CHESTER HEIGHTS · 2027 BOROUGH BUDGET

The 2027 Borough Budget Has a Problem, and 5 Options to Solve It

$299,943
gap in the bare-bones 2027 budget: no events, no library support, no maintenance of current parks

$504,291
gap once those items, the zoning rewrite and routine costs are restored

$119,000
in tax appeal costs (Wawa $69,000, Madison est. $50,000), more than the ~$112,000 raised in general property taxes

How we got here

Development money is gone
The budget was balanced for years on transfer taxes and one-time windfalls. The Borough bought 40 acres for a park instead of developing it.

A structural deficit
Recurring costs outrun recurring revenue every year until something changes.

Savings are running out
Reserves have been used to cover the gap, and they can only be used once.

The five options before Council

A · Wait	Spend down reserves and plug the hole one more year. The problem returns in 2028 with less cushion.	YELLOW
B · Raise property taxes	Nearly 4x today's level to cover the bare-bones gap, more than 5x to cover the real budget. Only property owners pay.	RED
C · EIT, nothing else	The ordinance on the Nov. 16 agenda as drafted: a 1% earned income tax with no repeal of property or fire taxes and no Fire Company share. Residents pay twice, about $340,000 a year more than needed.	RED
D · One package (recommended)	**1% earned income tax, eliminate the Borough's property taxes including the fire tax, and dedicate 25% of EIT revenue to the Fire Company.** Closes the deficit, relieves residents on Social Security alone, funds events, the library and parks. About 55% of residents already pay EIT where they work.	GREEN
E · Smaller EIT, keep fire tax	Surplus runs out in about 15 years. Nothing set aside for capital needs or the 40-acre park.	RED

Why it has to be one package

EIT
Without the repeal, residents pay twice.

Property tax repeal
Without the EIT, the Borough runs out of money.

Fire Company share
Without it, the Fire Company loses dedicated funding.

Take away any leg and the stool falls. The Fire Company faces a fire truck expected to cost $1.4 million in about two years. A dedicated share lets it plan ahead instead of scrambling.

Come to the budget meeting · Monday, November 16th

Ask Council to vote for Option D, as one coordinated package.

Prepared by Marta K. Driscoll, MPA, a Chester Heights resident. 24+ years in accounting and finance; former Borough finance committee chair. I am a volunteer member of the Chester Heights Fire Company, am not paid by the Borough or the Fire Company, and do not speak for them. Figures from the 2027 budget analysis presented to Council.