

Franklin County Residents' Guide to the 2023 Approved Budget

Service. Progress. Excellence.



Franklin County
**BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS**

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ABOUT FRANKLIN COUNTY

Franklin County is one of the region’s most diverse in socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, and educational attainment. Home to the City of Columbus, which serves as the County seat, Franklin County benefits from a broad base of industries, including trade & logistics, finance, education, healthcare, and government. The Franklin County Board of Commissioners governs in an environment of continual growth and must consider this impact while developing the annual budget.

As Ohio’s most populous County, one of every nine residents in the State of Ohio call Franklin County home. Since 2010, the County’s population has grown by more than 13% to over 1.3 million residents. There is little indication that this trend will slow over the next decade.

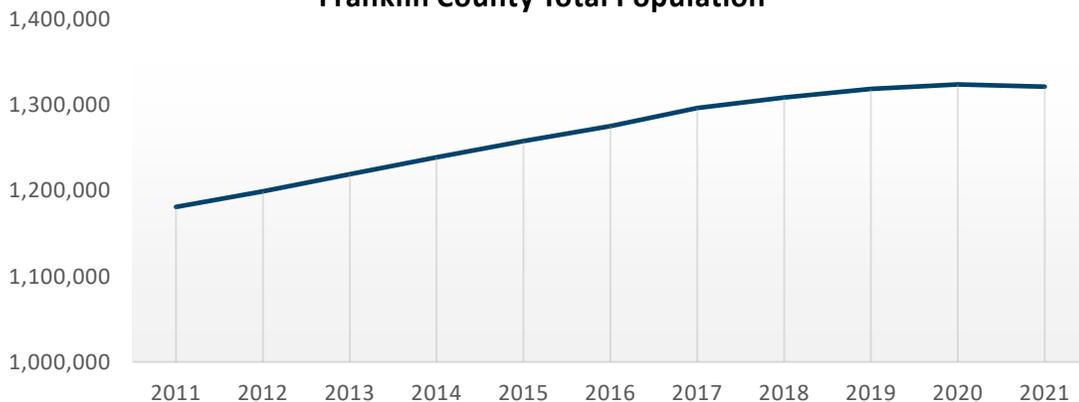
While Franklin County has seen population growth and increasing opportunities, not everyone in the community has benefited. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the poverty rate for all people in Franklin County was 14.2% last year, slightly higher than the 13.5% before the pandemic. Even more distressing are the racial and other disparities—almost one in four African Americans and one in five children in Franklin County are living in poverty.

FRANKLIN COUNTY GOVERNANCE

The Board of Commissioners is Franklin County’s taxing, budgeting, and purchasing authority. While the Commissioners establish the County budget, the independent agencies largely determine how they will spend it. The Commissioners have oversight of departments that provide building and zoning, human services, employment services, economic development and planning, water and sewer services, and environmental services.

Franklin County is governed by a complex organization of elected officials. Executive and fiduciary powers rest with a three-member Board of Commissioners. Eight other elected officials perform Ohio Revised Code mandated administrative functions as leaders of their respective offices. Other elected officials serve on the judiciary and independently appointed boards. An appointed County Administrator runs the County’s daily operations, administers board directives, and prepares the County’s operating and capital budgets with the support of the Office of Management & Budget. In addition, Administration is responsible for leading agency directors, coordinating county entities, and ensuring the Board’s contractual obligations are properly performed.

Franklin County Total Population



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1 Year Estimates

FRANKLIN COUNTY BUDGET PROCESS

January – December

Office of Management & Budget (OMB) analysts monitor adherence to budget & performance targets throughout the year.

May – June

Budget instructions are released. Agencies identify strategic initiatives and operational performance measures, which are linked to the Board of Commissioners' Core Principles, for each program in their Strategic Business Plan. Strategic Business Plans and baseline payroll information are reviewed by OMB staff.

July – September

Budget requests are submitted. OMB staff meets with agencies to review the prior and current year expenditures, and what resources will be needed to accomplish their performance targets in the upcoming year. Briefs are prepared and presented to County Administration.

