

2022 ANNUAL CITIZEN'S REPORT

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CITIZENS OF CHEROKEE COUNTY, GEORGIA FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022: OCTOBER 1, 2021 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2022

IN THIS **REPORT**

Cherokee County

- 3 About Cherokee County
- 4 Our Mission
- 5 2022 Happenings
- 6 Public Safety
- 7 Public Works

- Recreation and Parks
- 9 Community Development / Industry Mix
- 10 General Fund
- 11 Major Taxes Assessed by the County
- 12 Property Tax

13 Per Capita Comparisons

2

- 14 Financial Review of Fiscal Year
- 15 Revenues and Expenditures
- 16 Capital Improvements

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

March 31, 2023 Citizens of Cherokee County, Georgia:

On behalf of the Cherokee County Board of Commissioners, I am pleased to present our annual Citizen's Report for Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22). This report is a summary of how your tax dollars and other revenues have been managed throughout the year. State law and local ordinances require that every general purpose local government publish a complete set of audited financial statements each fiscal year which is the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). You may obtain a copy of the ACFR on our website.

www.cherokeega.com/Finance/annual-audit-information.

As part of our commitment to be transparent for our citizens, the Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) is published to summarize the County's financial activities. It provides an overview of our organizational structure, services offered to our citizens, and financial state. The information in this report is extracted from the County's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report. The PAFR is prepared by Cherokee County to increase public understanding and confidence in County government through an informal, easy, and user-friendly financial report.

Regards,

Harry

Harry Johnston Chairman, Cherokee County Board of Commissioners



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

- Chairman: Harry Johnston
- Board of CommissionersDistrict 1:Steve WestDistrict 2:Richard WeatherbyDistrict 3:Benny CarterDistrict 4:Cory Ragsdale
- Term: 4 years



ABOUT CHEROKEE COUNTY



Cherokee County was formed in 1831 from lands previously held by the Cherokee Indians. The very name of the county honors the proud people who first settled here. We are perfectly located 30 miles north of Atlanta where "Metro Meets the Mountains". There are five (5) main municipalities in Cherokee County: Canton, Woodstock, Ball Ground, Holly Springs, and Waleska.

Cherokee County ranked "Top 10 Georgia counties to live in 2022"

Ball Ground is a Georgia Main Street Community which focuses on revitalization of the central business district.

Movoto Real Estate ranked **Canton** the #1 place to live in Georgia.

According to Niche.com, **Woodstock** is the #1 Place for young professionals in Cherokee County.

Holly Springs completed the requirements to become a Tree City, USA

Waleska is home to the 134 year old Reinhardt University, a four year liberal arts institution.



2022 Population Estimate 279,435 2013-2022 Population 25% Change 434 Square Miles of Area Median Family Income \$93,578 Education Attainment: High School Graduate 92% Bachelor's degree or higher 38% 2022 Unemployment Rate: •United States 3.5% •Georgia 2.8% •Cherokee Count 2.4%

2022 M&O Millage Rate 4.995

Sources: 2022 ACFR, US Census Bureau, Georgia Trend & Bureau of Labor Statistics

OUR MISSION

OUR GOAL

To preserve the **beauty**, **unique character**, and **desirability** of the Community where we **live**, **work**, and **play**.



OUR PROMISE

- Listen to you
- Respect your Rights
- Represent you with the highest standards of ethics and integrity



APPOINTED OFFICIALS

County Manager County Clerk County Attorney Geoff Morton Christy Black Angela Davis, Jarrard & Davis LLP







