

**How do you rate the quality of life in Colchester?**



**Additional Comments**

There is a lot to love in this town but we really need to get going on the new Senior Center with better parking and more efficient rooms!

taxes are way too high

Raise my taxes and I'm leaving I'm done with tax increases and malloy's theory of tax and spend not interested in living in a town that spends Beyond its means

Need more businesses so we don't have to travel to other areas to shop or go out to eat

Traffic can be a problem at times but, otherwise good.

With a senior population about 40% and student population down almost a 1,000 too much money is going into the school system and seniors no longer can afford to live here any more.

I would like to see more large chain retail businesses and more diverse and interesting restaurants and restaurant chains in town. Also it is unacceptable that a town of our size does not have an indoor pool, and town owned community indoor fitness center.

new people coming into town want to change the town, why ? leave our town alone, it's perfectly fine as it is.

Too much traffic in center of town

I have 2 young children not in the school system yet (wasn't an option above) there is not much to do for young families and it appears that any form of economic development is not a priority.

Would love to have a pool or lake for swimming. Also would be nice to have some closer shopping options (clothes, shoes, etc.)

Safer place to enjoy peace and quiet

Taxes are way too high

Must leave area for most shopping Terribly outdated senior center although staff excellent; no exercise equipment, tired furnishings, etc

Colchester is great with the exception of insane taxes and no plan or clue how to reduce them

Nothing outstanding at all.

The school system sometimes offers programs and does things that are unaffordable for everyone. At WJJMS they needed a Wi-Fi connected device for a game they played in class. If they didn't have one (mine was one of 2 on the class without a smartphone) they had to go sign an iPad out from the library. It sounds fine, but was very embarrassing for the kids who had to go to the library, and they missed the beginning and ending of that class. They should make it clearly okay for boys to attend school dances at in shoes that are not dress shoes. My son didn't go to to dances because I couldn't justify the expense of dress shoes he would wear one time and grow out of. We finally found out after I pushed the issue that he wouldn't have been turned away, but the language on the permission slip did not indicate that in the dress code. The 8th grade team building they do at Camp Ingersol is too expensive and it isn't made clear that there are scholarships available. That day is an advertisement for the camp and fun for the kids, I don't see anything educational about it. Most people with school age children in this town are very comfortable. Kids mostly wear designer clothing. Not everyone is that comfortable, and I don't see the schools taking that into account. Projects cost money (If you want them to look as nice as everyone else's) that takes away from grocery money.

Better than good but not excellent

There is a great need for more public transportation.

The Town of Colchester is getting too expensive to live in. The roads are very bad and the town needs a lot of updating.

I wish there were more restaurants, not just pizza! As well as better places to shop local. Love the Colchester Farmer's Market.

Wish we had more options for stores in town, including groceries and restaurants.

Could use another grocery store

high taxes,

Quality of life would be better with more businesses in town, reducing the need to travel for services. We need to do more to attract new businesses.

The library and parks and recreation department are incredible. They do extraordinary things with the little staff and funds they have. They provide the majority of the town's arts and culture and youth programming. Increasing their funding only improves town programs. It's a win win. I wish the town center was home to more entrepreneur's and there was a commission or organization operating as the sole source of information for town arts/culture.

You've missed a question..... in #5 above.... are any grandchildren in our school system?... the answer is Yes.

we can not survive with the taxes we pay

Increases in taxes year after year makes it very difficult for retirees on a fixe income

Very good

Taxes are very high for services provided. One of the things that drives this are inflated assessments.

Lots of community events that is great. Wish there was a pool for the kids. Have to drive so far to get my kids lessons. Also, I am really tired of the taxes and no clear show for what I am getting. I understand education and I always vote for education...but...seems like we do not get more than we would in a lesser taxed area. Wish there was natural gas lines. Drivers are a-holes and drive way too fast and the police have zero presence to protect this.

The small Mom and pop places are nice. A few too many vacant building near the center of town.

Roads need work

We have a wonderful caring town

Needs more options for businesses and variety of food. Also needs more indoor activities for families and kids.

My opinion of the quality of life in Colchester has slipped. When I see other towns taking aggressive measures to sustain growth and Colchester remaining stagnant it is hard to remain optimistic.

I have not lived here very long but I love the community feel and feel like I have a great quality of life 22nd

For seniors and empty-nesters, the property taxes are too expensive. This will force aging residents out of of town. We have to seriously start thinking about it.

Nice rec plex with a lot of sports and activities offered to both children and adults. Decent restaurants. Nice community.

Town officials in this town act like they owe you something. Very poor experiences interacting with Public Works Director, Ist Selectman, Public Works employee's as well as building dept. and had school custodial staff berate someone I know. This person would have been fired working in any other town and had to issue an apology to that person in the least. I have worked for municipalities and they bend over backwards to please/help the taxpayer. In this town the employees talk very rudely to you and also in a very condescending manner like you are a moron which I do not appreciate. These employees tend to forget who their employer is.

Moved here because of the town activities and school system

Colchester strikes a decent balance as a decent commuter town with decent schools and parks ,decent public safety and a few decent options for dining and shopping.

I have a preschool aged child who goes to daycare in Colchester. This was not an option in your survey.

Would be excellent if there were more cultural venues (like "The Kate" in Old Saybrook and the Garde Arts Center in New London and the Goodspeed Opera House and all the theaters and art museums in Hartford and New Haven) and activities in town or no more than a fifteen minute drive away. Otherwise our library is a fabulous resource and the movie theater here would be better if there were more art cinema choices and not so heavily skewed to just the mainstream blockbuster films.

I have no complaints but don't feel any obligation to stay in Colchester over moving to another town

Taxes consume 1/3 of our family income.

Cost of living is too high. Mortgage was \$1200 7 years ago. Now is \$2000

Taxes too high
Not enough services for tax dollars (i.e. Trash removal, public water & sewer). Not enough commercial business.
More outdoor activity opportunities would be nice. More walking/biking trails in addition to the Airline Trail. Paved trails would be great! Sidewalks past Bacon Academy to Harbor Road as it is treacherous to walk on the road in that part of town where we see many students walking home.
We often find ourselves driving to Glastonbury, Waterford, Middletown, or Willimantic for shopping or restaurants. Choices in Colchester are very limited. Also - property owners, including businesses, don't take care of their properties. The appearance of our downtown is drab and uninviting. Sidewalks aren't cleared of snow and ice.
Not a lot to do, lacking in social, cultural and advanced education opportunities as well as no cycling infrastructure at all including bike lanes throughout town and mountain biking singletrack opportunities.
Would like to see increased diverse economic development in downtown area i.e ethnic restaurants, pubs, arts.
The quality and frequency of events in Colchester is a big part of why we moved in and stay. I feel that Colchester does not put enough emphasis in academics and should focus more on school level technology initiatives
All three children went on to higher learning and have very good jobs.
Nothing to do, high taxes, no services outside town boundaries...too many drug dealers and users
I would like to see more economic development in town. I think there are a lot of opportunities to get independent businesses (restaurants, retail, etc...) to make Colchester a destination.
Low crime rate is good, not a lot of shopping or activities. Usually go out of Colchester for most things. Nothing really unique about the town-average.
Too Expensive.
Town services are very good - Parks & Rec is outstanding. Downside is lack of retail.
Lack of control on spending by BOE makes all other services suffer. Lack of enforcement by mgmt to make BOE comply w/ all other town standards (insurance, pension, etc)
For Question number 5 you do not provide an option for children, but not school aged yet.
Sad town uses kids sports cuts to fix budgets
Could use more restaurants that deliver
Taxes are way too high.
All you do is raise taxes. And everything is for the schools, you have gone overboard! It is not such a good place to live, way to high
It's getting to the point that u don't listen to the people. Every year u raise taxes.
Taxes way too high. Don't get any services for money paid.
hate having to travel for things such as restaurants and stores all the time.
I think we are getting away fro the single family county setting Colchester has been know for.
taxes have gone up every single years since we came here...only service is snow removal of our road...had a child that went through the school system...would not recommend it to anyone. Police and Fire department are below par.
Great town, love the schools, Great experiences with the Parks and Rec and other sports programs offered, Love the Library and all the activities offered through it. I am very proud to live in Colchester.

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Getting crowded.
The town needs to more businesses into it. There is not enough competition for Stop & Shop. Another large food chain would create jobs and tax revenue. Colechester could also use additional large restaurants. Colchester should also be proactive in attracting businesses. Try to attract companies such as Amazon.com etc.
Not enough commercial business which leads us to travel to get to what we need
Could be better if sidewalks were finished off to major housing neighborhoods.
Nothing to do in Colchester for families for entertainment. Need restaurants other than pizza & chinese

When my children were in school - the school was not very helpful, in fact they were difficult to deal with, so not a fan of the school system in this town, especially if a child needed specific help.

There are not enough retail options right here in town. I'd have given a fair rating for this reason, but I also know the town does offer a lot of activities for all ages, so I upped it to good.

Taxes are too high for the little bit of service we get

Taxes are high with very little in return.

need more commercial development to offset taxes

high taxes

Quality is great; however, not knowing what other questions there will be, I just want to say the dealership that closed years ago across from the Post Office is an eyesore. I have been writing to Panera Restaurants as that would be a great location for this wonderful franchise. Or some other retail store that would keep us here in Colchester, supporting local businesses instead of traveling to Norwich, Glastonbury or Middletown for necessities. Thank you.

By continuing to make budget cuts that effect the character of our town, the quality of life here is diminishing. It is more expensive to live in a rural town than a city and it is unfortunate that so many residents fail to recognize and accept that. I choose Colchester because I wanted to live in rural community where residents know and care for each other and I am willing to pay more to keep it that way for everyone.

Not enough places to eat and meet friends, lim

strong sense of community but no real "plans" on how to deal with static population growth and increased costs.

The continued rise in taxes to support "services" which are undefined and the continued increased spending on education while less and less children attend the schools is very very troubling.

Could use more shopping options which will increase the town's tax base. Our Stop & Shop is supposed to be the HIGHEST PRICED IN THE STATE!! I do the majority of our food/staples/paper goods/clothes shopping OUT of town. I use the library, movie theater & Westchester Market. Even gasoline in Colchester is \$.20 a gallon more!

Not much too do, nice and quiet

Love the parks, the space and the people. Good restaurants, and you can pretty much get everything you need in town. I wish all the negative people on facebook would try to do something helpful instead of spreading hate and negativity. Its a sad few. The rest of life in Colchester is wonderful.

Quality of life is excellent for people with kids but slightly lacking for people without kids.

How do I say "it's an ok town" but over developing is becoming an issue.

Without any metrics how can this be truly assessed? We have low crime, roads are okay but functional. My children's education was more a function of their innate intelligence.

Taxes in this state are ridiculous and will force us to move out when we retire.

I've lived in more beautiful locations, but the town does a decent job maintaining town properties and a very good job keeping things safe.

I wish there were more destinations in town - possibly art galleries, museums, more things to do. I think if there were, it would encourage more out-of-towners to come into town and provide income. People don't travel here just for Dollar General and Tractor Supply.

Town officials and EDC need to be working with business owners and CBA in helping them be more attractive to and welcoming of potential customers.

**How do you rate Colchester as a place to raise kids?**

**Additional Comments**

Did not raise our children here.

There needs to be a way to keep drugs away from kids!

taxes are way too high

Wish there were more things to do with kids here and more restaurants and shopping!

Schools leave a lot to be desired!

I feel Colchester is safe, but the budget support for school facilities and the budget support for recreation facilities has taken a nose dive for the worst over the past ~8 to 10 years. I want to see more money spent on infrastructure of school building upkeep and improvements to recreation (improve playgrounds).

Not much for children to do in town...options outside of town aren't too far, but more in town would be nice.

this question poses some thought if drugs haven't infested your family

Nothing for the youth to do and if they hang out in town where they can be seen they get hunted for doing nothing wrong

I imagine as my children get older there will be more for them to do

This will be downgraded if school cuts continue.

I believe there are no activities or recreation to keep teens off the roads

More sidewalks would be helpful.

Raised my kids here in the 70's and 80's and it was a nice place. I graduated Bacon myself.

Have no children

Nothing for the kids other than school.

When my children were young, we made the commitment to send them to out of district schools. It is good to see the schools have improved.

Our park's and recreation department is amazing! We love all the events and join them all. We love our library and have been going to storytime for years. My son is in the pre-school program at CES and I have zero complaints. We feel very welcomed here in town, and our children have made friends they will have for life.

School budget out of control

Over the years there has been an increase of drugs coming into town and I don't hear what the town is doing about this situation.

I wish more effort was put into making our school's top notch. Years of financial difficulties has led to many families leaving for better educational opportunities.

The length to which the teachers go to avail the students of scholarship and awards opportunities is outstanding. And the value system instilled in the students throughout the year (particularly to include the parents) is a stellar effort on the part of the entire staff. Kudos.

Amazing to have a local theater program, orchestra, and choir these are amazing opportunities for a town this size. Again wish there was a community center/arts center that all towns people could enjoy and boost town economy.

We love the family friendly events in town!!

Getting expensive

No pool. I grew up in a town where all the High schools and middle Schools had pools and they had multiple public ones (including indoor ones). Education is moderate, but if I had the chance to send my kids to private, I would.

The activities on the green during the holidays are great. The recplex is really nice.

Too many administrator for schools. Need smaller class size, more support services for students.

Nothing to do in the town for kids

In no way do the kids get the education that \$40 million should provide.... average at best!

Great school system. Great senior center. Only wish we had more stores.
Don't know. Don't do that.
I put three of my kids through the Colchester school system and all my kids are doing well. They do not reside in Colchester any longer.
We need much better security in our schools to start. Having a play area outside our Elementary Schools with only a 3 foot chain link fence where the kids go outside and play, the same time every single day, where any psycho can drive by god forbid and plot something is just appalling. Common sense would dictate putting a play area in a courtyard area in the middle of the school with access only via getting in through the school itself. And how about some bulletproof glass? My taxes are too high not to support this.
Pool , YMCA would greatly benefit this town
Schools are "good" and typical of suburban public schools.
Cannot comment, no children
No children; does not apply to me. However, appears to be very good.
I have a preschool aged child who goes to daycare in Colchester. This was not an option in your survey.
Based on conversations with peers at work with similar aged children living in different town. Its not awful but would not have to look far to get better for same or less taxes. Commercial tax base in the other towns is the driving factor
We need a place like Sports on 66 or Wide World of Sports. Look at Chelsea Piers in Stamford. We need a pool.
Safe; good school system; strong police presence
More cultural, ethnic, religious diversity would help my kids be better prepared for life.
Children need more extra-curricular, ,not necessarily sports, activities in town. They also need more job opportunities which there is very little available in Colchester.
I am leaning towards more suburban tendencies these days. Shorter drives to more amenities...
The school system is very good, and there is minimal crime. There is a growing restaurant base.
Kids I've known seem poorly prepared for higher education or the workforce. Our schools don't seem to be encouraging them to think about careers and the steps needed to achieve them.
No kids
Cost does not equal output
Very good environment
Again low crime rate, nice park and rec fields, decent schools. Would like to see more activities for the teens.
Additional after school programs would be wonderful.
Not a lot for kids to do - w/ such a high budget - why are the bathrooms in the high school without basics (locks on doors, tampons in girls bathroom, no hand towels)
Don't know much yet but hoping that it is
Housing is very expensive. Lack of commercial businesses, equals lack of competition which force people to shop out of town, especially for groceries.
Would have been nice to have a pool in high school. But NOT NOW.
it is nice area but the kids need more things to do in the area.
I am not thrilled to have those recent low income homes built next to the Recplex. I would have much rather had the multisport complex that would've added income to local businesses.
Retirees are funding a lot of schools. It is a bargain for folks with children in school.
Not a lot of options locally for activities with children. This excludes the recreation program and library. Other towns have attracted businesses (indoor bounce/trampoline parks, children museums, etc.)
Athletic Facilities and Field are very poor. The community does not support the above which has a direct coronation to the Drive use and abuse in our teenagers. Also, pay for play is just another tax on the families of Colchester that is vitually unpresented in the state of Connecticut. A contributing factor to enrollment numbers decreasing.

Need a swimming pool in town

Although I've raised four children in this town it could definitely use improvement. There is an opioid problem here. One of my children will have a lifetime battle to stay off of drugs. She was exposed to heroin in the school system of Colechester. She is clean now but will struggle with sobriety the rest of life.

