

MORRIS COUNTY 2024 OPERATING BUDGET

Board of County Commissioners

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Introduction – March 13, 2024

*2024 County Commissioners'
Budget Committee members

2024 Budget at a glance

- 5th Year of No County Tax Rate Increase
- Ratable base grew by 8.8%
- Second lowest average county tax in New Jersey (Dept. Of Community Affairs 2023 Data)
- The budget is structurally balanced and cap compliant

	2023	2024
Introduced Budget	\$343.5M	\$365.3M*
Tax Rate Increase	0.0%	0.0%
Strong Ratable Growth	\$107.6B	\$117.0B
County Tax Rate	\$0.250	\$0.240

***2024 Budget total artificially inflated by early authorization of \$7.3M in grants**

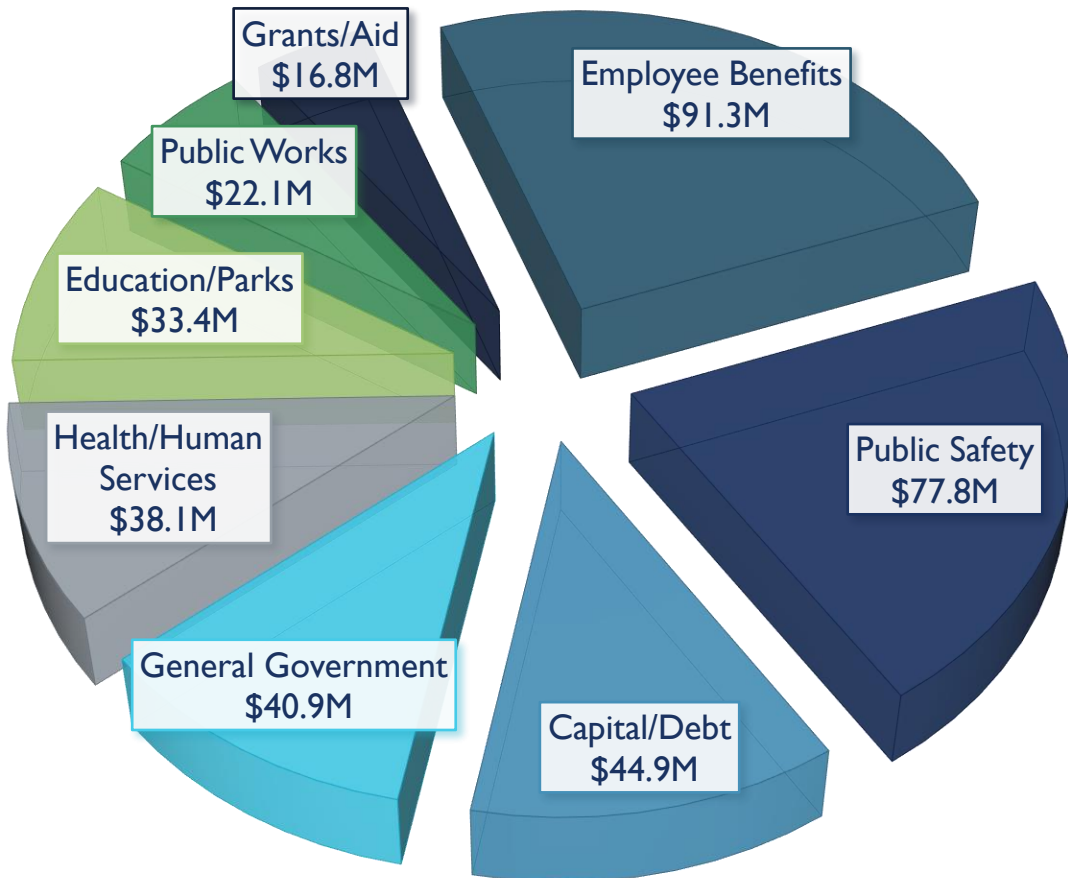
Maintaining a Strong Fund Balance Maintains a AAA Bond Rating

- Morris County has been rated AAA from both Standard & Poor's and Moody's for **48 years**
- At \$63.2M, Year-End Fund Balance is \$2.5M greater than 2022

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Beginning Year Fund Balance	\$53.5M	\$56.2M	\$57.9M	\$60.7M	\$63.2M
Portion Used to Offset Tax Levy	\$27.1M	\$28.2M	\$28.2M	\$30.2M	\$30.2M
Fund Balance Regenerated	\$29.8M	\$29.9M	\$31.0M	\$32.7M	\$30.2M*
Ending Year Fund Balance	\$56.2M	\$57.9M	\$60.7M	\$63.2M	\$63.2M*

*The 2024 Regenerated and Year-End Fund Balance are estimated figures.

Priority Investments in the safety, security and welfare of our residents continue to grow



Budget Area	Percent of Budget
Employee Benefits	25.0%
Public Safety	21.3%
Capital/Debt	12.3%
General Government	11.2%
Health/Human Services	10.4%
Education/Parks	9.1%
Public Works	6.1%
Grants/Aid	4.6%

Human Services is a major focus of the 2024 Budget

Veterans' Services

Adding a Veteran Service Officer to process cases more rapidly. Brings office from 3 to 4 VSOs.

