



Shining the Light

YOUR GUIDE TO COUNTY FINANCES

2024 Wakulla County, Florida
Popular Annual Financial Report
For the Fiscal Year Ended September 30, 2024



Message from the Clerk & Comptroller



Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller

WAKULLA COUNTY

GREG JAMES, CFCC



Dear Residents of Wakulla County,

As your independently elected Clerk of Court & Comptroller for Wakulla County, my responsibilities include serving as the County's Chief Financial Officer, Auditor and Treasurer. I am committed to examining how your tax dollars are spent, educating the public about County financial matters and promoting transparency and accountability in County government.

I am proud to present the County's Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2024. **Shining the Light: Your Guide to County Finances** provides a condensed version of some of the financial details in the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR), providing a concise summary of Wakulla County's financial information, revenues collected, and how those revenues were managed and spent.

Additionally, it includes information about the County's budget, property taxes, investments, capital assets, debt, demographic, economic and other general information about our County. Information in the PAFR does not provide detailed financial information for all funds and is summarized in a format everyone can easily understand.

It is my honor and privilege to serve as your Clerk of Court & Comptroller. Thank you for your interest in the County's finances and for the trust you place in me as your Comptroller. Contact financedirector@wakullaclerk.com if you have questions or comments on PAFR, or our website at www.wakullaclerk.org for a copy of the ACFR and additional County financial reports and other helpful information.

Table of Contents

Wakulla County is in the Big Bend Region of Florida and is a captivating slice of paradise on the Gulf Coast. Known for its pristine natural beauty and charming small-town ambiance, this coastal county offers a tranquil escape from the hustle and bustle of city life. With miles of untouched coastline, stunning white-sand beaches, and crystal-clear springs, outdoor enthusiasts will find themselves immersed in a world of adventure. Explore the vast Apalachicola National Forest, home to towering pines, diverse wildlife, and scenic trails perfect for hiking and biking. Dive into the depths of Wakulla Springs, one of the world's largest freshwater springs, and marvel at the vibrant underwater ecosystem. Discover the rich history and heritage of the region through its historic landmarks, museums, and quaint downtown areas. Whether you're seeking relaxation or excitement, Wakulla County offers a captivating getaway for nature lovers and culture enthusiasts alike.

2	Message from the Clerk & Comptroller
3	Table of Contents
4	About Wakulla County
6	Role of the Clerk & Comptroller
7	Constitutional Officers
8	Board of County Commissioners
9	By the Numbers
10	Annual Budget at a Glance
11	Property Taxes
12	Revenues
14	Expenses
15	Capital Expenditures
16	Investments
17	Debt
18	Capital Assets
19	Net Position

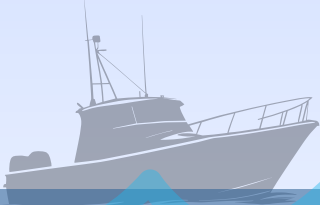
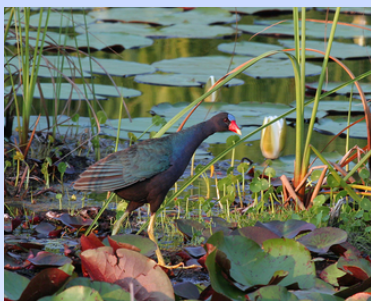
About Wakulla County

Established in 1843 as the 23rd county of Florida

- 735.74 total square miles
- 129.08 square miles of water
- 606.66 square miles of land
- 383.75 square miles protected



Home to one state forest, one national forest and one national wildlife refuge, two state parks, over twenty annual festivals, twelve public boat and kayak launches and two rustic sand beaches



About Wakulla County

Population

37,115

53.2%

Male

46.8%

Female

Median Household Income

\$78,358

5% more than State
1% more than Nation

Median Age

40

Over 65

17.1%

Under 19

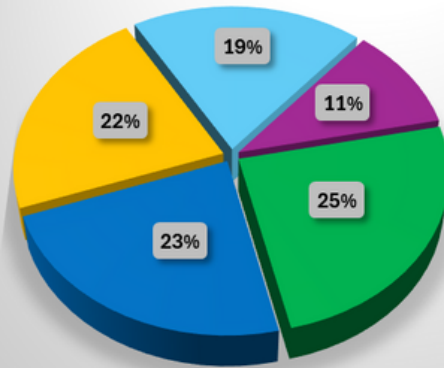
22.3%

Unemployment Rate

2.8%

State 3.5%
Nation 4.1%

Top Five Employment Sectors



- Office and Administrative Support
- Executive, Managers and Administrators
- Sales
- Education, Training/Library
- Construction and Extraction

