

Dutchess County Well Positioned for Property Tax Freeze Credit

Poughkeepsie, NY... “Dutchess County Government will deliver on the two key criteria necessary for Dutchess County property taxpayers to receive rebate checks through the two year tax relief program known as the Property Tax Freeze Credit,” Dutchess County Executive Marcus J. Molinaro said today. For Dutchess County homeowners to receive the credit in 2015, Dutchess County Government’s 2015 county budget must remain within the New York State Property Tax cap. In the second year, Dutchess County must have a Government Efficiency Plan in place that saves one percent of the tax levy through cooperation agreements, shared services, mergers, and efficiencies, in order for homeowners to be eligible for the credit.

Dutchess County Commissioner of Finance Heidi Seelbach has calculated Dutchess County’s 2015 property levy tax cap in accordance with the New York State Comptroller’s Office guidelines as required by the Property Tax Cap legislation. For 2015, the property tax levy growth limit for Dutchess County Government is projected to be \$3.1 million or 2.86%. The actual property tax cap limit is calculated based on a multi-point calculation formula provided by the New York State Comptroller’s Office.

“Despite the burden of state and federal mandates that consume 70 cents of every tax dollar, we are making the tough decisions in order to present a thoughtful and conservative spending plan. We continue our transformation of county government - strengthening our fiscal condition, preserving core services residents rely on and recognizing our taxpayers cannot afford to pay more. We continue our transformation to smaller, smarter and more effective government.”

Dutchess County Legislature Budget & Finance Committee Chairman Dale Borchert said, “The Property Tax Freeze Credit means homeowners are not burdened with a property tax increase. Throughout the year we have been working closely with County Executive Molinaro and his administration, meeting with departments to review county program and service operations to ensure Dutchess County property taxpayers get the Property Tax Freeze Credit check they deserve.”

Dutchess County Government's budget is dominated by state and federally mandated expenses that consume as much as 70% of county costs and these expenses continue to rise. The ability to make spending adjustments in the county budget is generally limited to the "optional" expense areas of the budget; making it challenging for county and local governments to remain under the property tax cap. "Optional" expenses include services such as parks and recreations, senior programs, law enforcement, snow plowing, road maintenance, and 911 dispatch.

Dutchess County Government is statewide leader in shared services and consolidations, which positions the County to meet the Government Efficiency Plan savings criteria. In 2013, County Executive Molinaro launched the Municipal Consolidation & Shared Services Grant Program, the first of its kinds in New York State, to incentivize local municipal projects that consolidate services, produce shared services, evaluate municipal consolidation opportunities and implementation possibilities, eliminate an entire government entity, establish the regional delivery of services, and/or offer other efficiency improvements. The County also offers a wide variety of shared services opportunities to local municipalities, districts and non-profit organizations to maximize fiscal and operational efficiencies, improve agency resources and increase accountability.

County Executive Molinaro is hosting the first Dutchess County Shared Services Summit this evening, bringing together more than 100 local, county and state officials to discuss current and potential shared services or consolidation opportunities, with the goal of helping ensure all local governments and districts can qualify for the New York State Property Tax Freeze credit. More information about tonight's summit is available

here: <http://www.dutchessny.gov/CountyGov/Departments/CountyExecutive/23725.htm>

County Executive Molinaro will give his 2015 Executive Budget Address on Tuesday, October 28th at 4pm at Arnoff Moving & Storage in Poughkeepsie, ahead of the required November 1st deadline established by the Dutchess County Administrative Code. The budget will be available for review on the County's website dutchessny.gov. Following the release of the Executive's 2015 Tentative Budget, there will be a series of public forums at various locations throughout the county as well as a countywide tele-town hall forum on November 12th. The forums offer

residents the opportunity to take part in the conversation about the 2015 county budget, learn key details, and be able to ask questions and share feedback.

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