Not enough activities. Pool, ice rink etc.. to keep kids busy

Schools need to be updated. Such as high school field. Embarrassing.

More activities needed as well as job opportunities for our teens.

Overall basically a good town to raise a child.

Past tense. My children have been out of school since 2008. Lots of things have changed and I'm not sure if it's for the better.

Too expensive

Parks and Rec does a great job of hosting events and other activities for kids, it feels like there's always something going on.

good schools and sports programs

When my children were young I would have said excellent, but over the past 5-10 years the education budget has been slowly chipped away to a level I find unacceptable. That, combined with continual cuts to Parks & Recreation and Youth and Social Services, I feel Colchester youth are not receiving the support they need and deserve.

No children, All grown up

good support and programs for k-8 - not impressed with Bacon Academy

quiet, not much to do so its not very rowdy.

There are many kid-friendly activities, the library is beautiful, and with a young kid starting out in the school system, people are so nice and helpful.

Not much for kids to do but we made it through.

It was good. Now it sucks

Used to be fantastic, but too much enrichment education has been slashed from the BOE budget in favor of excessive special education spending above and beyond state mandated requirements. It's now just a great place to raise a special needs child. I imagine that won't bode well for Colchester property value in the long run so my husband and I are planning to sell and move in the near future.

Great for young children, lacking for the 13+ age groups.

Great schools and town programs for the kids.

The schools and teachers are very good, but it's frustrating to see the town budget so often get voted down.



**How do you rate Colchester as a place to retire.**

**Additional Comments**

We really need an adequate senior center that we can be proud of!

taxes are way too high

\$9,000 a year for property tax I'm out of here

The taxes are creating a place that's too expensive for seniors to live

only rated fair due to the expensive cost of living, partially due to town and state taxes

If I were retired, I would like to live in a community that had many things to do and places to shop that wasn't a 30 minute drive.

Who can afford to retire with such high taxes?

Taxes increases are my main concern.

No md in town and no big box stores

Taxes are driving retirees out of town. I'm a Colchester native and ready to get out of town.

CT in general does not appeal to me as a good place to retire.

Not necessarily a Colchester thing, I don't want to retire in the state of Connecticut

Colchester, CT is not the place to retire, the rising taxes and cost of living in CT, will limit possibilities to live in my home for the rest of my life.

I hope to not have to retire here.

this question has some thought if you planned for retirement or if you expect the town to help you

No competition for groceries too expensive

I wouldn't know

Connecticut as a whole is a terrible place to retire.

The cost of living is way too high. Need to lower taxes both state and local level.

Rising taxes may force us to move out of our home we purchased forty years ago.

except for pensions being taxed by the state...

Not just Colchester but CT in general isn't retirement friendly.

we need book stores, garment stores and a cheaper supermarket.

I will be retiring end of this year. My wife will continue working two more years. We plan on staying. I will make a go of it. Only wish the taxes were less. I would forgo a senior center for a tax break.

Continual tax increases no additional services

Too expensive town & state. I will move out of state.

Too expensive to retire in CT

How can you possibly pay 10k in land tax 1 k in car taxes and retire

Nothing to offer seniors except an embarrassment of a senior center.

taxes are too high in this state for services rendered

It is an expensive town to retire in.

Largely due to State taxes

It would be better with a new senior center, which I attend regularly.

Too expensive to live in thinking of moving out of Colchester.

I still work and I am not sure if I will stay in Colchester. More affordable housing walkable to the center of town would appeal to me.

Too many taxes for retirees. Town and state.

This rating is less about the town and predominantly about the state. I plan on moving out of CT when my kids graduate high school and before if the state does not take steps to turn itself around in a more permanent fashion. Not a dig on Colchester but Connecticut as a whole. My parents from Westchester County were serious about retiring here.

The taxes would be too high to support us staying here past retirement. I do see the town has some great services, so that's why I said fair.

High taxes

Don't know. Not retired.

CT in general is too expensive for the middle class retired person. Many retirees are leaving and relocating down South. Something should be done for incentives to keep them here.

The senior center offers many worthwhile activities.

It's a good family town but I don't know much about senior services.

Taxes and the cost of living in this state make it difficult to retire in.

But expensive

Its to expensive to retire here

High taxes makes it difficult, got to stop or Colchester and the whole state in big trouble, value of house are dropping especially in view of new tax laws

Not applicable to me. I am not retired.

Colchester would be a great place to retire....if it wasn't located in the State of Connecticut. Because our "leaders" at the state level have essentially destroyed the state, we will relocate to another state immediately upon retiring.

Expensive taxes

Town taxes are too high

taxes to high for residents who don't have children. CT overall is "deplorable" as far as taxing individuals. Hence, those who can are leaving.

Taxes---\$7,200 for 1450 square foot home Plus more than \$1050 car tax

There is no way I'll be able to afford to live in Colchester after I retire.

taxes too high, no benefit for elderly

high taxes and very little if no return on investment. Pay taxes to ensure we have more teachers than what we need.

Taxes are too high to continue paying through retirement.

Taxes are high, little services, little support.

town and state taxes are too high

Part of my ranking is CT in general is very poor for retirement.

Poor due to the high tax burden

We have been talking about a new Senior Center for 15+ years. When is it going to happen. We have worst Senior Center in 10 town surrounding Colchester. That's pretty sad.

Cost of living is expensive. Grocery prices are higher than Norwich. Gas prices are high. Property tax is high.

I am unsure

not the towns fault, CT is just a bad place to retire!

Ct growth and taxes are a burden for retirees.

Not just Colchester but CT is very expensive for seniors on a fixed income.

The Board Of Education keeps spending and spending - who can afford to live here in a fixed income?

The increase in property and vehicle taxes have climbed to where soon we will not be able to afford to live here. We need more industry to help offset these ludicrous increases.

Unfortunately Colchester is located in Connecticut and therefore when I retire I will be forced to move to another state where it is Affordable to live.

There's no such thing as retirement for my generation.

Taxes are very high for seniors on fixed income. In Rhode Island, where we lived prior to moving here last year, taxes are frozen when you turn 65. Here, the taxes rise, our pensions do not, and we use very few services that the town provides.

Taxes too high

Senior Center is a disgrace

CT cost of living -- especially housing & taxation -- considerably more than most areas, particularly the southeast

Any town in CT is a horrible place to retire if you actually want to keep any of your money.

More a problem with the state of CT than the town, although the services for the older population are not good.

high tax rates are making it more difficult to retire

All of Connecticut is high for Seniors who are retired.

No there yet

Property taxes are too expensive. My wife's Social Security income will go 100% to our home property taxes.

No opinion

It's not necessarily "Colchester" as a fair place to retire, I blame the entire state of Connecticut that makes it just a fair to poor place to retire.

My rating has more to do with the instability of the state, than with Colchester.

Pricey taxes for retirement years

Transportation can be an issue.

little public transportation. few places to shop. Need to travel outside of local area to get items. Better than it was a few years ago. Taxes are an issue, but it is more of a CT problem than Colchester itself.

Maybe a bit cold!!

There are no activities here for young people to do anything let alone older/retiree's. You must be kidding with that question.

Higher taxes every year are making it harder to stay in the area. Being on a fixed income and retired make it hard to stay in Colchester.

Connecticut is not a place to retire based on the taxes if you have a fixed income you will never be able to make it

Really not sure. Looks like there is an active cadre of seniors. Cost of CT is, of course, an issue. Town is somewhat "walkable" but not really great in this regard for seniors who still walk. Retirement location is really a very personal decision, so Colchester could be perfect for some retirees and undesirable for others.

really cold. unsure of elder care & options for downsizing.

Due to state taxes not factors specific to Colchester

CT could be too expensive to retire full time.

There needs to be better long and short term planning as the demographics change and develop is slow to provide further support to tax roles. Town should manage within its means for all segments of the population, and due diligence by all employees to determine what is really needed (basis), not nice to have. I've had to do this with my own finances in retirement - assessing choices and making meaningful and affordable decisions are crucial to our town's future. Explore other options for economic development and addressing problems in town - traffic in center of town, lack of new businesses, more educational opportunities locally for seniors (e.g. other towns are beginning to partner with area universities and colleges to bring classes/lectures/programs local).

Same as response to question #6.

No reason for me to stay here to retire. Many reasons to move to a place that provides more fore less taxes.

Connecticut sucks for retirees.

I don't think we will be able to stay in CT for retirement due to cost of living.

Too high taxes
State and local taxes are far too high. Not enough senior services (transportation services, hospitals and quality health care)
Some towns freeze taxes for the elderly so they can budget their income
High taxes are driving every retiree away.
I would imagine the lack of walkable town center is a turn off for me. If there were a more centralized business/retail district it would be more favorable.
I would think that anyone with transportation issues may have a hard time here, but otherwise OK.
The grand list is too low. There should have been more movement in that area after the infrastructure investment. In addition, the schools do a good job with a very low per/pupil cost. How long is that sustainable?
Actively looking at 'downsizing' to our retirement home, and never realized how high Colchester's taxes are compared to surrounding towns that we've been looking at (and how poorly Bacon Academy is rated on 'Zillow').
Too remote from health care, shopping, and amenities. When I'm no longer physically able to maintain my home, I will move to a community where I can walk to a vibrant downtown.
sadly CT. is not too friendly to retire
Too expensive
Need to help retiring people. More activities and reasonable discounts
Taxes are killing us....can't afford to live here any more....people are leaving like rats leaving a sinking ship. Schools losing even more students in the coming year yet taxes never go down.
It more the state of CT rather than Colchester
Connecticut is not a very good place to retire, high taxes, etc. Colchester has communities that are for the 55 and older age that cost more than many average houses. I cannot personally rate the senior center or transportation services for
It's not Colchester it's mainly the state of CT.
Way too early to tell. Fair rating is directed more toward Connecticut as a place to retire
Not of that age, but can't see why not. There are plenty of retired people here.
The atmosphere for retirees in CT is not favorable. Colchester is not a 'walking' town where services are a short distance from housing for retirees.
Taxes too high for social security
High taxes and not many services offered for the mill rate.
Do not have this experience
Too expensive for old folks to retire due to increases in taxes.
Too expensive. No shopping.
well you can't change the weather and this is important for me with retiring.
taxes are too high for little to no services.
Pay a lot of taxes and do not get much return on investment.
Taxes are restrictive on the State level.
Don't know. I have not focused on that at all.
It's a town for younger families; we won't retire here.
Quiet though I live outside of town.
I am currently on a fixed income and struggle to pay my mortgage and all the taxes. As I said Colchester more businesses in the town as a tax system. The Town cannot rely on tax revenue from its citizens. People can I afford The Taxes entirely too high
Town limits business and thus taxes high. And the state is worse.
Not just Colchester, but CT as a whole. Taxes are too high, and because of this i plan to move out of state when i retire.

Many people who want to retire cannot stay in their current home. It's too big and too costly to maintain. That is a fact of life everywhere. But there are not many options for places to down-size in town. So these people have no other Taxes to high.

Taxes are too high.

Taxes keep going up!!!!

Entire state is too expensive not just this specific town.

Good senior services but taxes are too high for what we require from town.

Taxes to high, cost of living, lack of anything for seniors, very poor choice of markets and stores. Too many bars and package stores.

Too expensive

everything is geared toward and about the schools. There is nothing here in town to speak of which would attract a retired couple to move into town or keep a retired couple living in this town. The taxes are ridiculously high and there are no services that your paying for?? No stores to speak of. no chain restaurants. how many pizza restaurants can we have??? Colchester is a bedroom community at best..it will never be the level of a Glastonbury at least not with the current elected officials. Also, lets stop talking about economic development. there hasn't been economic development in this town in decades. we turned our nose to Walmart some 18 plus years ago and now look no farther than Lisbon landing!!! with 3 abandoned large commercial buildings in prime street front locations its a damn shame this town cant figure it out. they give the town a black eye when it comes to curb appeal.

Connecticut as a whole sucks!

great senior center

high taxes

Absolutely no entertainment or cultural places and very few good restaurants. Would like a greater diversity of restaurants (too many Chinese food and pizza places). Would have preferred a restaurant or two in place of the 3 auto parts stores within 1/2 mile of each other.

Taxes are out of control. When you retire you live on a fixed income and with taxes continuing to increase it will force people out

Just would like a few more retail establishments so we don't have to go out of town to buy necessities... or more restaurants. And if Dunkin Donuts (eat in) had a nicer place to sit and enjoy coffee and company (like the one in Marlborough) that would be a very nice addition to the town. Thank you.

Colchester is in Connecticut and therefore subject to scrutiny as a place to retire. Don't take it personally!

This has more to do with the State than Colchester specifically.

For some it may be too costly to live here on a fixed income. However, that does not justify cutting services to lower taxes. If I find I can no longer afford to live in my current house once I retire, I will move. For those that have a retirement savings, Colchester could be nice place to retire.

taxes too high. Isolated from activities

taxes taxes taxes

Why stay here? to be taxed at higher and higher levels by the town and the State? Are you serious about this question?

Colchester is fine, but unfortunately it's in Connecticut which is a trainwreck.

We enjoy using our "Silver Sneakers" at Anytime Fitness in Westchester. Senior Center is in poor condition, same options, not much variety in programs.

I would rate all of CT as a poor choice for retirement

Its very quiet, but not much to do

Too cold and too much land - we're moving south when we're old. :)

taxes are too high to retire here

Could never afford to retire here. CT is horrible and getting worse every year. Colchester is really not designed for retirement.

State of CT taxes make it very difficult to live in CT on a pension/401.

Seniors are taxed to death. A lot of my friends & neighbors have moved out of Colchester & CT to alleviate the tax burden.

Connecticut in general is expensive for retirees. Colchester is good compared to some of the cities and towns.

It's not just Colchester. It's CT. We are moving to New Hampshire...hopefully within the next 5 years. Our kids are in 11th and 12th grade right now. If they were in 1st and 2nd grade though, there would be a for sale sign in front of our taxes going up as income stays fixed.

Property values in Colchester are too risky to bank on. There's no clear path that the town is a sustainable investment. Overall growth is stagnant, if not negative.

It is actually Connecticut that is the issue for retirement, not Colchester

Too expensive of a state. Not just Colchester.

Taxes too high

I'm working my butt off to retire somewhere where there's more to do, especially in the winter.

We need to have more diverse housing options in terms of price and rental options so that more people who live here can stay here in retirement.

**If you have used the services listed below in the last 3 years, please rate your experience and quality of service.**

**Additional Comments**

library doesn't have the funds to get new books, even though taxes are way too high

If we keep cutting our education budget, Colchester will be less desirable to many living here and it may make others not want to live here.

the First Selectman's office is not very community friendly, they need to be reminded that they work for the citizens. Town Clerk and Office people are not very knowledgeable and very slow in processing documents. Water department needs to learn to be nice when dealing with customers.

Parks and Rec department is over staffed for the services they provide. Don't need a director, manager, supervisor, etc.

Very unpleasant in water department; very poor manners in dealing with the public. The is also very rude in person and on phone.

2 adults 2, 6 years olds. \$372 for sewer and water is outrageous.

Have rated senior center poor because of dilapidated facility

We don't need a senior center. We also should not take over roads and septic systems of new developments. They should be the responsibility of the developers and owners

The rec sports teams in this town are mostly run by the same group of men who want to make sure their child is on a winning team. They charge a lot for little in return. They are disorganized and care more about themselves than they do the kids. Many of the board members of sports teams coach their own for profit travel teams. They schedule the fields for the travel teams first. In the fall, baseball teams can't practice or have home games because the outfield is being used for soccer. I hope the town is receiving a fee when AAU teams use our fields. The fields aren't even maintained by the town or rec department, they leave it up to the volunteer coaches to maintain the fields. Some of the pitching mounds are downright dangerous, and are likely to cause injuries. The dugouts were in such bad shape, Boy Scouts fixed them.

Personnel at food bank could be friendlier

I volunteer for the food bank. I am impressed that the town is so supportive in this area.

We had a problem with our water due to a component in our new furnace. The water Dept. was more than helpful in testing our water, providing us with documentation and even coming to check our pipes. We were so please with their support and input.

Senior center needs a "new building" the older people could use etc.. Not senior friendly. The town is getting run down. The town just puts all the money into the school systems where we are down about 800 kids and kids being born are low for future years. Colchester is just getting too expensive to live in. People are moving out. Not a good town for senior people. Nothing for older people except paying big tax bills.

