

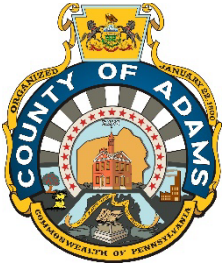
2023 ADAMS COUNTY BUDGET

Commissioners of Adams County

Randy L. Phiel
Chairman

James Martin
Vice Chairman

Marty Karsteter Qually
Commissioner



TO: The Citizens of Adams County:

The Adams County budget for 2023 maintains critical services, continues sensitivity to the taxpayer, and protects the quality of life that we value in Adams County. This budget is a continuation of the financially sound practices Adams County government has established and embraced. The proposed budget helps to promote a strong, diversified economy by focusing on essential programs and services to maintain and improve our community's overall quality of life. The 2023 budget is a comprehensive plan that is reflective of the goals and objectives set forth by the Commissioners. This document not only serves as a policy guide for fiscal year 2023, but it also provides the framework for sound decision-making for the County's future. The following priorities are reflected in the document:

- upholding public safety and security (crime/courts/corrections/911/emergency services);
- maintaining services that support Adams County residents by funding programs for human services and veterans;
- streamlining government and delivery of services through the use of and improvements to technology;
- responsibly and judiciously addressing the County's fiscal health, which will in turn maintain the County's bond rating and maintain compliance with the Fund Balance policy; and
- examining county staffing levels with a focus on operational priorities and providing competitive pay and benefits, as well as the resources that staff need to perform their jobs.

The County is dedicated to providing these services through the most efficient and effective means possible. As with past budgets, the 2023 budget prepares the County for the future. Consistent with previous budgets, the 2023 proposed budget prudently utilizes general fund reserves to maintain operations.

The Adams County staff have done a highly commendable job of addressing challenges that we have encountered in 2022. To be part of and observe such tremendous teamwork is a blessing. Through the dedicated work of County Departments to find operational efficiencies and minimize the rising costs of goods and services necessary to operate and deliver required services to the community the County can put forth this budget with no tax increase.

County Ordinance #3 of 2013, states that on an annual basis as of July 1, the Tax Services Department will calculate the Coefficient of Dispersion (COD) based upon the previous year's sales ratio studies. The results will guide the Board of Commissioners in determining whether to engage a reassessment task force to examine the need for a new countywide reassessment. A COD greater than 20.0 would trigger this action. In 2022 the 2021 sales dataset was analyzed per the ordinance and the COD was calculated at 12.86. Adams County has a strong COD and thus, it did not trigger a task force as it is well within the acceptable guidelines of the International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO).

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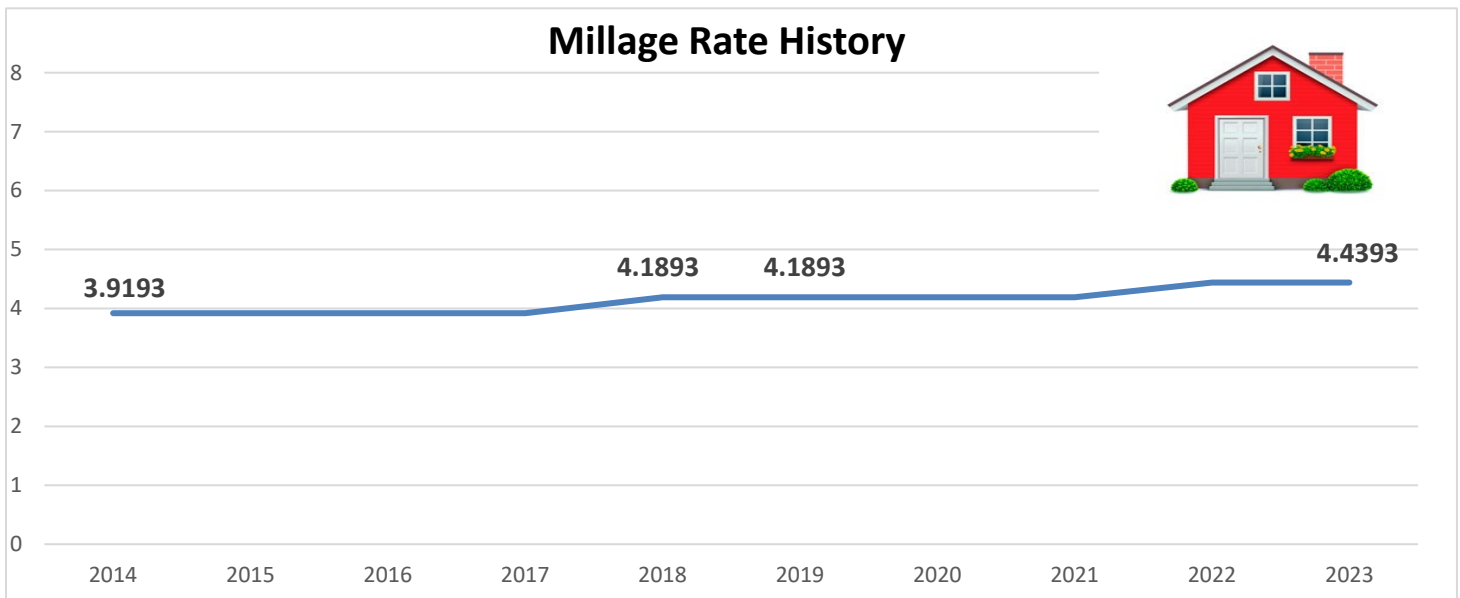
County Narrative (Continued)



