



Lake County, Florida

**POPULAR
ANNUAL FINANCIAL
REPORT**

Fiscal Year Ended September 30, 2021



Government Finance Officers Association

**Award for
Outstanding
Achievement in
Popular Annual
Financial Reporting**

Presented to

Lake County

Florida

For its Annual Financial Report
for the Fiscal Year Ended

September 30, 2020

Christopher P. Morill

Executive Director/CEO

The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) has given the Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting to Lake County, Florida for its Popular Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2020. The Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting is a prestigious national award recognizing conformance with the highest standards for preparation of state and local government popular reports.

In order to receive an Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting, a government unit must publish a Popular Annual Financial Report whose contents conform to program standards of creativity, presentation, understandability and reader appeal.

An Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting is valid for a period of one year only. We believe our current report continues to conform to the Popular Annual Financial Reporting requirements, and we are submitting it to GFOA.



A MESSAGE FROM

Gary J. Cooney

Lake County Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller

To the Citizens, Residents, and Friends of Lake County:

I am pleased to provide you with the Lake County, Florida Popular Annual Financial Report (Popular Report) for the Fiscal Year Ended September 30, 2021.

The information in this report is derived from the Lake County, Florida Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) for the Fiscal Year Ended September 30, 2021. The ACFR consists of over 200 pages of detailed financial statements, notes, schedules, and reports. The Popular Report presents the County's Fiscal Year 2020/2021 financial activity in a simplified, easier to read version than the ACFR. Both reports are posted on the Lake County Clerk's website, www.LakeCountyClerk.org (under "RECORDS SEARCH"), and on the County's website, www.LakeCountyFL.gov (under "Most Requested"). They are also available at the Clerk's Finance Department at 315 W. Main St., Tavares.



This Popular Report presents the financial information of all County government operations, including the Board of County Commissioners, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller, Property Appraiser, Sheriff, Supervisor of Elections, and Tax Collector. Since the Popular Report contains simplified information, it does not conform to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles for governmental entities, as does the ACFR.

I hope that you find this report easy to read, interesting, and informative.

Sincerely,

Gary J. Cooney

Lake County Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller

LAKE COUNTY

At a Glance

315 W. Main St. • P.O. Box 7800 • Tavares, FL 32778-7800

(352) 343-9800 • www.LakeCountyFL.gov



County Annual Budget

\$503 million, FY 2020/2021



Debt

\$301 outstanding debt per capita in 2020



Income

\$46,563 personal income per capita and \$55,792 median household income in 2020



School Enrollment

43,848 students enrolled in 2021



Housing

\$202,500 the median home price in 2020



Unemployment

4.3% in 2021



Population

With 400,142 residents in 2021, Lake is the 17th most populated county in the state, with a median age of 47.

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ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) provides an overview of the areas of responsibility and the operations of Lake County's Board of County Commissioners and the five Constitutional Officers: Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller, Property Appraiser, Supervisor of Elections, Sheriff, and Tax Collector. This information is summarized and is not prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

The financial information does not substitute for the County's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). The ACFR outlines the County's financial position and operating activities for the year in detail and in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles. The ACFR is audited by the County's external auditors.

Within this report, pages 6 through 13 reflect the sources and uses of County funds within governmental activities and page 14 represents revenues and expenses of business-type activities.

Governmental activities include most of the basic services offered to citizens, including tax assessment and collections, fire and law enforcement protection, judicial services, civil emergency services, construction and maintenance of highways, streets and other infrastructure, economic development, social and human services, and cultural and recreational services. Property taxes, intergovernmental revenues, and various user fees finance these operations. Business-type activities are limited to the landfill operation.



LAKE COUNTY

Then and Now

In May 1887, the Florida Legislature created Lake County. It is located in the center of the state approximately 65 miles from the east and west coasts at the northwestern edge of central Florida. It was carved from Orange and Sumter counties, and was named for its more than 250 named lakes and 1,735 bodies of water. Early industry was agriculture based, with farm crops, citrus, lumber, and turpentine as mainstays. Lake County was known worldwide for its record crops of tomatoes, watermelon, ferns, and, of course, citrus. All of this to some degree relied on the weather. Big freezes killed crops and citrus, with many growers moving south after a series of freezes in the 1980's.

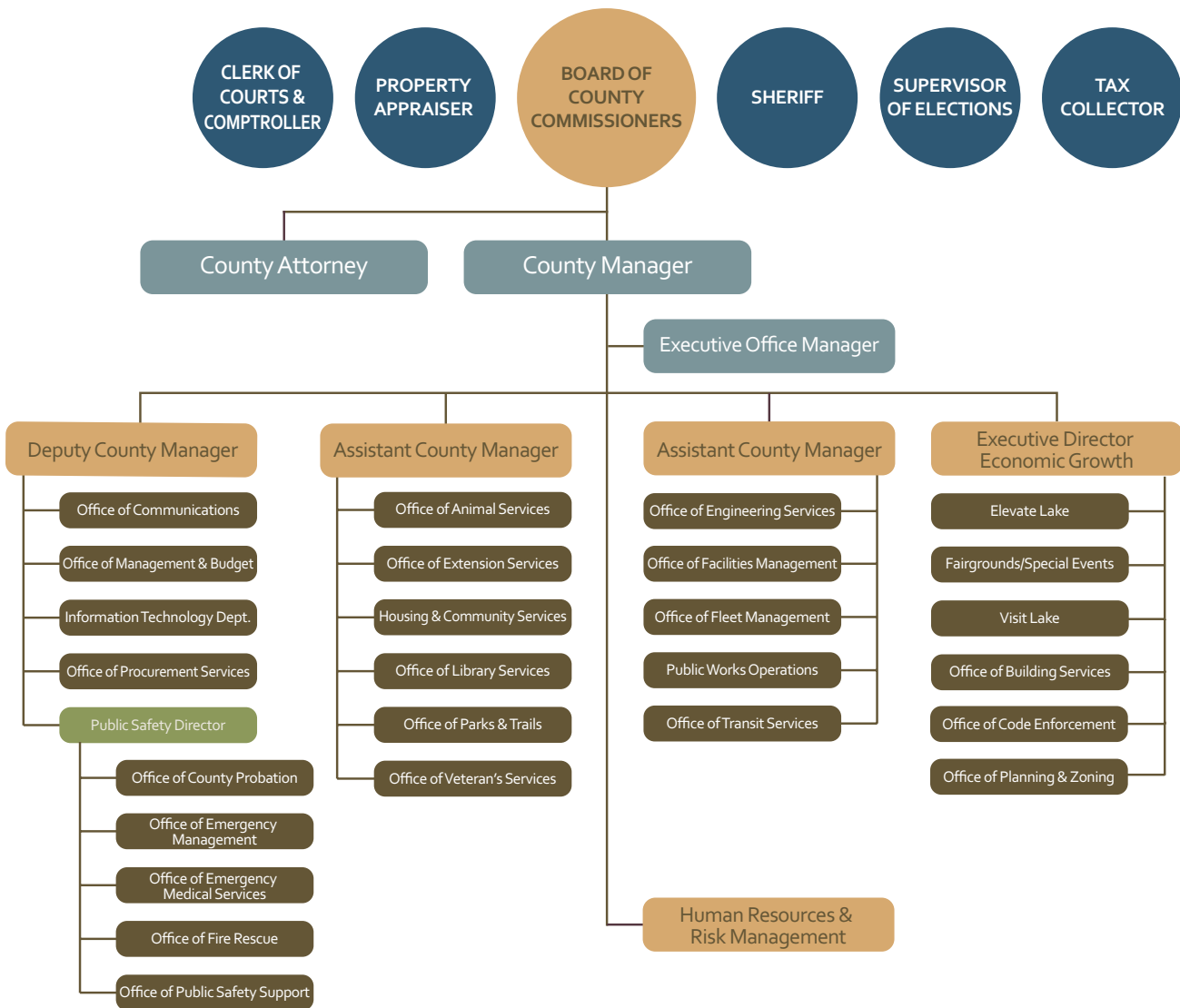
The land previously used for agriculture began being used for residential development, resulting in the growth of the County and its economy. The current population of Lake County is 400,142. The County is known for its beautiful lakes, parks, and trails, which support the County's economy and tourism industry. The unemployment rate decreased in the current year from 7.4% to 4.3%. Property values continued to trend upward, increasing approximately 9% in 2021. With its rich and diverse history, Lake County today, as in the past, is a pleasant place to live and work.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Lake County, Florida



