

**Deirdre Dillon**

Mayor

**Judith Cusick**

Councilwoman

Health, Education & Social Services

**Michael Gutwetter**

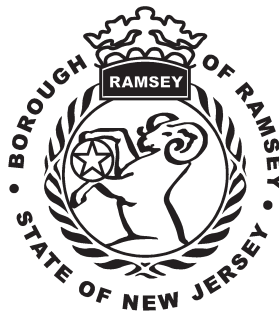
Councilman

Finance & Administration

**William Jones**

Councilman

Public & Governmental Relations



INCORPORATED 1908

**Peter Kilman**

Council President

Utilities, Building & Grounds

**Harry Weber**

Councilman

Public Safety

**Jane Woods**

Councilwoman

Building, Planning & Zoning

## **A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL**

**Public Hearing on the 2021 Municipal Budget will be March 24, 2021, 7:45PM**

**Due to COVID-19 budget hearing will be held telephonically. Access information will be posted on the Borough's website [www.ramseynj.com](http://www.ramseynj.com) with the agenda for the meeting**

Dear Resident:

Your property tax bill is comprised of four separate components: Ramsey Schools, Ramsey Public Library, Ramsey Municipal Services and Bergen County Government. Please note that only the municipal services portion (20%) of your property taxes is administered by your Mayor and Council. The Board of Education solely determines the school tax levy from the annual budget they set and incorporates any additional voter approved referendums or ballot questions. Similarly, the County is responsible for setting its budget and tax levy. The Ramsey Library funding is a formula mandated by State law.

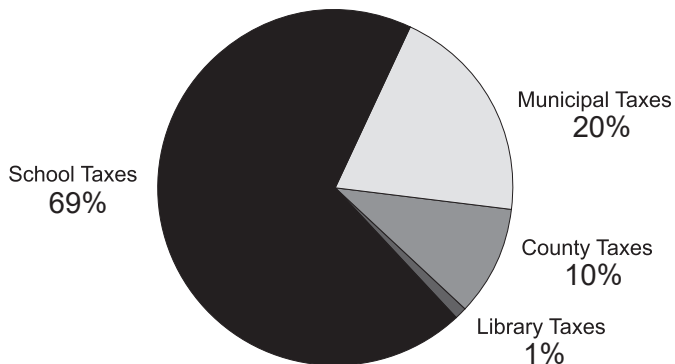
Below please find a breakdown of 2020 property taxes by component, followed by a discussion of the 2021 Municipal Budget

### **SUMMARY OF PROPERTY TAX COMPONENTS**

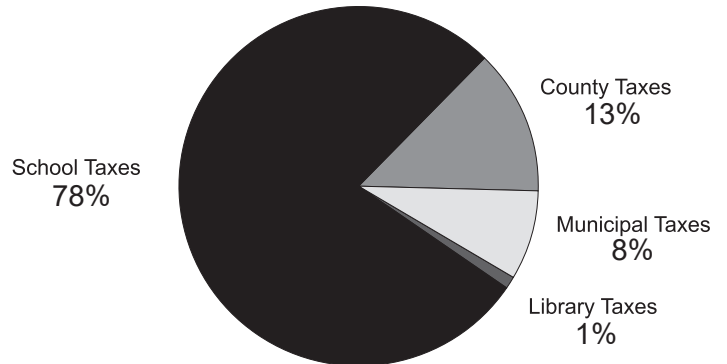
2020 Property Tax Rate Increases by Component:

Municipal 1.83% School 5.17% County 6.05% Library 2.94% Total Property Tax Rate 4.56%

**% of Your Property Tax Bill**



**% of 2020 Property Tax Increase**



## **2021 MUNICIPAL BUDGET**

**2021 Municipal Budget includes NO Municipal Tax Rate Increase**

The Governing Body understands the economic impact of the pandemic on our residents and businesses and is proposing a 2021 municipal budget with no municipal tax rate increase. The zero percent increase in 2021 marks the eleventh consecutive year that the municipal portion of property taxes annual increase has been under 2.0%.

Please note this means only that residents will see no increase in the municipal and library portion of their property taxes (combined 21% of taxes). Whether or not there is an increase in your total property taxes in 2021 will be determined when the Ramsey Board of Education and Bergen County Board of Chosen Freeholders set final budgets and tax levies later this year.

