

## CITIZENS GUIDE TO BUDGET TERMS

**ACCRUAL** is a method of accounting that recognizes the financial impact of transactions, events, and inter-fund activities when they occur, regardless of the timing of the cash flow.

**AD VALOREM TAX** is a tax levied in proportion (usually expressed in mills) to the assessed value of the property on which it is levied. This tax is also called **PROPERTY TAX**.

**ADOPTED BUDGET** is the financial plan for the fiscal year beginning October 1. Florida Statutes require the Board of County Commissioners to approve this budget at the second of two public hearings.

**AMENDED OR REVISED BUDGET** is the current year adopted budget adjusted to reflect all budget amendments approved by the Board of County Commissioners through the date indicated.

**AMORTIZATION** is the gradual elimination of a liability, such as a mortgage in regular payments over a specified period of time and the method used to prorate the cost of a specific type of asset to the asset's life.

**ANNEXATION** is the legal process of merging land from one governing authority to another. An example would be when an incorporated body annexes land previously governed as unincorporated by a county.

**APPROPRIATION** is the legal authorization of funds granted by a legislative body such as Alachua County's Board of County Commissioners to make expenditures and to incur obligations for specific purposes. An appropriation is usually limited in amount and to a time period within which it may be expended. It is the act of appropriation that funds a budget.

**ARBITRAGE** is a term used to describe the exploitation of inefficiencies within the financial market resulting in risk free profit.

**ASSESSED VALUE** is a value set upon real estate or other personal property by a government as a basis for levying taxes. The assessed value in Alachua County is set by the Property Appraiser.

**AUDIT** is an unbiased examination and evaluation of the financial statements of the organization. Conducted to provide an opinion whether the financial statements are stated in accordance with specified criteria.

**BALANCED BUDGET** is a budget in which revenues and expenditures are equal.

**BEGINNING FUND BALANCE** is the Ending Fund Balance of the previous period. See the definition for **ENDING FUND BALANCE**.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS** is the five-member legislative body of Alachua County's general-purpose government. This board is governed by State law and County Charter.

**BOND** is written evidence of the issuer's obligation to repay a specified principal amount on a certain date (maturity date), together with interest at a stated rate, or according to a formula for determining that rate.

**BUDGET** is a comprehensive financial operating plan that allocates limited revenues among competing expenditure requirements for a given time period. The budget, once adopted, is the legal authorization to expend County funds during the fiscal year. It may be amended during the fiscal year by the governing body and/or management in accordance with procedures, rules, and regulations. The Alachua County budget progresses in three stages: Tentative Budget, Final Budget, and Adopted Budget. See the definitions for each term.

**BUSINESS UNIT** is similar to a “division” as it is a sub-unit of a business center and provides one of the many functions of a larger governmental program.

**CAPITAL BUDGET** is the financial plan of capital project expenditures for the fiscal year beginning October 1. It incorporates anticipated revenues and appropriations included in the first year of the five-year Comprehensive Capital Improvements Program (CCIP), and any anticipated unspent budget appropriation balances from the previous fiscal year. It is adopted by the Board of County Commissioners as part of the annual County budget.

**COMPREHENSIVE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CCIP)** is the financial plan of approved capital projects, their timing and cost over a five-year period. The CCIP is designed to meet County infrastructure needs in a responsive and efficient manner. It includes projects which are, or will become, the property of Alachua County, as well as projects that although not owned by the county, will be part of a joint project agreement.

**CAPITAL OUTLAY** or **CAPITAL EQUIPMENT** is an item such as office furniture, fleet equipment, data processing equipment or other operating equipment with a unit cost of \$5,000 or more.

**CAPITAL PROJECT** is any improvement or acquisition of major facilities with a useful life of at least five years such as roads, bridges, buildings, or land.

**CAPITAL PROJECT FUNDS** are used to account for financial resources to be used for acquisition or construction of major capital facilities (other than those financed by proprietary or trust funds).

**CONDUIT DEBT** incorporates limited obligation revenue bonds, certificates of participation, or similar debt instruments issued by state or local government entities for the express purpose of providing capital financing for a specific 3<sup>rd</sup> party that is not part of the issuer’s financial reporting entity. Although the bonds issued bear the name of the governmental issuer, it has no debt service, or any other obligation beyond the resources provided to sell the debt on the 3<sup>rd</sup> party’s behalf.

**CONTINGENCY** is an appropriation of funds set aside to cover unforeseen events that occur during the fiscal year, such as new federal mandates, shortfalls in revenue and unanticipated expenditures.

