

My Plan to Reduce Taxes

Did you know?

The mill rate is set by the grand levy (the cost of the budget minus grants and other revenues) divided by the grand list (the total taxable property in town), expressed per \$1,000 of assessed value.

Did you know that between 2015 and 2025 Deep River's budget increased 40.2%, the highest of any other municipality near us?

Even more concerning is that when the budgets are adjusted to factor CPI inflation (in real dollars), Essex, Clinton, and Durham each saw effective reductions to their budgets of between 2.1% and 14.3% (their budgets rose less than inflation during that period). **Deep River did not; you are paying more today for your town than you were in 2015.**

Additionally, when the real costs of education are compared (inflation-adjusted) our education costs actually went down 2.9%, meaning that education is not the driver of our increased cost.

So What Am I Going to Do to Reduce Your Taxes?

First, my pledge to you, the taxpayer: I will not raise Deep River taxes above their current rate for my entire term, **under any circumstance. If I do, I will resign.**

Because the mill rate (town tax rate) is determined after the town's revenues are factored, many say that we need to raise revenue. While that may work, **it is a very long-term solution and won't make any meaningful difference in the next few years.** While part of my plan does include placing a priority on revenue-generating services, for example extending our town facilities (police, transfer station, equipment) to other towns on lease, raising revenue is not a realistic solution to our high taxes right now. Additionally, increasing our grand list (bringing in more taxable assets to town) also does not meaningfully impact the mill rate, even when the most optimistic figures are projected. **-These measures are not a complete plan.**

So what can we do?

Improve the efficiency of our town government so we can provide more and better-quality services with the same budget, or maintain the same level of services with a lower budget.

I am **not** suggesting a "mini DOGE" that cuts your services, all while failing to make a meaningful impact on the budget. **I am suggesting a three-prong approach:**

- **Drive Efficiency Through Technology**
Use modern technology like MyDR.gov to drive operational efficiency, reduce rework, and improve management's visibility into town operations.
- **Reduce Administrative Overhead**
Cut overhead and expenses from departments that do not provide any direct citizen-impacting services.
- **Improve Financial Controls**
Fix ineffective controls, centralize sourcing and service procurement, target contract costs, require stronger zero-base budget justifications town-wide.

★★★ More On Next Page! ★★★

Did you know?

Deep River has a property tax abatement program.

I intend to make this program available through MyDR.gov and begin mailing an easy-to-understand guide to residents who may qualify.

I will ensure that it is renewed during my prospective term, before the program is set to expire on Sept. 30, 2026.

Taxes Continued: My Immediate Priorities

- **Centralize Sourcing and Procurement**

This will allow for centralized management of all expenditures for goods and services across town departments, enabling stronger implementation of my policies for alternative sourcing and cost reduction through improved controls and vendor selection.

- **Strong Zero-Base Budgeting**

Require that the next budget start at zero, with each expense, even at the departmental level, be justified with no year-to-year carryovers.

- **Expand Alternative Sourcing**

Begin sourcing services and equipment through state resources that offer municipalities substantially below-market rates. This includes used equipment through DOT, discounted mechanical repair and construction services through CTECS, vehicle upfitting, printing and furnishing services through CPI, and bulk purchasing through the state DAS marketplace.

- **Rewrite Our Bidding Ordinance**

Rewrite the bidding ordinance in Deep River to consider the total cost of recurring services as a single expense over the contract term or estimated asset service life. Raise the bidding threshold to \$10,000.00 to allow more competitive sourcing for common costs that would not receive competitive bids. Establish a rigorous bidding process in compliance with my Open Government Initiative. Increase the fine for violating the ordinance from \$100.00 to \$5,000.00.

Long Term: An All-Department Effort.

Once in office, I will begin a systematic review of our town government. **I will create KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) for each department, per dollar spent, per service provided, so we can accurately measure progress in efficiency improvement.** During this review, I will also be identifying areas of high cost and waste and opportunities for operational efficiency gains through the strategic use of MyDR.

Once my review is complete, **I will generate a 2-year improvement plan for Deep River.** This will include eliminating repetitive administrative overhead through MyDR.gov, **tying department head yearly performance incentives to their KPIs**, a review of our capital projects and their 1, 5, and 10-year costs and TCO, **a strong plan to target our excessive staple costs (utilities, insurance, contract services, etc.), and other hidden inefficiencies that are as yet undiscovered.**

Because our mill rate (tax rate) is **only determined after grants from the state and federal government are deducted from our budget**, I can deliver immediate savings in my first year in office by **aggressively pursuing every available external funding opportunity to reduce your mill rate directly.**

My commitment is simple: every dollar collected from taxpayers must be used as effectively as possible, and the priority must be on actually providing valuable services to our residents, not performing administrative work inefficiently.