I have donated my time to support the food bank. They do an amazing job of supporting our community who are less fortunate. Also the Youth services are amazing in town!

Recreation department needs to work better with sport leagues. Fields are embarrassingly bad with no plan in place to improve them. We need to do better.

Youth center is a great resource for children and parents.

Need more sewer drains to keep our homes from flooding

Need to expand Sewer & Water system

I must add that I'm extremely disappointed that the region of road along Lake Hayward Road off of Route 11 was rezoned as commercial/industrial. This has significantly reduced the value of my home for resale. One of the reasons public works needs funds to do road maintenance, less teachers more infrastructure care. Lots of bad driving and illegal parking around town in the neighborhoods. The bad drivers are so brazen they drive, speed, do not yield to pedestrians in front of the trooper's barracks.

I think the best thing about Colchester is the great library we have. It was well worth it to redo it. Now if we could just have a senior center that actually works. The reason I marked fair above is because of the terrible condition of the current center. It does not allow for the needs of its users. I have been to many other senior centers in towns smaller than Colchester and their senior centers put this one to shame. The so called youth center is in exactly the same situation. A town the size of Colchester and one that is suppose to be affluent, it is hard to believe we lack these rather essential amenities.

Library hours are terrible. The voter registration person does not do their job well. But, people are mostly friendly.

The town hall needs better identification for where to go.

I feel all are doing quality work for residents when considering their strained and limited budgets.

Taxes are to high for the services we receive.

Trees along roadway not trimmed. brush along roadway not trimmed properly. Tall grass/brush obscures view of road at rural intersections. glad that sand/salt mix is available to residents in winter. good job plowing, except for mailbox destruction

I wish library hours were longer/open more days.

We pay a lot of money!!!

Water/Sewer is very, very expensive for such a small town.

The library should be up to the standards of other towns. There is no reason the Marlborough and Salem libraries should have better hours, for one.

Tap water is not drinkable

Rates too high. Mineral content too high.

We have so much to offer for parks & rec for all ages, but the tax rate is making staying in Colchester prohibitive. It's also disappointing to see Seniors uniting to vote down any investment in our children & schools - very big divide in town ideals.

Programs at Senior Center are excellent especially considering the physical restraints they are working with. Library offers many programs, helpful staff

Transfer station in Colchester is well organized and essential to maintain environmental stability in our community.

as you can see we have little interaction with the services provided by the town. We have well water, septic systems, garbage pick up. We moved here 20 years ago from Rocky Hill who provided these services as well as good schools, but property taxes were much lower and the town provided all the services that we now have to provide ourselves in Colchester.

I have not needed the services of Social Services or the Food Bank personally, however a family member of mine (my sister) has, and from what I see the staff is "excellent". Could they offer more, perhaps yes but they do great with what they have to offer. I think the town needs more public housing, as I have been told by the housing department that my handicapped sister can't even be put on a list for housing because the list is "too long" ...? This was shocking to me..

**BUILD THE NEW SENIOR CENTER!** The building is woefully inadequate and antiquated.

I think the hours of the Library could be reduced to save some money. Beautiful building but it is huge. Used a lot for meetings. Could there be a more economical way to manage the costs by reducing hours or charging organizations a small fee to use it?

The library is great, need to budget to allow them to increase hours

Had to call as to why the frontage was not mowed in the spring or summer as it usually was. Received a letter explaining of maintenance problems, that the person in charge would go look & they'd get back to me- I explained it was about 4' deep from the road yet they inquired as to whether or not it was more than 6' away from the road??? - No one ever called back and it went for over 2 months looking unkempt and we will now probably have more rowing into our yard including poison ivy.

The library is a very good service but its not cheap. Big budgetary expense for a discretionary item.



We LOVE the library. What an amazing community resource! My child loves to go there and I attend a variety of meetings in their community rooms.

Town needs a large recreational center with a pool!

Why am I being taxed to the hilt as I am self sufficient and have no need for most of your services!

Would like to have access to public water & sewer services

Town hall could use renovations on their roof

How about we get an actual full time police department. A police department that actually patrols down in Westchester area like near the Marlborough area. I never see any police in this area of town. Let's get some retail stores chains in town like a Panera or push for a grocery store like an Aldi's. We would kill it with an Aldi's in town. I currently go all way to Glastonbury and Rocky Hill for those 2 establishments because there is nothing like that anywhere near here. I plan on shopping at the new Big Y in Marlborough when it comes in. Forget Stop and Shop in Colchester. How about plowing my street a little better and more often?! am not exaggerating when I say ours is always the worst and last to be done compared to when I drive 10 minutes away to any number of nearby towns. Can we please put public notices like road repairs in local newspapers in addition to just the towns website. We could also use more services for our money such as trash pickup or leaf collection. Again, our taxes are far from being reasonable for what we actually receive compared to similar towns. You need to survey nearby towns and see what other people get for same amount of money. We also need better test scores for our schools to attract the best teachers and want to have people come here for the educational system. See towns like Glastonbury, Farmington, South Windsor. When towns like East Hampton and Portland are scoring higher on these tests, that's a problem.

Schools need bigger budgets, new building is desperately needed, we cannot loose funding and have to cut corners to finish.

The Park and Rec do not treat all sports equally. This needs to change.

We try to be self sufficient. Right now we can do that. Schools can always be improved were not flexible with children that were given creative choices with part of their education. I have grand children coming up to schools and would like to see a competitive education to top Connecticut schools.

I sue nothing....pay for everyone else to...

The only reason I give town hall a lower rating is because it is in need of major repairs like the meeting room blinds, all the carpets, the heat, the windows are old and drafty.

Police dept staff is rude, and officers have attitude like it is inconvenient to help you. Other depts mentioned have no staff most of the time. Have to make multiple trips in to talk to anyone

Rec programs- get a pool!!! Swimming classes would bring in so much cash.

Police wouldn't even come out and do some speed or traffic enforcement on a dangerous part of the road next to my house or follow up very off putting

Wish we had it but live just outside the limits

Rude people work in town hall. The \_\_\_\_\_ needs to learn basic office etiquette. She is not a friendly face for Colchester.

the library has such old books on the shelves. yes you can order books from other libraries and wait to get them but the selection on the shelves are rather poor.

I love the town green activities, trick or trunk, holiday homecoming, concerts and everything else.

24/7 Police should be a future priority

School is way to liberal and needs to focus on academics and not social issues! They are not the parents !, push back on the state and not teach sex issues. This is why many are home schooling and going to private schools

I think the library staff do a good job offering programs for every age group and they offer a variety of programs.

The senior Center project to replace the structure needs to start ASAP!

Of the services I have used, the staff has been excellent. The quality of service is directly related to funding.

lady is very rude ( \_\_\_\_\_ ).

Police failed to investigate a suspicious vehicle parked in front of my house for two hours with a damaged front end and an irate driver. My wife was fearful.

The first floor people are excellent to work with. Those on the second floor are a little stand-off.

I have school aged children - on me a n Colchester schools one in private school. You do not have a category for this and should consider adding.

We pay taxes get no garbage service, no sewers, no water and we have to fight for every penny for our kids schools.

Police failed to investigate an irate driver with a damaged vehicle who parked in front of my house for over two hours screaming on his phone and pacing back in forth. My wife was home alone and fearful.

Every winter the plows go off the road, and cause damage to one of my neighbor's properties. Just this morning one of them send the garbage flying all over my neighbor's yard. My son goes to summer camp and loves it. More people need to take advantage of the amazing library. I went to East Lyme for school, which had a slightly stronger school system; their budget was easier to pass.

**In 2018-2019 Budget, what is your preference for funding the following areas?**

**Additional Comments**

Concerned with school administration cost, more than teacher's salaries. And we don't need a full time police force.

Need to keep the schools up and keep our youth busy with programs

There shouldn't be any tax increase this year. Less student population should be less money going to the schools. The state is broke and less money coming to the towns for the foreseeable future. The average person can't afford higher taxes.

I see a lot of wasted money in the public works department. I think we have too many people working in town hall, building department and in the schools.

Too many cops sitting in their cars talking on their cell phones; meanwhile houses are robbed in broad daylight. We need to take care of our older residents. More and more people need social services and food and donations to pay for basic services.

Library needs longer hours. Playground at rec plex needs redone. We should have an indoor and an outdoor pool (not just a splash pad). Dates that splash pad are kept open need extended.

It would be helpful if you had a blurb on what each department actually did!!!!

Our family income is 160,000 , yet we live paycheck to paycheck due to high taxes. Our household (family of 6) has reduced spending in order meet our basic needs. Town spending needs to be reduced to unload some of the tax burden and mass exodus of the population

Too much "free" programs. Tired of paying tax dollars to pay for other people's free stuff. Government should be Only in government business and not involved in recreational nor free hand out programs. For government to pass out "free" stuff they must first steal from us tax payers

Close town hall one day a week to save money and consolidate secretaries to do more than one job. No pay raises for elected job positions, especially for Art Shilosky until he can do the job properly like Jenny did.

We have incredible school systems in this town and are currently being recognized for it with awards. Capitalize on that. Good school systems brings more families to town. Let's set our children up for success.

I heard there is no police on duty after midnight. This is insane! It is 2017 if we call 911 we need a quick response.

Town needs to focus on all age groups not just the schools

The youth center trips are excellent each summer. The youth center itself could be nicer.

In our home, we will be making cuts because of state imposed furlough days. I think the town and schools may also need to cut back.

Build the seniors a new building. The seniors (biggest tax payer) just get crap and delays in building a new one. Spent more money on this town and service to make Colchester a better place. Reduce the spending on the school systems.

Although I would like to see current spending maintained, I do not see how that is feasible considering the declining State and Federal support.

I believe the school system is not growing as fast as the cost increases demand. Unrealistic raises annually.

Improve fields and buildings at RecPlex. Need irrigation for fields and better snack shack/restrooms at complex. Dugouts are also in very bad shape.

I feel these departments should be funded as needed and since I know nothing of their needs do not feel adequate enough to comment.

Lets learn how to cut the towns costs

reduce spending any were possible

I do not have a good grasp of the towns spending on these budget areas, but my inclination is maintain what we have.

Senior center building is inadequate and in very bad shape.

Town is seemingly overpopulated, hence reduction in BD. Traffic is horrible especially at the town green intersection. Something needs done! Will sewer and water be expanded beyond its current perimeter?

Fire department should cease adding to their equipment collection/large capital purchases and look more to negotiating and strengthening their relationships with other local fire departments. They should also seek how to save \$ further (or fund capital improvements they claim are vital) by selling the property on Route 149 (which is not used for fire response - only to house some antique collectibles, which is NOT the mission of the FD). Would also like to see the Schuster property on Mill Hill Road opened up more to the general public to rent, and rather than the private club it currently acts as for the FD (and their family and friends) alone.

I do not want to see any cuts in schools, however, I do want to see the money spent better. Less technology, more basics. Invest in what we know works, not what sounds like will work. Smart boards and other expensive items are not required. books, black boards and projectors are all that is needed. More police presence as there is an increase in crime and uncontrollable speeding.

The town budget is only 30% of the mill rate. It is not unreasonable. The Board of Ed is 70% and seems like they are not cutting spending wisely.

Ignoring needs now only causes greater strain later. Statistics prove that investing in youth lowers substance abuse later in life which directly impact fire and police resource needs. Statistics also prove that keeping seniors active into their later years also improves their overall health. Well being of people is absolutely essential!!!

too much school \$ goes to administration. the library has been put to good use.. classes, programs, resources, and building use by community.

The library should be open more, Tuesday closing early is example.

Quit giving carte Blanche to the schools when they have lost so many students!!! Where is the fiscal accountability in this Town???

There is administrative fat and redundancy that can be cut in all of those marked with "reduce spending." Bring the teachers back to the table to renegotiate health insurance.

Additional hours at library needed.

Not everyone relies on sewer/water, so it's difficult to say that this should be on taxpayers - this should only be assessed to rate payers. There are so many non-profits that support the food and fuel banks (and more that could adopt it), so it's hard to say this belongs in the tax rate. Distinction on the 2PD's still needs to be clear, but we're very supportive of the cadet program.

We should increase spending to maintain or increase all departments at current levels

I would reduce spending across the board before considering asking for another dime in taxes. Gov Malloy tried it the other way and the result is a state that is failing rapidly with an economy that may never recover.

Colchester needs to prioritize the "needs" versus "wants" of our town and reduce spending to keep Colchester affordable for all.

The cost per student keeps rising but the number of Colchester students keeps decreasing year over year, to the point where we're letting out of towners in. Town needs to become more efficient and cut costs.

I really don't know enough about how much is spent in each area to make an informed decision.

Attraction of some business to the town.

It is my understanding that the Rec department, through substantial summer programs, has been able to turn a profit. Although not self sustaining, this does infer that funding could be moved to other areas. If that is incorrect than my opinion would change.

We need a fire department closer to the Marlborough/East Hampton side of town. When a town like Marlborough gets to your house in an emergency faster than the fire department for the town you live in, that speaks volumes. Get rid of Quinnebaug Valley dispatch and do something smart like East Hampton did and pair with Glastonbury Police. Stop this combining services with other towns like the Animal Control services. We have had 3 different types of ACO's in a little more than 10 years. This is ridiculous we share ACO's with 18 other towns with towns that border Rhode Island. We need our own dedicated ACO and dog pound.

Funding for education should decrease due to decreased enrollment.

There is an over prioritization of town of Colchester police services.
Our schools should be fully funded. We do not have children.
Increases are not necessary, they really do nothing for us but waste our money
We should explore greater regionalization in services to achieve cost savings without reducing services overall. Please do not reduce library hours. Good schools encourage people to move to our town, let's keep the quality high and have empty seats filled by kids from neighboring towns (funded by those towns) where possible.
Fire department's YOY budget growth has gone unchecked. This has been going on for some time now. Where is the financial accountability that OBJECTIVELY balances public safety with affordability?
With Building, Recreation and Sewer and Water, use fees to offset some of the costs.
Numbers would be good here.
Park and rec department is poorly structured
Provide seniors with necessary services, including transportation. Reduce school spending as student enrollment is declining.
Schools need bigger budgets, new building is desperately needed, we cannot lose funding and have to cut corners to finish
Teachers salaries are obscene. School Admin salaries are out of control as well.
I think activities for young people are important and would like to see an increase there. It seems that there are not many programs for teens in town.
No idea what 'Building Department' does.
With school enrollment shrinking, we should look for ways to improve quality of education. I would also support more programs for youth; there aren't a lot of choices for them here. I would also support increases in for departments/positions where salaries are not competitive. We can't have a great town without great employees. But we should also look for opportunities to collaborate and regionalize with other towns.
More cycling opportunities
It is hard for me to say what to increase and decrease because it is based on use. You do not always have to increase to get a better program.
I think we need to be very careful with any increase in spending. I can't say what could be reduced since I don't know enough about each item, but if there is a place where we could reduce spending of course we should.
It may be time to consider regionalizing some services, though the size in area of Colchester may make that difficult. A look at the administrative size of the school system may also be a consideration as far as downsizing.
Town doesn't need ANOTHER TRUCK, and volunteers are getting paid 3 times - fuel comp, tax cut, and pay to volunteer - they are ripping off the town. School system is mismanaged. Pay to play for cheerleaders is ridiculous - they don't take the bus in the spring...Social services needs to vet the clients better - food and services is being given to townspeople that see it as "free food"
Taxes and spending are out of control! the town must find ways to perform more efficiently and spend less. Totally out of control!
No funding through my taxes for sports of any kind
Need to reduce spending, especially in town hall. Create one office to pay or complete multiple transactions like other towns do.
There are always ways to reduce waste.
We spent too much money with little return
I believe the fire department has some vehicles that need costly service or repairs. Would also like a 24/7 police force.
Use the money you have.
Better job controlling spending is needed. Important to decrease taxes. Local government to involved with zoning.
I feel schools + youth center are free babysitters. Parents should entertain their kids.

I choose maintain current spending only because I am not aware of the needs of any of these areas. If however, the fire department, police, social services, public works, library or sewer/water need additional funds to improve safety, for capital expenditures such as critical, new equipment or to meet any other community critical needs, I support increase in spending.

From past experience with town governments and school districts, I know there are options for reducing spending without diminishing services.