Below Poverty Line

10.1%

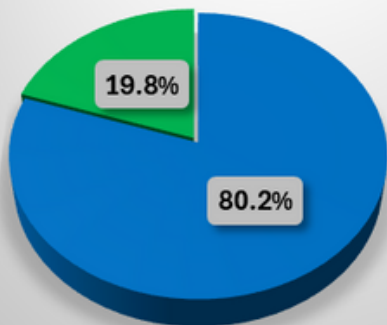
Number of Businesses

1,323

Labor Force

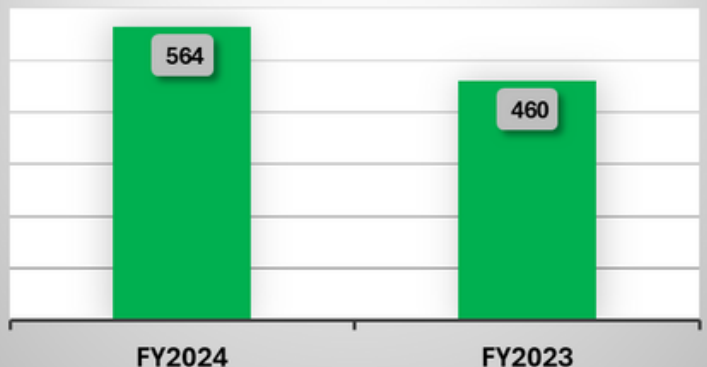
16,624

Housing



- Owners
- Renters

New Homes Added



Constitutional Officers

October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024



Clerk of Court & Comptroller - Greg James

(850)926-0300 www.wakullaclerk.org

Accountant, Treasurer, Auditor



Property Appraiser - Edward Brimner

(850)926-0500 www.mywakullapa.com

Assesses property taxable value



Sheriff - Jared Miller

(850)745-7100 www.wcso.org

Protects citizens



Supervisor of Elections - Joe Morgan

(850)926-0300 www.wakullavotes.gov

Upholds election laws



Tax Collector - Lisa Craze

(850)926-3371 www.wakullacountytaxcollector.com

Collects property taxes



Board of County Commissioners

(850)926-0919 www.mywakulla.com

Levies property taxes

Separation of Duties Protects You and Your Tax Dollars

Board of County Commissioners

October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024



District 1
Ralph Thomas



District 2
Fred Nichols



District 3
Mike Kemp



District 4
Quincee Messersmith



District 5
Chuck Hess



County Administrator
David Edwards

Role of the Clerk & Comptroller

The Clerk of the Circuit Court, established by the Florida Constitution in 1838, is the local constitutional officer who serves as the Public Trustee for the County. The Clerk is independently elected to protect public funds and public records while performing several functions.



1

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT

The Clerk of Circuit Court safeguards all Court records with the utmost integrity. The Clerk is also responsible for managing the jury system, attending court hearings, and collecting and disbursing all court related monies.

2

COUNTY RECORDER

The Clerk is responsible for processing and maintaining all official public records, such as mortgages, deeds, wills, and marriage licenses. Citizens may also apply for a U.S. Passport at the Clerk's Office.

3

COUNTY COMPTROLLER

Serving as the County Chief Financial Officer, Treasurer, and Auditor, the Clerk provides a system of checks and balances on budget, revenue and spending. The Clerk also provides financial statements to the Board of County Commissioners and many federal and state agencies.

4

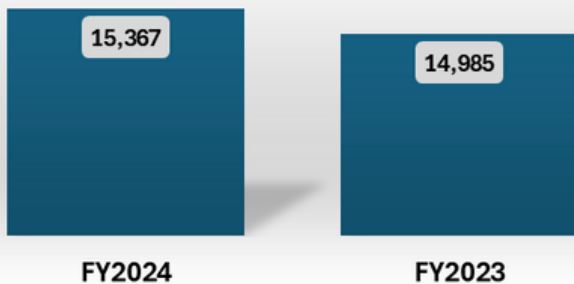
CLERK TO THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

The Clerk prepares and maintains public records of Commission meetings and serves as the custodian of county resolutions, ordinances, and contracts. Also, the Clerk administers the Value Adjustment Board which may be used by property owners to contest their assessed value.

By the Numbers

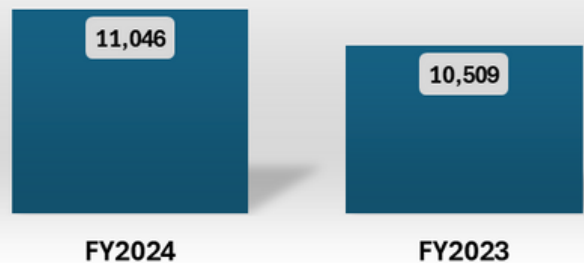
The BOCC holds two public meetings a month, with the exception that July and December each have only one meeting. At those meetings, they vote to adopt various items from an agenda published in advance of the meeting. Some of the routine items are County bills to be paid, grant awards, budget amendments and planning and zoning items. The graphs below illustrate the outcomes of the agenda items that are adopted.