The three County Commissioners constitute the chief governing body of the County. The Commissioners are vested with policy-making authority to provide certain local services and facilities on a county-wide basis. Administrative powers and duties of the County Commissioners encompass 911 call center and emergency services, veterans’

affairs, voter registration and elections, human services, operation of a county jail, personnel management, operation, and maintenance of 40 vehicular and two pedestrian bridges, appointment of county personnel, assessment of property, and budget and purchasing management. The Commissioners are the sole contractors for the county, as such, they make contracts and purchases for all purposes expressly or implicitly authorized by law. The position of commissioner is a county-wide elected office with a term of four years; their current term is 2020-2024. The County Commissioners sit jointly as members of the Retirement Board, Salary Board, Election Board, Security Board and Prison Board.

The total budget for 2023 is \$86,674,623. In total the revenue is projected at \$86,674,623 with expenses of \$86,586,338. Fortunately, through good fiscal practices of the Commissioners the County is in a good position to utilize reserves of \$2,636,774 to balance the budget.



The Adams County population of 103,009 has exhibited a good deal of stability, which is favorable considering that many rural counties in the commonwealth are experiencing population decline. Wealth levels are average with per capita income and median family income at 95.6% and 107.1% of national medians, respectively. The county's poverty rate of 7.6% is a good deal below the national rate of 13.4%. Over the last five years the tax base has increased at a compound annual rate of 0.7%. Given the relatively modest amount of new development underway, primarily residential, we expect the tax base to remain stable.

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County Narrative (*continued*)

The need for better broadband service has long been a concern of the Adams County Board of Commissioners, and the Board's interest in improving broadband accessibility throughout the County was heightened due to the pandemic. Affordable broadband high-speed internet is critical infrastructure in today's world and is essential for the long-term economic viability and livability of the county. Reliable access is a quality-of-life issue, necessary for remote learning and medical access as well as economic development and stability. The Adams County Board of Commissioners appointed a Broadband Community Advisory Task Force to help formulate and advance a strategy to address the development and implementation of an affordable county-wide broadband network. A Broadband Community Assessment is being conducted through a joint project between Adams and Franklin Counties. The assessment will help pinpoint areas in the county where broadband service is either unavailable or where upload and/or download speeds are too slow or unreliable to support virtual businesses, virtual education, telehealth services and other internet users. The study will analyze the types of technology that may be needed to provide acceptable levels of service in unserved and underserved areas of the county. After several years of opioid litigation, Adams County will be receiving a settlement of \$2,392,983 with an additional share as a litigating county estimated at \$695,000. The Settlements contain injunctive relief provisions governing the opioid marketing, sale, and distribution practices at the heart of the lawsuits.

As a result of an outstanding collaborative effort between Adams County Economic Alliance, Destination Gettysburg, Adams County Planning, Adams County Solicitor's Office and the Adams County Commissioner's Office, the PA Ag Discovery Center may soon be a reality in Adams County. The decision to locate the PA Ag Discovery in Adams County was the result of an extensive site selection process. The Discovery Center Team solicited proposals from four counties in Central-Pennsylvania, and after careful consideration determined that Adams County offered the most cohesive approach and enthusiastic support for bringing the Center to life. The Discovery Center will showcase Pennsylvania's rich agricultural industry and history and cultivate the next generation of farmers through an interactive and fun educational experience. The complex will be open year-round and will be an ideal venue for families with school aged children, field trips, and individuals of all ages interested in an interactive learning experience about Pennsylvania's agricultural history and legacy. The Center will be a multi-building complex that will immerse visitors in a replica farming community. It will feature dedicated spaces to learn about crops, dairy cows, poultry, and other livestock, as well as environmental education, child play, events, retail sales and outdoor experiences. This complex will be a showcase for Pennsylvania Ag, provide educational benefits especially to youth, and be a complement to Adams County's Ag/Tourism economy.

