



III. Fiscal Policy



During this time of prudent budget control, of major changes in federal and state policies toward local governments, and of limited growth in the County's tax base, the Board of County Commissioners strives to ensure that it is capable of adequately funding and providing government services desired by the community. To achieve those purposes, the Board of County Commissioners initially adopted the County's first Fiscal Policy on March 7, 1998. These policies are intended to establish guidelines for the continued financial strength and stability of Martin County as reflected in its financial goals. The Board of County Commissioners will review the financial policies contained in this document annually.

These policies are amended as of December 2, 2025.



BACKGROUND

Fiscal Policy is a document combining written rules and regulations for prudent, efficient, and transparent management of County's financial resources.

Martin County Board of County Commissioners (the Board) is responsible to the residents to account for all public funds, to manage County finances wisely, and to plan for adequate funding of services desired by the public, including the availability and maintenance of public facilities. Board's fiscal policies are designed to establish annual and long-range guidelines for fiscal stability of the County and to provide directions to the County's Chief Executive Officer, the County Administrator.

Martin County's Fiscal Policy consists of several interdependent policies. Its content is organized as follows:

- Policy Goals
- Policy Objectives
- Long-range Fiscal Policies:
 - Decision Making and Analysis Policy
 - Revenue Policy
 - Investment Policy in Brief
 - Capital Projects Policy in Brief
 - Procurement Delegation Policy in Brief
 - Debt Policy
 - Interfund Loan Policy
 - Reserve Policy
 - Risk Management Policy in Brief
 - Financial Planning Policy
 - Division Performance Policy
 - Employees Compensation Policy
 - Tax Increment Financing Policy
 - Economic Development Fund Policy
 - Reimbursement for Legal Costs Policy
 - Funding Outside of Budget Process Policy
- Annual Policies:
 - Division Performance Based Budget Policy
 - Fund Accounting Policy
 - Re-appropriation from Prior Year Policy
 - Financial Monitoring Policy
 - Audit Policy
- Budget Guidelines for Fiscal Year 2026



POLICY GOALS

Comprehensive fiscal policies are a cornerstone of sound financial management. In order to be effective, the policies have to be followed and regularly reviewed. They are designed to guide the financial management practices of Martin County, targeted to accomplish the following goals:

- Enhance short- and long-term financial credit worthiness by striving to achieve high credit and bond ratings through timely payments and maintaining prudent levels of reserves
- Promote long-range financial stability by establishing clear and consistent guidelines
- Direct attention to the total financial picture of the County rather than individual issues
- Link long-range financial planning with daily operations

POLICY OBJECTIVES

The County strives to be a fiscally responsible and successful organization by adhering to both the short- and long-term fiscal policies and by aiming to achieve eight fundamentally sound objectives requiring consistent effort in the monitoring and control of financial resources:

- I. Synchronize the planning system with major capital investments: The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), Technology Investment Plan (TIP), and the broadband expansion plan
- II. Identify and coordinate operational impacts of major capital investments
- III. Reflect fiscal restraint in the annual budget, maintaining a stabilization reserve of not less than ten percent (10%) of combined general fund disbursements
- IV. Keep annual expenditures within revenue forecasts
- V. Maintain a cash management system ensuring legality, security, and liquidity
- VI. Employ a division/performance-based budget process
- VII. Evaluate cost-effectiveness of divisions' activities through benchmarking and streamline operations where warranted
- VIII. Continue to facilitate diversification of the County's economic base relative to services and infrastructure

LONG-RANGE FISCAL POLICIES

Fiscal policies will be presented to the Board and re-adopted annually. Fiscal policies will be coordinated with the Board's strategic objectives as well as those parts of the County's budget which have significant commitments for more than one fiscal year.

Decision Making and Analysis Policy

The County's financial planning and budgeting decisions will be based on a foundation of regular in-depth analysis and data modeling. At minimum, the following tools will be utilized:

Financial Forecasting

The County will maintain, and annually update, a mid-range (three-to-five-year) financial forecasting system, which includes projections of revenues, expenditures, and future costs and financing of capital improvements and other projects that are included in the capital and operating budgets.

A yearly forecast of major funds receipts will be maintained and updated monthly. Individual and aggregate revenue categories, as well as expenditures, will be projected by revenue and/or expenditure type. Historical growth rates, inflation assumptions, and County expenditures priorities will be used in developing the forecast. Forecasting will be used as a planning tool for developing the budget guidelines and for evaluating the future impact of current year's decisions.



The County will maintain a financial trend monitoring system. At minimum, the following indicators will be analyzed:

- Revenue - recurring and non-recurring, ad valorem, and user charges
- Expenditures - fixed cost, fringe benefits, capital, maintenance, and operations
- Operating positions - deficits, fund balance
- Debt - current liabilities, long-term debt
- Resource indicators - demographics, property values, employment base, business activity, gross sales tax by category

Revenue Policy

Revenues will be monitored regularly by the Budget Office and compared to prior years' trends to ensure that collections are consistent with the forecasts.

When collections diverge from the established trends, the Board will be notified and asked to amend the budget if necessary.

Revenue Forecasting

The County will prepare multi-year projections of major revenues and other incoming resources in order to analyze and understand the level of funding available for services and capital projects. Projections for future budget periods will be designed to determine the likelihood that County services can be sustained, and to identify future financial issues to be addressed. Revenue projections will also serve as a method of managing revenues' sensitivity to changes in budgeting assumptions and controllable factors such as changes to a tax rate or fees.