Obligations Processed



Checks Processed

Includes payroll



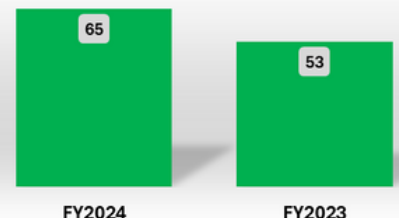
Deposits Processed



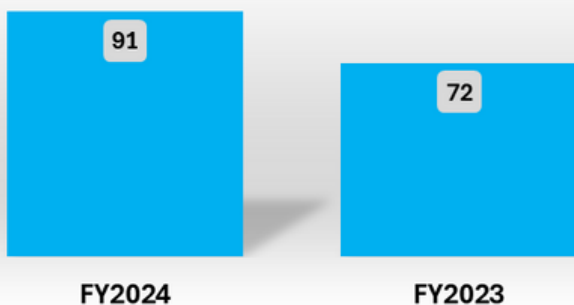
Budget Amendments Processed



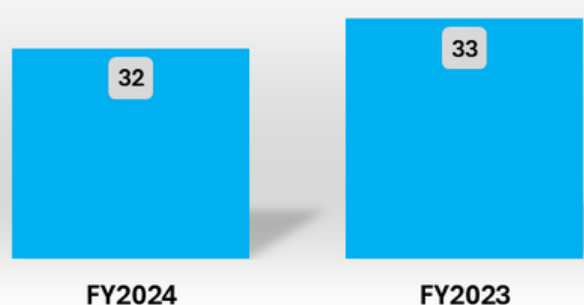
Grants in Progress



Resolutions Adopted

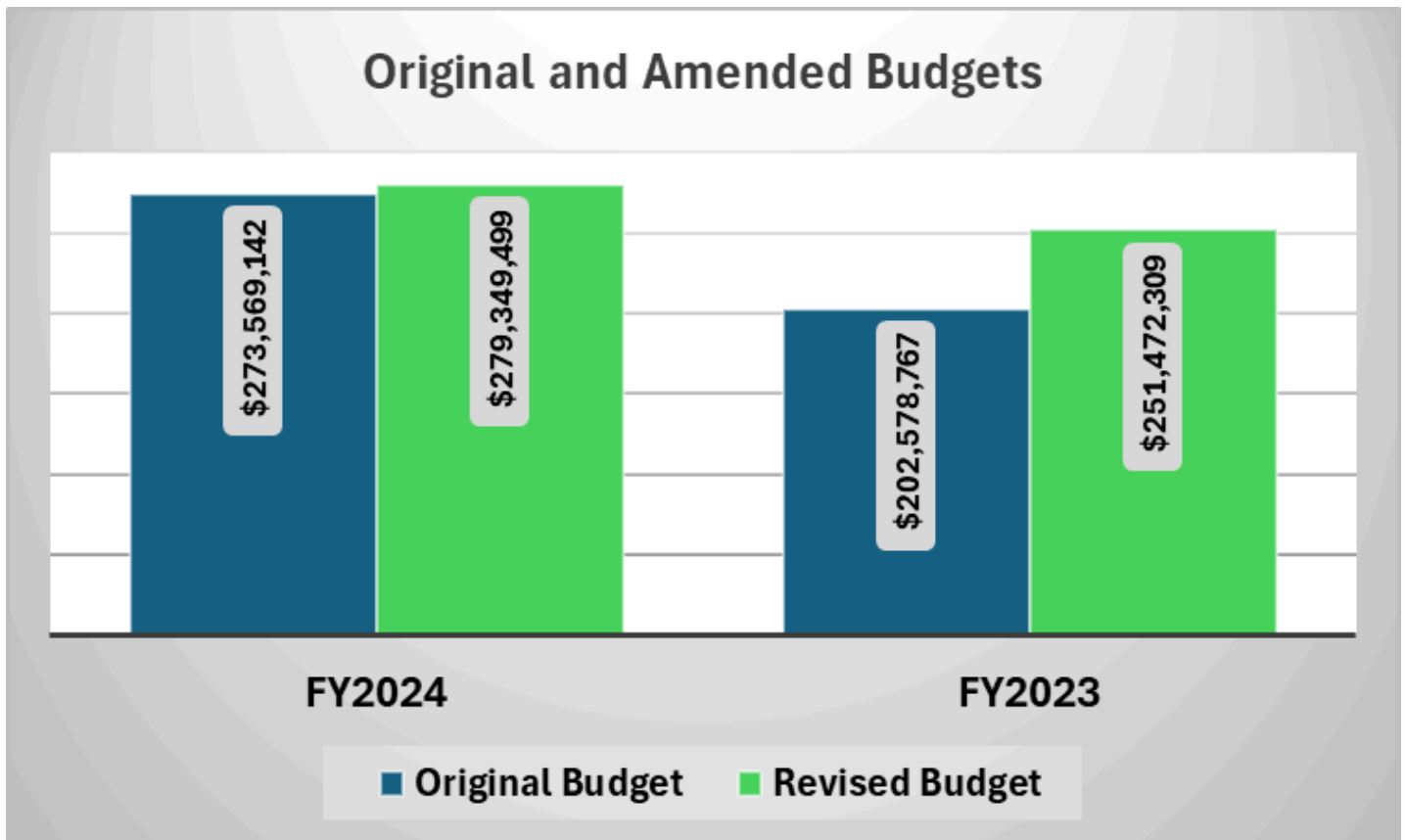


Ordinances Adopted



Annual Budget at a Glance

January	Budget calendar is approved
March	Budget “kick-off”
May	Budget requests due to the BOCC
July	Preliminary budget to BOCC
August	Final budget workshop
September	Budget is adopted in two public hearings



The four types of funds used by the County that make up the adopted budget are:

**General
Fund**

**Special
Revenue**

**Capital
Projects**

**Business
Activities**

Property Taxes

January

Determination of market value and exemptions

July

Mail out Truth in Millage (TRIM) Notices

August

BOCC adopts millage rate in two public hearings

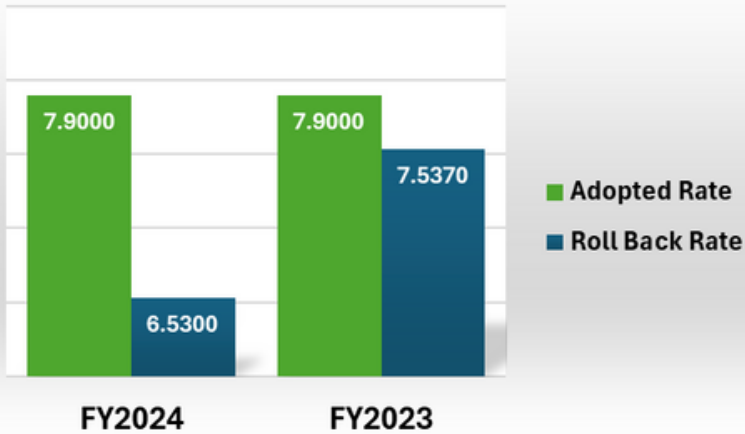
September

Certification of valuations and exemptions

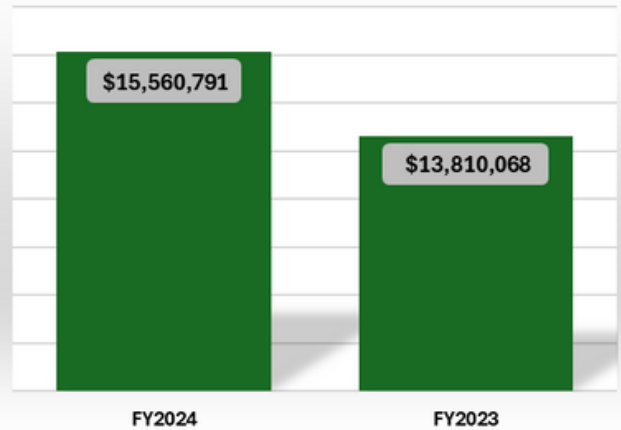
November

Tax Collector mails out tax bills and begins collection

Adopted vs. Rollback Millage Rate



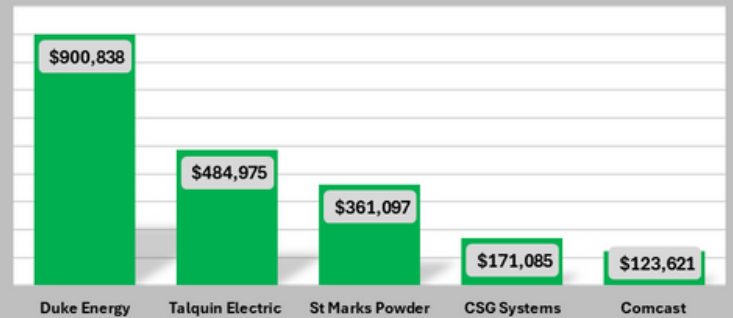
Property Taxes Collected



Did you know?