Fifty-eight acres along the pristine waters of the Conewago Creek were officially transferred to the PA Fish & Boat Commission after a two-year project to purchase the land from Knouse Foods. Representatives from the Adams County Commissioners, Adams County Office of Planning and Development, the Watershed Alliance of Adams County, Adams County Trout Unlimited (ACTU), the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, and the Land Conservancy of Adams County developed a plan in cooperation with Knouse Foods to buy the 58 acres with various grant funding and private donations. The ACTU and the PA Fish and Boat Commission entered a lease agreement for the management of the property. ACTU will act as steward, maintaining fly-fishing access and developing other passive recreational opportunities within the wooded acreage. This project benefits the citizens of Adams County and Conewago Creek Watershed.

In the past 2 years the cost of administering elections has spiked considerably with election regulations and mail in ballots. Equipment, personnel, and material costs have all increased dramatically. The Commissioners approved The Election Integrity Act, through the PA. Department of Community & Economic Development, which allocates \$365,842 in grant funding to Adams County for eligible election costs.

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County Narrative (*continued*)

The 2022 General Election was conducted in a secure manner that assured the integrity of the election process. The extensive planning, preparation, and execution of the election, by county administration, staff, and poll workers, resulted in an election day that was secure and efficient. The Adams County Board of Elections and the Elections Office were efficient and transparent. The County saw an unusually large voter turn-out for the 2022 general election, which was a non-presidential election. Approximately 65% of registered voters cast their ballot. As a comparison, highly contested presidential elections have registered 70%. Recognition must be given to the many dedicated poll workers that provide their valuable time to assure we can exercise one of our most coveted and fundamental rights. The election in Adams County shows that good planning, dedication, and execution for this inalienable right assures a secure and efficient election process.

Adams County was awarded the Pennsylvania 2022 Road & Bridge Safety Award for rehabilitation of the Rhodes Mill Bridge over Middle Creek on Shorbs Mill Road. The bridge is an historic engineering gem that also serves a very important function since the other egress is unpassable for residents during flooding. Built in 1905, the bridge is an historic, single span, Warren pony truss bridge with concrete and stone masonry abutments.

In 2022, Adams County took possession of Oak Lawn Cemetery from Cumberland Township in preparation for a 501 (c) (13) Board being formed to guide and sustain the cemetery in the future.

Adams County rolled out Multi-Factor Authentication in 2022 with the purpose to improve system access security by adding an additional authentication step when logging into County systems.

In order to stimulate economic development, the County passed Ordinance #2 of 2022, agreeing with Oxford Township and the Conewago Valley School District, to provide for a Tax Exemption for certain improvements to designated deteriorated areas at the site of the former Alwine Brick Company. Beside extensive acreage, the site has strategic access to a rail spur.

The Adams County Adult Correctional Complex (ACACC) recently received “a perfect score” from the National Commission on Correctional Health Care audit. The ACACC met all 37 standards that covered a three-year audit period. The standards address governance and administration, health promotion, safety, and disease prevention; personnel and training; ancillary health care services; patient care and treatment; special needs and services, and medical-legal issues.

To reduce storage space, improve customer service and enhance information retrieval, Adams County row offices are in the process of increasing the digitizing of county records. The Clerk of Courts eliminated the need for 19,951 paper case files.

Five Adams County farms were approved for preservation and when completed the County will have preserved almost 1,000 acres of farmland in perpetuity, utilizing State, Federal, County and Township funds. The County is not only preserving the economic value of these farms, but the viewshed as well.

To respond to the public health and economic crises caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Adams County Board of Commissioners created the Adams Response and Recovery Fund (ARRF) to provide grant funding for large-scale, high-impact projects that maximize the number of beneficiaries.

Courthouse improvements in the Register and Recorders and Clerk of Courts have been performed by the internal staff of Building / Maintenance and IT, which has saved the County considerable money. These

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County Narrative (*continued*)

upgrades are an improvement operationally and maximize efficiencies while enhancing service to the community.

We expect with good fiscal management and vision combined with reasonable economic conditions, that Adams County government will continue a very steady and positive path. The 2023 Adams County Budget meets the County's budget objectives and addresses the major policy issues that face the County. As the County enters a new year and looks forward to future years, we will continue to strive to meet the needs of Adams County's citizens efficiently and effectively