

Budget in Brief

**Proposed Fiscal Year 2025/26 Budget
Town Meeting: Saturday April 26, 2025**
10:00 A.M. Veterans Auditorium,
Coventry High School, Ripley Hill Road

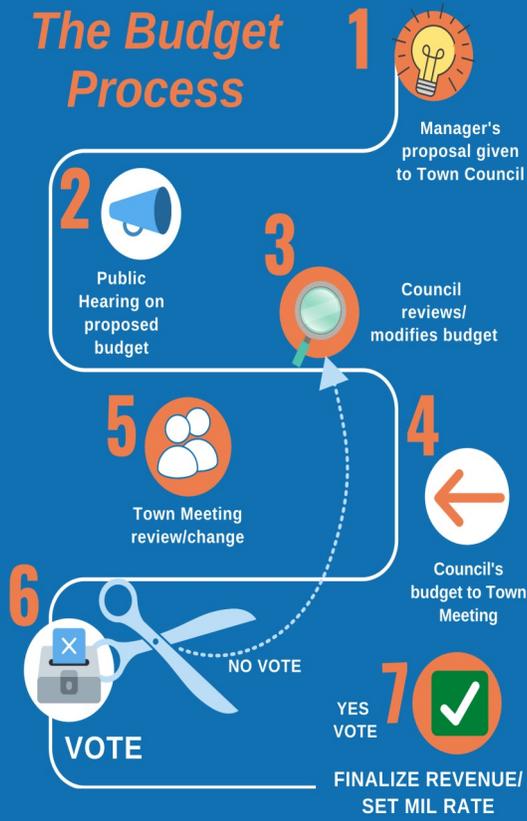


Overview

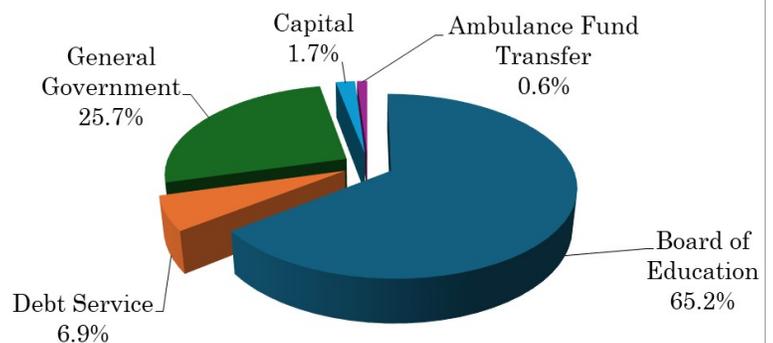
Revaluation of real property and new State laws reducing the taxable value of motor vehicles has created a tax burden shift toward the residential taxpayer. Responding to the concerns of higher residential taxes due to the State mandated revaluation and expectations of Coventry residents for maintaining quality services, Town and Board staff reviewed programs and services and prepared budget proposals that address the stated goals of the Town Council and Board of Education. Though scaled back, existing services have been maintained. Priority has been given to infrastructure repairs, services to students, seniors, and public safety. The Town Manager's recommended budget demonstrated that most department budgets were submitted with modest increases.

“The Town Council’s budget proposals for the Town, Board, Capital and Debt Service call for a 3.74% spending increase.”

The Budget Process



Where Your Money Goes



The Town Council reviewed and modified the Town Manager's proposed budget resulting in a reduction of \$1,044,706 from requests. The Town Council's budget proposals for the Town, Board, Capital, Debt Service, and EMS (Ambulance) Fund transfer call for a \$1,743,314 spending increase from the prior year adopted budget. Due to revaluation, the proposed budget will require a decrease of the current mil rate of 33.31 mils or a decrease of 26.8%, to a rate of 24.37 mils. The proposed budget has been sent to the Annual Town Meeting scheduled for Saturday, April 26, 2025, in the CHS Veterans Auditorium at 10:00 A.M. The adjourned Town Meeting vote is scheduled for Tuesday, May 6, 2025.