CITIZENS OF LAKE COUNTY



PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

Board of County Commissioners



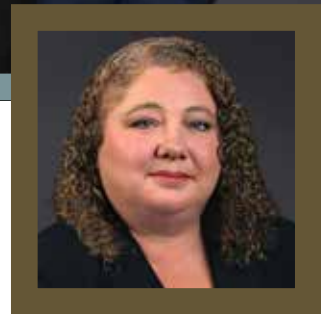
(Pictured left to right: Doug Shields - District 1, Leslie Campione - District 4, Josh Blake - District 5, Sean Parks - District 2, Kirby Smith - District 3)

Lake County is served by a Board of County Commissioners representing five districts in the County. Elected by the County as a whole, each commissioner serves a four-year term. Elections for odd-numbered districts coincide with the elections for presidential election, while those for even-numbered districts coincide with the gubernatorial election.

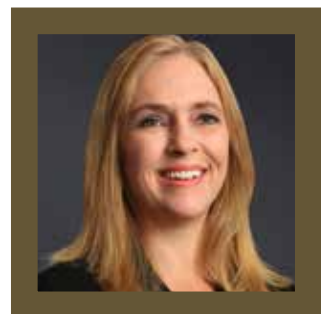
The Board of County Commissioners is the legislative branch of County government. Individual Commissioners are both lawmaking officers and fiscal representatives of the County. The County Manager and County Attorney are appointed by the Commissioners to oversee daily operations, personnel, and legal matters.

The Commissioners appoint citizens to a variety of committees. Vacancies on these advisory boards are posted as the terms expire. Those interested in serving go through an application and selection process.

The Board normally meets in regular session three times monthly at 9 a.m. on Tuesday. In addition, the Board meets in specially called sessions whenever necessary. Minutes are recorded of all Commission meetings, and made a part of the record.



County Manager
Jennifer Barker



County Attorney
Melanie Marsh

CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS



Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller: Gary J. Cooney

www.LakeCountyClerk.org | (352) 742-4100

The Clerk of the Circuit Court is an elected office established by the Florida Constitution. The duties include Clerk of the Circuit and County Courts, County Comptroller, Treasurer, and Custodian of County Funds, County Auditor, County Recorder, and Ex-Officio Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners.



Property Appraiser: Carey Baker

www.LakeCoPropAppr.com | (352) 253-2150

The Lake County Property Appraiser's function is to inventory and assess all real estate and tangible personal property in the county for ad valorem purposes. Florida law requires the Property Appraiser to update the values on these records annually.



Sheriff: Peyton C. Grinnell

www.LCSO.org | (352) 343-2101

The Sheriff is responsible for law enforcement and the protection of life and property in Lake County, for the welfare and safekeeping of the inmates incarcerated in the Lake County Jail, and for security and order in the Circuit and County Courts.



Supervisor of Elections: Alan Hays

www.LakeVotes.com | (352) 343-9734

The Supervisor of Elections is responsible for preparing for and conducting all county, state, and federal elections held in Lake County. The office maintains records for all registered voters in the county, qualifies all candidates, and monitors all financial reports required from candidates for office.



Tax Collector: David W. Jordan

www.LakeTax.com | (352) 343-9602

The Tax Collector's Office is responsible for providing a wide range of services that include the collection and administration of all ad valorem taxes, and certain non-ad valorem assessments. The office also issues driver licenses, motor vehicle and vessel titles and registrations, and collects tourist development taxes, and fees for hunting and fishing licenses.

NET POSITION

of the County

The net position of the County is a useful indicator of the County's financial position.

