



TOWNSHIP OF CHATHAM

58 Meyersville Road
Chatham, New Jersey 07928
www.chathamtownship.org

Ziad Andrew Shehady
Township Administrator

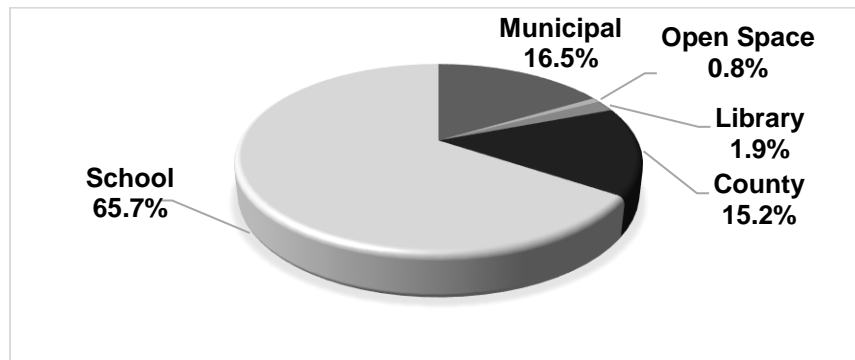
administrator@chathamtownship.org
(973) 635-4600

Dear Property Owner:

I would like to take this opportunity to provide residents with an annual update on behalf of Mayor Ashley Felice and the Township Committee. I began my service to Chatham almost one year ago as your Township Administrator. In that time, I've had the privilege of overseeing the development and introduction of the 2023 budget, along with carrying out the policies of the governing body and ensuring progress towards the goals they have set. We acknowledge your trust in us and are honored to showcase our advancements and efforts throughout the year, as well as explain your tax bill.

With bipartisan support, the Township Committee adopted the 2023 budget prepared by the Finance Subcommittee, consisting of Mayor Ashley Felice, Committeewoman Stacey Ewald, Chief Financial Officer Debbie King, and myself. A presentation was made at several public Township Committee meetings and more information is available on the Township website (www.chathamtownship.org). Our overarching objectives were to draft a balanced and fair budget that maintains our workforce levels, while appropriating enough resources to provide essential services and minimizing any tax increases. ***We are proud that we accomplished that goal by keeping the municipal tax rate flat and reduced the open space tax*** while maintaining superior level of service, improving our fund balance (surplus) and making continued capital improvements.

2023 PROPERTY TAX BREAKDOWN



The Township collects taxes for the County, School District, and Library, however, ***we only have jurisdiction over approximately 17% of your tax bill.*** In other words, ***only about 17 cents of each property tax dollar you pay is used by the Township for municipal operations.*** The balance of the money pays the County, Board of Education, and Library for their budgets. Some of the municipal services provided with your taxes include police protection, storm cleanup & snow removal, road maintenance, parks maintenance, recreation programming, recycling collection & center, storm sewers, street lighting, construction safety & building inspections, code enforcement, fire hydrants, court services, animal control, public information, and vital statistics. Subsidies are also provided to the Fire Departments, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and Senior Citizen Center.

Public Safety

- With the backing of an over \$800,000 federal grant, we're launching a new fiber-optic network to bolster real-time crime data transmission by leveraging existing safety technology and integrating public safety equipment in parks, streets, and other public spaces with technology in police headquarters.
- Chatham was awarded a grant of \$69,194 to expand our Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) technology system to two more vital intersections to assist in identifying, locating, and recovering stolen vehicles; interrupting auto theft networks; and apprehending individuals involved in vehicle theft and other violent crimes.
- Earlier this year, a postcard was mailed to every home with an important Public Safety Announcement from Mayor Ashley Felice and Police Chief Tom Miller about the opioid epidemic affecting New Jersey, along with resources to assist those in need. It is not too late to participate – please visit www.chathamtownship.org/opioidaware to learn more and request a free NARCAN kit.

Infrastructure and Road Safety

- We were awarded a \$375,000 grant to upgrade numerous crosswalks along Fairmount Avenue, enhancing pedestrian and road safety, and ensuring ADA accessibility for all.
- The 2023 Road Resurfacing Program also marked significant strides in our infrastructure efforts. With a budget allocation of \$500,000, streets like School Avenue, Thornley Avenue, Maple Street, Floral Street have undergone significant improvements, enhancing the daily commuting experience of our residents. Repaving of Pine Street is also on the horizon this year thanks to a \$249,770 grant.

Recreation and Community Enhancement

- The Colony Tennis Courts Improvement Project is underway, representing our commitment to enhancing recreational facilities. With a budget of \$161,820 sourced from the Township's Open Space Fund, the tennis courts will be rejuvenated for years to come. An exciting update also includes the addition of striping for pickleball, adding to the versatility of our sports facilities.
- Our continuous dedication to active and passive recreation can be seen through investments from the Open Space tax dollars. Almost \$800,000 was allocated to parks, fields, and our community pool this year. We are proud of the safety and field improvements performed by our amazing Public Works team at Shunpike and Nash parks, including new water fountains & bottle refill stations, upgrades to the bathrooms ensuring year-round use, among others. And there is more to come – including refurbishment of the Shunpike turf field.

Transparency and Community Engagement

- We believe in maintaining clarity and transparency. The municipal website will be receiving a facelift in the coming months, and we are improving on our e-mail and social media communication efforts to the community. You can also look forward to more “e-government” services online.
- A postcard mailing is expected by the end of the year with a resident survey to assess needs and solicit feedback. Such initiatives echo our commitment to inclusiveness in decision-making processes.

In conclusion, our accomplishments this year could not have been possible without your support and cooperation. We're optimistic about the future and pledge to continue our work ensuring Chatham Township remains a place you are proud to call home. Thank you for your continued trust and partnership. As always, please don't hesitate to contact me if I can ever be of any assistance. I thank you for the opportunity to serve you. Together, we are building a brighter future for Chatham Township!

Respectfully,



Ziad Andrew Shehady