Revenue Optimization and Diversification

The County will strive to maintain a diversified and stable revenue structure to shelter its budget from short-term fluctuations in any one-revenue source. As part of the County's policy on appropriations, nonrecurring revenues will be used for nonrecurring expenditures, capital, or reserves. Recurring revenues will be used primarily for recurring expenditures.

The County will attempt to optimize all appropriate revenue sources to achieve an effective mix of inflow of money and will continually seek new sources of revenue to broaden its revenue base. At minimum, the County will adhere to the following revenue guidelines:

- The County will estimate its annual revenues by objective and analytical processes.
- The County will periodically recalculate the full cost of activities currently supported by user fees and charges to identify the impact of inflation and other cost increases.
- The County will set fees and user charges for all its enterprise funds that fully support the total direct and indirect costs of operations and debt service of those funds.

Ad Valorem Taxes

Ad valorem tax levies will not exceed statutory millage rates. Ad valorem taxes are used primarily to fund general County operations and the constitutional officers' budgets. Ad valorem and millage calculations will be separated between the two to provide relative information for millage rate discussions. This separation will allow both the Board and the constitutional officers to make focused reductions or increases that may



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impact their millage accordingly. If one should choose to raise their ad valorem, then the other would not be forced to reduce ad valorem to balance the other's increase.

Municipal Service Taxing Units (MSTUs)

The MSTUs are taxing entities established by ordinance to provide a mechanism to assess ad valorem taxes for specific services or projects benefiting residents in a defined geographic area. Each MSTU will have a budget established and approved by the Board as part of the budget adoption process. Expenditures not defined during the budget adoption process will be brought to the Board for review and approval.

At present, Martin County has the following MSTUs: Fire Rescue MSTU, Parks and Recreation MSTU, Roads and Stormwater MSTU, as well as five District MSTUs corresponding with the geographic areas represented by each County Commissioner and Special District A-61 (Hutchinson Island).

Use of Current Revenues

It is the Board's policy that nonrecurring revenues should not be used for recurring expenditures. Major capital projects may be funded through the sale of general obligation bonds or other types of external borrowing. The County will continue to prioritize the importance of maintaining a balance between pay-as-you-go financing and debt financing for capital projects.

Financing capital projects from current revenues indicates the County's intent to show purposeful restraint in incurring long-term debt. The decision for using current revenues to fund capital projects will be based on the merits of the particular project in relation to an agreed upon set of criteria.

Revenue uses that result in increases to the recurring expenditure base will be carefully reviewed and minimized, e.g., capital expenditures that significantly increase ongoing operating expenses without sustainable and offsetting long-term revenues will be thoroughly evaluated before approval and construction.

Grants - County as a Grantee

The County's Grant Policy requires that all applications and acceptance of grant funds be approved by the Board. Approval may be given during the annual budget process when the grant is planned and anticipated, or it may be presented as a separate Board agenda item at any time during the fiscal year. Each grant application will be reviewed for the appropriateness and desirability of the program or service, the availability of match dollars, and the projected impact on program continuation and future funding requirements. Upon completion of the grant, programs will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine whether the program should be continued utilizing County matches and staff time. The decision to continue will be made by the Board as a significant change during the budget review process. The County has no obligation to continue either grant-funded positions or grant funded programs. Based upon the Board's Strategic Objectives and preliminary budget guidelines, staff will make grant allocation recommendations to the Board.

County as a Grantor

Requests for County grant funding (excludes District MSTU's) of \$1,500 or less are considered a donation and once included in the budget, will be disbursed with the detailed documentation or request from the receiving entity.

Requests exceeding \$1,500 (excludes District MSTU's) will require an application and Board approval. All requests for County grant funding may be considered during future year's budget review with the Board. If awarded, all monies disbursed to non-profits and community groups will be subject to the requirements of the grant application conditions. Disbursement schedule will be approved by the Board.

The Board will follow its policy for awarding grants and aid to local non-profits in order to provide transparent, efficient, and objective process of funding activities of agencies filling in critical gaps between government programs and urgent community needs.



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At minimum, the Board will require that the grants and aid funding process involve the following elements: evaluation of availability of funding in a specific fiscal year, detailed application, timeline, award criteria, disbursement conditions, and contractual post-grant accountability.

Fund Balance

Fund balances are residual financial resources not expended in a prior fiscal year. Components of fund balance are categorized as:

- Non-spendable balances such as endowments and inventories of supplies
- Restricted - resources subjected to externally enforceable legal restrictions by law, creditors, grantors, contracts, and other external factors
- Committed - resources with self-imposed limitations set by the governing body. Formal action in the form of a County Ordinance must be taken by the Board prior to the end of the fiscal year. The same formal action must be taken by the Board to remove or change limitations placed on the fund.
- Assigned - balances marked by the Board for specific purposes
- Unassigned - total fund balance in excess of non-spendable, restricted, committed, and assigned

After the official closing of the prior fiscal year, any remaining fund balance except grant funds and operational commitments (i.e., professional services, contracted services, equipment), will be placed into reserves. Grant funds and approved obligations will automatically be carried forward. Any reserves above the level established for the fund will be identified and appropriated, when possible, to non-recurring expenditures. Primary consideration will be given to ad valorem reductions and reduced debt when applicable. When both restricted and unrestricted resources are available for the same type of projects, it is the County's policy to use restricted resources first, and then unrestricted resources as needed.

Special Assessments

The Board will approve assessable projects either as determined through the Capital Improvement Element/Capital Improvement Plan (CIE/CIP) or as otherwise considered by the Board. Assessments will be collected by the Tax Collector's Office through applicable laws.