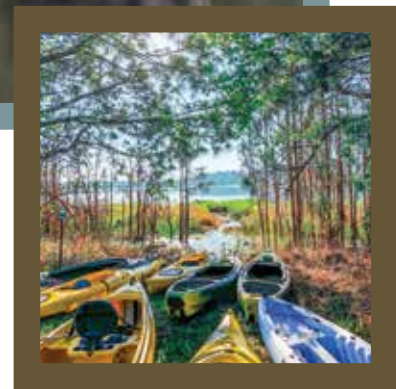
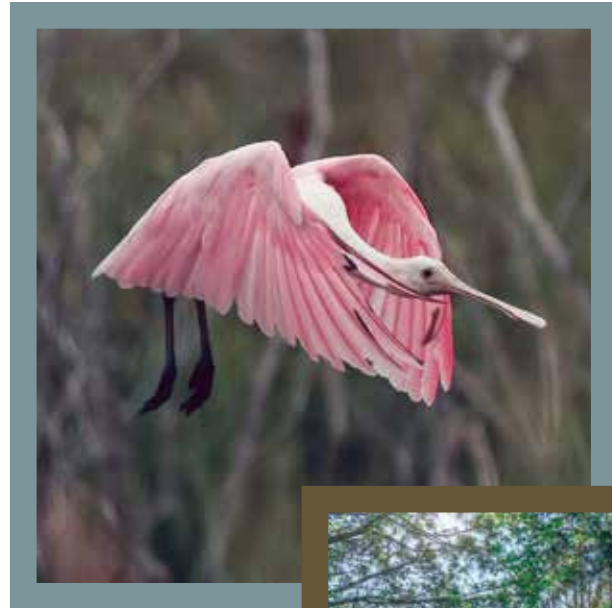
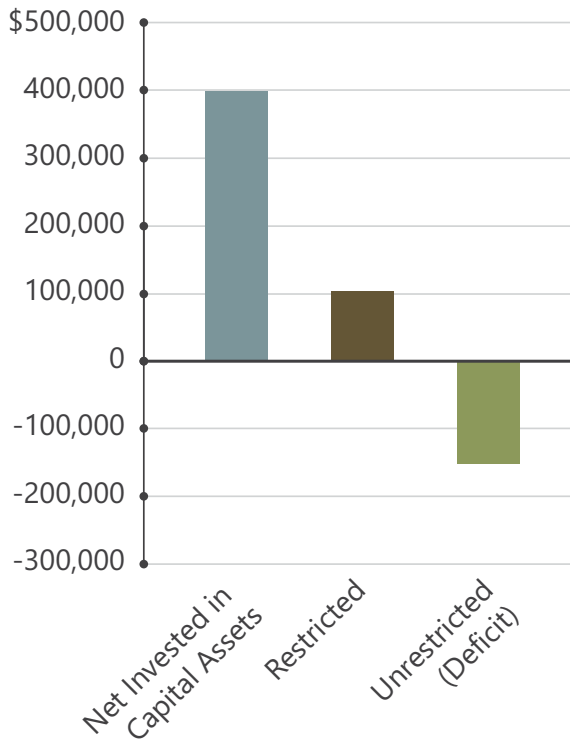
Lake County's Net Position for Government & Business Activities

(in thousands)

	GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES			BUSINESS-TYPE ACTIVITIES			TOTAL		
	2021	2020	2019	2021	2020	2019	2021	2020	2019
Current & other assets	\$250,819	\$161,637	\$138,977	\$5,772	\$5,028	\$4,339	\$256,591	\$166,665	\$143,316
Capital Assets	495,603	497,515	475,646	11,049	11,281	10,848	506,652	508,796	486,494
Total Assets	746,422	659,152	614,623	16,821	16,309	15,187	763,243	675,461	629,810
Deferred Outflows	64,743	84,785	68,774	322	509	432	65,065	85,294	69,206
Long-term liabilities outstanding	220,660	379,684	320,557	7,147	7,625	8,140	227,807	387,309	328,697
Other liabilities	106,347	49,631	34,832	1,563	1,670	1,614	107,910	51,301	36,446
Total Liabilities	327,007	429,315	355,389	8,710	9,295	9,754	335,717	438,610	365,143
Deferred Inflows	137,316	18,054	26,248	718	24	81	138,034	18,078	26,329
NET POSITION:									
Net Investment in capital assets	397,642	394,177	376,030	11,049	11,281	10,847	408,691	405,458	386,877
Restricted	102,453	78,587	73,304	-	-	-	102,453	78,587	73,304
Unrestricted (deficit)	(153,253)	(176,196)	(147,574)	(3,334)	(3,782)	(5,063)	(156,587)	(179,978)	(152,637)
Total Net Position	\$346,842	\$296,568	\$301,760	\$7,715	\$7,499	\$5,784	\$354,557	\$304,067	\$307,544

2021 Net Position

(in thousands)



As of September 30, 2021, Lake County’s assets and deferred outflows were greater than its liabilities and deferred inflows by \$355 million (net position). The largest portion of the County’s net position reflects investment in capital assets (infrastructure, land, buildings, equipment and machinery), less any debt used to acquire those assets that is still outstanding. These capital assets are used to provide services to citizens; consequently, these assets are not available for future spending.

The County’s restricted net position of \$102.4 million is primarily restricted by enabling legislation which restricts the use of such revenue sources as gas taxes, road impact fees, infrastructure sales taxes and fire assessments. The remaining unrestricted net position may be used to meet the County’s ongoing obligations to its citizens and creditors. The amount of unrestricted net position is a net deficit of \$156.5 million. The unrestricted deficit is primarily the result of the County’s proportionate share of the State of Florida Retirement System’s net pension liability.

GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES

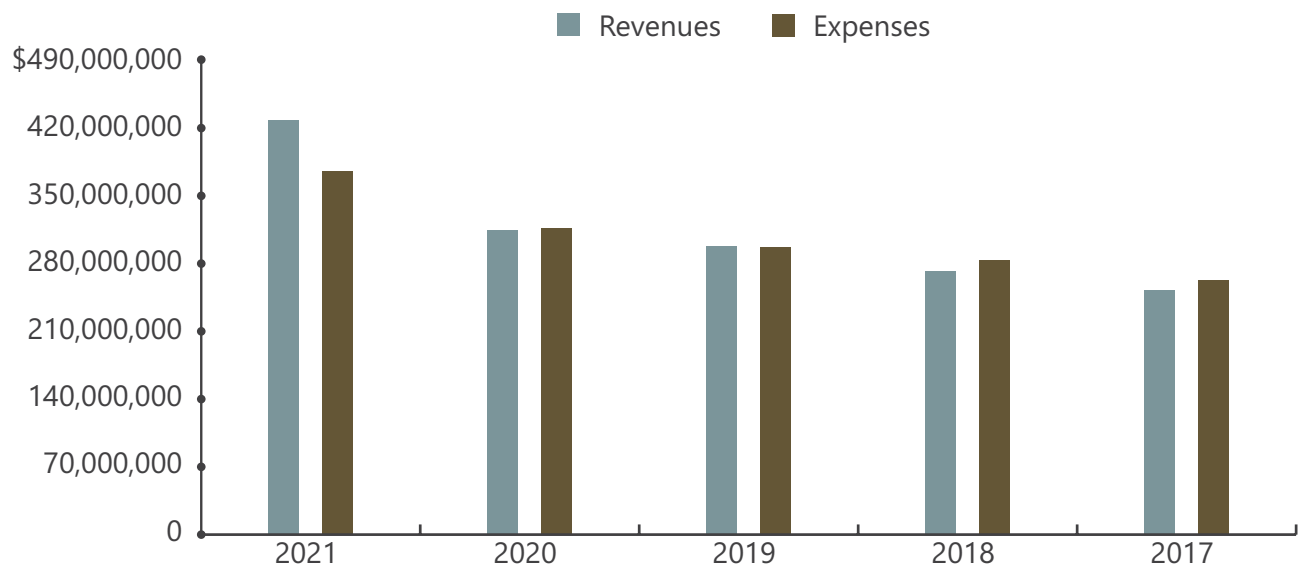
Five-Year Summary of Lake County Governmental-Type Activities

