

## **FY2025 Budget Goals**

- ***Provide departments of public safety and first responders with adequate resources to respond to emergencies and protect the community***
- ***Create responsible budgets that protect the taxpayers investments school and town facilities, maintenance and repairs***
- ***Provide the high quality of services Wilton residents and businesses expect at the lowest possible cost.***
- ***Provide assistance to those in need and the recreational and cultural activities that residents deserve while staying within budget***
- ***Focus on cost savings opportunities, increased use of technology and maintaining appropriate staffing levels.***
- ***Pursue grant opportunities to reduce the taxpayers' share of the funding of infrastructure and other initiatives.***
- ***Provide the oversight required to bring in building projects on time and within budget***
- ***Modernize town government functions to provide better taxpayer experience***

**BUDGET OVERVIEW**

**The FY2025 BOS Requested Budget is \$34,473,596**

**The request is \$2,455,505 or 7.12% more than the FY2024 Budget**

*(In thousands)*

	2024 Adopted Budget	2025 Budget Request	FY'24 vs. FY'25 \$ Change	FY'24 vs FY'25 % Change
Expenses	\$ 33,413	\$ 35,325	\$ 1,912	5.72%
Operating Capital	\$ 1,061	\$ 1,604	\$ 544	51.24%
Debt Service	\$ 9,961	\$ 9,976	\$ 15	0.15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 44,435</b>	<b>\$ 46,905</b>	<b>\$ 2,471</b>	<b>5.56%</b>

## **FY2025 Budgeted Employee Costs**

### ➤ ***Wages Rates***

- **Nonunion: GWI increases TBD, subject to annual performance reviews.**
- **Police: Current contract expires 6/30/24; in negotiation.**
- **Salary contingencies are held in reserve pending CBA agreements.**
- **Fire and Teamsters 2.50% increases per current contract.**

### ➤ ***Staffing***

- **DPW: Addition of one engineer for project support for PDHQ and addressing facilities needs .**
- **Registrars of Voters: Increase in temporary help due to Early Voting Act.**

## FY2025 Budgeted Employee Costs

### ➤ *Medical Benefits*

- CT Partnership Plan 2.0 for nonunion and all unions, except Teamsters.
- CT Partnership rates have not been finalized. Currently budgeted at +5.0%. Actual increase for FY'24 was 10%.

### ➤ *Retirement*

- Defined Contribution for new employees, except fire.
- Defined Benefit for fire and longer-term employees.
  - *Plan currently funded above 100%.*

## **Significant Factors Affecting This Budget Request**

- ***Cost of addressing deferred maintenance of Town and School buildings.***
- ***Uncertainty concerning shifts in tax burden due to state-mandated property revaluation.***
- ***Expected drop in vehicle values following the pandemic “spike” will reduce personal property tax revenue.***
- ***Expected drop in conveyance tax following pandemic related spike in real estate sales.***
- ***Expected increase in demand for essential services as new development increases Wilton’s population.***

## BUDGET OVERVIEW

### Budget Risks, cont.

#### ***General Risks***

- **Continued uncertainty over inflation.**
- **Litigation.**
- **Major Weather Event or Natural Disaster.**
- **Continued Nationwide and Statewide Police Officer Shortage.**

#### ***Legislative Initiatives***

- **Transfer of Responsibility for funding for Teacher Pension Fund.**
- **Potential expansion of 8-30(g) applications and resulting litigation.**
- **Potential for reductions in state ECS and SPED funding.**

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN, TOWN COUNSEL, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

➤ ***Initiatives to Meet Budget Goals***

- **First Selectwoman's Office**
  - *Continue to work towards shared services and/or facilities with area municipalities.*
  - *Identify grant opportunities.*
  - *Work with area municipalities to identify joint or regional opportunities.*
  - *Long-term capital and debt planning.*
  - *Ensure progress against the Plan of Conservation and Development.*
  - *Support expansion of technology.*
  - *Support improved resident and business access to information and processes.*
  - *Support economic development.*
  
- **Town Counsel**
  - *Proactive engagement to minimize litigation risk.*

➤ ***Risks to Budgets***

- **Board of Selectmen: None.**
- **Town Counsel: Unexpected Litigation Not Covered by Insurance.**

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN, TOWN COUNSEL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

