



ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATIVE NEWS

ULSTER COUNTY NEWS INFORMATION

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Ulster County Legislature Adopts 2026 Budget

(Kingston, NY) – Following the adoption of the 2026 County Budget and 2026-2031 Capital Improvement Program Wednesday night in a party line vote of 14-8, the Clerk of the Legislature will deliver the Adopted Budget to the County Executive for signature. The total spending plan of \$495,999,727, will not raise taxes in the new year and is offset through an appropriation from the fund balance of \$37,199,727.

“I’m grateful to my colleagues in the Ulster County Legislature for their diligent and thoughtful work in reviewing the County Executive’s proposed budget,” **said Legislative Chair Peter Criswell**. “This budget passed because legislators took the time to analyze the details, ask hard questions, and offer amendments where appropriate to best serve the people of Ulster County. I also want to extend my sincere thanks to our legislative financial analysts for their expertise and guidance, and to Ways and Means Chair John Gavaris for his steady leadership throughout this process.”

“This Budget is a product of careful deliberation and consideration by members of the Ways & Means Committee and the Legislative Body as a whole. We sought to provide funding for public safety, improve transportation and housing access, while taking into account changes in federal guidelines without imposing additional financial burden on our constituents,” **said Legislator John Gavaris, Chair of the Ways & Means Committee**

In keeping with the Legislature’s commitment to addressing the ongoing housing crisis, the 2026 Budget was amended to divert occupancy tax revenue to support housing initiatives across the County. Resolution No. 167, adopted June 18, 2024, established a Policy requiring the dedication of revenue generated from the collection of Occupancy Tax to housing, transportation, and tourism initiatives by set amounts. This inclusion of this amendment will put the County in compliance with this Policy by allocating the required funding to housing initiatives.

“By ensuring that the County follows the policy established by the Legislature earlier this year, we can better address the housing crisis facing all of our communities. These dollars, collected from those visiting Ulster County rather than taxpayers can be used to fund eviction defense programs, repair assistance grants for homeowners and provide critical support to affordable housing developments. We look forward to seeing these funds improve and expand our housing opportunities across the County,” **said Majority Leader Abe Uchitelle, the author of the amendment**.

“The top issue we hear from our constituents is the difficulty they experience in finding an affordable place to live. While we have brought dozens of affordable apartments online in the last year, we need to

find creative solutions to expand housing opportunities, keep people in their home, and improve existing stock. By allocating over \$2 million to support housing initiatives, we in the Legislature will continue to prioritize addressing this need in 2026,” **said Legislator Jeff Collins, Chair of the Housing & Transportation Committee and co-Sponsor of the amendment.**

Legislators Corcoran, Hansut, Kovacs, Litts, Lopez, Maloney, Roberts and Walls voted against approving this spending plan.

“This Budget follows a decade long trend of unsustainable spending as we continue to use a fund balance borne from overtaxing our residents, who are struggling to get by every day. Accordingly, this was a Budget the Republican Caucus could not support. Our Caucus will continue to seek ways to put money back in our neighbors’ pockets and reduce the bloated tax burden we are placing on our community,” **said Minority Leader Roberts.**

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