



# Community Conversations

Alachua County Board of County Commissioners  
April 19, 2010  
Alachua Branch Library



# Economic Uncertainties

---

- Following a path in this historical time that most of us have not seen before
  - Economic decline is prolonged by continued high unemployment, slow housing sales, depressed consumer spending
  - County government is faced with the challenge of providing services to our citizens in these uncertain financial times



# The “New Normal” for Local Government

---

- The “new normal” is a term being used by private businesses and government organizations to describe the new way of doing business that will remain in place after the U.S. economy rebounds
  - The strategies put in place now will need to sustain us through the next few years



# The "New Normal" for Local Government

---

- For government, the public's concern over spending has led to efforts to permanently constrain local government revenues
- Unlike the situation with private businesses, the demand for public services often rises as revenues fall



## "A Community Budget"

- "Citizens understand their household budgets, executives understand their organizational budget. The New Normal requires the community to consider the total 'Community Budget' available from all the resources of the non-profit and profit sectors within their community. Abundance comes from collaboration; not indebting future generations."



# Community Conversations

Citizen Participation

# What does "Alachua" mean?

1. Sunflower

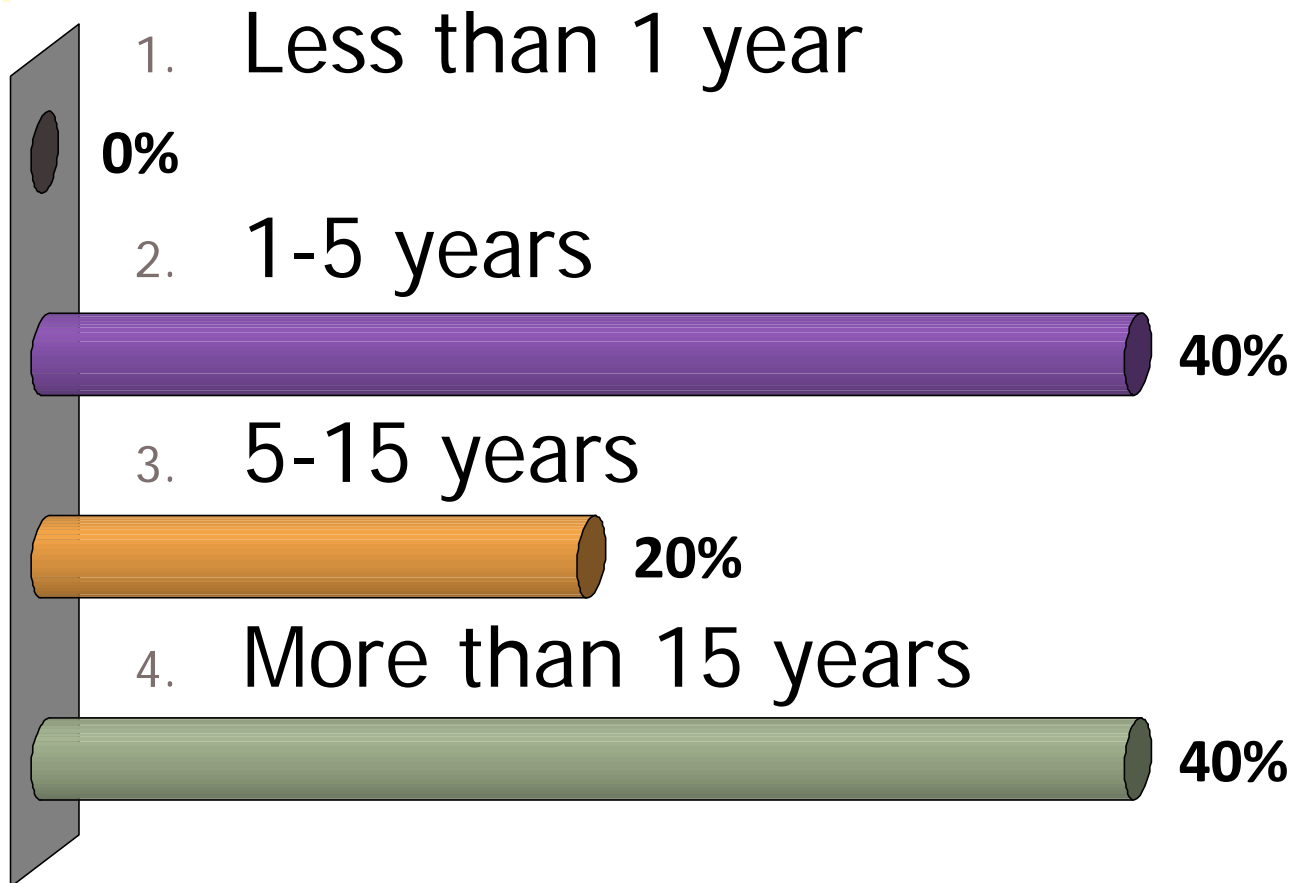
**100%**

2. Big Tree  
**0%**

✓ 3. Big Jug  
**0%**

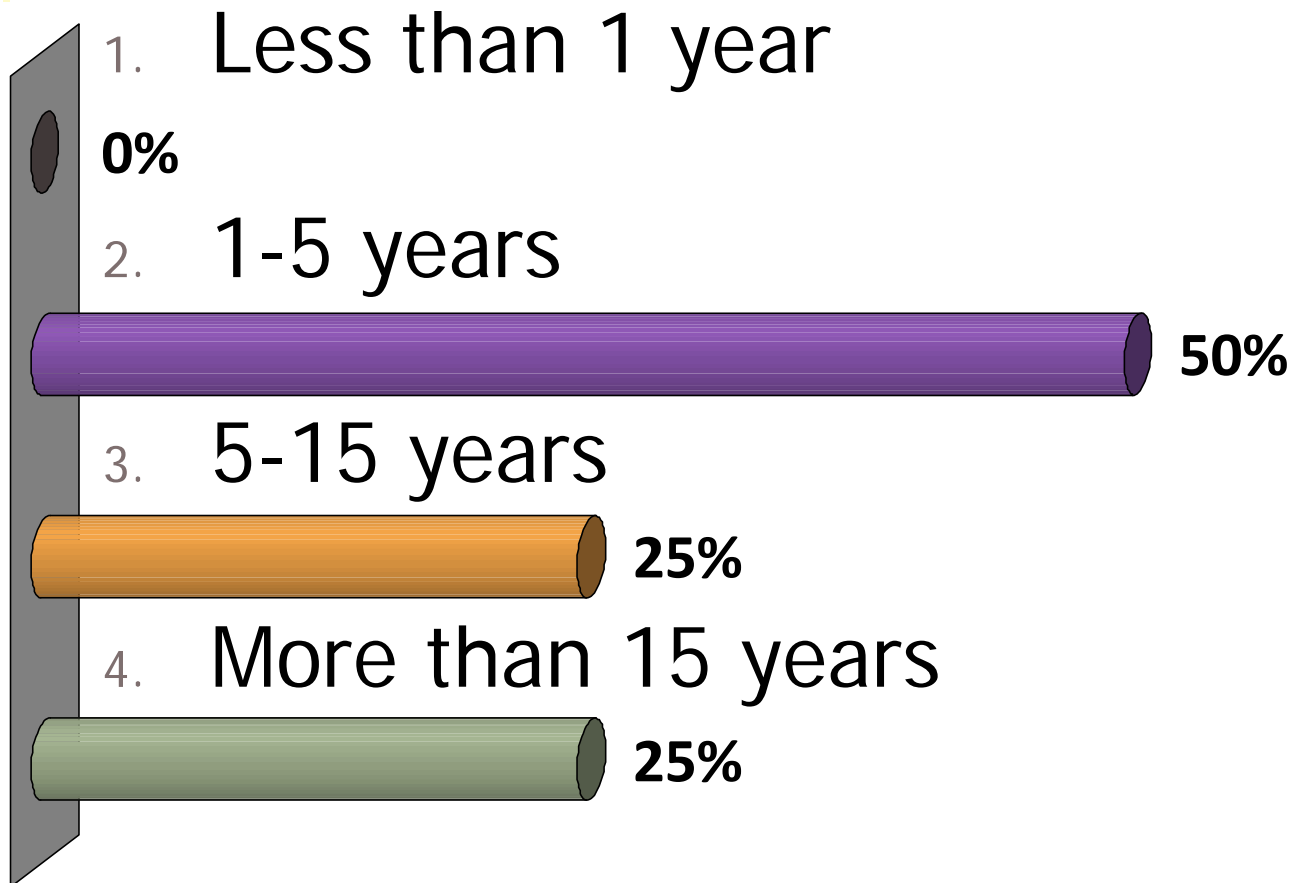
4. Hog Town  
**0%**

# How long have you lived in Florida?





# How long have you lived in Alachua County?



# When do you believe our national economic situation will improve?

1. Within one year

**0%**

2. In two years

**40%**

3. In five years

**40%**

4. Recovery has already started

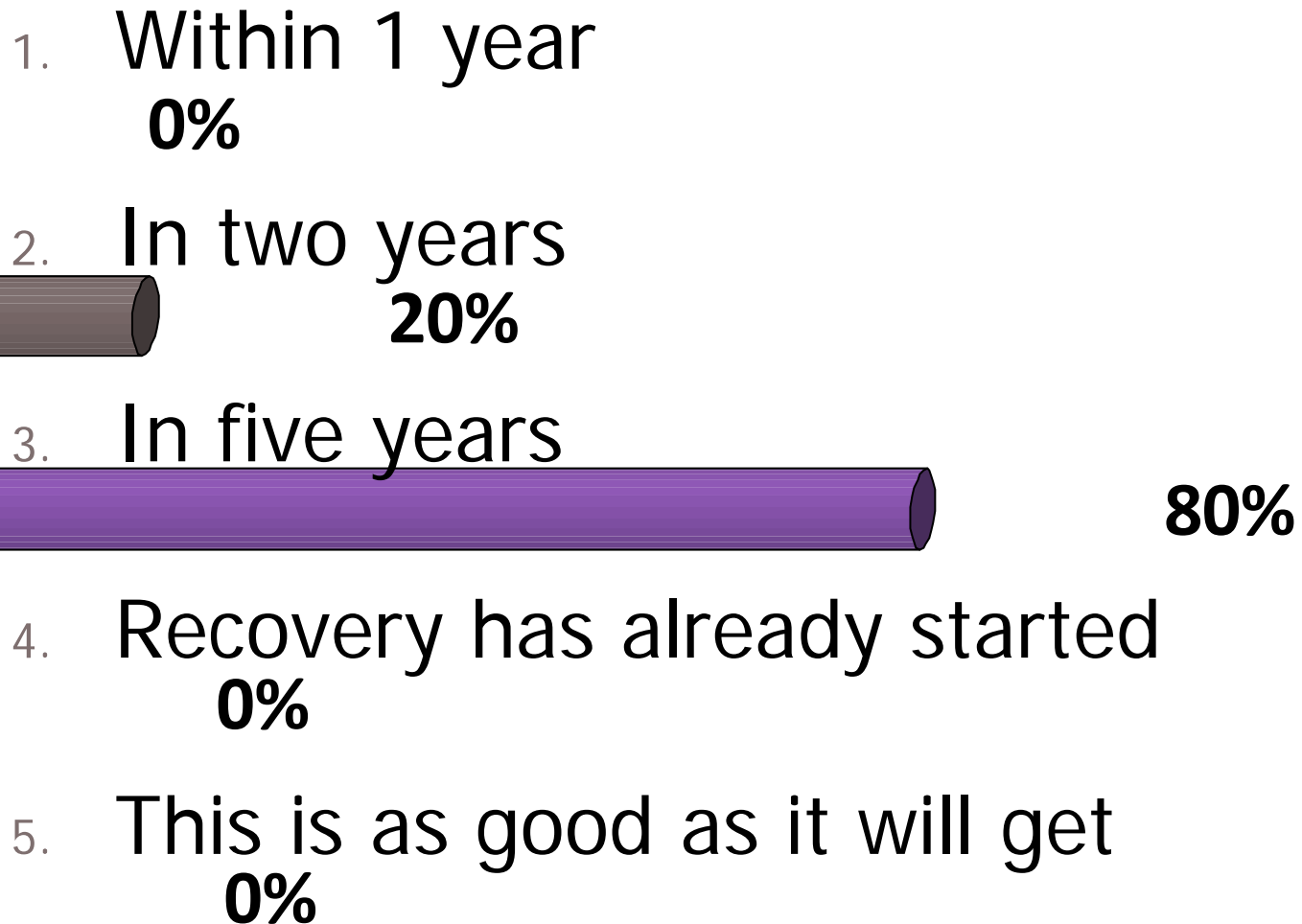
**20%**

5. This is as good as it will get

**0%**



# When do you believe the economic situation in Florida will improve?



# Personally (financially) where are you compared to a year ago?

1. The same



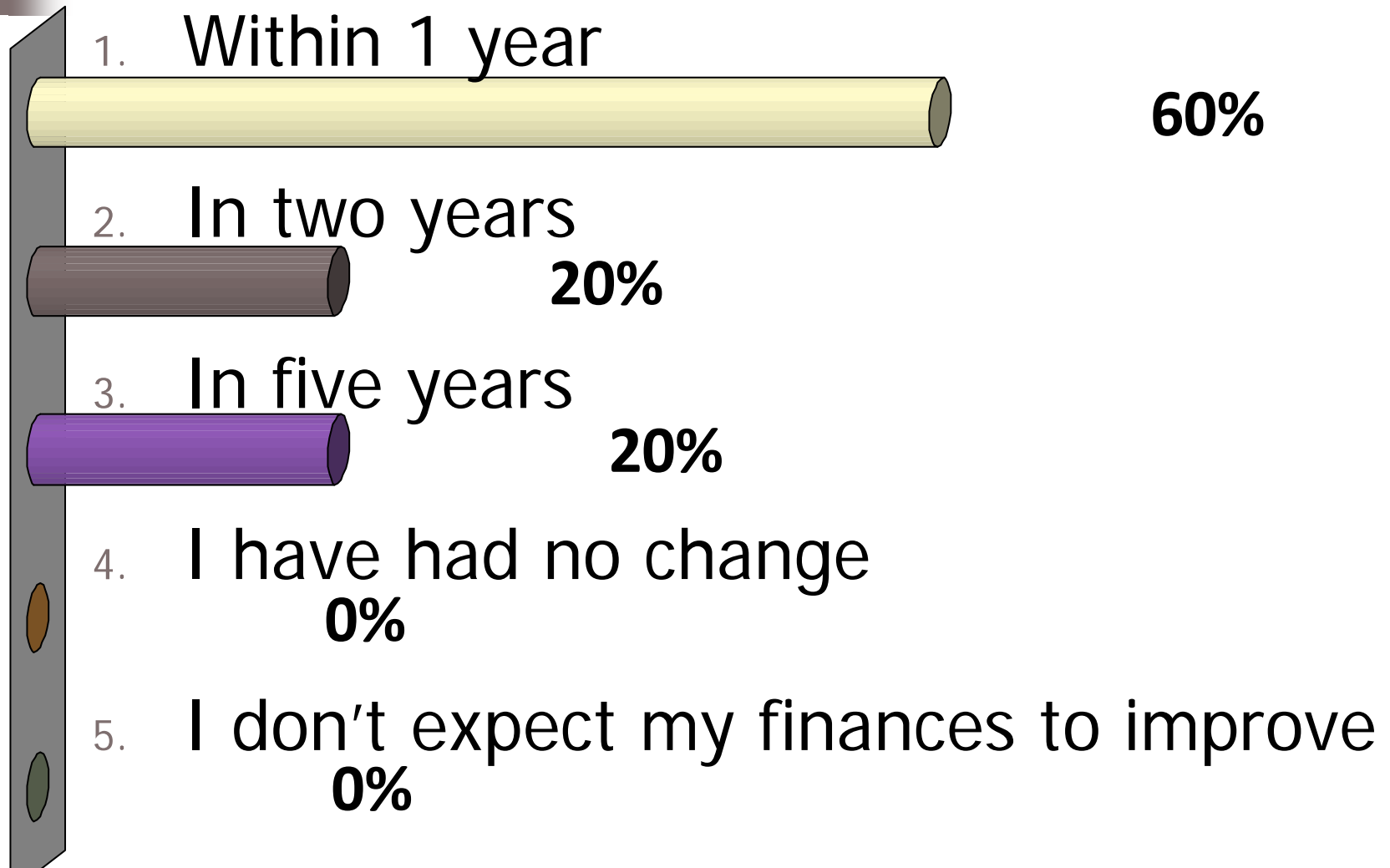
**100%**

2. Better off  
**0%**

3. Worse off  
**0%**

4. Struggling to survive  
**0%**

# When do you believe your personal financial situation will improve?



# How do you think County government should respond to our current financial situation?

1. Reduce services

**40%**

2. Increase taxes

**0%**

3. Raise other fees/assessments

**0%**

4. Consolidate services with other governments

**60%**

# What one area would you not want to see reduced?





# Community Conversations

General Government Property Tax





