



PRESERVING THE PUBLIC TRUST

AN ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2021

ROGER D. EATON

Clerk of the Circuit Court & County Comptroller
Charlotte County, Florida

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MESSAGE FROM ROGER D. EATON, YOUR CLERK AND COUNTY COMPTROLLER



In 2021, the Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce named the Charlotte County Clerk's office its large business of the year. I am humbled and honored that we were recognized for our continued efforts to make our office more efficient, user friendly, and transparent for the citizens of Charlotte County. That my staff continued meeting these goals despite COVID-19 lurking over us this year is a testament to the skill, hard work, and willpower of our entire staff.

It's been an innovative year as we introduced hyper-automation into our local court system. Hyper-automation facilitates the processing of court documents directly into our Case Maintenance System (CMS), without any human intervention. As a result, court documents are now available for public viewing within seconds, rather than hours or days. Our staff now has substantially more time to provide direct assistance to help serve our citizens and can focus on more complicated tasks, such as attendance at court hearings and efficiently processing case records.

In an effort to provide better citizen communication and engagement, as well as receive important feedback from our local community, we increased our social media presence. You can find us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn. Please connect with us, as we constantly share valuable information and updates. Via customer service kiosks, we continually monitor feedback provided by citizens who use our office's services. Whether online or through our customer service kiosks in the Justice Center, we welcome our citizens' feedback and suggestions on how we can provide improved services. Court documents online instantly...Clerk automation in effect!

For the fifth straight year, your Clerk's office reduced its budget, this year by 2.6%. As a result, your Clerk's office returned \$529,536 in budget funds to the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners this year, despite rising staff health care costs and increased Florida Retirement System (FRS) rates.

Since I took office in 2017, your Clerk's office has returned over \$2 million in taxpayer funds to the Board of County Commissioners, without eliminating any services provided by our office to local citizens. Excellent staff combined with implementing cutting-edge technology systems provides simultaneous cost savings and increased services for everyone.

The Comptroller Division for your Clerk's office manages all investments for Charlotte County funds. Our financial team

ensures the safety, liquidity, and profitability of all county investments. This past fiscal year, at its highest point we managed a Charlotte County investment portfolio of \$699 million, which earned \$3.5 million for the year. Since I took office in 2017, over \$32.7 million has been earned on county funds controlled by your Clerk's office.

For the fifth consecutive year, your Clerk's office was awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association. (<https://www.gfoa.org/>) The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment for our Comptroller Division and staff.

Not only has our staff excelled in the workplace in 2021, but we have also supported our community outside of normal business hours. Our office partners with the Animal Welfare League and sponsors "Eaton's Eats" to collect food donations for AWL. Our Jury Pay Donation Program benefits Center for Abuse and Rape Emergencies (CARE) by allowing jurors the option of donating their jury pay to CARE rather than accepting the compensation. In honor of Veterans Day, we offered FREE passport photos to all veterans and active military personnel for the entire month of November.

On behalf of the entire staff at the Charlotte County Clerk's office, thank you again to the Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce for naming our office the 2021 Charlotte County Large Business of the Year. I know how hard the Clerk's office staff works, day in and day out, to provide the best, most convenient and efficient services possible to the citizens of Charlotte County. I am appreciative their hard work and effort were recognized and congratulated.

For more information about our office and to access all of our new features, please visit us at CharlotteClerk.com.

Thank you!

HONORABLE, ROGER D. EATON
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND COUNTY COMPTROLLER

ABOUT THIS REPORT

“Preserving the Public Trust” is an overview of the finances of Charlotte County’s government which includes the Board of County Commissioners, Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller, Sheriff, Tax Collector, Property Appraiser and Supervisor of Elections.

ABOUT THE POPULAR ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT (PAFR)

Charlotte County Clerk of the Circuit Court & County Comptroller, Roger D. Eaton, is proud to present the Charlotte County Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2021. The purpose of the PAFR is to provide a user-friendly summary of the financial position of Charlotte County, Florida and other interesting information for citizens who want a better understanding of the County’s finances. The financial information in the PAFR is taken from Charlotte County’s Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). The ACFR details the County’s financial position and operating activities each fiscal year presented in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and includes financial statements audited by Cherry Bekaert, LLP and Ashley, Brown & Smith, CPA, independent firms

of certified public accountants. The auditors’ reports concluded that the financial statements fairly reflect the financial condition of Charlotte County, including the Constitutional Officers, in all material respects.

The numbers in the PAFR come from an audited source but they are presented in a summarized, unaudited non-GAAP format that is more accessible to the public. Citizens who wish to review the audited, full disclosure statements can refer to Charlotte County’s Annual Comprehensive Financial Report on Charlotte County Clerk of the Circuit Court & County Comptroller’s website at http://charlotteclerk.com/Reports/ACFR_2021.pdf

ABOUT THE CLERK & COMPTROLLER

The Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller’s Office is responsible for safeguarding public records and public funds. The Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller is independently elected and accountable to Charlotte County residents. In addition to the roles of Chief Financial Officer, Treasurer and Auditor for Charlotte County, the Clerk and Comptroller is the Clerk of the Circuit Court, County Recorder, Ex-Officio Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners and Value Adjustment Board.



CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS, BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS & COUNTY ADMINISTRATION



CLERK AND COMPTROLLER

ROGER D. EATON

- Clerk of the Circuit Court
- County Comptroller
- County Recorder
- Clerk of the County Commissioners



PROPERTY APPRAISER

PAUL L. POLK

- Determine and assess all property value within the county



SHERIFF

BILL PRUMMELL

- To serve and protect our community



SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

PAUL A. STAMOULIS

- Designated to administer elections and voter registration for the county



TAX COLLECTOR

VICKIE L. POTTS

- Responsible for the collection of local and state taxes

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



DISTRICT 1

KEN DOHERTY



DISTRICT 2

**CHRISTOPHER
CONSTANCE**



DISTRICT 3

BILL TRUEX



DISTRICT 4

STEPHEN R. DEUTSCH



DISTRICT 5

JOE TISEO

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION



COUNTY
ADMINISTRATOR

HECTOR FLORES



DEPUTY COUNTY
ADMINISTRATOR

EMILY LEWIS



ASSISTANT COUNTY
ADMINISTRATOR

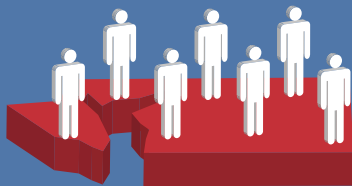
CLAIRE JUBB

HISTORY OF CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Charlotte County was established April 1921, located on the southwestern Florida coast, and was named for the Bay of Charlotte Harbor. Punta Gorda is the only incorporated city in Charlotte County. Charlotte County has a population of approximately 190,000 on 680 square miles of land and over 200 miles of natural shoreline and canals. Charlotte County’s largest industries are trade, transportation and utilities, education and health services, leisure and hospitality, government, and construction.

The County is a political subdivision and a charter county of the State of Florida established by and operating pursuant to the Constitution of the State of Florida, Article VIII, Section 1(g). The Florida Constitution provides for “home rule” county charter government when approved by the voters through referendum. Charlotte County voters approved a charter form of county government effective January 1, 1986. The charter was amended in November 1992, November 1998, November 2010, and November 2016. Counties operating under charters have all the powers of local self-government not inconsistent with general law, or with special law approved by vote of the electors. The County, pursuant to its home rule powers, may enact county ordinances not inconsistent with general law.

Legislative control is vested with a five-member Board of County Commissioners, each of whom is elected to a four-year term. The day-to-day operational direction of the County is the responsibility of the appointed County Administrator. The operation of other specific government functions resides with five constitutional officers elected to four-year terms. They are the Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller, Property Appraiser, Sheriff, Supervisor of Elections and Tax Collector.



CHARLOTTE COUNTY HAS A POPULATION OF APPROXIMATELY

190,000



SQUARE MILES OF LAND

680



MILES OF NATURAL SHORELINE AND CANALS

200

2021 COUNTY HIGHLIGHTS & INITIATIVES

JUSTICE CENTER RENOVATION

The purpose of this renovation project was to: (1) relocate Clerk of Court records storage to an off-site building (2) Provide interior and exterior enhanced security improvements, including expansion of a secured entry pavilion, enclosing of an exterior colonnade for interior secured use, and other security enhancements (3) Provide remodeling, relocation, and growing in place of various departments currently located at the Justice Center, within the existing building footprint, to meet program target needs until at least 2025, and (4) Provide space for two new courtrooms and necessary support space.



CENTENNIAL EVENTS COMMEMORATED 100TH ANNIVERSARY

Charlotte County has been commemorating the 100th anniversary of its creation on April 23, 1921 when Charlotte, Highlands, Glades and Hardee counties were divided from DeSoto County.

The county held a Centennial Gala on April 23, 2021, created a Centennial website (www.CharlotteCounty100.com) and Facebook page (www.Facebook.com/CharlotteCounty100) and held more than a dozen commemorative events, attended by thousands.

Centennial street sign toppers were installed at historic and prominent intersections, banners were hung from the Gilchrist and Collier bridges and seals were installed on driveways, entryways and manhole covers.

Here's to the next 100 years!



