



THE BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK

COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221 SO. 5TH AVENUE

HIGHLAND PARK, NJ 08904

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July 15, 2019

Dear Highland Park Neighbor:

So far, 2019 has been a very busy and exciting year, with much more to come. Here are a few highlights:

- We applied for and received grants from the New Jersey Department of Transportation for nearly \$850,000 to repair our streets and pedestrian infrastructure throughout town.
- We installed energy upgrades at all Borough buildings, which will pay for themselves within a three-year period while reducing our carbon footprint.
- PSE&G broke ground on the much-anticipated solar field on Donaldson Street, which will not only provide new revenue to the Borough, but also enable important research to expand the use of renewable energy technology throughout the state.
- The Borough successfully prepared an affordable housing plan that will end more than 10 years of litigation and hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal expenses.
- We developed a draft Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan to help improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and connectivity throughout town; this was paid for by the New Jersey Department of Transportation.
- After an extensive interview process we promoted our new police leadership team, Chief Rick Abrams and Captain Jose Curbelo. They are already making many efforts to elicit and act on public input.
- The Zone 6 Teen Center celebrated its first high school graduating class this year. The Center provides a series of programs and a safe haven for all our high school aged teens.
- Thanks to support from the Aetna Foundation and New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute, we continued wellness activities in town such as walks with the mayor, regular healthy cooking demonstrations, and providing fruits and vegetables at the Community Center.
- The Highland Park Arts Commission worked with the New Brunswick Community Arts Council and Rutgers' Mason Gross School of the Arts on the engaging Windows of Understanding program, featuring the works of local artists in the windows downtown.

Our goal is to continue providing the services you expect, promoting downtown development for additional tax ratables and vibrancy, and improving infrastructure that benefits our economy and our resiliency long-term. We cannot do this without taxpayer support. **To see: a) where your property taxes go, and b) a breakdown of how the municipal portion of our taxes is spent locally, please read the back of this letter.**

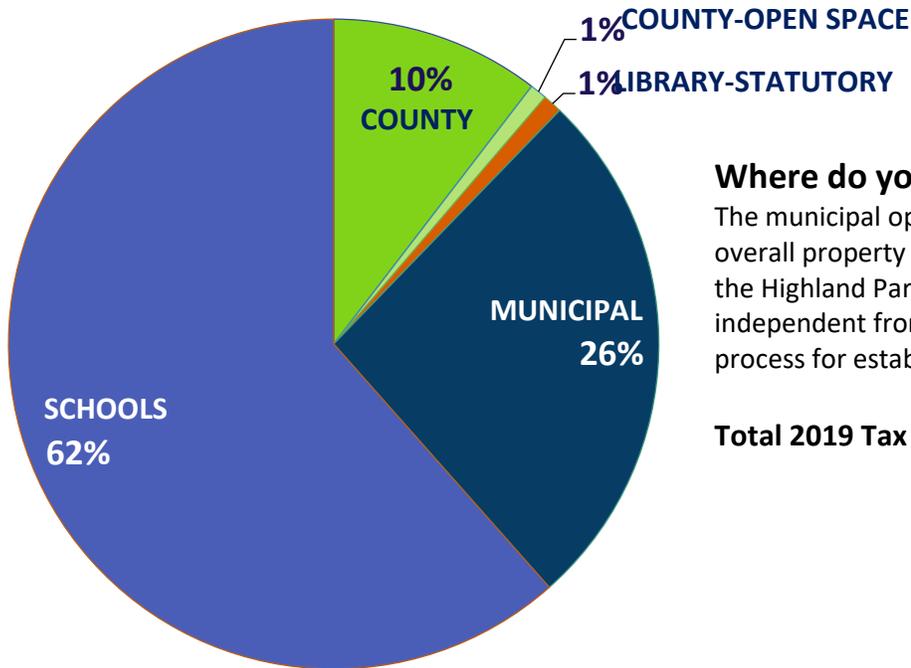
I look forward to seeing you around town. Enjoy the rest of your summer.

Sincerely,

Mayor Gayle Brill Mittler

Please see reverse side for the 2019 property tax overview. →

2019 DISTRIBUTION OF PROPERTY TAX DOLLARS

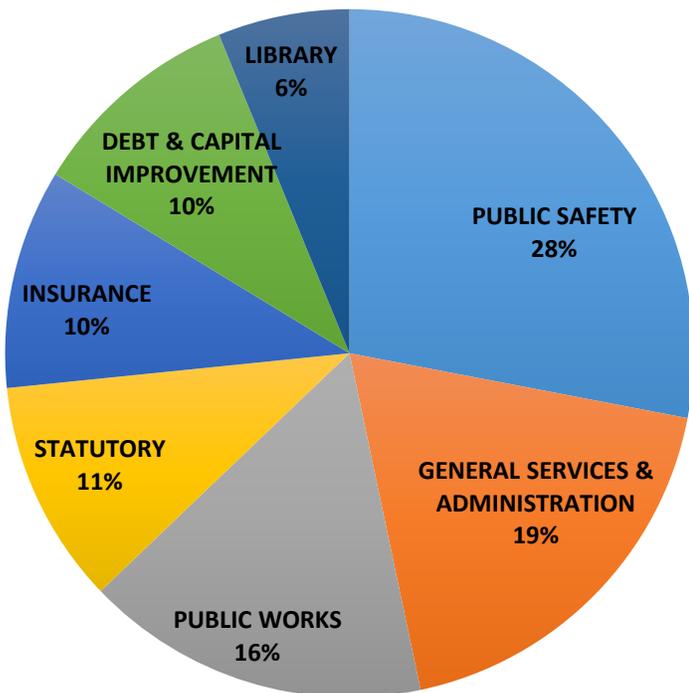


Where do your property tax dollars go?

The municipal operating budget makes up 26% of your overall property tax bill. The largest portion, 62%, goes to the Highland Park Public School District, which is independent from the Borough and has its own public process for establishing its budget.

Total 2019 Tax Levy = \$48,190,468.90

2019 MUNICIPAL BUDGET



What does the municipal budget pay for?

Public safety, which includes all police, fire and emergency personnel and related expenses, makes up 28% of the municipal budget. This number is exclusive of statutory requirements such as pensions and unemployment benefits, which makes up 11% of the total budget.

Public Works, which includes garbage and recycling pick-up, buildings, grounds and roadway maintenance, is 16% of the budget and the remaining 19% goes toward running almost all other municipal functions, such as administration, recreation, code enforcement and finance.

The public library makes up 6% of the budget, inclusive of the statutory minimum. The Borough more than doubled its statutory requirement in 2019.

Total 2019 Municipal Budget = \$16,486,671.87

The 2019 Municipal Budget costs the average homeowner in Highland Park \$265.35 per month.

The municipal budget increases the average homeowner's annual tax bill by

\$96.16 without any reduction in municipal services.