Investment Policy in Brief

The County's Investment Policy was adopted on July 26, 1994, and last revised in June 2019. Listed below are highlights of that policy:

Maintaining the safety of the principal of County's financial resources will be the highest priority in effective management of the County's cash flow. Secondary priorities will include liquidity of the investments and optimization of the rate of return within the parameters of the Florida Statutes. Funds held for future capital projects will be invested in accordance with these objectives, and in compliance with U.S. Treasury arbitrage regulations.

The County will invest funds not needed for day-to-day operations into prudent investment instruments, targeting 100% of cash balances for investment. The investment accounts must meet the criteria below, in order of importance:

- Safety of principal
- Liquidity
- Yield



Capital Projects Policy in Brief

The County will adopt on an annual basis a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) component of the Capital Improvement Element (CIE) of the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan (MCCGMP). Fiscal aspects of the CIP in brief:

Capital projects included in the plan are those resulting in new or improved assets with a life span at least three (3) years and a total cost of more than \$60,000. Capital projects also includes fixed asset replacement budgets (FARB) and heavy equipment refurbishment and replacement. All capital improvements will be made in accordance with the CIE/CIP as adopted.

Adopted budgets for CIE/CIP projects may be amended upon the adopted CIE/CIP for the year applicable. The County will coordinate the adoption of capital budgets with the adoption of operating budgets.

Funding issues will be discussed with the Board during review of the CIE/CIP. Increases above the continued level of funding will require identification of additional revenue source(s) needed to fund the projects.

Capital Improvement Program

The Board annually reviews a ten-year CIP. The CIP is designed to balance the need for public facilities driven by population projections with the fiscal capability of the County to meet those needs. Projects within the CIP are prioritized in accordance with the criteria in Section 14.4 of the Martin County Comprehensive Growth Management Plan. The CIP serves as the planning guide for the construction of public facilities in the County. The first year of the ten-year CIP is the foundation for the Capital Budget. The remaining nine years in the CIP serve as a plan for the future provision of capital facilities. The first five years of the CIP will be fully funded. In accordance with the MCCGMP Policy 14.1B.2, CIP projects that provide new level of service for growth will normally not be funded with countywide ad valorem taxes.

The CIP is supported partially through long-term borrowing, grants, General Fund revenues, and impact fees on a pay-as-you-go basis. Fiscal Policy restrictions on the issuance of general obligation bonds are designed to keep combined General Fund supported debt service expenditures to not exceed ten percent (10%) of the total disbursements in General Fund. Due to the fact that the debt service expenditures restrict the amount of funds available for other uses, the County will monitor the debt levels and ensure that the ratio of debt service to the total operating budget does not exceed ten percent (10%).

Capital Project Sheets

A capital project sheet will be prepared for each project that meets the requirements defined in the CIP. Life Cycle Cost will be determined and reflected for each capital project. Each sheet will clearly state all improvement elements to be included in the project. Amounts included on the CIP sheet are intended to be rounded estimates for planning purposes. CIP sheets will include amounts spent to date except for annual, recurring capital projects such as road resurfacing. Revisions to a capital project's total cost of 10% or greater will require Board approval. Expenditure increases of less than 10% of the capital project total cost may be approved by the County Administrator. Budget resolutions related to capital projects, which are approved by the Board, i.e, for grant funds and fund balance forward, may result in an automatic CIP sheet revision. Revisions to the scope of work that alter the intended plan will require Board approval.

Capital Project Budget

Once the Board has approved the CIP, the first year on the CIP sheet will represent the budget for the upcoming fiscal year. The project budget allocations for the future years will remain unchanged unless the CIP detail sheet is modified and approved by the Board. This approach will allow for proper re-appropriation of the budget as necessary (allocation of fund balance) from year to year.

Capital Program Debt

The County will coordinate capital projects financing with the limitations of its Debt Policy presented in the next section of this document.



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In case of financing for capital improvements, other projects, or equipment by issuing debt, the County will establish a maximum debt service maturity of the earlier of: (i) the useful life of the capital improvement being financed; or (ii) thirty (30) years; or (iii) in the event they are being issued to refinance outstanding debt obligations, the final maturity of the debt being financed.

The County will calculate and monitor a self-imposed restriction to maintain the ratio of net General Obligation bonded indebtedness to the market value (assessable base) of taxable property in the County at less than three percent (3%). This ratio is a commonly accepted measure of capacity for bonded indebtedness.

Evaluate Capital Acquisition Alternatives

The County will evaluate all proposed capital projects or acquisitions in conjunction with a cost/benefit comparison of alternative options capable of meeting the same set of public needs. Additionally, the County will carefully assess the capital proposal's consistency with the financial forecasts, programmatic policies, and long-range strategic goals.

Fixed Asset Capitalization

The implementation of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement 34 compelled all governments to capitalize infrastructure assets for financial statements presentation. Martin County has been in reporting compliance with GASB 34 since fiscal year 2002. The following set of guidelines is intended to document the policies and procedures governing how assets will be accounted for on the County's financial statements.