(in thousands)

DESCRIPTION	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Revenues	\$427,688	\$313,946	\$297,461	\$271,717	\$251,984
Expenses	375,402	316,458	296,892	283,216	261,826
Transfers in (out)	(2,012)	(2,680)	(2,492)	(2,213)	(2,113)
Change in Net Position	50,274	(5,192)	(1,923)	(13,712)	(11,955)
Beginning Net Position	296,568	301,760	303,683	330,341	342,326
Restatement for GASB 75 Implementations	-	-	-	(12,976)	-
Ending Net Position	\$346,842	\$296,568	\$301,760	\$303,653	\$330,371

The County's governmental activities change in net position was a \$50 million increase in 2021. This change is partially due to an increase of ad valorem and other taxes of about \$15 million. Additionally, the net pension liability was decreased in 2021, resulting in an overall decline in expenses of approximately \$15 million, which increased net position. There were also increases in grants received related to the pandemic.

Five-Year Comparison - Government Activities Revenues & Expenses



GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES

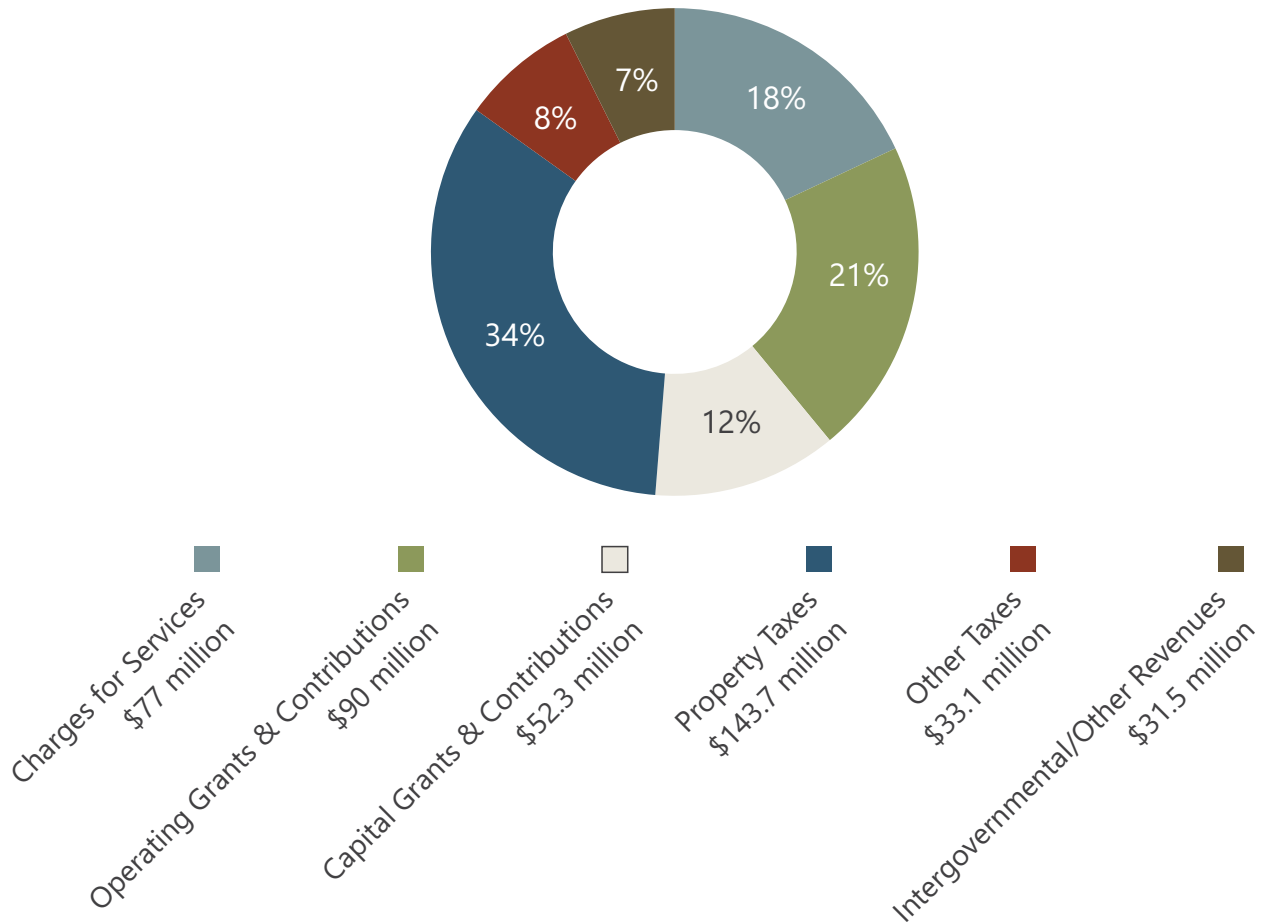
Revenues by Type

Total governmental revenues were \$427.6 million in 2021, and \$313.9 million in 2020.