**DEBT SERVICE** is the dollars required to repay funds borrowed by means of an issuance of bonds or a bank loan. The components of the debt service payment typically include an amount to retire a portion of the principal amount borrowed (i.e., amortization), as well as interest on the remaining outstanding unpaid principal balance.

**DEBT SERVICE FUNDS** are used to account for accumulation of resources for, and payment of, general long-term debt principal and interest. Specific revenue sources are pledged to provide repayment of various bond issues.

**DEMAND** is a type of measurement category. Demand represents the external factors that demonstrate the needs for the service(s) or program(s), i.e., population, service area, complaints, and waiting lists.

**DEPARTMENT** is, for budgeting purposes, any distinct government organizational entity receiving direct funding approved by the Board of County Commissioners in order to provide a major governmental function, such as Public Safety or Public Works.

**DEPRECIATION** is the process of estimating and recording lost usefulness, expired life or decrease of service from a fixed asset that cannot or will not be restored by repair and will be replaced. The cost of the fixed asset’s lost usefulness is the depreciation or the cost to reserve in order to replace the item at the end of its useful life.

**DIVISION** is a sub-unit of a department engaging in the provision of a large multi-service program. An example would be the division of Procurement within the department of Budget and Fiscal Services that provides numerous administrative functions.

**ECONOMIC INDICATOR** is economic information such as consumer price index, population, personal income, housing, wages, business activity and unemployment.

**EFFECTIVENESS** is a type of measure category sometimes referred to as quality indicators. Effectiveness measures examine the degree to which services are responsive to the needs and desires of the customers (both external and internal). These measures tell how well the job is being performed, how well the intent is being fulfilled. Effectiveness encompasses both quality and quantity. Demand and the response to demand are often linked in these measures. These are the most difficult measures to collect and use, because the organization must develop a method of retrieving the information from outside those served.

**EFFICIENCY** is a type of measurement category sometimes called productivity. This is often measured in terms of unit costs over time, increased timeliness of responses, or reduction in previous delays. Efficiency refers to the ratio of the quantity of service (tons, gallons, hospital care days, etc.) to the cost in dollars or labor or the time required to produce the service. An efficiency measure can be either an output or input ratio (e.g., the number of trees trimmed per crew per day or the dollar cost per permit application processed).

**ENCUMBRANCE** is an obligation in the form of a purchase order, contract, or formal agreement that is chargeable to an appropriation and for which a part of the appropriation is reserved.

**ENDING FUND BALANCE** is funds carried over at the end of the fiscal year. Within a fund, the revenue on hand at the beginning of the fiscal year, plus revenues received during the year, less expenses equals ending fund balance.

**ENTERPRISE FUND** is a fund used to account for operations that are financed and operated in a manner similar to private business enterprises, wherein the stated intent is that the costs (including depreciation) of providing goods and services be financed from revenues recovered primarily through user fees.

**EXPENDITURES** are amounts of money actually paid or obligated for payment from County funds.

**FACILITY PRESERVATION EXPENSES** are asset preservation costs generally considered to be outlays that extend the useful life of an asset beyond its original estimated useful life but do not increase the capacity or efficiency of the asset. Preservation costs are expensed under the modified approach and capitalized under the depreciation approach if they meet the capitalization threshold.

**FIDUCIARY FUNDS** are used to account for assets held by a governmental unit in a trustee capacity or as an agent for individuals, private organizations, other governmental units, or other funds.

**FINAL BUDGET** is the Board's modification to the budget made at the first public hearing (basis for the second public hearing).

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS** shows the revenue collected and the amounts the government spent for the fiscal year.

**FISCAL YEAR** is a twelve-month financial period used by the County, which begins October 1 and ends September 30 of the following year. A fiscal year is identified by the year in which it ends. Example, October 1, 2022, to September 30, 2023, is identified as fiscal year 2023 (also FY 2023 or FY23).

**FIXED ASSETS** are of a long-term character that are intended to continue to be held or used, such as land, infrastructure, buildings, construction in progress, improvements other than buildings, and equipment.

**FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)** is one position funded for a full year. For example, a permanent employee funded and paid for 40 hours/week and 52 weeks/year, or 2 employees funded and paid for 20 hours/week and 52 weeks/year would be equal to one full-time equivalent.

**FUND** is an accounting entity used to record cash and other financial resources as well as an offsetting amount of liabilities and other uses. The resources and uses are segregated from other resources and uses for the purpose of carrying on specific activities or attaining specific objectives in accordance with special regulations, restrictions, or limitations.

