



Alachua County, FL

Fire Assessment Update
Study
Presentation of Preliminary
Results

May 7th 2024





Introduction

- Alachua County has retained Stantec to perform a Fire Assessment Study Update
- Stantec provides a variety of Financial Consulting Services including but not limited to:
 - General Fund Financial Sustainability Analysis
 - Non-Ad Valorem Assessment Fee design and management
 - Utility rate design and revenue sufficiency studies
 - Impact Fee Studies
 - Bond/Debt Issuance Support
- Stantec has successfully implemented, updated and consulted on Fire Assessment programs/studies throughout the State



What is a Fire Assessment?

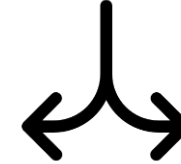
- Fire Assessments are a Non-Ad Valorem Fee used to directly fund Fire Protection Services
- Revenue raised through a Non-Ad Valorem Assessment must be used for that service.

Note: The County currently funds approximately 70% of Fire Protection Services through an existing non-ad valorem fire assessment that has been in place since 2018.



Legal Requirements

- The Fee Calculation must follow the “two-pronged test”



1. The property assessed must derive a special benefit from the service provided
 - i.e. properties such as rights-of-way, submerged lands, etc. would be excluded from a Fire Assessment
2. The assessment must be fairly and reasonably apportioned among the properties that receive the special benefit
 - Addressed by the fee calculation methodology



Legal Requirements cont.

- **Costs for EMS, ALS & Personal Transport must be removed**
 - Per case law, EMS services benefit people, not property



- **Required Exemptions**

- Governmental 

- Agricultural 

Can only bill residential

- **Optional Exemptions**

- Churches, non-profits, charitable & disabled veterans





“Availability” Methodology

- Utilizes publicly available parcel data from the Alachua County Property Appraiser
- Simple, Two-Tier rate structure for all parcels
 - Tier 1 - flat
 - Tier 2 - variable
- Administratively easier to maintain than other methodologies
- Methodology has been validated by the Florida Supreme Court



“Availability” Methodology

- Availability-based cost apportionment with two tiers of benefit
 - **Tier 1 Benefit** – Response Readiness Availability – all properties
 - All properties are charged the Tier 1 rate (Single fee per parcel)
 - **Tier 2 Benefit** – Protection from Loss of Structures – improved properties
 - Only developed properties are charged the Tier 2 rate
 - Charge per every \$5,000 of structure value on parcel (EBU)

Current Rates

Tier 1	Tier 2
\$90.69 per Parcel	\$8.31 per Structure Val. EBU

Revenue

Current (FY24) \$21,400,000

Avg. Bill

Current (FY24) \$456.33


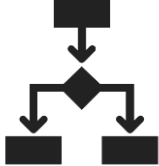

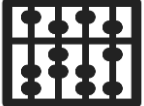


FY 2025 Preliminary Calculations

Note: All calculations are preliminary at this time and may change slightly as data is updated throughout the study process.

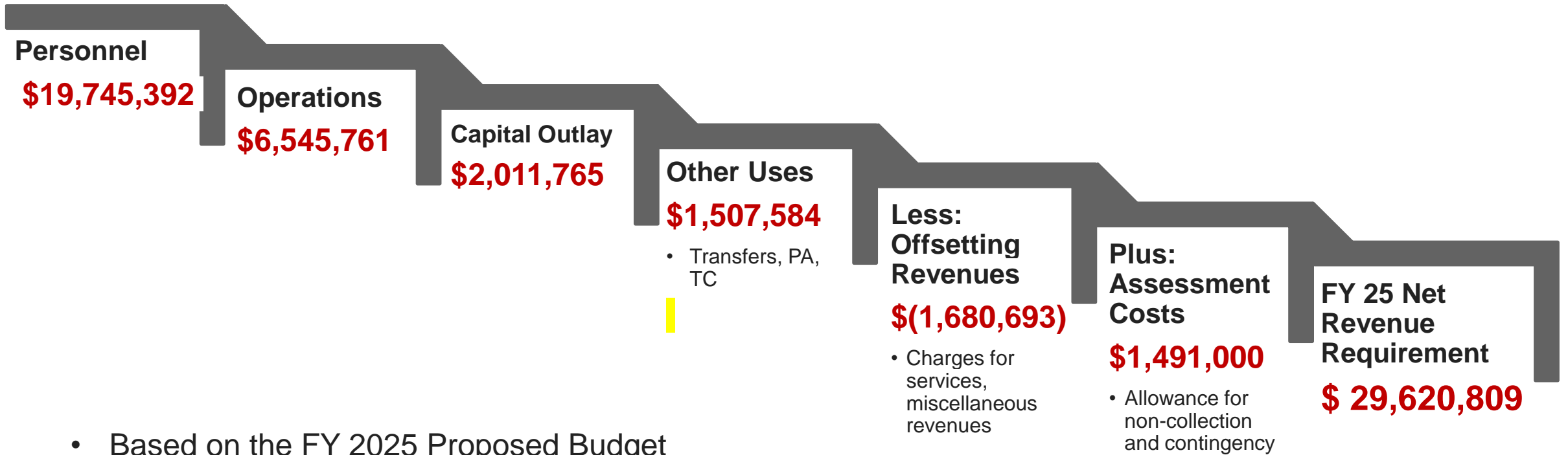


Approach

1. Calculate Cost of Service 
2. Update Allocation (Tier 1 & Tier 2) 
3. Update Billable Units 
4. Calculate Assessment Rates 