Budget Summary

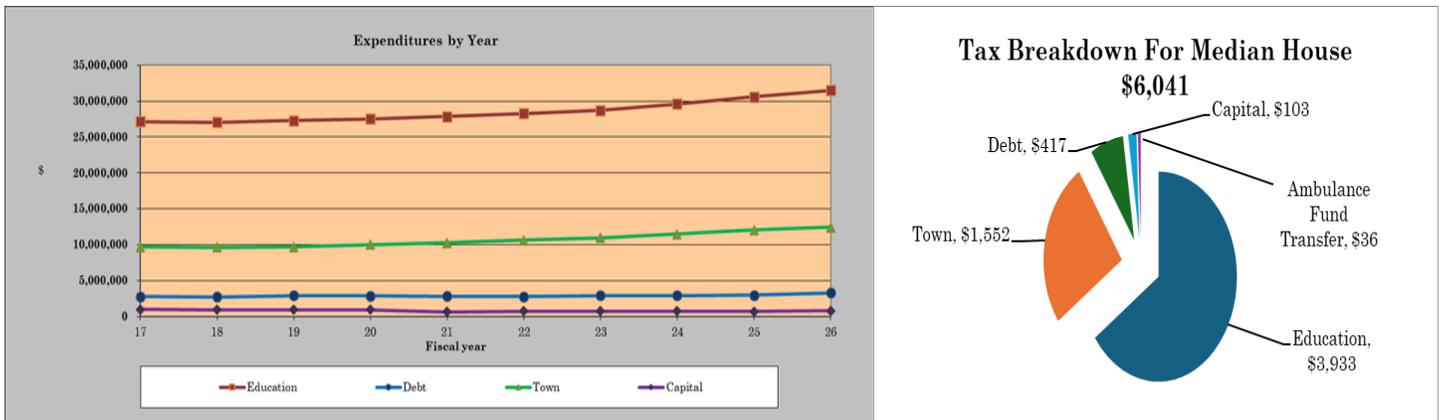
The expenditure part of the budget is broken down into the areas of General Government, Board of Education, Debt Service, Capital and the EMS (Ambulance) Fund Transfer totaling \$48,333,348, an increase of \$1,743,314 or 3.74% compared to the adopted FY24/25 budget. A breakdown of the budgets are illustrated below.

Budget Area	Adopted FY24/25	Requested FY25/26	\$ Change	% Change
General Government	\$ 12,050,160	\$ 12,407,208	\$ 357,048	2.96%
Board of Education	30,599,700	31,520,374	920,674	3.01%
Debt Service	2,972,506	3,314,306	341,800	11.50%
Capital	668,748	803,314	134,566	20.12%
(EMS)Ambulance Fund Trns	298,920	288,146	(10,774)	-3.60%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 46,590,034	\$ 48,333,348	\$ 1,743,314	3.74%

Town Operating Budget Summary

The Town operating budget recommended for FY26 is \$12,407,208; an increase of \$357,048. This is a reduction of \$1,044,706 or 2.12% from the Town Manager's proposed budget. The largest driver to this increase is personnel services which increased \$324,729 or 3.58%. Health insurance increased 9% due to increased claim trends. The Town's required pension contribution increased \$41,000 or 5.5%. This budget maintains the current level of staffing. Other drivers behind the Operating Budget increase include general inflation increases, increased costs in electricity, gasoline and diesel fuel. This budget has already had significant cuts. It is a lean budget but it can maintain the current level of services provided by the Town. Any additional reductions to the Town Operating Budget would very likely result in staff layoffs and would include a reduction in services provided to Town residents.

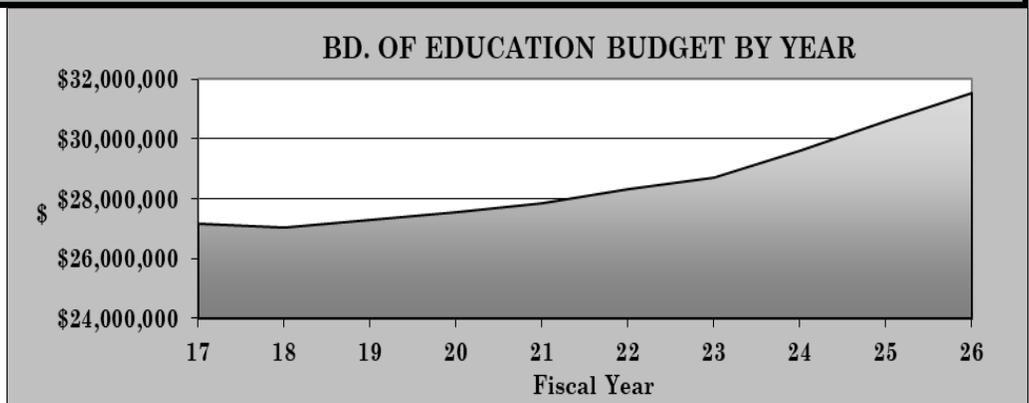
The median assessed house value (\$247,900) in Coventry, with this budget, would have a tax bill of \$6,041. The pie chart below shows where this money goes. Additionally the graph shows the Town's level of spending over ten years.