CHARLOTTE COUNTY STATS

PRINCIPAL EMPLOYERS



CHARLOTTE COUNTY
SCHOOL BOARD
2,227



WAL-MART
ASSOCIATES, INC.
1,395



PUBLIX
SUPERMARKETS
1,321



BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS
1,301



Fawcett
H s l
FAWCETT MEMORIAL
HOSPITAL
1,000



BAYFRONT HEALTH
PORT CHARLOTTE
900



CHARLOTTE COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE
688



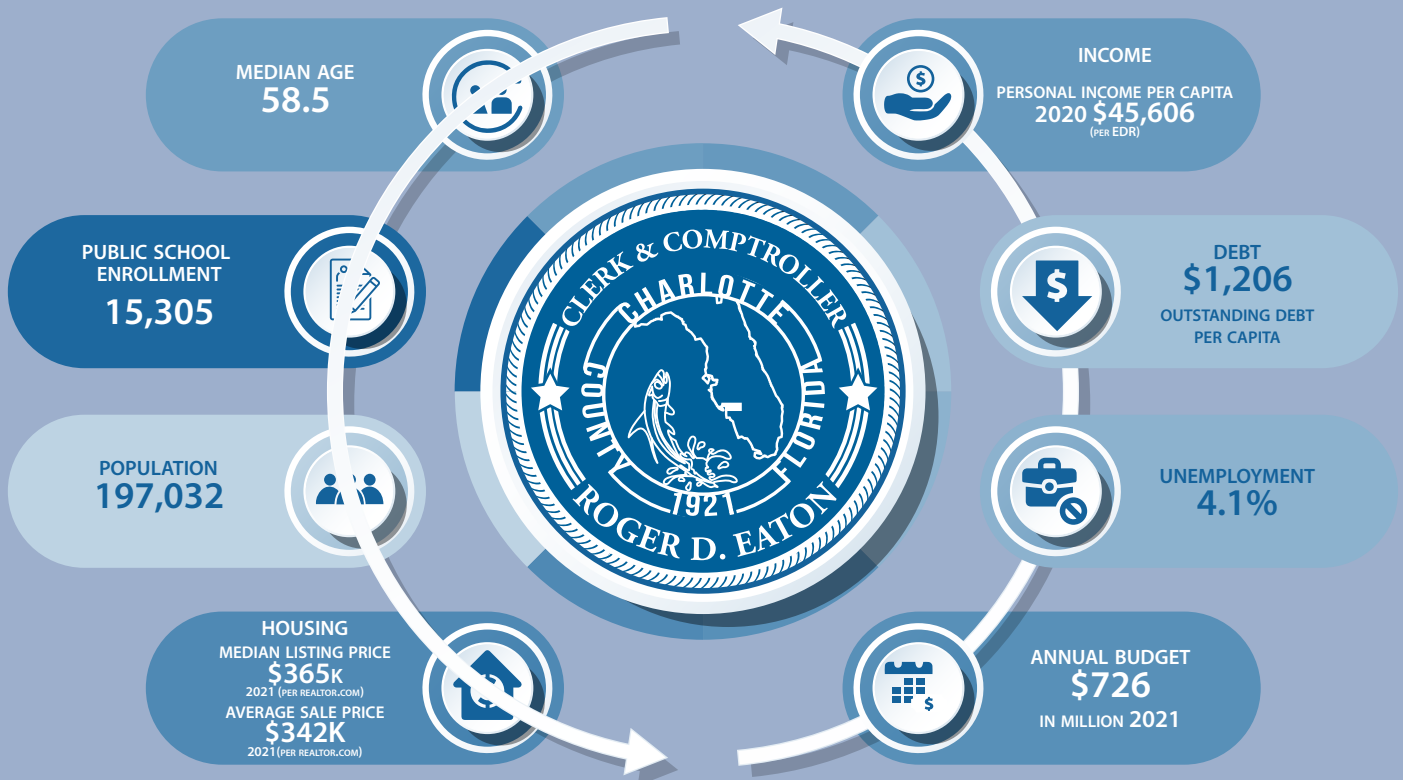
HOME
DEPOT
600



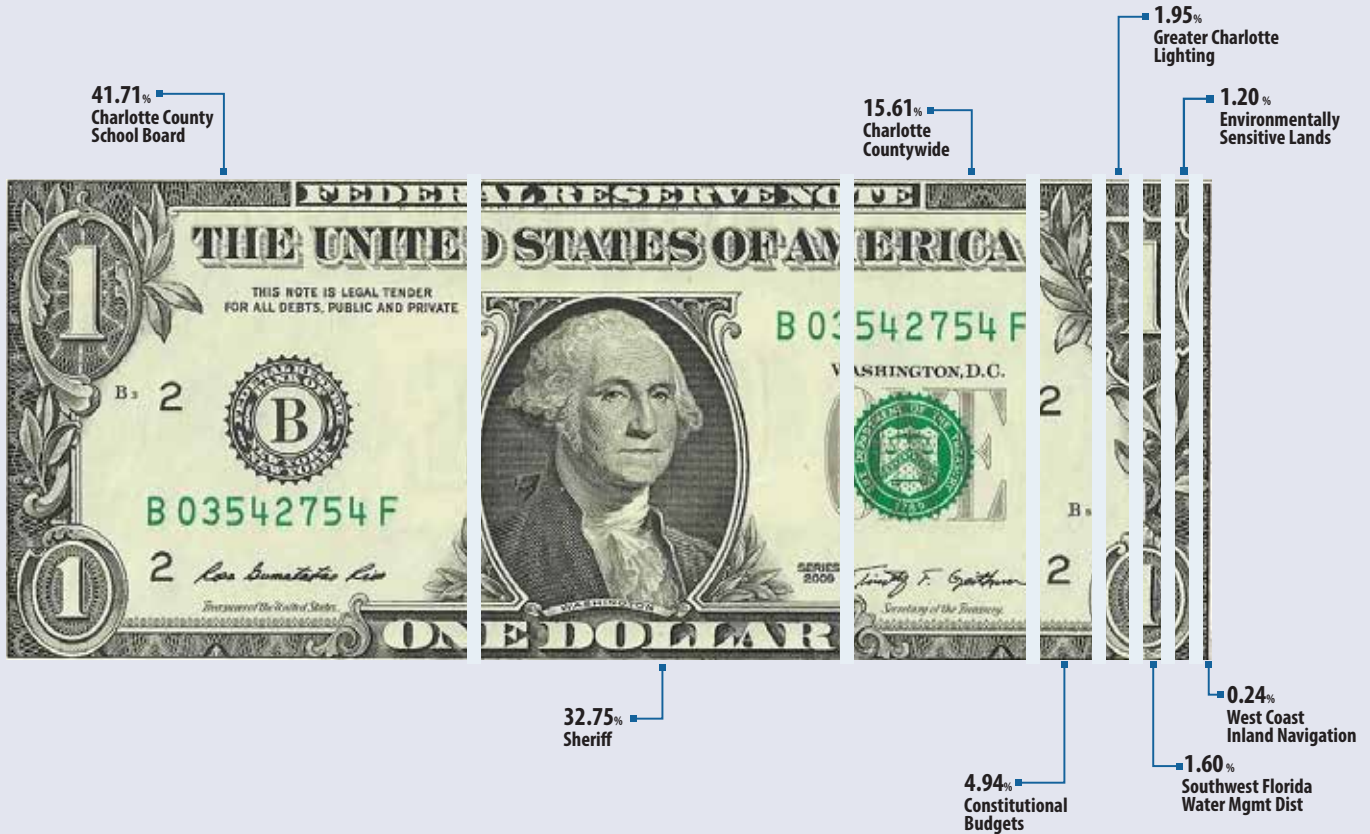
CHENEY
BROTHERS
590



BAYFRONT HEALTH
PUNTA GORDA
450



HOW YOUR TAX DOLLAR WILL BE SPENT IN FY 21/22



PRINCIPAL PROPERTY TAX PAYERS (TAXABLE ASSESSED VALUE)



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OVERVIEW

STATEMENT OF NET POSITION

The Statement of Net Position is presented in more detail in Charlotte County's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report. The summary shown here is a high-level summary that presents total assets and liabilities and compares them to prior years. The comparison may serve as a useful overall indicator of Charlotte County's financial position and trends over the past two years.

The County's activities are presented in two categories: governmental activities and business-type activities.

Governmental activities include most of the County's core services such as administration, building, public safety and public works. Property taxes and state shared revenues finance most of these activities. Business-type activities consist of Water and Sewer utility and Landfill, which is primarily financed through user fees and charges.

The largest portion of Charlotte County's net position is in capital assets such as land, buildings and improvements, equipment, and infrastructure, less any outstanding debt used to acquire the assets.

Charlotte County, Florida
Summary of Net Position
September 30, 2021 and 2020
 (\$000's)

	Governmental Activities		Business-Type Activities		Total	
	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020
Assets						
Current and Other Assets	608,123	533,174	223,655	171,869	831,778	705,043
Capital Assets, Net	964,319	932,949	376,604	359,984	1,340,923	1,292,933
Total Assets	1,572,442	1,466,123	600,259	531,853	2,172,701	1,997,976
Deferred Outflows	55,526	86,737	5,380	8,830	60,906	95,567
Liabilities						
Current and Other Liabilities	83,641	64,467	38,784	32,211	122,425	96,678
Long-term Liabilities	229,161	402,540	149,010	145,215	378,171	547,755