When the fire department is 4+ miles away and the police don't know where the outer limits of the town are to patrol these areas, why do we need to increase their budget. It hasn't done any good in the past years.

Public works employees seem to be disenchanted with their jobs. Too much cronyism and complacency.

This town needs a community pool.

I would love to have services at Piekarz rd.

It is not the town's responsibility to provide the senior center/services nor the youth center. If people want to use these facilities, they should pay for these services. Recreation Programs should also be pay as you go.

I feel strongly Colchester should sieze the opportunity to elevate education when other towns are cutting. This will attract more families to Colchester.

i thought a lot of the recreational programs were self funded?

Fewer students should mean less spending. Not to mention a brand new building. As for the library, many items are now available online.

We don't get anything for our money now. The road plowing has gone downhill as the budget is more important than providing proper service for the taxes we are forced to pay.

Too many town hall employees and departments. Need to create one place to do/pay multiple transactions.

stop spending so much on education.

I don't know enough about each dept to make a comment on where they can cut their spending.

Recreational programs and YouthCenter/Services should be self funded and require no additional money from the Town.

it's time to stop wasting money and stop spending what we don't have.

Maintain as in staying flat or maintain staffing levels with contractual increases. recreation should have parent bear more of the burden,

Would like to see a reduction in the RIGHT education spend areas. Not the components that create excellent students and put Colchester on the map. However, since much of that spend isn't mandated, it's often the first cut in favor of other needless increases!

If this town could maintain current spending that would be amazing. It is going to be difficult in the school system with what this state did.

YES - I said YES to them all. We are one of the few residents in town that want to see taxes go UP so the quality of things increases! It's all relative.

**As many of you know the State of Connecticut reduced funding to the Town of Colchester. Please indicate how these reductions, or future reductions should be handled:**

**Additional Comments**

DO NOT REDUCE THE EDUCATION SERVICES IN THIS TOWN. KIDS ARE OUR FUTURE AND YOU ARE GOING TO RUIN THE FUTURE IF YOU CUT FUNDING.

Spending has to be reduced

I read that enrollment is way down, my kids Education is fair at best. Cut spending!

We need to be prudent on spending. Especially now with the current changes in US tax law limiting the amount of local and state tax credits allowed on our (Fed) 1040's.

Not sure how to handle that

Colchester infrastructure is falling apart while too much money going into the school system. Can't believe they took a school that was only thirty something years old to build a new one. There's something wrong here.

Cuts from education should be at the administrative level. Do not teachers.

Now is not the time to be spending more money or giving raises. Time to make sure the BOE is not on another spending spree, I see a lot of waste in the schools. Are we charging rent to the PTO store? Who is paying the utility costs to run the zoning commission needs to reduce lawsuits, sitting around a private round table and hash out problems will go a long way in resolving issues instead of lawsuits which the lawyers are the only ones that get rich.

Get other businesses in this town that will pay taxes on large chunks of property stop letting stop and shop buy land

None of the above...taxes are high enough and I don't see much in return.

far more responsibly than in the past BOE needs some serious oversight and town needs special accounting software put back in less protecting town assets is not important or your covering something up! Forensic Audit is a MUST

Again can only take so much tax dollars from the citizenry.

provide tax relief for seniors

The school budget is too much money and is making it harder to afford living in Colchester, especially for those living on fixed incomes.

do not reduce education budget

Why isn't there an option to increase taxes, maintain education services, and reduce town spending?

Budget reductions should not be made. There should never be a reduction in education, we have to keep good schools with good after school activities.

Our schools need to improve. Funding can not be reduced. Good schools will raise everyone's property values. Our police need to be funded for 24/7 coverage.

I understand the need for possible reductions and cuts, but please make this minimal to education.

This is a serious problem. Bonding will decrease because of shifting cost to the towns. Period will be selling of their Municipal Bonds.

Plan for less state funding.

Do not increase taxes as they are already much higher than many of the other towns, especially the shore areas, most of which have adequate facilities for the senior population. My taxes are extremely high for a condominium.

better town planning better use of town volunteers better with state law makers

The schools need to be a top priority, and some red tape and union issues need to be addressed.

Be sure to keep Educational budget in line w/ per pupil expenditures (if declining enrollment, then budget should decline); Work to make town services as efficient as possible. No single entity should feel the pain of the tax burden.

Reduce the school budgets immediately. Don't increase taxes. People are moving out of Colchester because it is getting town expensive to live in.

Taxes are too high. We get no services except plowing after everyone else is plowed.

Depending on the amount of cuts from State funding, we all should tighten our belts and I realize the Town requires funding to run.

What town services?

Until a definite outline is given as to how much the budget was decreased and what it hurt I do not feel able to comment at this time.

Spreading the burden fairly and appropriately between all so no one area feels the hit more dramatically than another seems to be the best strategy.

Please do not reduce education budget! Quality schools are important to the town as a whole and not funding them adequately will be detrimental to our town.

I notice there is no option to reduce spending just to town budget. This is written poorly and basically will give you skewed results that almost always would result in people voting for a reduction in education.

Be more efficient with what we've got

we can not give anymore money

Hard decisions have to be made but increase taxes should not be on the table

This is telling--the options don't include 'combination of tax increase, reduction of town services from the town budget.' These options clearly target decreasing education services and budget. Ill-formed survey question.

All the above choices are undesirable. The last choice is probably the most equitable way to approach this. However, it depends on what the services are that you would be cutting. I think there are ways schools can cut some of their costs. For example, I've heard anecdotally that some school districts give students a list of supplies (i.e. pencils, crayons, folders, etc) they need to bring to the class at the start of the school year. This is probably a small savings, but not unreasonable. I've bought school supplies for my kids and every year the teacher tells them to bring them home they already have what they need for the class.

Create opportunities for citizens to volunteer and fill some of the "gaps" in services. For example, create a pool of human resources based on expertise. The pool could consist of working and retired residents. This pool could then be tapped-into as a way to fill gaps in services. The unions would probably take issue with concept, but we have to find a way to work together for a win-win.

Are these the only choices? Tough one!!!!!!

Reduce administration jobs in the school system. NOT TEACHERS! overlay and secondary positions in administration.

start off with reduction in Salary's for Principals and the Superintendent...last ditch effort taxes

no tax increases...lay off teachers, let them start funding their retirement program. Pay them on a merit based system.

I dislike that reducing the Education budget seems to be the only option you're giving us.

Why not reduce school and town staff. Services offered can be maintained with fewer staff. 7

Seems like you have your mind made up to cut education. that is the last thing you should do. Make the town more efficient and weigh in responsible tax increases.

I'm appalled that 4 out of 5 options suggest reducing the education budget!!

Work towards bringing in more businesses to the town to aid in paying taxes, so burden if taxing not only on residents. may have been helpful to know the current allocation because it really seems like you're trying super hard to take away from the education budget with this question

The state cuts show that the Board of Ed needs to better manage their budget. They should be operating with the towns mil percentage and use the state funds to achieve certain goals they have set.

I am extremely disappointed in the BOF regarding this question. It's an outright attack against education services. What about an option to reduce Town Services only. I am well aware that education is the big ticket item BUT that's no excuse for this omission!

an option not presented here is a combination of tax increase and reduction of town services with NO reduction in education budget. Why is it that the education budget is always the first on the chopping block?

Every group needs to work to keep this in line. Town needs to look at everything not single out one or two groups.

taxes are quite high already, and the cost of living is going up (inflation) we will have to do with less funding and ask town and schools to become more frugal.



From what I understand, school enrollment is down and decreasing - far from projections it would continue to rise, so there should be room here to adjust the budget.

we don't need 4 schools.

Do not reduce education services.

Reduce pay for officials to cover the difference since they aren't able to spend within their means.

How about just a reduction of executive salaries!

That is a tough one. I know I can currently afford a tax increase but I know that is not true for all residents. Also, not knowing how employers who are affected by state cuts will react, even someone in my situation could find themselves struggling. This town offers so many great programs I would hate to see them go.

No sympathy for the State cutting education funding! The Board has lied for years about enrollment - time to pay the piper! I will no longer support ANY spending increase until the BOF cuts education spending!!

Our student enrollment is dropping...why do we need to increase education spending? That's not logical.

I don't mind paying more taxes if you can prove to me that people in the upper tier of pay among public servants have sacrificed somewhat. If you can't, forget it.

Please stop cutting education budget. You are making Colchester undesirable to move to. Why do you think kids are choosing to go to school elsewhere. Why does pay to play go to general fund and not education budget?

Lower student population should equal less spending.

Increase overall efficiency.\*

The economic development commission needs to bring large commercial companies to the town of Colchester. You currently do not have enough commercial revenue to support the budget for a small town. Residential development does not increase our revenue; it only increases our education budget and Municipal Services budget.

We cannot support an additional tax increase, personally and I don't want to move out of the community. I hate to reduce services, but we have to be realistic about what tax burden the average citizen can afford.

Constant increases in education budgets do not yield commensurate outcomes. Also, enrollment is projected to decrease by 4% this year. In the non-profit sector we have had to impose pay cuts to address the state's funding reductions. The Town should do the same.

Do NOT raise taxes!

There has to be a way to fund all Education programming/services without increasing our taxes. Our children are our future.

How about reduce the raises politicians will get. Schools already don't get much funding which is why current generations aren't getting the proper education. As it is Colchester does not offer much in town services so I don't see where that reduction will affect.

Reduction of town budget, reallocate funds according to needs and changes in community, reduce town salaries

Don't touch the education budget

If you have less money coming in, you spend less. Only in political circles is that math not understood.

Board of Education budget is far too expensive. Too many administrators, costing the town too much money and causing our taxes to continually increase.

No tax increase! Property tax is too high already.

Would have preferred option: "Combination of tax increase, reduction of Town services from the Town Budget."

Nobody wants to see taxes go up again... but I don't think we have any choice but to raise slightly and reduce slightly the entire town wide spending. Not an easy task.

I am not sure how much more you can expect to get out of the school budget and still have a school system. We should consider consolidation of services where appropriate.

Also should include shared services with other towns and taking on other towns for school regionalization.

We own 2 small businesses and several properties in town and we simply cannot afford any additional taxes.

We should look at regionalization of services and more creative approaches for revenue in general. Look to Norwich student example as model. Get serious about attracting businesses to town to expand the tax base - not just retail. reducing education a stand alone item in 4 of 5 options, reducing town services not a stand alone option - pushing an agenda?

School spending is already out of control and with the current rate of students leaving the school system why do we continue to increase the school budgets every year?

Ct spends the most on per student than most other states. The high taxes are driving people out of the state. We need to bring these costs down.

Cannot make an educated opinion without having some reasonable understanding of the potential tax increases for each scenario.

When I moved here Colchester was one of the fastest growing towns in CT. An increase in taxes over the years comes with the package to maintain excellence!

I would have chosen "Combination of tax increase and reduction of Town services from the Town Budget" if that option existed. Cutting money from schools is terrible for the town and its inhabitants, and the students have suffered enough in your hands the past couple of years. If you keep cutting the Education Budget until there's nothing left, no one with children will want to move to Colchester, and people who have gone through the school system will know better than to move back here to raise their children.

Everyone wants to live in a nice town. Let's get over having to pay to get this.

I believe we need to regionalize to help our educational budget, our taxes continue to increase. With the declining enrollment in the school system due to the population .. we should reduce the school buildings down to 3, making CES as the senior center/additional town offices.

why is there no option to reduce just town services OR to reduce town services combined with tax increase. This puts an unfair slant on these responses if some are combined and education reduction is in FOUR out of 5 choices. This question should not e counted as a valid measure. My answer would be to increase taxes combined with decreasing town services.

No more reductions in education. Combination of tax increase and reduction of Town Budget.

So much waste in the school system.

Tough choices, spread the pain.

Do not reduce the educational budget!! Reduce the town before anymore cuts are made to the schools

all the options include reduction of education services. I would rather decrease Town services, but leave education alone.

There had better be NO tax increase. This is not a one time occurrence but the beginning of a trend. The faster we get to THE NEW NORMAL the better, else the mobile, who happen to be best able to pay more than their fair share, will respond with their feet. And those who live off the government will be all that's left to "pay".

Why is there no choice for just reduce town services from the town budget?

When there needs to be additional revenue reductions, we shouldn't decimate our schools to handle all the reductions. We should develop a plan that resolves the problem by comes up with the reduction through whatever

I expect equal reduction to services to that of reduced funding.

Difficult to say how to address loss of funds without analyzing spending and revenue more closely

Do not want Education reduced

Local taxes are already far too high and job opportunities are declining, causing real estate buyers to seek employment and home purchases outside of CT.

Schools need bigger budgets, new building is desperately needed, we cannot lose funding and have to cut corners to finish

An option not included was to increase taxes and trim the town services/budget. The education budget should be maintained. In addition, raises should be suspended for 3 years for all town and education employees.

Use volunteers groups for certain projects

Didn't see the option I wanted - Reduce Town services from the Town budget, and drive overall budget efficiency across the board.

The board of Finance should be working with state legislators to lobby for reductions to unfunded mandates. They should get together with neighboring area town boards, identify a list of goals to present to our representatives and work toward reducing burdens placed on towns handed down by the state with no money to pay for them. Secondly the board of finance should identify barriers in our own town to new businesses moving in/current businesses staying and work with the necessary boards or committees to remove those barriers. Be proactive, innovative, and start helping to try to reduce our tax burden with some ideas other than simply raise taxes or cut programs. Provide some input into ways we can raise revenue and try to assist in making those ideas reality. We need to start thinking differently and the board's focus needs to be broadened.

Reduce cost of health insurance by increasing employee copays. Taxpayers can't afford providing a Cadillac healthcare plan.

Let's look at everything - potential efficiencies from regionalization, options to reduce costs, and options to raise revenue.

is there an option to reduce town services from the town budget but not touch the education budget?

Maintain infrastructure. No new initiatives. Maintain quality staffing, but use the opportunity to trim out staff in Police, Fire, Town Building Custodial, and unnecessary town positions.

This is a hard one because higher taxes will lose people to Connecticut and decreasing what you already have will also suffer in what the town and education system offers. I think smart spending is the answer I also think bus costs and special education costs need to be looked at.

This is a bit of a quandary...We moved to Colchester because of the school systems. Our son is 4, attending Castle and will be enrolled in Kindergarten next year. While I want the school system to be top notch, I also don't want to price us and others out of town with taxes. I have to believe that there are other areas where we can cut...there is no option in this question to choose, an increase in slight tax increase, reduction of town services. Education gets cut in all options except tax increase.

Getting more businesses in to create a larger tax base, reviewing how current resources are used in the schools and other areas of the towns. Not a simple solution to just increase taxes or decrease services - need more creative ways to handle these reductions.

No, thanks. Always increase taxes in this town. No more needed. State generally taxes on almost everything which is so not needed. Education always have been a big cut too. Let's not have schools vacant?

Could certain positions be shared among towns? Again, reduce administrative costs - look for givebacks from the unions.

Don't need to reduce services!! That is exactly the root of the problem, learn to do more with less; intelligent resourceful ideas are what fuel the private sector and need to be transformed into the public sector.

Education budget has been stagnant or reduced every year for the past 10+ years. I strongly disagree with this, as it results in teacher cuts = increased class size, reduced educational programming, etc. In turn, students are less prepared for college and/work after high school. Additionally, students' grades decline or there are increased behavioral issues to address in classrooms, impacting Colchester's desirability as a town to live in for young/ growing families.

Enough taxes we can not afford it, we are on a fixed income and have considered moving

I don't think the education budget should be decreased at all. Raise taxes and reduce town budget.

Education budget is out of control and needs to fairly address the decrease of students.

No tax increase. We the people don't get raises, benefits. Get with the times and stop being selfish. Listen, not act!!

No more raises for public employees and reduce benefits. I don't get a pension. My health care is EXPENSIVE (even if you work at united healthcare)

do not increase taxes.

Lay off teachers and use funds to maintain town services

move out of Ct,go south

I think everyone needs to bear the burden.

Combination of tax increase and reduction of Town Services from the the Town Budget. Leave Education budget alone.

Wasting money in schools on social programs !

Bring in businesses.

You are missing 2 choices. 1) Reduce Town budget. 2) Combination tax increase, reduce Town budget. I think you are unfairly targeting the Education Budget with this question since it is mentioned in 4 of the 5 choices. Shame on you.