OUR COMMITMENT

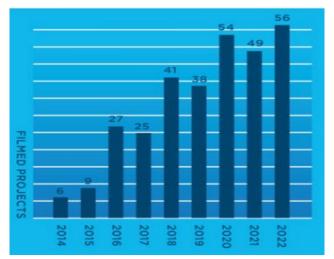
- Service Excellence & Continuous Improvement
- Accelerate Infrastructure Improvements
- **State-of-the-art** Public Safety facilities, training, and personnel
- Fiscal Responsibility & Conservative planning to maintain the lowest tax rates in the ARC Metro Atlanta area.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Sheriff Frank Reynolds **Tax Commissioner** Dana McKinzie **District Attorney** Shannon Wallace **Chief Judge Ellen McElyea Superior Court Judge** David Cannon, Jr. **Superior Court Judge Tony Baker Clerk of Superior Court Patty Baker State Court Judge** Michelle Helhoski **State Court Judge** Alan Jordan **State Court Judge Dee Morris** Juvenile & Family Court Judge Jennifer Davis Juvenile & Family Court Judge Richard Jones **State Court Solicitor Todd Haves** Magistrate Court Judge James Drane **Judge of Probate Court** Keith Wood Coroner Sally Sims **Ron Wikle** Surveyor

2022 HAPPENINGS

Cherokee County is a "Camera Ready Community." During 2022, there were 56+ Projects filmed 35% Film inquiries to Production 161+ Total inquiries





The Annual Cherokee Career Expo provides job seekers a competitive edge through on-site interviews, resume review assistance, and connections with Cherokee's leading employers. This year, over 250 job seekers were ready to *Forget the Commute* and *Work in Cherokee.* Job seekers can also find the latest hot jobs on the cherokeega.org careers page.



Cherokee is an attractive destination for global businesses. This year Cherokee welcomed two global North American headquarters to the county – Becker Robotic Equipment and Gerflor Extrusions, Inc. Combined, these HQs are expected to created over 400 jobs.



Canton and Cherokee celebrated the official ground breaking of **Technology Ridge Parkway**. A new corridor that will improve access from the Cherokee County Regional Airport to The Bluffs- a location primed for corporate relocation. The Sheriff's Office was awarded its 9th Advanced Accreditation Award from CALEA – Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies. Less than 5% of agencies in the US earn this accreditation.

The department boosted crime fighting abilities across the county by increasing the number of **Flock Safety Security Cameras** from 10 to 38 and outfitted the Field Operation Division and jail deputies with cameras in 2022.

The ACA (American Correctional Association) recommended re-accreditation following an audit visit in 2022. The Sheriff's Office received a perfect score (100%) on all ACA standards.

Fire/EMS services has ISO 2 Rating Response times for Fire and EMS are in the **top 10% nationally.**

The Marshal's Office, nationally accredited and certified, responded to 8,836 calls for service

Our Nationally Accredited 911 communications center is only 1 of 56 in the Nation.

Finance received **GFOA's Triple Crown**, which is given for earning the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award, and the award for Outstanding Achievement Popular Annual Financial Reporting.

Cherokee Parks and Recreation has national accreditation and this year received the Outstanding Program for CYB (Cherokee Youth Basketball) from GRPA .

PUBLIC SAFETY

DID YOU KNOW?

- Fire & Emergency Services respond to a call every 18 minutes.
- > The Sheriff's Office received 116,687 calls for service.
- Animal Control responds to calls for all the cities in Cherokee County.

You can find County ordinances online at <u>www.municode.com</u>.

Sworn Officers 427 **Firefighters/EMTS/Paramedics Total Fire Incidents** 627 Structure Fires 210 All Other Fire Incidents 417 **Total EMS Incidents** 22,950 **All Other Incidents** 6,596 14,419 **Ambulance** Transports **Code Enforcement Complaints** 5,315 **Animal Control Complaints** 3,521 E-911 Calls for Service 394,937 **New Misdemeanor Probation Cases** 2,101 Adopted, Reclaimed, or Rescued Animals 1,770

AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME

00:10:25 Law Enforcement 00:06:44 Fire & Emergency Services



PUBLIC WORKS









The County maintains 1,251 miles of paved roadways. In 2022, our Public Works crews resurfaced 19.12 miles.

