



# CITIZENS' GUIDE

## to the 2025-2026 East Haddam Town Budget

### MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF FINANCE

Dear East Haddam Citizens:

The Board of Finance has worked with the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education to present a responsible budget committed to sensible management and oversight of our town's resources. Detailed information was provided by each Board, Commission and Department to support the requested budgetary funding. The proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2026 provides for current services and plans for future needs.

It has been a challenge to provide the services we all expect within the constraints of rising costs - something we are all experiencing. These challenges resulted in a 9.51% increase in total expenses as compared to Fiscal Year 2024-2025. The main drivers of the increase include contractual obligations, higher insurance premiums, negative changes in the grand list related to motor vehicles and inflationary pressure. As a result of the citizens' comments heard at the April 8th Public Hearing, the Board of Finance has revised the budget by proposing to use \$2,600,000 of Fund Balance to offset total costs. This is an increase of \$100,000 over the original proposed amount of \$2,500,000. The additional \$100,000 from fund balance enables the Board of Finance to reduce the initial \$600,000 cut to the Board of Education budget to \$500,000 without raising taxes. The proposed mill rate of 28.45 is a 1.69 mill increase when comparing it to last year's Grand List.

The budget, as presented, allows for the continued support of our Police, Fire and Public Safety needs, the maintenance and improvement of Town infrastructure and the responsible investment in Education programs and infrastructure.

The Board of Finance hopes that all citizens can attend the remaining budget meetings either in person or virtually by using the YouTube links. It is critical that the budget development process gets input via questions and comments directly from the people of East Haddam. Please note that the Town's website continues to be the best resource for the budget meeting schedules and agendas. All meetings are open to the public and provide opportunity for comments and questions.

Using ClearGov has allowed for open explanations of both the operating budget and capital needs for the Town of East Haddam. Please go to the town website to access ClearGov for more detail by going to Boards—Board of Finance—Budgets—Fiscal Year 2026—Link to ClearGov.



We encourage you to join us for the Public Hearing on Tuesday, April 29, 2025 at 7 pm at the Nathan Hale-Ray High School. The Public Hearing will also be broadcasted via YouTube live.

The Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 13, 2025 at 8 pm at the Nathan Hale-Ray High School.

The Referendum is scheduled for Tuesday, May 27, 2025 at the Municipal Office Complex. The Referendum start time will be determined at the Town Meeting and the end time is 8 pm.

For those unable to attend in person, to express your comments, concerns, and to ask questions, please email us prior to or during the hearing and meeting at [budget.questions@easthaddam.org](mailto:budget.questions@easthaddam.org).

We look forward to hearing from you.

Todd Gelston, Chairman

Members of the Board of Finance:  
William Barney, Secretary  
Maureen Goff  
Eric Kolasinski  
Harvey Thomas  
Joseph Corbett



All meetings will broadcast live via YouTube.

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLZq-CmatoKY6FW829c6mBA?view\\_as=subscriber](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLZq-CmatoKY6FW829c6mBA?view_as=subscriber)



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### ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES SUMMARY

Description	2023-2024 Actual (unaudited)	2024-2025 Adopted Budget	2025-2026	
			Proposed Budget	\$ Change
General Government	\$ 3,027,547	\$ 3,468,697	\$ 3,849,276	\$ 380,579
Public Safety	1,386,976	1,677,482	1,892,411	214,929
Public Works	2,470,712	2,777,088	2,945,887	168,799
Health and Welfare	561,401	578,942	618,890	39,948
Culture and Recreation	773,741	821,423	953,530	132,107
Debt Service	2,830,488	2,644,713	3,290,579	645,866
Fringe Benefits	1,243,725	1,557,067	1,515,431	(41,636)
<b>Total Town Government</b>	<b>12,294,590</b>	<b>13,525,412</b>	<b>15,066,004</b>	<b>1,540,592</b>
Education	22,643,016	23,998,220	25,451,627	1,453,407
Transfers to Capital Reserves and Projects	2,041,125	3,149,283	4,023,161	873,878
<b>Grand Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 36,978,731</b>	<b>\$ 40,672,915</b>	<b>\$ 44,540,792</b>	<b>\$ 3,867,877</b>

### ESTIMATED REVENUES SUMMARY

Description	2023-2024 Actual (unaudited)	2024-2025 Adopted Budget	2025-2026	
			Proposed Budget	\$ Change
Taxes, Interest, Penalties and Fee Revenue	\$ 31,139,526	\$ 32,293,601	\$ 34,079,479	\$ 1,785,878
Intergovernmental Agencies	4,255,277	4,060,430	3,981,416	(79,014)
Investment and Interest Income	269,716	95,000	100,000	5,000
Local Revenues	1,035,972	932,049	945,268	13,219
Transfers in/Other Funding Sources	647,542	1,778,585	3,261,485	1,482,900
Transfer in from Reserves for Debt Service	1,405,100	1,513,250	2,173,144	659,894
<b>Grand Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 38,753,133</b>	<b>\$ 40,672,915</b>	<b>\$ 44,540,792</b>	<b>\$ 3,867,877</b>

## The Mill Rate

A tax mill is the number that, when applied to the value of taxable property, distributes the tax burden among the town's owners of real estate, vehicles and personal property. The mill rate is calculated by dividing the total amount of required taxes by 1/1,000th of the net taxable Grand List.



Required Taxes (budgeted expenditures less all other budgeted revenue sources) .....	\$33,881,079
October 1, 2024 net taxable Grand List (adjusted for uncollected taxes) .....	\$1,190,802,955
1/1,000th of net taxable Grand List (to calculate mill rate) .....	\$1,190,803
Mill Rate=Required Taxes divided by 1/1,000th of Grand List .....	28.45
Current Mill Rate .....	26.76
Mill Rate Increase .....	1.69