October – November

County Administration and OMB develop budget recommendations for each program, ensuring the most cost-effective use of available resources. The Recommended Budget is presented to the Board of Commissioners and followed by a series of public meetings in which agencies present their budgets and performance measures.

December

After any revisions are made, the Approved Budget is voted on and adopted by the Board of Commissioners.

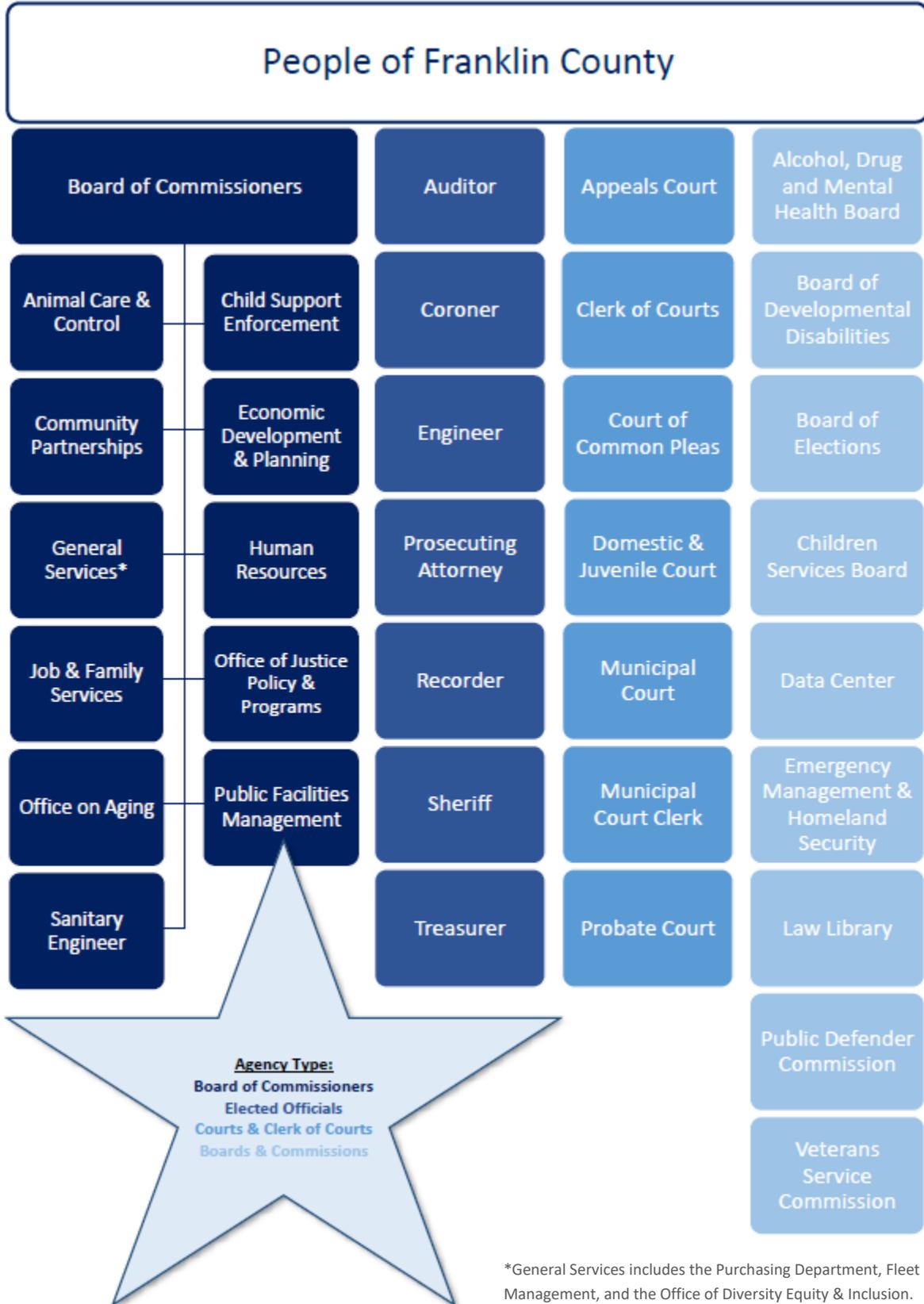
HOW IS THE COUNTY'S BUDGET STRUCTURED?