9 Bridges/Culverts9 Traffic Signals

Stormwater inspected 2,444 structures and 120 miles of pipe and ditch. maintained and repaired 335 structures and 9,679 feet of pipes.

Development Inspectors inspected 4,750 sites for development/construction



DID YOU KNOW?

Upcoming Projects in 2023

- Hwy 140 @ East Cherokee Drive
- Wiley Bridge Road at Cox Road
- Union Hill Road over Canton Creek bridge replacement
- Bells Ferry Road at Kellogg Creek Road at Victory Drive Intersection Improvement and Signal Installation
- Hames Road reconstruction
- Technology Ridge Parkway Construction (new alignment)
- Rhine Road

CATS Transportation

Fixed Route System

10,108 riders

Demand Response Service 11,640 riders

30,366 Empower Cherokee and Senior Center Trips

56,319 Customers served

Recycling 374 tons of glass, 186 tons of Metal, and 823 tons of paper, plastic, and cardboard

RECREATION & PARKS

DID YOU KNOW?



Making Life Better in Cherokee County by **Preserving our Parks and Facilities While Creating More Active and Healthier Communities through Recreation**



Average Homeowner paid just \$14.34 for maintenance and operations of county parks and recreation programs in FY2022

- **Over 3.6 Million Visits to Parks and Program Participations**
- **Total Developed Park Acres** 2,444 8.9 **Total Park Acres per 1,000 Residents Total Facebook Followers** 12,578 Cost Recovered through Earned Revenue 53% 51%
- **Staff with Professional Certifications**

The National Average for Public Recreation Agencies cost recovery is less than 24%

81 baseball/softball/lacrosse tournaments, and swim meets had more than \$12 Million impact on the local economy.

Source: Data collected from tournament & meet organizers and Georgia Department of Tourism.



Acres Protected as Current & Future Parks

- Cherokee Youth Softball experienced its largest growth in league history (1,091 players)
- Cherokee Youth Basketball experienced it's largest growth in league history (552 teams)
- Cherokee Youth Girls Flag Football inaugural seasons had 320 participants. •
- Touch A Truck event at Cherokee Veterans exceeded over 5,500 in attendance.
- Awarded BOOST Grants for summer camps totaling \$155,000 in funding.
- Outdoor Recreation Opportunities continues to be the leading trend among residents.
- Cherokee County Aquatics Center hosted the GRPA State Swim Meet in July 2022.





COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/INDUSTRY MIX

INDUSTRY GROWTH / INVESTMENT

\$137,000,000^{^{II}}

IN NEW CAPITAL INVESTMENT

78 Business Prospects 11 Expansion Locations

55+ Works Filmed

978 Career Opportunities Announced and/or Committed



DID YOU KNOW?

Cherokee County is developing a new 86-acre Airport Site.

Cherokee County is part of the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC).

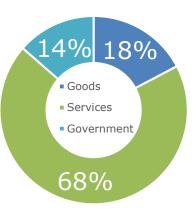
Acres for Future Corporate Growth

COBB COBB GWINNETT DOUGLAS FULTON FAYETTE

Map of Atlanta Regional Commission

4,940 Business Licenses Renewed 637 New Business Licenses

INDUSTRY MIX

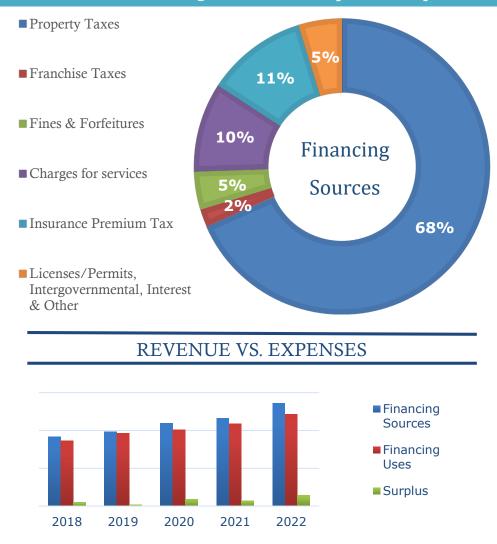


The industry mix was relatively unchanged from 2014 to 2022. From 2000 to 2018, Cherokee's population grew 86.0% which created significant construction opportunities.