Total Liabilities	312,802	467,007	187,794	177,426	500,596	644,433
Deferred Inflows	124,370	5,569	8,216	439	132,586	6,008
Net Position	1,190,796	1,080,284	409,629	362,818	1,600,425	1,443,102

There are several transactions that have had an impact on the Statement of Net Position for the year ended September 30, 2021. Most notably, total assets increased \$174.7 million. \$74.9 million of the increase is cash and investments, attributable to a conservative spending approach as well as receiving pandemic recovery funds. Capital assets increased \$50.0 million for completed projects such as renovation and

expansion of the Justice Center; Aquatic Center at Centennial Park and East Port Water Reclamation Facility, Stage 5. Total liabilities decreased \$143.8 million, due to a decrease of \$162.3 million in net pension liability as the FRS Trust Fund investments earnings reported increased earnings and resulted in reduction of net pension liability statewide.

Statement of Activities

Statement of Activities, often referred to as an income statement, reflects all of the financial activity of Charlotte County during the fiscal year ended September 30, 2021. The statement presents information to show how the County's net position changed during the year as a result

of financial activity. Over time, increases or decreases in net position may serve as an indicator of whether the County's financial position is improving or deteriorating. The following is a summarized version of the detailed statement of activities found in Charlotte County's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report as compared to 2020.

Charlotte County, Florida
Summary of Revenues and Expenses
September 30, 2021 and 2020
(\$000's)

	Governmental Activities		Business-Type Activities		Total	
	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020
Revenues						
Program Revenues	242,410	175,898	148,878	143,339	391,288	319,237
General Revenues	261,796	251,706	2,076	7,070	263,872	258,776
Total Revenues	504,206	427,604	150,954	150,409	655,160	578,013
Expenses						
Program Expenses	394,294	399,092	103,543	98,415	497,837	497,507
Change in Net Position before transfers	109,912	28,512	47,411	51,994	157,323	80,506
Transfers	600	676	(600)	(676)	0	0
Changes in Net Position	110,512	29,188	46,811	51,318	157,323	80,506
Net Position October 1	1,080,284	1,051,096	362,819	311,501	1,443,103	1,362,597
Net Position	1,190,796	1,080,284	409,630	362,819	1,600,426	1,443,103