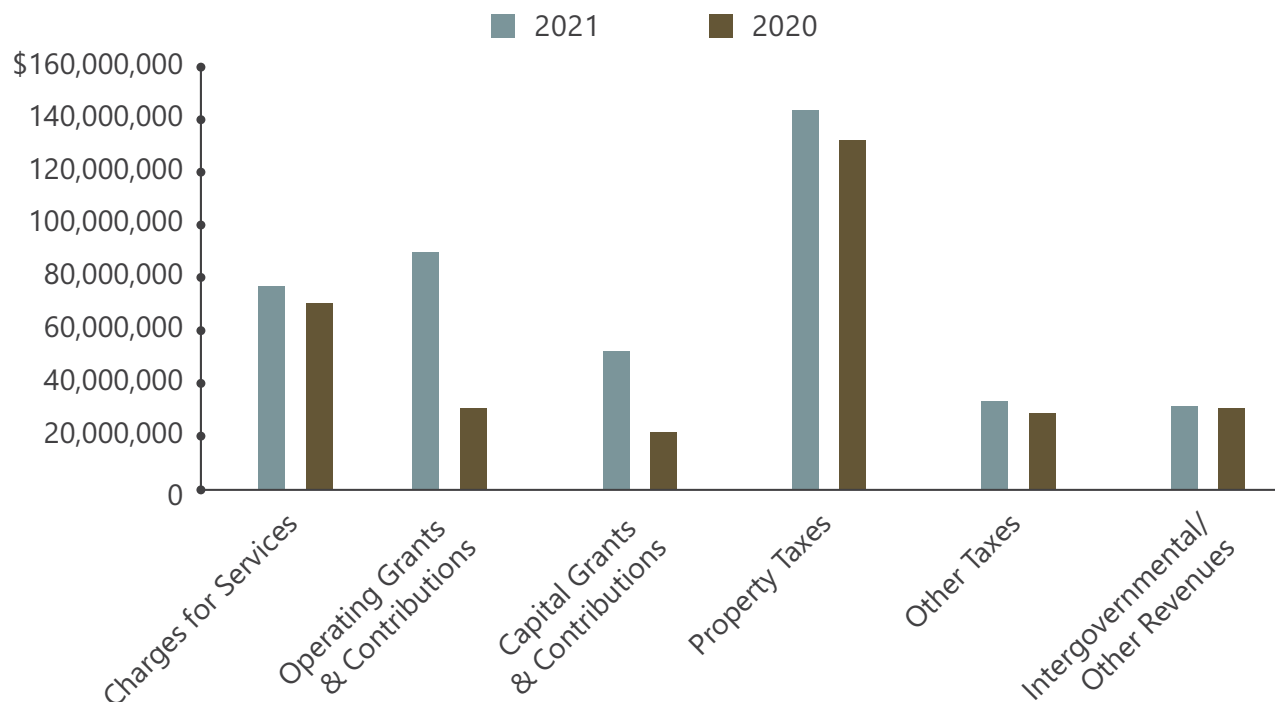
Lake County receives revenues from various sources. Those sources include property taxes, other taxes, intergovernmental transfers, charges for services, operating and capital grants, and investment income.

Property taxes are the largest single source of the County's revenue. Other taxes include sales tax, infrastructure sales tax, gas taxes, and tourist development taxes. Sales taxes are received from the state and can be used for any lawful purpose. A portion of the sales tax is used to pay debt service on the Capital Improvements Revenue Bonds. Gas taxes are collected on fuel sold in the county and are used solely for road construction and maintenance. Infrastructure sales tax is the extra penny approved by voters and is used for infrastructure improvements such as buildings, roads, fire and sheriff vehicles or other capital. Tourist development taxes are collected from rental lodging and used to promote tourism in the County.

FY 2021 Governmental Activities Revenue



Government Activities Revenue by Type - FY 2021 and FY 2020



Program revenues include charges for services, and capital and operating grants. Charges for services include fees collected for services provided by the County and include recording fees, and fees charged to other governments. Capital and operating grants include monies received from state and federal agencies.

Total revenues from governmental activities increased by \$113 million in 2021. The \$11.6 million increase in property taxes and the \$4 million increase in other taxes resulted primarily from an increase in taxable value of about 9%.

Operating grants increased by approximately \$60 million, primarily the result of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) for expenses related to the pandemic, as well as economic assistance to businesses and residents, including emergency rental assistance.

Capital grants increased approximately \$30 million, primarily resulting from the reclassification of school impact fees from a Fiduciary Fund to a Special Revenue Fund as part of the implementation of Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement 84, Fiduciary Activities.

GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES

Expenses by Type

Total governmental expenses were \$375.4 million in 2021 and \$316.5 million in 2020.

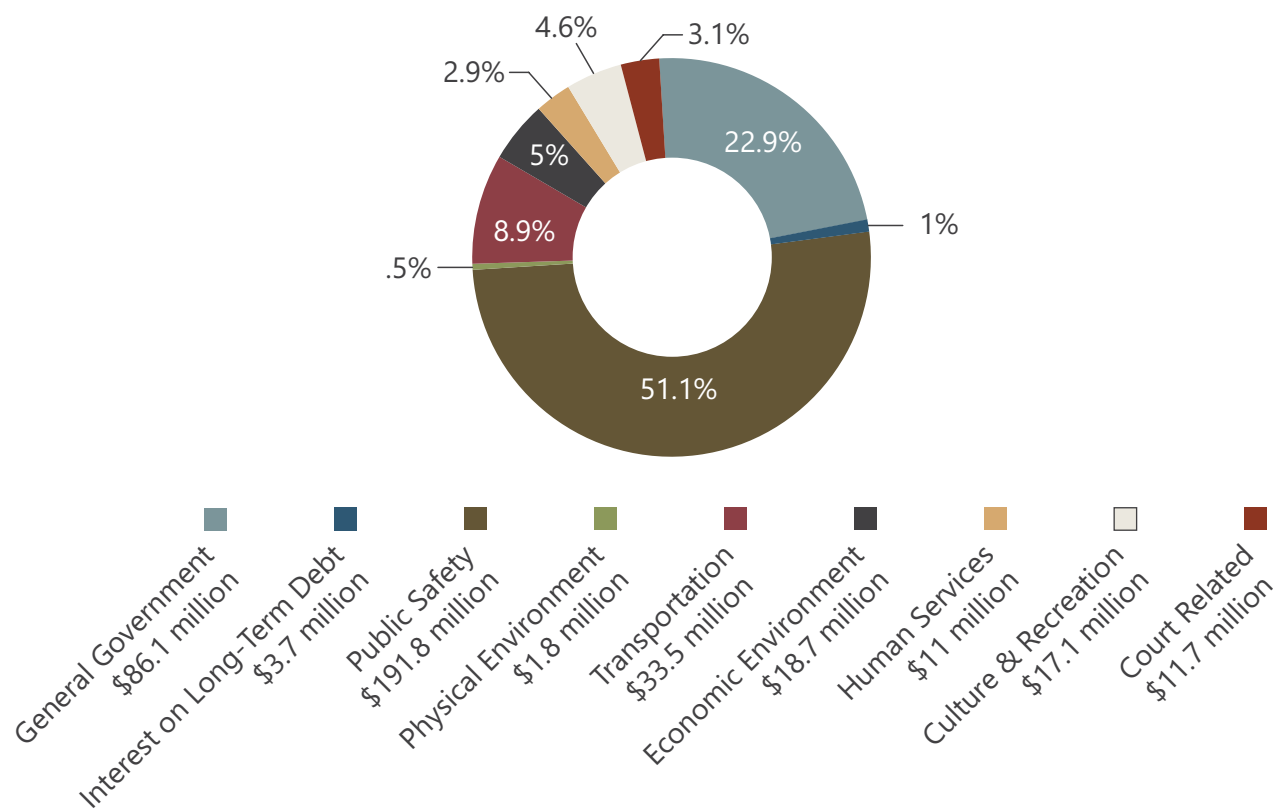
Expenses from governmental activities increased by \$59 million in 2021, primarily due to increases in general government and public safety expenses. General government expenses increased about \$32 million, primarily resulting from the reclassification of school impact fees to a Special Revenue fund as part of the implementation of GASB Statement 84, Fiduciary Activities. Public Safety expenses increased approximately \$19 million, primarily the result of increased expenses related to the CARES Act grant of about \$50 million, which were offset by a reduction in expenses related to the net pension liability.