The percentage of taxes collected in FY2024 that were paid by the Top Five Taxpayers is 13.1%.

Top Five Taxpayers for FY2024

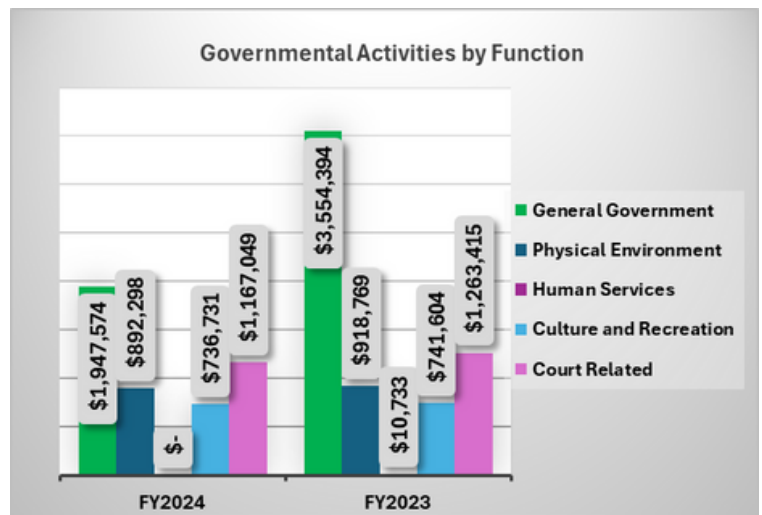
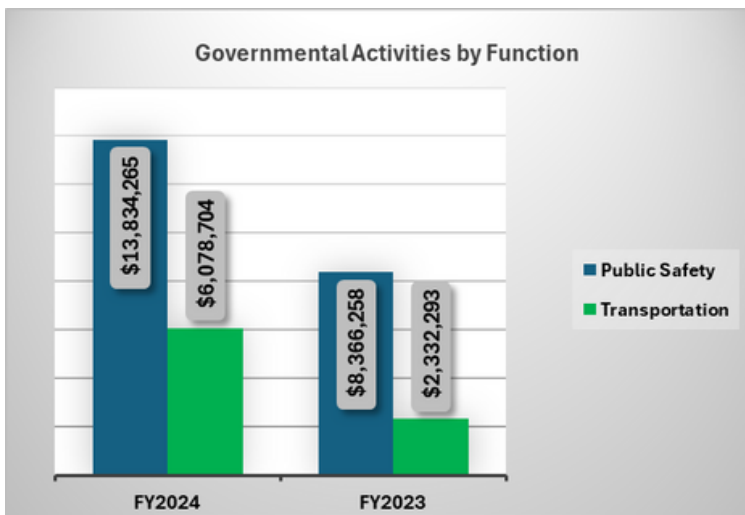


Assessed value minus exemptions divided by 1,000 multiplied by millage rate equals property tax owed

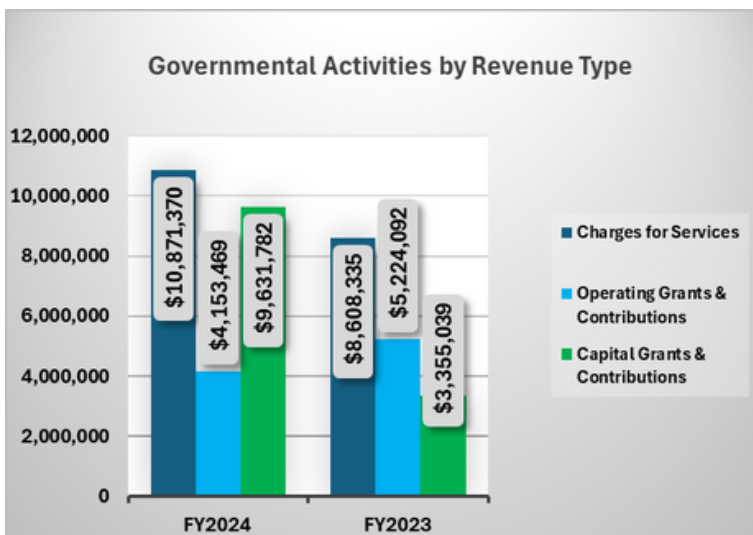
- Other taxing authorities also impose property taxes
- Save Our Homes Act caps assessed property value

Revenues

There is a distinction between activities that the County is responsible for that are not intended to function like a business, that is, make a profit or break even. These activities are called “governmental activities” and are accounted for in the General Fund, Special Revenue Funds, and Capital Project Funds. Governmental revenues can be compared by the function or the department/s that collect them, as shown in the charts below. Comparatively, governmental activities revenue increased 43.5% from the prior fiscal year.



The revenue can also be compared by the type of revenue or the specific revenue source, as shown in the charts below.

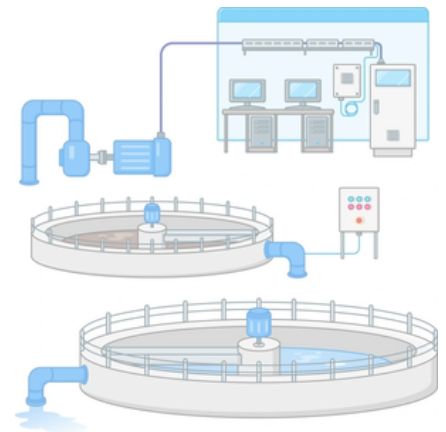
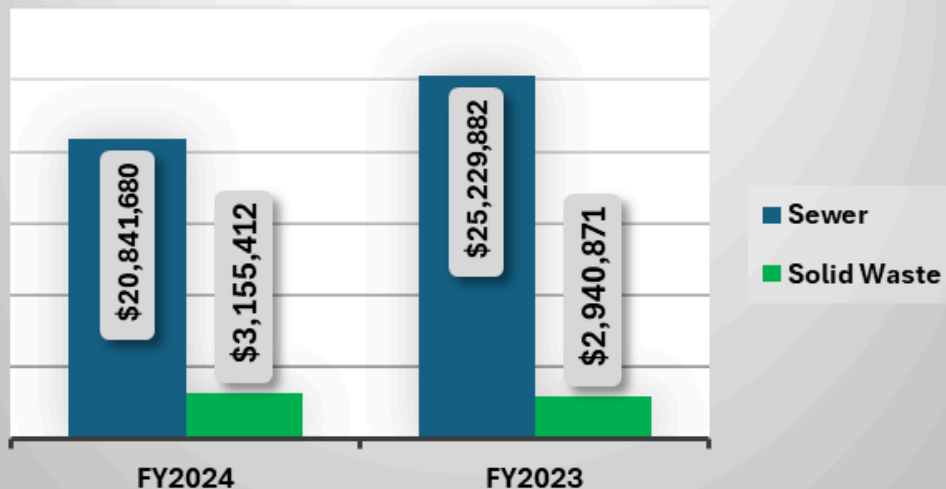