# General Government Property Tax

- Revenue calculation is based on taxable property values as determined by Property Appraiser's Office
  - 2007 Legislative Property Tax Reform limits growth from property tax revenue
  - January 2008 voter approved referendum increased property tax exemptions
    - Additional homestead, tangible personal property exemption, Save our Homes portability, 10% growth cap on non-homestead property



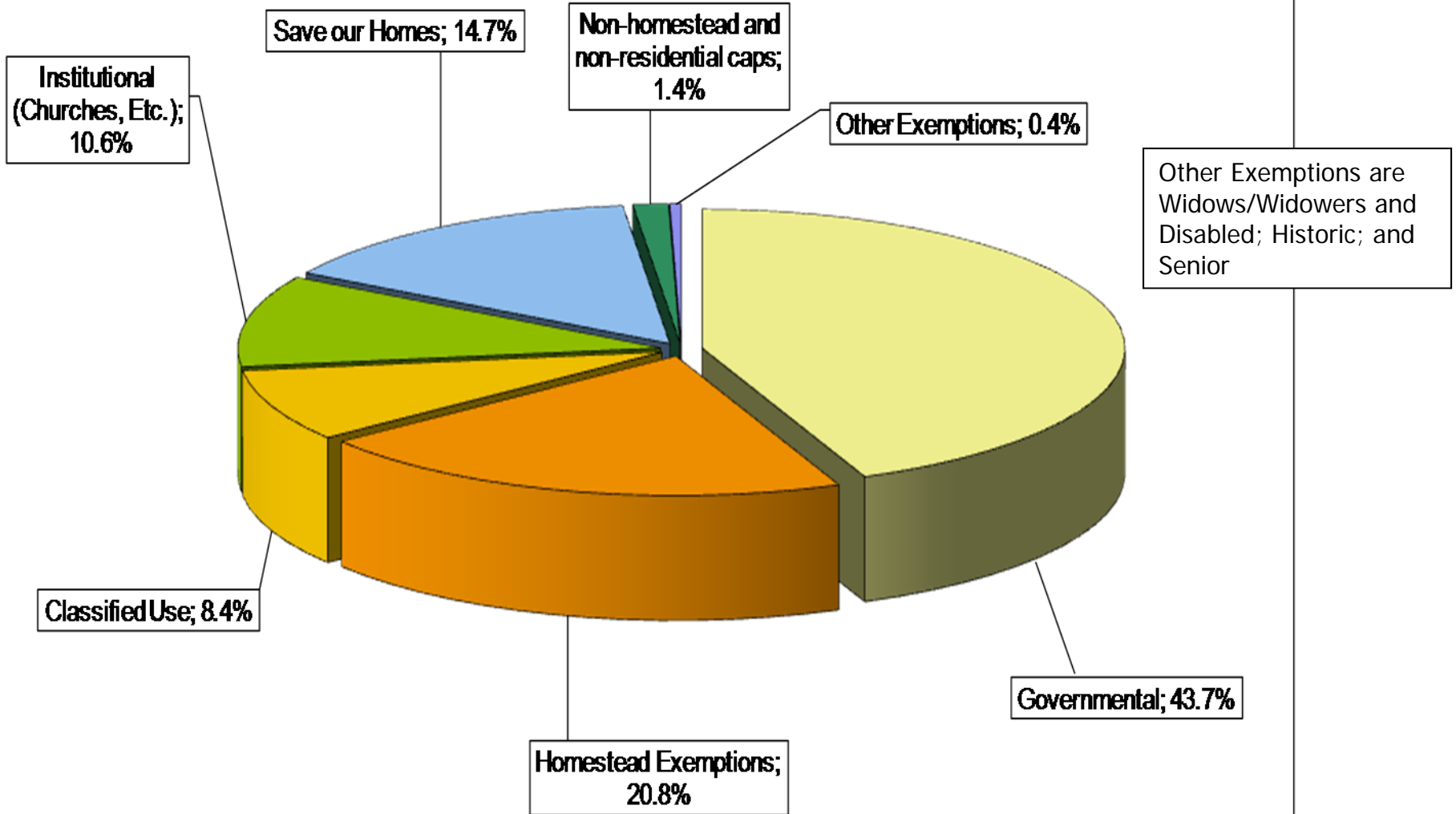
# General Government Property Tax

---

- Property valuation and tax exemptions
  - Only 52% of countywide property values are on the tax rolls
    - 64% of City of Alachua property values are on tax rolls
    - Marion County has 60% of property value on tax rolls
    - St. Johns County has 70% of property value on tax rolls



# 2009 Property Value Exemptions and Classified Uses



# General Government Property Tax



## 2009 Millage Rate Comparisons

Municipality                      2009 Millage Rate

<b>Micanopy</b>	8.0000
<b>High Springs</b>	6.1500
<b>Waldo *</b>	5.8686
<b>Alachua</b>	5.5000
<b>Hawthorne *</b>	5.3194
<b>Archer *</b>	5.0000
<b>Gainesville</b>	4.3963
<b>Newberry *</b>	3.8500
<b>Unincorporated **</b>	3.2180
<b>LaCrosse</b>	2.1444

\* Archer has elected to participate in Fire and Law Enforcement MSTU's. Newberry participates in the Law Enforcement MSTU. Waldo and Hawthorne participate in the Fire MSTU.

