

Dear Neighbor,

Do you realize only 26% of the property taxes that you pay remain in the Township of Cranford? I am enclosing this letter with your property tax bill to help you understand where your tax dollars go. The municipal tax rate shown on your bill is an estimate for the 3rd quarter of 2010 and in September the actual tax bill will be sent to you. August 1st is the deadline to pay third quarter taxes and the ten (10) day grace period is effective through August 10, 2010.

The Township of Cranford is responsible for collecting all property taxes; however only 26% of what it collects is retained for Township operations. That is 26¢ of each dollar collected which provides delivery of municipal services. The Township Committee manages only 26% of the tax payment it receives from you.

What does the Township do with the 26% of the taxes it retains? With that 26% share it provides an impressive array of services to its residents, including, but certainly not limited to the following:

- Police Department
- Fire Department
- Library
- Senior Transportation Services
- Municipal Parks
- Municipal Court
- Public Health Services
- Flood Control Efforts
- Maintenance of 70 miles of roads
- Leaf Collection and Disposal
- Snow Plowing
- School Crossing Guards
- Conservation Center
- Recreation Program and Facilities
- Curbside Recycling
- Electricity for Street Lighting
- Pressurized Fire Hydrants
- Administrative functions such as tax collection, tax assessment, engineering, surveying, building inspection and zoning.
- Professional and Legal Representation
- TV 35

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The Township Committee is committed to providing all of these services in the most cost effective manner possible. To further control costs, staffing levels have been reduced through attrition and redistribution of workloads. Less expensive health care plans have been implemented for employees. Administrative staff employee wages have not increased in recent years, and an extension to the public safety employees' contracts call for a 0% increase in 2011.

Future budgetary challenges are more certain as even more stringent tax cap levies seem likely in 2011. The Township Committee's goal is ensuring that municipal services are provided in the most efficient manner possible.

Finally, if the Township keeps only 26¢ of each dollar collected, where does the other 74¢ go? The remainder goes to Union County (19%) and the Board of Education (55%).

My hope is that this explanation is helpful in understanding where your tax dollars go and the wide range of municipal services the Township's 26% portion provides.

Yours truly,

Mark C. Smith

Mayor, Cranford Township