	FY2024	FY2023
General Government	\$ 12.43	\$ 12.19
Public Safety	\$ 27.19	\$ 25.67
Physical Environment	\$ 0.41	\$ 0.39
Transportation	\$ 6.78	\$ 5.63
Economic Environment	\$ 0.37	\$ 0.19
Human Services	\$ 1.26	\$ 1.16
Culture and Recreation	\$ 3.86	\$ 2.86
Court Related	\$ 1.20	\$ 1.21
Sewer	\$ 4.98	\$ 4.70
Solid Waste	\$ 2.84	\$ 2.66
Interest on Long Term Debt	\$ 1.23	\$ 0.85
\$ In Millions		

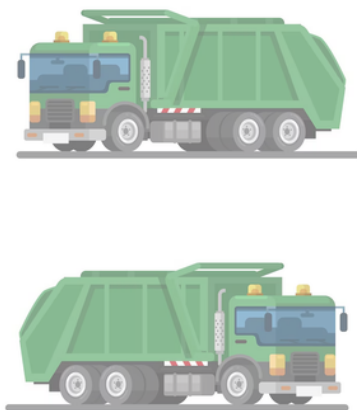
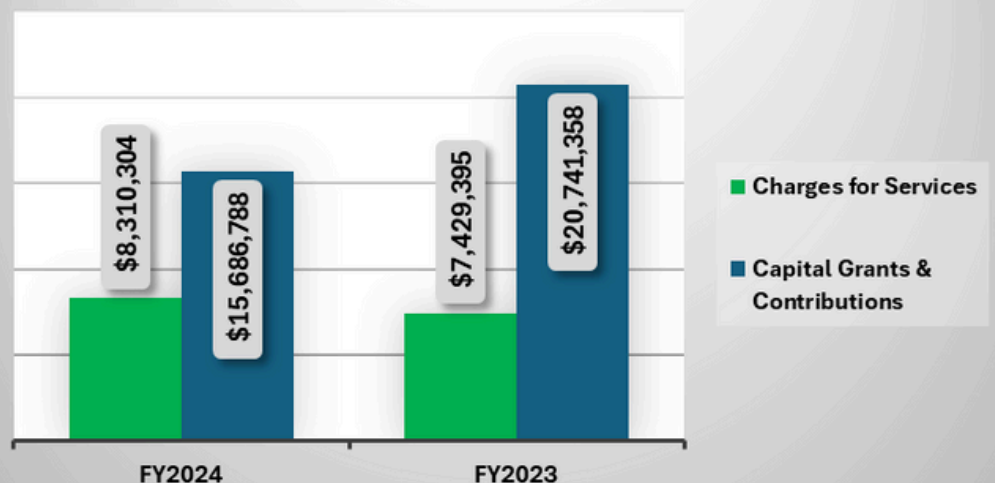
Revenues

Activities that are more narrowly defined and are intended to function like a business, make a profit or break even, are called “business-type activities.” The County has two such business-type activities. They are accounted for in the Sewer Fund and Solid Waste Fund. Comparatively, business-type activities charges for services revenue increased 11.9% and capital grants and contributions revenue decreased 24.4% from the prior fiscal year. It should be noted that capital grants and contributions revenue can vary greatly from year to year due to the number and amount of grant received and other factors.

Business-Type Activities by Function

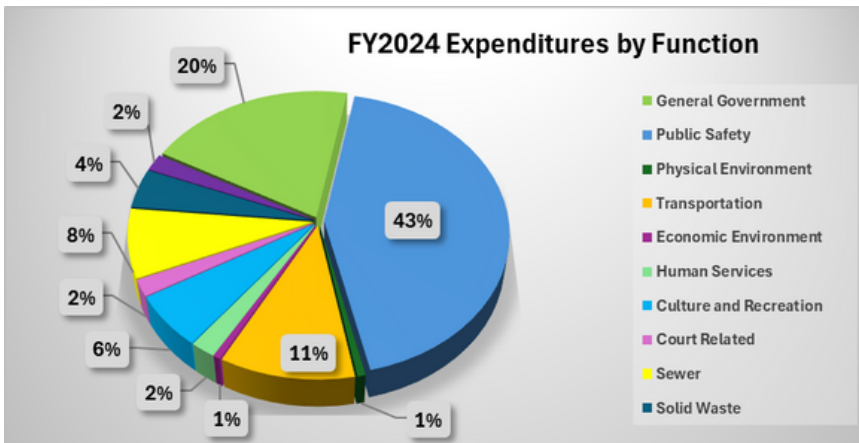


Business-Type Activities by Revenue Type



Expenditures

Total expenditures were \$62.57 million compared to \$57.52 million in the prior fiscal year, an increase of just over \$5 million. Public safety accounts for the largest increase in governmental activities expenditures at \$1.52 million and sewer accounts for the largest business-type activities expenditures at just under \$280 thousand.