\*\* Alachua County MSTU millage rates:  
Unincorp. 0.4124  
Law Enforce. 1.6252  
Fire Protect. 1.1804



# General Government Property Tax

- Example Tax Year 2009 – Homeowner in City of Alachua
  - Total Property Value           \$187,900
  - Save our Homes                 - 46,910
  - Homestead Exempt.           - 50,000
  - Taxable Value                 **\$90,990**
- Taxable value is less than 49% of total value
- 2009 Total Property Taxes - \$2,512

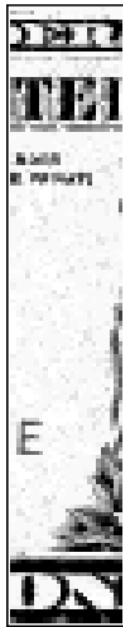
# General Government Property Tax

Example Homeowner in the City of Alachua with taxable value of \$90,990

Total  
2009 Tax  
Bill of  
\$2,512



33.2% of Each  
Tax Dollar  
Goes to the  
County -  
\$755



5.5% of  
Each Tax  
Dollar  
Goes to  
Libraries -  
\$125



1.7% of Each  
Tax Dollar  
Goes to Water  
Management  
Districts - \$40

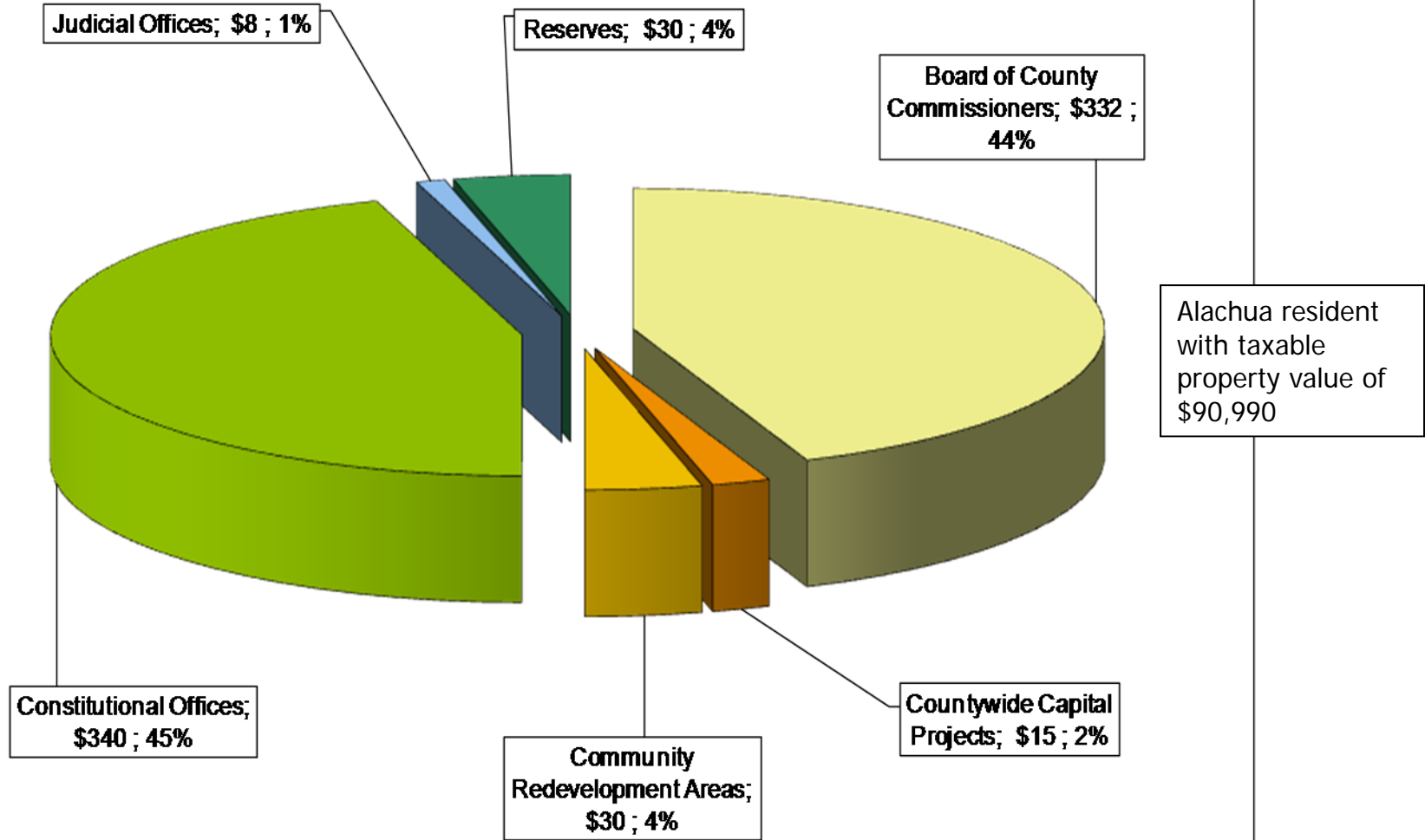


37.6% of Each  
Tax Dollar Goes  
to the School  
Board - \$1,091



22% of Each  
Tax Dollar  
Goes to City  
of High  
Springs -  
\$501

# General Fund Expenditures - All Property Taxes of \$755 for FY10





# Community Conversations

## County Government Budget Overview





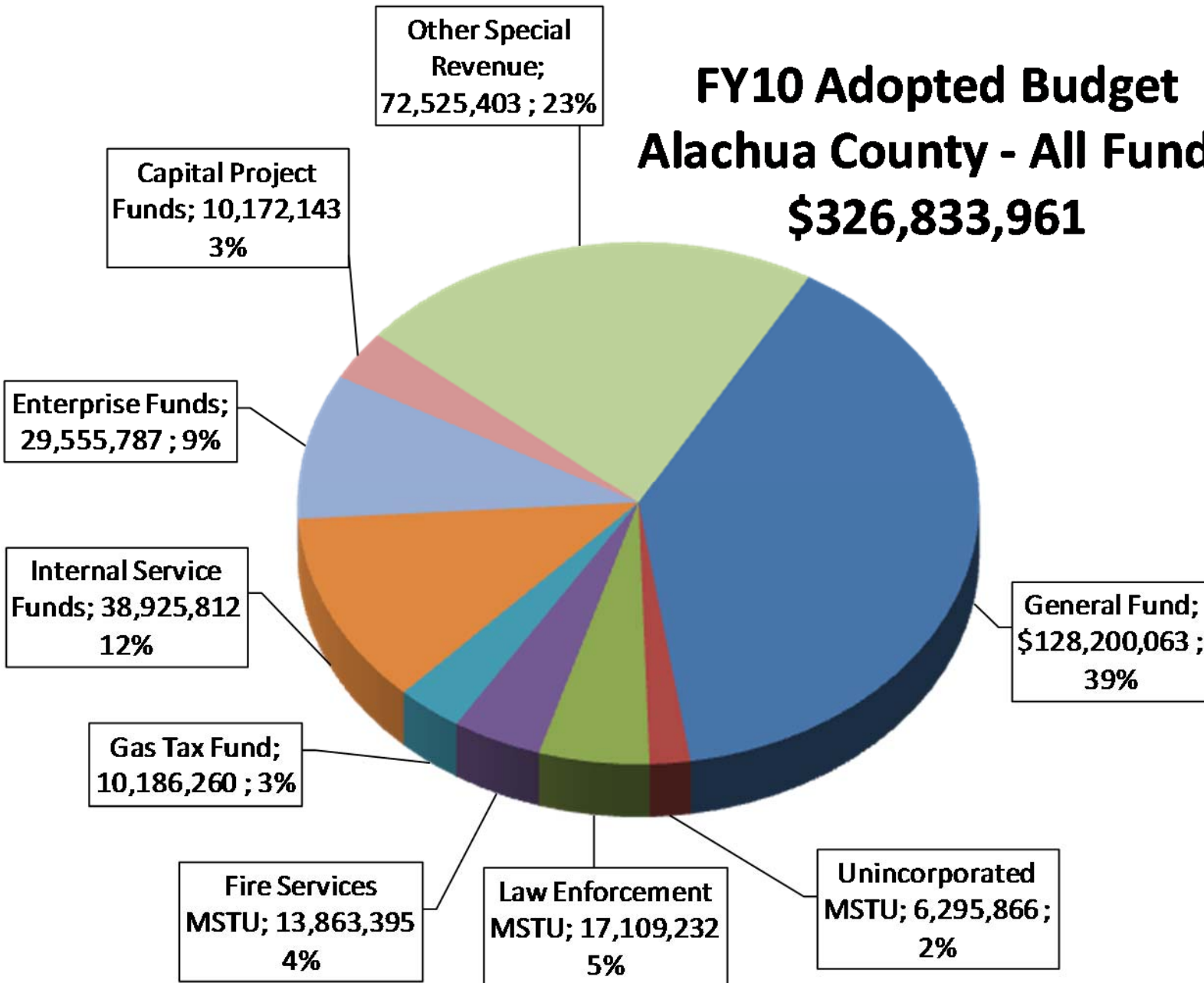
# County Government Budget Overview

---

- Budgeting for local government
  - Comply with Federal/State regulations and guided by policies set by the Board of County Commissioners
  - The process is transparent and open to the public
  - Broad range of county government responsibilities makes for complex accounting

