

Frequently Asked Questions

About Mayor Adrian Mapp's Proposed 2014 Budget

Is the proposed 2014 budget on time?

Municipal budgets must meet deadlines imposed by the New Jersey Department of the Treasury. State law requires that every mayor introduce the Administration's budget by February 10, but this year the deadline was extended to March 14 because of the severe winter weather that forced many local and state government closings.

The Administration planned to introduce the budget at the March 10 Council meeting, but the meeting was rescheduled to March 20 because 3 Council members and the Mayor were attending a government conference in Washington, D.C. The entire Council received a copy of the proposed budget in their weekly information packets on Friday, March 14, meeting the deadline. The Administration's deadline for budget presentation has not been met in the past 8 years, which resulted in frequent delays and numerous emergency appropriations.

How can the 2014 budget be on time if we are already in March 2014?

The budget process cannot be initiated until revenues from the previous year are complete, up through and including December 31. The state deadline recognizes that municipalities must have an accurate financial accounting when preparing the current budget, so the deadline for presentation is set in February (or this year, in March).

Why have Plainfield's homeowners seen an increase in municipal taxes every year?

Plainfield has shown a continuous decline in commercial and industrial ratables – approximately 13 percent in the last four years (2010-2014). As a result, the tax burden falls more heavily on homeowners.

How do we reverse the trend in declining commercial and industrial ratables?

The Administration's budget reflects the belief that the decline in commercial and industrial ratables can only be reversed through increased economic development, which requires a rebranding of Plainfield and a review of City practices to ensure that we are a business friendly community.

Why does this budget draw down so heavily from the surplus?

Reversing the decline in commercial and industrial ratables will be a multi-year process. Using a smaller portion of the surplus in the 2014 budget would have resulted in a greater share of the tax burden falling on Plainfield homeowners. The Administration recognizes that we cannot draw down on surplus to this large an extent in consecutive years.

Why is the Administration requesting funding for so many new positions?

The new positions reflect the need to invest in Plainfield's future through increased communication and rebranding and to strengthen our financial position by seeking increased funding from grants. They also reflect our residents' requests for enhanced public safety and increased recreation and job training programs for our youth.