



Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Introduction

JULY 1, 2025 | JUNE 30, 2026



Successes

Committed to
providing
services that
promote public
safety

Implemented the public safety department model to improve coordination among all public safety divisions

Achieved New Gen 9-1-1 readiness; the first in the state to achieve this goal of data accuracy

Improved EMS response times in seasonal areas when seasonal unit is operational – 27.5% reduction in Roxana and 19.9% reduction in Dewey

Improved hospital transfer of care times: 96.7% took less than 20 minutes compared to 95% last year

Improved intubation success numbers; the overall patient success rate improved 0.7%

9-1-1 Center – 91.5% of calls answered within 10 seconds, since ACD was put in place this is now 96.8%

Worked to improve hospital off-load times and to develop a transfer of care policy to address extended wait times

Reengaged county personnel in EOC activation trainings

Completed construction of Millsboro Medic Unit 103



Successes

Committed to
providing
services that
promote well-
being and
prosperity

Assisted more than 421 households with housing repairs (300 last year)

Assisted 17 households with down payment and settlement assistance

Broke ground on the 2nd SCRP project, Chapel Branch Apartments (24 affordable units)

Completed 14 sewer district boundary expansions including Love Creek Mobile Home Community

Completed the Herring Creek Sewer Area, providing service to over 800 existing homes

ExciteSussex Loan fund – approved two loans totaling \$1.1 million to retain/create 27 jobs

Worked with the Delaware Strategic Fund to have \$3.9 million awarded to Sussex businesses retain/create jobs

After first year, kitchen incubator expanded members by 12 businesses, or 63%



Successes

Committed to
providing
services that
promote an
enriched quality
of life

Worked with DelDOT to refine the calculation used for the Land Use Forecast for a new potential transportation improvement district to be located in the south-east of the county

Lead the project improvements at the James Farm Ecological Preserve which included a 3-season educational center

43,809 people attended 1,899 programs offered by County libraries – a value of \$397,634

365,552 items were checked out at the County libraries – a value of over \$5.8 million

31,641 sessions were logged at the Greenwood, Milton and South Coastal Libraries, allowing individuals to have access to a computer and WiFi

Mobile Library – partnered with the Seaford School District's Read & Feed program and handed out approximately 400 new books to children

Milton Library – hosted English as a Second Language classes in partnership with Sussex Tech Adult Learning, allowing the library to serve the growing Hispanic population

South Coastal Library – partnered with the Delaware Division of Libraries and Operation Warm to provide coats to over 100 children in need; children also received a free book



Successes

Committed to providing services in a personal, professional manner

Began allowing builders to submit required documents electronically for building inspections

Added 81 vendors to accept electronic payments

Gathered 8,320 satellite-based GPS data collection points in our sewer areas to assist with maintaining four inches of accuracy of record drawings

Provided 1,414 training sessions for employees (virtual and classroom)

Register of Wills – implemented a new procedure to more efficiently handle walk-ins into their office

Provided wedding ceremonies in different languages

Expanded a publicly accessible large-scale document management system to access P&Z documents

Implemented the call-taker model and automatic call distribution in the communications center

48 additional old deed books have been verified and made available online; online deeds now go as far back as September 1924

Successes

Committed to
providing
services in a
fiscally
responsible
manner

Added \$147 million to the Assessment roll in FY 2024 (\$153 million was added in FY 2023)

Generated over 416 invoices that brought in \$80,000 in fine revenue and abatement charges

Completed 19 Existing Wastewater Use Agreements totaling \$2.0 million (up 18%)

Gathered 6,490 satellite-based GPS data collection points to maintain four inches of accuracy of record drawings for sewer infrastructure

Completed a reassessment of all properties that have not been updated in 50 years

Earned the GFOA's Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting

Performed more repairs in-house: 95% of fleet repairs in-house, 100% of electrical repairs in-house, and 97% of HVAC repairs in-house

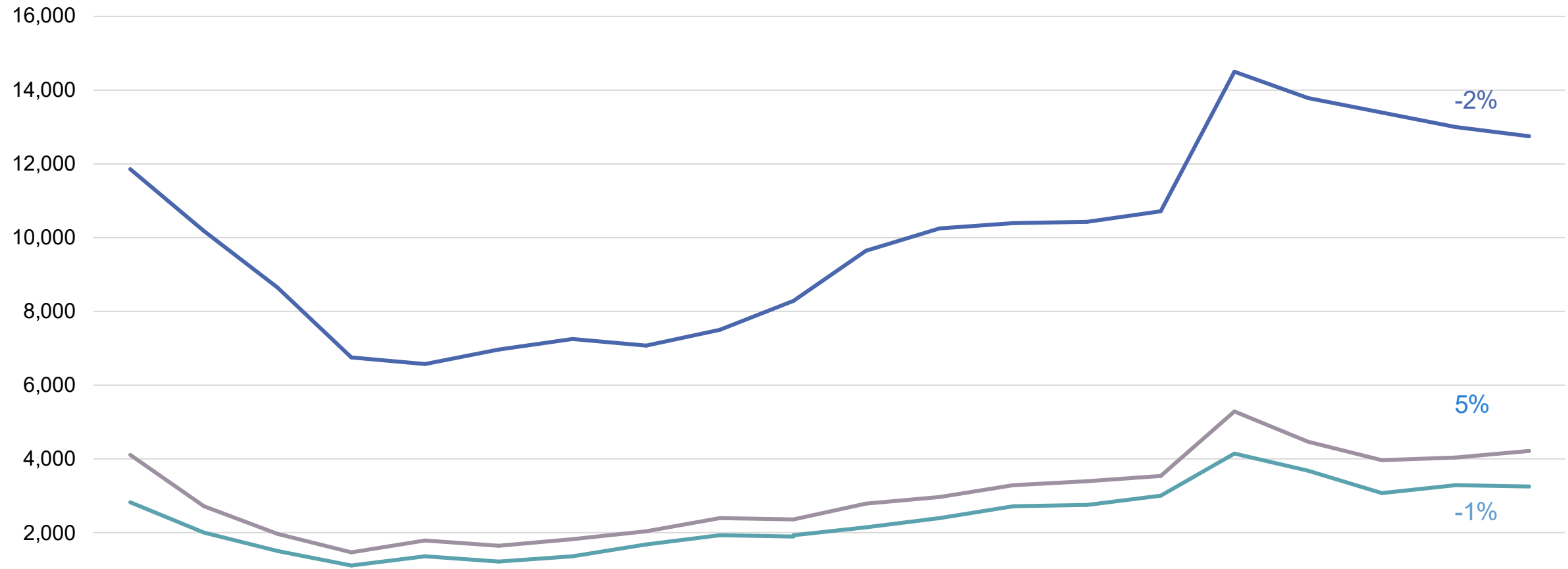
Implemented a shop-floor network for all SCADA networks to mitigate cyber threats

