

The 2019 Innovation in Governance Awards Program

Contact Information:

Municipality: Middletown Township

Population: 68,000

County: Monmouth County

Address: Mayor's Office/ Public Information Officer: 1 Kings Highway

City: Middletown

Zip:
07748

Contact Name:

Tara Berson

Title: Public Information Officer

Telephone: 732-615-3226

Fax:

Email: tberson@middletownnj.org

Project Information

Initiative Title: Tax Dollar Receipt Calculator

Description: An online calculator that breaks down where residents' taxes go (see attached).

The judges will be looking for successful innovative efforts by a municipality or a partnership among several municipalities or a municipal/county joint effort. Innovations must have been initiated or completed during the time period June 1, 2018 - September 30, 2019

Project Specific Details: *(Please explain your innovation and include up to 3 supplemental pages if needed.)*

- How has this initiative successfully met the local needs of your municipality?
- How have the stakeholders benefited & responded to this initiative?
- Are there any measured savings or program improvements?
- Please include whether the innovation is temporary or permanent
- How can this innovation be replicated in other communities across the state?

Please attach a supplemental sheet(s) noting the details of your initiative.
(Supplemental attachments NOT to exceed 3 pages)

Application Deadline: Applications must be received no later than Monday, October 1, 2019. Mail applications to NJLM Innovation in Governance, 222 West State St., Trenton, NJ 08608, Attention: Ciara Bradley or send by email to CBradley@njlm.org

*If you have any questions, please contact Ciara Bradley at the League of Municipalities
609-695-3481 ext.128 or CBradley@njlm.org*

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New Jersey's First Tax Dollar Receipt Calculator

Like many other towns across New Jersey, taxes have been one of the biggest concerns for our residents. When the Middletown Township Committee announced its 2019 budget this Spring, they were proud to highlight that the municipal tax rate decreased by over two percent. However, they were aware that when residents receive their tax bill, it is often difficult to determine how their tax dollars are being spent since they can only see the percentage that goes to the County, School and Municipality. In an effort to help residents gain a greater understanding of where their municipal tax dollars go, the Township launched a Tax Dollar Receipt Calculator that permanently lives on the website.

For the first time, residents could visit the Township's website at www.middletownnj.org/mytaxdollars, click on the calculator, type in their assessed home value, and within seconds see penny for penny where their tax dollars go. Not only does the calculator show the total dollar amount going towards the municipality, but it is broken down to show exactly how much money is being utilized in each department such as Police, Public Works, Recreation, Utilities, etc. (see the example below).

This Tax Dollar Receipt Calculator is the first of its kind in the State of New Jersey. Residents appreciate that our Township Committee is trying to foster a more open relationship between the town and the taxpayer, and that we have presented the information in such an easy and digestible way. Based on the success of this venture, we recommend other municipalities emulate Middletown's Tax Dollar Receipt Calculator model to help increase understanding and transparency while decreasing misinformation in their own communities.

The Township announced the calculator to the public with the following Tax Dollar Receipt Calculator graphic that was posted on Township's website, in the weekly e-newsletter, *Middletown Minutes*, and aired on the municipal TV station (with the URL). Additionally, the Township included information about the calculator in the July 2019 tax bill and biannual newspaper, *Middletown Matters*.

We have also included an example of how the Tax Dollar Receipt Calculator breaks down your taxes based on an average home assessment of \$400,000. Per your limit on supplemental pages, we only included an excerpt.

Graphic:

**Find out exactly where
your municipal tax
dollars go.**

**Click HERE to access
the Tax Dollar Receipt
Calculator.**

MIDDLETOWN TAX DOLLAR RECEIPT	
POLICE	\$532.43
DPW	\$456.31
INSURANCE	\$331.36
FINANCE	\$49.97
PENSION - NON POLICE	\$44.62
RESERVES	\$41.92
INSPECTIONS	\$35.28
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND	\$27.11
FIRE	\$26.75

continued.....

Based on the 2019 average residential assessment.
Visit www.middletownnj.org/MyTaxDollars
for more information.

Example of Tax Dollar Receipt Calculator for Home Assessed at \$400,000



★ Middletown Tax Dollar Receipt ★

This "Tax Dollar Receipt" calculator was created to help residents gain a greater understanding of where their tax dollars are being spent.

Simply type in your 2019 residential assessment to see penny for penny where your tax dollars go. Don't know your assessed value? Click [HERE](#).

ASSESSED VALUE 400000
OF PROPERTY *

MUNICIPAL TOTAL \$2034.16
Due to rounding, this number may differ slightly from that displayed on your tax bill.

POLICE \$479.48
Includes Patrol, Detectives, K-9 Units, Community Relations, Police Administration and Police pension costs.

DPW \$410.92
Includes roads and road repairs, vehicle fleet maintenance

as judges, prosecutors and Public Defender of Prosecution and Public Defender Offices

SHARED SERVICES \$17.04

Includes shared service functions that the Township pays other entities to perform such as Dispatch, Health and SCAT.

RECREATION \$13.76

Includes management and oversight of all Recreation programs and events and use of facilities, full and half day summer camps, a Pre-K program, Poricy Park Nature Center & programs and the Middletown Arts Center.

HEALTH \$13.92

Includes regular inspections of food service and food sale businesses, enforcement of State health codes, Animal Control, overseeing well and septic permitting and Communicable Disease Management.

CLERK \$13.16

Includes Official Record Keeper for the Township, Passport Office, Registrar services for marriage and death certificates, issuance of parking permits and managing and overseeing all elections and polling places.

PLANNING \$12.56

Includes professional planning support to the Township Committee, Planning Board and Zoning Board, Management of Affordable Housing units and Federal CDBG home rehabilitation programs.

LOSAP \$8.16

Includes modest retirement program for volunteer Fire and First Aid members. Volunteers must qualify annually by responding to calls and participation in Fire Company and First Aid Squad activities.

FIRST AID \$7.20

Includes volunteer First Aid and rescue services for the Township
