

## 2022 ADAMS COUNTY BUDGET



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 2022 is \$76,112,521. In total the revenue is projected at \$76,112,521 with expenses of \$75,834,321. Fortunately, through good fiscal practices of the Commissioners the County is in a good position to utilize reserves of \$4,790,934 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.

In 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to change the way systems were required to operate. These changes have impacted every department and every service that the County provides and, in many instances, increased operating costs. A substantial portion of services are funded with state and federal dollars, which we will continue to monitor closely as those funds have not matched increases in expenses.

Adams County is in a stable, yet changeable short-term financial situation as we enter the 2022 budget cycle. Stable in the sense that current revenues and expenses are in rough equilibrium and changeable due to the higher than usual number of variables that exist due to the impacts of COVID-19 on revenues, the increased direct and indirect costs associated with the pandemic, and the unpredictable CARES Act

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monies sent to the County. The County continues to face the structural imbalance between natural growth in the real estate market and other revenues versus the increasing expenditures related to continued pressures to provide additional services and other increasing costs.

The 2021 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 total voter turnout was 31.02% from a registered voter pool of 70,519, which is an increase of turnout from the last Non-Presidential General Election in 2019 of 26.29%. Absentee/Mail-in ballots total was 6,037. 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.

Regarding Long-term Planning, the County identified internet connectivity as a critical infrastructure to promote economic development, not only to sustain the county's existing employment and tax base, but also to attract new employers to the county and encourage entrepreneurship. Internet connectivity is also a key factor in the well-being of citizens of Adams County in every aspect of their lives, including but not limited to education, health care, recreation, and communications. On November 4th, 2021, the Commissioners passed a Broadband resolution. The Resolution established an Adams County Broadband Task Force whose vision is a connected community in which all sectors of the community have access and ability to utilize dependable, high speed affordable broadband services. The Task Force is charged by the Board with developing a proposed strategy to address the development and implementation of an affordable countywide broadband network.

Over the past year Adams County worked in partnership with WellSpan Health to meet the community's needs in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Adams County provided site space at the Department of Emergency Services for drive thru COVID-19 testing and vaccination administration.

Adams County continues to examine methods to increase efficiency and at the same time increase convenience to the local community. This past year the Adams County Treasurer's Office launched an "Online Dog Licensing Program," which allows for the purchasing of annual dog licenses online. This new licensing system replaced one that was in place since 1994. Not only do these types of modifications assist the public they also provide tools and resources for Adams County to streamline in office processes. This program has many benefits including 24-7 licensing for pet owners, providing 24-7 availability of information to animal control, dog wardens, permitting the Adams County SPCA and the Adams County 911 Center to obtain information needed when the courthouse is closed. The system offers a higher level of efficiency in data processing and an easier format in the research of requested information.

Adams County partnered with Kenyon Energy for the installation of a roof-mounted solar array on top of the Human Services Building. The practical and code requirements to reinforce the aging roof on the Human Services Building gave the County the perfect opportunity to take its first step towards embracing renewable energy. Kenyon and its partners have been leaders in affordable solar energy for over a decade, installing solar projects for commercial giants like Walmart, Tesla, and Pepsi, along with local municipalities including Shippensburg Borough. Under the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with Kenyon, the County will pay nothing for the installation and maintenance of the roof-mounted solar array and will receive solar-generated energy at a competitive rate of \$0.09/kwh with a 2% annual escalator over a 25-year period. The power generated from the roof-mounted array will substantially reduce the building's carbon footprint. The array itself is a 446 kW DC fixed tilt system with Tier 1 Talesun solar panels, sized to produce all the energy required for the Human Services Building each year. This project

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will harness the same clean solar energy that has helped to make Adams County a premier agricultural environment for generations and will help to preserve the environment for generations to come.

Act 79 went into effect on April 10, 2019. This law includes improvements to Pennsylvania's Protection From Abuse Act and deals primarily with increased safety provisions related to firearms in both Protection From Abuse (23. PA C.S.) and misdemeanor crimes of domestic violence (18 PA. C.S) to help prevent domestic violence. This has caused the seizure and secure storage of weapons to increase dramatically. To meet the demand, in 2021 the Adams County Sheriffs and Building/Maintenance collaborated to expand gun storage in the Sheriff's Office. The project was completed professionally and expeditiously by Building/Maintenance. This is one more example of various County departments collaborating to provide enhanced service to residents.

On June 16, 2021, to assist with Long-term Planning, the Board passed the 10-year capital improvement policy. The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Policy provides the framework and procedures for the development and approval of the Adams County ten-year plan for Capital Improvements. It is a ten-year rolling plan identifying capital projects to be funded during the planning period. The CIP identifies each proposed capital project to be undertaken, the year the project is to begin, the amount of funds expected to be expended in each year of the CIP, the total cost of the project, and identification of the funding source.

In 2021, Adams County took a vacated and deteriorating building and re-purposed it for use as a men's recovery house, which is a significant community benefit. Mercy House has been an outstanding collaboration between The Adams County Board of Commissioners, York/Adams MHIDD Health Joinder, community organizations and individuals that made the development of a recovery house possible.

The Hospitality Industry was significantly impacted by COVID in the past year. On Friday, February 5, 2021, Governor Tom Wolf signed into law legislation that set aside \$145 million in funds statewide to aid hospitality industry businesses adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, the program requires counties to establish grant programs for eligible businesses. The Board of Commissioners approved grants recommended by the Adams County Economic Development Corporation to 64 county hospitality businesses. The grants totaled \$1.13M.

Adams County applied for and received \$6,774,933 in Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) funds from the Federal Government through the State. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania received \$569,807,659.70 in total through section 501 of Division N of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, Pub. L. No. 116-260 (Dec. 27, 2020). The Rental and Utility Assistance Grant Program component of Act 1 of 2021, signed into law by Governor Wolf on February 5, 2021. ERAP monies provided families and individuals financial assistance for rent including rent, rental arrears, utilities and home energy costs, utility and home energy costs arrears, and other expenses related to housing incurred due directly or indirectly to COVID-19. Adams County has worked with local community partner, South Central Community Action Program (SCCAP), to manage the eligibility and payment to landlords. This program has been instrumental in helping individuals in the service and hospitality industry be able to get back on their feet and back to work. To date this program has assisted more than 606 local Adams County families with over three million dollars of assistance with past due rent and utilities. The average assistance provided per family was \$4,998 dollars, which rental payments went directly to the landlord. While many other areas have struggled to effectively utilize this money, Adams County has been able to utilize nearly 49% of the funding in the first eight months of the program – the program has an additional 10 months remaining.

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Courthouse improvements in the Register and Recorders office, Sheriffs, and Clerk of Courts have been performed by the internal staff of Building/Maintenance and IT, which has saved the County considerable money. These upgrades are an improvement operationally and maximize efficiencies while enhancing service to the community.

The success the County has had balancing the budget with a .25 mil real estate tax increase can be attributed to slowing the growth in short- and long-term costs, prudent borrowing, savvy debt management and working with staff to improve cost efficiency. 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 2022 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