Do not raise taxes.

Please no supplement tax bills to cover decrease from state.

Charge a fee for internet at the library

This question could have been worded better. We need to sharpen our pencils and look at benefit cost of what we do in every category. That could impact both Town and Board side of budget.

See above. I would look at school administration before I would look at teaching staff.

Continued increases in taxes will have negative effect as businesses and residents will move on. Same downward spiral as the state of Ct. is experiencing

Everyone has to "bite the bullet"

I understand the need to make up budget shortfalls, but it should be balanced from all departments within the town. BOE consumes roughly 70% of the town budget, thus the bulk of reductions should come from that area.

prefer no tax increase, but reality is what it is. Try to cut back wherever possible first without hurting the quality of life in town.

Tax increases would be deleterious.

Reduce admin costs in town in general both education side as well as then side

The Education budget is already bare-boned. Everyone should feel the brunt of the reduction, particularly since the education budget passed on the first referendum for the first time in YEARS. People are making a statement that in order to have a successful town, we need to invest in our education!

Had to pick the first by default as the option to reduce anything except Education is not there. BE WARNED: ANY reduction of the Education services will prompt an AUTOMATIC NO vote on ANY budget regardless of any other changes. You must realize that a NO vote does NOT mean I disapprove of the tax rate and want it lower. It means I do not agree with the cuts to education. Consider yourself warned.

It's not fair to cut education. Kid's didn't create the financial mess in CT and to ask them to sacrifice their education for mistakes made by adults is unacceptable to me. In fact, its cowardly. Adults should pay the price for the shortfall.

We can not afford to make any additional cuts. Making more cuts will only cost more in long run. More parents will put their children in charter schools, which costs the town more money. Sports and extra curricular activities will have to paid for by parents, so that only the more affluent will be able to participate. This creates more disparity between the wealthy and the poor, which we should be working to decrease, not increase. Cutting services doesn't make the need for the service go away, it just means we pay for it individually which will still cost money.

reduce budget for Recreation dept. youth and social services. Far too many resources are directed to these depts.

Colchester needs to do with that they have. Services and/or employees should be cut to maintain current taxes.

None of those are acceptable. Organize grant writers to get as many as possible applied to Colchester.

Again, less students means less money should be spent. Also, don't even go to the "We need to cut sports" b.s. that is usually offered as a scare tactic!

how come reducing taxes and cutting isn't an option??? The town needs to cut. Cut jobs if you have to. Cut services. the old "everybody has to pay a little more because we need more" doesn't cut it.

Education budget is way too high. Taxpayers cannot afford the increases.

how about reduce town budget alone? I am not sure what we get from the town other than plowing really...

Our kindergarten teacher doesn't have para. She works so hard. We need funding for the schools!

school spending here has gotten way out of hand and now that we have "retired" Karen back i can only see it getting worse. consolidate administration/overhead expenses for the 4 schools and trim where needed. someday maybe the BoE will actually tell the town how graduation conversions to higher ed are doing - the FIRST thing mentioned when we moved our child to a private high school was where graduates go after graduation and what percentages where, e.g. 92% go to 4 year colleges, 45 go into military, 4% go to tech colleges.....seems to me this is a result they don't want to tell people.

There has already been a tax increase, and taxes are high enough. It appears better money management by the town is where the focus needs to be.

education is too high. It is said that our children are our future, however there is nothing here for the children to stay after high school.

The funding reduction is for education and so the schools should reduce spending to cover the costs.

The BOE needs to be more conservative in spending. With the school population decreasing the budget should also be decreasing.

Would need more info

Spread it out as thinly as possible. Negotiate contracts with teachers and eliminate the pensions and get them on the same health care plan as everyone else.

Class sizes are already large and funds have already been cut. Once you get beyond 25+, it doesn't matter how much bigger the classes get.

Colchester should pass a temporary tax increase to float until the state budget increases. Set a mandatory expiration date, otherwise the tax increase will become the baseline for the town budget.

our student population is decreasing so why is the budget going up? Why are we still increasing that spending? As for town hall - when our pay goes down we cut back.....it's time for town hall to cut back too.

None of the above Decrease town services. The schools have been cut enough.

change BOF policy to allow more money from GFB to offset budget one time purchases along with capital needs.

We need to better manage the spending of money.

interesting you did not offer a reduce town budget only - which is my vote

It seems the only fair way.

Please don't cut funding.

**In order to maintain current levels of Town services would you be willing to pay higher taxes to cover any increase in operating costs?**

**Additional Comments**

Learn to work in a lower budget. Households are having to do that all over the state. This town can too! Look into salaries too and unnecessary expenditures.

Differently no increase in taxes.

Despite earning a decent living, I am not going to vote yes this year. Shilosky took money from the town to give to the school budget, so he should not be asking for more money because he gave it away to the schools.

the zoning commission needs to follow the rules not issue outrageous conditions that leads to lawsuits.

More businesses

Figure it out, you have been wasting our hard earned dollars far to long and since the same people have been in office for decades it is on them

Why do operating costs continue to increase? Intelligent spending would not consistently lead to increased operating costs.

My taxes have increased 31% in 5 years!

Simple, can NOT afford a tax increase.

but I don't really have a choice now do I??

How much more can people take

Cut spending.

I don't get any town services to speak of. E.g., my street is plowed poorly, never repaired, and trimmed tree limbs are left in place. The guys at the dump pocket the money and do NOT give receipts unless specifically asked for.

I want the schools funded, the roads plowed, and the town kept looking nice. I'm willing to do my part to pay for that.

We would have no choice

Cut the school budget. Down 800 plus kids and current birth rate has decreased for this town. Freeze senior taxes and let the people that have kids pay any increase.

taxes here are outrageous.. would and have recommended living here is toooooo expensive, especially for seniors. My,opinion is there should be a tax reduction for people who do not have children in school system. That is very unfaire.

Too many taxes now. You've got to start thinking of people on fixed incomes.

The increased taxation will never end if we don't change things on a state level. The largest part of the budget is teacher salary and benefits so local government is irrelevant when the salary and benefits are based on the contract that is not really negotiated among the town and union but dictated to the town. The state is controlled by the unions and our perpetual deficits are the end result of that control.

We pay so much in taxes already, so it's hard to say please raise our taxes. I just don't understand why we have reduce services when we already pay so much. We pay for garbage pick up, we have zero street lights and yet we pay more then I paid when I lived on Long Island. I feel we should be able to use the money we get more responsible. This is from the state of CT, not just Colchester

That would depend on the targeted services . . .

I get no services

What choice do we have

As long as the town and education budgets are TRULY LEAN. (This is particularly hard to prove when for years the Board of Education continually finds itself with extra money based on savings it KNOWS it will get (like the health care savings a few years ago) and then immediately spends elsewhere. One of the reasons the BOD has a struggle passing budgets is the lack of trust people who would otherwise support the education budget have in the BOD.

Depends remember the seniors have not been serviced well and have been the least expensive

Please refer to my earlier comments, on earlier questions - Colchester is already non-competitive in terms of tax burden and provided services and home values for towns closer to the shoreline and Hartford.

If it seemed the increase was paying for the most needed services.

No cuts to schools

It depends on what the services are and if ALL avenues to find cheaper was to operate have been explored.

Very minimal increase only

Increase in taxes would be least painful as it is spread out over all Colchester citizens.

If everything is fair and evenly surveyed.

Currently planning to leave as the cost of living here is exorbitant relative to the value

Yes, when justifiable

Education cuts are not a good idea. A main objective for our town is to ensure we provide a quality education to the children here in Colchester.

I am willing but again, things could change. Have we looked at getting more businesses in the town? Not sure clothing stores would help, so perhaps a chain restaurant that is popular would be nice to help pull in more revenues.

Had always voted "yes" for Town budgets - but you can't trust Shilosky who talks out of both sides of his mouth! Voted for him the 1st time - never again! How do you run a Town when your word is no good!

I don't mind paying more taxes if you can prove to me that people in the upper tier of pay among public servants have sacrificed somewhat. If you can't, forget it.

\*It would depend on Town's success at increasing efficiency, getting more out of the dollars we currently spend.

Our First Responders must receive any financial support necessary

Tax Collectors office is very inefficient and impolite. Other areas in town hall seem over staffed and very quiet during the day. Very cyclical work that could be done with part time or per firm staff. I support Public Works, but want to be sure that projects are prioritized based on Safety, not personal interests.

I'd be perfectly fine with reduced Town services.

Colchester is already one of towns in CT with the highest tax rates. I've lived in towns that require less and offer more. Makes me think twice about wanting to continue living here.

Renegotiate existing contracts - really renegotiate! Not pay lip service to the process.

Cut spending!

I don't use many services right now, but I would say my taxes are too high for what I am paying for. My roads are not plowed very well in snow. And the transfer station hours are not accommodating at all.

Maybe very little increase, please!

I'd prefer to try and cut some town services before raising taxes.

As long as the money goes to security, seniors and education.

It all depends what we are talking about.

Benefits should be brought in line with private industry. We can no longer afford big pensions for people. Most companies offer a 401k and that's it.

See above comment. With wise spending and strict attention to unnecessary costs, the Town can make a significant difference in expenses. Run the Town like any small business or household - if there is less income, changes need to be made to accommodate those changes.

Currently would be tight with one income, but it is what it is!

Not if Education sees cuts and the town budget does not. Are we laying off town workers or are we just looking at getting rid of people in the education budget?

There is way too much waste in spending in this town and the town governing body just doesn't get it.

When it comes replacing revenue as a result of State of Connecticut reduced funding: NO. Categorically and non-negotiably NO. See answer below regarding revenue neutral budget increases

As long as the spending is appropriate
I can't afford higher taxes, they keep going up and up and we aren't getting any more for them. It is getting way to expensive to live in Connecticut as it is
As noted above, our taxes for equivalently priced homes in surrounding towns are definitely higher in Colchester.
Residents are taxed out. We've reached a point where higher taxes will dissuade people from moving to Colchester
Taxes are to high
A fully transparent budget should be developed with the number of positions, costs and plans for moving forward.
I think there needs to be a hard look at ways the community can work together to reduce costs.
Again, would like to see more creative measures from our town leaders on trying to make use of the town's resources and build the town to be more financially stable.
No more before I go bankrupt.
I think an audit of products used needs to be done, I don't think offices are running at efficient levels.
current services match current taxes.
reduce costs!!
Cuts all the administrative jobs
Taxes killing us now
For quality education and necessary social services.
Not willing to pay more in taxes.
All this survey says IS raise taxes. Nobody can take the time to vote. Every year when ur taxes r due you should send out this survey.
There has to be a way to cut costs across the board.
we have five jobs between the two of us so no we do not want to pay higher taxes. it would drive us from town.
education needs to be a priority.
reduce services..and I say what services.
Not if raising taxes is the only thing, all programs would need to make reductions as well
I won't be able to retire here if taxes keep going up
As the population continues to decrease, spending should also decrease. To do otherwise is unreasonable.
Absolutely not.
IF programs are well run economic and produce results
Too high to begin with.
Bite The Bullet
Minimal increase. Some cuts and increase in taxes may be necessary
Definitely Not!
NOT BOE
I live in North Woods (over 55 community) and cringe when I have to pay my taxes. We do not require snow plowing, etc., we send no children to the schools, and have only occasional police patrol (in my 3+ years here, I have only seen a patrol car maybe twice). Yet we contribute a large percentage of our income to establishments in this town. We give and give to this town and its retails and other resources, yet our taxes are the same as those with school age children and who rely on town services for their street maintenance and schools. Either a reduction in our taxes or an ability to freeze them at a certain age. Thank you.
So long as we are not squadering tax dollars, I can happily pay them.
i guess outside of some services what do we actually get?
I gave up my morning coffee at Dunkin Donuts years ago. I've been forced to cut my spending. You need to also. No raises, increased health insurance costs, less benefits. Get rid of the unions.



Absolutely not. The services aren't even up to standards. Make the people do more with less. that is how business is done.

Not willing to pay anymore taxes!!!

Would force us to move out of town if taxes increase.

We do not receive any Town services.

it depends on which services. If you plan on funneling more money into education then NO.

I think it's irresponsible & unrealistic to expect no increase. The last time we had no increase was a disaster and we still have not caught up.

Depends on the services and the increases to do so.

It should be a matter of how well money is spent not how much. Start adding performance metrics to budget presentations.

reduce town services

This state is getting worse and with the taxes at the national level even more so. Raises do not match these increases.

I know I'm not in the majority here

Increased taxes for education, library & police only

It would depend on what the service was and was was the driver(s) of the operating cost increase.

**As the cost of most things goes up every year, maintaining current services generally requires an increase in the amount budgeted to pay for them. What percent of tax increase would you find acceptable, given the effect on services**

**Additional Comments**

I think you can operate the town and schools at the current funding levels, without sacrificing services.

Look for ways for town departments to share resources; eliminate the "use it or lose it" thinking when it comes to the budget. If a department saves money based on the budget they were given, they should be rewarded (not penalized by having the next year's budget reduced to match their actual spending).

Once again, proper planning and responsible spending should show little increase in taxes. Especially with a declining education population.

We have a state police barracks in our town. We can start by reducing the police force. Many town departments are over staffed for what they do.

second time took this survey on same IP address

Taxes are high enough!

People see either a 1.5 percent pay increase or nothing, but yet every year costs go up. There needs to be a limit to tax increasing.

Do you know why taxes are tied to property values. Historically they have risen and provided your basic cost of living increases. lately they are decreasing which means you need to decrease spending

taxes are not a huge problem. allowing the poor and under privileged to suffer is a problem, as are cut backs to education and services for mentally challenged and mentally ill persons

No one is going to move to this town unless we keep up services.

Town of Colchester for the amount of the population is too low to fund these expensive school systems. Maybe go to regional school systems with other towns. If the taxes get any higher I will plan to move out of Colchester. Reduce money going to the school systems immediately.

Stop wasting money

I understand taxes must go up, things cost money. We just ask that with tax increase we also see additional services

Unfortunately my paycheck doesn't go up every year.

However looking at taxes on various homeowners the distribution does not seem fair. Those with the same home have higher taxes than those with like homes. I feel a good look at the way the taxes are distributed needs to happen. This way it could be done fairly for future home owners. Everyone should bear the burden equally.

Be more efficient

you have raised our taxes every year we can not afford it, enough

Add to seniors

I can't afford to live here, and am postponing retirement because of this.

Education expenses should not be cut.

No cuts to schools

Cost does go up but taxes don't have to go up if other ways of increasing revenue are available

I am personally taking a pay cut due to the state budget challenges but I am still willing to invest in my community.

We are overtaxed as it is. The town of Colchester does not provide an appropriate level of services for the amount of funding that is received. This comment does not apply to the educational services. The teachers do the best they can with what is given but the education budget is greatly underfunded.

We need to look for creative ways of doing business. Status quo does not work any more.

I basically get little to no services from the town and pay a high price for the privilege

I can support a 2% increase, much more is going to be difficult to pass a budget in town.

My comments remain the same. Increase is understood but where are there cost savings for services so that the increase does not need to be as much. Is there anyway to use solar power to power more town buildings? I mean if there is a good return on investment that can be realized pretty quickly.

Can't trust Shilosky and his budget!

Depends on which services are affected.

Amount of increase should not exceed the rate of inflation. It should be a little lower.

We just got a modest 2% increase on our taxes and we are still \$500,000 short for our town budget due to state revenue cuts.

I would normally support a modest increase, but we're all spending more personal funds on Parks & Rec, daycare services, higher personal health insurance costs and higher taxes from prior increases. We could not afford for the increase to be passed on to taxpayers.

Wages in CT are stagnant. Many layoffs threatened or have already occurred. Tax increases are tough to accommodate for many families. I'd want to understand the needs more completely before I could be comfortable paying more.

Reduced services are fine with me.

Decrease the amount that goes in your own pocket.

Need a reorg.

Again, having less to spend means you SPEND LESS

Cut wasteful spending. Make town and BOE employees pay more towards health costs.

spread the reduction of state funding amongst all equally; tax rate, and town services/departments equally.

possible 1%-2% depending on what might still get cut

No reduction in Education

Need to make cuts in spending. The mind set in this town and every town in ct is tax more and spend more every year.