Budgets are organized by funds. Funds can incorporate one or many programs across one or more agencies. There are 94 funds with appropriations in the 2023 Approved Budget. The General Fund is the chief operating fund for the County and includes all revenues unless they are required to be accounted for in another fund. Special Revenue Funds receive revenues from tax levies, grants, and federal and state social service programs – the largest of which are the Board of Developmental Disabilities Fund, the Children Services Levy Fund, the Public Assistance Fund (Job and Family Services), and the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Levy Fund. Other Funds include Capital Project Funds (which pay for the acquisition or construction of major capital items), Debt Service Funds (which pay the principal and interest on County-issued bonds), and Internal Service & Enterprise Funds (which support business-like activities for internal and external customers).

Budgets are further separated by 35 agencies (see page 3) and divided into programs, which group together the revenues and expenses to provide a particular service or type of service. Line items (object codes) are grouped into roll-up categories with other similar expenses, such as Personal Services, Fringe Benefits, and Materials & Services. Appropriations, or the authority to make expenditures for specified purposes, are made at the fund/agency/roll-up level, which means that an agency has some flexibility in spending across programs to meet changing needs during the year, as well as between the line items within the category. Additions to or transfers between the categories require the approval of the Board of Commissioners.

Additional information regarding the Franklin County 2023 Approved Budget and budget process, including recordings of the public budget hearings, details of all agency budgets and performance measures, and links to agency websites, can be found online at <http://budget.franklincountyohio.gov/>

FRANKLIN COUNTY AGENCIES

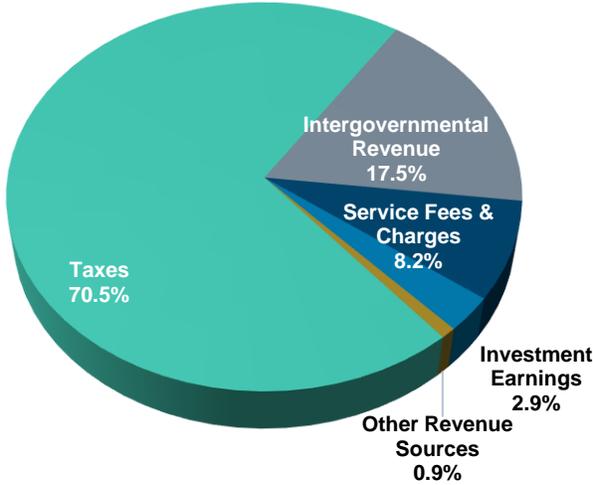


*General Services includes the Purchasing Department, Fleet Management, and the Office of Diversity Equity & Inclusion.

FRANKLIN COUNTY GENERAL FUND

2023 General Fund Approved Budget

Total Revenue by Source
\$598.4 million



Note: Other Revenue Sources includes Licenses & Permits, Fines & Forfeitures, Miscellaneous Revenue, Interfund Revenue, and Other Financing Sources.

General Fund revenue in the 2023 Approved Budget is expected to be \$598.4 million. The main source of revenue is Sales Tax, which comprises nearly 62% of the General Fund revenue. A modest increase in collections is expected in 2023 as strong growth from 2022 is slowed by Federal Reserve rate increases.

Real estate tax collections remained strong during 2022 with additional growth anticipated in 2023.

Intergovernmental revenue includes \$28 million for reimbursement from the State Public Defender's Office. For the 2023 Approved Budget, County agencies and the courts agreed to budget for an 85% reimbursement rate based on historical fluctuations.

HOW IS MY DOLLAR USED?

The 2023 Approved Budget contains \$594.8 million in General Fund Appropriations. General Fund supported services are pictured at right.