Note: These numbers are based on the 2nd Qtr of 2022

GENERAL FUND

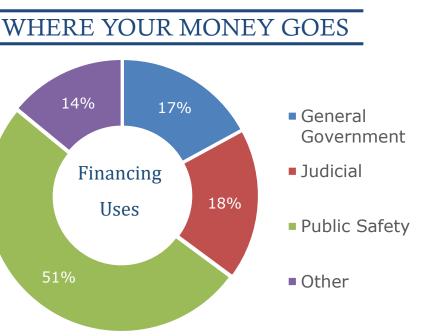
The General Fund is the County's primary operating fund. It accounts for all financial resources of the general government, except those required to be accounted for in another fund.



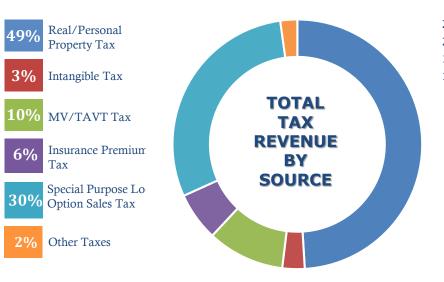
After the County collects taxes and other revenue, the funds are spent efficiently to provide services to our citizens and businesses. The expenditures of the General Fund are classified by the type of service provided:

General Government Judicial Services Public Safety Public Works Health & Welfare

Culture & Recreation Housing & Development Capital Outlay Intergovernmental Debt Service



MAJOR TAXES ASSESSED BY THE COUNTY

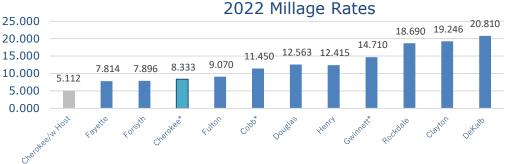


AD VALOREM TAX / TAVT

The TAVT (Title Ad Valorem Tax) fee was implemented in 2013 and generated new revenue for the County's General Fund, while eliminating sales tax on vehicle sales.

SALES TAX

SPLOST tax revenue peaked in 2007 but decreased from 2008 until 2010 because of the economic downturn. The revenue began to increase and 2015 taxes exceeded the 2007 totals. The total is now increasing each year. The amount collected in 2022 was 12.88% greater than the 2021 total.



* Indicates Counties without 1 cent sales tax (LOST or HOST). Counties with this tax must reduce property tax rates, resulting in lower Millage rates.

PROPERTY TAX

Property taxes are recognized as revenues in the fiscal year for which they are collected, thus the 2021 taxes collected beginning in September were for the 2022 fiscal year beginning October 1. The 2021 Tax Digest increased 7.04% with 3.24% due to new growth. In July 2022, the County approved rolling the M&O millage rate back slightly to 4.995. Cherokee County has the third lowest combined millage rate in the metro-Atlanta area.



WHERE DOES YOUR PROPERTY TAX DOLLAR GO?



\$0.69 Cherokee County School District

\$0.19 Cherokee County

\$0.11 Cherokee County Fire & Emergency Services

\$0.01 Cherokee County Parks



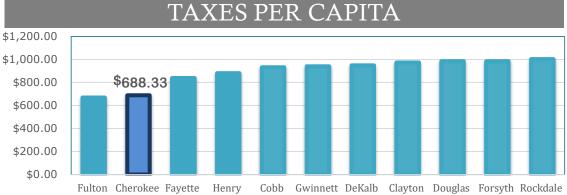
Median value of a home in FY2022 was \$372,400* compared to \$303,600 in FY2021

Taxes on a \$372,400	home in FY 2022
County	\$ 719.08
Fire	\$ 444.50
Parks Bond	\$ 52.73
Year Total	\$1,216.31

The average taxpayer paid \$3.33 per day which is less than the price of 1 large cup of freshly brewed coffee.