Capital assets will be grouped by category and separated between governmental and enterprise funds. The following categories will apply to governmental funds' fixed assets:

- I. Land
- II. Land Improvements
- III. Rights of Way
- IV. Roads and Related Structures
- V. Bridges and Related Structures
- VI. Sidewalks and Related Structures
- VII. Stormwater Structures
- VIII. Buildings
- IX. Building Improvements
- X. Fixed Equipment
- XI. Major Moveable Equipment
- XII. Minor Moveable Equipment
- XIII. Other Assets
- XIV. Intangible Assets

Governmental Fund Capitalization Guidelines

Florida Statute 274 requires the Chief Financial Officer to establish rules and requirements for the recording of property and for the periodic review of property for inventory purposes. County staff will track fixed assets using the capitalization thresholds listed in this Policy. Assets below the thresholds will be expensed in the year of purchase. Capitalization thresholds will be established as follows:

- I. Land – All purchased land will be capitalized at historical cost. Donated land for specific purposes, which serves a public benefit will be capitalized at fair market value as of the date of the gift. Land/Right Of Way (ROW) donations will be capitalized at estimated fair market value. This will include land for parks, open space, future construction, etc. Estimated fair market value for donations will be determined with assistance from Martin County Property Appraiser's Office and/or the Surveying and Property Management Department. Land is not depreciated.



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The County will maintain an inventory of all of its assets and properties, including ROW.

- II. Land Improvements – Improvements to land costing less than \$50,000 will not be subject to capitalization. Certain land improvements are not subject to depreciation, or to financial reporting under the Modified Approach, and distinctions between types will be necessary.
- III. Right of Way – ROW will be capitalized at historical purchase price for purchases and at estimated fair market value for donations.
- IV. Roads and Related Structures – New construction or improvements to roads and related structures costing less than \$100,000 will not be subject to capitalization.
- V. Bridges and Related Structures – New construction or improvements to bridges and related structures costing less than \$100,000 will not be subject to capitalization.
- VI. Sidewalks and Related Structures – New construction or improvements to sidewalks and related structures costing less than \$25,000 will not be subject to capitalization.
- VII. Stormwater Structures – Prior to the implementation of the Stormwater Program in 1996, stormwater structures were primarily constructed as part of another project. These were usually associated with the construction of a road. New construction or improvements to stormwater structures costing less than \$100,000 will not be subject to capitalization.
- VIII. Buildings – New construction of buildings costing less than \$25,000 will not be subject to capitalization.
- IX. Building Improvements – New construction or improvements within an existing building costing less than \$25,000 will not be subject to capitalization. Improvements to buildings which are leased and meet this threshold will be capitalized in this category.
- X. Fixed Equipment – Fixed equipment purchased costing less than \$5,000 will not be subject to capitalization.
- XI. Major Moveable Equipment – Major moveable equipment purchased costing less than \$5,000 will not be subject to capitalization.
- XII. Minor Moveable Equipment – Minor moveable equipment purchased for less than \$5,000 will not be subject to capitalization.
- XIII. Other Assets – Other assets purchased for less than \$5,000 will not be subject to capitalization.
- XIV. Intangible Assets – Intangible assets purchased or internally generated for less than \$25,000 will not be subject to capitalization. Intangible assets are non-physical valuables such as intellectual property (computer software) or claims and rights to other assets (easements). For capitalization purposes, internal labor and other internal expenses may be capitalized for intangible assets.

The County uses straight-line depreciation for all tangible capital assets, and straight-line amortization for intangible capital assets, subject to limitations described above.

The following categories will apply to enterprise funds' fixed assets:

- I. Buildings
- II. Water Distribution Systems
- III. Sewer Collection Systems
- IV. Wells
- V. Equipment
- VI. Leasehold Improvements



- VII. Landfill Improvements
- VIII. Land
- IX. Land Improvements

Enterprise Fund Capitalization Guidelines

- I. Buildings – include *water* and sewer plants, scalehouse, transfer stations, sheds, and all improvements made to buildings. Also included are structures inside buildings including but not limited to Reverse Osmosis (RO) Trains, plant automation, filters, control panels, pumps, etc. Life of the assets in this category range from 5 to 40 years depending on the asset. Capitalization requirement - \$25,000.
- II. Water Distribution Systems – include water lines and infrastructure related to water lines such as pumps, large water meters, valves, and any improvements and refurbishment to these assets that significantly extend the life of the asset. Life of assets in this category range from 3 to 40 years depending upon the asset. Capitalization requirement - \$5,000.
- III. Sewer Collection Systems – include sewer collection lines, lift stations, sewage pumps, control panels, infill and infiltration rehabilitation of sewer lines, lift station telemetry, and any improvements or refurbishment of these assets that significantly extend the life of the asset. Life of assets in this category range from 3 to 40 years. Capitalization requirement - \$5,000.
- IV. Wells – include all wells, refurbishment of wells, wellfield telemetry, meters on wells, pumps, etc. Life of assets in the category range from 5 to 20 years. Capitalization requirement - \$5,000.
- V. Equipment – fixed equipment purchased costing less than \$5,000 will not be subject to capitalization. Life of assets range from 3 to 15 years.
- VI. Leasehold Improvements – Improvements made to leased office space – walls, electrical, and any improvements that become a permanent part of the building structure. Life of the asset is based on the length of the lease. Capitalization requirement - \$5,000.
- VII. Landfill Improvements – Include all new cell construction, buffers, test wells, etc. Life of these improvements is determined by the estimated capacity of the cell. Capitalization requirement - \$5,000.
- VIII. Land is capitalized at cost and is not depreciated.
- IX. Land Improvements – Improvements to land costing less than \$50,000 will not be subject to capitalization.

Donated infrastructure will be capitalized based on documents provided by the individual developer. These assets are most frequently supported by a “bill of sale” from the developer that evidences the developers’ cost for the assets, which also represents Fair Market Value.

The County uses straight-line depreciation for all tangible capital assets, and straight-line amortization for intangible capital assets, subject to limitations described above.

Procurement Delegation Policy in Brief

Specifics of procurement rules are detailed in the County’s Purchasing Manual. Listed below are fiscal aspects of those rules:

The Board has delegated certain approval authority to the County Administrator to ensure effective and efficient management of contracts.