Please do not reduce education spending. We should look at supporting changes in structural spending at the state (particularly regionalization following the findings of the MORE commission <http://www2.housedems.ct.gov/more/>) to promote cost savings while protecting spending on services.

Need zero-based budgeting throughout the system not simply taking last year's numbers and adding a percentage increase factor. All line items need to be critically revisited every year to see where economies and savings are possible. Is this the practice among all departments when submitting budget requests each year? Also need a much more open and transparent process of negotiating union contracts which seem to always be all done behind closed doors without any direct "Joe taxpayer" input. A very closed loop, and I believe this is the source of many of our biggest budgetary problems at all levels of government in the state of CT.

Agree. Maintaining current services with all else equal requires an increase in the amount budgeted to pay for them. People should get raises, cost of material increases. I accept the fact that a no new initiative budget holding revenue flat will cost more than the year before and feel responsible to cover my fair share of the increase. New initiatives need to stand on their own merits and have the majority of taxpayers decide.

I believe this statement is a bit disingenuous since there is often a balance between increase, maintenance of cost and decreases.

See above regarding holding salaries for 3 years.

I reject the premise of this question. I'm the Director of Finance at a major (Fortune 100) company, and we're tasked every year with doing more at the same time reducing budgets. Our town should be expected to do the same.

Home values are increasing 3 to 4% annually. Hence property tax revenue is increasing 3 to 4% annually. Make do with that increase, don't raise the tax rate as well

Zero based budgets are common in most towns of our size. Management should be considering real ROI and recommending cutting services that have little return.

I think any increase to a already tight budget knowing that the schools enrollment is declining is not a good idea.

While prices go up it also doesn't mean that salaries do. I work for a nonprofit. In the past 6 years I have gotten 1 3% raise.

Cannot put a percentage on this at this point.

Consider opening Town Hall later in the day and stay open in the evening, when many people are returning home from work; reducing operating hours at Town Hall; give taxpayers the opportunity to choose to pay extra, I would pay ten to twenty dollars for a dedicated account for the library, for example.

Taxes are already way too high

No increase, as all you do it give yourselves raises

Why does cost HAVE to go up to maintain services. Cut services is you have to. I don't get any anyway.

I already pay over \$7,000 in taxes with no public utilities. I have well and septic, no trash pickup and we don't have fulltime police or fire.

Cut school budget-layoff teachers

I don't get raises either

Offer pay to play services for most activities and not force people to pay for services they don't ever utilize. Also, many towns in the country are billing parents for utilizing buses per student to assist with budget shortfalls and decreases in their State's funding. This makes sense as the maintenance, insurance and fuel costs continue to rise. All of those costs should be renegotiate, however on a yearly basis to ensure the best price for the services received are being expended.

Bite the Bullet

Living in Ct is becoming increasingly difficult.

Find ways to cut. Look for better deals. Shop around. Really go through and see what is not being utilized or used and get rid of

Try considering running the town like a business and not a welfare state. As a business owner, I understand that sometimes cut backs are required.

Taxes shouldn't go up every year. Us citizens need a break. Once every 5 years would be better.

Not willing to pay any additional taxes. The town and State is forcing people to leave, making it hard to retire in a home you spent your entire working life paying for.

Colchester needs to hire a grant writer. There is money out there that you could qualify for that you don't apply for. Dept's are too short staffed to take on a grant (some not motivated to do so) That position would more than pay for itself. We need more revenue coming in. That's our issue, not really too much spending. What happened to Jack's? Thought that was all set?

This survey is a good idea. This question in particular sets expectations.

I would not be in favor of an increase over 0.5%.

If taxes are increased the end result should be an increase in services to bring more people to Colchester and raise property values.

I do not know. I need to see the budget

My only child needs a proper education and the employees of services for the town need to be happy and well-paid for the town to flourish

**In the future would you support spending for the following?**

**Additional Comments**

The police don't need a new building, they are doing just fine in the perfectly good building that they have. Once the middle school is finished there could be an option of a new senior center if it was fundraised for and not directly from our taxes.

Again taxes are too high

Until the present situation improves with the state financial area there should be a freeze on spending in the town.

Unfortunately, we have spent over and above what we should have been spending - which has led us to this dire financial mess.

If you increase fees to for-profit sports programs and make them contribute a fair share to improve rec fields, it will not cost the taxpayers. A few years back I was on the board of a sports program, we had over \$150,000 in the bank account. We have enough police and more fire equipment than most towns our size. The Fire Marshall is a joke and a jerk, he thinks he is a king. The senior center would be nice but because of the new school, the impact on taxes will be too great at this time. No way am I supporting a police station, it is time to regionalize our police.

We need a community center.

I would support serious additional spending on: Town needs an all new modern multi-use indoor recreation center. Town owned, with indoor pool for swimming lessons, indoor basketball court & possibly indoor raquet court(s) for all ages swimming excersie year round. This space could be large enough to have a youth center attached to it. Should be an all new facility (not a re-work/add on to an old school).

The RecPlex needs to be updated with more playground equipment, especially the splash pad. An indoor recplex/community center would be awesome to have.

Rec complex is in bad shape and BOE owes the town several years of back pay for public works directors salary.

Again, you need to explain what infrastructure, improvements etc. would entail. Not enough information to make an intelligent choice.

If it raises my taxes, the answer is NO.

Our fields are horrible especially compared to other towns. All the seniors in the town forget what it was like to want for their children and unfortunately they are ruling the budget and not letting improvements for our kids.

Our recreation complex is a very good place for children of all ages. We need to maintain this area and improve it.

Last March I got my fingerprints done at the Colchester Police Dept. it was a total dump. I felt bad that the officers and the woman at the window worked in such a place. I've seen nicer offices in the town hall.

The baseball fields in particular are in bad shape, and dangerous to play on. CBSL has a lot of money, but won't fix them, and won't buy land for a new field.

Other towns take care of the seniors with new buildings where Colchester just give them crap with promises of future things. This town is just falling apart because all the money is being dumped on the schools where enrollment is down. Not a good town to live in.

Open space? That's determined by real estate market and zoning. Why artificially adjust progress or status quo? First hearing of new Police Building. What's wrong with current site and where's new? Emergency Medical: There was funding for a historic garage in town what infrastructure is needed more than that? Fields: Allow a select group of volunteers to maintain at times. I remember coaching and we were discouraged from doing anything positive (maintenance) to the fields.

I am a health care worker and took my client to play bingo and do other programs but could not use the bathroom with her. The bathroom is not handicap assessable for all seniors. The building was grandfathered in but really NEEDS to be fixed

That question was already asked

Didn't know a new police building was being planned. Do we need that? We don't even have a full-time police dept.

It would be silly not to maintain what was given through a grant to our town. We have amazing rec fields and should be proud of them and keep them up. Even if it means a volunteer day to help defray the costs.

It all depends on how it is done.

Be more efficient with what you've got

Public safety comes first in my book.

Everyone knows about the "secret" plan to put the police station into the current senior center. This is an absolutely unnecessary and future increasing expense to do this, as well as the false need to move to 24/7 policing, with an entire Troop C in the center of our town.

I already am having a very difficult time living here because of the taxes.

I do not feel the hours we have local police staffed corresponds to the hours they could be of most use to the citizens of Colchester. It is in the evening and overnight hours when most crime occurs, staffing at that time rather than staffing during the day when they are primarily focused on speed enforcement would in my opinion better serve the taxpayers.

Pool

I feel focus at this time should be on the senior center and replacing/purchasing rescue and medical equipment as necessary based on actual needs (and not wish list shopping sprees). As for the rec fields, maintenance of the fields should be a priority. The sports programs in town bring in visiting teams which ultimately help to support our local businesses and restaurants. We need to maintain quality fuels to ensure home games and tournaments continue to come to Colchester.

My answers are based upon incomplete information. While I believe we may need to reduce spending "across the board" given the current climate, I am willing to spend the same or more money where there is genuine need. I also feel that administrative costs should be cut commensurately with other cuts.

We need less police, and they don't need a new building. Suggest a large reduction in the police force.

My support would depend upon sensible allocation of funds for sensible services/improvements

The education budget sucks the life out of this town. Fix that and then you can address the other issues

I would need more information to be a definite "Yes"

I would support anything that adds to the community.

Our seniors need a new center, our land must be preserved. I would rather have police services over a new building, maybe increase to fire EMS services depending on what is needed. The rec fields are charging families \$10 per season per child to play, this should be enough to maintain fields, or charge another \$5. My children play soccer and football, I know many where fine paying this small fee.

Voting no until we get leadership that is honest with both the education and town spending!

Yes or no depends on how good a buy, and relative efficiency.

I would only approve of Field improvements if it did not impact the budget in any way that affected the education of our children.

The only reason I would consider investments in Rec Fields is that I think we could use the additional revenue that could be generated and it's clear from the Summer Rec program that we get a lot of our revenue from surrounding towns (Bozrah, East Haddam & Hebron).

I have involvement in local sports, yet I vote No on field improvements despite it 'hurting' in that regard, because you don't have the funds. Let the leagues actually do something to benefit the town and stop throwing bureaucratic BS in their way. They have always been willing to do it - it's only the town's ridiculous rules that prevent it.

No additional spending in the current fiscal crisis that is going on at the State level.

Until Colchester can attract more industry and more of a tax base, the level of services should not increase. Cut administration levels in schools, not teachers.

Recreation fields need a maintenance budget in addition to improvements. The appearance is that fields are improved and then starved of maintenance to the point they need improvements (Ex. football field on Old Hartford Rd)

Although funds are low, I do believe we "owe" the town elders and our veterans deserve a comfortable safe place to gather. We need a new senior center.

The Town Hall needs a serious cosmetic facelift!

Would only support a new police building if we had a fulltime police department. No need if we only have a part time police force and share duties with Troop K. I would support a Fire/EMS building if one was to be built closer to the Marlborough/East Hampton side of town. Somebody needs to donate some land so we can have more than one gigantic town rec field. This is insane and a zoo when everyone has soccer, baseball all at the same time. And these fields are also very poorly maintained. Go to a nearby town and see for yourself.

Been inside the police building. Really needs upgrading

Not the near future.

Why would we need a new police building when there is a state police HQ in our town? That seems to waste resources that we don't need. I would also like to see services such as a senior center and fire and emergency services and

At this time, in this environment, all are a no, Some will always be a no. Public safety is a bottomless spiral of small incremental improvements gained at the large costs. There needs to be an agreed upon public safety level of service

The rec fields are embarrassing

I would support a "new" senior center if existing structure can be improved to good quality at a cost which is less than a new structure. At this time, a new center would not be prudent if additional taxes are needed for funding. In the current economic climate of CT, I believe we should be looking to rationalize more services rather than expanding or improving local services. I would support initial costs that assist with rationalization of services.

Recreational center like Chelsea Piers in Stamford. Sports on 66 or Wide World of Sports. The town needs a public pool!!!

If it increases taxes then no we should maintain and make due with what we have and work within our budget.

Everything needs to be looked at sensibly. The Middle School original proposal was insane how they planned the most expensive building to maximize state contributions. We need to build for what is needed not wanted.

None of the above, unless it could be done within existing budget parameters.

Now is not the time to raise taxes.

Fix airline trail parking lot and add more mountain biking singlertrack on town property.

Colchester seems to be loosing many people in the area that I live. I believe we need to focus on bringing people to the town and this means making it more inviting. That's family based entertainment. We can all do with less police, that would be a popular opinion with all that's happening.

Can't do everything at once and maybe buildings that are not used can be turned into new facilities.

I would recommend seeking corporate sponsorships to aid in field maintenance. I would also recommend presenting a post mortem on school expansions and whether looking back the capacity growth was necessary.

The next project that gets started should be the senior center.

Charge all users for the rec field.

MANY groups use the fields and don't pay. If a fee is to be charged to use the fields - to be used for their upkeep - than ALL who use MUST pay

Let more businesses come into town.

If you want sports programs in the town they should be privately funded and/or sponsored

In tough financial situations you DO NOT keep spending.

Absolutely not. For one year in the 30 plus it would be nice for no increase. The senior center was voted down twice but you still managed to put it through. Listening to the people again.

These are examples of ridiculous increases. Don't need any. Do fund raising if you want money. Who ever wants to contribute, can.

I'm not sure of the need for all of the above.

Only increase for recreation if we get a swimming pool

Find other ways to make your budget. Get off the backs of your citizens. We cannot afford additional tax increases. Get real you need to think out of the box . There are other ways to get tax dollars. Think people!!!

Fundraising to support those as with the library.

I support in an increase in spending to maintain the current level of service. I will also support an increase in spending to meet critical needs in any of these areas.

Please ... no more tax increases.

The rec fields are an absolute embarrassment. It boggles my mind how we have such a beautiful facility and the fields are in such disrepair. I visit other towns with larger recreation complexes, smaller budgets and fewer employees and the fields are impeccable. How we as a town have been sued due to injuries caused by the lack of field maintenance is a miracle.

Compared to area towns, Colchester falls short in public safety funding. I'd like to see a full time police department as well as investment in the fire department. The fire department is out growing the current station, so it'd be a good investment to bring the police and fire dept under one roof in a new public safety complex. Land conservation is critical to maintaining the small town feel, but we need to focus on building industry where appropriate too.

A new Senior center is desperately needed, as are rec field improvements. It is embarrassing when other towns come to play on our fields. And downright dangerous for the kids. Improve the lives of ALL residents from beginning of life to later.

You MUST use the money from the TAX you placed on citizens who participate in P&R affiliated activities. SHAME on you for doing that!

Are we only hiring POST certified police officers? If not, I would look at whether or not we're getting a good value out of local police services vs state police.

The fire departments paramedic program is a scam for the town. Please do not fund this program that will be funded from townspeople's pockets.

if someone says they want an artificial turf field i am putting my house up for sale.

Get rid of the police force. We have Troop K and pay for a damn resident trooper anyway. Get rid of them. they are like mall cops...

What is the case for each of these?

I will only support a Senior center if it is a combination Town Rec/Senior Center.

I'd like to say yes to all of these but I know we can't afford it. We do need a Senior Center. Let's get it done! Colchester hasn't done anything in years with the exception of WJMS. You spend so much money repairing and putting band aids on to keep the Senior Center open. What a waste. How much is spent annually to band aid that building? Staff repairs included.

Recreation Field improvements should be made by the leagues that use the facilities. Example: CBSL is responsible for field improvements and is allowed to privately contract for maintenance and upgrades as needed. Same applied for Soccer and Football. They should be able to raise the money needed to perform maintenance and upgrades and be allowed to hire the best contractor to complete the job.

Colchester should invest in municipal broadband internet. federal elimination of net neutrality may cripple internet and Colchester residents are limited in their internet providers. Communities with municipal broadband are thriving and it encourages business development.

again - fix what we have and stop building. All we do is leave behind old useless buildings so fix them and move on.

need to put costs to each item. Also for Rec fields, they are over played. Either cut back on usage or have parents bear more of burden.

Sports cannot be cut from the town budget. You will lose students.

People don't realize by building a new senior center, you're appealing to a key demographic of voters



Why would the police need their own building? Whenever have have called Colchester police department I get forwarded to troop k. What do Colchester police actually do?

recreation field should be supported by user fees by those who use them. Why is there not a choice for youth services? The Senior Center should be part of a community center.

**Did you vote in the last budget referendum? If you selected "No" please indicate why.**

**Other (please specify)**

Just moved back to Colchester

I didn't make it there in time!

Had to work

Working

Do not know

Away

New to town

on travel

Forgot on the day to vote. Would have voted yes this time

Only live in Colchester 5 months of year.

Not allowed

Forgot

didn't make it.

The town wont or cant deliver on services regardless if there was an increase for them. Why doesn't the town just confiscate a third of our income and just hand it to the unions instead of having this charade every year?

Was traveling for work

missed due to family situation

Didn't reside in Colchester then.

I did vote

Out of town with military

I was not old enough to vote

I voted

I am a Green Card holder, but I am in the process of becoming a citizen and I will vote in every single election, no matter how small.

Not very knowledgeable.

Did not live in town yet.

No

Work

I votedr

Out of the country

not registered presently. spouse is.

Unknown how much money Colchester to receive from state.

I voted.

I voted.

You reduced educational services. This results in an AUTOMATIC NO vote!!!

Tax increases are excessive and the quality of what services i do get continue to decline.