The Statement of Activities shows that Charlotte County's total net position has improved over the beginning net position by \$157.3 million. \$110.5 million of the increase is in governmental activities. Ad valorem taxes increased \$10.7 million as a result of Charlotte County experiencing a \$1.2 billion increase in property values with holding millage rates flat as compared to the prior year. Charges for services increased \$69.7 million. The majority of the increase is due to implementation of GASB 84 requirements which resulted in \$53.7 million increase in the form of documentary stamp and intangible tax charges for services. Gasoline, sales and other taxes increased \$8.1 million; included in this category are franchise fees, one cent local option sales tax and tourist development taxes. Business-type activities realized an

increase in net position of \$46.8 million; the largest portion of the increase is due to increased sanitation charges which was offset by decreased capital grants and contributions as large-scale water and sewer project was completed in prior year. Expense increased \$.3 million; \$52.4 million increase due to GASB 84 requirements in payments to the State for documentary stamps and intangible taxes offset by reductions of \$27.6 million in public safety expenses due to pandemic recovery payments received, \$19.6 million reduction of expenses in physical environment which would include completion of capital projects for the Justice Center. In addition, business-type activity expenses increased \$5.1 million in large part due to increased expenses for solid waste disposal and \$2 million in landfill closure expenses.

GENERAL FUND

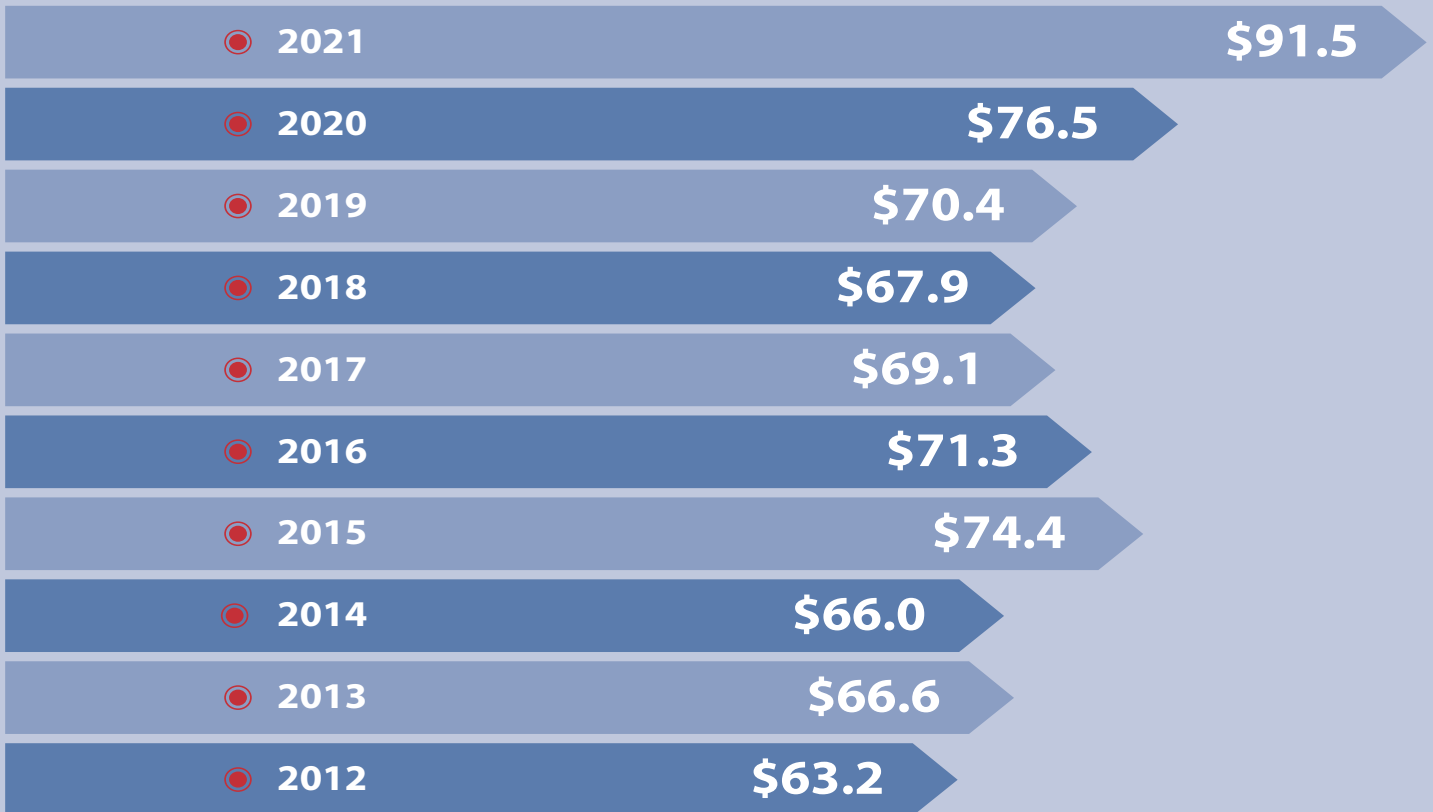
The General Fund is the operating funds for the principal governmental activities of the County. The ending funds balance as of September 30, 2021 was \$91.5 million.

The fund balance classifications used are:

- Nonspendable – funds that cannot be spent, such as prepaid items, inventory and advances to other funds.
- Restricted – Resources that are used based on constraints from other parties, such as grantors, creditors, contributors or laws and regulations.
- Assigned – amounts the County intends to use for a specific purpose.
- Unassigned – amounts that have not been assigned or restricted.