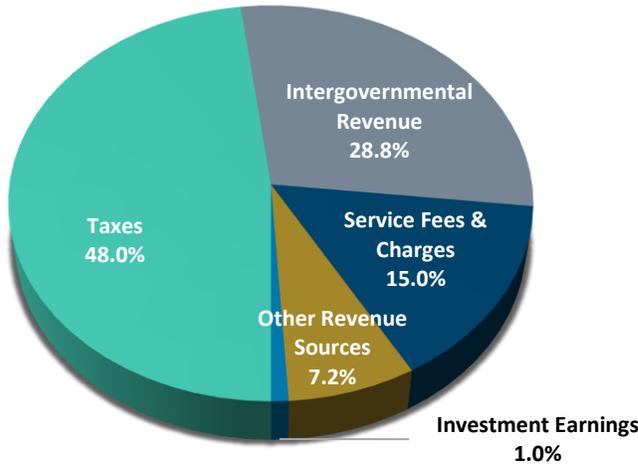
2023 General Fund Expenditures (\$594.8 million)



FRANKLIN COUNTY ALL FUNDS

2023 All Funds Approved Budget

Total Revenue by Source
\$1.79 billion



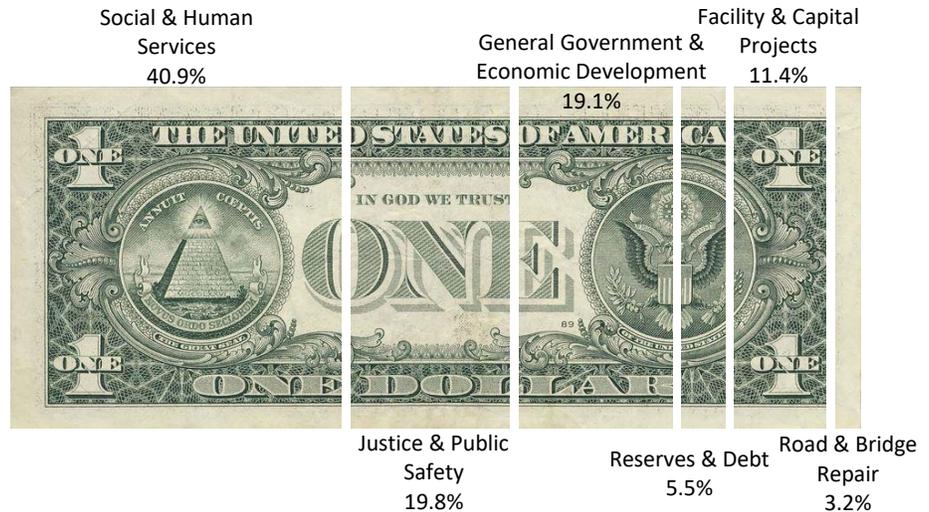
Note: Other Revenue Sources includes Licenses & Permits, Fines & Forfeitures, Miscellaneous Revenue, Interfund Revenue, and Other Financing Sources.

Two major revenue sources in the \$1.79 billion 2023 All Funds Approved Budget are taxes and intergovernmental revenue. Taxes include the County sales tax and real estate tax levies. All levies in Franklin County are assessed on residential, agricultural, commercial, and industrial properties. Current Franklin County property tax levies support services such as mental health and addiction treatment, supportive care for seniors, children services, and the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium. Intergovernmental revenue includes funds from federal, state, and other local governments. Other sources include license and gas taxes as well as revenue from the operation of casinos in Ohio.

2023 All Funds Expenditures (\$2.02 billion)

HOW IS MY DOLLAR USED?

The largest portion of the All Funds Budget is dedicated to Social & Human Services. The total approved budget for all County funds in 2023 is \$2.02 billion. Some of the services provided in the All Funds Budget include:



- County road, bridge, & path maintenance and construction
- Vehicle and watercraft title issuance and management
- Dog Shelter & Adoption Center operation

- Services for seniors & residents with developmental disabilities
- Mental health and substance use disorder treatment
- Foster care system, child welfare & child support enforcement

SERVING, SUPPORTING, AND UPLIFTING ALL RESIDENTS

In 2022, the Board of Commissioners continued to align resources with its six core principles, supporting activities that enact the recommendations in the [Rise Together Blueprint](#) to combat poverty in Franklin County. The 2023 Approved Budget invests in the following efforts:



- **Supporting Families** – The Family Stabilization Unit (FSU) launched in 2020 to help stabilize families by streamlining access to resources from Health and Human Service agencies. To date, the FSU has connected 1,474 residents with a variety of services including housing, health, education, and employment. In 2022, the County enhanced outreach to residents via a mobile unit. In 2023, mobile efforts will be increased to meet demand by adding two units.
- **Strengthening the Early Learning System** – In 2022, the Commissioners committed to investing \$22 million over two years to implement [Franklin County RISE](#) in partnership with the City of Columbus and Action for Children. This multi-point approach seeks to improve the quality, accessibility, and affordability of child care by offering support and incentives for families, providers, and teachers. The 2023 approved budget includes \$13 million for this endeavor.
- **Investing in Workforce Training** – The 2023 Approved Budget continues support for the County’s premier workforce training programs, Building Futures and Driving Futures. These programs continue to change lives in Franklin County and beyond, as other counties take action to adopt similar training programs. The County continues to launch innovative programs including those described below.

Tech Women of Color

Tech Women of Color is a 15-week program that offers technical skills training, executive mentoring, financial coaching and more. Participants graduate with industry-recognized credentials – ready to compete for high-paying, in-demand technology jobs.

County Futures

County Futures is a community outreach and job training program designed to recruit and assist individuals seeking employment in good jobs with Franklin County. Participants receive career readiness training, such as financial literacy, basic computer skills, and leadership development.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The 2023 Approved Budget includes the final allocation of grant funding to support the Mid-Ohio Food Collective’s warehouse expansion project. This project is supported by the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund authorized by the American Rescue Plan. The Food Collective is in the process of building a 19,000 square-foot addition to its existing warehouse roughly doubling their current storage and picking locations. In addition, the Mid-Ohio Food Collective was awarded a \$2.5 million grant for emergency food needs and support of the local food system infrastructure across Franklin County.



COLLABORATIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

INVESTMENTS IN CENTRAL OHIO

The 2023 Approved Budget includes \$2.8 million for Experience Columbus to support the travel and tourism industry in Franklin County. Visitors make 42.7 million trips to Greater Columbus annually, spending \$6.6 billion and supporting nearly 75,000 jobs. Part of the funding will be used to promote 2023 events such as the Professional Convention Management Association Convening Leaders Conference and the United States Conference of Mayors Annual Meeting.



Housing

Franklin County continues to support affordable housing and rental assistance efforts.



EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE

Franklin County has leveraged Federal Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) programs to help a record number of families avoid eviction and homelessness. Using ERA1 and ERA2 allocations, the County helped approximately 6,500 households keep their homes. The County has requested reallocated unspent funds from other communities to continue assisting Franklin County Residents.

Magnet Funds dedicated to affordable housing have already made a significant impact in the community. Within three years, Franklin County has already met its 10-year goal to create 2,050 units of affordable housing. Efforts will continue in 2023 to increase the availability of affordable housing including homes developed in partnership with the Central Ohio Community Land Trust.



AFFORDABLE HOUSING

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

ENSURING WATER QUALITY

The 2023 Approved Budget includes funding for water quality initiatives as described below.



Water Quality Partnership – The Kanawha/Rosslyn Sewer Project will provide the infrastructure to remedy the last remaining pocket of pollution identified by the Water Quality Partnership. The engineering and construction of the Kanawha/Rosslyn sanitary sewer system impacts 114 users and stands to provide greater protection for Franklin County’s water quality.

Water Quality Enforcement – The 2023 Approved budget includes funding to meet increased workload due to expanded stormwater projects and reporting requirements. This includes support for Franklin County Public Health and the Franklin Soil & Water Conservation District for enforcement activities as well as two additional positions in the Stormwater Management Fund.

RACIAL EQUITY

In 2020, the Commissioners established racial equity as a core principle with a pledge to create and sustain an organizational culture that applies equity principles both internally and externally. The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI) was created to lead these efforts.



