

Town of Fairfax

FY2020 Municipal Budget Abstract

The purpose of this report is to give a brief, but clear explanation to our taxpayers of where their municipal tax money is going, and what the direct impact on the individual taxpayer will be. We've created a budget that will maximize the services and benefits we aim to provide in a way that is realistic and reflective of Fairfax at this moment in time, while having as low an impact as is reasonable on our tax base. We've worked strategically to arrive at projected operational costs that will deliver our residents the best bang for their buck.

The proposed FY2020 municipal operating budget to be raised by taxes is \$2,013,971. This number reflects an overall expenditure increase of 5.1%. This projection forecasts non-property tax income in the most conservative manner possible, and no funds have been included without a high level of certainty that they will be realized within the fiscal year. The formula for this budget value also assumes no surplus rollover money from our current budget.

So, what does this mean for you?

The projected impact on the municipal property tax rate is an increase of 2.2 cents per \$100 of assessed value. This means that the average property in Fairfax (roughly \$250,000) will see an approximate monthly increase of \$4.65 on its municipal tax share—less than the cost of a value meal at a fast food restaurant or a specialty coffee. Here's a breakdown:

Property Value	\$200,000	\$250,000	\$300,000	\$400,000
Anticipated Yearly Increase	\$44.60	\$55.75	\$66.90	\$89.20
Anticipated Monthly Cost	\$3.72	\$4.65	\$5.58	\$7.43

And where is your money going?

The increase in the municipal tax rate presented above will directly allow for the following services and improvements in the coming fiscal year:

- Continuation of the Highway Department's Paving Plan. Our goals are ambitious, and our success will depend on the per ton cost of asphalt in the coming year, but the intention is to pave degraded sections of:
 - Huntville Rd.
 - Brick Church Rd.
 - Bessette Rd.
 - Carroll Hill Rd.
 - Rood Mill Rd.
 - Cherriville Rd.
- Increased staffing for our Highway Department to increase capacity and coverage

- Expanded ditching along our heavily traveled dirt roads to improve drainage and drivability
- Full, managed IT services for the Town Offices to keep information secure and our technology up to date
- New Tires for Fire Engine 1
- Improved data and communications capability for the Fairfax Fire Department
- Costs associated with the expectation of a single audit to be triggered by the Town obtaining Federal grant funding over the threshold amount of \$750,000.00 in a fiscal year

This year's budgeting process began by asking a simple question: What do we want to do? Rather than start with a dollar value or a percentage limit, the aim was to provide for our expected needs in the coming year. This proposed operating budget will allow Fairfax to continue in its position as an attractive and growing town, and expand its capacity to provide a high level of service to all residents. The demand for this is increasing in step with our population, and we want to be able to be responsive to the needs of residents. This budget represents our plan to do so.

Town of Fairfax Selectboard

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Brad Docheff, Town Manager