Projected Cost of Service (FY 2025)



- Based on the FY 2025 Proposed Budget
- **Fire Only**



Fire Projected Costs

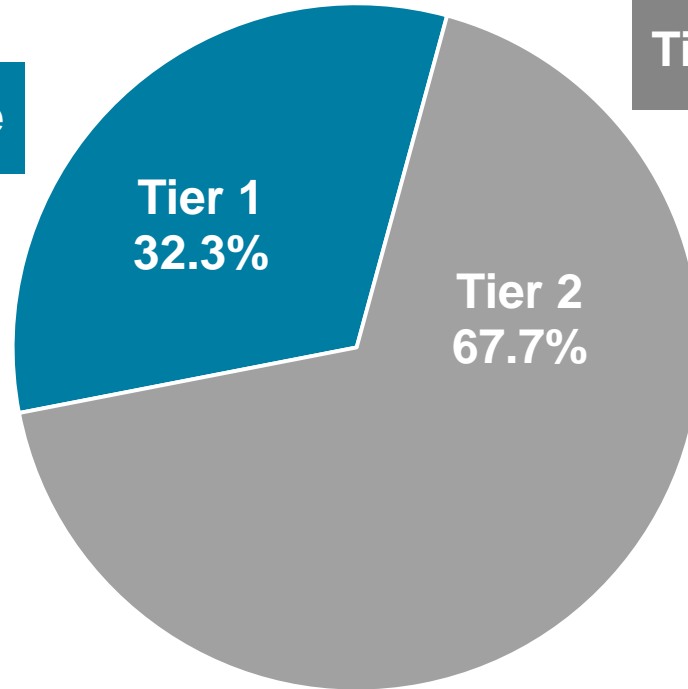




Updated Allocation

Tier 1 : Availability of Fire Service

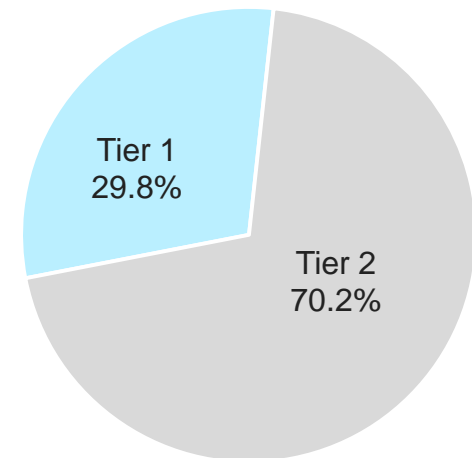
Land Value: \$ 5,335,092,343



Tier 2 : Protection of Structure Loss

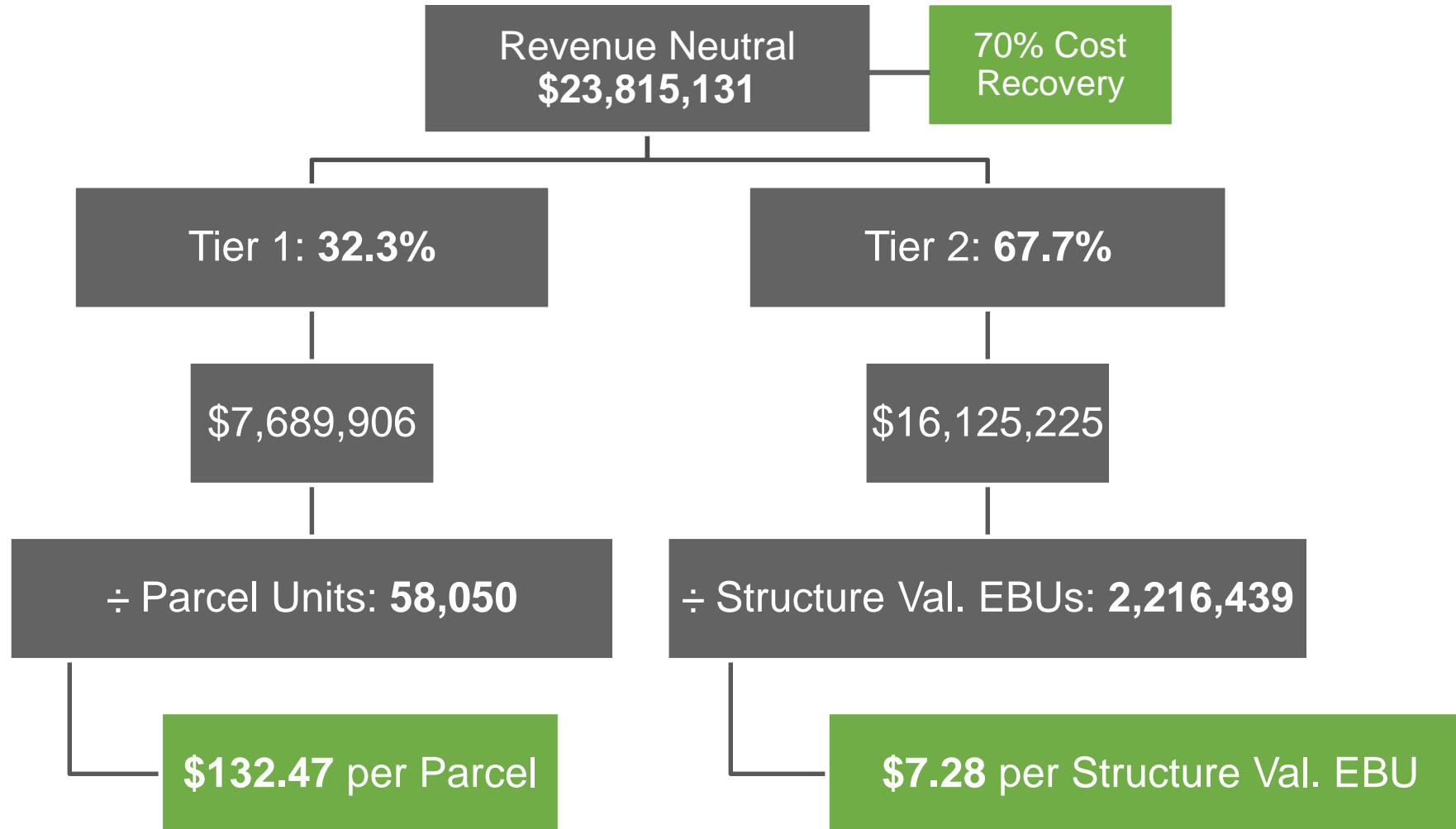
Structure Value: \$ 11,186,176,231

2018 Allocation





Fire Assessment Results FY 2025, Revenue Neutral





Fire Assessment Results FY 2025, Revenue Neutral

Revenue Neutral
\$23,815,000

Less: Exemptions

Gov/Inst: **\$(1,250,000)**

Agricultural: **\$(608,000)**

Church: **\$(200,000)**

Disabled Vet/Other : **\$(357,000)**

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**Net Billed
Assessments
\$21,400,000**

Current (FY24)
\$21,400,000

Change
\$0



Fire Assessment Results FY 2025, Revenue Neutral



\$220,000
(44 EBUs)

**Average Single
Family Home**

Tier 1
1 Parcel x \$132.47 = **\$132.47**



Tier 2
44 EBUs x \$7.28 = **\$320.32**

**Total
Assessment
\$452.79**

Current (FY24)
\$456.33

Change:
\$(3.54)



Fire Assessment Results FY 2025, +\$2M Add'l Funding

	Tier 1	Tier 2
Rates	\$144.99 per Parcel	\$7.96 per Structure Val. EBU

Revenue	Net Billed Assessments \$23,400,000	Current (FY24) \$21,400,000	Change: +\$2,000,000
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Average Bill	Average Assessment \$495.23	Current (FY24) \$456.33	Change: +\$38.90
