



# Budget in Brief

## Fiscal Year 2024

### AN OPEN LETTER FROM WEST PALM BEACH MAYOR KEITH A. JAMES

Mayor  
Keith A. James



**City Commission**  
(From Left:)  
Christy Fox  
Christina Lambert  
Joseph Peduzzi  
Cathleen Ward  
Shalonda Warren



**City Administrator**  
Faye W. Johnson

**Assistant City Administrators**  
Armando Fana  
Jose-Luis Rodriguez

**Chief Financial Officer**  
Bridget M. Souffrant

**Budget Office**  
Kyle Roberts  
Rosanna Santana

Dear West Palm Beach neighbor:


I am pleased to share that the City of West Palm Beach has adopted a balanced \$242 million general fund budget for Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24).

The city has continued its positive growth and economic development. This resulted in increased property values which allowed the city to reduce the millage rate for the second year in a row. Specifically, the millage rate was reduced by \$0.0657 from \$8.1965 to \$8.1308 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. Additionally, the annual fire assessment fee remains unchanged for the fourth year in a row at \$100 per residential property. The \$25,000 additional Homestead Exemption for qualifying Seniors also remains in place for a second year, providing an additional well-deserved tax reduction for seniors.

Our city is continuing its commitment to a high quality of life. The approved budget includes a heightened focus on prioritized special events, housing services, public health and safety, safe parks and public spaces for the enjoyment of our residents, visitors and businesses. This budget also includes more funding for roadway repairs, mobility and transportation. It facilitates the creation of a mobility plan to help us become a safer and more walkable city that is accessible to traverse through various modes of transportation.

Our city is also continuing to place a high value on the arts and culture. This budget includes additional funding for enhanced programming on our Waterfront and events in the Lake Pavilion. It also reflects a restructuring of the current positions in the mayor's office to provide a stronger focus on culture, arts and community building. The unique and distinct features of our neighborhoods will become part of our show case. Through the addition of a Chief Marketing Officer, the city's entertainment, recreational and cultural attributes will be prominently promoted as a tourist, leisure and recreational destination.

In addition, the FY24 budget also reflects a significant investment in the city's workforce. Our employees are the lifeblood of the city and critical to maintaining our city's high quality of life. As part of our effort to retain and recruit the best talent, the city completed the next step in updating its employee compensation structure. The plan provides non-public safety employees unprecedented salary market adjustments to rectify the city's historic low salary placement in the market. This is the same action taken by the city in the FY22 budget for Police and Fire.



The following are some of the other programs and services provided in the budget:

- Parks and recreation, including continued youth and adult programming, citywide tree trimming, and enhanced roadway median and mowing,
- Library services and funding for Library digital and hard copy materials,
- Mental health and other services for individuals experiencing homelessness, as well as workforce/affordable housing development incentives.
- Resources to expand community engagement with stakeholders.
- Economic development incentives to attract and retain businesses.
- Educational programming and grants for elementary school sites within the city.
- Entrepreneur training and business grant assistance to small and minority owned businesses.

In other elements of the budget, the Public Utilities Water & Sewer Fund and Stormwater Fund will continue to finance protection of water quality from source to tap and the continued provision of services to valued water customers. As part of the 2020 Parks Bond funds of up to \$30 million, improvements to several of the larger parks and recreational facilities such as Gaines Park, Currie Park, Pleasant City and Howard Park will get underway.

I encourage you to learn more about the budget on the Finance Department's page on the city's website, [wpb.org/finance](http://wpb.org/finance). Copies of the budget are also available upon request through the City Clerk's office.

In closing, I am pleased to report that the city remains financially well positioned and highly attractive to new development and corporate relocations. The property tax revenue and all other sources of funds will continue to be strategically utilized for the benefit of our community. Our dedication to practice sound and conservative financial planning remains steadfast and serves as the cornerstone of our commitment to be judicious and fiscally responsible with the public funds entrusted to us.

I extend my sincere gratitude to City Staff, City Administration and the City Commission for their engagement and hard work to develop a balanced and fiscally responsible annual budget.

The FY24 budget is a representation of the greatness of our city. Yet, there is more to be done. Let us not, however, lose sight of the forward progress that continues to be made day in and day out to make West Palm Beach a community of opportunity for all. It is indeed one of the best cities to live and work. And as a neighbor, I invite you to continue working with us and let's all share in our city's transformative and ongoing success.

