

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCIAL ANALYSIS**INTRODUCTION**

The responsibility of implementing the Perry County Comprehensive Plan rests with the administration of the County. The effectiveness of this plan toward reaching sound planning goals relies on clear communication between the Perry County Commissioners, the Perry County Planning Commission and other agencies and authorities involved in the development of the County's future. The continued support and maintenance of the Plan from County leaders, County administrators, and County residents is essential for its future success.

This section of the Comprehensive Plan delineates the County's governmental components associated with the planning and development process and describes the general financial structure of the County. These basic descriptions will assist in establishing a basis to promote both the Plan design and its implementation.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON PERRY COUNTY

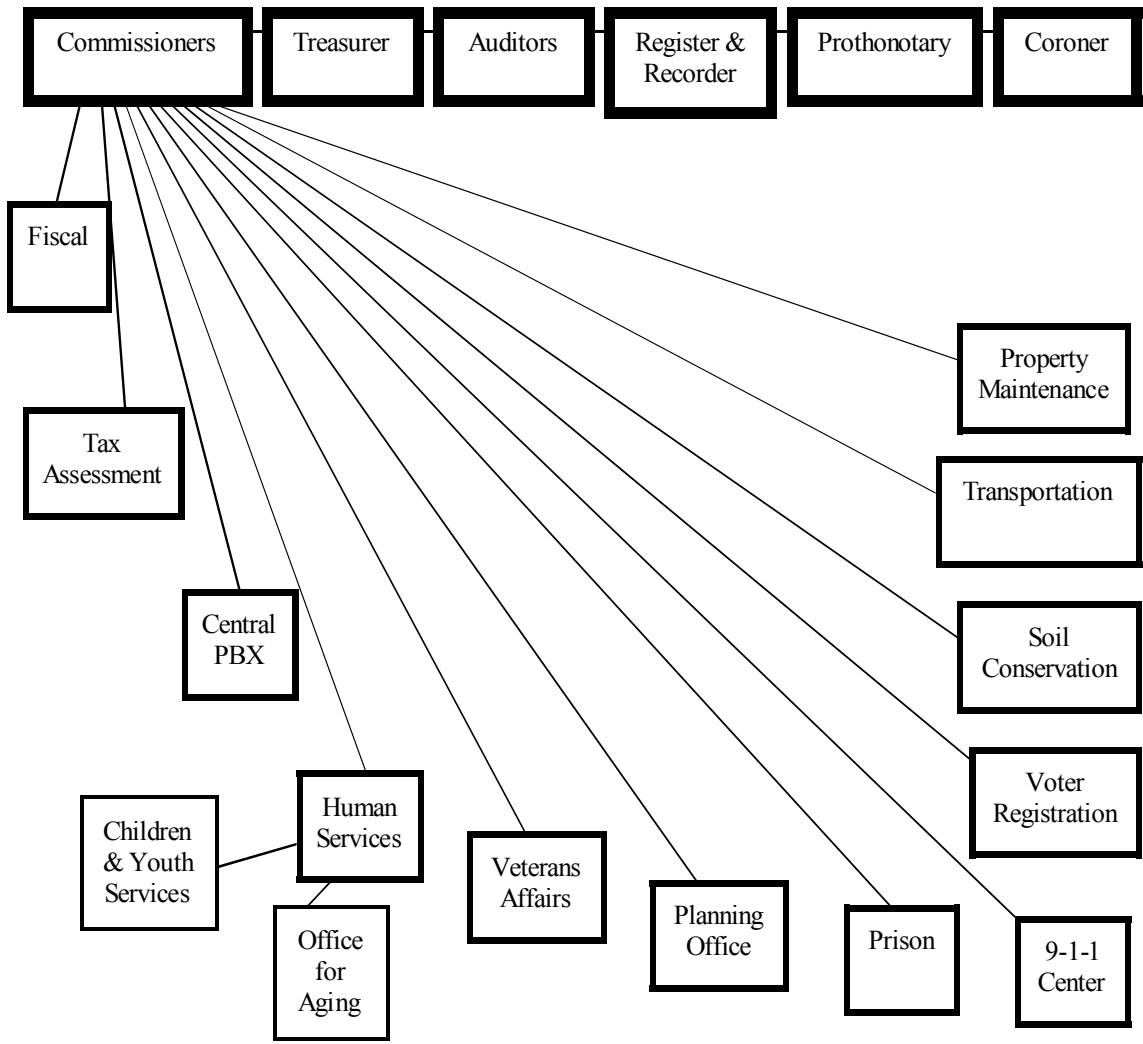
Based on a 2000 population of 43,602, Perry County is classified as a Seventh (7th) Class County. Section 210, Act 130 of August 9, 1955, P.L. 323, as amended, known as "The County Code" divides counties into nine (9) classes based on decennial population counts. Seventh Class Counties are those having a population of 20,000 or more but less than 45,000. Based on the population projection estimates listed earlier in the socio-economic chapter (Chapter IV), Perry County could be transitioning into a new class by the time the County embarks on its next comprehensive planning process.

