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**Who we are and What we do?**

**Kenneth Spencer Jr.** is the Treasurer for Benton County, Washington. The Treasurer is a constitutional office elected by the people for a four year term. The Benton County Treasurer's office is responsible for receiving funds and cash management, including collecting taxes, fees and other revenue. The Treasurer also manages the collection and distribution for various county departments and districts, such as schools, water and fire districts as well as other local government entities. This is accomplished by adhering to a set of core values which provide a framework and guiding principles for actions, decisions and overall behavior within the department.



**Core Values**

**Integrity**  
 Earn our community's trust through responsible actions and transparent communication.

**Reliability, Accuracy and Accountability**  
 Maintaining up to date with relevant treasury operations knowledge.

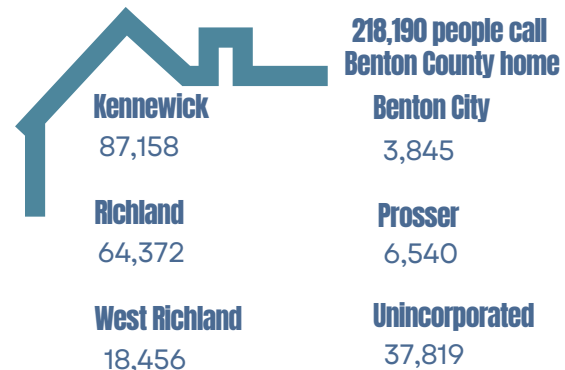


**Innovation**  
 Implementing creative ideas to enhance existing operations and maximize productivity.

**Teamwork**  
 Collaborative team effort to serve our community in an effective and efficient way.

**Our Community**

Benton County is comprised of six major cities and unincorporated areas. The County has a total of 1,760 square miles of which 1,700 is land and 60 square miles is water. Benton County has been known primarily as an agricultural hub, particularly know for its tree fruit, wine grapes, potatoes and hay. The agriculture sector contributes significantly to the County's economy.



\*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Benton County, Washington

Excess monies not currently being used by the county or various local governments are "pooled" for investment with the emphasis of ensuring public monies are safe and secure, available when needed, and achieve the best rate of return after meeting the first two objectives.

For detailed information on Investment and Financial data can be found on: [Investment Reports, Benton County Washington, Treasurer](#)

## Upcoming Year Goals



Our financial team will be working with districts and departments to ensure investment strategies meet cash flow needs. Suitable cash flow is essential for day-to-day operations, from paying employees to purchasing necessary supplies. This approach will enhance financial stability, ensure sufficient funds meet short term obligations, cover ongoing expenses and support planning for future needs and opportunities.

In Washington State, a property may face foreclosure when taxes are three years delinquent. Although this is the legal threshold for county Treasurers, our team is dedicated to helping homeowners avoid reaching this stage and to stay in their homes. Our Foreclosure Specialist will work to connect property owners in jeopardy of foreclosure with available resources like the Washington State Homeowner Assistant Fund program.

Our office is actively seeking opportunities to enhance efficiency and functionality with our system. Currently, some processes are quite lengthy and time consuming and while they are necessary, they can be streamlined for better productivity. We will be evaluating various services that offer automation features designed to reduce the hours spent annually on manual tasks. Implementing these services can provide significant benefits and cost savings for the county and tax payers.

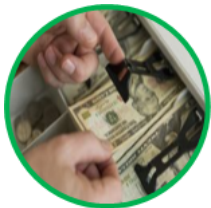
## Accomplishments

Our Production	2023	2024
Tax Statements	86,131	86,992
Property Transfers	6,136	6,239
General Receipts	3,816	3,826
Investments	15	16
Overpayments/ Refunds	1,025	1,211

Payments Processed	2023	2024
Mortgage Accounts	69,518	70,161
Checks	56,857	56,851
Electronic	16,022	16,989
ACH Payments	4,228	4,394
Overpayments/ Refunds	1,025	1,211

### P-Cards Platform

The Treasurer's Office acts as the Program Administrator for the County's Procurement Card (P-Card) Program, a corporate credit card solution used to streamline purchasing. We have reviewed P-Card platforms and verified we have access to more stringent safeguards and additional oversight.