Yours in service,



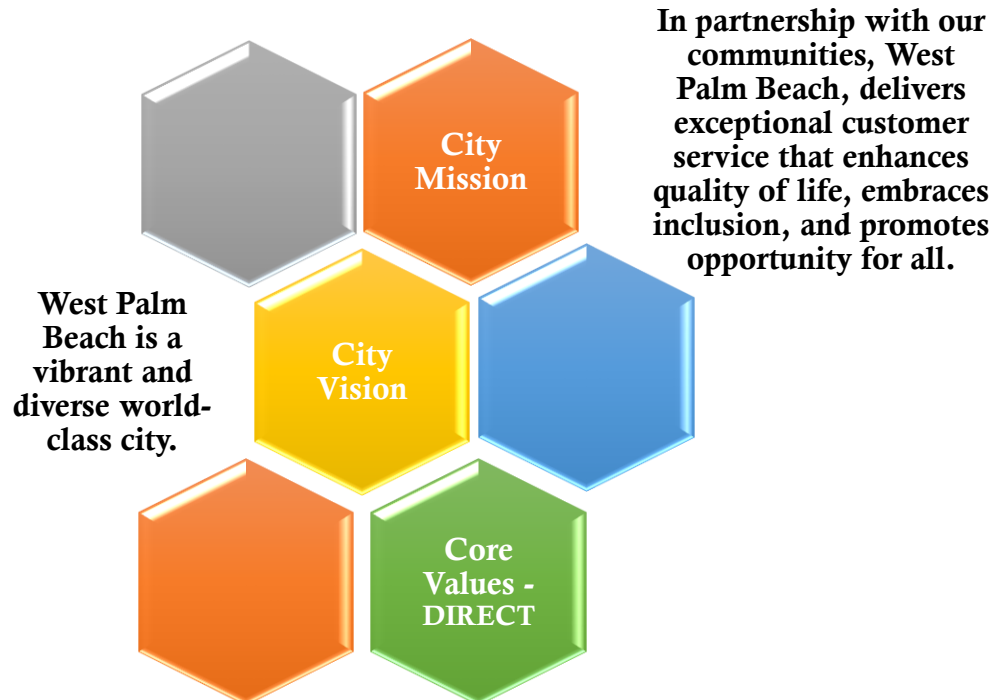
Keith A. James, Mayor

# About the Budget

The City of West Palm Beach's FY24 Budget in Brief is provided to serve as an overview of the City's budget. This document provides a summary of the highlights to the budget, revenues the City expects to receive and planned areas where the money will be spent.

The adopted budget is a deliberate balance of revenues and expenditures prepared in accordance with Florida's statutory Truth in Millage process and best serves the City's prioritization for provision of core services and commission initiatives. State law requires that the City adopt a balanced budget prior to the beginning of its fiscal year on October 1<sup>st</sup>.

The FY24 budget was developed to assure that fundamental services are appropriately delivered, and programs are maintained at current or higher levels. The budget is a responsible allocation of public resources that maintains the City of West Palm Beach as a safe, attractive and vibrant community for the satisfaction of its residents and visitors.