The term "transitional" has been used to describe Perry County. Based on future population projections and anticipated growth, the County should find itself in a completely new class (6th) by the time the next comprehensive planning process is initiated.

There are thirteen (13) elected officers in Perry County, including positions in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. **Chart 10-1** illustrates the organizational structure of the County government.

The Perry County Board of Commissioners serves as the chief elected officials of the County government. The Board is comprised of three (3) members, each elected to a four-year term. Their responsibilities are numerous and include but are not limited to the annual budget preparation, millage rate establishment, appointment of planning commission members, and hiring county employees. Other responsibilities include supervision of the construction and maintenance of County owned facilities and bridges, and the administration of welfare, elections, and County health services. The Board of Commissioners meets weekly in the Perry County Veteran's Memorial Building to conduct official county business.

Perry County Executive/Legislative Government Structure



Perry County Judicial Government Structure

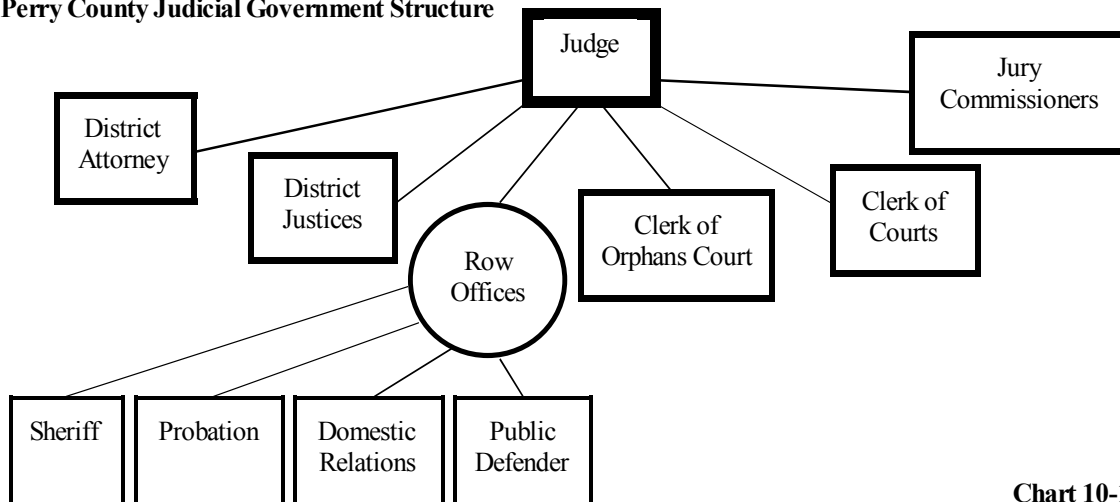


Chart 10-1

PLANNING IN PERRY COUNTY

Established in 1966, the Perry County Planning Commission is the primary planning body in the County. The Commission consists of nine (9) members appointed by the County Commissioners with each member meeting the County residency requirements.

The Commission's authorities and responsibilities are set forth in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) Act of 1968, No. 247, as reenacted and amended.

In addition to these basic responsibilities, the Board of Commissioners can request that the Planning Commission provide other services outlined in the M.P.C., such as: preparation and updating of the comprehensive plan, maintenance of certain files and records, preparation of codes and ordinances (zoning, subdivision and land development ordinances, building codes, and housing codes), preparation of environmental studies, and preparation of Capital Improvement Programs. The Planning Commission also administers the Community Development Block Grant Program and holds public meetings and public hearings as necessary.