	FY2024	FY2023
General Government	\$ 12.43	\$ 12.19
Public Safety	\$ 27.19	\$ 25.67
Physical Environment	\$ 0.41	\$ 0.39
Transportation	\$ 6.78	\$ 5.63
Economic Environment	\$ 0.37	\$ 0.19
Human Services	\$ 1.26	\$ 1.16
Culture and Recreation	\$ 3.86	\$ 2.86
Court Related	\$ 1.20	\$ 1.21
Sewer	\$ 4.98	\$ 4.70
Solid Waste	\$ 2.84	\$ 2.66
Interest on Long Term Debt	\$ 1.23	\$ 0.85

\$ In Millions

Citizen Services



General Government

County Administration
Facilities Management
Planning and Zoning



Public Safety

Fire Rescue
Law Enforcement
E911



Culture & Recreation

Parks
Recreation
Library



Transportation

Roads
Bridges
Airport



Economic Environment

Veterans Services
Housing / SHIP



Health & Human Services

Medicare / Medicaid
Crisis Stabilization
Animal Services



Physical Environment

Agriculture Extension
Solid Waste
Sewer



Court Related

Courthouse
Guardian Ad Litem
Legal Aid

Capital Expenditures

The County spent \$60,116,540 on capital projects to meet the increased demand on County resources and infrastructure. This included the acquisition of land and equipment, and the construction of building and infrastructure systems. There are numerous capital improvement projects in progress with the focus on upgrading the Otter Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and expanding central sewer capacity. To meet that goal, the County opened the Wakulla Sands Golf Course in FY2024 which can dispose of 1.2 million gallons of treated effluent per day and eventually, 1.8 million gallons per day. The primary funding sources included grant and One Cent Sales Tax funds.

Land

\$16,854 spent on lots for lift stations and stormwater drainage. There were right-of-way donations of \$82,500 in four completed subdivisions and one road that connects to Highway 98 from Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Boulevard.

Equipment

\$2,801,885 spent on 10 emergency medical equipment items, 31 mower, tractors and heavy equipment items, 50 golf carts, 11 on and off-road vehicles, one dump truck, one firetruck, one trailer and replacement a/c units. There were equipment donations of \$72,951.

Buildings

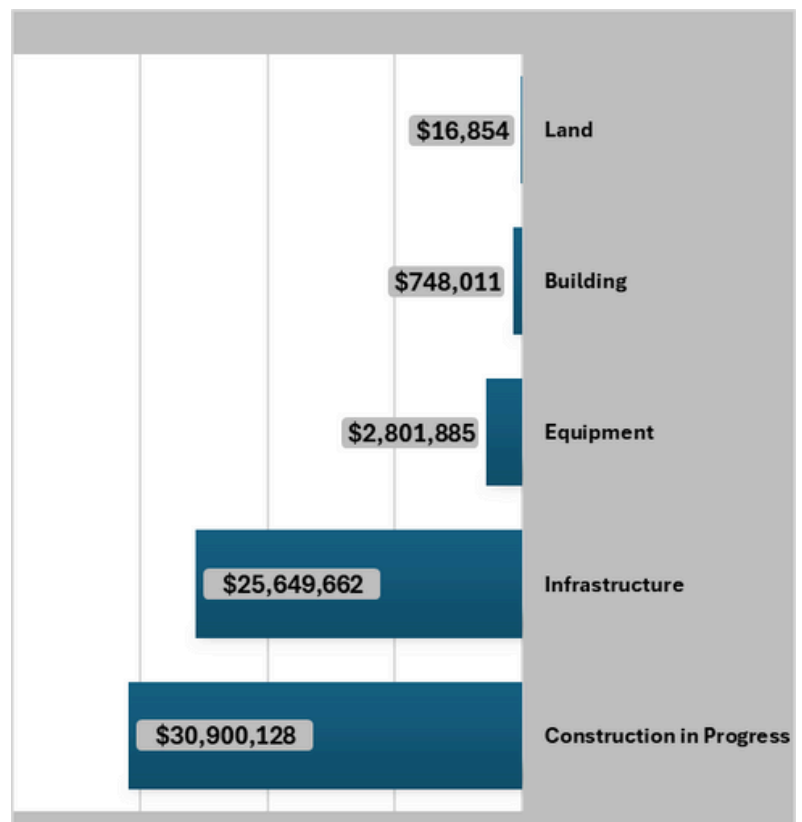
\$748,011 spent on the construction of a storage barn, concession stand, pro shop and restroom facility at the Golf Course. Also purchased was one portable office building for Newport Park and one industrial generator for the County Administration complex.

Infrastructure

\$25,649,662 spent on Arran Road, Lonnie Raker Road, Wakulla Springs Road, Medart Park irrigation, Songbird Avenue round-a-bout, the construction of the parking lot, cart path, sidewalks, and the effluent irrigation system at the Golf Course, and sewer expansion for Magnolia Gardens phase 3.

Construction in Progress

\$30,900,128 spent on projects that were still under construction at the close of the fiscal year most notably, the County emergency radio system, coastal lift station mitigation, sewer expansion for multiple phases in Wakulla Gardens and Magnolia Gardens, and expansion of the WWTP.



County Investments

There are four (4) investment objectives of the County, listed in order of importance. The order of these objectives is intended to minimize the risks inherent to any investment of funds.

Transparency

The Clerk's office annually prepares an investment report that contains detailed information and comparisons regarding County investments.

Safety

In order to protect taxpayer funds, Florida law limits the type of investments that local governments can invest in. The County's cash deposits are held by banks that are qualified as a public depository.

Liquidity

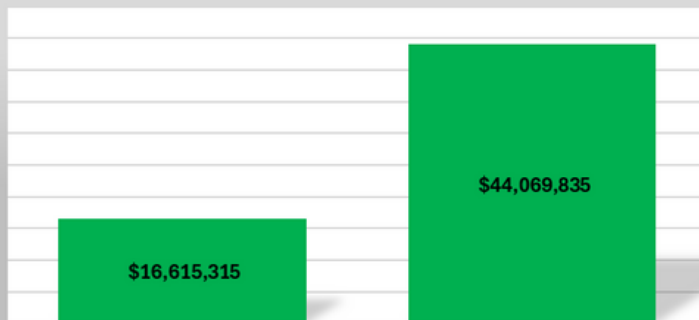
The County has twelve (12) bank accounts that are monitored daily and all investments have overnight liquidity.

Return

The average interest earnings rate for the fiscal year was 2.77% .