Governmental activities expenses are classified in the following categories:

GENERAL GOVERNMENT includes services that are provided by the legislative and administrative branches of the County for the benefit of the public and government body as a whole. These services are provided by Board departments such as the county manager, county attorney, budget office, communications, information technology, facilities and human resources.

PUBLIC SAFETY includes law enforcement, corrections and detention, fire services, ambulance services, animal services, and building inspections.

Government Activities Expenses by Type



PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT includes services relating to the management of natural resources, such as soil and water conservation, and the operation of the County landfill.

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES include the construction and maintenance of roads and streets and traffic control services for the countywide road system.

ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT includes services that develop and improve the economic condition of the community, including housing and veteran services.

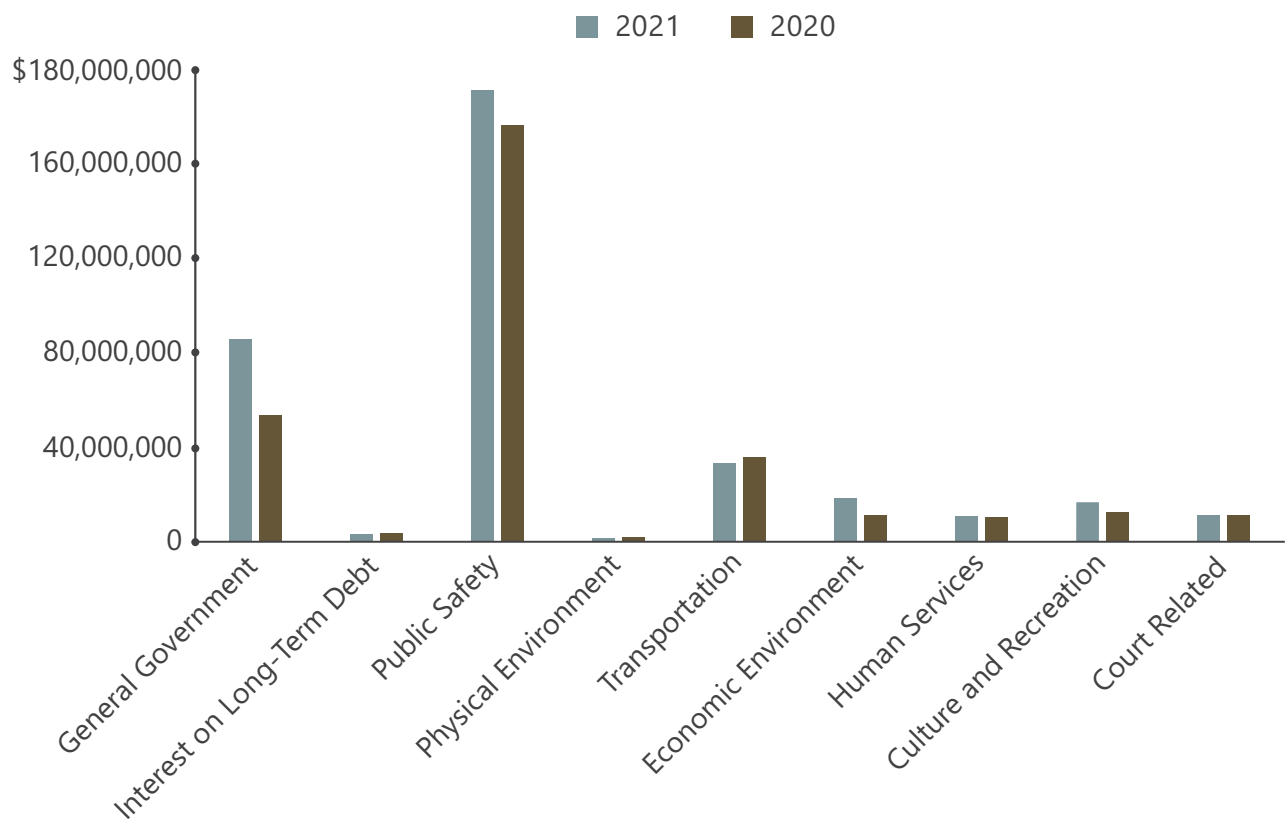
HUMAN SERVICES include services for the care, treatment and control of human illness, injury or handicap. These services are for mental health, physical health, and public assistance for indigent citizens.

CULTURE AND RECREATION includes services provided through parks and recreation programs and the countywide library system.

COURT RELATED expenses include all costs of the Lake County courts, including personnel and courthouse facilities.

INTEREST ON LONG-TERM DEBT includes all interest payments made by the County for governmental activities.

Government Expenses Comparison 2021 to 2020



PROPERTY TAXES

Property taxes are ad valorem taxes levied on the taxable value of real and tangible personal property in the County. These taxes are based on the millage rates imposed by various taxing authorities.

Property taxes are considered general revenue to the County. The County assesses and collects ad valorem taxes to fund the following activities: general government functions, public lands debt service, and three Municipal Services Taxing Units (MSTU) for ambulance services, fire rescue services, and for stormwater, parks and roads. An MSTU is a taxing district authorized by law for providing specific services to a defined geographical area.

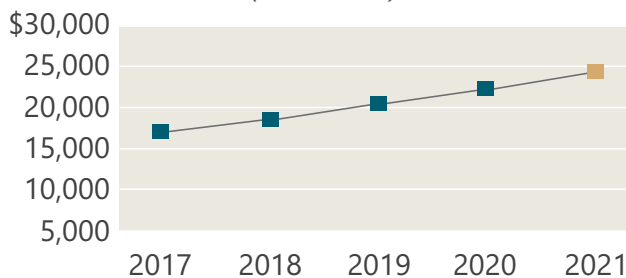
Millage Rates Assessed & Taxes Collected for 2021

TAXING AUTHORITY	MILLAGE RATE	TAXES COLLECTED
General Fund	5.0327	\$119,205,360
MSTU Emergency Medical Services	0.4629	10,957,275
MSTU Stormwater, Parks, and Roads	0.4957	5,477,054
MSTU Fire Rescue	0.4704	5,509,686
Voter-Approved Debt	0.1100	2,604,221
Total		\$143,753,596

The millage rate for the General Fund was 5.0327, a decrease from the FY 2019/2020 rate of 5.0734. The amount of total taxes collected in 2021 totaled \$143.7 million compared to \$132.1 million in 2020, an increase of about 9%. This was the result of an increase in taxable value also about 9%. The millage rates for 2022, adopted by the Board on September 28, 2021, included an increase in the General Fund of .0202 to 5.0529, to provide additional funding for roads. Other rates remained the same with the exception of an increase in the MSTU for Fire Rescue of .0434 to .5138 to cover increases in advanced life support (ALS) calls.

