

# Westchester County

George Latimer  
County Executive

November 7, 2024

Honorable Members:

I am pleased to present my seventh budget to your Honorable Board for your consideration.

My 2025 Proposed County Operations Budget totals \$2.5 billion. This budget continues a commitment to programs that meet the needs of Westchester County residents while maintaining the same tax levy as 2024 for the County General Fund. It marks the sixth consecutive year without a levy increase. This is great news for our community as it reflects our dedication to responsible financial management while maintaining steady tax rates. This budget prioritizes key areas such as public safety, emergency preparedness, housing, health and mental health services, as well as environmental and economic development programs. My proposal avoids any financial gimmicks, does not rely on borrowing for operating expenses, and preserves our rainy-day funds.

The fiscal actions that we have taken over the past seven years have restored the County's unrestricted general reserves to \$527 million at the end of 2023. The three major rating agencies have taken notice, as we have the highest rating of AAA from Fitch, a 'positive' outlook from S&P and a "stable" outlook from Moody's. Thanks to our continued strong financial performance, the New York State Comptroller has once again assigned the County a fiscal stress score of zero—the highest possible rating, reflecting exceptional financial stability. Other key measures supporting this fiscal health include adequately reserving for labor contracts, eliminating one-time financial tactics, avoiding borrowing for operating expenses such as pensions and tax certioraris, refraining from using the fund balance, and maintaining cash flow without borrowing.

This budget provides the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of record funding of \$303 million for public safety. Funding consists of \$78 million for County Police, \$161 million for Department of Correction, \$46 million for Probation and \$18 million for Emergency Services. Included is funding for a new class of correction officers and 308 sworn police officers. Funding is continued for the highly successful HERRO program, which provides recruitment and retention incentives to assist local volunteer emergency service agencies. The Threat Assessment Management (TAM) team in the Department of Public Safety was created to prevent targeted violence through a collaborative team approach.

To meet the health and mental health needs of County residents, we are continuing the many new initiatives that were implemented over the past 7 years. These include partnerships with Federal Qualified Health Center networks, Project Alliance—a multipronged program to address the needs of Westchester County residents with behavioral health challenges—and community vaccination clinics in partnership with the Yonkers School District. We are also developing a Mental Health Outpatient Clinic at 112 East Post Road in White Plains and establishing a lead rental registry to protect Westchester families. Additionally, funding for the telehealth program for seniors and the maternal mortality community programs will continue in this budget.

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A significant emphasis has been placed on the need for fair and affordable housing. We launched the Office of Housing Counsel to provide grants for legal services and eviction diversion. The Planning Department partners with local organizations to assist residents access lotteries for affordable rental and homeownership opportunities. We have also enhanced the Fair Housing Community programming through the revitalized Human Rights Commission. The recently released proposed Capital Budget also includes \$50 million in funding for affordable housing development. This operating budget proposal continues funding for various housing subsidy and eviction prevention programs including \$500 thousand for on call planning consultants to expedite implementation of affordable housing and flood mitigation projects.

Environment and climate resiliency initiatives include the Municipal EV charging grant program, Climate Action Council's planning institute technical assistance for NYS grants for municipalities, expansion of free compost giveaway days, continuation of the municipal food waste program and institution of a new program to recycle fats, oil and grease (FOGs) at the Household Material Recovery Facility. Additionally, 304 of our fleet of 325 buses are now hybrid or fully electric greatly reducing our reliance on fossil fuels. The remaining 21 diesel buses will be replaced with hybrid or fully electric buses in 2025.

Access to affordable child care and food security are important issues addressed by this budget. There is \$78 million for childcare subsidies, an increase of \$22 million from the prior year. This budget continues funding for food pantries to address food security.

To further our efforts on the area of economic development, this budget provides for continued MWBE technical assistance and procurement fairs, programs for expansion of the local biosciences sector and workforce development programs in healthcare and clean energy.

I look forward to working with your Honorable Board now and into the future, and pledge the full availability of the Westchester County executive branch as you review my 2025 Proposed Budget over the coming months.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George Latimer", written in a cursive style.

George Latimer  
Westchester County Executive

**HONORABLE BOARD OF LEGISLATORS  
THE COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER, NEW YORK**

Your Committee on Budget and Appropriations is in receipt of a transmittal from the County Executive of his proposed 2025 County Budget and Budget Act making appropriations and levying real property taxes for the support of County Government for the year Two Thousand Twenty-Five.

The Department of Budget has advised that this legislation is necessary for the conduct of County Government for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2025.

Therefore, the Committee recommends the adoption of the attached Budget Act making appropriations and levying real property taxes for the support of County Government for the year Two Thousand Twenty-Five.

ACT NO. \_\_\_\_\_ of 2024

AN ACT adopting the County Budget and making appropriations and levying real property taxes for the conduct of the County Government for the year Two Thousand Twenty-Five.