Out of town

I travel for work and was away

**What can the town do to increase participation in voting?**

**Open-Ended Response**

Extended polling hours (5am-9 or 10pm, give rewards to those who do vote (free food, \$5, etc), door to door polling, polling at childcare centers, or outside schools, etc

Be able to vote more than one day

probably nothing, many in town (and the state) are too self absorbed to be bothered to take an interest in politics and town issues to vote. but those same people are quick to complain when something doesn't go the way they "think" is should.

That's a good question! It seems like the flyers and town meetings aren't working. It's sad how many people living in this town have school age children and choose not to vote. It's disgusting! The children deserve a good foundation for their future!

Get Elected Officials who actually really listen and understand that we can't afford to stay in Colchester

Use more avenues to communicate with residents.

Have only one vote like most states do and if the budget doesn't pass then you have to live with the same amount of money budgeted for that current year. Learn to live within the town's means. People are barely making it and you guys just want more. Maybe actually listen to the people in the community and letting them know their opinions matter. No one cares what others think, so why should they vote on matters that you guys will just manipulate to get your way

Not sure

Give them the option of voting on line.

Educate

Send more information

Stop the kids from being on the green waving signs. I stopped letting my kids participate when I realized what a danger it is to distract drivers at the busy intersection.

Send post card notice to every address in town ~a week before the referendum, and especially explain how absentee ballots may be mailed in. I've lived here & voted for 17 years and I have no idea if an absentee ballot can be used. And make sure the first referendum is well before school vacation starts. There was risk it was going to be scheduled the week after school ended in 2017 and this would be do the disadvantage of families with children.

More notice - more transparency

Not sure.

it's on point now why change

Make it seem like the People's voice actually matters and that the town is not going to do what it feels like in the first place

I wish I knew.

Offer an incentive....something worth voting for. Something to give us in return that will be effective and beneficial.

stop lying to them and stop using public media to limit public perception, it's illegal! Facts only

More transparency. All of a sudden every town employee has a new truck, nothing in budget we voted on about that.

Not really the towns responsibility

clarify better where to vote and get the word out better

May be proposing spending cuts will get people to the polls

More space in River East; larger/more posters

Spread more information

find way to inform voters of when and where

Run shuttles send mailings for absetee ballots

Do like east Haddam and pay for newspaper insert

More information dispersed about issues or candidates.
Better communication of issues voted on
Better marketing of what the budget is going to keep/cut. There are people in town that vote “no” no matter what- some might change that if they are better informed. Unfortunately people don’t always have the time to meet at town hall to discuss it.
accept more needed business
Online
Non-partisan education about voting, absentee voting and registering to vote.
Nothing. You are pretty good at letting people know a vote is coming up.
Nothing. It's the people's choice. They are adults.
More fliers in the mail.
Remind people via text /everbridge system
Not sure but theres alot of bullying on the social pages for the town about it
Better communication about voting.
More transparency.
Threaten tax increases and or education cuts. Both work.
Advertise in River East in bold type under Colchester news
Actually listen to the voters instead of giving them lip service.
need to read budget referendum before vote better communication on time and place to vote
Contact new residents as they move into town and educate them on our local government system. If they lived in a suburban our urban area before moving here, they likely do not know how much we vote and how many meetings we can go to for the purpose of being heard.
I'm stumped....perhaps offer a way to vote on-line but locked down to 1 vote per eligible person. (that's a challenge) but leveraging technology will help.
Better advertising, flyers in the mail
Have more meetings
Signs about referendum need to go up in all parts of town- Westchester, areas close to Lebanon, Amston Rd, out towards Salem.
The town doesn't really listen to people that are against things in meetings. They do not want to hear anything bad about reducing money on school systems. The school systems take all the priority any money and that is it. Period. Don't come to the meetings unless you support the school systems. It is very bad. They put in money for school systems even if they don't need it. Only a one way group of people running this town. Get a better communication and more friendly town. It is that bad.
Provide more information.
Nothing
Allow to vote via email.
Start saving money. Everyone else has to tighten their budget.
Reduce my work demand. No, it goes day to day when I must get in to work and stay late. It was just a misfortunate day.
I vote every year, I find it very important to be part of the community. My husband never votes, but that’s good b/c he would usually vote the opposite of me.
Provide more stats and info.
Offer transportation
More notice of referendums/elections, especially at off times of the year.

Increased notice to the citizens
Simplify all of the information that a voter may not have time to sift through. Distribute a flyer through the mail providing brief bullet points comparing the candidates' stand on the top 5 to 6 issues
It convenient and easy to do . Continue using town social media groups and pages to spread the word and promote the importance of involvement.
Put up more signs at each entrance to Colchester the week before the voting. 8
Keep reminding people to vote!!!
More information to the voters about cuts or increases in spending.
Communicate better
all you do is lie about everything, why not trying to be honest, we need no more money for these schools
That's easy allow voting over a period of time more than one day
Not sure.
<b>MORE POLLING SITES</b>
,transportation phone calls
Have more transparency in tallying of votes.
Make voting available more than one day.
social media
not much, people think their votes do not count. The teachers always get what they want, higher pay and less work. It is not "for the kids".
Proposed cuts need to impact families of all demographics. For years cuts to educational services have targeted the middle school and high school. Parents of younger students are largely out of touch with how the budgeting process impacts educational services offered. The connection is not made that cuts to educational services at the upper aged schools will eventually impact them and their children because when you have a child in K or 1st grade middle school seems a million years away. When you have had children progress through the schools you realize it is here before you know it, but the cuts to programming and class size already been made and once cut, are virtually never restored.
publicize date of vote more, provide specific examples of how it will affect them
Bigger independent party.
I feel that there should be ample notice given via newspaper and mail. Also multiple notifications should be given as to where townspeople should vote-town hall, Bacon, church
early voting
less political haggling and better public education of issues at hand
I do not know.
Increased advertisement/dissemination of absentee balloting
Signs up by Stop and Shop, entrances to Rt 2, call every citizen as a reminder.
Free items at local businesses/coupons towards products at local businesses.
Maybe send an email or letter to people.
provide more information about what we are voting for. I spent about 5 minutes looking via email and around the site and gave up
Good question that I wish I had the answer to!
Better communication via email/text/website/ social media
Place informative signs at more intersection locations (not just town center) especially Vote Today signage at heavily used intersections on the day of the vote.
Those who feel they have a voice in government and who are involved are the people who vote. Some are truly so busy in this climate that they just can't.

Improve information available. Most of us are on Facebook and that is where most debates takes place have more information there, go live, explain everything to that captive audience. We are busy... no one has time to go to meetings and deal with the drama but that doesn't mean we aren't interested. The old way doesn't work anymore!

Perhaps doing vote on week-end.

More signage around town

People who vote do, people who do not vote do not. There is a choice and they make it. You do an excellent job of places and times.

publicize more (tv news, radio, newspaper, Facebook)

Continue to advertise the best you can

You could at least pretend to care about the people that are being squeezed by taxes

Extend the amount of time over which you are able to vote - instead of one day, maybe a couple of weeks.

Honesty, transparency to reduce confusion

Have places that are close to where people live. I live in north westchester and I always have to travel 10 miles to get to the place. There is never enough parking.

Email and text reminders

Explain ALL aspects of what is being voted on. Not just what people gripe about in the local papers.

Good luck! Propose a five % increase to the budget.

Actually put some effort into overhauling the budget so there is something worth voting for.

Add a section to the town newsletter that is emailed by the First Selectman, there is never voting information in the newsletter

Publicize votes Increase number of town meetings and time between town meetings and vote

That is the question for all voting across the country. wish I had an answer.

Spend the people's money where they say they're going to spend it. Why bother voting if the budget presented doesn't reflect how its spent.

make understanding the budget simplified for those new to the town or/an voting.

Educate the people.

Weekends, online -- but these are things that need to be changed at a MUCH higher level.

Efforts to educate the citizens that this is the only way they have to have a voice in setting their own tax bill, and what kind of return to expect in services.

Don't worry when the people see how much the budget is going to increase next year did it state revenue cuts I'm sure you'll have a substantial increase in voting

Create and "event" on FB so that we can invite connections to participate. This gets it on people's calendar and ensures they dont miss it unintentionally. Referendum signs can't just be concentrated by the Town Green & Town Hall - most of us don't live or travel regularly through this area.

Listen when the voters say "No" to budget increases - instead of tinkering with budget levels and repeatedly submitting budgets with minor alterations until they pass.

Inform citizens, including clarity on voting location and times

publicity/out reach

Provide more information as to what the effects of their choices are.

Nothing

Phone calls, phone tree, friends talking to friends, encourage editorials

Easier to vote and stop the bickering over stupid stuff that makes people not care about stuff

More "advertising" might have some impact

Make the public aware of the importance of every vote

Colchester's voting percentages don't seem out of line with other jurisdictions. Outside of national elections cycles that's what you get.

Put up a Town sign in Westchester.

Listen to what people really want the money spent on.

I don't know

Give the public notice earlier. Have meeting with town officials and express the importance of local voting

Distribute information ie. online regarding issues being addressed.

More information in the news bulletin

I just don't understand why this is an issue but I know it is. I think nowadays, social media is the best way to continually blast Colchester with info about upcoming and important votes.

In order to get people to pay attention and make informed decisions you need to get all the relevant information out to people. Social media and emailing would be a good way to get information out. Just like this survey I came across on FB.

That is a great question. What can the country do to increase participation in voting? Perhaps it could be another survey, although the non-voters might not participate. I do not think there is any one strategy. I believe it needs to be a multi-prong approach. You need to reach people in a way that it works for them and help them understand their vote does matter. Perhaps more ongoing articles in the RiverEast about the town operations, using social media in a positive manner to push out info, holding town meetings with town leadership where people can come and at times that work for all segments. We need to engage the community....they are the stakeholders.

Electronic voting

Communicate as much and as often as possible at as many venues as possible. But I would suggest this is mostly out of the Town's hands.

Allow early voting, not just one designated referendum day.

Facebook live or livestream budget meetings. Utube. Get students involved in these efforts. Stop first referendum vote from occurring after school ends.

Send reminders out telling you when to and where to vote. Post it in the local newspaper.

some type of free to the town incentive.

people don't seem to care about local govt.

Not so sure the Town is responsible for what is a personal decision, one for which each individual must recognize and be be grateful for the privilege.

Making people aware it's happening before just days before and make sure any information people are asking is answered truthfully

Sad that there needs to be an incentive. 'Free coupon of punch card to benefit business

Unsure of measures the Town already uses to maximize participation - rides for those who don't drive, Town services "fair" or exhibition, CBA sponsored raffle for voters, series of on-site forums in the evening or on Saturdays to meet Department heads, see public works facility, view proposed school renovations, view potential parks improvements, etc.?

Institute on line voting.

You can't. Stop making yourselves frustrated about it. If you are getting the same percentage of voting that is gotten on a national level. Let it go.

Post on town green time to vote

Televise/video the town meetings for the pupic to watch.

Signs outside Stop & Shop with the date. Signs on Rt 16 with the date.

I wish i knew.

Have the voting on a Saturday so the people that work can make it.And I am positive you will have a very large turn out.

More presence on social media. More publicity about issues that will be affected.
Use technology to vote remotely
More information that voting is happening. Can a town wide phone call (the same as the emergency call info) be done to let more people know about voting.
Multi-day elections, make mail-in ballots readily available, spend money on social media to advertise the simple fact that there is a town election day.
I have no socially acceptable answer to that question.
Put up signs with the date of the vote
Social media
Nothing, nobody cares
Use local newspaper to publicize desire for more participation
Internet voting, more publicity
Continue to publicize the information in whatever means possible.
Increase methods of communicating and reminding people to vote.
Target the younger generation.
Apathy is difficult to deal with. Limit budget referendum voting to property owners.
Allow fingerprint confirmed online voting.
Inconvenient polling mechanism for professionals who work out of town. Consider modern technology, on-line voting.
Voting online would be good as long as it was secure since sometimes it is hard to fit voting into your schedule if you have a family
Probably nothing
allow early voting, or voting over a period of time greater than 1 day
More announcements
More information to the public
not much.
Put the main bullet points in easy-to-read language and put in the RiverEast, which every home gets. In addition, a direct mailer would help.
Secure, online voting
Unknown. Seems like many ideas have been tried, most have not had much impact.
Pay more attention to voter comments.
I think you need to ask the people who don't vote. I've never understood why anyone who's eligible to vote doesn't do it.
Frequent reminders on social media
better household information on issues and people running
Provide households with detailed information about issues being voted on
Provide households with detailed information regarding the issues being voted upon.
Record your budget speeches and post your powerpoints and your budget presentations along with participating questions and answers. Make a public blog where people can post (Moderated) questions, and get answers. The budget needs to be very clear and transparent for this to work well.
maybe offer services or drawings for a free week at camp/ recreation programs/field trips. Free coffee get businesses involved free dinners, have people donate.
We need a way to get information on the issues without having to attend meetings in person, and without a political spin from either side.
I actually think the town does a great job in notifying people of upcoming votes.
Text messaging.



Control the budget meetings. The are out of control
Get more unbiased information out there, flyers, newspapers, etc - most people do not have time to sift through propaganda.
online voting
make it easier (online voting)
Have families vote at schools or even online.
Email blasts to registered voters
Provide shuttle services for elderly. Develop a way to electronically vote on-line while maintaining security and controls.
Robo calls? Emails like the ones we get from 1st selectman?
get better candidates
transparency
Publicize (via website) addresses of those who voted. Ask local businesses to remind people to vote when people are checking out/leaving establishment.
Stop playing up education all the time
Wish I knew
Advertise .....
provide real options - if the results are always the same then why would people vote? (school budget constantly going up despite fewer students ...really?)
If people don't care, there is nothing you can do.
Push it senior year in the school system to those children who are becoming adults.
Start streaming services to increase remote access of town meetings for citizens who can't attend.
Go to the rec fields with a polling booth
Robo call reminders
keep the voters more informed on where are money is being spent.
more signs and notices to let people know if they don't vote their taxes will more than likely go up.
Only property owners should be voting. Only real estate property owners should be controlling how money is allocated. You don't pay you don't play
get more youth involved and increase positive advertising
get us mad with tax incre
Perhaps more electronic communications/reminders via text, email, Facebook, Twitter, All Things Colchester, etc.
Providing a simplier/redux version along with the complete breakdown. After working all day most people don't have the energy to read 150+ pages.
Nothing. Unfortunately, people like to complain more than take action
Good question. More voting by mail
Have people vote when they pay their taxes
offer transportation to those unable to get to the polling places. I have my own car so tht is not a problem for me.
Offer rides to seniors as they don't generally travel if there is even a hint of weather.
Offer a tax credit.
Send postcards to each registered voter in the mail.
Aside from door-knocking, the town uses website and local newspaper, Rivereast and Bulletin 9which have much to be desired)
I don't understand how people that pay only taxes on a car have the same voter weight as people who pay many times that on property taxes.

More articles about spending plans in paper. People have become complacent about budget— —if budget meets resistance just cut sports and student services is listed

Let the voters know why the budget decisions were made as they were. Give them more than numbers.

need people running for office in all parties

It seems schools have not been doing much in educating students to civic responsibilities and consequences of not participating for quite some time. Thus many adults aren't well informed and think their votes don't count. Well advertised education sessions on this issue may be helpful.

Door to door. Or electronic voting.

Placement of signs around town.

Help people get to the polls by picking them up, drive by voting and getting more people to use mail in ballots if they need them.

Fight apathy. Offer more situations that offer question and answer sessions throughout the year (perhaps you do and they aren't publicized enough).

Come out with a fair budget and give seniors a break on the education budget.

Articulate in local publications why it is so important to vote, especially prior to elections...

Have forums at multiple days and Times of the day.

bring commercial retail and restaurants into the town..start doing things that we've been given lip service about for years!!!!

Digital reminders - get people onto an email list or something similar and send out reminders leading up to the vote

Politically approach younger population.

It is hard to say, just keep getting the word out and have ope discussions

Stress how each vote matters, how these outcomes affect voters, and have polls open during more convenient hours for working families

Teach civics in the schools.

Ensure that voting will actually make a difference.

Advertise

Get the word out. Post more places with advanced notice

Better explain in easy to understand and unbiased terms what we are voting for or against.

show debates and discussions on public access tv

More public forums and debates for the major candidates.

Have one social media page dedicated to providing TURE information during budget season. Too much misinformation is put out there by certain groups.