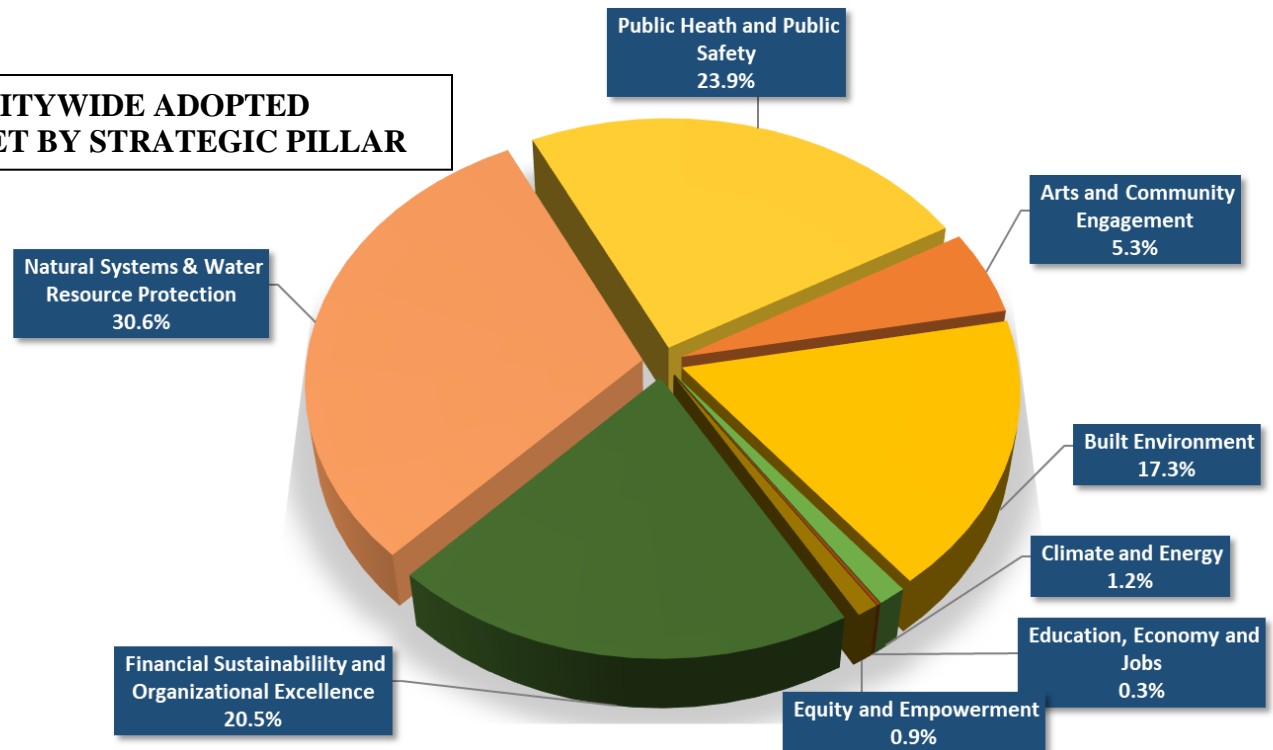
- Diversity:** We find strength in celebrating our differences, promoting mutual Understanding and inclusiveness.
- Integrity:** We demonstrate the ethical principles underlying public service; believing honesty and follow-through support credibility.
- Respect:** We treat our constituents, stakeholders, and each other with dignity, courtesy and esteem.
- Excellence:** We deliver high-quality services in a friendly manner, based on an understanding of our constituents and their needs.
- Collaboration:** We build partnerships, which ensure our community's success.
- Transparency:** We recognize that openness, accountability and two-way communication makes mutual trust possible and invites participation.

# Strategic Pillars for Success

The Mayor and City Commission have designated eight strategic pillars as the foundation for future budgeting and resource allocation. Seven of the pillars align with the tenets of the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for cities and communities. An eighth pillar was added to emphasize high performance and financial sustainability in the delivery of city services. The pillars reflect the Mayor and Commission's policy direction to city staff based on community needs.

<b>Arts, Neighborhoods &amp; Community Engagement</b>	• A range of arts and cultural resources that encourage community participation.
<b>Built Environment</b>	• Adopt an integrated approach toward urban planning through mixed-use development, efficient transportation and better connectivity
<b>Climate &amp; Energy</b>	• Reduce climate impacts through adaptation and mitigation efforts and increase resource efficiency.
<b>Education, Economy &amp; Jobs</b>	• Create equitably shared prosperity and access to quality jobs.
<b>Equity &amp; Empowerment</b>	• Equitably address the needs of all people.
<b>Natural Systems</b>	• Cities depends on nature and ecosystem services to sustain and enhance the quality of life.
<b>Public Health &amp; Public Safety</b>	• Strengthen communities to be healthy, resilient and safe places for residents and businesses.
<b>Financial Sustainability &amp; Organizational Excellence</b>	• Ensuring a high performing organization that follows best operational practices and supports the city's financial stability.