### Cash Handling Policy and Procedure

Accuracy and safeguarding of public funds is of the utmost importance to our office. In 2024 we reviewed and updated our Cash Handling Policy and Procedure. With changes in technology and banking processes, it is important for us to review periodically to enhance security, mitigate fraud and ensure accurate financial reporting.

### Updated Website

As the Treasurer for Benton County and the districts we serve, communication is very important. Our team has updated our website to ensure we have relevant, up-to-date information for taxpayers and districts. This included updating the content, refreshing layouts and making it more user friendly.



## Where Did Your Tax Money Go?

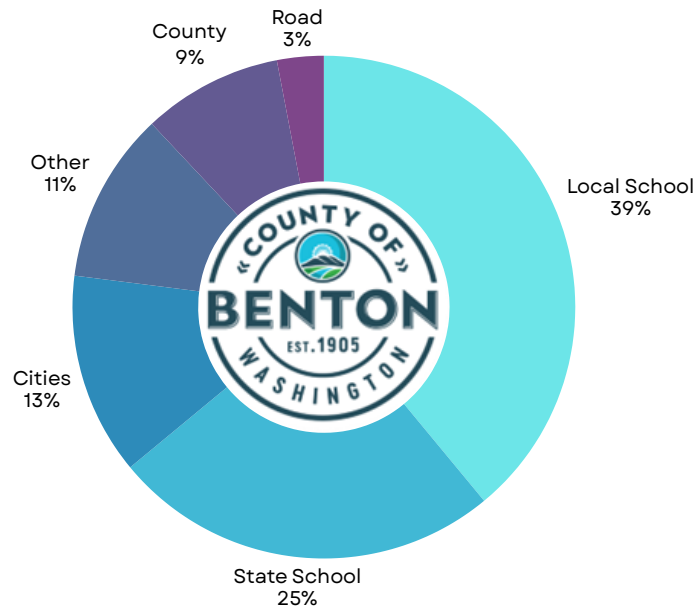
Property assessed values and levy rates, both certified by the Assessor’s office, are certified annually and used to calculate the property taxes for each taxable real and personal property parcel. The Treasurer then issues statements informing taxpayers the amount to be collected for the year. Property taxes are collected by the Treasurer’s Office and distributed to their respective county/district funds. Below, you will find the distribution of property taxes for 2023 and 2024.

Tax Distribution	2023	2024	% change
Local Schools*	\$62,326,541	\$75,346,715	20.8%
State School*	\$84,072,255	\$115,585,627	37.4%
Cities	\$41,667,261	\$43,180,479	3.6%
County	\$27,016,102	\$27,904,908	3.2%
Fire	\$14,892,508	\$16,706,284	12.1%
Ports	\$7,698,711	\$7,960,987	3.4%
Road	\$7,501,191	\$7,708,184	2.7%
Library	\$4,257,556	\$4,385,828	3.0%
Special Assesments	\$2,971,147	\$3,402,188	14.5%
Hospital	\$2,586,028	\$2,676,429	3.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$254,989,270</b>	<b>\$304,857,629</b>	<b>19.5%</b>

\* State School is a levy all property tax payers pay for public schools and Local School is tax levy approved by voters for a specified school district.

## How Your Tax Dollars are Distributed

Tax monies are collected on an annual basis. These funds are vital to functions within the County and used to provide public services for the taxpayers. The pie chart (below) displays the percentage of total property taxes distributed to each fund.



