

Long Island

Nassau sales tax revenue increases 5%; Suffolk's up 2.7%

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Sales tax collections in Nassau jumped an unexpected 5.1 percent for the first two months of this year compared to the same period last year while revenue is up 2.71 percent in Suffolk.

The growth in sales taxes signals a strengthening economy on Long Island, officials said, boosted by higher employment, strong automobile sales, lower gasoline prices and increasing home sales in Nassau, officials said.

In Nassau, sales tax collections came in \$10.5 million higher than projected. Sales taxes need to grow only 0.4 percent for the remainder of the year to reach the budgeted total of \$1.11 billion.

The county had budgeted a 1.26 percent increase, according to Nassau Comptroller George Maragos.

The sales tax numbers are “welcome news and reflect the health of the local economy, near full employment and very low interest rates,” Maragos said. “As these trends are not expected to materially change during the balance of the year, the county should have no issue exceeding its budgeted sales tax revenue.”

Business



County Executive Edward Mangano said, "Nassau's economy continues to strengthen."

In Suffolk, sales taxes came in \$6.5 million higher than the same period in 2015.

"We're pleased to get off to a much stronger start than last year," Deputy County Executive Jon Schneider said.

In 2015, the first-quarter sales tax collections dropped 0.08 percent. Though better, this year's sales tax revenue is still below the 3.55 percent increase projected for 2016.

Overall, "we're growing," said Martin Cantor, director of the Long Island Center for Socio-Economic Policy. "We're growing slowly. We have lost quality higher-paying jobs. We've been creating more lower-paying jobs. We finally caught up to the economic difference between more lower-paying jobs and fewer higher-paying jobs."