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Contracts can be either single project contracts or task order/work order contracts. Task order/work order contracts anticipate the award of incremental work assignments and will be awarded in the total value of all anticipated work assignments. The total award value of the contract will constitute the total amount that can be awarded under the contract throughout the contract's life. Continuing services contracts are considered task order/work order contracts. Task orders and work orders are defined as anticipated incremental work assignments, under a single contract, that are awarded across the life of the contract.

Change orders are defined as unanticipated contract modifications that increase or decrease the value of the contract award and are required due to unforeseen conditions or scope changes.

These thresholds apply to all contracts. These thresholds do not supersede the Florida Statutes guidelines for continuing contracts. A report of Consultant's Competitive Negotiation Act (CCNA) Task Orders will be provided to the Board on a monthly basis.

Contract and contract change order award policy is as follows:

CCNA Contracts

The Board will award single project or task order CCNA contracts valued at \$500,000 or more.

All Other Contracts

The Board will award all other contracts valued at \$500,000 or more. Contracts valued at \$1 million or more shall be presented to the Board on the Departmental agenda at regularly scheduled meetings. All other contracts that are to be awarded by the Board will be presented on the Consent agenda.

CCNA and Other Contract Change Orders

The Board will award change orders for contracts that meet the thresholds above and cumulatively increase the total contract award value by ten percent (10%) or more.

A cone of silence shall be established on all County competitive selection processes. The cone of silence prohibits any communication regarding a RFB, RFP, RFQ or other competitive solicitation between any bidder (or its agents or representatives) or other entity with the potential for a financial interest in the award (or their respective agents or representatives) regarding such competitive solicitation, AND any County Commissioner or County employee, selection committee member or other persons authorized to act on behalf of the Board including the County's Architect, Engineer or their subconsultants, or to provide a recommendation to award a particular contract, other than Purchasing Division staff. The cone of silence shall be in effect from the time of advertisement until contract award. Violations by Vendors will result in disqualification.

The County Administrator will award all other contracts by delegation as detailed in the Purchasing Manual adopted by the Board.

Debt Policy

- The County will calculate debt service requirements on a five-year basis and coordinate with adoption of the CIP to facilitate short-term decisions, to sort out other priorities, and to examine the long-range implications and effects of debt issuance.
- The County may limit long-term borrowing and **Finance Purchase Agreements** to capital improvements, projects, or equipment that cannot be financed from current financial resources.
- The County will not issue long-term debt with maturity longer than the useful life of the project or item funded.
- The County will not fund current operations or normal maintenance from the proceeds of long-term financing.



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- In an effort to conserve debt capacity, the County will borrow only when necessary and utilize pay-as-you-go financing to the extent possible.
- The County will strive to achieve and maintain an underlying bond rating of at least A (Moody Rating Service) for its obligations, which will facilitate favorable interest costs.
- The County's debt capacity will be maintained within the following parameters:
 - Net General Obligation Bonded debt per capita will remain under nine hundred dollars (\$900).
 - Net debt as a percentage of estimated market value of taxable property will not exceed three percent (3%).
 - The ratio of debt service expenditures as a percent of governmental fund expenditures will not exceed ten percent (10%).
 - The debt per capita as a percentage of income per capita will not exceed five percent (5%).
- The County may use voted general obligation debt to fund general purpose public improvements, which are necessary but cannot be financed from current revenues or the unreserved portion of the non-voted debt capacity.
- Every effort will be made to limit the amount of general obligation debt. All general obligation debt will be used only for public purposes.
- The County will strive to keep the average maturity of general obligation bonds at or below fifteen (15) years.
- The County will maintain a minimum debt service coverage ratio of 110% in the Water and Wastewater Funds.
- The County will review its outstanding debt annually to determine if the conditions in financial marketplace would allow the County the opportunity to refund an issue and reduce its debt service costs. In order to consider the possible refunding of an issue, a Present Value (PV) savings of three percent (3%) over the life of the respective issue, at a minimum, must be attained.
- When appropriate, the County will use special assessment or self-supporting bonds instead of general obligation bonds, so that residents benefiting from the improvements absorb all or part of the cost of the project financed.
- Martin County will maintain solid relationships with bond rating agencies and will keep them updated about its financial condition or other relevant information.

Types of Borrowing

- General obligation bonds are secured by the County's ability to levy ad valorem taxes on real and personal property within the County.
- Assessment bonds are secured by special assessment upon the property benefiting from specific improvements.
- Revenue bonds are secured by dedicated revenue streams arising from sales taxes, specialized types of taxes, and charges for services, such as water, sewer, and solid waste collection and disposal.
- Short-term bank notes and tax-exempt commercial paper are secured by covenant to budget and appropriate legally available non-ad valorem revenues.



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- Other types of debt subject to this Debt Policy include:
 - State Revolving Fund Loans (“SRF Loans”)
 - Revenue anticipation notes and promissory notes
 - Finance Purchase Agreements
 - Line of credit

Financial Disclosure

The County is required to provide a full and complete financial disclosure annually.

- Cooperate fully with rating agencies, institutional and individual investors, agencies, other levels of government, and the general public to share clear, comprehensive, and accurate financial and other relevant information.
- The County is committed to meeting secondary disclosure requirements on a timely and comprehensive basis.
- The Office of Management and Budget assists the Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller’s Financial Services Division with the ongoing disclosure to established national information repositories and for maintaining compliance with disclosure standards promulgated by state and national regulatory bodies and may carry out such responsibility through the engagement of an outside dissemination agent. The Clerk of Circuit Court and Comptroller’s Financial Services Division will provide disclosure information that is sent to Municipal Securities Ruling Board (MSRB) and posted to the Electronic Municipal Market Access System (EMMA) to ensure compliance.