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Fire Assessment Results FY 2025, Full Cost Recovery

	Tier 1	Tier 2
Rates	\$164.77 per Parcel	\$9.05 per Structure Val. EBU

Revenue	Net Billed Assessments \$26,600,000	Current (FY24) \$21,400,000	Change: +\$5,200,000
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Average Bill	Average Assessment \$562.97	Current (FY24) \$456.33	Change: +\$106.64
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Fire Assessment Results, **5-Year Maximum**

	Tier 1	Tier 2
Rates	\$212.95 per Parcel	\$11.70 per Structure Val. EBU

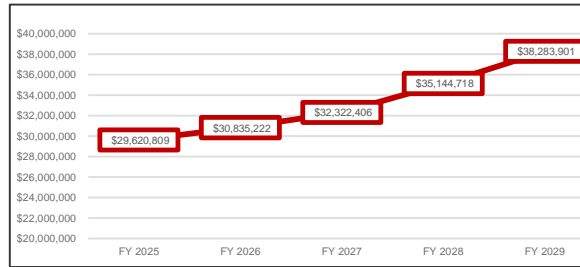
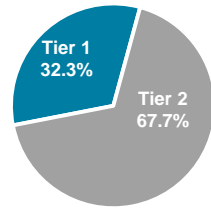
Revenue	Net Billed Assessments \$34,400,000	Current (FY24) \$21,400,000	Change: +\$13,000,000
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Average Bill	Maximum Assessment \$727.75	Current (FY24) \$456.33	Change: +\$271.42
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Conclusions & Recommendations

- The rates presented reflect current allocations, cost of service, and property data



- The County has the option to adopt rates for FY 2025 at any level of cost recovery under 100%

Scenario:	Revenue Neutral	+ \$2M Add'l Funding	FY 25 Full Cost Recovery	5-Year Maximum
Billed Revenue:	\$21,400,000	\$23,400,000	\$26,600,000	\$34,400,000
Average Bill:	\$452.79	\$495.23	\$562.97	\$727.75



Sample Implementation Timeline