Adding a part-time seasonal intern for additional support and to foster interest in aiding Veterans.

Homelessness Prevention

\$300,000 added to the Office of Temporary Assistance budget to:

- Double in the County Emergency Assistance funding line item from \$150,000 to \$300,000.
- Provide \$150,000 in specific homelessness prevention funding to keep residents in their current housing.



Commissioners dedicate expanded Veterans Services Office, Nov. 2023

Morris County supports our constitutional officers so they can continue to provide the best services to our residents

The 2024 Budget increases funding to address challenges faced by the:



County Clerk

- Responding to increasing state election mandates & preparing for the presidential election.



Surrogate

- Providing online & electronic options to residents probating wills.



Prosecutor

- Meeting state mandates on the growing amount of video evidence that must be processed and cataloged & expediting the administration of justice.

Morris County continues to invest in Public Safety initiatives to bolster our municipalities

Funding once again allocated to absorb the 2024 municipal 911 emergency dispatch cost increases. Services are currently provided to address the following needs:

- Countywide Interoperable Radio System for all 39 Municipalities
- Countywide Law Enforcement Records Management System - 29 Municipalities
- Full Dispatch Services - 23 Municipalities
- 911 only and Medical Pre-Arrival Directives - 4 Municipalities
- Solely Medical Pre-arrival Directives - 2 Municipalities
- EMS/FIRE Dispatch - 8 Fire Districts/Municipalities

Funding continues for the County's Basic Life Support (BLS) Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Unit, which responded to over 3,862 Emergency calls in 2023.

Daily backup services are provided to local BLS/EMS for all Morris County Municipalities.

The 2024 Budget recognizes that Economic Development and Tourism are essential to Morris County's continued success



Director Myers announces America's 250th Anniversary celebration funding, Feb. 2024

A record \$900,000 directed to Economic Development and Tourism.

- \$100,000 earmarked to ensure Morris County takes its rightful place at the center of celebrating America's 250th Anniversary – our nation's Semiquincentennial!

Over \$9M to Morris the County Park Commission, stewards of the largest county park system in NJ.

- Over 4.8 million, residents and visitors alike, are drawn to nearly 20,450 acres of parkland and 38 facilities.
- Included are National & State Register historic sites, golf courses, educational & recreational facilities, arboreta, 250 miles of trails, conservation areas and an ice-skating arena.
- Award-winning program & activities offered year-round.

The Preservation Trust Fund has protected and enhanced Morris County for more than 30 years

The Preservation Trust Fund Tax will stay level for 2024, at 5/8 cent per \$100 of total county equalized property valuation. It has financed county park improvements, preservation programs and restoration projects through these popular grant programs:



Parks Farm, Chester Township

Farmland Preservation

\$169M

Open Space Preservation

\$295M

Historic Preservation

\$50M

Flood Mitigation

\$100M

Trail Design & Construction

\$5M



Historic Speedwell Wheelhouse Dedication, Oct. 2023

Education Opportunities are endless in Morris County and the highest rated

County College of Morris

- A \$484 million economic impact on Morris County.
- The highest graduation rates of all NJ county colleges.
- #1 in alumni salaries in NJ for the past five years.

Morris County Vocational School District

- A blue-ribbon school, and US News/Newsweek top-performing high school in the country.
- County allocation to district operating expenses is up \$75,000 for third consecutive year.
- Planned increases paving the way for the new Career Technical Center being constructed on CCM campus.
 - Project will accommodate 500 new students.
- Training in healthcare, information technology, manufacturing and supply chain will ensure a clear and lucrative career path for those who enroll.



At the core of county government, we invest heavily in our infrastructure

2024 Capital Major Components:

- County Roads & Bridges
- Education
- Public Safety
- Human Services
- Park Safety
- Law Enforcement



Millbrook Avenue Bridge Dedication, Randolph, Aug. 2023

Responsible investment to avoid deferred maintenance costs

Description	Dollars
2024 Full Capital Plan	\$60,320,536
Less Grants	-\$10,354,917
Net 2024 Capital Plan	\$49,965,619
Less Legacy Courthouse Project - 2024 budget	-\$15,000,000
Net 2024 Capital Plan of Traditional Projects	\$34,965,619

County Costs are up, but no increase in the tax rate thanks to prudent fiscal management and a growing ratable base

- Budget increases are being driven by non-discretionary expenses:
 - Health Insurance costs up \$1.9M
- However, thoughtful, mission-driven investments continue:
 - Human Service and Public Safety needs prioritized
 - Focus remains on education and training for students and adults
 - County infrastructure maintained - deferred maintenance costs avoided
- **No tax rate increase for the 5th straight year.**
- Budget is structurally stable and sustainable, anticipating the challenges of future years.

