

**Benton County**  
**Summary of Major Factors in the Final 2020 Budget and Levy**

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- ❑ The final 2020 levy increases 1.99%, or \$392,835 from 2019, to a total of \$20,119,369
- ❑ With this change for 2020, the 10-year average levy change for Benton County is a 0.87% increase (the final 2020 levy is \$169,000 higher than it was 10 years ago)
- ❑ The final 2020 levy keeps the increase below the 7.8% expected growth in the County’s payable 2020 tax capacity, which translates into a reduced County tax rate in 2020; the estimated 2020 County tax rate will fall from 61.5% to 58.16% of tax capacity (down from a peak of 77.74% in 2013)
- ❑ The final 2020 operating budget totals \$45,026,581, a decrease of \$665,678, or a 1.5% reduction from 2019
- ❑ The final 2020 levy increase is comprised of the following major elements:
  - Employee compensation and benefits \$551,053
  - Additional County Program Aid (245,061)
  - Funded “Policy Issues” (new funding) 271,943
  - All other operating and capital budget changes (185,100)
  - Total Levy Change for 2020 \$392,835
- ❑ The final 2020 budget includes the following “Policy Issues”:
  - An additional Supervisor position in Human Services, based on a Human Services study recommendation to reduce the number of direct reports for current supervisors (\$93,387)
  - Abolishing a vacant Community Health Specialist position to help fund the new Supervisor position (\$81,082 in savings)
  - A Deputy Director position for Human Services as recommended by the Human Services study (\$114,048/\$81,599 net levy after revenue offsets)
  - A part-time position for the License Center to address increased customer volume at the DMV counter (\$18,552)
  - Adding \$35,000 to Auditor-Treasurer for increased election year expenses
  - Funding a new payroll and Human Resources information management system (\$17,612)
  - Using \$36,875 in reserves for an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (Drone) for the Sheriff’s Office
  - Using the County Board’s contingency account in 2020 to fund a new leadership training program for County managers.
- ❑ The 2019 State Legislature increased County Program Aid (local government aid) by \$27 million statewide; this increase plus the County Program Aid formula provides Benton County with an additional \$245,061 in Aid for 2020; the County’s total certified County Program Aid for 2020 is \$2.7 million; without this additional County Program Aid, the County’s final 2020 levy increase would be 3.2%.