Fiscal Year	2023	2024
Parcel Count	90,734	92,349
Full Time Employees	15	15
Salaries & Benefits	\$1,155,208.02	\$1,181,040.08
Supplies & Services	\$108,330.98	\$114,304.54
Interfund	\$295,704.48	\$295,704.52
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,559,243.48</b>	<b>\$1,591,049.14</b>

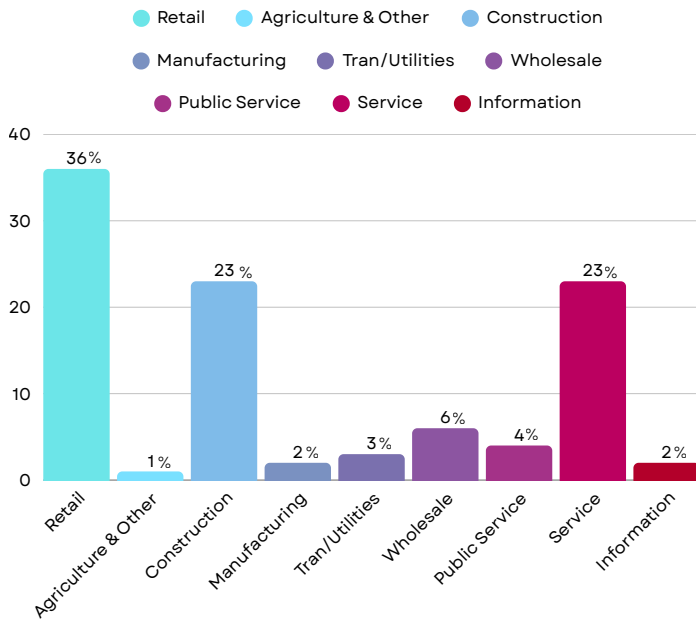
Independent Audit: The Treasurer’s office does not issue separate financial statements, however, the Treasurer’s office contributes a major portion of the revenues and statements included in the [Benton County Annual Comprehensive Financial Report \(ACFR\)](#). Complete financial information can be found at the County’s website: [www.co.benton.wa.us](http://www.co.benton.wa.us).

The Benton County Treasurer Citizen Centric Report provides a brief summary of the Benton County Treasurer’s 2024 performance. For more information visit our website at: [www.Bentoncountytax.com](http://www.Bentoncountytax.com)



## Sales Tax Distribution

The Treasurer's Office monitors and analyzes local retail sales & use tax trends. Our office receives data from the Department of Revenue on a monthly basis. Analyzing data helps our office be more accurate when forecasting future revenue. The chart below displays the breakdown of the collected sales and use tax for the 2024 tax year. The total collected for 2024 was \$16,201,532, a small decrease from 2023.\*



\*Total tax reflects current expense received into the general fund, less refueling tax received. (Refueling tax is only received on odd number years.)

## County Demographics

Benton County, WA continues to grow both demographically and economically. While the issuance of building permits has decreased, the overall value of new construction has increased, indicating a strong demand for housing and commercial development. Economically, inflation has risen nationally and regionally, impacting the cost of living. While unemployment has decreased significantly from the pandemic highs, the local job market remains stable.

\*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau Benton County, Washington

### Population:

Increased from 214,997 to 218,190



### Unemployment Rate:

Decreased from 4.6 to 4.4%



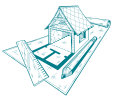
### Building Permits:

Decreased from 890 to 754



### New Construction:

Increased from \$615,978,810 to \$699,975,450



## FUTURE CHALLENGES 2025

For government agencies, maintaining a satisfactory cash flow can be challenging at times due to the operational structure and reliance on external funding sources. As our finance team starts developing a comprehensive cash flow forecast, we may encounter various budgeting challenges due to the changing market. While fixed costs are relatively easy to forecast, variable costs can fluctuate significantly depending on the economic environment. For example, fluctuations in inflation, interest rates and global market conditions for raw materials can impact the variable expenses that lead to higher prices for consumers. To prepare for these changes, we will identify and minimize non-essential costs by streamlining and automating operations, which will help improve overall financial efficiency and stability.

## Feed Back

Please let us know what other information you would like to see included in this report by contacting the Benton County Treasurer at: Treasurer@co.benton.wa.us



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