Received a 2024 FAA grant for \$3.5 million for a new Taxiway B – Phase 2

Obtained grant funding to facilitate the County Emergency Operations Plan



Building Trends



	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 est.
Building Permits	11,858	10,193	8,637	6,755	6,587	6,972	7,239	7,093	7,518	8,286	9,659	10,236	10,381	10,413	10,719	14,501	13,802	13,409	13,015	12,737
Dwelling Permits	2,827	2,021	1,519	1,110	1,376	1,213	1,360	1,691	1,935	1,931	2,165	2,390	2,707	2,772	3,003	4,147	3,684	3,085	3,282	3,263
Residential Permits	4,100	2,727	1,960	1,464	1,803	1,649	1,829	2,056	2,403	2,375	2,801	2,980	3,292	3,395	3,533	5,306	4,470	3,957	4,025	4,221



Various One-Year Activity

Activity	2022's Activity	2023's Activity	2024's Activity	2025's Projected Activity	Difference	% Change
Constable Complaints Tracked	1,127	1,104	889	657	(232)	(26%)
Building Code Inspections	30,347	29,198	27,534	25,326	(2,208)	(8%)
Bills Issued Annually	489,674	501,444	510,558	522,598	12,040	2%
Deed Documents Recorded	72,064	62,970	47,820	47,777	(43)	(0%)
Register of Wills Revenue	\$1,577,899	\$1,874,099	\$1,992,419	\$1,846,641	(\$145,778)	(7%)
Water and Sewer EDUs	87,488	92,030	94,947	96,703	1,756	2%
Miss Utility Tickets	51,294	52,957	50,976	51,093	117	0%
Utility Inspections	2,949	2,621	2,810	3,010	200	7%
Sewer Annexations Completed	16	13	14	12	(2)	(14%)



Budget Summary

Fund	2025 Budget	2026 Proposed Budget	Difference	Percent
General Fund	\$99,057,382	\$103,422,374	\$4,364,992	4.4%
Capital Projects – GF	\$17,428,500	\$18,335,462	\$906,962	5.2%
Water Fund	\$2,029,843	\$2,088,180	\$58,337	2.9%
Sewer Fund	\$57,484,311	\$62,841,457	\$5,357,146	9.3%
Capital Projects – WS	\$52,520,000	\$76,739,000	\$24,219,000	46.1%
Pension	\$10,518,895	\$11,784,000	\$1,265,105	12.0%
American Rescue Plan	\$26,735,854	\$9,929,558	(\$16,806,296)	(62.9%)
Total	\$265,774,785	\$285,140,031	\$19,365,246	7.3%

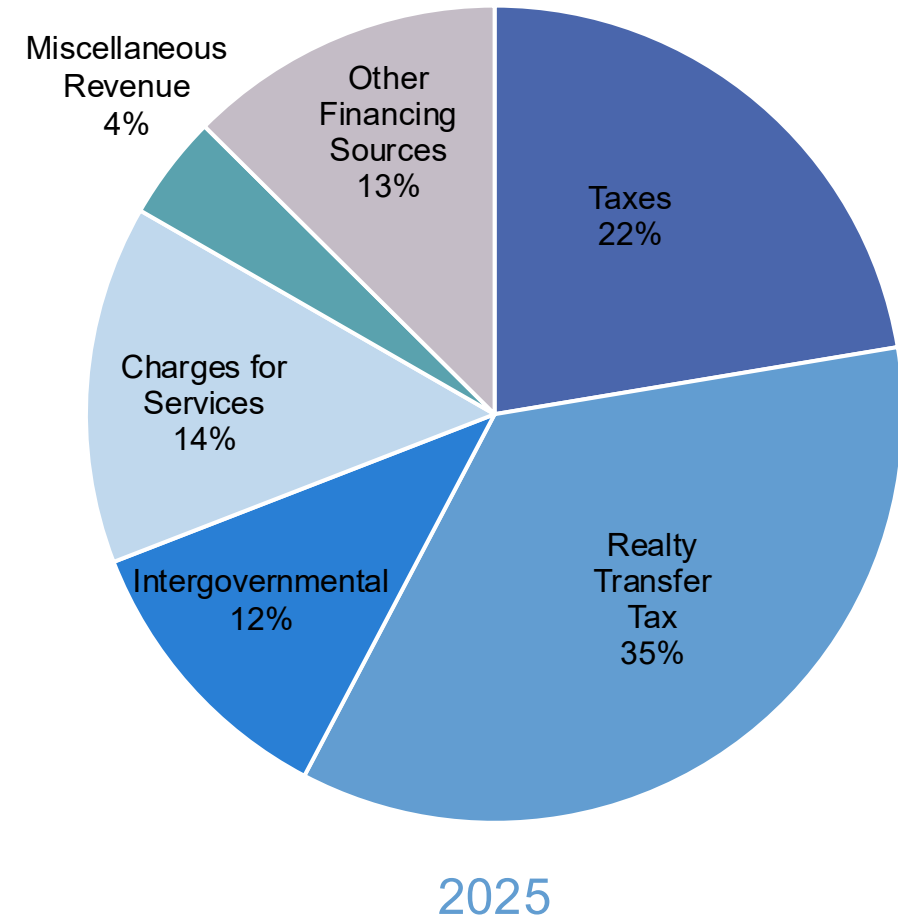
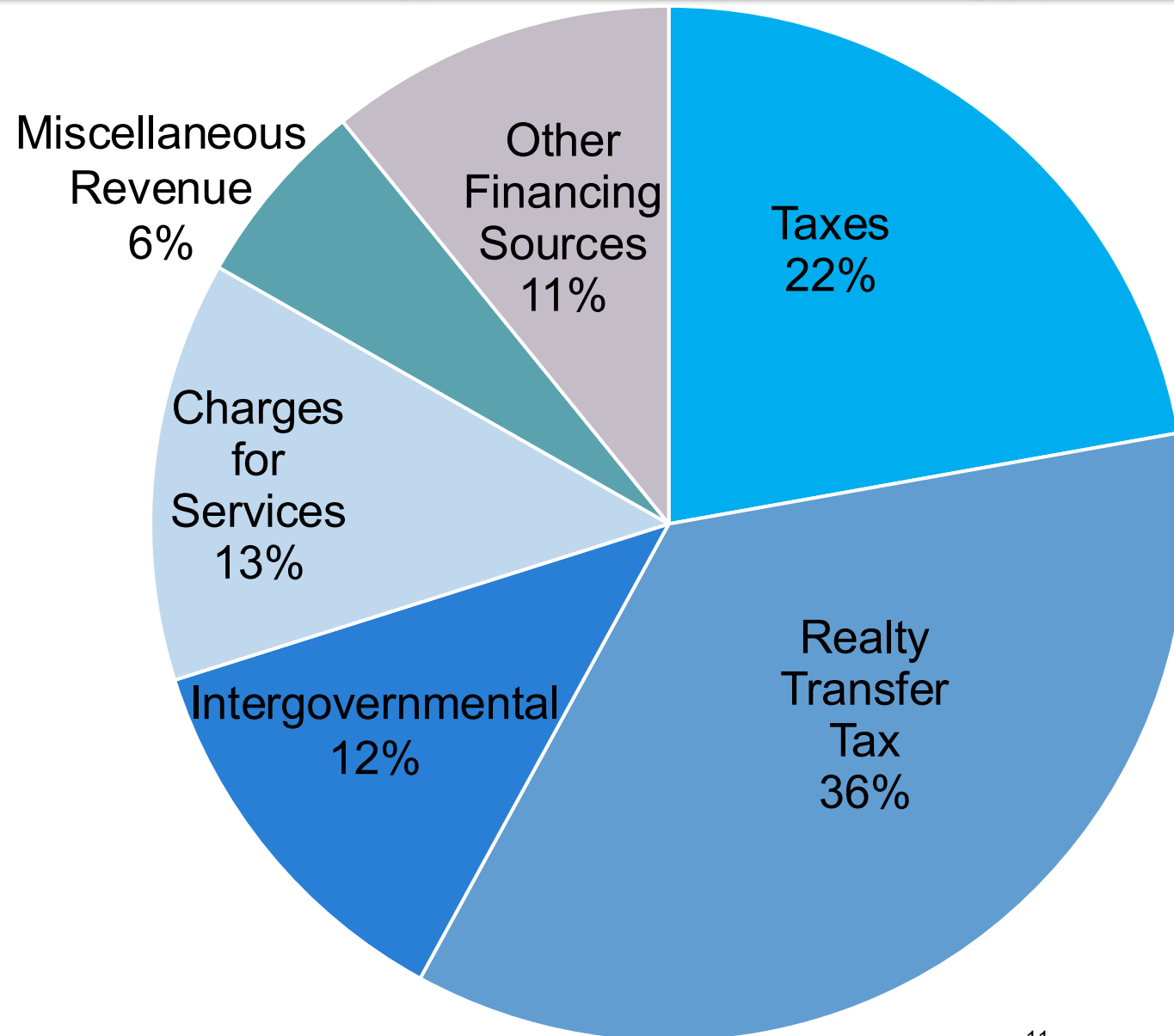