➤ ***Initiatives to Meet Budget Goals***

▪ **Economic Development**

- *Continued engagement with development community.*
- *Continued work with area municipalities and state and regional economic development organizations to drive initiatives to maintain and attract businesses.*
- *Continued funding of initiatives to support Wilton businesses and Wilton Center.*
- *Continued partnership with the Wilton Chamber of Commerce.*
- *Continued funding and partnership with the Garden Club on the Wilton Center beautification initiative.*

➤ ***Risks to Budget***

- **None**



➤ ***Initiatives to Meet Budget Goals***

- **Complete the restructuring of the Information Technology Department; identify opportunities to consolidate services for cost savings.**
- **Identify and implement solutions to improve the efficiency of the Land Use departments to support economic development.**
- **Identify and implement solutions to reduce the the Town's cost of waste management and encourage recycling.**
- **Expand risk management initiatives to reduce insurance costs.**
- **Ensure professional and responsive operations at the lowest cost possible.**

➤ ***Risks to Budgets***

- **None**

## HUMAN RESOURCES, BENEFITS & REGISTRAR

### ➤ ***Initiatives to Meet Budget Goals***

- **Human Resources**
  - *Ensure effective collective bargaining negotiations.*
  - *Implement updated technology within the department.*
  - *Expand employee access to online information.*
  - *Expand management/supervisor and employee training.*

### ➤ ***Risks to Budget***

- **Collective bargaining negotiations**
- **Employee related litigation**

➤ ***Initiatives to Meet Budget Goals***

- **Town Clerk's Office**
  - *Increased online access, as available.*
  - *Efficient implementation of new early voting regulations.*
  
- **Registrars' Office**
  - *Increased use of technology.*
  - *Ongoing recruitment and training of election workers.*
  - *Efficient implementation of new early voting regulations.*

➤ ***Risks to Budgets***

- **New Legislative Requirements**

**FINANCE, TAX COLLECTOR, ASSESSOR**

➤ ***Initiatives to Meet Budget Goals***

▪ **Finance**

- *Implementation of Munis ERP core finance system and ClearGov budgeting application by 7/1/2024.*
- *Increase staff training and recruitment.*
- *Expand employee access to online information.*

▪ **Tax Collectors & Assessor's Office**

- *Seasonal support, as needed.*
- *Ongoing employee training towards certification to allow for cross management between departments.*
- *Expansion of online access to records.*

➤ ***Risks to Budgets***

- **Litigation**
- **Shortage of Certified Staff.**

FY 2025 Board of Selectmen Proposed Budget  
February 2024  
**Information Systems**

➤ ***Initiatives to Meet Budget Goals***

- **Ongoing cybersecurity upgrades and increased monitoring to protect taxpayer assets.**
- **Complete department restructuring; eliminate redundant outside consultants; bring essential network administration “in house.”**
- **Modernized network architecture for improved performance and security and lower costs.**

➤ ***Risks to IS Budget***

- **Possible costs of replacing outdated servers and network equipment.**
- **Possible “one-time” costs of restructuring network and communication capabilities.**

➤ ***Initiatives to Meet Budget Goals***

▪ **Planning and Zoning**

- *Comprehensive rewriting of zoning regulations.*
- *Master planning for Cannondale.*
- *Continue to support amenities master planning.*
- *Continue to support economic and grand list growth.*

▪ **Building and Health**

- *Complete Community Health Assessment.*

➤ ***Risk to Land Use Budgets***

- **Litigation**

➤ ***Initiatives to Meet Budget Goals***

▪ **Environmental Affairs**

- *Continue public private partnership initiatives to improve town-owned open spaces and the Norwalk River.*
- *Additional upgrades and continued maintenance of Schenck's, open spaces and town-owned trails.*

▪ **All Departments**

- *Ensure adequate personnel to meet the sustained rise in land use departments' workload.*
- *Identify ways to streamline processes.*
- *Increase communication of processes.*

➤ ***Risk to Land Use Budgets***

- **Litigation**

➤ ***Initiatives to Meet Budget and Operational Goals***

- Continued focus on traffic safety.
- Increase recruitment efforts to ensure adequate professional staffing.
- Continue to maintain Wilton's reputation as a safe community in which to live and work.
- Proper and adequate training to ensure the safety and health of all officers.

➤ ***Operational Risks***

- Statewide and nationwide police officer shortage.
- Despite proactive measures, hiring is difficult as all municipalities are competing for the same small number of applicants.