Interfund Loan Policy

The Board may resolve to fund certain projects through internal financing. An interfund loan is defined as a loan from one specific fund to another, as identified within the loan resolution. The following rules will guide internal borrowing:

- The loan will be approved by the Board via resolution identifying the fund from which the loan is being made, the impact on that fund, and the terms of the loan.
- The initial expenditures will be made from the fund where the monies are available, and in the next fiscal year, the interfund transfers will be established to begin repayment of the loan. The term of the loan will be defined within the resolution and may be for a period of more than one year when approved by the Board.
- If a project funded by an interfund loan is not completed prior to the budget preparation for the next fiscal year, then the first year of repayment will be calculated on the estimated cost of the project. Once the project is completed, and an actual total cost available, repayments will be calculated for the future years when applicable to cover the total cost incurred. Any interfund loan may be paid in advance without any additional accrual of interest, or any other penalties.
- The interest will be based on the County’s investment portfolio rates, but not to exceed the current market rate when applicable.
- Money advance will be in accordance with the Board's adopted Reserve Policy as defined in the next section of this Policy document.

Conduit Financing Policy in Brief

The Board may facilitate conduit financing, such as bonds, for private project activities within the County that have a specific public purpose and are consistent with the County service needs and strategic objectives.



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The authority of the County to issue or approve conduit bonds shall be derived from state or federal law and/or ordinances and resolutions of the County. The County will not be responsible for any cost related to the issuance or debt repayment of conduit financing or any aspects of the project constructed as a result of the financing.

The County will follow specific financial guidelines to issue or approve conduit bonds. At minimum, these guidelines will include the following elements: a detailed application, application fees/ processing cost, and requirements for supplementary information; criteria for approval including community need, financial feasibility, security, risk, project management, and commitment to the County; statements regarding the County's role in the conduit financing process and applicant's responsibilities related to the project, financing, and debt repayment.

Reserve Policy

The Reserve Policy, implemented in 1999, is adopted annually. The County will set aside reserves to mitigate unforeseen and unexpected events and to offset unanticipated downturns in revenues. Sufficient levels of reserves can ensure continued and orderly operations and tax-structure stability. It is an objective of the Board to maintain a managed reserve in the various operating funds at a level sufficient for temporary financing of unforeseen emergency needs, and to allow for orderly adjustment to changes resulting from termination of revenue sources through actions of other governmental bodies. Use of reserves through budget transfers will require that available balances be disclosed.

Designated Reserves

The stabilization reserve in the General Fund will be maintained in an amount not less than ten percent (10%) of the annual General Fund budget (less reserve totals). Additionally, separate funds will be appropriated to mitigate natural disasters. Other operating funds will strive to maintain similar designated reserves.

In order to provide the resources necessary to ensure continued operations of the County's water and wastewater systems should a natural disaster occur, the County will establish a working operating reserve equal to a minimum of three (3) months of the water and wastewater operating budget, less depreciation, annual debt service, and capital expenditures. This level of reserves is established by the industry standards.

Capital and special revenue funds will be allowed to accumulate in designated reserves for future capital projects. There is no percentage restriction on the amount of these reserves.

Tourism and Marketing will have three months operating reserves which will be based on the average Bed Tax collected within the tourism and promotional category annually for financial stability.

Funding for medical services will include in the adopted budget, an established reserve that represents two percent (2%) of the total medical services expenditure line items.

The Building Fund, which is operated solely on fees, will have a reserve equivalent to one (1) year of operating expenditures. Funding for Building Permit Waiver Program will not exceed four million dollars and will be placed in reserves to mitigate permitting costs associated with natural disaster recovery. Any additional funds will be placed into a reserve for future capital.

The reserves necessary for each operating fund will be identified and updated annually in the operating budget and revised and reported with every related budget amendment during the year.

Undesignated reserves will be limited to an amount that is consistent with previous years, except where otherwise defined. These reserves are to be used for any unforeseen expenditures for either operations or minor capital projects.



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Replenishment of Reserves

When the undesignated reserves are to be utilized, due to unforeseen circumstances, staff will prepare a plan for the Board to begin to replenish these reserves as part of the budget adoption process. The plan may span from one to five years depending upon the magnitude of the expenditure. Each year the necessary funds to replenish the reserves will be reflected in the budget, approved and levied accordingly.

Self-Insurance Fund

Martin County has a self-insured health plan for employees. This plan will have a reserve established within the self-insurance fund as required by the Department of Insurance: the costs incurred but not reported (IBNR) plus two months' equivalent of claims expected to be incurred. The County provides employees with a wellness clinic. In order to provide adequate funding for this program, each operating fund will pay a proportionate share based upon cost of the number of employees. Enterprise funds calculation will be included in their indirect cost.

Risk Management Policy in Brief

The County will protect its assets by maintaining adequate insurance coverage. The County will strive to reduce accidental losses that would endanger personnel and property. The County will continue to analyze all insurance alternatives and periodically assess each to ensure that the best coverage overall is maintained. Additionally, the County will continue to maintain a business interruption insurance to cover natural disasters and minimize impact on businesses.

Financial Planning Policy

The County will use financial planning to expand awareness of governing options of its resources and assets, potential problems, and opportunities. Financial planning will be used as a tool to identify long-range revenue, expenditure, service implications of continuing or ending existing programs, or adding new programs and debt. Financial planning process will be used to shape prudent decisions and to mitigate the severity of potential problems before they arise.

