



News from Livingston County, N.Y.

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Livingston County Files 2022 Tentative Budget

GENESEO, N.Y., Nov. 9, 2021 – On November 1, 2021, Livingston County Administrator Ian M. Coyle unveiled the County’s tentative budget for fiscal year 2022. The public budget hearing will take place on November 17, 2021, as part of the regularly scheduled Board of Supervisors meeting.

Coyle states that the proposed budget is sound, stable, and balanced, while also being aligned with the policies, objectives and goals of the County’s strategic plan. Despite recent hardships, he says residents have reason to be optimistic regarding the County’s emergence from the pandemic.

“Livingston County government continues to operate at a high level in an environment challenged by the continuing response to the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Coyle. “The collective governmental response of the County workforce has been nothing short of amazing, and I would like to personally thank the County government staff for their public service. This budget is fiscally sound, balanced and forward looking. I look forward to its public inspection, review and eventual adoption.”

Coyle recommends a balanced budget of \$168,430,466. The tentative budget includes a tax rate of \$7.77, down 22 cents or 2.66% from the 2021 rate. The tax levy, or total amount of taxes collected from properties in the County, will drop to approximately 1.83% or \$550,000, which is within the County’s calculated “cap” figure of approximately 2%.

“This represents a situation that is very rare, a tentative budget submission that cuts both the tax rate and tax levy,” explained Coyle. “Barring assessment changes, an average homeowner with a single family home assessed at \$135,227 will see their county tax bill decrease nearly \$29 under this plan. County property taxes for most taxpayers in the county will go down slightly. Those property owners with tax bill increases will see growth solely due to the result of assessment fluctuations upward.”

Over the last 12 months, the federal government has provided counties with needed stimulus funding and cost-relief reimbursements through the CARES Act and American Rescue Plan Act legislation. At \$12.2 million over several budget cycles, this funding has been transformational

for Livingston County. However, this funding is not included in the 2022 budget in terms of recurring revenue or offsets to recurring expenses. County officials have stated funding decisions will need to soon take place regarding ARPA usage.

The financial impacts of the pandemic continue to be felt, though not all of them are negative. Sales tax has increased significantly, up 17% or \$4.5 million, from the previous year, in part due to rising inflation and consumer demand. Revenue from internet sales tax has also increased exponentially over the previous year. As in previous years, the County's Board of Supervisors will continue its financial support of non-profit organizations, such as the Livingston Arts Council, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Livingston County, and the Pioneer Library System, among others. Several of these organizations will receive increases in the 2022 budget.

Looking forward, the County will continue pursuing the implementation of its strategic plan. Livingston County is in possession of more than \$10 million in federal USDA ReConnect funds to be used toward the Light Up Livingston broadband expansion initiative. Several solar projects are underway throughout the County in varying states of completion. Many of these have a payment-in-lieu-of-tax (PILOT) component that will add to the coffers of participating local governments where the project is located. The County's five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) includes provisions for a number of infrastructure-related projects, including water, sewer, roads, bridges, and broadband.

Coyle states that from a financial management perspective, the County's affairs are in order. Its fund balance and reserve positions are both strong. The 2020 Early Retirement Incentive has saved significant local share dollars. The Office of the State Comptroller has indicated Livingston County's Fiscal Stress score is lower than last year and its 2020 audit opinion was clean.

The 2022 tentative budget can be found [here](#) in its entirety. For more information on the budget, please contact the Livingston County Administrator's office at 585-243-7040.

About Livingston County:

Founded in 1821, Livingston County, N.Y., is comprised of more than 61,000 residents in 17 towns located across 640 square miles of the Finger Lakes region.

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