**FUND BALANCE** represents the excess of a fund's current assets over its current liabilities. For accounting purposes, fund balance is calculated as of year-end and is based on the difference between actual revenues and expenditures for the fiscal year. If revenues exceed expenditures, fund balance is positive and carries forward as revenue to the following year. If expenditures exceed revenues, any existing fund balance from a prior year is reduced. A study of changes in fund balances can indicate financial trends and fiscal health. Extreme quantities of fund balances or large fluctuations may indicate possible policy adjustments by the governing body or changes in budget procedures.

**FUNDING SOURCES** is a term referring to the type or origination of funds to finance recurring or non-recurring expenditures. Examples include revenues such as ad valorem taxes, user fees, licenses, permits, and grants and non-revenues such as fund balance and interfund transfers.

**FY 22 ADOPTED BUDGET** refers to the budget period beginning October 1, 2021, and ending September 30, 2022.

**FY 23 ADOPTED BUDGET** refers to the budget period beginning October 1, 2022, and ending September 30, 2023.

**GENERAL REVENUE FUND (GENERAL FUND)** is a fund that accounts for all financial transactions except those required to be accounted for in all other funds. The fund's resources, ad valorem taxes, and other revenues provide services or benefits to all residents of Alachua County.

**GENERALLY ACCEPTED ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES (GAAP)** comprises the uniform minimum standard of, and guidelines for, financial accounting and reporting. They govern the form and content of an entity's basic financial statements. GAAP encompasses the convention, rules, and procedures necessary to define accepted accounting practices at a particular time.

**GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS** are used to account for tax supported activities. Alachua uses four different types of governmental funds: the general fund, special revenue funds, debt service funds, and capital project funds.

**GRANTS AND AIDS** includes all grants, subsidies, and contributions from other government agencies or private organizations.

**HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION** is a deduction from the total taxable assessed value of owner-occupied property. The current maximum exemption is \$25,000 for all homesteaded properties, and an additional \$25,000 on the assessed value between \$50,000 and \$75,000. Exemptions must be requested by taxpayers.

**IMPACT FEES** are a type of charge for services imposed on new construction to support specific new demands on a given service, e.g., transportation, schools, parks, and fire protection.

**INFRASTRUCTURE** is a permanent installation such as a building, road, or water transmission system that provides public services.

**INTER-FUND TRANSFER** is the movement of funds from one accounting entity to another within a single government.

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVENUES** are revenues from other governments in the form of grants, entitlements, shared revenues, or payments in lieu of taxes.

**INTERNAL SERVICE FUND** is a fund established from the financing of goods or services provided by one department or agency to other departments or agencies on a cost reimbursement basis.

**LEVY** is the action of imposing taxes, special assessments, or service charges for the support of County activities.

**LIABILITY** is debt or other obligations arising out of transactions in the past which must be liquidated, renewed, or refunded at some future date. The term does not include encumbrances. See the definition of **ENCUMBRANCE**.

**LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX** is an infrastructure surtax to be levied by local governments as approved by referendum at a rate of 1/2 cent or 1 cent. Tax may be effective for up to fifteen years from the date of levy. Proceeds must be expended on fixed capital expenditures or fixed capital costs for construction, reconstruction, or improvement of public facilities that have a life expectancy of five or more years and land acquisition, land improvement, and related design and engineering costs. See also "Voter Approved Indigent Care Surtax."

**MAJOR FUND** is a title given a fund within the County that is large in proportion to other funds (e.g., General Fund, the MSTUs, and the Gas Tax Fund).

**MANDATE** is a requirement imposed by a legal act of the federal, state, or local government.

**MEASURE** is a term referring to any one of four different types of measure: a count, a ratio, a percentage, or a dollar amount. Before developing any measure, it is necessary to identify something that can be counted. To identify what is to be counted, the event being assessed must be determined, i.e., days spent in the hospital, certificates of occupancy issued, gallons of water treated, etc.

**MILL** is a monetary measure equating to 0.001 of a dollar. When referring to the **AD VALOREM TAX**, it means that a 1-mill tax is one dollar of tax on \$1,000 of taxable value.

**MILLAGE RATE** is the rate per one thousand dollars of taxable property value which, when multiplied by the taxable value, yields the tax billing for a given parcel.

**MISCELLANEOUS (FUNDING SOURCE)** is revenue other than those received from standard sources such as taxes, licenses and permits, grants and user fees.

