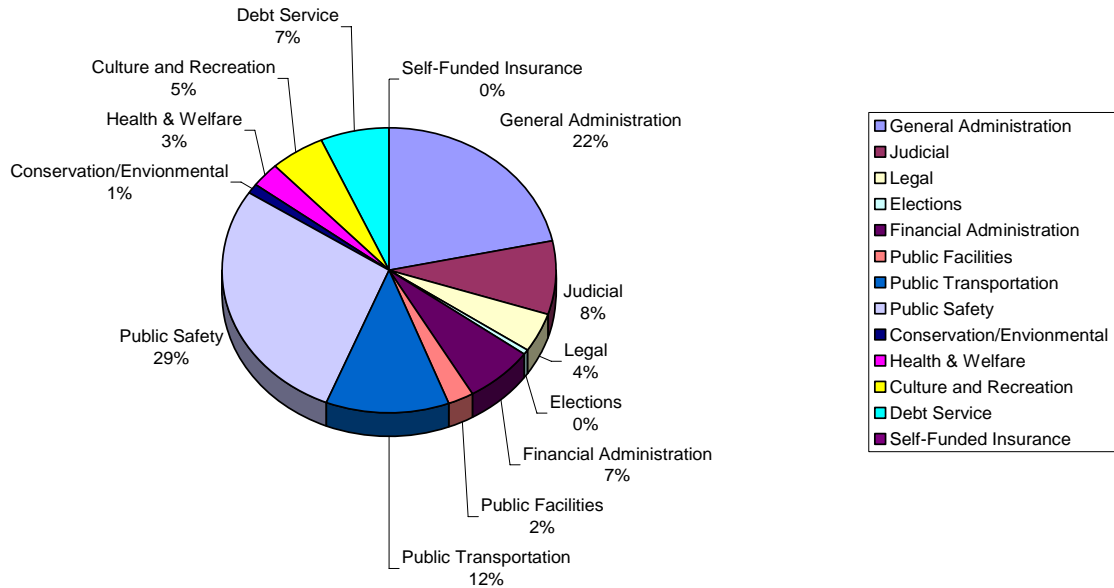
Burnet County spends the largest share of its money on public safety. This includes law enforcement, EMS, area fire departments, courthouse security, animal control, and constables—salaries, equipment, supplies, and operating costs. Other significant expenditures are transportation (road and bridge expenditures) and general administration of the county.

Burnet County citizens voted in 2006 to freeze ad valorem taxes at age 65. Burnet County's tax rate is .3779. In November 2007, a proposal was placed on the ballot to establish a county assistance district in Burnet County. A county assistance district brings unincorporated areas of the county to the same level of sales tax as the county's municipalities. This results in more equitable collection of the sales tax across the county. Revenues from the CAD can be used for the construction, maintenance, or improvement of roads or highways; the provision of law enforcement and detention services; the maintenance or improvement of libraries, museums, parks, or other recreational facilities; the provision of services that benefit public health or welfare, including firefighting or fire prevention services, and for the promotion of economic development and tourism. Although the proposal on the November ballot failed, it may be placed again on the ballot for consideration in the future.

BURNET COUNTY REVENUE



BURNET COUNTY EXPENDITURES



Burnet County’s Judicial System

Burnet County administers several courts. They have divisions of responsibility, depending on the type and severity of the case.

The district courts are the trial courts of general jurisdiction of Texas, and are the highest level trial courts. Burnet County is served by two judicial districts, the 33rd and 424th, each having geographic jurisdiction in Burnet, Blanco, Llano and San Saba counties.

District courts have original subject matter jurisdiction in all felony criminal cases, divorce cases, cases involving title to land, election contest cases, civil matters in which the amount in controversy (the amount of money or damages involved) is \$200 or more, juvenile cases, and any matters in which jurisdiction is not placed in another trial court.

The district court shares jurisdiction with the Burnet County Court-at-law for family law cases and civil cases up to \$100,000 in controversy.

The county court considers class A and B misdemeanor arraignments and hears probates.

The justice of the peace courts consider smaller civil cases \$10,000 and below, evictions, Class C misdemeanor criminal offenses, and small claims.

The Future of Burnet County

Burnet County is one of the fastest growing counties in the state. No longer is our area simply a place for retirees and weekend vacationers. Many younger professionals are moving here because it is a great place to live and raise a family. That growth brings its own set of challenges. Not only do these new citizens expect greater amenities—housing, shopping, and restaurants—but also place a greater demand on our systems of transportation, public safety, health care, and education.

To meet these challenges, Burnet County is actively involved in the following projects:

The Burnet County Transportation Committee: This group of elected officials and citizens meets monthly to strategically plan for the long-range transportation needs of Burnet County. Among its duties are to coordinate transportation planning among the various jurisdictions and municipalities as the county experiences growth. All parties have signed a Memorandum of Understanding supporting a comprehensive county transportation plan that sustains and improves the quality of life for the residents in Burnet County. The improved quality of life for residents will be addressed by examining safety and mobility, and investigate how to improve different modes of transport such as: traditional roadways, railroads, airports, public transit, bicycle and pedestrian.

The New Burnet County Jail Expansion: After over two years of planning and research, Burnet County recently closed on its contract to build a new county jail. The jail will be located adjacent to the current Ellen Halbert Women's Prison (a TDCJ unit), off Hwy 281, near the Burnet Municipal Airport. The 587-bed facility will house Burnet County inmates, federal government inmates, and inmates from other counties who have contracted with Burnet County for bed space. The cost to construct the new county jail is being financed through project revenue bonds, not taxpayer money. Although the county is contracting with a professional corrections management company to develop and manage the county jail, the County Sheriff will oversee the jail, and continue to provide the training to employees.

Emergency Services Districts: Emergency Services Districts, or ESDs, are created by local citizens in a community to provide increased funding for emergency medical services and/or fire services. Local citizens must petition the Commissioners Court to hold an election in their community creating an ESD. Currently, Burnet County has one ESD in Horseshoe Bay. However, two communities, Cassie and Bertram, have submitted petitions to hold ESD elections this May. The role of Burnet County is to certify the petitions and help organize the election. Once citizens approve the establishment of an ESD, the Commissioners Court appoints ESD directors upon recommendations from local citizens. ESDs levy a certain tax to help pay for these services. (.01-.10 per \$100 valuation)

ESDs are being considered in light of possible actions at the state level to cap revenue for local governments. Essential services, such as EMS and firefighting, could see decreased

funding under such caps. ESDs provide a funding alternative to continue the level of these services for citizens.

Helpful County Numbers:

County Courthouse Main:	(512) 756-5420
County Judge	(512) 756-5400
Commissioners Court Coordinator	(512) 715-5203
County Records (birth certificates, death certificates, deeds, plats, marriage licenses)	(512) 756-5406
Permits (building, sewage system)	(512) 756-5420
Vehicle Registration (tax assessor-collector)	(512) 756-5494 or (830) 798-3220
Voter Registration	(512) 715-5288
Burnet Central Appraisal District	(512) 756-8291

Helpful Links:

Burnet County Website	www.burnetcountytexas.org
Burnet County Tourism	www.visitburnetcounty.org

The Burnet County Commissioners Court meets each Tuesday at 9:00 AM at the Burnet County Courthouse. To receive Commissioners Court agendas, e-mail Kathy Golson at: bccordinator@burnetcountytexas.org.