

Budget in Brief  
Part III

The Town of Orchid Compared to Other Towns and the County

In order to compare the cost of living in Orchid to the cost of living in the other municipalities or in the unincorporated County, you need to begin with the base Municipal Services Millage Rates.

Municipal Services Millage Rates  
(Rates supplied by Indian River County Property Appraiser's Office)

	<u>Actual 2008-09</u>	<u>Budget for 2009-10</u>
Orchid	0.45500	0.45500 (1)
Vero Beach	1.93670	1.93670 (2) (3)
Sebastian	3.80380	3.34560 (3)
Fellsmere	4.43000	4.43000
Indian River Shores	1.43070	1.39230 (4)
County	1.08040	1.07740 (5)

1. Only Orchid includes the cost of trash collection, recycling, and streetlights in its millage rate.
2. It should be noted that Vero Beach transfers about \$6 million in profit from Vero Beach Power & Light to its general fund to reduce its millage rate. A significant portion of this profit comes from fees paid by people living outside of Vero Beach. Vero Beach is also planning to raise fees by 18% for services such as trash collection and the marina to realize more money for the general fund.
3. Both Vero Beach and Sebastian have eliminated one day of work (and the pay for that day) for all city employees in order to make their budgets.
4. This amount includes or is affected by the following:
  - a. The cost of Indian River Shores Fire and EMS – this is the only municipality with its own Fire and EMS.
  - b. This does not include trash pick-up, recycling, or streetlights.
  - c. Indian River Shores took \$110,000 from its reserve funds in order to give all employees a 3% increase (the only non-union contract raises anywhere in the County)
  - d. Indian River Shores uses Vero Beach water and sewer and those rates will increase 18% in November
  - e. Residents who live in the area extending from the south end of Indian River Shores to Winter Beach Road pay for Vero Beach Power & Light. This is at least 50% more than what FP & L customers pay.
5. The County has reduced its staff by 42 employees in the last year.

Based on taxes alone, to compare any of the municipalities and/or the County with Indian River Shores, you need to add the EMS tax rate of 1.7148 to each of the non-Indian River Shores municipalities' and to the County's rate. Thus Indian River Shores had the lowest total tax millage rate. It is, however, obvious that Orchid is significantly cheaper (tax-wise) than the other three municipalities and the County. It is impossible to make any general statement comparing total costs of living in Orchid as opposed to living in Indian River Shores. There are too many variables.