On June 21, 2006, the Perry County Planning Commission finalized its first Mission Statement. The statement is as follows:

“To serve Perry County and its communities with a professional planning program structured to recognize and support regional and local planning efforts and to manage growth in a coordinated orderly fashion while preserving the natural and cultural features and rural character which create the Perry County lifestyle.”

The Perry County Planning Commission's staff functions are supported by the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission and an assigned planner with office hours at the Perry County Veteran's Memorial Building two (2) days a week. Both staffs coordinate subdivision and land development reviews in addition to the routine activities of the respective departments.

THE TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

The Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC) encompasses the region of Cumberland, Dauphin and Perry Counties. The Commission is composed of 31 voting members representing local planning organizations, municipal officials, county planning commissions and associations representing minority interests. Members are appointed bi-annually by each County's Board of Commissioners. The TCRPC meets in full four (4)



2006 TCRPC Full Commission Annual Meeting

times a year. An Executive Committee, comprised of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer, meets monthly outside the Full Commission.

The TCRPC staff includes an Executive Director, Associate Director, ten (10) staff planners, a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Manager, and a supporting technical and clerical staff. The staff is responsible for the daily activities of the Commission and the professional planning services.

Aside from the staff functions supplied to the Perry County Planning Commission, the TCRPC's staff responsibilities to Perry County are also directed toward the County's transportation planning.

Since being initiated in 1965, the Harrisburg Area Transportation Study (HATS), the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Harrisburg area, is an organization comprised of federal, state, and local agencies. HATS has continued with the planning process to establish a transportation system that will adequately serve the growing needs of the Harrisburg urbanized area. Serving as HATS support staff, the TCRPC's responsibilities involve an area of 1,675 square miles and 106 municipalities. The HATS planning process emphasizes short and



Tri-County Regional Planning Commission Staff

long-term problem solving and involves the public in the development of a Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program, Short Range Transit Plan, and Congestion Management System. The planning process culminates in the preparation and approval of a biennial Transportation Improvement Program, which constitutes the first four-year period of the Commonwealth's Twelve Year Program. Other important transportation planning activities include traffic counting and inventory work for the federally initiated Highway Performance and Monitoring System; administration of the Regional Ridesharing Program; the provision of transportation system information for interested individuals, organizations and local governments; congestion management planning; transit planning for Capital Area Transit (CAT); and review of projects and recommendations for the Commonwealth's Twelve Year Transportation Program.

In addition to the H.A.T.S. program, the TCRPC provides regional support services that include: Regional Annual Reports, a quarterly newsletter, functioning as an affiliate data center for the Pennsylvania State Data Center, and providing area-wide clearinghouse activities and special studies.

The TCRPC also contracts with several Perry County municipalities under the Local Planning Assistance Program (LPA). Through this program, the TCRPC staff provides direct professional planning assistance to the respective municipal planning commissions.

The service includes consultation on comprehensive planning, zoning, subdivision, and land development and other aspects of local planning programs.

PLANNING CODES AND ENFORCEMENT

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (PA MPC), Act No. 247, of 1968 as reenacted and amended, gives municipalities and counties, certain powers, and authorities to establish and enforce land use controls. This enabling legislation allows municipalities to prepare comprehensive plans, and to establish zoning, and subdivision and land development codes.

The PA MPC differentiates the county ordinance jurisdiction in municipalities that maintain local development ordinances and in municipalities that do not. The power of the county governing body to enact, amend, and repeal subdivision and land development, and zoning ordinances is limited to land in cities, boroughs, incorporated towns and townships that do not have these ordinances in effect at the local level.

Since the original enactment of the Perry County Subdivision Regulations in April of 1968, the Perry County Planning Commission has administered and enforced these regulations. Table 10-1 lists the current municipal information pertaining to the existence of local planning commissions, zoning ordinances, subdivision and land development ordinances, and comprehensive plans. The Perry County Planning Commission currently has the ultimate authority over eight municipalities in approval/disapproval of subdivision and land development plats. However, the remaining twenty-two (22) municipalities that do maintain ordinances are still required to have the County Planning Commission review and report on each application for subdivision and land development. The County has 30 days from the date a subdivision or land development application is received to supply the municipality with its review and report.