Revenue Highlights

- New tax rate based on being revenue neutral (2.14 cents)
- Use of reserves: \$11.2 million in General Fund; \$12.6 million in Capital
- Use of reserves **DOWN** \$1.2 million, or 9.9%
- Property tax revenue is **UP** \$614,000, or 3.2% due to new improvements
- Building related revenues are **relatively flat**
- Realty Transfer Tax revenue is **UP** \$2.0 million, or 5.7%
- Grant revenue is **UP** \$1.3 million, or 11.3%
- Interest revenue is **UP** \$1.9 million, or 62.3%

Revenue Highlights

General Fund



Use of Reserves - \$23.8 million

	General Fund	Capital Projects Fund
Open Space/SCLT w/Improvements	\$417,000	\$4,841,500
ExciteSussex Program	\$2,500,000	
Deferred Accommodations Tax	\$2,100,000	
Reassessment Project	\$1,689,819	
Farmland Preservation	\$2,000,000	
Trap Pond Project	\$1,500,000	
Community Development/Affordable Housing	\$1,000,000	
Airport - Stormwater Improvements		\$100,000
Airport – Property Acquisition		\$150,000
BP – Utility Improvements		\$70,000
Airport – Pavement Improvements		\$100,000
Airport – Various Projects		\$95,391
Administrative Annex		\$4,000,000
Building & Building Improvements		\$425,000
Library Improvements		\$953,330
Landfill Property		\$250,000
EMS Stations		\$1,600,000
Total	\$11,206,819	\$12,585,221

