

Wayne County Commissioners have released the Proposed 2026 General Fund Budget during this week's Board of Commissioners meeting. Designed to meet residents' needs while addressing rising costs and increased service demands, the proposed budget ensures the County can deliver high-quality services in a fiscally responsible manner. It is balanced through a combination of new revenue, strategic cost-containment measures, and fund balance reserves.

The proposed 2026 budget totals \$43,388,487—a 3.8% increase over the 2025 Adopted Budget—and notably includes **no tax increase**. Cost increases primarily reflect investments in General Government, Public Safety, and technology infrastructure. These technological upgrades, while costly, are expected to yield long-term efficiencies. The County also remains committed to offering competitive compensation to attract and retain essential talent, while carefully balancing fiscal impact on the community.

Consistent with the adopted Fund Balance Policy, the County maintains an unassigned fund balance equal to at least 60 days of operations. The 2026 budget incorporates \$508,142 in prior-year carryover, with close monitoring of fund balance usage.

Wayne County continues to uphold a fiscally responsible approach—maintaining prudent reserves to safeguard against service reductions or tax increases due to temporary revenue shortfalls or unforeseen expenditures. Revenues are recognized only when reasonably certain, and expenses are budgeted at projected costs, with ongoing evaluation throughout the year. This disciplined policy enables the County to pursue grants, secure competitive bids, and reduce costs wherever possible.

The Proposed 2026 Budget will be available for public inspection and comment for at least 20 days, with adoption scheduled for Thursday, December 18, 2026. The summary will be posted on the County website and in the Commissioners' Office beginning November 26, 2026.

This year's budget process reflects the collaborative efforts of Elected Officials, Department Heads, and Business Office staff. Our strategy emphasizes modernization, efficiency, and strong advocacy for stable funding. Together, we will build on past successes, remain resilient in the face of challenges, and ensure Wayne County continues to thrive for all residents.