*Source: Cherokee County Tax Assessor

PER CAPITA COMPARISONS



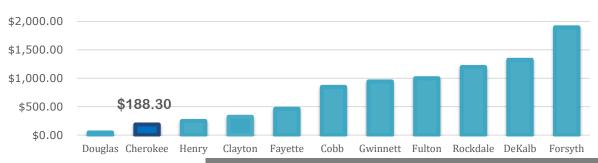








LONG TERM DEBT PER CAPITA





FINANCIAL REVIEW OF FISCAL YEAR

Governmental Funds (e.g. General Fund, E-911 Fund, etc.) Figures presented in millions. Totals subject to rounding

	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	Cherokee County. Include		
Revenues:				expenditure categories, and		
Property Taxes	\$104.8	\$116.0	\$123.2	trends. Information conta		
Insurance Premium Taxes	11.4	11.8	13.8	level of understanding of h		
Sales and Use Taxes	47.9	55.4	62.5	Cherokee County.		
Other Taxes (Alcohol, Franchise, Other)	4.0	4.1	4.2	During figgel upor 2022 th		
Licenses and Permits	3.1	3.5	3.8	During fiscal year 2022, the		
Intergovernmental	24.7	19.8	44.3	of \$126.2 million, which in fund balance is attributed t		
Fines and Forfeitures	5.6	6.4	6.5			
Charges for Services	20.7	23.5	26.5	Fund also had an increase		
Investment Earnings	1.6	.1	1.1			
Contributions and Donations	0.2	1.2	.1			
Other Revenues	1.4	1.4	1.6			
Total Revenues:	\$225.4	\$243.0	\$287.6			
Expenditures:			<u>.</u>	The County's proprietary funds reported a combined		
General Government	\$16.0	\$19.9	\$23.7	ending net position of \$4.9		
Judicial	19.8	21.1	24.8	million which was a increase		
Public Safety	90.2	95.3	108.8	of \$3.0 million from 2021.		
Public Works	11.3	12.0	14.6	The EMS and Conference		
Health and Welfare	3.6	3.7	5.1	Center fund balance		
Culture and Recreation	7.4	8.2	9.2	increased \$2.8 million while		
Housing And Development	5.7	7.5	10.6	the internal service funds for fleet and healthcare fund		
Capital Outlay	48.0	36.3	54.8			
Intergovernmental	16.4	16.3	22.1	balance increased \$.17.		
Debt Service	9.5	7.5	10.1			
Total Expenditures:	\$228.0	\$227.8	\$283.8	Sources: Cherokee County		
Excess (deficiency) of Revenues over (under) Expenditures	-\$2.7	\$15.2	\$3.8	Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the respective Fiscal Year		
Total other financing sources (uses)	-\$2.8	-\$2.6	-\$5.3	Statement of Revenues, Expenditures & in Changes in		
Net Changes in Fund Balances	-\$5.5	\$12.5	-\$1.5	Fund Balances (Governmental Funds)		
Beginning Fund Balances	\$120.7	\$115.2	\$127.7	Statement of Revenues, Expenditures & in Changes in Net		
Ending Fund Balances	\$115.2	\$127.7	\$126.2	Position (Proprietary Funds)		

The Financial Review section is designed to provide details on the financial health and stability of Cherokee County. Included within this section are discussions of major revenue sources and major expenditure categories, analysis of fund balances, analysis of net position and significant financial trends. Information contained within this section is intended to provide the reader with an increased level of understanding of how available resources are utilized to provide services to the Citizens of Cherokee County.