The County Planning Commission also fulfills its PA MPC obligations to perform reviews of municipal comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances and amendments, subdivision and land development ordinances and amendments. In addition, the Commission also performs a wide variety of intergovernmental reviews and other various county support functions.

**TABLE 10-1
MUNICIPAL PLANNING INFORMATION
PERRY COUNTY
2006**

Municipality	Planning Commission	Zoning Ordinance	Subdivision and Land Development (S&LD) Ordinance	Comp. Plan	S&LD Approving Body
Blain Borough	No	No	No	No	County
Bloomfield Borough	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Municipality
Buffalo Township	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Municipality

TABLE 10-1 Continued

Carroll Township	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Municipality
Centre Township	Yes	No	Yes	No	Municipality
Duncannon Borough	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Municipality
Greenwood Township	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Municipality
Howe Township	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Municipality
Jackson Township	No	No	No	No	County
Juniata Township	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Municipality
Landisburg Borough	No	No	No	No	County
Liverpool Borough	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Municipality
Liverpool Township	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Municipality
Marysville Borough	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Municipality
Miller Township	Yes	No	Yes	No	Municipality
Millerstown Borough	No	Yes	No*	Yes	County
New Buffalo Borough	No	No	No	No	County
Newport Borough	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Municipality
Northeast Madison Township	No	No	No	Yes	County
Oliver Township	Yes	No	Yes	No	Municipality
Penn Township	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Municipality
Rye Township	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Municipality
Saville Township	Yes	No	Yes	No	Municipality
Southwest Madison Township	No	No	No	Yes	County
Spring Township	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Municipality
Toboyne Township	No	No	No	No	County
Tuscarora Township	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Municipality
Tyrone Township	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Municipality
Watts Township	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Municipality
Wheatfield Township	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Municipality

SOURCE: *Tri-County Regional Planning Commission*

(*County acts on all subdivision and land development approvals but the Borough zoning ordinance regulations overrule County lot area and setbacks.)

PERRY COUNTY FINANCES

In order to successfully implement programs and provide services to county residents, adequate financial resources and support are essential. The Board of Commissioners must prepare a fiscal (January 1 through December 31) year budget. The budget anticipates all sources of revenue and expenditures for the coming year. The following section will outline the different revenue sources and expenditures in Perry County in 2005.

Revenue

The most important sources of revenue in Perry County are the Real Estate and Per Capita Taxes. These taxes account for almost half of the total revenue generated each

year. Other important revenue sources for the County are intergovernmental revenues and charges for County services. The following will discuss some of these sources.

1. Real Estate Taxes

Real Estate Taxes are taxes levied on real estate within Perry County, with some exemptions such as churches, public buildings, or charitable institutions. The rate is fixed to meet the budgetary needs determined by the County Commissioners. Overall, there are three (3) variables that affect the revenue total for a given year. These are:

A. Changes in the Total Market Value of Real Estate

This value usually increases due to the combined effect of real increases in property values and new additions to the housing stock or building stock through new construction and redevelopment.

B. Changes in the Assessment Ratio

The assessment value is important because it is the basis on which real estate taxes are levied. Currently, the assessment ratio in Perry County is 100 percent, as set by the County Commissioners. Perry County completed a full reassessment in 2000.

C. Changes in the Millage Rate

Determined by the County Commissioners, this rate is levied on the assessed value. The current County rate is 4.05 mills. As a result, a person who owns a house assessed at \$100,000.00 pays \$405.00 in taxes.

2. Per Capita Taxes

The Per Capita Tax is a flat rate imposed on all taxable persons that are residents of Perry County. Over the past several years the per capita tax has maintained a level of three (3) percent of the total taxes collected in the County.

3. Intergovernmental Revenue

Intergovernmental revenues are obtained from federal, state and local government programs and sources. In general, the federal sources are derived from social security and through the federal lands program. Revenue from the County's local governments comes from the gypsy moth program and from certain tax notices.

The largest amount of intergovernmental revenue is obtained through the many active state programs and assistance sources. In 2005, there were 28 different sources of state funded revenue for the County. Some of the larger programs include: Grant in Aid, Childcare Title XX, Foster Home/Institutional Care, Domestic Relations, Office of the Aging, and Transportation Coordination.

