



MECKLENBURG COUNTY  
North Carolina

# Cash Transaction Penny Project

Penny Shortage

6/23/2026 – BOCC Public Policy

# Purpose

This presentation provides a brief overview to the BOCC regarding an **ongoing project to create a policy and process for non-exact change cash transactions at county facilities.**

This project is a proactive measure to plan for potential future penny shortages, due to the federal government no longer minting new pennies.

# Background

November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025

U.S. Treasury mints final penny



The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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### The Penny Shortage and Local Government Payments: Limiting Cash, Accepting Pennies, and Using Rounding Rules

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## As Penny Production Ending, GFOA Monitors Federal Rounding Standards and Local Impacts

# What we know so far:



“Penny problem” is *only a problem* once it “becomes a problem.” - i.e. Mecklenburg County is currently not experiencing a penny shortage.



UNC School of Government, GFOA, among others are monitoring local government impacts and changes.



Mecklenburg County has several cash handling points.



“Rounding rules” are allowed, but special consideration is required for property tax payments

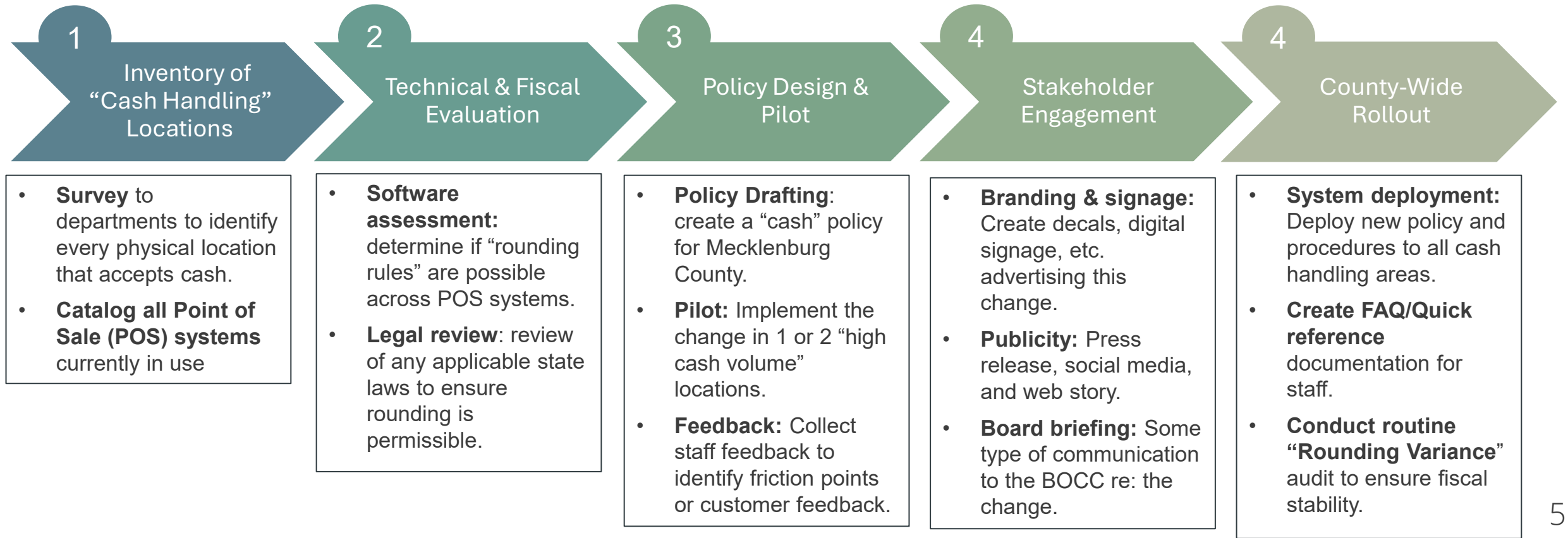


State governments exploring rules regarding cash handling and rounding.



Pennies currently in circulation will remain in circulation. No *new* pennies are being minted and added to circulation.

# As a proactive measure, the county is working on a project to develop a policy and process for rounding cash transactions.



All county departments were surveyed to understand  
gain an understanding of **where cash transactions may  
occur.**

**9**  
Departments handle cash  
transactions



Vast majority fall  
within 2 departments

The **NCGFOA & UNC School of Government** presented a webinar, outlining options and recommendations for local governments to proactively consider regarding cash transactions.



**NCGFOA**  
North Carolina Government Finance Officers Association



- ✓ Cashless enterprise
- ✓ Requiring exact change
- ✓ Transaction rounding
- ✓ Fee schedule changes

# Property tax transactions have special considerations that must be followed.

## General Statute 105:

- Taxes shall be payable in existing national currency.
- Taxes can only be released or refunded if the tax is illegal or due to clerical error.
- Very limited flexibility regarding under/overpayments (less than \$1) **but does not apply to in-person cash transactions.**

## What this means:

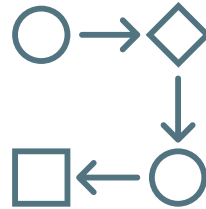
- If residents elect to **pay property taxes in cash and exact change is not offered**, rounding up to the nearest .05 cents is the practical option
- **Ex:** \$1000.71 → \$1000.75
- **Ex:** \$1000.76 → \$1000.80

# Current project status

Currently, the project is in **phase 3** of the plan reviewed earlier



**Drafting policy**



**Determining process**



**Identifying pilot locations**

# Preliminary Changes

To ensure consistency across the enterprise based on property tax requirements:

at areas where cash is accepted and if cash is being used, develop and implement an enterprise “penny rounding” policy for applicable areas.

Require exact change.

If no

Request other payment method.

If no

Round up to nearest .05.



Consider future fee schedule updates to reflect whole dollar or .05 amounts for applicable programs.

# Examples

Maximum impact, regardless of total transaction amount, would be **less than or equal to .04 cents.**

## Small transaction:

- \$10.02 → \$10.05
- \$10.07 → \$10.10

## Large transaction (ex. Property taxes)

- \$1,000.71 → \$1,000.75
- \$1,000.76 → \$1,000.80

**Thank You**  
Questions?