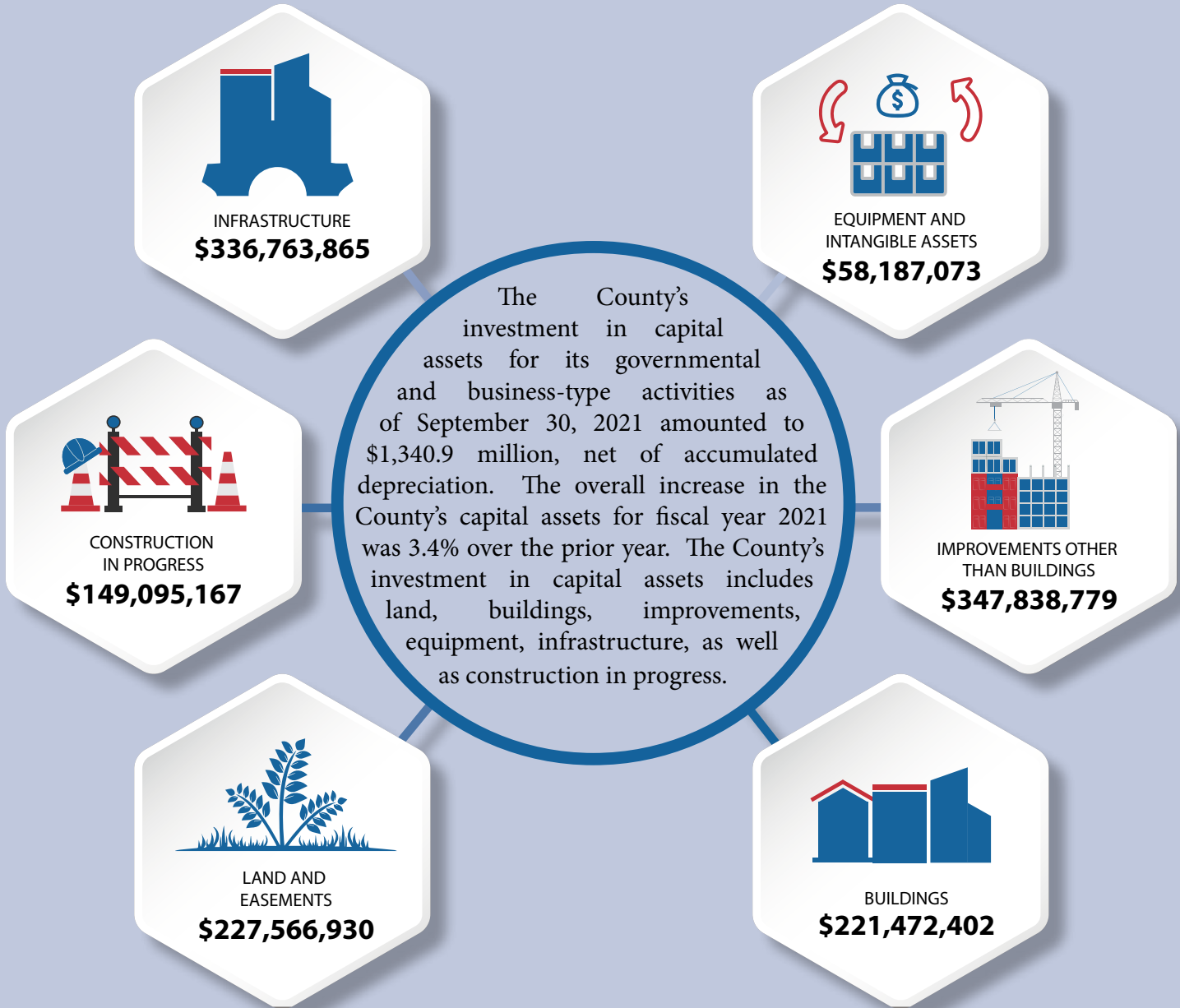
FUND BALANCES REPORTED

	2021	2020	2019
Nonspendable	\$811,424	\$768,828	\$715,162
Restricted	4,391,506	3,453,327	2,579,870
Assigned	7,119,598	7,198,523	7,129,322
Unassigned	79,187,173	65,119,573	59,968,635
Total	\$91,509,701	\$76,540,251	\$70,392,989

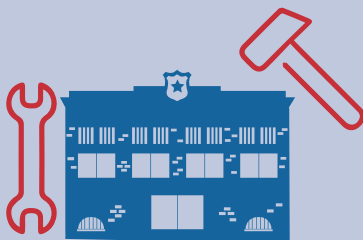


In millions as of September 30th of each year

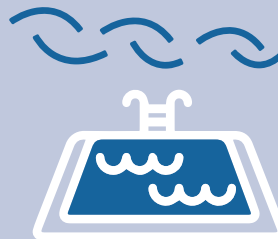
CAPITAL ASSETS



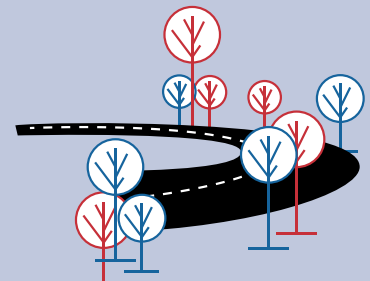
The overall increase in net capital assets from 2020 to 2021 was \$48 million. A few of the major projects that can be attributed to this increase include the following:



Justice Center Renovation and Expansion



Centennial Park Aquatic Center

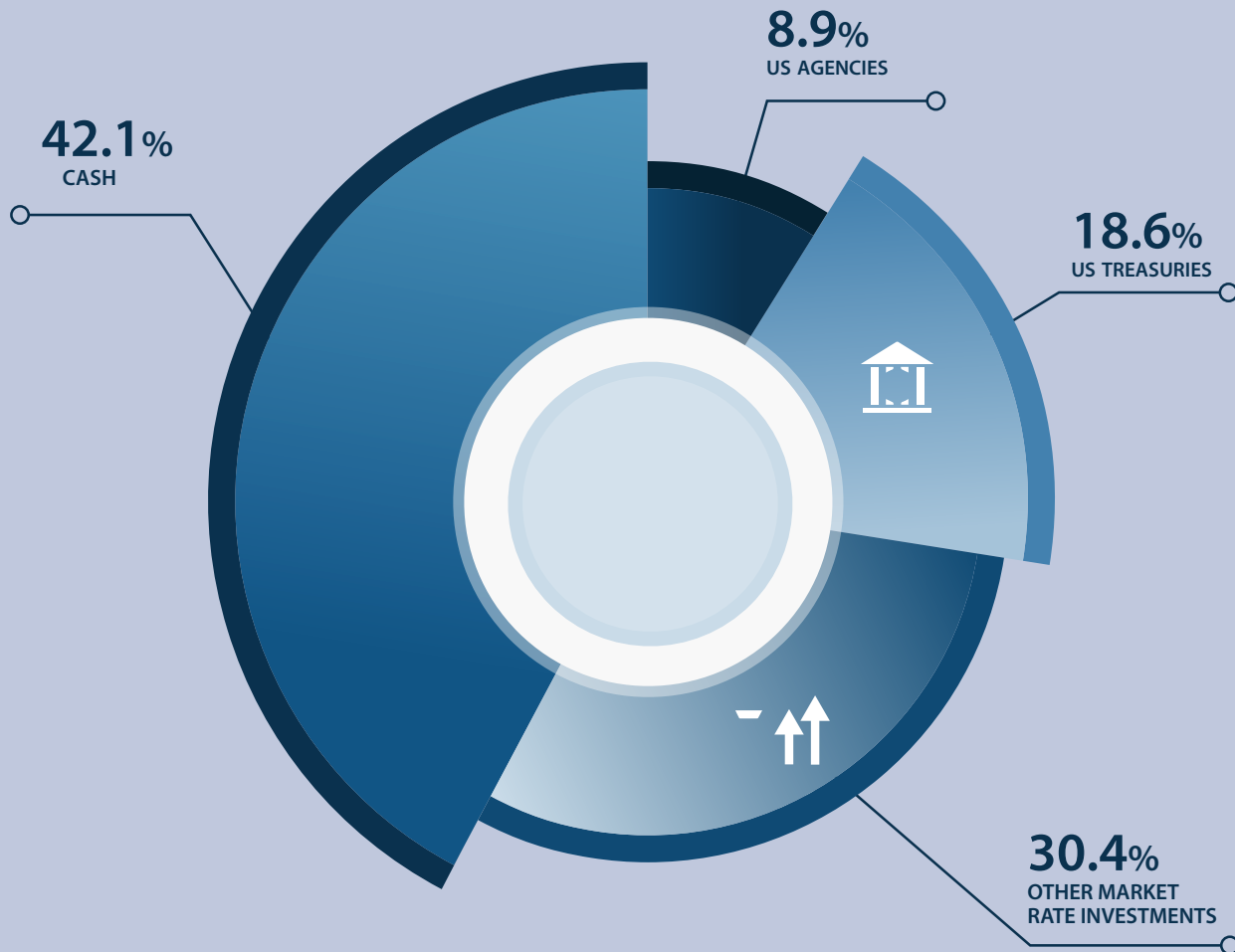


andhill Boulevard Phase 1

CASH AND INVESTMENTS

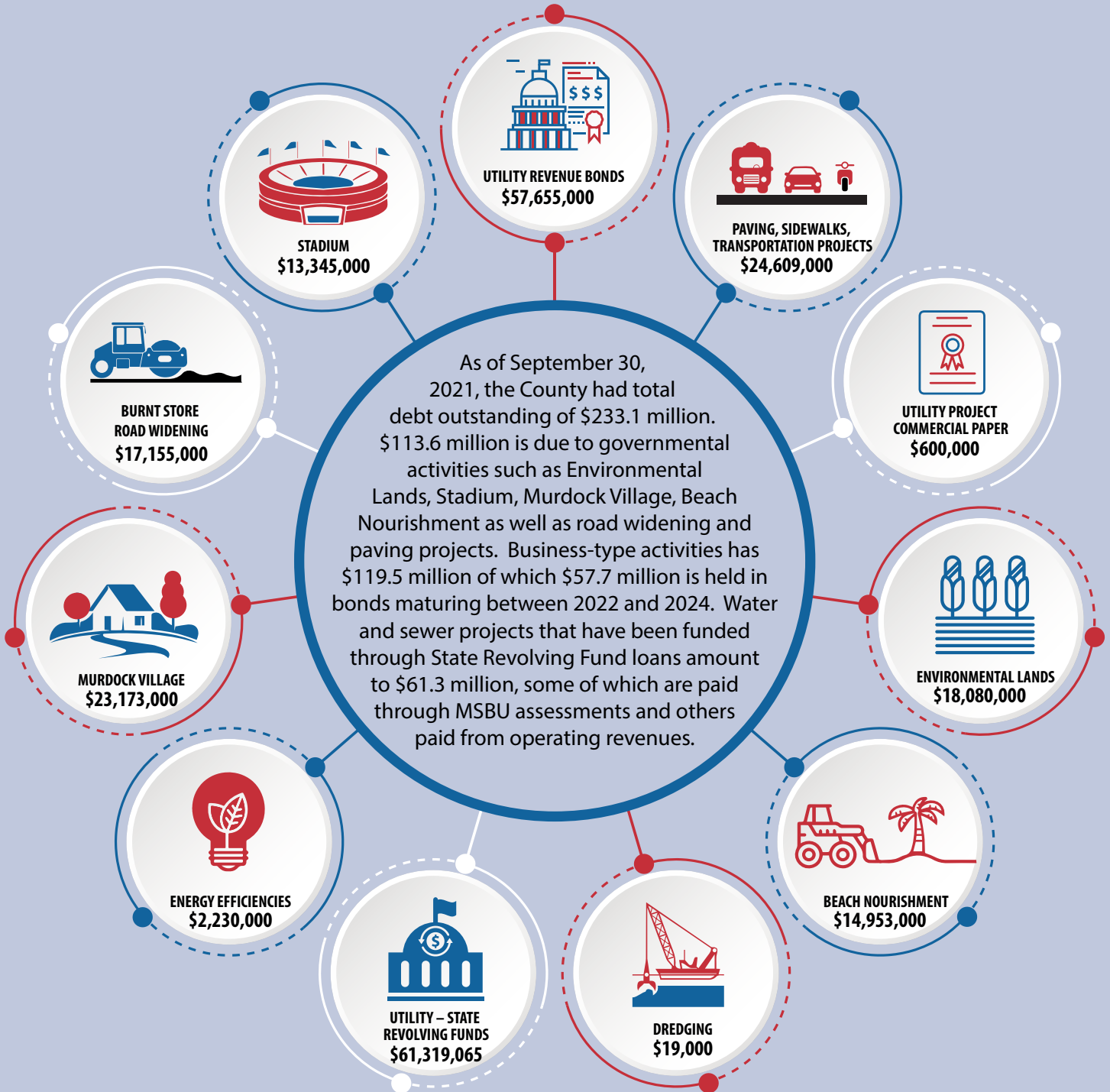
The Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller manages the County’s investment portion with the primary objective of safeguarding principal, then ensuring liquidity and maximizing investment earnings within guidelines of the County’s adopted investment policy. The adopted investments policy was developed in accordance with Florida Statute s218.415.

Cash and investments totaled \$675.8 as of September 30, 2021. Cash includes bank deposits, money market accounts and highly liquid investments with maturities of less than 90 days when purchased. Investments consist of U.S. Treasury Notes, U.S. Government Agency Securities. Other investments consist of local government investment pools such as Florida Trust Day to Day, Florida FIT, Florida FIT 1-3 fund and Florida Prime.



US Agencies	\$60.6
US Treasuries	\$125.7
Other Market Rate Investments	\$204.8
Cash	\$284.7

CHARLOTTE COUNTY DEBT



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



Through our annual Guardian ad Litem - 20th Circuit Toy Drive Collection, we work tirelessly to help Charlotte County families during the Holiday Season.




We helped 160 citizens obtain their passports and gave away over 250 free passport photos.


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Charlotte County Clerk of Court Roger D. Eaton

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@CharCoClerk

 **FOLLOW**
Charlotte County Clerk of Court Roger D. Eaton