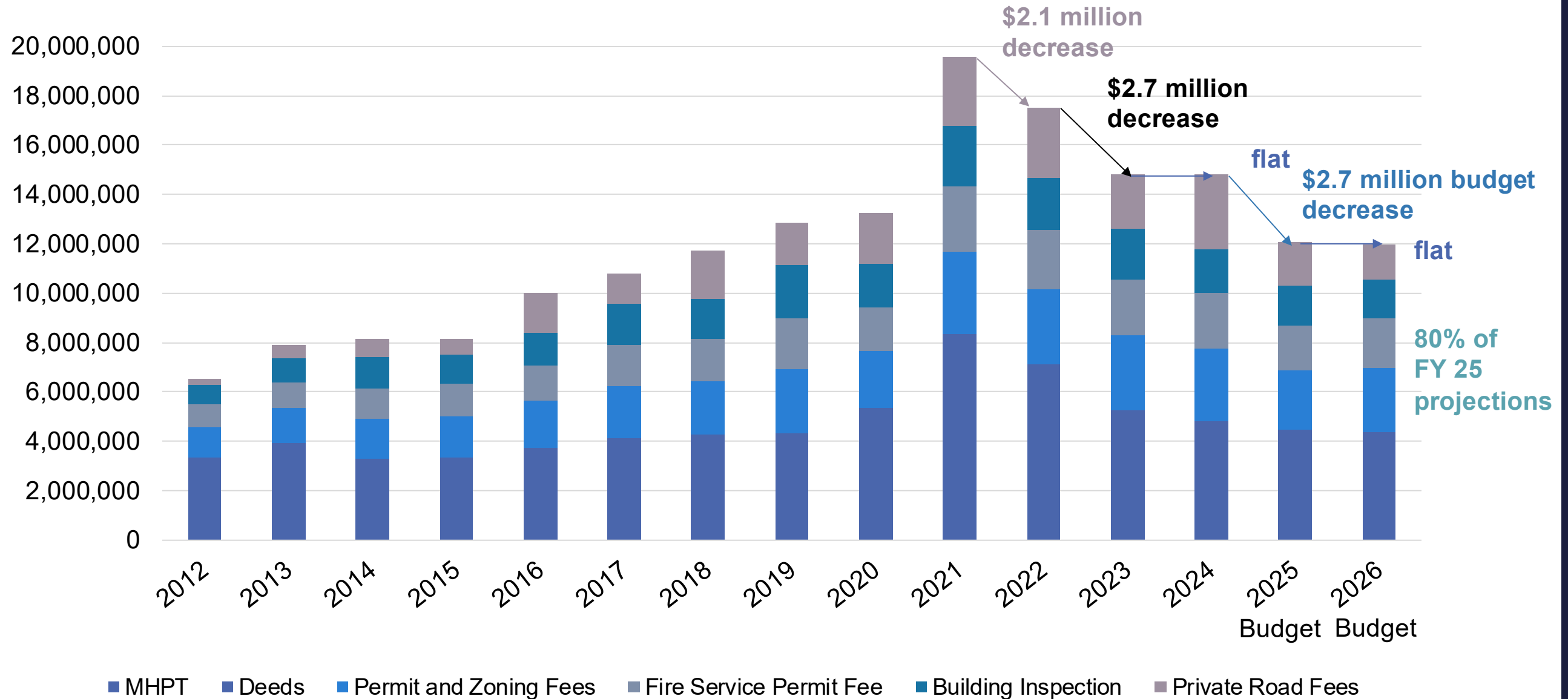
Blue
denotes
RTT
reserves



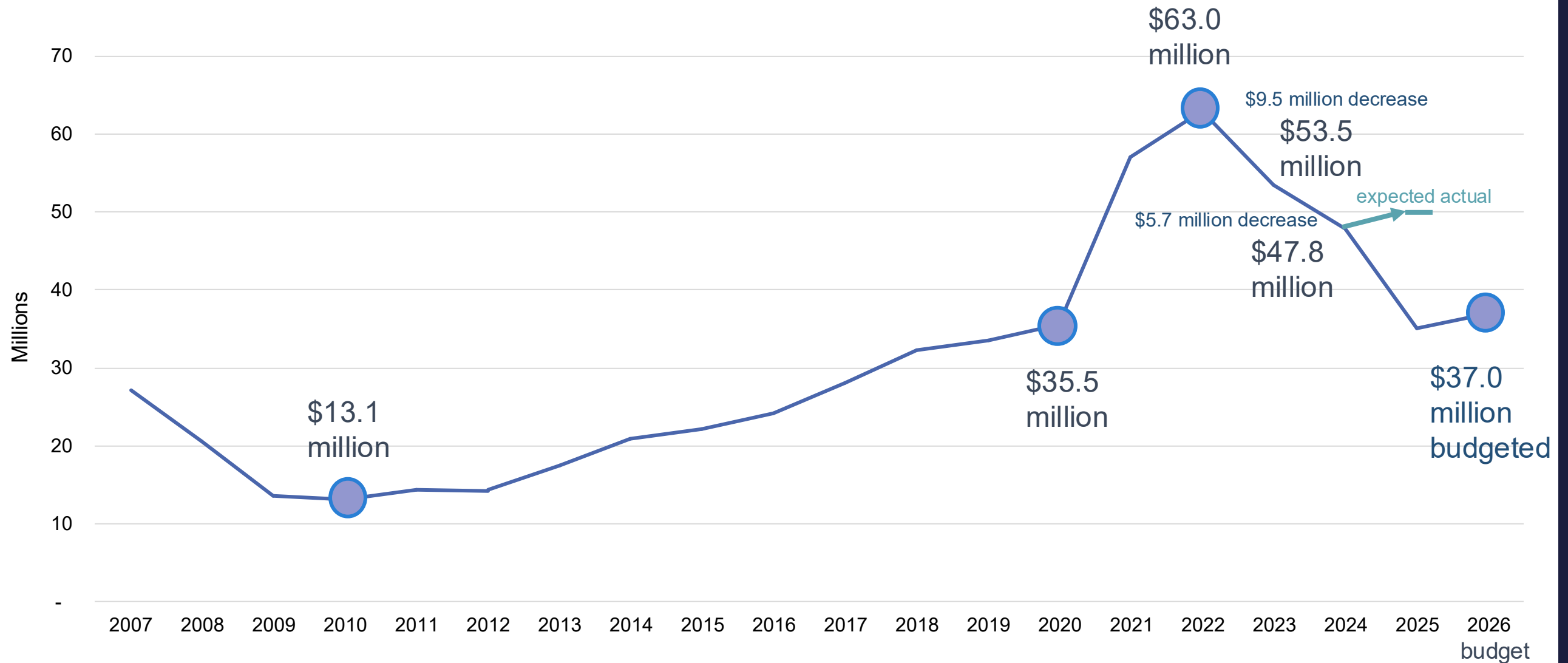
Change in Fees

- **CHANGE:** \$33 annual increase in un-metered water rates
- **CHANGE:** \$12 annual increase in sewer rates
- **CHANGE:** \$3,000 increase in sewer connection fees - \$7,700 to \$10,700
- **CHANGE:** Sheriff fees for services (last change was 15 years ago):
 - Summons and complaints: from \$30 to \$40
 - Alias summons from \$40 to \$50
 - Replevin/Writ of possession from \$30 to \$40
 - Posting the property from \$30 to \$40
 - Subpoena for Civil and Criminal from \$15 to \$20
 - Attachment on Levy from \$75 to \$90 (service required additional deputy time)
 - Certified mail from \$7.50 to \$10.00
 - Posting property with the Notice of Lienholders from \$25 to \$30
- **NEW:** Subdivision name changes in mapping outside the first service \$50/hour
- **NEW:** Construction Phase Design Modification Fee
 - *Technical Bulletin (UCD management sign off) where existing lateral not located as stated on plans or an illegal connection or disconnect was made - \$500*