**FY24 CITYWIDE ADOPTED BUDGET BY STRATEGIC PILLAR**



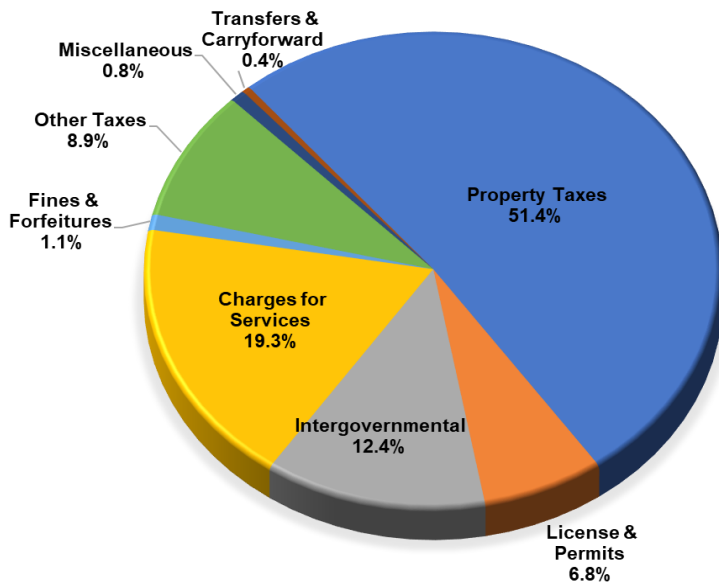
# Where the Money Comes From

The City of West Palm Beach has an approved total Citywide Budget of **\$711,386,685** which is an 8.0% increase over last year's budget. The total citywide budget includes a General Fund budget of **\$242,914,450** which is a 7.8% increase over last year.

The City continues to experience growth and stability in its revenue streams with increasingly new development and new assessed value added to the tax rolls. Property Tax revenue accounts for 51.4% of the General Fund revenue sources. The \$8.1308 adopted millage rate will generate \$124M in FY24.

## FY24 Revenue highlights include:

- + + Property Taxes – increased by 14.3% or \$15.6M
  - Accounts for millage reduction of \$0.0657
- + + Licenses & Permits – increased by 7.8% or \$1.2M
- + + Intergovernmental Revenues – increased by 5.8% or \$1.6M



Revenue Sources	FY23	FY24	\$ Variance 23 vs 24
	Adopted Budget	Adopted Budget	
Property Taxes	109,219,752	124,859,881	15,640,129
License & Permits	15,298,401	16,569,855	1,271,454
Intergovernmental	28,583,186	30,233,532	1,650,346
Charges for Services	43,321,430	43,983,078	661,648
Fines & Forfeitures	2,269,244	2,561,860	292,616
Other Taxes	21,053,800	21,627,000	573,200
Miscellaneous	1,874,560	1,988,540	113,980
Transfers & Carryforward	3,817,369	1,090,704	-2,726,665
<b>Total General Fund Revenues</b>	<b>\$225,437,742</b>	<b>\$242,914,450</b>	<b>\$17,476,708</b>

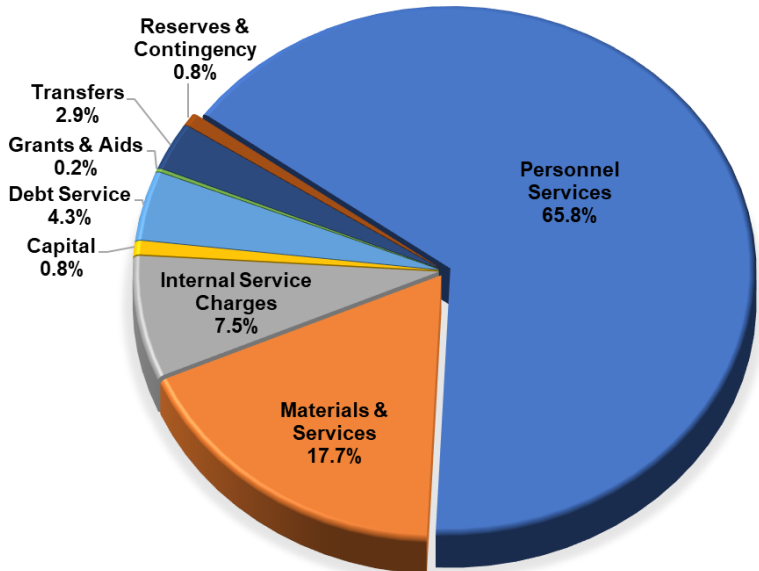


# Where the Money Goes

The FY24 General Fund budget prioritizes essential services for our residents and neighborhoods. It will maintain the overall quality of life for residents, help make our community even safer, and promote continued economic development within our city.