Be it enacted by the Board of Legislators of the County of Westchester as follows:

Section 1. The accompanying County Budget including the current plan and the capital program for the County of Westchester and the several districts therein, as listed below, is hereby adopted for the fiscal year Two Thousand and Twenty-Five:

County of Westchester

Environmental Facilities, Department of	Saw Mill Valley Sanitary Sewer District
Blind Brook Sanitary Sewer District	South Yonkers Sanitary Sewer District
Bronx Valley Sanitary Sewer District	Upper Bronx Valley Sanitary Sewer District
Central Yonkers Sanitary Sewer District	North Yonkers Pump Station
Hutchinson Valley Sanitary Sewer District	Joint Treatment Plant (Yonkers)
Mamaroneck Valley Sanitary Sewer District	Water Agency
New Rochelle Sanitary Sewer District	County Water District No. 1
North Yonkers Sanitary Sewer District	County Water District No. 2
Ossining Sanitary Sewer District	County Water District No. 3
Peekskill Sanitary Sewer District	County Water District No. 4
Port Chester Sanitary Sewer District	Refuse Disposal District No. 1

Section 2. During the Calendar Year 2025, the Commissioner of Finance shall verify and provide the Board of Legislators quarterly with a statement of the County's cash flow for the General Fund.

Section 3. The several amounts specified in the above mentioned budget under the column heading "Allowed 2025" or so much of such amount as shall be sufficient to accomplish the purposes designated are hereby appropriated for such purposes under the following general classifications:

Personal Service (Code 100 and 101)  
Purchase of Equipment (Code 200)  
Materials and Supplies (Code 300)  
Expenses (Code 400 and 599)  
Relief (Code 501)  
County Debt Service (Agency 51)  
Miscellaneous (Agency 52)  
Capital Projects

Section 4. Within 30 days after the close of the Second Quarter and the Fourth Quarter for the Calendar Year 2025, the Commissioner of Finance shall verify and provide the Board of Legislators with:

- (i) A combined statement of the County's cash balances for all accounts
- (ii) A statement of the County's cash balances for all enterprise funds

Section 5. With respect to the Executive Branch of County government, the positions shown in the budget are hereby authorized, created and/or continued and the number appearing on the line items of the positions shall be the number of positions under such title.

Section 6. All elective officers, appointive officers and other positions are to be paid at salaries set in accordance with the provisions of the personnel rules and amendments thereto adopted by this Board and with respect to the Executive Branch of County government, may be filled only in accordance with procedures approved by the County Executive.

Section 7. Where personal service is required to accomplish the intended purpose of an appropriation, such personal service may be employed in accordance with the provision of the personnel rules and amendments thereto adopted by the Board, when approved and allocated by the Budget Director as appropriate.

Section 8. Where personnel are employed under a trust or grant, such employment shall terminate at the expiration of the funds provided by the trust or grant.

Section 9. The Commissioner of Finance is hereby authorized to advance from funds on hand to Year 2025 Budget accounts such amounts as may be required, pending receipt of taxes and/or other revenues.

Section 10. Transfer of appropriations between departments and transfer of appropriations between a department and the Miscellaneous Budget are made upon the prior recommendation of the County Executive with the prior authorization of the County Board of Legislators.

Section 11. Transfer of appropriations between general classifications of expenditures within the same department and transfers of appropriations between account lines in the Miscellaneous Budget are made with the prior authorization of the County Executive on the recommendation of the Budget Director and with the prior approval of the Committee of the County Board designated by resolution of such Board.

Section 12. The "Trusts" section presented after the operating budget of a department is provided for informational purposes only. Adoption of this budget act shall not be considered to be acceptance of any grant requiring the expenditure of County funds.

Section 13. The invalidity of any provisions, paragraphs, or portions of this Act shall have no effect upon the validity of any other part or portion hereof. Should any provision(s) of this Act be held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or for any reason unenforceable, the remainder shall nonetheless be of full force and effect.

Section 14. The amounts of the County and Special District Taxes for 2025 resulting from the County Budget are hereby fixed and determined as indicated below:

County of Westchester:		
Metropolitan Transportation Authority	33,125,466	
Metropolitan Commuter Transportation Mobility Tax	1,705,000	
County Operating Purposes	507,365,761	
Total County		542,196,227
Special Districts:		
Blind Brook Sanitary Sewer District		11,248,615
Bronx Valley Sanitary Sewer District		32,502,913
Central Yonkers Sanitary Sewer District		2,330,942
Hutchinson Valley Sanitary Sewer District		9,975,015
Mamaroneck Valley Sanitary Sewer District		22,467,931
New Rochelle Sanitary Sewer District		20,130,744
North Yonkers Sanitary Sewer District		6,456,816
Ossining Sanitary Sewer District		5,372,604
Peekskill Sanitary Sewer District		6,711,096
Port Chester Sanitary Sewer District		3,880,307
Saw Mill Valley Sanitary Sewer District		20,155,623
South Yonkers Sanitary Sewer District		2,725,017
Upper Bronx Valley Sanitary Sewer District		1,925,508
County Water District No. 1		4,698,623
Refuse Disposal District No. 1		62,716,478

Section 15. The foregoing amounts are hereby levied and assessed upon the real property liable therefore in the County, and in the several special districts indicated.

Section 16. This ACT shall take effect immediately.

DATED: December \_\_\_\_\_, 2024  
White Plains, New York