Building Related Revenues

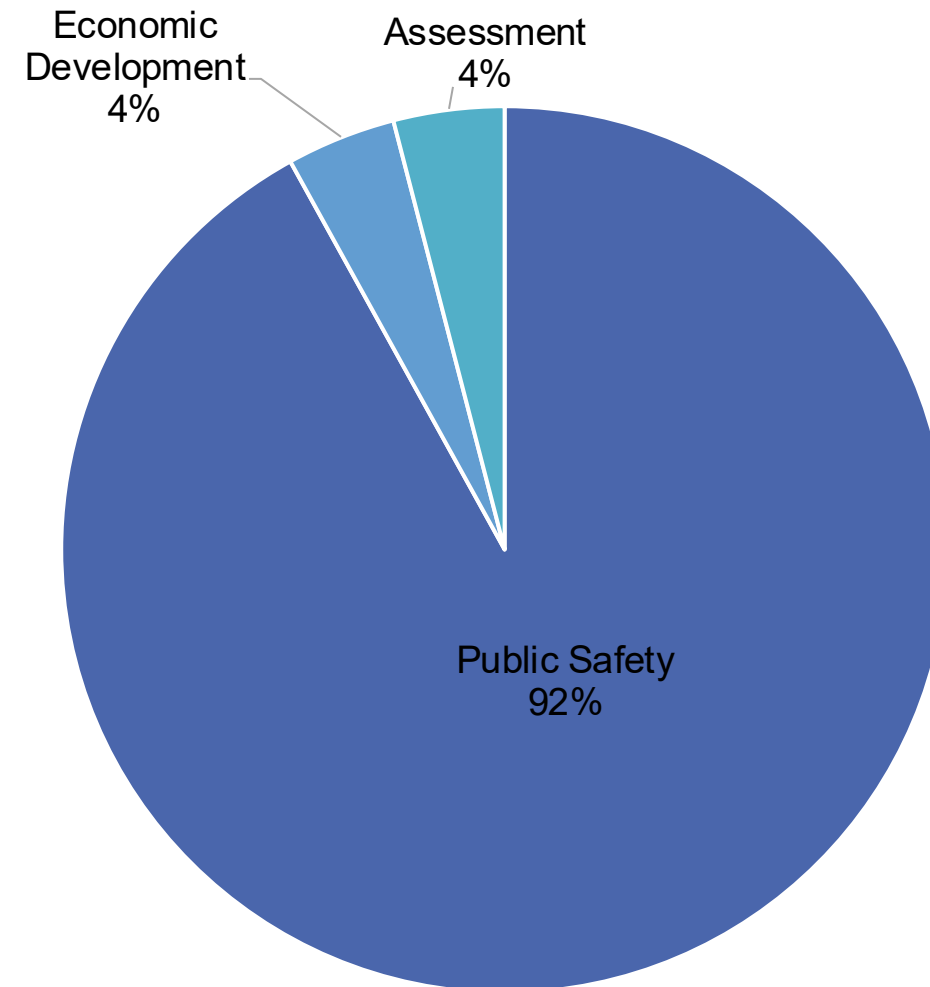


Realty Transfer Tax

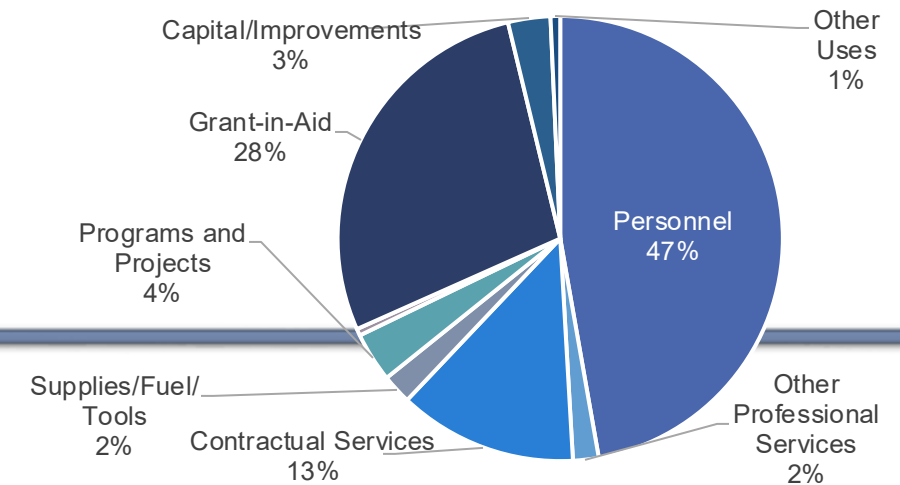


RTT Expenses

Paid with current revenues



General Fund Expense Comparison



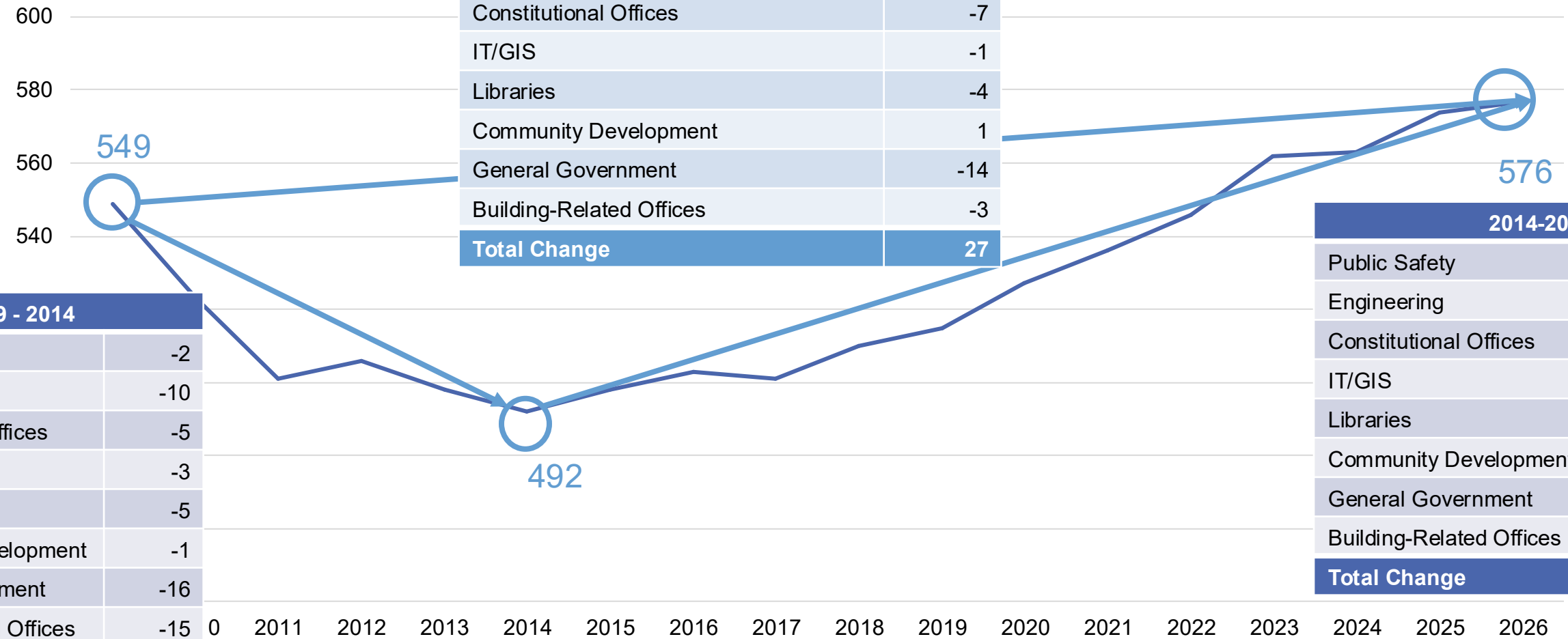
	2025	2026	Difference	Percentage
Personnel	\$47,792,105	\$48,842,892	\$1,050,787	2.2%
Other Professional Services	\$1,878,531	\$1,923,868	\$45,337	2.4%
Contractual Services	\$11,366,788	\$13,430,695	\$2,063,907	18.2%
Supplies/Fuel/Tools	\$2,236,568	\$2,236,966	\$398	0.0%
Programs and Projects	\$4,123,541	\$3,723,149	\$(400,392)	(9.7%)
Training	\$456,053	\$512,828	\$56,775	12.4%
Grant-in-Aid	\$27,482,856	\$28,844,799	\$1,361,943	5.0%
Capital/Improvements	\$3,005,440	\$3,183,682	\$178,242	5.9%
Other Uses	\$715,500	\$723,495	\$7,995	1.1%
Total	\$99,057,382	\$103,422,374	\$4,364,992	4.4%