Franklin County
Board of Commissioners
**OFFICE OF DIVERSITY
EQUITY & INCLUSION**

ODEI Core Actions



The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, working with the Racial Equity Council comprising representatives from each county agency that falls under the Board of Commissioners, has developed an equity framework that will be delivered to Franklin County employees through agency engagement, operations, and resource groups. The Office will also continue its efforts in supplier diversity by expanding access and opportunity to connect, educate, and bring vendors to Franklin County. In order to implement this work in 2023, the Approved Budget includes a \$5 million increase from last year's budget.

SMART JUSTICE & COMMUNITY SAFETY

SAFE AND PRODUCTIVE TRANSITIONS

Franklin County launched the Rapid Resource Center (RRC) in 2021 at the Jackson Pike jail facility to help justice-involved individuals complete safe and productive transitions back to their normal lives. In 2022, the RRC expanded its hours to be available 24/7, making services accessible to residents released after business hours.



The RRC continues to enhance services by building partnerships. Residents indicating homelessness can access respite housing through the RRC Bridge Program and a partnership with COTA provides transportation for recently-released individuals and their families.

SUPPORTING COURT OPERATIONS

The 2023 Approved Budget includes support for updating reimbursement rates such as those for indigent defense, jury service, and counsel in psychiatric cases heard in Probate Court. Many of these rates had not been updated in over 20 years. The update will better compensate legal representatives and jurors for their service.

SUSTAINABLE GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

Despite challenges such as inflation, supply chain disruptions, and increased employee healthcare costs, the County remains in a fiscally strong and sustainable position due to careful planning and federal support. Beginning with the CARES Act in 2020 and the subsequent support provided from the American Rescue Plan, the County has avoided depleting cash reserves while preserving service levels in critical health and human services agencies. The funding from the American Rescue Plan also allows for the County to meet its targeted reserve levels throughout its long-term financial forecast.

The 2023 Approved Budget includes a projected General Fund ending cash balance of 43% of the total 2023 Expenditures. This keeps the cash balance among the highest levels of other counties rated triple-A by Moody's and Standard & Poor's.

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND ALIGNMENT

The County made strides to improve operations and align policies with the Board of Commissioner's Core Principles.

- **Realizing Efficiencies in Payroll Processing** – Since the implementation of Kronos, a unified Human Resource Information System, the County has begun centralizing the payroll function within the Department of Human Resources. Previously, each agency managed its own payroll tasks. Centralization will ensure consistent application of policies across Board of Commissioner agencies, ease implementation of new initiatives, and allow better internal controls, integrity measures, and data analysis. The Human Resources Department has assumed payroll for ten agencies and will take on the remaining agencies during 2023.
- **Aligning Policies with Values** – For 2023, the Human Resources Department has planned a comprehensive review of the Board of Commissioners Employee Handbook in partnership with the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and consultant Raising the Bar. The review will utilize a DEI lens to ensure County policies and procedures are consistent with stated values and intentions.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT & WELLNESS

The 2023 Approved Budget includes several initiatives to support employee wellness and improve engagement including:

COTA Downtown C-Pass Program

Professional Development Opportunities

Wellness Events & Challenges

- A reserve of 3.0% for non-bargaining pay increases and an additional 1.25% reserve for to provide tenure adjustments in the second half of the year.
- An 8% increase for the cost of employee healthcare due to increases in the national trend.



A Message from the County Administrator

I am pleased to present to the residents of Franklin County the 2023 People’s Guide to the 2023 Approved Budget. The budget places Franklin County on the path to ensuring that every resident’s needs are met on the fundamental social, wellness, economic, and environmental levels. As a result of the Board of Commissioners’ vision and actions, the 2023 Approved Budget maintains the County’s strong financial position while providing for innovative programming to enable all residents to share in the progress and growth of our community.

Every resident, every day.

County Administrator

Kenneth N. Wilson

Deputy Administrators

Joy Bivens

Erik J. Janas

Kris Long

*“It always seems impossible
until it is done.”*

-Nelson Mandela

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