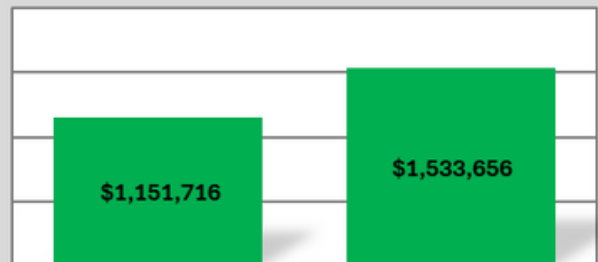
Cash Balances on September 30



FY2024

FY2023

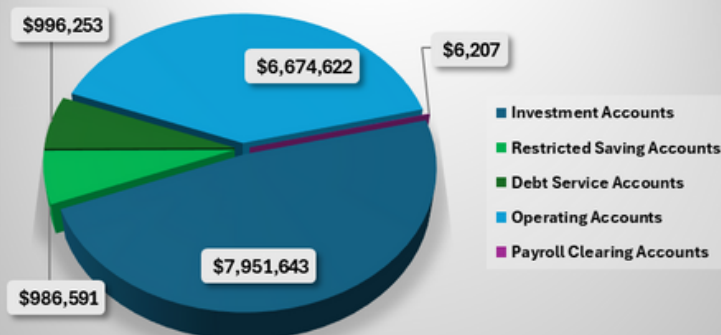
Interest Income



FY2024

FY2023

Cash and Investments on September 30



The County invests excess funds that are not needed at that time for paying the bills of the County. Investments are diversified across local banks and governmental trusts.

County Debt

At the end of fiscal year 2024, the County had total debt outstanding of \$21.9 million, compared to \$36.3 million in the prior fiscal year, a decrease of \$14.4 million. This substantial decrease in outstanding debt is due to the County paying off a significant amount of the principal balance in FY2024 for a loan agreement entered into in FY2023. This also the reason for the increase in County debt per capita in FY2023.

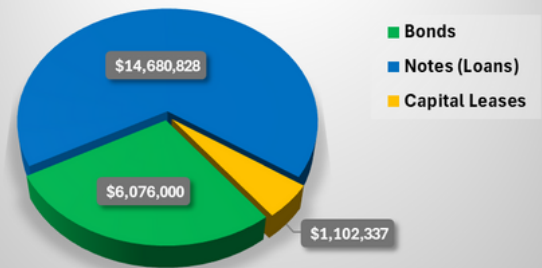
Governmental Activities

- * Loan for Fire Station Construction
- * Loan for Cash Flowing Grant Funded Projects
- * Capital Leases of Motor Graders, Firetrucks and Fire Equipment

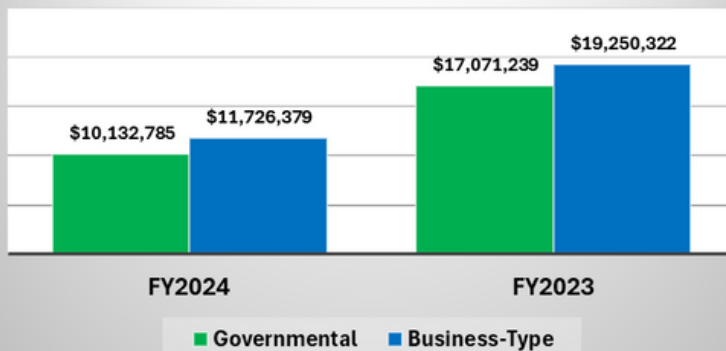
Business-Type Activities

- * Bonds for Construction of WWTP Improvements
- * Loans for Closure of Landfill and Sewer System Design
- * Loan for Cash Flowing Grant Funded Projects

Debt by Instrument Type

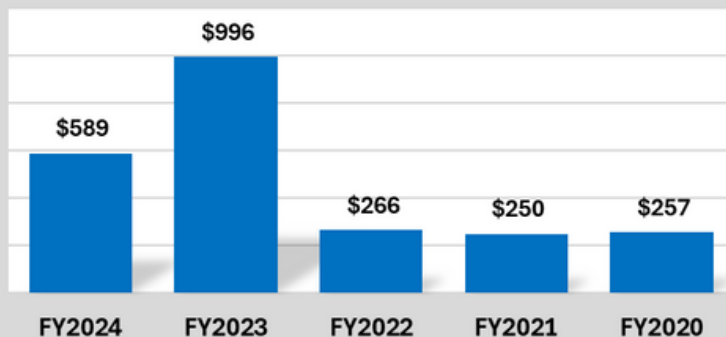


Outstanding Debt by Activity

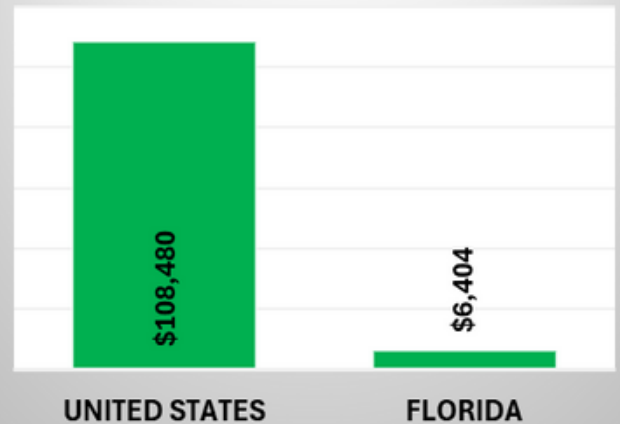


Debt per capita is the County's total debt divided by the current population. The County's goal is not to exceed \$500 per person.