Staffing –Positions

Department	Position	Increase(Decrease)
Sewer - Engineering		
Engineering – Utility	Planner	1
Engineering – Utility	Assistance Manager of Env. Services	1
Engineering – Utility	Scheduler	1
Engineering		3
General Fund - General Government		
Register of Wills	Clerk	1
Facilities Management	Custodian	-1
Recorder of Deeds	Clerk	-1
General Government		-1
Total New Full-Time Employees		2



Staffing



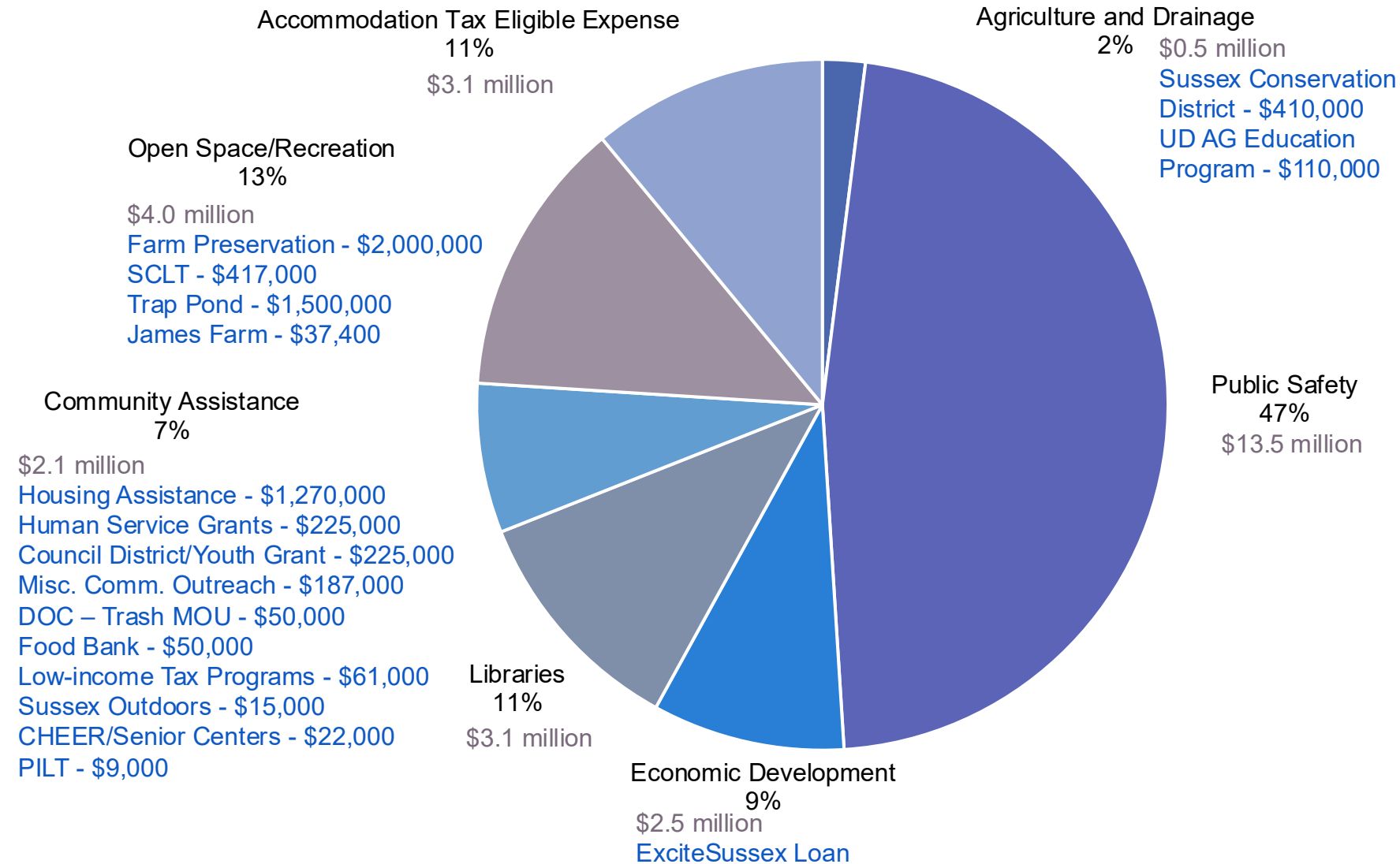
	Population	Overall County Employment	Public Safety Employment
2009	194,751	549	140
current	263,509 (35% growth)	576 (5% growth)	188 (25% growth)



Employment Costs

- Pension County Contributions
 - Contribution is 18.5% of salaries
 - Total cost \$7,500,000 - all employees (LY's contribution was \$7,000,000)
- Salaries
 - Merits - Average of 2% - costs \$751,000
 - Recommended COLA – 2.5% - costs \$1,083,000

Grant-in-Aid - \$28.8 million



Public Safety - \$13.5 million

	2022	2023	2024	2025 Budget	2026 Budget
Delaware State Police	\$3,587,492	\$3,770,393	\$4,101,834	\$4,601,557	\$5,750,000
Local Law Enforcement	\$690,000	\$690,000	\$804,933	\$920,000	\$1,025,000
Fire/BLS	\$5,176,565	\$5,933,471	\$6,131,444	\$5,678,950	\$5,990,550*
Total	\$9,454,057	\$10,393,864	\$11,038,211	\$11,200,507	\$12,765,550

Funding for public safety comes from Realty Transfer Tax and the pass-through building permit fire service fee.