Of the 70 Bergen County towns, Ramsey ranks as the 7th lowest, or better than 90% of the towns in the lowest % of property taxes utilized for municipal services at 19.5% of total property taxes. The average across Bergen County is 30.1% of a town's property taxes directed to municipal services. This is further illustrated by an effective municipal tax rate more than 31% below the County average, translating to Ramsey's annual municipal tax levy being millions of dollars below that of the average Bergen County town.

As your elected representatives, we face the ongoing challenge of making difficult choices in the provision of municipal services to ensure municipal government costs remain under control, while still maintaining a high level and quality of municipal services for our community. In order to provide budget stability, we continually seek new revenue sources such as grants (2020 work done Main Street Streetscape with approximately \$600,000 grant), income from use of Borough facilities (cell tower rent) while controlling costs by finding efficiencies where feasible. We also continue, at Borough Hall and throughout our other points of service to residents, to streamline and enhance our services in a cost-effective way.

We also put a high priority on investing in the Borough's infrastructure. This investment has resulted in better overall conditions on our local roads, upgraded emergency service apparatus, other projects such as the new pool house/community center/senior center project and drainage upgrades to the pool property. Even with these investments, Ramsey's debt level is the fourth lowest of the 13 Northwest Bergen County towns, and is less than 10% of the level the State allows for a community our size

#### **Summary of the 2021 Municipal Budget**

- **Meets the objective of adopting a prudent and responsible budget while continuing to provide a high level of service to taxpayers**
- **No municipal tax rate increase**
- **Number of revenue line items will be below 2020 pre-pandemic levels reflecting the continued economic impact of COVID-19**
- **Economic benefits of 2020 budget reduction measures taken are being utilized as revenue in the 2021 budget**
- **Borough has implemented and negotiated further appropriation line-item reductions for 2021 to offset contractual and statutory appropriation increases to other line items**
- **Ramsey maintains favorable ranking for municipal tax rates, debt and surplus levels with other Bergen County, as well as Northwest Bergen municipalities**
- **2021 budget continues to reduce municipal debt levels while addressing necessary capital infrastructure investments**

As your elected officials, we remain highly cognizant of our obligation to wisely manage residents' tax dollars, and we maintain our focus upon managing these expenditures as conservatively as possible without sacrificing long-term value. Through our careful long-term planning, which includes a history of stable budgeting and low debt levels, Ramsey is financially healthy and strong. Your Mayor and Council have worked diligently to produce a leaner, more efficient municipal government, yet one which remains able to deliver the essential municipal services which our residents have come to expect. Much credit continues to be due our dedicated and hard-working municipal employees, who have worked with the governing body to reduce operational costs and improve efficiencies, while maintaining high standards of performance.

The full 2021 budget is available for your inspection in several places. You may view the budget in its entirety on our borough website ([www.ramseynj.com](http://www.ramseynj.com)) along with a summary budget presentation. Residents are invited to comment on any aspect of the budget at Mayor and Council meetings, or by letter or e-mail.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and support,

**Borough of Ramsey Mayor and Council**

## PROPOSED MUNICIPAL TAX DATA COMPARISON

	2020 Actual Tax Rate - \$	2021 Proposed Tax Rate - \$	2021 Rate Increase - \$	2021 Rate Increase - %
MUNICIPAL SERVICES	\$0.502	\$0.502	\$0.000	\$0.0%

The following information is a more detailed overview of the municipal budget:

### MUNICIPAL REVENUE COMPARISON

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>
Alcoholic Beverage Licenses.....	\$34,000	\$35,500
Other Administrative Licenses .....	\$55,000	\$64,000
Construction Code.....	\$580,000	\$423,000
Other Permits .....	\$35,000	\$21,000
Municipal Court Fines.....	\$117,000	\$80,500
Interest and Cost on Taxes.....	\$130,000	\$136,000
Energy Receipts Tax.....	\$1,474,471	\$1,474,471
Utility Operating Surplus.....	\$115,000	-----
Interest on Investments and Deposits .....	\$135,000	\$70,000
Cable Franchise Fee .....	\$237,000	\$225,000
Municipal Occupancy Tax.....	\$175,000	\$98,000
Cell Tower Revenue .....	\$40,000	\$69,500
Life Hazard Use Fees.....	\$185,000	\$195,000
Reserve to Pay Bond Anticipation Notes (Grants).....	\$771,772	\$109,228
Clean Communities Grant Program .....	\$31,645	\$28,533
Various Grants.....	\$15,701	\$16,354
Governor Council.....	\$9,065	\$7,159
Recycling Tonnage Grants .....	\$54,391	-----
Alcohol Education & Rehabilitation Fund .....	\$3,578	-----
Recycling Revenue.....	\$5,000	\$12,500
Receipts from Delinquent Taxes.....	\$500,000	\$560,000
Utilization of Contingency Reserve (1) .....	\$2,050,000	\$2,495,000
Amount of be Raised by Taxes for Support of Municipal Budget .....	\$17,506,140	\$17,628,522
Amount to be Raised by Taxes for Free Public Library .....	\$1,228,207	\$1,226,828
<b>TOTAL GENERAL REVENUES .....</b>	<b>\$25,487,969</b>	<b>\$24,976,095</b>