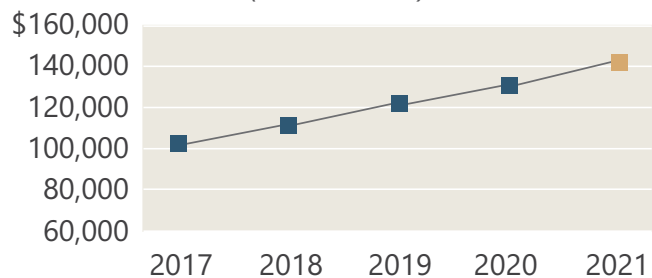
**Five-Year Comparison
in Property Taxable Value**

(in millions)



**Five-Year Comparison
in Property Taxes Collected**

(in thousands)



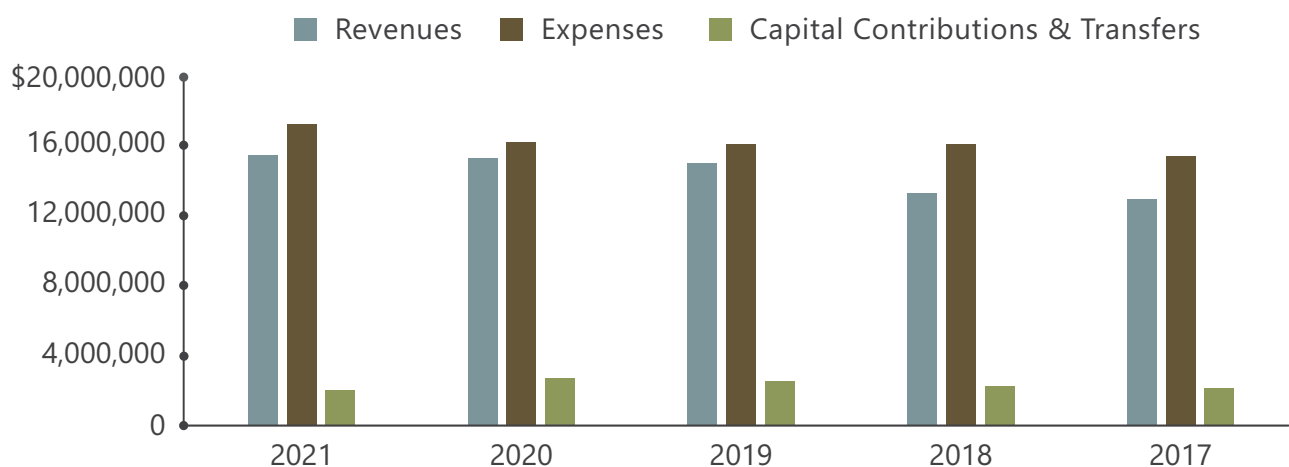
BUSINESS-TYPE ACTIVITIES

Landfill

The County has only one business-type activity, the solid waste management system. The system consists of one operating and six closed landfills. The operating landfill is the Central landfill Phase III. The six closed landfills are located in Astatula, Umatilla, Lady Lake and Clermont. The Phase III landfill, consisting of two cells, the Ash Cell and Municipal Solid Waste Cell, was completed in 2009. The Ash Cell started accepting waste in 2011. Currently, disposal of waste is primarily transported to a landfill outside of Lake County, instead of the Lake County Landfill.

The activities of the solid waste management system are reported in the Landfill Fund. Overall, the fund finished the year favorably with a positive change in net position of about \$200,000; this was lower than the prior year increase of \$1.7 million due to capital contributions in the prior year. Revenues were comparable from 2021 to 2020 at approximately \$15 million. Operating expenses (excluding the amounts for landfill closure and post closure costs), remained fairly consistent for 2021 and 2020 at approximately \$16 million. This resulted in an operating loss for 2021 and 2020 of \$1.8 and \$1.1 million, respectively. The County’s transfer from the General Fund remained consistent at approximately \$3 million in 2021 and 2020.

Business-Type Activity - Revenues, Expenses & Net Transfers



CASH & INVESTMENTS

Cash and investments increased from 2020 to 2021 primarily the result of increased revenues. The 2021 year-end balance included approximately \$35 million in unspent American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, about \$13 million in other grant funds, and about \$6 million in unspent bond proceeds which will be used to fund road resurfacing projects. The following chart is a comparison of Lake County’s cash and investments by year.

Cash & Investments Comparison

DESCRIPTION	2021	2020
Florida Local Government Investment Trust	\$12,649,640	\$12,621,425
Other Cash and Deposits	233,496,632	154,579,826
Total	\$246,146,272	\$167,201,251



CAPITAL ASSETS

The County's investment in capital assets for its governmental and business-type activities as of September 30, 2021, amounts to \$506,651,746 (net of accumulated depreciation).

Investment in capital assets includes land, buildings, improvements, machinery and equipment, park facilities, roads completed and put into use during the period from fiscal year 1980 to 2021, and construction in progress.

Comparison of Lake County's Capital Assets by Year

(in thousands)

	GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES		BUSINESS-TYPE ACTIVITIES		TOTAL	
	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020
Land	\$109,455	\$109,474	\$3,183	\$3,183	\$112,638	\$112,657
Buildings	158,933	152,894	190	268	159,123	153,162
Improvements other than Buildings	22,919	22,905	6,928	6,975	29,847	29,880
Machinery and Equipment	27,158	22,054	610	753	27,768	22,807
Infrastructure	139,370	147,407	-	-	139,370	147,407
Construction in Progress	37,768	42,781	138	102	37,906	42,883
Total	\$495,603	\$497,515	\$11,049	\$11,281	\$506,652	\$508,796

There was an overall net decrease of approximately \$2 million in capital assets. An increase in buildings included about \$8 million for the completion of the new Animal Shelter; these additions resulted in a decrease in Construction in Progress. In improvements other than buildings, the County completed a \$1 million project to interconnect the downtown Tavares chiller plants and completed approximately \$700,000 in park improvements. The County continued infrastructure road improvements to County Road 466A and Citrus Grove Road, spending approximately \$1 million and \$3 million respectively, and completed approximately \$2.6 million for county-wide resurfacing projects. All of these increases were offset by approximately \$27 million in depreciation expenses.