Other items included in the \$13.5 million

\$15,000 for lifeguards in Fenwick.

\$750,000 to Dewey Beach for medic station

* Included is a \$200,000 grant to the Sussex County Technical Rescue Team for a replacement vehicle, breathing apparatus, and a carport for one of their units; this budget also reflects additional funds from building permits based on actual numbers from 2024 and trends from 2025 (budgeted at 80% of 2025 projections)

Libraries - \$3.1 million

Account Description	2024	2025 Budget	2026 Budget
Local Library Grants	\$2,747,600	\$2,817,600	\$2,887,600
Local Library Placement Fees	151,768	200,000	200,000
Total	\$2,899,368	\$3,017,600	\$3,087,600

Funding for the libraries come through:

- The library tax of \$2.1 million
- Mobile home placement tax of \$200,000
- General property tax of \$800,000

The funding increased by \$70,000 from the previous year due to growth in assessments.

THE VALUE OF LIBRARIES IN SUSSEX COUNTY

The libraries in Sussex County function as Technology Centers, Learning Centers and Community Centers for all in Sussex County, Delaware

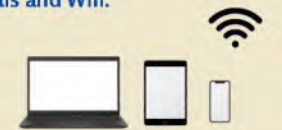
IN FY24...

31,641 COMPUTER/WIFI

sessions were logged at the Greenwood, Milton and South Coastal Libraries, allowing those in Sussex County access to computer terminals and Wifi.

A VALUE OF
\$379,692

Based on Fed Ex/Kinkos pricing



PROGRAMS

43,809

People attended **1899** programs offered by the County Libraries



A VALUE OF
\$397,634

Based on the average entertainment/Program attendance fee



365,552

ITEMS

were checked out from Sussex County Libraries



A TOTAL
VALUE OF OVER



\$5,796,769

Based on the average prices of Amazon, Audible, Netflix and iTunes

LIBRARIES WERE VISITED 233,064

times by the workers, residents, and visitors to Sussex County, Delaware

A VALUE OF
\$4,661,280

Based on the cost of a museum pass

THE FRIENDLY, HELPFUL SERVICE FROM THE STAFF OF
SUSSEX COUNTY LIBRARIES...

PRICELESS

Values calculated according to the Massachusetts Library Association from statistics submitted to the Delaware Division of Libraries for FY24

SUSSEXCOUNTY.LIB.DE.US



Open Space/Recreation - \$2.4 million

The County participates in multiple open space programs. There is \$2.4 million in the budget for possible open space partnerships. There is another \$5 million in open space purchases in Capital.

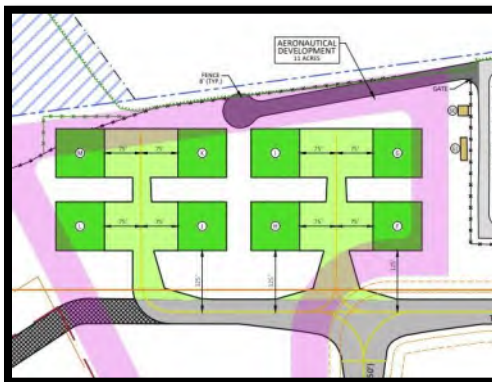
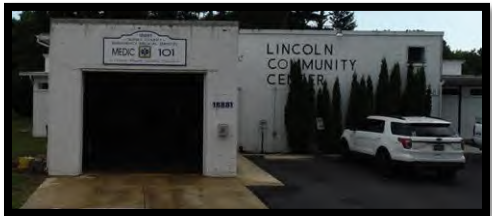
	Previous set-aside Contribution	Funds Spent since 2003	Acres Acquired	Remaining Funds in Reserves
Land Trust	\$6,787,005	\$6,369,776	992.10	\$417,229
Farmland Preservation	-	\$4,971,258	4,960.82	-
Out-right Purchases or Other Partnerships	-	\$14,767,836	787.18	-
Total	-	\$26,108,870	6,740.10	\$417,229

The County's commitment of \$1,500,000 to help the State of Delaware with a water area at Trap Pond is still in the budget; would be paid with RTT reserves

General Fund Capital

FY 2026 Budget





	TOTAL	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
PROJECT REVENUES						
Reserves/RTT (transfer)	\$46,238,777	\$12,585,221	\$17,763,625	\$13,316,875	\$2,459,167	\$113,889
FAA Grant	21,684,852	3,854,850	5,321,250	3,993,750	3,765,001	4,750,001
Investment Income	4,126,500	1,726,500	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000
State of Delaware	1,085,946	95,391	295,625	221,875	209,167	263,889
	73,136,075	18,261,962	23,980,500	18,132,500	7,033,334	5,727,779
PROJECT EXPENDITURES						
AIRPORT - Extend Runway 4	14,013,745	2,052,632	2,512,500	837,500	3,333,334	5,277,779
AIRPORT - Construct Hangar Taxiways	1,300,000	300,000	775,000	225,000	-	-
AIPRORT - Construct Parallel TW B	8,313,000	1,463,000	2,625,000	3,375,000	850,000	-
AIRPORT - Pavement Improvements	500,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
AIRPORT - Utility Improvements	70,000	70,000	-	-	-	-
AIRPARK - Stormwater Improvements	6,100,000	100,000	4,000,000	2,000,000	-	-
Facilities Pole Barn	325,000	325,000	-	-	-	-
Administration/PS Building Improvements	730,000	330,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Administration Annex	25,000,000	4,000,000	11,000,000	10,000,000	-	-
Admin Parking	1,000,000	1,000,000	-	-	-	-
EMS Stations	7,450,000	1,600,000	2,300,000	1,150,000	2,400,000	-
Landfill/Airport Property Acquisition	1,400,000	400,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000
Land Improvements	981,000	568,000	318,000	95,000	-	-
Library Improvements	120,000	120,000	-	-	-	-
Library HVAC Improvements	833,330	833,330	-	-	-	-
Property Acquisition	5,000,000	5,000,000	-	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	73,136,075	18,261,962	23,980,500	18,132,500	7,033,334	5,727,779

Sewer

FY 2026 Budget



Sewer Financial Facts

Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	Increase
Budget	\$51,313,948	\$52,013,083	\$57,484,311	\$62,841,457	\$5,357,146 - 9.3%