Division Performance Policy

The County will regularly evaluate the departmental divisions and services they provide, as well as external factors that could affect their operations and their intended purpose in the future.

Divisions will use performance measures to review their effectiveness on quarterly basis. During the budget preparation process, each division will use benchmarks to compare its performance to others in the same line of public services.

Changes in County's fiscal condition, operational environment, and other organizational factors may result in redesigning of the primary functions, purposes, and types and scope of services provided by a division.

Compensation Policy

In order to maintain fair and equitable compensation for all employees, the County will strive to maintain salary levels, which represent the fiftieth (50th) percentile of the comparable market basket. In extenuating situations, positions considered Market Impact Positions, may be held to criteria different from the salary structure.

At least every four years, the County will review all employees' classifications as well as the total payroll and benefits package for competitiveness with the market, including the private sector where applicable, and make adjustments as necessary.

It is a goal of the Board to treat employees equally with respect to pay, benefits, and advancement opportunities. The County will strive to bring collective bargaining agreements into conformance with these



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policies as the contracts are renewed. Any wage adjustments resulting from renewal of collective bargaining agreements will also be applied to the non-bargaining employees.

Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB)

GASB Statement (45), *Accounting and Financial Reporting by Employers for Postemployment Benefits Other Than Pensions*, addresses how state and local governments should account for and report their costs and obligations related to post-employment healthcare and other non-pension benefits. Collectively, these benefits are commonly referred to as OPEB.

In general, the statement requires that state and local governmental employers account for and report the annual cost of OPEB and the outstanding obligations and commitments related to OPEB in essentially the same manner as they currently do for pensions. Annual OPEB cost for most employers will be based on actuarially determined amounts that, if paid on an ongoing basis, generally would provide sufficient resources to pay benefits as they come due. During budget preparation, the Board will determine a contribution amount to be placed toward the OPEB liability. In addition, funds remaining at the end of each fiscal year from the retirement and benefits account will be allocated toward the liability during fund balance adjustments. These funds will accrue each year and will be available when retirement benefits are to be paid. The County will strive to accumulate the necessary funds to fully fund the program over time.

Tax Increment Financing Policy

The Board has established six Community Redevelopment Areas (CRAs) per Florida State Statutes (FSS) Chapter 163, Part III (FSS 163.330-163.463). Funding for the CRAs is based upon an annual allotment through Tax Increment Financing (TIF) per FSS 163.387(1), and through a trust fund as defined in FSS 163.353. The CRAs will maintain separate trust funds and will not be co-mingled unless the Board has approved accordingly.

The Board will approve the allocation of CRA funds through the adoption of the CIP and the County budget. Modifications to the allocations may be necessary from time to time and will be communicated to the Board via existing policy and procedures. All expenditures will be made in accordance with Board policies and procedures. The Board will serve as members of the agency. The Community Development Department (CDD) will be a Board department established under the direction of the County Administrator. All employees in CDD will be County employees and will abide by all County policies and regulations. A Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) may be executed between the BOCC and the CRA.

Economic Development Fund Policy

The Economic Fund was set up to boost economic activities by promoting and fostering economic development to targeted industries based upon job creation, wage levels, and capital improvements. The fund is created by Chapter 71, Article 2, General Ordinances, Martin County Code. In addition, Section 125.045, Florida Statutes authorizes the Board to extend public funds to attract and retain business enterprises.

The Economic Development Fund includes the following policy statements:

- Martin County Opportunity Fund, established by Resolution No. 10-6.9, is a deal closure program using a performance agreement to attract qualified targeted industries as defined in the Economic Element of the County's Comprehensive Plan in accordance with adopted guidelines.
- Martin County Job Creation Grant Program established by Resolution No. 10-6.10 is a reward program for job creation using a performance agreement, paid out over a number of years following creation and verification of jobs in accordance with adopted guidelines.
- Economic Development Impact and Building Permit Fee Mitigation established by Chapter 71, Article 2, General Ordinances, Martin County Code, uses an agreement with a Qualified Targeted Industry or



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business which provides that building permit and impact fees be paid from the Economic Development Fund and are replenished by the County from available funds, including impact and building permit fees.

These policies will be reviewed and revised annually to incorporate any policy or strategic objectives developed and approved by the Board.

Reimbursement for Legal Costs Policy

The policy provides procedures for the reimbursement of attorneys' fees and costs for Martin County officials and employees who successfully defend or prevail in civil, criminal or ethical actions for conduct performed in their official capacity while serving a public purpose. In accordance with Board directed policy, reimbursement of attorneys fees and costs for County officials and employees was adopted November 26, 2019.

The amount of reimbursement may be approved by the County Administrator following review by the County Attorney if the requested amount is less than or equal to \$7,500.00 per case, and greater amounts will be approved by the Board.

Funding Outside of the Budget Process

Once the budget has been either tentatively approved or adopted, any requests for funding that are not included in the tentatively approved or adopted budget will be brought to the Board as an agenda item during one of the Board's scheduled meetings. The agenda item will detail the nature of the request, public purpose, operational expense, relationship with similar organization, and other funding alternatives. Funding will be dependent upon Board action.

ANNUAL POLICIES

The Board will annually adopt a balanced budget as their operating and capital plan for the fiscal year starting on October 1 and ending on September 30. The budget will balance expenditures with revenues and will be adopted as per the established timetable of the Truth in Millage Act (TRIM).