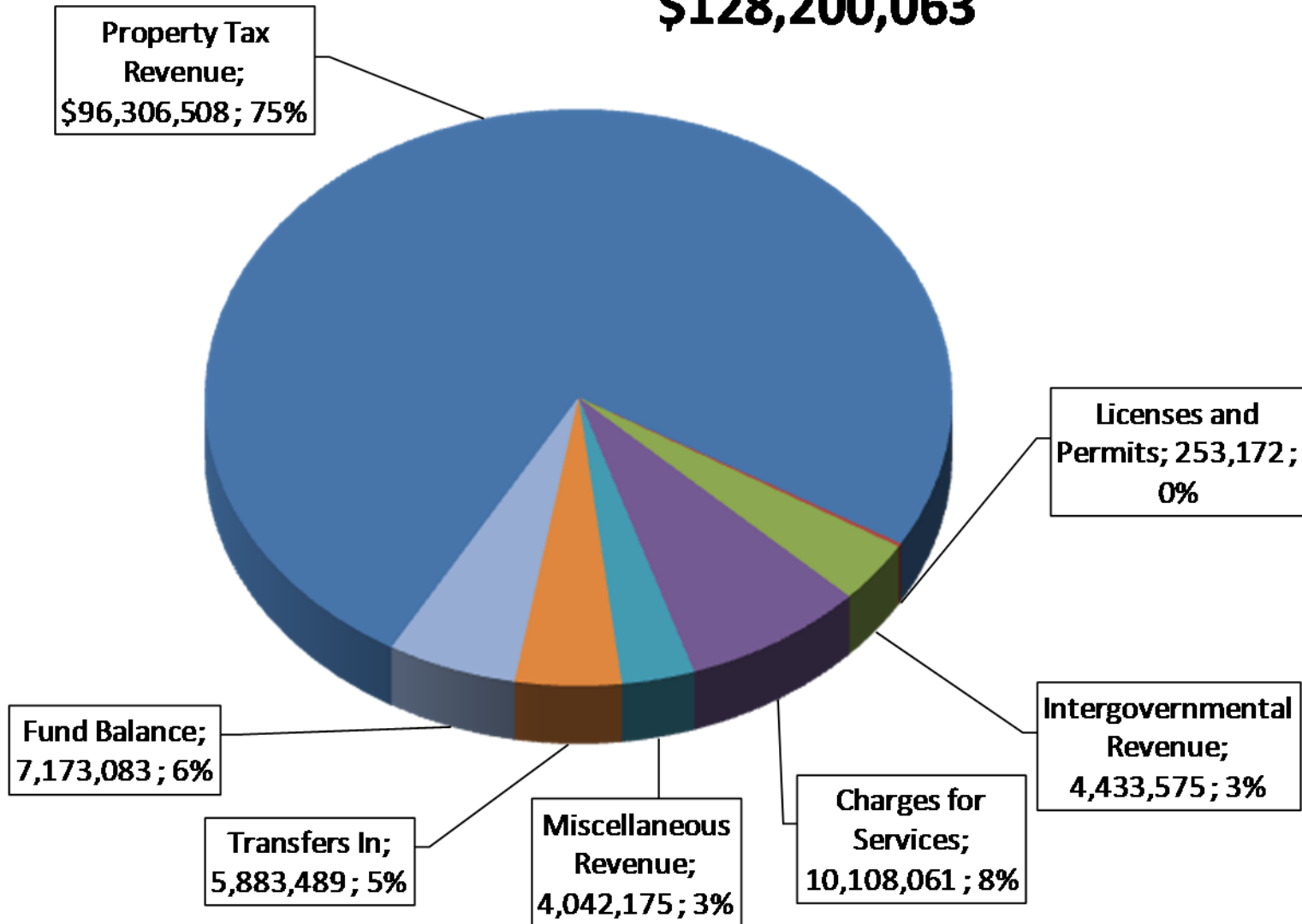


# FY10 Adopted Budget Alachua County - All Funds \$326,833,961



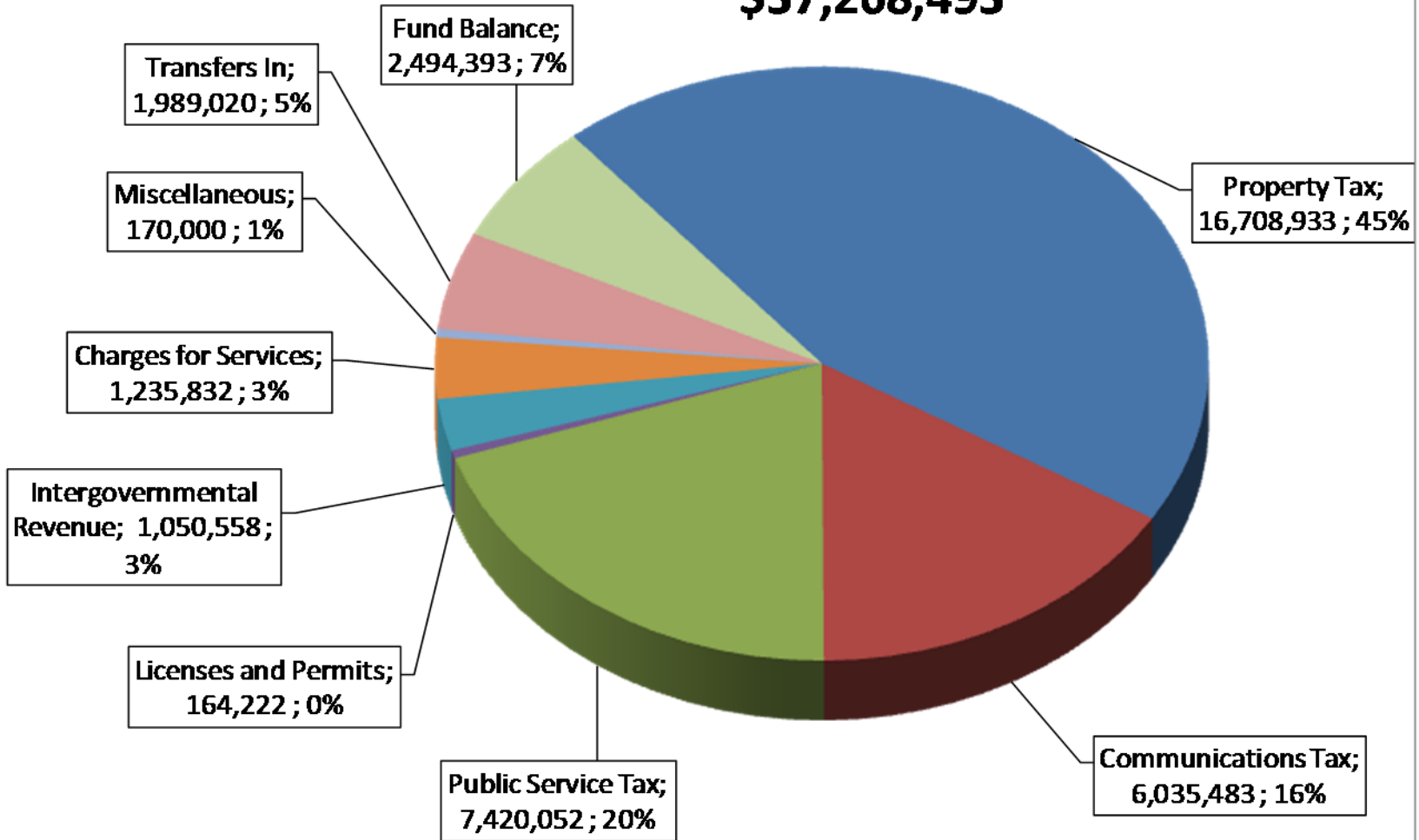


# FY10 Adopted Budget Alachua County - General Fund \$128,200,063



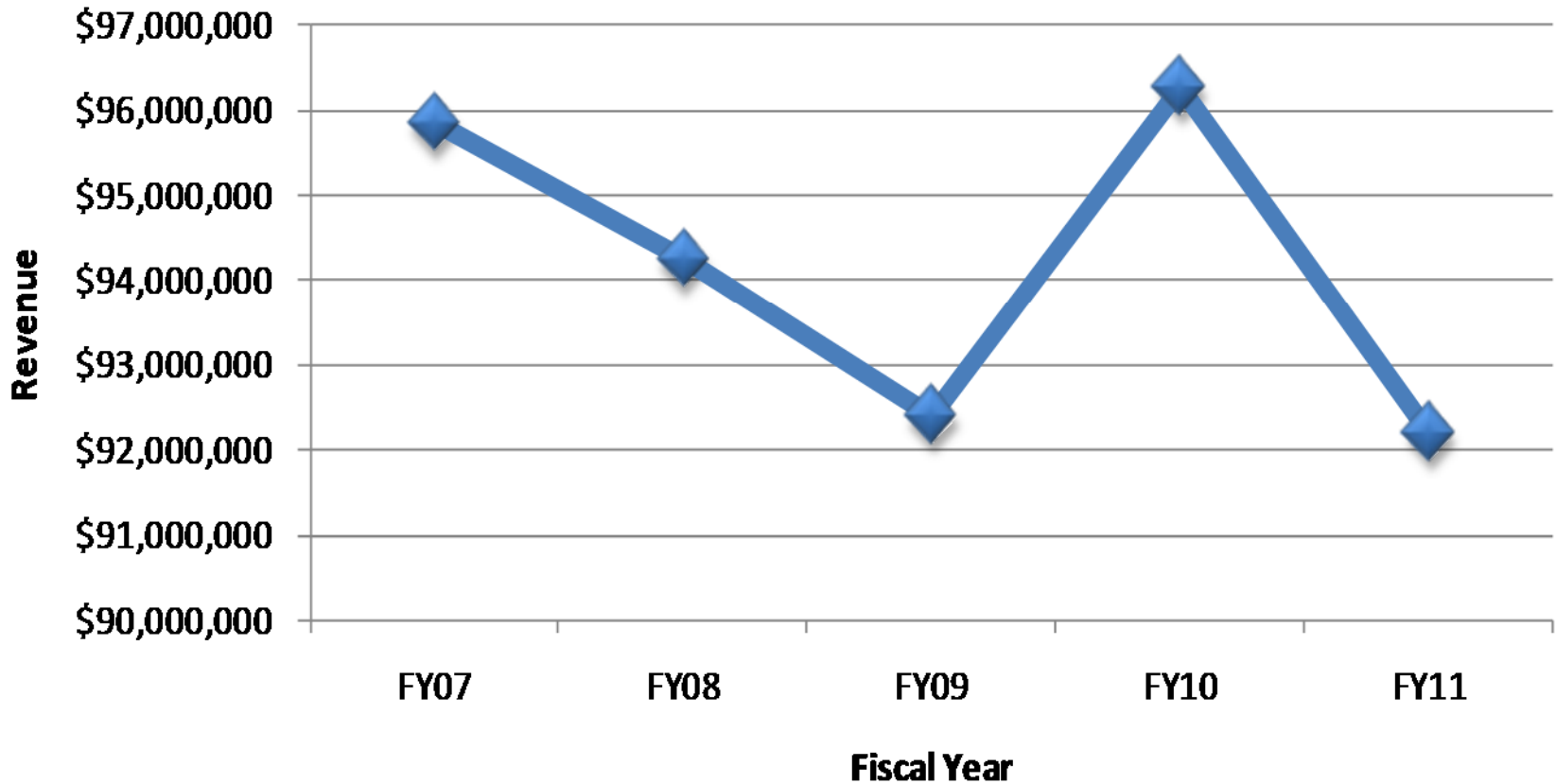


# FY10 Adopted Budget Alachua County - All MSTU's \$37,268,493



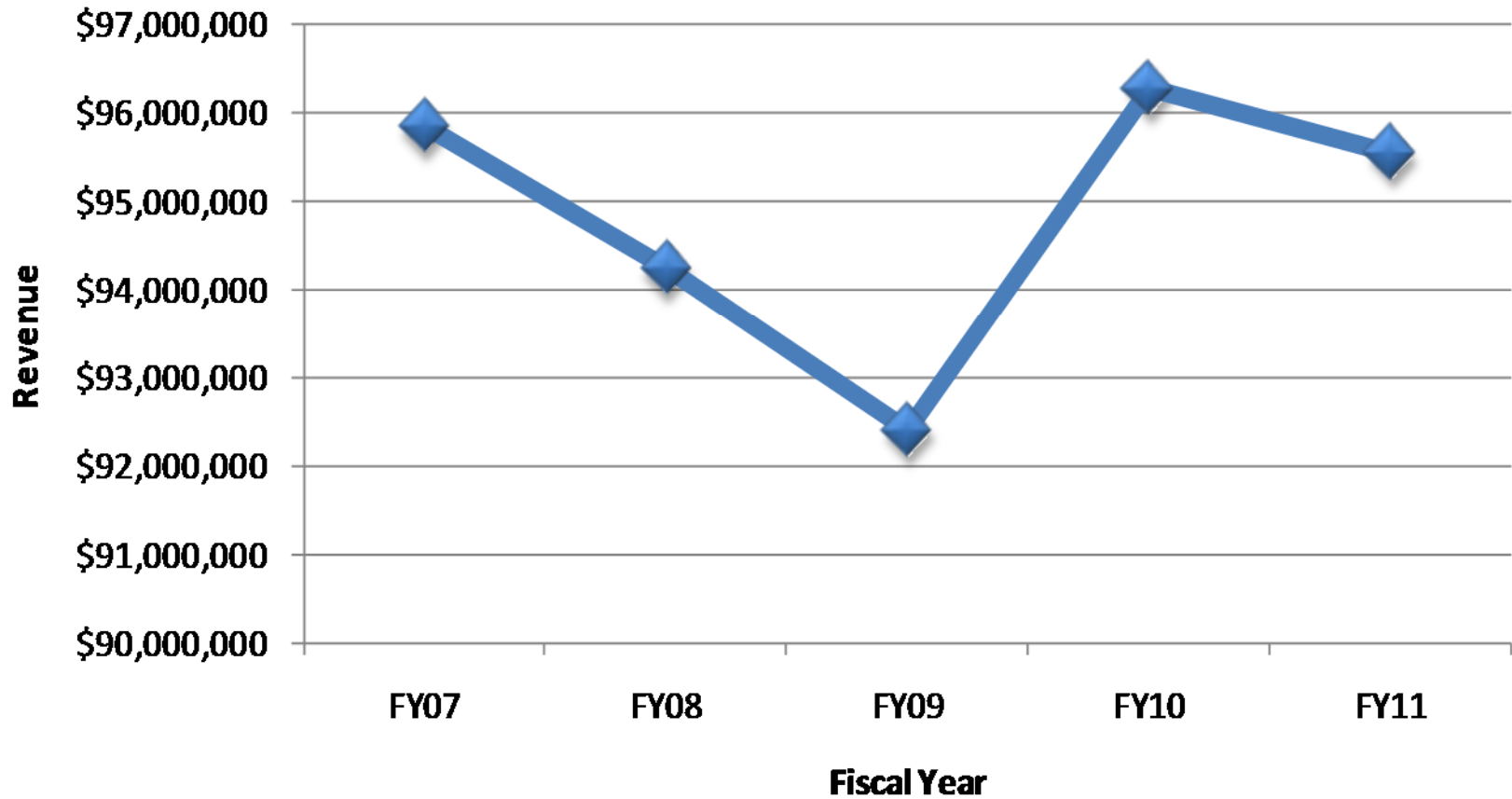


## Property Tax Revenue - General Fund Current Millage Rate for FY11



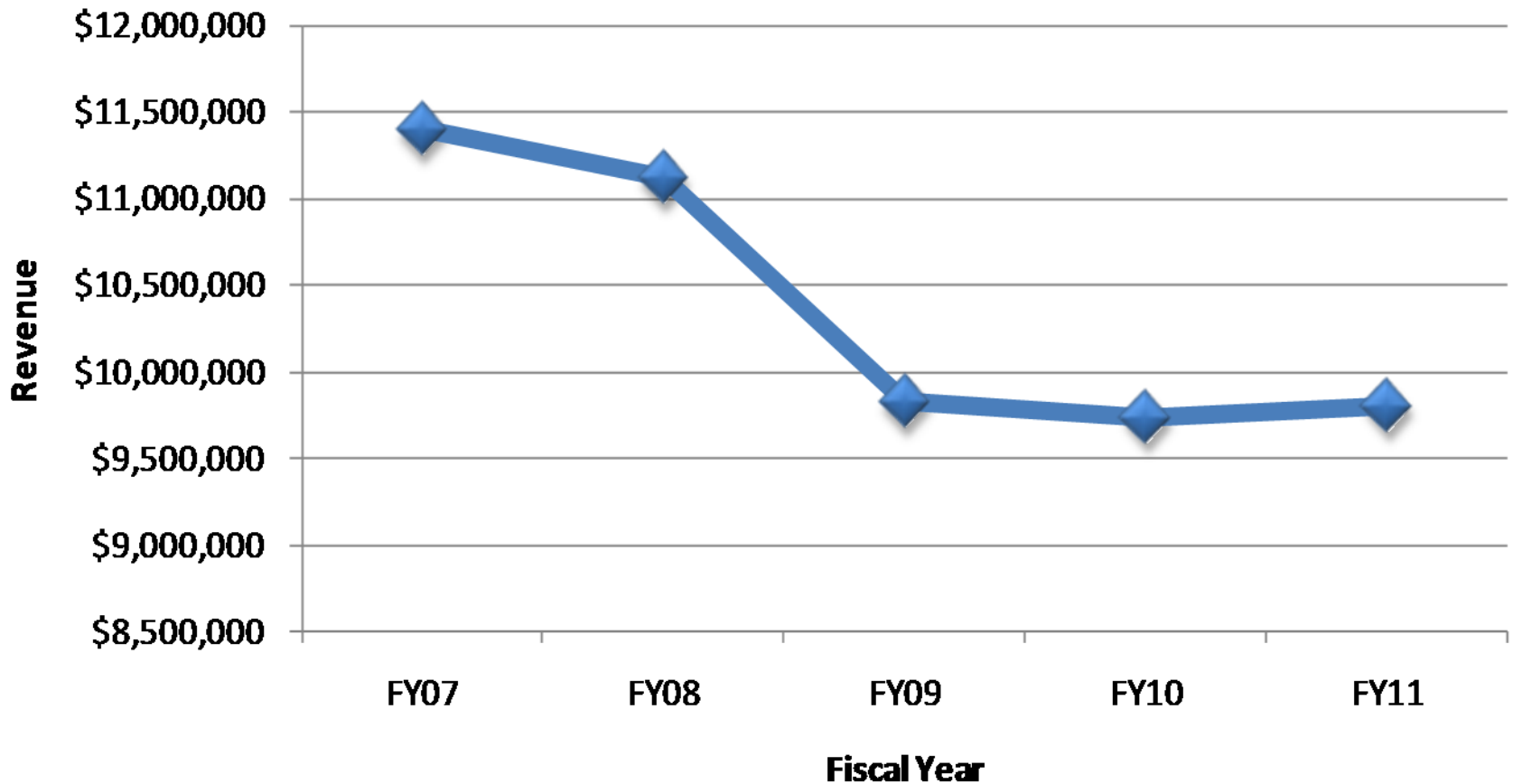


## Property Tax Revenue - General Fund State Millage Rate for FY11



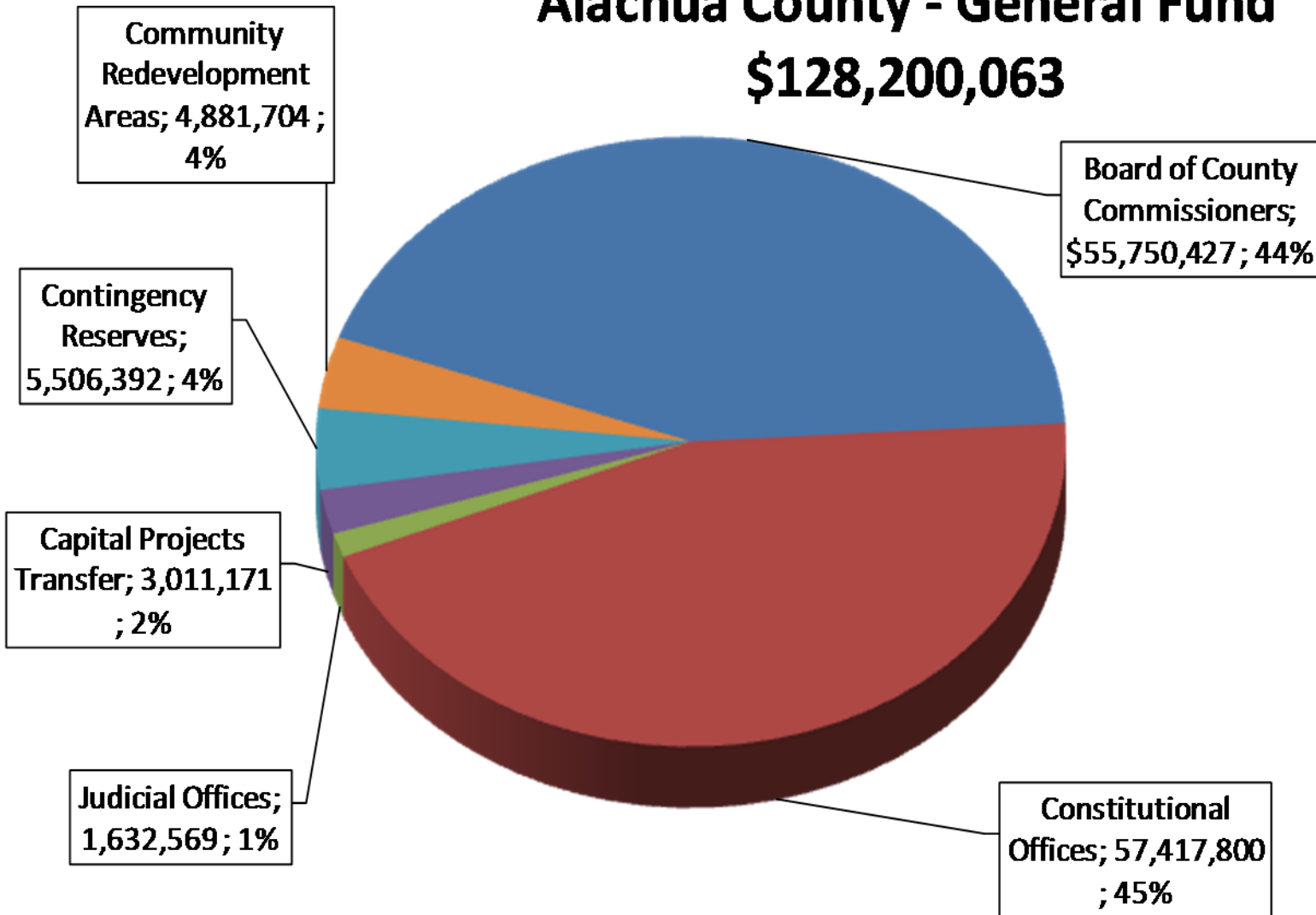


## 1/2 Cent Sales Tax Revenue - County Share





# FY10 Adopted Budget Alachua County - General Fund \$128,200,063





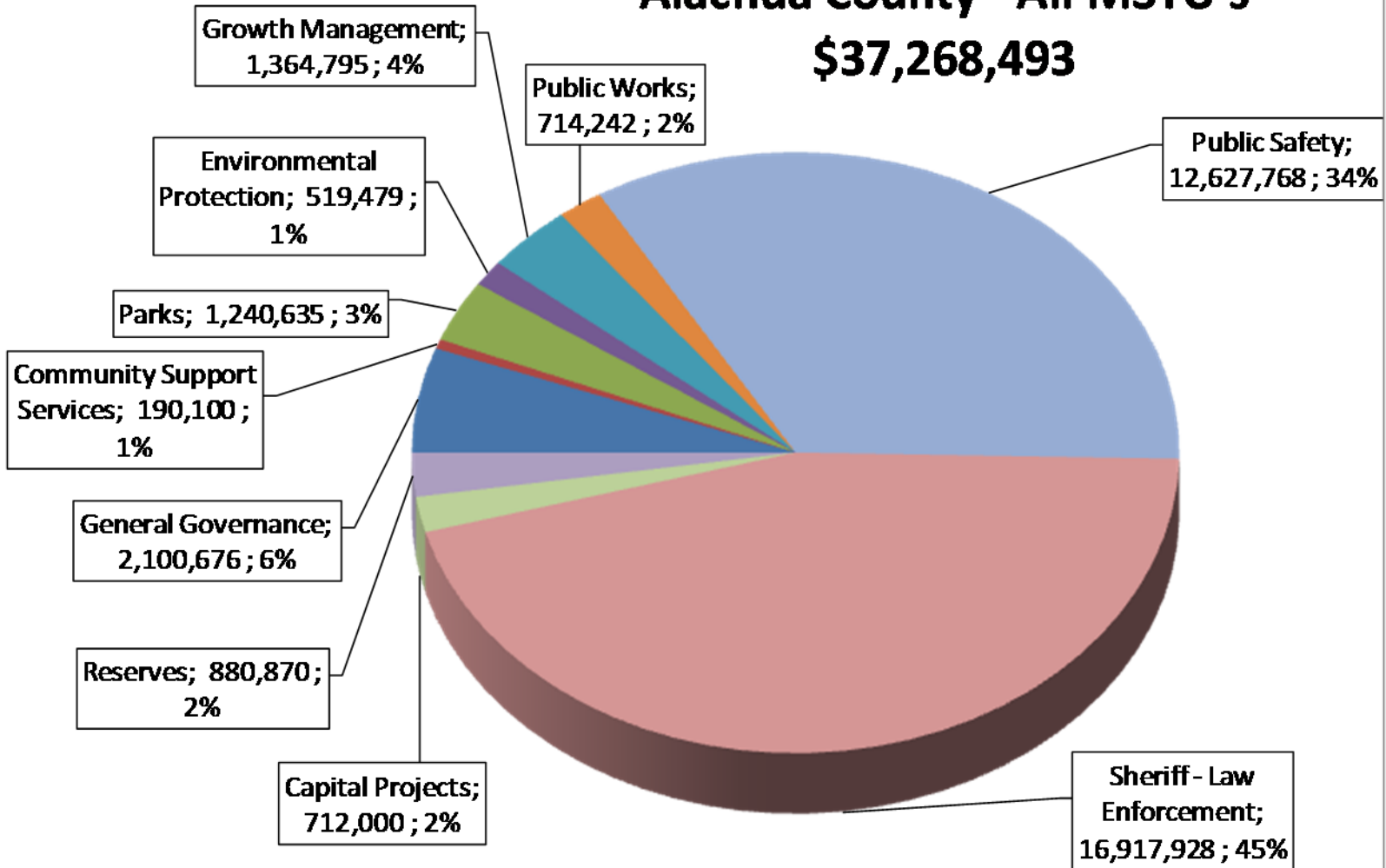


# County Expenditure Overview

- FY11 General Fund Budget Adjustments
  - Beginning fund balance (2,000,000)
  - Property Tax Revenue \* (3,500,000)