County Debt Per Capita

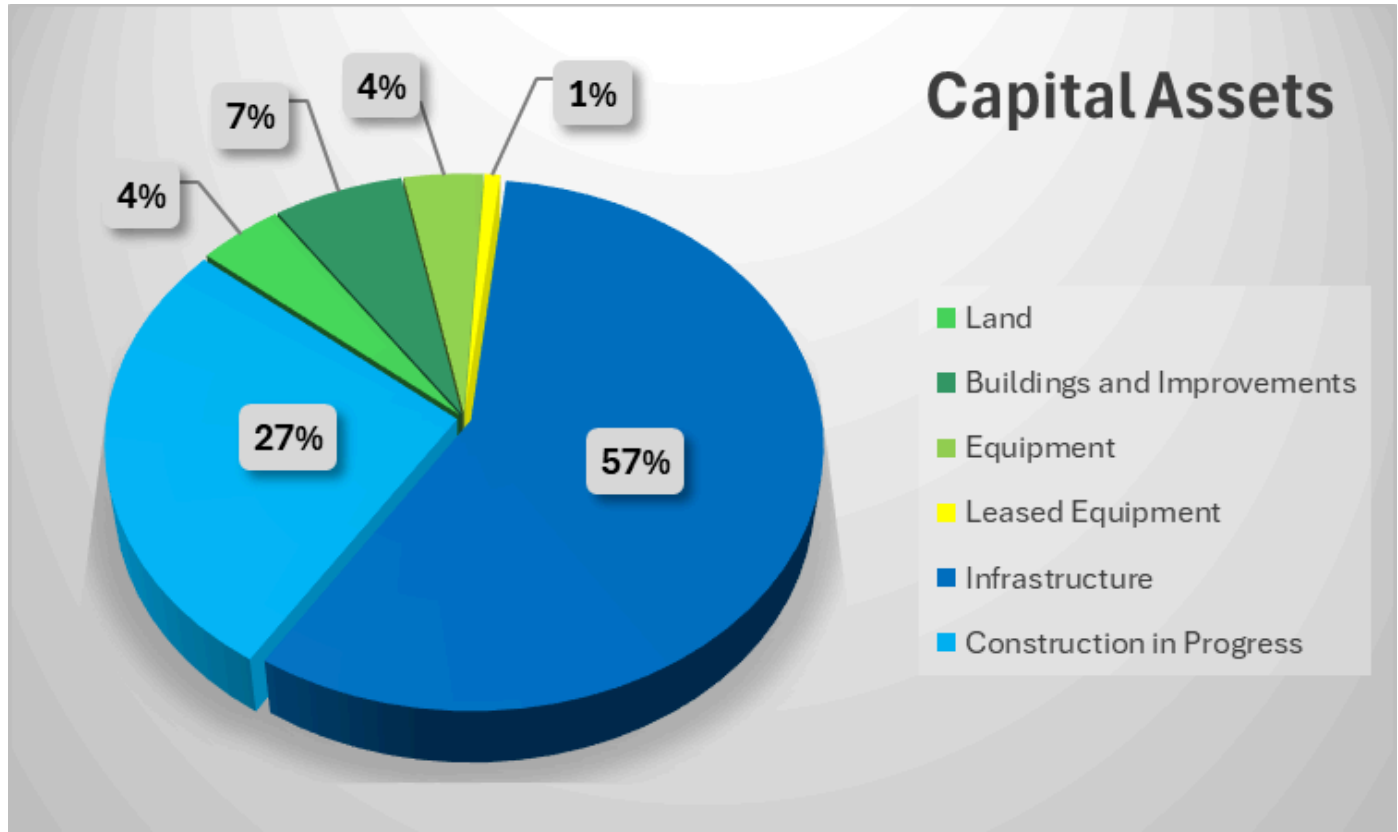


Debt Per Capita Comparison



Capital Assets

The County's investment in capital assets as of September 30, 2024 amounts to \$192.7 million, net of accumulated depreciation. During fiscal year 2024, governmental activities infrastructure assets increased by \$11.4 million and business-type activities infrastructure assets increased by \$10.6 million from the prior year.



Infrastructure, such as roads and wastewater systems, account for the largest portion of County-owned assets at 57.4%

Land	\$	8.29
Buildings and Improvements	\$	12.65
Equipment	\$	7.72
Leased Equipment	\$	1.51
Infrastructure	\$	110.50
Construction in Progress	\$	52.00
\$ In Millions		

Did you know?

**Wakulla County
maintains 580 miles
of roads, and 230
miles of wastewater
collection lines.**

Net Position

The statement of net position presents what the County owns (assets) less what the County owes (liabilities) and report the difference between them as net position. Governmental activities represent services provided to Wakulla County citizens that are principally supported by taxes, and federal, state or other local revenue. Business-type activities are services for which all costs are recovered through the users of service (user fees and charges).

Summarized Statement of Net Position (\$ in Millions)	Governmental Activities		Business-Type Activities		Total	
	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023
ASSETS						
Cash, investments, net receivables, other assets	\$ 36.3	\$ 47.8	\$ 5.3	\$ 19.5	\$ 41.6	\$ 67.3
Net capital assets	\$ 101.0	\$ 83.4	\$ 91.7	\$ 74.6	\$ 192.7	\$ 158.0
Total Assets	\$ 137.2	\$ 131.2	\$ 97.0	\$ 94.1	\$ 234.2	\$ 225.3
DEFERRED OUTFLOWS OF RESOURCES						
Deferred outflows related to pensions and OPEB	\$ 21.5	\$ 20.5	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 21.5	\$ 20.5
Total Deferred Outflows of Resources	\$ 21.5	\$ 20.5	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 21.5	\$ 20.5
LIABILITIES						
Current and other liabilities	\$ 6.2	\$ 6.7	\$ 6.2	\$ 5.8	\$ 12.4	\$ 12.5
Long-term liabilities	\$ 47.3	\$ 55.5	\$ 10.6	\$ 20.7	\$ 57.8	\$ 76.2
Total Liabilities	\$ 53.4	\$ 62.2	\$ 16.8	\$ 26.5	\$ 70.2	\$ 88.7
DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES						
Deferred inflows related to pensions and OPEB	\$ 8.8	\$ 6.0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8.8	\$ 6.0
Total Deferred Inflows of Resources	\$ 8.8	\$ 6.0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8.8	\$ 6.0
NET POSITION						
Invested in capital assets	\$ 92.4	\$ 81.9	\$ 82.1	\$ 66.8	\$ 174.5	\$ 148.7
Restricted	\$ 15.7	\$ 8.4	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 15.7	\$ 8.4
Unrestricted	\$ (11.6)	\$ (6.8)	\$ (1.9)	\$ 0.8	\$ (13.5)	\$ (6.0)
Total net position	\$ 96.5	\$ 83.5	\$ 80.2	\$ 67.6	\$ 176.7	\$ 151.1

At the close of fiscal year FY2024, the County reported a total net position of \$176.71 million which is an increase of \$25.58 million, or 16.93%, in comparison to the prior fiscal year. The increase in net position was nearly equal between governmental and business-type activities with a \$12.96 million, or 15.51% increase in governmental activities and a \$12.63 million, or 18.68% increase in business-type activities.



www.wakullaclerk.org