Thank you for making our 2021 Operation Green Light a success! Our clerks helped 47 Charlotte County residents get back on the road and removing \$10,988.25 in collection fees.



HEART WALK



Thank you, Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce, for naming us Business of the Year! We appreciate this award, which recognizes the hard work, empathy, and efficiency of all Clerk's office staff.

NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS AND BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH.



C.A.R.E. Victim Services Center of Charlotte County Florida and Virginia B. Andes Volunteer Community Clinic Foundation



Throughout the month of October, Clerk's office staff observed National Domestic Violence Awareness and Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Through our efforts, we raised \$4,623.94 for C.A.R.E. Victim Services Center of Charlotte County Florida and Virginia B. Andes Volunteer Community Clinic Foundation. Clerk Eaton

presented checks to C.A.R.E. and Virginia B. Andes on Friday, November 5th at a ceremony attended by Clerk staff, Karen Amador Director of Donor Development at Virginia B. Andes Volunteer Community Clinic and Alyson Burch, C.A.R.E. Victim Services Center of Charlotte County Florida Vice Chair & Board Member.

Interested in Learning More?

Thank you for reading the 2021 Popular Annual Financial Report. The Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, the foundation of this document, can be found on the Clerk's website. The Annual Comprehensive Financial Report is a more detailed analysis of the County's fiscal year and offers an in-depth account of the overall financial status of Charlotte County.

http://charlotteclerk.com/Reports/ACFR_2021.pdf

OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday
8:00am - 5:00pm