  - Inmate Medical Costs (1,000,000)
    - Total Adjustments (state millage) (6,500,000)
  - Update property tax revenue (current millage) (3,300,000)
    - Adjusted for worst case (9,800,000)



# FY10 Adopted Budget Alachua County - All MSTU's \$37,268,493





# Budget Overview – County Government





# Community Conversations

Conversations



# Community Conversations

---

Why do you believe that County government exists?

Based on the knowledge we just shared with you that Alachua County must make changes, what service do you fear we will reduce that you believe is necessary for the County to continue to do?



# Community Conversations

---

What services are you willing to reduce or do without?

Other than paying taxes, have you volunteered to work or provide service to benefit the community/county? If so, how?



# Community Conversations

## Budget Simulation

# Aligning For Success



Strategic Plan

Managed Growth & Development



Economic Development



Environmental Stewardship



Health & Human Services



Public Safety



Governance



Quality Workforce



Infrastructure & Physical Assets



Fiscal Strength







# Community Conversations

County Manager Closing Remarks



# Challenges Ahead...

---

- The “new normal” that we discussed today, and the concept of limited community budget will require us to collaborate more in conversations about how we can attain our goals without depending on government or taxes.



# Challenges Ahead...

---

- Governments are struggling to redefine their roles and what levels of service they can provide to citizens.
- Citizen expectations will have to change and citizen involvement will need to increase in order to meet the challenges ahead.

# Why Civic Engagement?

- We wanted to have a conversation with you.
- When policies are grounded in citizen preferences, the result is cooperation between sectors of the community and the overcoming of community problems





# Why Civic Engagement?

- The “new normal” creates a disconnect between what your expectations are and what we can provide as a government
- We want you to see yourselves as citizens rather than our customers
- Citizens will make choices about their future rather than waiting for someone else to do something for them



# Community Building for our Future

History shows us that a community is simply a collection of the individual behavior of its citizens. The world is filled with examples of how negative behaviors and lack of civility are destroying our sense of community. It is our hope that positive community engagement will make us a more sustainable community.

“Fundamentally, the behavior of citizens is what will be decisive in sustainable communities”

- *Peter Block*



Thank you for your participation!