**MISSION STATEMENT** is a broad statement of purpose derived from an organization's and/or community's values and goals.

**MODIFIED ACCRUAL** is the basis of accounting that is used in governmental funds where the focus is to measure current financial resources. Revenues are not recognized until they are measurable and

available. Expenditures are recognized when the related liability is liquidated not when the liability is first incurred.

**MUNICIPAL SERVICES BENEFIT UNIT (MSBU)** A special assessment district authorized by Florida Statutes 125.01 to provide for improvements and/or services to a specifically defined area of the county and financed by a special assessment on only those properties receiving benefits of those improvements or services.

**MUNICIPAL SERVICES TAXING UNIT (MSTU)** is the taxing district authorized by State Constitution Article VII and Florida Statute 125.01 encompassing the unincorporated area of the County. It provides services typically provided by a municipality (e.g., Sheriff's patrol, paramedic services, fire protection, parks and recreation, code enforcement and road network maintenance) to the residents and businesses in the unincorporated area. The services are financed primarily by an ad valorem tax levied on all taxable property located in the unincorporated area.

**NON-AD VALOREM ASSESSMENT** is a fee levied on certain properties to defray all or part of the cost of a specific capital improvement or service deemed to benefit those properties. The value of the property is not considered when calculating a non-ad valorem assessment. Instead, the cost of the facility or the service is allocated proportionately to the benefited properties in a defined area. It is sometimes referred to as a "Special Assessment". Generally, this is collected by the Tax Collector's Office on the annual consolidated tax bill like ad valorem taxes.

**NON-OPERATING EXPENDITURES** are costs of government services that are not directly attributable to a specific County program or operation. Examples include debt service obligations and contributions to community service organizations.

**NON-OPERATING REVENUES** comprise income received by a government not directly attributable to providing a service. An example would be interest on investments.

**OBJECTIVE** is a statement specifying achievements to be attained within a prescribed time frame. An objective is exchanged for or superseded by another objective at the expiration of the time frame. An objective is directly connected to how the resources of an organization will be used. An objective statement begins with an action verb and includes the quantified statement of the results expected as an outcome of the action, such as "*Increase (the action verb) with existing manpower, 24-hour security coverage for five government buildings at a daily cost not to exceed \$16.00 (quantified results) during the applicable fiscal year (explicit timeframe)*".

**OPERATING BUDGET** is the budget including appropriations for recurring and certain one-time expenditures that will be consumed in a fixed period of time to provide for day-to-day operations (e.g., salaries and related benefits, operating supplies, contractual and maintenance services, professional services, and operating equipment). The operating budget does not include debt service payments (principal and interest), budgeted reserves, transfers between funds, and the capital projects program budget. It does include the Internal Service and Trust funds.

**OPERATING EXPENDITURES / EXPENSES** are the costs (expenses) directly related to a fund's primary service activities on an on-going or regular basis.

**OPERATING REVENUES** are the incomes (revenues) directly related to a fund's primary service activities. They consist primarily of user charges for services.

**OPERATING TRANSFERS** are legally authorized transfers of money from one fund to another fund from which the resources are to be expended.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES** comprise a set of measures of service efforts and accomplishments. Six measure types include: 1) measure of efforts (inputs), 2) activity or process measures, 3) output measures, 4) service quality measures, 5) outcome measures, and 6) efficiency measures.

**PERSONAL SERVICES** characterize expenses for salaries, wages, and related employee benefits provided for all persons employed by the County whether on a full-time, part-time, or temporary basis. Employee benefits include employer contributions to a retirement system, social security, insurance, sick leave, and similar direct benefits as well as other costs such as Workers' Compensation and Unemployment Insurance.

**PORTABILITY** is a legislative provision that was enacted as part of Constitutional Amendment 1 that allows Florida homeowners to transfer a portion of their Save Our Homes taxable value reduction when they move to another homesteaded property in the State of Florida. Portability reduces the local government tax base by reducing taxable values of homesteaded properties. Portability benefits must be requested by taxpayers.

**PROPERTY TAX** is another term for ad valorem tax. See the definition for **AD VALOREM TAX**.

**PROPRIETARY FUND** is a fund category which often emulates the private sector and focuses on the measurement of net income. Expenditures are funded by user charges and fees.

**PROPRIETARY FEES** are home rule revenue sources, which are based on the assertion that local governments have the exclusive legal right to impose such fees. Examples of proprietary fees include admissions fees, franchise fees, user fees, and utility fees.

