



OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
OF SARATOGA COUNTY

40 MCMASTER STREET
BALLSTON SPA, NEW YORK 12020
(518) 884-4742
WWW.SARATOGACOUNTYNY.GOV

STEVE BULGER
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

RIDGE HARRIS
DEPUTY COUNTY
ADMINISTRATOR

STEPHANIE HODGSON
BUDGET DIRECTOR

MATTHEW ROSE
MANAGEMENT ANALYST

AUDRA M. HEDDEN
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SARATOGA COUNTY UNVEILS TENTATIVE 2023 BALANCED BUDGET

Proposed Budget Provides 5% Reduction In Property Tax Rate; Cuts Government Spending By \$3.2 Million

BALLSTON SPA, NY – Saratoga County officials unveiled the County’s tentative 2023 budget, delivering a balanced budget with a 5% decrease in the property tax rate, no reliance on reserve funds, and an overall decrease of government spending by \$3.2 million from the 2022 adopted budget.

The proposal is fiscally conservative and controls government spending while providing robust government programs and services to residents.

Saratoga County Board of Supervisors Chairman Theodore T. Kusnierz, Jr. said, “Saratoga County continues to be one of the fastest growing, fiscally conservative counties in the state as reflected in this proposed budget. With uncertain financial times ahead, homeowners will receive much needed relief with a 5% property tax reduction through a balanced budget that doesn’t borrow from the County’s fund balance. Importantly, the budget upholds our fiscally responsible practices, continues to provide vital programs and services to our residents, supports public safety and public health initiatives, and makes smart investments in economic development.”

Saratoga County Board of Supervisors Vice Chairman Jonathan Schopf said, “This budget reflects our goals to invest in critical services and programs for our residents, reduce taxes, and provides a structurally sound budget that will help the County weather uncertain economic forecasts. This fiscal discipline is important for the future economic health of our County and to ensure we can continue to provide services that make Saratoga County one of the healthiest and safest counties in New York State.”

County Administrator Steve Bulger said, “In the wake of increasing inflation, soaring costs for goods and services, and an uncertain national economic environment, the County is tightening its financial belt while continuing to make key investments in services and programs to sustain the quality-of-life Saratoga County residents enjoy.”

(more)

TENTATIVE 2023 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- Delivers a balanced budget of \$378.3 million for 2023 without using fund balance reserves for the first time in six years
- Reduces the overall budget by \$3.2 million from the 2022 adopted budget
- Reduces the County's Property Tax Rate by 5%, keeping it under the tax cap
- Maintains Saratoga County's position as having the lowest county property taxes in New York State
- Maintains funding for important programs and services

LOWER PROPERTY TAXES & FISCALLY CONSERVATIVE PRACTICES

The 2023 proposed budget reduces the property tax rate by 5%, keeping the levy within the tax cap and continuing to provide Saratoga County homeowners the lowest property tax rate in the State at \$2.12 per \$1,000 of assessed value. This will provide on average a 5% property tax cut for homeowners and businesses.

The 2023 tentative budget cuts government spending by \$3.2 million over the 2022 adopted budget while maintaining funding for and making key investments in important government services and programs.

The County makes a conservative sales tax revenue projection of \$150 million, amidst national soaring inflation and uncertainty in future consumer spending habits. This is a decrease of \$4 million compared with 2021 sales tax receipts and approximately \$8 million less than expected 2022 revenues.

The County's debt service remains less than 1% of the County's operating budget. This low debt helps to maintain the County's high AA+ rating from Standard & Poors (S&P), which will help the County weather any possible downturns in the nation's uncertain fiscal environment.

Notable funding allocations include the following.

PUBLIC SAFETY & HEALTH

The tentative 2023 budget makes significant investments in public safety to build upon Saratoga County's longstanding ranking as one of New York State's safest communities and support officials' increased obligations stemming from changes in New York State public safety laws. These include nearly \$53,000,000 for investments in personnel, technology, and equipment for the District Attorney's Office, Sheriff's Office, Probation Department, Public Defender's Department, and Conflict Defender's Office.

The tentative budget allocates \$50,000 for a countywide first responder needs assessment to provide critical information for future personnel needs, planning, and response efforts.

The budget allocates \$20,000 to purchase Automated External Defibrillators for patrol vehicles, allowing trained Sheriff's Deputies to provide life-saving aid before an ambulance can arrive and \$15,000 for Project Lifesaver, which helps children with autism and people with dementia.

(more)

PUBLIC SAFETY & HEALTH (Continued)

The proposed budget utilizes \$130,000 in Opioid Settlement Funds to create programs and provide services to connect families, veterans, and underserved populations with community-based treatment, rehabilitation, recovery, and support services related to opioid and substance use disorders.

The proposal allocates \$25,000 to expand the successful EMT Career Pathway Program countywide to help meet the growing need for more first responders.

TOURISM, ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & OPEN SPACE

To continue Saratoga County's status as a cultural, entertainment, and industry destination for travelers and businesses worldwide, the tentative 2023 budget provides more than \$600,000 to promote economic development and tourism.

This spending plan provides nearly \$3 million for community development organizations that support initiatives including literacy and career development, history and culture preservation, and agriculture and environmental conservation. This funding includes \$150,000 to further the county's goals to leverage Saratoga County's vast historical resources, advancing it as a world class heritage tourism destination.

The proposed 2023 budget includes \$400,000 for the Farmland and Open Space Grant program to maintain the county's extensive network of trails and open space.

For more information, to view the budget brief, and to read the full tentative 2023 budget, please visit www.SaratogaCountyNY.gov.

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