During fiscal year 2022, the county's governmental funds reported a combined ending fund balance of \$126.2 million, which indicates a decrease of \$1.5 million from the prior year. This decrease in fund balance is attributed to increased SPLOST spending due to timing of projects. The General Fund also had an increase due to higher property tax revenue.

Proprietary Funds (EMS, Conference Center, w Internal Service Funds) Figures presented in millions. Totals subject to rounding

3 1	-		
	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
Operating Revenues:			
Charges for Services	\$26.6	\$29.7	\$32.5
Miscellaneous Revenue	2.0	2.8	1.9
Total Operating Revenues:	\$22.2	\$28.6	\$34.4
Operating Expenses:			
Personal Services	\$8.9	\$9.9	\$10.9
Contractual Services	3.0	3.3	3.9
Claims Paid	19.4	22.6	22.6
Supplies	1.6	1.8	2.3
Depreciation	0.5	0.5	0.4
Total Operating Expenditures:	\$33.4	\$38.0	\$40.1
Operating Income (Loss)	-\$4.8	-\$5.5	-\$5.7
Non-Operating Revenues			
Gain (Loss) on disposal of capital asset	-\$0.1	\$0.0	-\$0.5
Non capital grants	0.1	0.01	0.0
Total Non-Operating Revenues	0.0	0.0	0.0
Capital Contributions	1.3	1.0	3.2
Transfers-in	3.4	4.7	6.0
Changes in Net Position	-\$0.1	\$0.2	\$3.0
Beginning Net Position	\$1.8	\$1.7	\$1.9
Ending Net Position	\$178	\$1.9	\$4.9

REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

Revenues

For fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, the County's revenues for all Governmental Funds totaled \$287.63 million, which was \$44.6 million higher than FY2021. There were several factors contributing to this increase:

Property tax revenue increased \$7.1 million. Cherokee County Commissioners approved millage rates in 2021 to remain the same. The increase in property taxes was due to the tax digest net growth of 7.04% and higher TAVT receipts of 7.08%.

Sales tax revenue also increased \$7.1 million in 2022. Sales tax has been steadily increasing due to the building and opening of many new retail centers such as the Outlet Shoppes of Atlanta, located in Woodstock, Cabela, and the Canton Exchange.

Intergovernmental revenue increased from \$19,778,415 in 2021 to \$44,259,785 in 2021, or \$24,481,640. The majority of this increase was due to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds the County received in 2021, of which the majority was deferred. In 2022, the County began using these funds and thus they were recognized as revenue.

The **Insurance Premium tax** increased \$1.97 million in 2022 due to an increase in residential property in the unincorporated portion of the county.

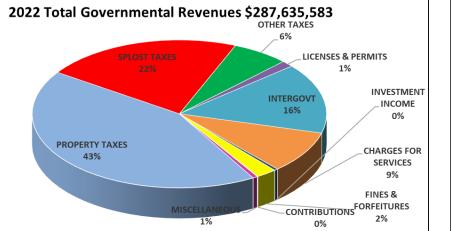
Expenditures

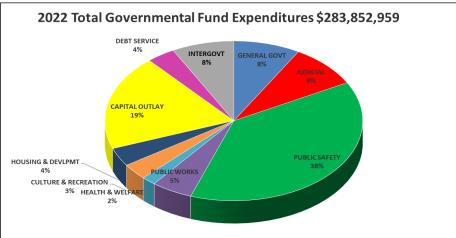
For fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, the County's governmental funds expended \$283.8 million. Expenditures within Government Funds increased \$56 million between 2021 and 2022. Major variances include the following:

There was a \$18.5M increase in **Capital Outlay** expenditures as the work on several large projects began; W.B. Ahrens Recreation Center, two replacement and expansion of fire stations and Bells Ferry road widening, etc. There was new Parks land purchased, along with new Sheriff vehicle purchases, and road projects completed.