Board of Education Summary

The Board of Education budget was reduced \$765,000 by the Town Council and is proposed at \$31,520,374, an increase of \$920,674 or 3.01% over the adopted FY24/25 budget.

Details are available on the web at coventrypublicschools.org

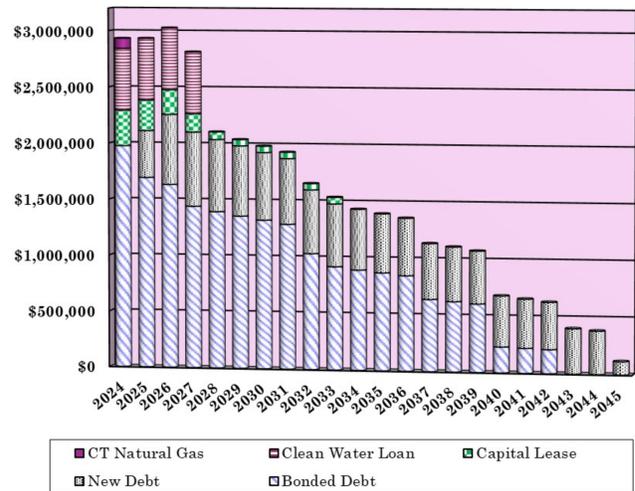


Debt Service

Debt Service represents 6.9% of the Town budget. This remains below the common threshold of 10% for Towns. For FY26, there is a proposed increase of \$341,800 or 11.5% from the prior year. This increase is due to debt payments being added for the 2023 Road Bond and the CHS HVAC project, which is currently being installed. This is not only a nice improvement for students, it also provides compliance with recent State laws establishing indoor air quality standards for schools in Connecticut.

Though debt service has increased, it is important to know that our projected debt service is anticipated to decline in FY27 and in the years going forward, which will allow for additional debt issuance or savings to taxpayers.

Projected Debt Service by Year



Capital Projects

1. Summer Road Program (49.6 % of Town Aid Road)	\$	285,000
2. BOE Network Refresh	\$	100,114
3. Student Computer Upgrades	\$	35,000
4. Town Computer Upgrades	\$	145,000
5. SCBA (FD Air Tanks)	\$	24,000
6. FD Personal Protective Gear	\$	13,000
7. Fire Hose/Equipment	\$	12,000
8. CNREF	\$	70,000
9. Lake Management (water quality treatments)	\$	119,200
Total	\$	803,314

The proposed capital projects budget for the General Fund for FY26 totals \$803,314, a 20.12% increase from the prior year. Of this budget, \$135,114 is related to capital projects for the Board of Education. This plan represents a reduction from the Town Manager's proposal of \$110,000.

In addition to the capital project budget outlined in the General Fund, several capital projects are proposed through grants, including Town Aid Road, (\$290,000), Local Capital Improvement Program (\$154,000). The Capital budget for FY 26 includes a bond proposal which would be used for fire alarms at GHR and CGS, new communication-intercom systems for the four Coventry schools, an Ambulance, and other equipment. The Town Council is planning a future referendum for these items. Please refer to the Capital Improvement budget, within Section 11 of the Budget for additional details.

Transfer to EMS (Ambulance) Fund

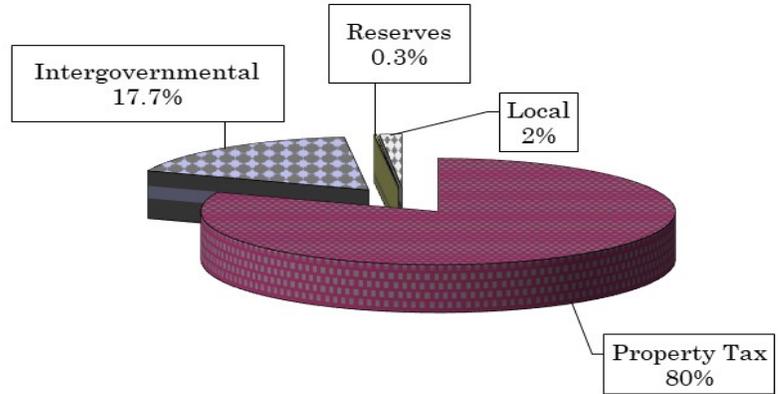
The FY26 budget separates out the transfer to the EMS (Ambulance) Fund as a separate budgetary line. It is proposed to transfer \$288,146 to the EMS (Ambulance) Fund to assist in funding the ambulance coverage currently provided to residents on a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week basis. This service has historically been all volunteer, but in recent years the Town has had to add paid staffing to cover shifts with the decrease of volunteerism in Coventry and throughout the nation. The Town is about to complete our first year of having paid Town staff provide in-house EMS-Ambulance Service. Last summer, the Town hired 4 fulltime staff members and several part-time staff members to supplement the shift hours provided by the Volunteer Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs). Previously the Town used a private EMT service to staff the unfilled volunteer hours. Last year the Town estimated that over \$71,000 could be saved by ending the contracted services and bringing the service in-house. Though the first year is not complete, we have seen a trend of lower expenses. This has resulted in a budget reduction in FY26 of \$10,774 or a reduction of 3.6% to the EMS budget. The Town continues to save due to the on-going committed service of our remaining volunteers!