**REGULATORY FEES** are home rule revenue sources that may be imposed pursuant to a local government's police powers in the exercise of a sovereign function. Examples of regulatory fees include building permit fees, impact fees, inspection fees, and stormwater fees.

**RESERVES AND REFUNDS** refers to a budget category for funds required to meet both anticipated and unanticipated needs; the balance of anticipated earmarked revenues not required for operation in the budget year; estimated reimbursements to organizations, state, or federal governments for revenues received and not spent, and those required to be set aside by bond covenants.

**RETAINED EARNINGS** is a term the County uses as the amount of budget/cash set aside within an enterprise fund for possible, unforeseen expenditures. Similar to fund balance.

**REVENUE** are funds that governments receive as income, including such items as tax payments, fees for specific services, receipts from other governments, fines and forfeitures, grants, shared revenues, and interest income.

**REVENUE BONDS** are bonds usually sold for constructing or purchasing capital projects. Reliable revenue other than ad valorem taxes is pledged as the source for funding to pay bond principal and interest.

**ROLLED-BACK RATE** is the millage rate needed to be levied in the new fiscal year to generate the same amount of tax dollars as adopted in the previous fiscal year. Voter approved debt levies are excluded from the calculation. Value of new construction is excluded from the current year total. Rolled-back rate adjusts prior year for reappraisals based on market value of property and represents "no tax increase." The only source of additional tax revenue, if the rolled-back rate is levied, is the tax on new construction.

**SAVE OUR HOMES** is a voter approved amendment to the Florida Constitution which limits the size of the annual increase in the assessed value of owner-occupied residential properties which have homestead status. Increases in the annual assessment of homesteaded property shall not exceed the

lower of either 1) three percent (3%) of the assessment of the prior year or 2) the percent increase in the Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers in the United States.

**SPECIAL ASSESSMENT** is the term used to designate a unique charge that government units can assess against real estate parcels for certain public projects.

**SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS** are funds used to account for proceeds of specific revenue sources (other than special assessments, expendable trusts, or major capital projects) that are legally restricted to expenditures for specified purposes.

**STATUTE** is a written law enacted by a duly organized and constituted legislative body. Citations are often followed by "F.S." to indicate Florida Statute.

**TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY** is the non-real estate property, excluding motor vehicles, inventory, and household goods, that is owned by business enterprises and subject to ad valorem taxation. Constitutional Amendment 1 provides that the first \$25,000 of tangible personal property is exempt from ad valorem taxes starting with FY 09. It also imposes a 10% cap on annual increases in tangible property valuation.

**TAX RATE** is the amount of tax stated in terms of a unit of the tax base. For example, 5.000 mills yield \$5 per \$1,000 of taxable value.

**TAXABLE VALUE** is the value used for computing ad valorem taxes levied against property. Taxable value is the assessed value less any exemptions allowed by law. The most common exemption is the \$25,000 homestead exemption allowed when the owner uses the property as a principal residence, and an additional homestead exemption of \$25,000 on assessed value between \$50,000 and \$75,000 enacted as part of Constitutional Amendment 1 in January of 2008. Exemptions are also granted for disability, government owned and non-profit owned property.

**TENTATIVE BUDGET** is the County Manager's recommendation of the budget plan to the Board of County Commissioners.

**TRANSFER IN/OUT TO CONSTITUTIONALS.** There are five elected constitutional officers per Florida Constitution; the expenditure budgets for these officers are transferred out to each entity to manage on its own and revenues received from them are also accounted and recorded separately, in order to meet GASB/GAAP and statutory requirements. The details of the budgets are managed by the officers and not through the County system.

**TRUTH IN MILLAGE LAW (TRIM)** is a Florida Law enacted in 1980 which changed the budget process for local taxing governments. It was designed to keep the public informed about the taxing intentions of various taxing authorities.

**TRUST AND AGENCY FUNDS** are funds used to account for assets held by the County in a trustee capacity or as an agent for individuals, private organizations, other governments, and/or other funds.

**USER (FEES) CHARGES** are payments of a fee for receipt of a public service by those individuals benefiting from the service.

**UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE** is the residual classification that includes amounts that are not included in other classifications. Unassigned amounts are the portion of fund balance which is not obligated or specifically designated and available for any purpose. The General Fund is the only accounting fund that can report unassigned fund balance.

**UNINCORPORATED AREA** is the portion of the County not within the boundaries of any municipality.