The annual budget will reflect revenue sources and expenditures by division within each department. The County's goal will be to pay for all recurring expenditures with recurring revenues and use nonrecurring revenues for nonrecurring expenditures. If a budget deficit is inevitable, the Board will reduce appropriations or identify revenues, which could be increased.

The budget will be developed based upon guidelines that are established by the Board during an annual review of the budget preparation process.

Division Performance Based Budget Policy

Martin County's budget development process will be division and performance based. In order to improve the effectiveness of governmental programs, the County will integrate performance measures and productivity indicators within the divisions' budgets, whenever possible and feasible.

The County will conduct all fiscal activities in accordance with the highest level of statutory and ethical standards.

The budget will be reviewed with the Board and will focus on the following:

- Division Changes - increases or decreases in the service level will be detailed and defined by division.



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- New Divisions - proposed new divisions will be identified as a budget issue and will require detailed justification and analysis of the long-term fiscal impacts.
- Staffing - staff increases will be limited to cases mandated by the Comprehensive Plan level of service or support to Board strategic objectives. Reductions of staff will be done when there is no adverse effect on approved service levels. Reallocation of staff resources to improve efficiency and effectiveness will be at the discretion of the County Administrator and in accordance with the Human Resources Manual.

Division

All County divisions will develop spending patterns to keep costs to their absolute minimum necessary to deliver public services without substantially increasing the local tax burden.

- The budget will provide for adequate maintenance of capital infrastructure and equipment, and for required replacement of equipment as established by County's replacement standards.
- The County will maintain budgetary controls at the division level within each department.
- The County will develop and annually update a long-range financial forecasting system, which will include revenue, expenditure, and future cost projections. Financing of capital improvements as defined within the CIE/CIP and capital within the operating budgets will also be included.
- The County will periodically update their growth projections and capital needs assessments.

Fund Accounting Policy

The Board will account for all revenues and expenditures within the established funds as outlined in the Uniform Accounting System Manual developed by the State of Florida Department of Financial Services.

Re-appropriation from Prior Year Policy

The Board will allow for automatic carry forward of the following types of encumbrances not completed in the prior fiscal year: contracted, professional services, maintenance contracts, grant allocations, and capital equipment and projects. Approved capital projects will be re-appropriated and may be modified according to the CIP detail sheet adopted by the Board. Funds remaining within the Supervisor of Elections' equipment account will be placed into a reserve for future equipment replacement.

Financial Monitoring Policy

Monthly budget status reports will be provided to each division within the County. Each division's management will review the reports to analyze expenditures for accuracy and budget limitations. An executive summary report will be provided to the County Administrator. In addition to the monthly reports, all revenue resources will be reviewed periodically.

Audit Policy

The Board will provide for an annual independent audit of its financial statements. In addition to regular financial audits, the County may conduct internal audits of operational practices and financial activities as determined by the Internal Audit Committee.

BUDGET GUIDELINES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026

Budget Guidelines will be presented to the Board annually as part of the budget preparation process. These guidelines are the basis of Board direction for development of the next fiscal year's budget and are to be



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considered during future budget deliberations. These guidelines are specific to the next budget year only, and will be amended annually, if necessary.

- Budgets will include benchmarks. Reviews of benchmarks may result in revision of performance measures.
- Departments will be benchmarking their cost of services by division to provide comparative analysis between the public and private sector when applicable.
- The County budget document will include elements required by the Government Finance Officers Association Distinguished Budget Award criteria.
- Ad valorem distributions will be separated between departments that are under the purview of the Board and those that are for constitutional officers' budget requests.
- Program Change Requests will be identified as separate budget requests with information detailing the nature of the request, full time equivalent (FTE), funding source, etc. These requests will represent any shifts in funding from the State or County, any Board directed requests, or directives by the County Administrator.
- Departments will provide cost reduction options, which may be included in the County Administrator's proposed budget. Such reductions will be prioritized and will clearly identify the impact to residents.
- New positions will be requested only when there is a change in service level relative to a Board strategic objective or Comprehensive Plan mandated level of service.
- The disclosure of all millages will be in compliance with Truth in Millage (TRIM).
- The Board will reflect all health care services for qualified Martin County residents collectively in accordance with Chapter 163, Article 2, General Ordinances, and Martin County Code.
- The Board will strive to assure continuance of existing levels of funding for the CIE/CIP to provide for fire rescue infrastructure and equipment, to maintain and develop parks and public beaches access, to maintain buildings, and to expand the library book and electronic media collections. The level of funding for these purposes depends on the portion of ad valorem allocation by the Board; therefore, it is subject to change.
- The Board will review the CIE/CIP and tentatively approve it in a workshop setting. Final adoption will occur simultaneously with the adoption of the budget.
- Road resurfacing, sidewalk, bike path construction and maintenance will be performed based upon a priority schedule approved annually during the budget process. Funding for these projects will be identified and budgeted accordingly in the Road Maintenance Unincorporated Area MSTU or gas tax funds.
- The Unincorporated MSTU Fund will include general revenue source of funding for divisions that are not fully fee supported.
- Wage increases for all employees will require a reserve consistent with the negotiated union contracts and the Employees Performance Appraisals.
- To maintain existing levels of service, fund balance from the Stormwater Maintenance Program may be utilized to purchase replacement of heavy equipment each year as needed.



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- Funding for replacement of voting equipment for the Supervisor of Elections will be accomplished by accumulating \$25,000 annually. In addition, any remaining dollars in the General Elections division will be added to increase funding for this purpose.
- Road, landscaping, and other maintenance activities for projects completed by the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) will be funded in the same manner as for other County assets: Road Maintenance MSTU, gas tax funds, or other sources appropriate for the specific type of assets.