Revenues

The property tax is the major revenue source (81.22%) for Coventry. The proposed budget is an increase of 3.74% from the prior year. The proposed mil rate is 24.37 for real estate, personal property, and motor vehicles., which is a 8.94 mil decrease or a -28.7% change from the prior year. Due to increased assessed value in property this year, one mil in FY26 equals \$1,568,369 as compared to \$959,615 in FY25.

Coventry currently has a much lower tax rate than most towns in the area. This is especially true when you consider that we offer 24/7 Police and EMS (Ambulance) services. Even with the spending increase in our overall budget of 3.74%, our Town will still have a tax mil rate lower than comparable Towns in our immediate area. This would include our neighbors, Tolland and Windham.

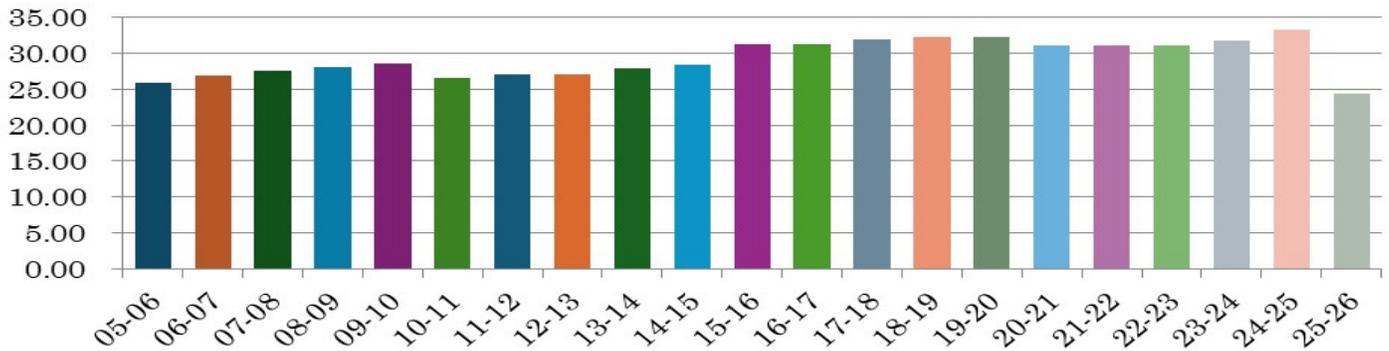
FY 25/26 Revenue by Source



Intergovernmental revenues, mostly State aid, are the second largest source (17.43%) of revenues for Coventry. The amount anticipated to be received in FY26 is \$8,425,380. This is a decrease of \$166,973 or 1.94% from the prior year adopted budget. These revenues are based on the Governor's proposed budget. The majority of the State cuts for Connecticut towns, including Coventry, are tied to Special Education. There has been much debate between the Governor and the General Assembly on whether these funds will be restored to towns. The Town is required to provide Special Education services by State law, so missing revenues must be made up locally to cover the cost of these programs.

Other local revenues consist of a variety of fees or permits, services and interest earnings. This revenue, which represents 1.5% of the total budget, is estimated to be \$730,050. This is an increase of \$15,450 or 2.16%. The increase is estimated due to increased interest revenue and increased building permit activity.

Mil Rate History



To learn more about the fiscal year 2025/26 proposed budget, you can view the detailed Town budget document online at www.coventry-ct.gov under Finance. Copies of the Town and Board of Education budgets are also available for viewing in the Coventry Town Clerk's office during regular office hours.

YOUR OPINION COUNTS!

If you have questions or concerns about the FY 25/26 proposed budget, please don't hesitate to call the Town Manager's Office at 860-742-6324 or email:

budgetcomments@coventry-ct.gov



TAX RELIEF FOR SENIORS

Guidelines for additional tax relief for qualified Coventry seniors and disabled persons are available in the Town Assessor's Office. This includes a local tax credit program. Call 860-742-4067.

Application Deadline: May 15, 2025.