**Highlighted benefits achieved by this balanced budget include:**

- ✚ Maintains all external core services such as police, fire, library, parks and recreation etc.
- ✚ Maintains all internal core services such as fleet, legal, finance, human resources etc.
- ✚ Includes increased funding for vehicle replacements to continue updating the City's fleet.
- ✚ Includes unprecedented funding towards road-paving to augment other funding sources and address additional roadway repairs.
- ✚ Increases funding for contingency in the event of any unforeseen operational expenses.
- ✚ Maintains funding for economic development incentives.
- ✚ Includes funding for Mobility and Transportation planning initiatives.
- ✚ Includes citywide tree trimming services and roadway median mowing.



Expense Category	FY23 Adopted Budget	FY24 Adopted Budget	\$ Variance 23 vs 24
Personnel Services	146,533,234	159,755,330	13,222,096
Materials & Services	38,675,434	43,057,264	4,381,830
Internal Service Charges	16,075,750	18,185,158	2,109,408
Capital	1,750,000	2,054,000	304,000
Debt Service	11,656,000	10,336,500	-1,319,500
Grants & Aids	432,061	460,561	28,500
Transfers	8,061,822	7,114,611	-947,211
Reserves & Contingency	2,253,441	1,951,026	-302,415
<b>Total General Fund Expenses</b>	<b>\$225,437,742</b>	<b>\$242,914,450</b>	<b>\$17,476,708</b>



# Your Property Taxes Explained

The Property Appraiser provides the City’s estimated total assessed taxable value every year by June 1. The City then uses this estimate for budget planning purposes. For the current tax year, the City of West Palm Beach’s assessed taxable value is \$21.1 billion which is a 15.4% growth in value and an increase in tax revenue of \$15.6M over last year. This includes new construction of \$284M that was added to the tax roll.

**MILLAGE RATE REDUCTION**

**\$8.1965** → **\$8.1308**

The City approved a millage reduction of \$0.0657 bringing the operating millage down to \$8.1308 from \$8.1965.

**AD VALOREM TAX CALCULATION**

The millage rate is the ad valorem tax rate levied per \$1,000 of a property’s taxable value. The rate is expressed in mills, which is equal to 0.1% of the taxable value. Each taxing authority adopts a millage rate every year that appears on the property tax bill.

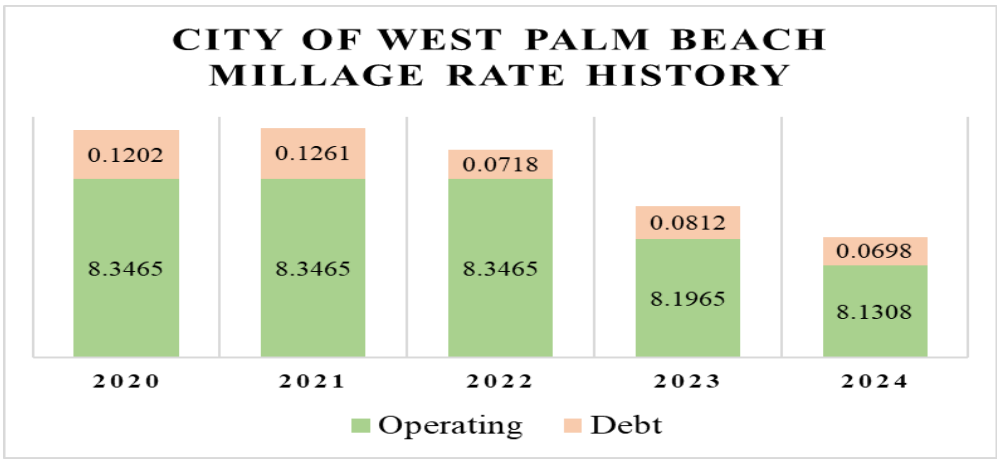
To calculate the tax levy using a given millage rate, the formula is:

**Taxable Value/1,000 X Millage Rate = \$ Ad Valorem Tax**

For example, a West Palm Beach property with an assessed value of \$400,000 and exemptions of \$50,000 has a taxable value of \$350,000

The ad valorem property tax for West Palm Beach would then be:

**\$350,000/1,000 X 8.2006 Mills = \$2,870**



**WEST PALM BEACH BY THE NUMBERS**

**120,932**  
Residents

**48,002**  
Households

**\$56,549**  
Household Income

**57.73**  
Square Miles

Named the “Best Farmers Market” in 2023  
for the third consecutive year



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