LONG-TERM DEBT

At the end of 2021, the County had a total of \$103.7 million in bonded debt outstanding, of which \$54.2 million was related to direct placements. This amount is comprised of \$11.8 million in limited general obligation bonds and \$91.9 million in revenue bonds. The limited general obligation bonds were issued to acquire and improve lands within the County, to protect drinking water sources, preserve natural areas and protect open space from overdevelopment, and are secured by ad valorem taxes.

Capital improvement revenue bonds and pari-mutuel replacement bonds were issued to fund county-wide recreation projects, fund the expansion of the courthouse, and for other governmental buildings in downtown Tavares, and are secured by specific revenue sources, such as the half cent sales tax and sales tax revenues.

Sales surtax revenue and refunding bonds were issued to provide funds to construct a new animal shelter and upgrade the County's public safety radio network. The bond also provided \$10 million for road resurfacing projects. The bond is secured by the one cent local government Infrastructure Sales Surtax Revenues.

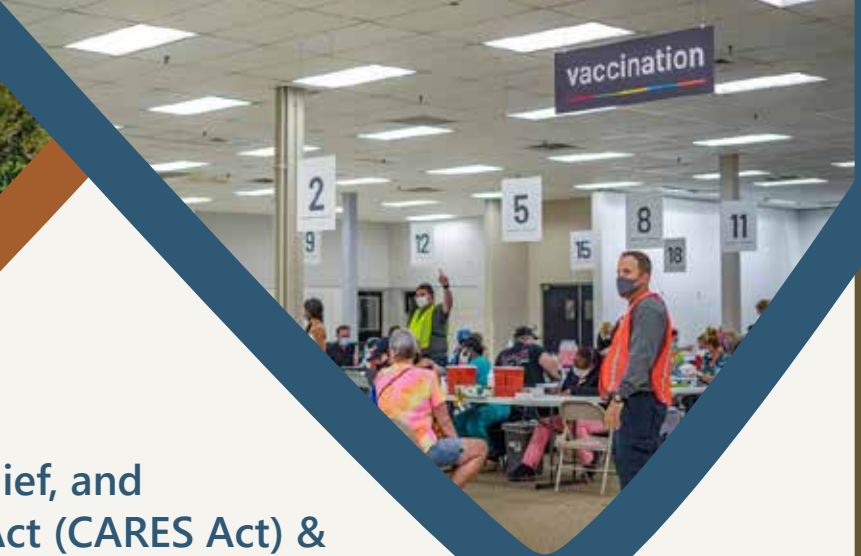
The County does not use long-term debt to finance current operations. When the County finances projects through the issuance of bonds, it strives to use self-supporting revenues instead of general obligation bonds and to pay back the bond within a period not to exceed 90% of the useful life of the project.

Other liabilities not shown below include \$15.6 million in accrued compensated absences for all County employees, which represents the value of accrued but unused vacation and sick leave benefits; \$48 million in other post-employment benefits which represents the County's financial obligation for retiree and dependents health and medical coverage; a \$68 million net pension liability, which represents the county's proportionate share of the Florida Retirement System liability; and landfill closure and post closure cost of \$6.8 million.

Long-Term Debt Outstanding Amounts & Maturity Dates

(in thousands)

DESCRIPTION	OUTSTANDING AMOUNT	MATURITY DATE
Limited General Obligation Bond, 2015	\$11,835	2026
Capital Improvement Revenue Bond, 2015A	14,630	2026
Capital Improvement Revenue Bond, 2015B	49,495	2037
Sales Tax Refunding (Pari-Mutuel Replacement) Bond, 2011	1,940	2030
Sales Surtax Revenue and Refunding Bond, 2019	25,795	2032
Total	\$103,695	



Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) & American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

.....

In 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact the County, but there have been improvements in revenues and economic activity. The County's response to the pandemic included a vaccine site and assistance to businesses and residents. The County received and expended approximately \$60 million in CARES Act funding for expenses related to the pandemic, and also received additional grants in the areas of transportation and housing, including emergency rental assistance. The County is also expected to receive and expend approximately \$72 million in ARPA funds through fiscal year 2023/2024; areas of spending will include - public health, negative economic impacts, services to disproportionately impacted communities, premium pay, and infrastructure.

Bassmaster Team Championship

.....

Lake County hosted the 2020 Bassmaster Team Championship in the Harris Chain of Lakes; welcoming anglers from more than 30 states and several countries.

The teams competed in the four-day tournament in various competitions. Being selected for this prominent event was an opportunity to showcase the County's beautiful lakes, and provided advertising and tourism benefits for the County's branding as "Real Florida, Real Close."





New Animal Shelter

Lake County hosted the grand opening of its new animal shelter in January 2021. The shelter, an \$8 million project, was funded through sales surtax revenue bonds. The opening was also an opportunity to celebrate the fourth anniversary as a no-kill shelter. The new 31,000-square-foot facility features many improvements and will enable the County to focus on its commitment to better serve the public and pets.

Economic Development Opportunities

The County was selected by Kroger Company (Kroger) and Ocado as the site of their second U.S. high-tech customer fulfillment center. The center, which opened in July 2021, is an automated warehouse facility with digital and robotic capabilities. This center created approximately 600 high-wages jobs in the south Lake County area. In addition, Amazon Logistics opened a new delivery station in south Lake County, bringing hundreds of new full-time and part-time jobs. Also, in 2021 Hanover Capital Partners held a groundbreaking for a new 15,000-square-foot distribution center. All of these opportunities help to grow the local economy and further validates the County's economic appeal.





Enhancing Public Safety

The Office of Fire Rescue hired 12 new firefighters using a \$1.7 million Staffing For Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant from the federal government to enhance their staffing and response times. The County also will be expanding fire services for the cities of Fruitland Park and Mascotte, adding coverage and efficiencies to the system. The County spent approximately \$1.1 million on fire station improvements and had a groundbreaking for a new and expanded fire station to serve the growing communities in east Lake County.

Neighborhood Lakes Scenic Trail

The Neighborhood Lakes Scenic Trail opened on September 2, 2021 in east Lake County. The trail is a connection to the Wekiva Trail System and offers 2.8 miles of multi-use paved trail into Orange County. The Lake County trailhead offers a variety of recreational activities and has vehicle and horse trailer parking, restroom facilities, and a picnic area for residents to enjoy. The trail offers views of wildlife, vistas and natural areas, provides connectivity to regional trails, and will provide positive economic impacts to the community and all of Lake County.