➤ ***Risks to Budget***

- Overtime due to injury, illness or major event
- Unfunded mandates



➤ ***Initiatives to Meet Budget Goals***

- Continued focus on the health and safety of all department employees.
- Continued management of overtime.
- Continued focus on training.
- Full staffing of administrative and firefighter positions.

➤ ***Risks to Fire Budget***

- Retirement or resignation of a Firefighter, Lieutenant or Captain
  - Additional overtime
  - Recruitment costs
  - Lost time to Academy
- Injury

➤ ***Initiatives to Meet Budget Goals***

- **Successful completion of new police headquarters facility.**
- **Formulate long-term plan to address deferred maintenance of municipal facilities.**
- **Efficient and cost-effective oversight of on-time repairs and maintenance.**
- **Effective management of highway department resources.**

➤ ***Risks to Budget***

- **Major weather event**
- **Particularly bad winter season**
- **Injury**

➤ ***Initiatives to Meet Budget Goals***

- **Install credit/debit card payment system for on-site use..**
- **Investigation of Pay to Dispose initiatives.**
- **Identification of successful programs to reduce waste and increase recycling.**
- **Conversion to 100-yard containers to reduce annual operating costs.**
- **Continue to work with surrounding communities to address our shared issues.**

➤ ***Risks to Budget***

- **State mandates**
- **Reduced disposal capacity within the State**

➤ ***Initiatives to Meet Budget Goals***

- **Expand necessary counseling services for community members in need.**
- **Continue to meet financial assistance needs.**
- **Continued partnership with surrounding towns to provide onsite counseling services.**
- **Engaging and efficient senior programming, with no-fee.**
- **Continued partnership with donors.**

➤ ***Risks to Budget***

- **None**

FY 2025 Board of Selectmen Proposed Budget  
February 2024  
**PARKS AND RECREATION**

➤ ***Initiatives Meet Budget Goals***

- **Efficiently address possible legislative-driven changes to camp offerings.**
- **Maximize new registration software to improve efficiency and resident experience.**
- **Maximize resources to improve appearance of parks, fields and area surrounding municipal-owned building.**
  - ***Engage professional landscapers to maintain plantings around buildings.***
- **Support approved field drainage projects at WHS sports complex and Middlebrook.**
- **Complete installation of new playgrounds at Merwin Meadows and Schenck's Island.**

➤ ***Risks to Budget***

- **Injury**
- **Major weather events**

## CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

### ➤ ***Initiatives to Meet Budget Goals***

- **In-house oversight of the police headquarters construction project to completion on time and within budget.**
- **Function ends upon the completion of the police headquarters project.**

### ➤ ***Risks to Budget***

- **Weather delays; potential for additional costs due to unknown conditions at the site.**

FY 2025 Board of Selectmen Proposed Budget  
February 2024  
**OTHER EXPENSES AND GRANTS**

➤ **OTHER EXPENSES**

**Ambler Farm**

- *Continue to seek a grant funding for the Yellow House and Raymond Ambler projects.*

**Visiting Nurses & Hospice of Fairfield County**

- *Funding for WPS nurses and health assistants.*
- *Funding for private school nurses. Reduction with the closing of Our Lady of Fatima.*
- *Funding for Public Health nurses.*

**Paramedics-Wilton/Weston Advanced Life Services**

- *Wilton's share of costs.*
- *Managed by Wilton Volunteer Ambulance Corps (WVAC) and Weston's volunteer corps.*

**Georgetown Fire District**

- *Payment of District property taxes for Wilton property owners taxed and served by the Georgetown Fire District.*

**Probate Court**

- *Mandated support of the cost of the Norwalk/Wilton probate court.*

**OTHER EXPENSES AND GRANTS**

➤ **Grants**

- **Wilton Library**
  - *Funding as per public private partnership agreement.*
  
- **WVAC**
  - *Support for volunteer-managed and staffed organization.*
    - *WVAC hires Norwalk Hospital EMTs for non volunteer hours.*
  
- **Wilton Garden Club**
  - *Grant for their management of the town-owned Old Town Hall.*
  
- **Route 7 Bus**
  - *Funding support for Norwalk Transit District.*
  - *Provides transportation for the disabled and bus transportation from Norwalk to Wilton.*
  - *Possible legislative action to dismantle the District. Expected:*
    - **Bus route taken over by CT Transit**
    - **Transportation for disabled outsourced to a subcontractor.**