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County Administrator's recommended FY2025 budget keeps total property tax rate unchanged

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PIMA COUNTY April 26, 2024 – County property taxpayers won't see much of a change in their tax bill next year if the Board of Supervisors adopts County Administrator Jan Leshar's recommended fiscal year 2025 budget. Leshar submitted her recommended \$1.7 billion budget to the Board April 26, in which she suggests the Board keep the combined County property tax rate the same as the current fiscal year at \$5.1048 per \$100 of assessed value.

Leshar told the Board she crafted the budget with an eye toward fiscal prudence while still meeting Board priorities for important services and programs.

"The recommended budget for FY 2024/25 represents a balanced approach to financial management, blending continuing, expanded, and new initiatives with fiscal prudence. It reflects our commitment to maintaining stability for County residents and employees while maintaining a solid financial foundation," Leshar wrote to the Board in [her budget memo](#). "This process involved scrutinizing expenses, exploring avenues for revenue enhancement, and reassessing the County's spending priorities."

Leshar continued the budget-writing process she established last year through consultation with the Board to set funding priorities for the coming year and write the budget to ensure those priorities have the needed funds.

The Recommended Budget focus areas for FY25 include:

- Effectively Manage Core Government Functions and Provide Excellent Service to Pima County Residents
- Prioritize Critical Infrastructure and Economic Growth
- Improve the Quality of Life for Pima County Residents

- Being an Employer of Choice
- Providing Employee Benefits
- Managing County Staffing
- Allocating State Cost Shifts

There are two components to County property taxes – a property’s assessed value and the tax rate. Using formulas set by state law, rates for the different County property taxes are multiplied by the assessed value to determine the tax bill. The County imposes four types of property taxes, the Primary property tax, which funds the General Fund; the Library District, revenue from which can only be used for the Library; the Regional Flood Control District, which can only be used to fund RFCD infrastructure, programs, and administration; and the Debt Service tax which repays borrowed funds.

For FY25, Leshar is recommending an 8-cent increase in the Primary property tax, negligible hundredths-of-a-cent increases for the Library and Flood Control districts, and a 9.5-cent reduction of the Debt Service tax. If the Board adopts the tax rate proposed in the Recommended Budget, the average increase in County property tax bills next fiscal year would be \$58.49, which is due to increases in assessed values. The County is only one of many property taxing jurisdictions in Pima County. Property owners may see other increases in property tax bills depending on where they live in the County.

PROPERTY TAX RATES

Tax Type	FY 24 Adopted Rates	FY 25 Recommended	Difference
Primary	\$4.0102	\$4.0990	\$0.0888
Library District	0.5493	0.5537	0.0044
Debt Service	0.2200	0.1250	(0.0950)
Flood	0.3253	0.3271	0.0018
TOTAL	\$5.1048	\$5.1048	\$0.0000

The Board is expected to hold a budget study session May 7 after its regular meeting ends to discuss the recommended budget. At its May 21 meeting, the Board is expected to adopt the Tentative Budget, which under state law caps the expenditures for FY25. The Board can still make changes to the budget before or during final budget adoption, which is anticipated for the June 18 Board meeting, but it can’t increase expenditures beyond what it approves May 21.

By The Numbers:

5.71% - Net Increase in the primary property tax base (assessed values). The 10th consecutive year assed values have increased since the downturn of the Great Recession. It’s a sign of sustained County economic health.

\$571,228,635 – Combined recommended property tax levy for the County’s four property taxes.

\$775,279,759– Total of the Recommended General Fund Expenditures, which pays for most County services, a 7.74% increase over FY24.

26.7% - The percentage of the General Fund (\$121.3 million) that would be necessary to pay for functions of the state of Arizona that have been imposed on the County by the Legislature. Without these cost shifts, the County’s primary property tax rate would be closer to \$3.00 per \$100 of assessed value rather than just above \$4.00.

\$97,945,766 – Proposed General Fund Reserve amount necessary to meet the requirements of credit rating agencies to keep interest rates low on borrowed funds. Low interest rates help taxpayers avoid millions of dollars a year in interest payments.

\$27,389,432– General Fund Ending Fund Balance for FY 24 other than the General Fund Reserve. The County anticipates receiving more State Shared revenues than budgeted for in FY24. This along with expenditure savings produces the General Fund Ending Fund Balance.

\$25 million – Shared state transportation revenue dedicated for road repair and preservation. Since FY2018 the County has repaired more than 1,000 miles of unincorporated County roads.

\$208,397,996 – Capital Improvement Plan projects that improve County public works infrastructure, and repair, renovate, or replace existing County facilities.

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