Public Safety increased spending \$13.5 million. All employees received a 4% COLA in Oct 21, 7% COLA in July 22, a salary study increase, and ARPA retention pay. Health and pension benefits also increased... The Fire Department added 7 new positions to upgrade existing stations. which began in 2019. Inmate medical costs increased \$1.4M.

General Government increased expenditures \$3.8M from 2021. This increase covered the 4% COLA/7% COLA for all employees, ARPA retention pay, and increased Health Insurance costs.





CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS/6-YEAR CIP

\$253 million SPLOST

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS The SPLOST Funds account for sales tax collections and project expenses. Most of the **COMPLETED DURING FISCAL YEAR**

Community Service Projects

-Acquired 40 AC in Hickory Flat for future park

Patriots Park, & Cherokee Veterans Park

-LB Ahrens Recreation Center Phase 1

-Long Swamp Creek Recreation Area

-Yellow Creek Conservation Area & Trails

-Completed historic Hickory Flat Gym renovation

-Future Park in SW Cherokee near Clark Creek Elementary

Completed

In Design

Under Construction

\$70.0 \$62.50 \$55.4 \$60.0 \$47.9 \$50.0 \$43.5 \$39.0 -Added 1/3 mile walking track @ Hunkey Maulding Sports Complex \$40.0 -Constructed 1 new pavilion each at Hunkey Mauldin Sports Complex, \$30.0 \$20.0 \$10.0 -Conversion of old Fire Station #9 to Charlie Ferguson Community Ctr Ś-2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 Transportation 51.6% **Projects 6 Year** General 7% Projects SPLOST PROJECT Plan Municipal 9.5% Projects 31.9% Public Safetv Projects

Source: Cherokee County, Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the respective Fiscal Year, Statement of Revenues, Expenditures & Changes in Fund Balance (Governmental Funds).

2022 **Public Works Projects**

UNDER CONSTRUCTION OR

Completed Projects

-Little Road (in house project) -Upper Dowda Mill Rd Bridge -I575 @ Ridgewalk Pkwy -Univeter Rd @ New Light Rd Intersection -SR140 @ Sugar Pike Intersection -Bells Ferry Sidewalks -Bates Drive (in house project) -Wrights Mill Rd (in house project) **Under Construction** -SR 140 at East Cherokee Dr Improvements -East Cherokee Drive at South Holly Springs Road Intersection Improvement -Towne Mill Parkway Multi-use Trail -Heard Road Connector -Batesville/Hickory Rd -Transart Parkway Bridge Replacement -Bells Ferry Widening/Bridge Replacement -Hames Rd & Jett Road -New Public Works Facility Equipment -CAT Excavator -Two Mack Dump Trucks -CAT mini Cold Planer

Public Safety Projects

-Fire Training Center expansion/renovations -Purchased 20 Law Enforcement Vehicles -Construction on new precinct/K9 training center -Construction began on New Fire Station #15 -Land was purchased to expand Fire Station #32

County's capital projects are funded by SPLOST funds. These funds collect sales tax revenue each month, if this revenue is not spent in the current year, the balance will accumulate and carryforward, and the projects will be completed in future years.

Tenow creek conservation mea & mans
Equipment/Vehicle Purchases
-Purchased 2 New Mini Buses for CATS
-Purchased 2 New Vehicles for Recreation and Parks
THE HICKORY FLAT GYM





16

Avg. Annual Growth

23.5%

From 2018 to 2022



Government Finance Officers Association

Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting

Presented to

Cherokee County Board of Commissioners Georgia

For its Annual Financial Report For the Fiscal Year Ended

September 30, 2021

Christophen P. Moniel

Executive Director/CEO

Cherokee County

Cherokee County Board of Commissioners

> 1130 Bluffs Parkway Canton, GA 30114 (678) 493-6000 www.cherokeega.com