4. Charges for Services

The variety of fees and charges collected by the different services of Perry County's administration plays an important role in generating revenue. Filing and Recording fees, District Justice fees, and Sheriff's fees services are just a few of the fees collected by the County. This source of revenue accounts for approximately nine (9) percent of the County's total revenue.

5. Other Revenue

The miscellaneous revenue category is all the revenue outside the above-mentioned sources. This revenue includes sources such as rent, insurance reimbursements and other reimbursements. This category seems quite flexible and accounted for seven (7) percent of all revenue in 1985, three (3) percent in 1990, six (6) percent in 2000, and six (6) percent in 2005.

6. Licenses and Permits

Perry County gives licenses to both business and non-profit entities. Categorized as a revenue source, the license and permits issued by Perry County remain the smallest source of revenue. The 2005 budget relied on this area of revenue for less than one (1) percent of the County's revenue income.

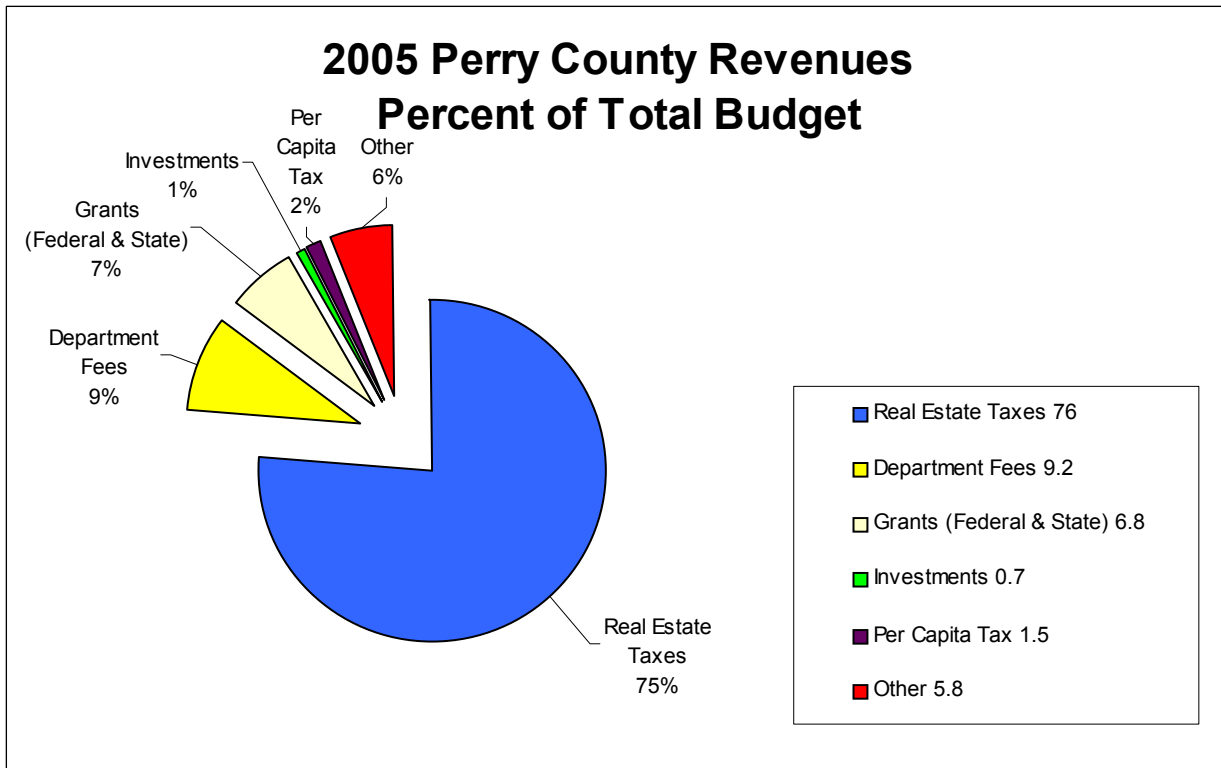


Chart 10-2

Perry County Expenditures

Expenditures of the Perry County government are detailed here. The following list gives the general categories where money is spent by this government. A closer examination of the County's 2005 Budget Chart (See Chart 10-3) also may be useful in understanding where the County Commissioners allot money within the various channels of the governmental system. The categorical groupings of offices/departments for the 2005 Budget are as follows:

1. General Government – This category includes the County Commissioners Office, Chief Clerk, Fiscal Office, Voter Registration Office, Auditors, Assessment Office, Tax Claim/Treasurer, and Veterans Affairs.
2. Judicial – This group consists of the Judges' Office, District Attorney, Sherriff's Office, District Justice Offices, Probation Office, Coroner, Public Defender, Domestic Relations, Prothonotary/Clerk of Courts Office, Register & Recorder, and the Jury Commissioners.
3. Public Safety – This set contains Emergency Management and 9-1-1.
4. Human Services – This grouping includes Mental Health/Mental Retardation, Drug and Alcohol, Children and Youth Services, and the Office of Aging.

5. Prison – The County budget lists the Prison separately because of the significance of its influence.
6. Conservation and Development – This category comprises Farmland Preservation, Black Fly Suppression, Planning Commission, Conservation District, Agricultural Extension Office, Recycling, and Housing.
7. Debt Service – Return payment on expenditures and other financing.
8. Tax Collection – This classification includes Tax Collectors and the Tax Claim Bureau.

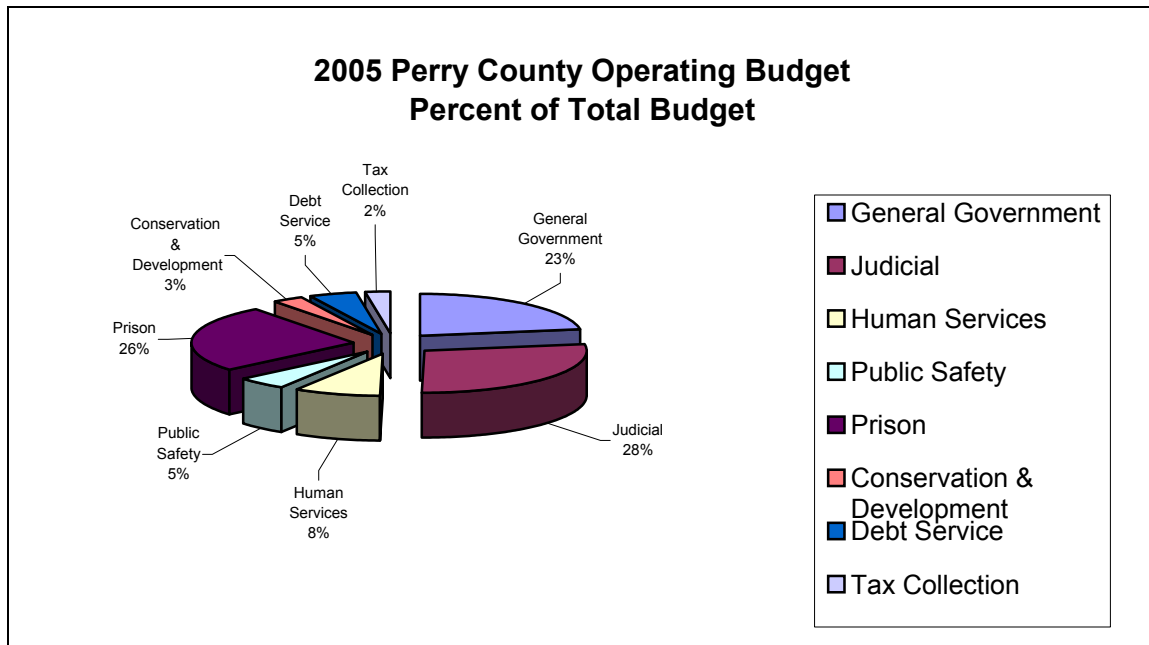


Chart 10-3

The actual dollar amounts budgeted for each office/department category is as follows:

General Government	\$2,254,410.00
Judicial	\$2,777,130.00
Human Services	\$847,939.00
Public Safety	\$498,625.00
Prison	\$2,573,200.00
Conservation & Development	\$322,478.00
Debt Service	\$467,250.00
Tax Collection	\$249,425.00

Source: Perry County Fiscal Office

* All told, employee wages and benefits account for 59% of the budget at a cost of \$5,953,815.00.