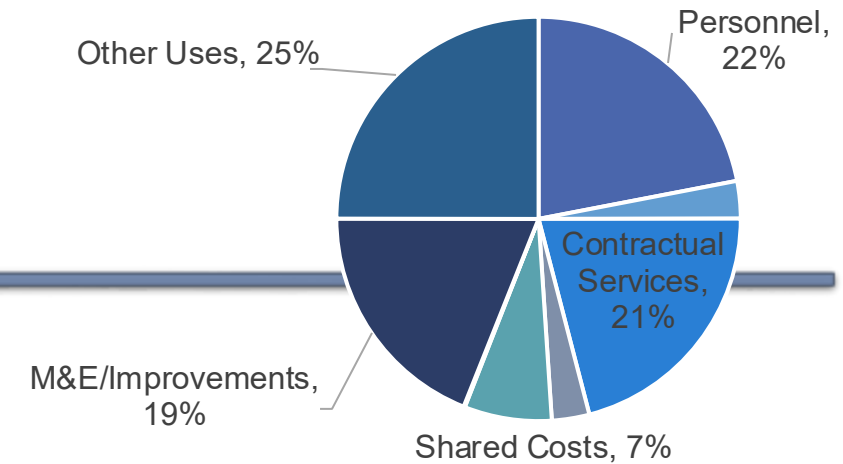
Fiscal Year	Use of Savings to Balance Budget
2025	\$644,528
2024	\$601,112
2023	\$537,596

New Customers	Amount Generated
2,390 for service	\$841,280
For debt payment	\$425,700
For pumping equipment improvements	\$3,000,000

Fiscal Year	Rate	Amount Generated
2022	\$296	-
2023	\$320	\$1,972,944
2024	\$330	\$853,800
2025	\$340	\$898,500
2026	\$352	\$1,114,740



Sewer Budget Summary



	2025	2026	Difference	Percentage
Personnel	12,393,136	13,586,889	1,193,753	9.6%
Other Professional Services	446,300	1,692,300	1,246,000	279.2%
Contractual Services	12,474,403	13,395,556	921,153	7.4%
Supplies/Fuel/Tools	1,995,885	2,104,335	108,450	5.4%
Shared Costs	5,041,248	4,610,674	(430,574)	-8.5%
Training	61,530	47,200	(14,330)	-23.3%
M&E/Improvements	9,656,894	11,656,744	1,999,850	20.7%
Other Uses (Debt)	15,414,915	15,747,759	332,844	2.2%
Total	57,484,311	62,841,457	5,357,146	9.3%



Assessment Rates

Area – Billed by Front Footage	2024 Rate	2025 Rate	2026 Rate
Angola	\$5.13	\$4.89	\$4.48
Angola North	\$8.30	\$7.80	\$7.20
Cedar Neck Expansion	\$2.99	\$2.67	\$2.67
Concord Road Area - Blades	\$4.24	\$4.24	\$4.24
Dagsboro/Frankford	\$0.60	\$0.60	\$0.60
Dagsboro/Frankford – Prince George’s	\$3.63	\$3.63	\$3.63
Ellendale	\$1.22	\$0.73	\$0.73
Ellendale - New Market Village	\$2.58	\$0.36	\$0.36
Fenwick Island Sewer	\$0.26	\$0.26	\$0.26
Fenwick Island – Rt. 54	\$7.06	\$7.06	\$7.06
Golf Village	\$1.47	\$1.47	\$1.47
Herring Creek	\$8.24	\$8.24	\$8.24
Johnson’s Corner	\$4.55	\$4.55	\$4.55
Miller Creek	\$6.40	\$5.48	\$5.48
Millville Expansion	\$4.01	\$3.72	\$3.16
Mulberry Knoll	\$8.00	\$8.00	\$4.19
Oak Orchard	\$4.26	\$4.26	\$2.59
Oak Orchard Expansion	\$4.19	\$4.19	\$4.19

Area – Billed by Front Footage	2024 Rate	2025 Rate	2026 Rate
Ocean Way Estates	\$1.82	\$1.82	\$1.82
South Ocean View	\$5.47	\$5.47	\$5.47
West Rehoboth Sewer Expansion	\$1.30	\$1.30	\$1.30
Woodlands of Millsboro	\$0.42	\$0.42	\$0.42

Area – Billed by EDU	2024 Rate	2025 Rate	2026 Rate
Briarwood Estates	-	-	\$800.00
Chapel Branch	\$680.00	\$680.00	\$680.00
Dewey/Henlopen Acres	\$318.54	\$318.54	\$318.54
Joy Beach	-	\$540.00	\$540.00
Lochwood	-	\$708.00	\$708.00
Long Neck Communities	-	\$633.00	\$633.00
Mallard Creek	-	\$540.00	\$540.00
Oak Acres/Tanglewood	-	\$644.00	\$644.00
Pintail Pointe	\$954.00	\$954.00	\$985.92
Warwick Cove/Gull Point	-	\$325.00	\$325.00
Western Sussex	\$285.00	\$285.00	\$285.00



Water

FY 2026 Budget



Water

Year	2024	2025	2026	Change
Budget	\$1,801,420	\$2,029,843	\$2,088,180	\$58,337, 2.9%

Item	Increases over the 2 years
Capital Reserve	\$269,000
Water supply costs	\$100,000
Meters	\$100,000
Employment Costs	\$9,000
Shared Costs	\$19,000

Operating Income/(Losses)	Water Fund
2024	(\$31,887)
2023	(\$352,727)
2022	(\$128,533)
2021	(\$84,108)
2020	\$84,630

How are we closing the gap of the Water Fund?

Current Rate: \$417
Proposed Rate: \$450
Rehoboth: ~\$467
Artesian: ~\$672
Lewes: ~\$561
*residential customer at 150 gpd

City of Rehoboth

Beginning January 1, 2021, annual prices increased by \$300,000; To make up the \$300,000, rates were going to increase \$15/year until 2026. \$800,000 in savings was being spent to avoid a large increase of \$80 in one year.

Year	Cost	Total Increase In Rate	Additional Income
2021	\$ 150,000	\$15	\$ 56,235
2022	\$ 300,000	\$30	\$ 112,470
2023	\$ 300,000	\$45	\$ 168,705
2024	\$ 300,000	\$60	\$ 224,940
2025	\$ 300,000	\$75	\$ 281,175
2026	\$ 300,000	\$80	\$ 300,000

\$75,060
anticipated
use of
savings

Increase the cost per EDU by \$33 annually (8.0% increase)

\$129,000

Utility Capital

FY 2026 Budget





JULY 1, 2025 | JUNE 30, 2026

Fiscal Year 2026 Budget

Budget book and presentation can be found at: www.sussexcountype.gov

Budget comments can be sent to: budget@sussexcountype.gov

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Any questions can be sent to: gjennings@sussexcountype.gov