1. CONTINGENCY RESERVE – We anticipate utilizing \$2,495,000 of reserve/fund balance in the 2021 Municipal Budget. Fund Balance is generated by unused appropriations and unanticipated revenues through last year's Municipal Budget. This is then utilized to offset municipal taxes on a year-to-year basis.

# MUNICIPAL EXPENSE COMPARISON

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>GENERAL GOVERNMENT</b>		
Administrative & Executive .....	\$436,000	\$422,500
Mayor & Council .....	\$51,000	\$50,950
Borough Clerk .....	\$294,000	\$291,050
Finance & Administration .....	\$272,000	\$270,750
Audit Services .....	\$50,000	\$50,000
Computer Maintenance & Data Services .....	\$134,000	\$135,000
Collection & Assessment of Taxes .....	\$358,000	\$403,800
Legal Services .....	\$275,000	\$250,000
Engineering .....	\$140,000	\$139,500
<b>LAND USE ADMINISTRATION</b>		
Planning Board .....	\$92,000	\$90,500
Zoning Board .....	\$12,000	\$11,400
<b>INSURANCE</b> .....	<b>\$2,245,000</b>	<b>\$2,305,500</b>
<b>PUBLIC SAFETY</b>		
Police, Prosecutor and Courts, and 911 .....	\$5,937,000	\$6,166,000
Emergency Management .....	\$159,500	\$157,400
Fire and Fire Protection .....	\$444,000	\$436,730
First Aid Contribution .....	\$115,000	\$112,750
Construction Official .....	\$398,000	\$373,250
<b>PUBLIC WORKS</b>		
Road Maintenance, Resurfacing and Sidewalks .....	\$1,435,000	\$1,463,750
Shade Tree Commission .....	\$206,500	\$197,250
Recycling .....	\$610,000	\$664,000
Garbage & Trash Removal .....	\$625,000	\$630,000
Building & Grounds .....	\$705,000	\$606,000
Vehicle Maintenance .....	\$465,000	\$450,750
<b>HEALTH SERVICES</b>		
Board of Health .....	\$119,500	\$118,130
Visiting Nurses .....	\$18,500	\$19,500
Environmental Commission .....	\$7,500	\$7,330
Dog & Cat Regulation .....	\$20,500	\$20,500
Drug Abuse Program and Other Human Services .....	\$31,450	\$31,400
<b>PARKS &amp; RECREATION</b>		
Board of Recreation Commission .....	\$142,800	\$140,310
Other Programs .....	\$182,500	\$180,250
<b>PURCHASE VARIOUS DEPARTMENT EQUIPMENT</b> .....	<b>\$250,000</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>
<b>UTILITIES AND LANDFILL FEES</b> .....	<b>\$1,400,000</b>	<b>\$1,427,000</b>
<b>CONTINGENCY</b> .....	<b>\$5,000</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>
<b>DEFERRED CHARGES AND STATUTORY</b> .....	<b>\$2,672,234</b>	<b>\$2,609,176</b>
<b>LIBRARY</b> .....	<b>\$1,228,207</b>	<b>\$1,226,828</b>
<b>GRANTS OFFSET BY REVENUES</b> .....	<b>\$114,380</b>	<b>\$52,046</b>
<b>CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND</b> .....	<b>\$550,000</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>
<b>DEBT SERVICE AND DEFERRED CHARGES</b> .....	<b>\$2,246,272</b>	<b>\$1,709,795</b>
<b>RESERVE FOR UNCOLLECTED TAXES</b> .....	<b>\$1,040,127</b>	<b>\$1,050,000</b>
<b>TOTAL GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS</b>	<b>\$25,487,969</b>	<b>\$24,976,095</b>

## Borough of Ramsey

33 N. Central Avenue  
Ramsey, NJ 07446

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**Residential Customer**  
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