More transparency in the budget information. Avoid hyperbole and scare tactics!

I do not believe that the town can do anything to increase voter participation. There is a general apathy towards voting in that nothing ever changes.

Get more individuals and groups involved with spreading the word about voting. Hold the referendum in June. Last year more people voted when it was held later.

advertise adverstise

Mail in ballots. People are lazy and do not want to come to town hall. Send out mail in ballots and you'll have an increase in participation.

More visible signs promoting voting day.

communication this year was horrible - signs, emails, phone messages all should be used to communicate the date and times - very disappointed we have all this technology we don't use to keep residents informed for events like this

Stop the nastiness of politics. Stop the lies. Own up to the truth even if it's painful. You have no respect in this town. People don't want to get involved so they leave it up to "someone" else.

Not sure how you can get people to do what is their right

Lower taxes. Show real commitment to lowering the tax burden and stop trying to save jobs that aren't needed. also make the people do the work they should do.

More signs about DATE of vote.

Nothing, it's a personal decision.

Nothing

If you solve this problem spread the word, voter turnout is always low. How does Colchester compare to other towns in voter turn out?

Be less negative towards each other.

Get the message out on social media - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.

Present the truth in the budget without bias towards passing the budget. Stop the negativity towards those who ask questions or who oppose additional spending. Stop using school/taxpayer resources and children and parents to push the budget. Be open to reducing spending and looking for savings and encourage those who have ideas to come forward, instead of bashing them in meetings or on social media.

Earlier advertising Budget 101 meeting a simple overview

Find out who isn't voting and ask them why.

More well published public forums.

Not sure. There is always some amount of apathy amongst taxpayers. They might feel like they don't have a voice. I would continue to urge sessions and invitations to town meetings. Most people don't spend their time looking up things on the town website, so informing people is key. I would also try to get more people interested in signing up for the 1st Selectman's emails which are sent 2X/week. They are excellent and keep me "in the loop."

Utilize social media have more voting stations that are easily accessible. Perhaps near major shopping centers in town. Perhaps online voting could be an option. In order to increase participation we must make it easier for the constituents to engage and vote. That will drive an increase in voter participation.

electronic, better information and NOT via Facebook!!!

do a better job convincing people all votes matter regardless of yes or no Give metrics to show the ROI on tax spending,

Start presenting transparent budgets using REAL inputs from town citizens. In particular, the education budget. It reads like a principal's holiday wish list every year and loses credibility shortly after it's presented.

Used to be able to put flyers into CES and JJIS folders. That needs to come back so all of those parents are aware of the dates. Parents get busy

Listen to the voters and make changes to the budgets.

Organize groups of volunteers to get the word out, provide easily sharable information about increases, which relate to the physical, tangible improvements we'll see around us if we vote YES

Make it easier to understand what is being voted on and the difference between choices

More notification, both type and frequency.

**What is the best way for you to receive town information?(check all that apply)**

**Other (please specify)**

Mailings and digital backpack from the schools

I also go to meetings, but the politicians need to stop telling the crowd what they want to hear and tell them the economic reality we are facing.

Friends

Flyers in towm businesses

second time took this survey on same IP address

I like the Facebook group Keeping it all in Colchester. They have a variety of people who post information from both sides and all the political parties, including the Colchester Independent Party are represented. I find the debates helpful in deciding issues.

Mail

Town wide telephone alerts

senior center email

TV

Which newspaper, however?

good old telephone

Phone

Current town website is very difficult to navigate. Information is hard to find and it just isn't user friendly.

mail

I also read the Resident

Rivereast, Norwich bulletin, New London Day

SOCIAL MEDIA!! MAKE IT EASY FOR EVERYONE THAT IS GLUED TO THEIR PHONES!

Flyers mailed to each address listed in Colchester- both business & residential

Meeting opportunities.

Add events to FB for the budget planning meetings and referendum

I don't want any information.

Colchester Citizens Watch Jim McNair provides balanced, truthful information on the budget.

Rivereast News bulletin - rather than publishing the routine church and local lettlers put the bulletin to better use.

Public billboards on the green, for all to see as they drive through and around town.

Town forums with leadership for open discussion

Town website is a joke to post to. Nobody uses it.

Auto calling

automated phone messages

Phone calls

I am always disappointed by the lack of information available sometimes on official social media channels for the town. There is far more on Facebook groups that do not necessarily accurately represent facts.

Mailing

Digital backpack, Facebook

Yes

text messaing

free local newspaper

town letter

More signs in town with dates. Text messages

posting in town hall would work also

First Selectman's weekly Facebook posts are a joke; an insult to our intelligence. If he doesn't know how to use social media by now.... delegate the weekly posts to another department. Why repost the same information week after week? More utter incompetence in local government.

Regular mail

Texts

Either

James McNair Deanna Bouchard Andres Bizbiskos Robert Tarlov Colchester Independent Party provides good information for voters.

DON'T spend money on any advertising.

rivercast

Caution should be used with social media because sometimes the facts can be distorted. Those who have gripes tend to be the ones with a lot of "social media skills". Too many threads can cause a very large knot.

Phone banking.

Would like more coverage in The Courant other than the weekly local insert.

Face to face meetings.

paper is best for me, but do see many posts on facebook

Apparently, some new law prevents you from using the town services to provide IMPORTANT information too close to a vote. I strongly suggest you find an independent party to display information. Failure to do this will result in an AUTOMATIC NO vote for lack of available information. On the day of the vote, I MUST be able to find all necessary information. No exceptions. Figure out a solution!

voice message - like the one used to inform residents this week about the storm

Town website is looked at but most of the info is skewed to make them look better.

Selectman needs to improve his website.

The newspaper is weekly, which makes timely information impossible.

timely release of correct/accurate information to lessen the rumors that develop

Instagram with photos of town and messages about updates/info.

Mail to house

telephone call

The town website is not current with meeting minutes etc. The tapes are so long, I'm not going to listen to the whole thing. More detailed minutes would be nice. They are so basic they aren't worth having. Maybe have different topics in a table of contents for the tapes? If I want to know about a specific topic I shouldn't have to listen to the entire meeting.

Town website it too hard to navigate and find information. Should be completely redone to bring it more in line with other towns.

social media and private sector websites.

No mailers!

**Do you have any budget related comments or questions not covered in your responses above?**

**Open-Ended Response**

taxes are way too high

Don't spend more than you take in simple business plan

You guys have got to start working with current budgets and living and working within your means. You're taxing people out of this town. I feel really bad for people on fixed incomes, while all your incomes keep increasing and you keep taxing all of us, there are many of us who don't get income increases. Try walking through town and talking to the people that live in your community and sincerely listen to the concerns.

The seniors in this town have helped pay for four or five schools. Think it's about time the town revamps the whole school system. They have too many administrators.

Schools can function with less administrators. The two elementary schools should go down to 1.5 principals.

We should have voted out Shilosky and Coyle, they just are not honest in my opinion.

What town services are provided? We don't even have garbage removal...

I realize I am probably not the norm in that I'm willing to pay higher taxes for the good of the town. I imagine many don't feel the same.

none, lets start controlling our spending

Stop raising taxes. Lebanon Ave needs a make over. Wish there were more parks in town. Parking is non existent anywhere. Make businesses want to come here as we are supporting other towns. More

Yes, stop creating leading surveys they only will return the results you lead toward creating a fake narrative to support your goals

I don't care to drive through town and see 1 public works employee working and 5 other employees watching. Also don't care to have them hanging out in club house by rec field doing nothing all winter or waiting for it to snow.

May be instead of building more apartment complexes we should concentrate on creating a better tax environment to draw businesses in to town. Jacks Chevrolet has been vacant for many years. Why have no businesses come to this site?

Again - find way to give tax relief to seniors

We cannot afford to cut our education, it's why many choose Colchester

second time took this survey on same IP address

How many people take this survey work for the Town. This can produce slanted answers to push a tax increase.

We have to stop cutting education budget, people are getting ready to leave the district bc it's getting so bad

The number of times we see the plow trucks go by our house is excessive and unnecessary. We'd like to see an decrease in spending with snow removal.

It defies logic to believe that this town will ever have a strong tax base (commercial and residential) when you continue to defund our schools. Why would anyone with small children come to a town that does not support its future. Without young families, business will not follow. We plan to send our children to school outside of Colchester if you continue to cut the education budget.

We should be funding our schools at the same level as Glastonbury. We need to improve. Good schools will make people want to move here.

There are ways to reduce spending. There are alternatives to the tax equation. We have to stop doing business as usual. And start a discussion. Compromise.

You need to find ways to cut. State of CT cannot be relied on for funding

Stop relying on State funding. If you can't afford it ,you can't have it!

Combine our town expenses with other towns. Consider merging with another town.

Cut spending. Student population is decreasing. The school will no way suffer from a "bare bones" budget. If you actually knew what went on, you might have some credibility.

Stop wasting money

Town department meetings: There are a few people that attend the meetings that are disruptive, that talk over others, that distort information, that throw incorrect numbers around repeatedly, are aggressive, and yell when making comments. When they act in that manner, the chairperson of the meeting needs to step in. They need to be reprimanded and told that we do not yell at public meetings, we do not intimidate at public meetings, and we do not state opinions as facts at public meetings. If they continue to disrupt meetings in this way, they need to either not be allowed to attend, or attend with a police chaperone. As soon as voices are raised, the chairperson needs to step in.

Desperately need a new senior center

Taxes are getting very high for the amount of population in this town. Stop building new schools.

The school population is going down.

We don't like seeing unnecessary sanding or plowing through neighborhoods during OT and not accomplishing anything.

What happened to 24hr 7 day a week police coverage.

I think too often the cuts made have huge impacts to our town, our students and their education. Too often cuts are made to teachers and programs first. Teachers, students, parents and stakeholders should have a voice in these cuts to education. It seems like some things could be consolidated across schools or some positions could be 10 month positions as our school population decreases. Do we truly need all secretaries, administrators to be year-round positions or could some be 10th month positions? We need to think of cuts that don't impact our students so directly.

There should be some sort of tax abatement program for low-income/fixed income residents. If the State program is not functional, then a local program should be created. This could help alleviate some of the angst around the budget and pitting one group's interests against another's.

More publication about BOF meetings so that citizens can attend if they want to.

We cannot afford more "affordable" housing or more "cheap" shops.

Taxes cannot keep being increased on residential property to cover short-falls in revenue. It's time to think "out of the box" for new ways to increase revenue. I think it is time to start attracting new businesses to the rural areas of the town to increase the tax base. I don't like changing the small town atmosphere, but, we must adjust to the times. What have other towns done to adjust?

The old and the young are the ones that need the most attention as they are the neediest and our future.

No, please do not increase taxes.

cut back on school buses. Most buses have very few students on them. You cannot fill them, do away with the service.

Getting more people motivated to participate is key. When segments of the population do not see how the results impact them they are not likely to make the effort to get out and vote. I see increasing participation in the process as key to keeping Colchester Schools strong and our community moving forward.

I'm concerned that the proposed budget looks like we're paying for Norwich students to come to Colchester schools. Where can I find more information on why this is a proposed change?

As a retired educator I realize the importance of education. However I think the dwindling number of students needs to be taken into account

We need a pool. this could be a great draw for our community as there are none. We need to make businesses want to come here. There was supposed to be a rec place build, that did not happen. I do not want a Walmart or big store but things that will bring money and increase quality of life

I feel items are cut from organizations and the townspeople don't have any say in those items. I find that very frustrating. People only know the number and not the impact of what that number means.

Please allow the public to share their voice at meetings "including moments of applause" when someone speaks and captivates the hearts and thoughts of others in the room. I was utterly disappointed last year when the room was instructed to limit applause. Please be aware that applause is in fact a form of community voice.

Place demands back on state legislature.

Why did we waste so much money on a new school when our town is decreasing and there is less kids in classrooms.

I am willing to spend more on education!!! Also lets bring more businesses into Colchester to reduce the tax burden on individual families.

Budget transparency is needed and should be supported by all Citizens, the board of selectmen and all departments. If you want the citizens to trust you then give them true and accurate data openly.

Your school census has dropped drastically and your budgets keep going up. Stop pretending that it is proper or sustainable

More transparency.

Usual confusion seen every year, since 98 when I moved here..

Spend within the budget!

Both town and school executives are overpaid. Teachers are underpaid. Budget needs to be analyzed top down and all the pork removed.

Well I've been asking questions for almost 9 years and still no answers, so I won't waste my time asking again.

I did not respond to many, we as a town need to start to consider what we want for the town as a whole. Are we willing to lose the small town, peaceful feel for large corporations to come in to off sets costs? Or will we start really looking at the education & town budgets and make appropriate cuts so that families can remain and the town can keep its charm? I do not get an increase in pay yearly, and I know many families do not. We can not keep raising taxes, and having all these foreclosed homes everywhere.

This town needs more industry to help offset tax increases. We love the small town atmosphere, but realistically the town can not continue expecting everything to be paid for by just increases our taxes.

Please explain cost per pupil for special education versus cost per pupil for general population students and how many of each type of student. I understand enrollment is going down but what is the number for special education? I want to visually see the numbers.

Our Town budget is currently \$516,983 short.Maggie indicates that projected Revenue increases this year will make up for the majority of the shortage. If Maggie's projections are not correct that means the shortage must come from the fund balance or a supplemental tax bill. The town also needs to have a proposed budget in place if we need to absorb \$2000000 in teachers pensions every year.

With fewer children, why does your education budget keep going up?

We appreciate all you do to support our community, but want to be sure we respect that most townspeople cannot afford another tax hike. We're stretched too thin and are already paying for all school-age activities that used to be covered with taxes. Double-whammy for school-aged families :-{

Cut 2 or 3 positions at Town Hall.

The runaway tax assessors in the town, they are out of control.

I have my own well and septic and pay for trash removal. I don't have children in school. Aside from police and fire, where are my taxes helping me?

Reorg....sometimes you need a retreat and revise allocation...vote on that

Colchester needs another grocery store. I shop outside of town and so do many of my neighbors because costs in town are too expensive.

The budget process should consider the seniors in town, no so much as providing senior services but in the form of tax discounts for seniors so they can stay in their homes and retire comfortably

I wish the Board of Finance the best of luck this year, because it's not going to be easy (they never are). I do have total faith that we can come to a happy medium and put a reasonable budget in place again this year.

No. I just need more information. Details I guess.

How is it that this town always seems to "find" extra money, when they cry to the taxpayers before a budget vote that the budget is bare bones - what a joke?



No one wants to pay more money. But the reality is everything is more expensive than it was before. People do have choices. There is a minimum amount of cost that can not be avoided. When gas goes up, people have to pay the increase. When the cost is transferred to how we run the town, someone has to pay. At the end of the day, you can't write checks if you do not have the money in the bank.

Cutting school budgets is always a target as it is the largest part of the budget. I am often disappointed that the pain out on reducing school budget does not seem to be mirrored in decreasing the town budget. All pain should be felt equally.

Board of finance should streamline the workshop and meeting structure. Far too many meetings and parents etc are not able to attend multiple meetings over multiple months that are considered critical.

Why do we a whole bunch of selectmen? Let's just have 1 town manager run the town?

why can't retire's on fixed income stop paying the education portion of the budget. Our kids are out of the school system. This would really help senior home owners make ends meet.

Reduce administrative and overhead costs where possible.

No - thank you for surveying residents and good luck with the budget process.

Please do not decrease library budget.

Colchester needs to be more proactive with attracting new business to help offset our tax base.

Please do not cut education

Need to cut the school budget. When 80% of the budget goes to the school system that is way too much spending. YOU don't need to build more schools when the enrollment is going down.

Education is a priority. The taxpayers want an excellent school system. Do not make cuts. This is our future.

Please regionalize more services! A town of our size should not be trying to operate alone. Please also protect the strength of our school system.

Need to have a meaningful way to fund in advance for open space and farmland preservation as conservation opportunities arise in the future as is done in many surrounding CT towns by referendum approving the funding of these acquisitions by issuance of municipal bonds. Process now in Colchester far too cumbersome to react to appropriate opportunities quickly.

NOT happy after numerous discussions (I took the time to be there on many occasions, or listened to the tapes afterwards) that despite promises otherwise there was no triboard meeting to discuss how to absorb State Revenue cuts. I am very disappointed in many town officials that I previously held in high regard over their comments and behavior that followed the state cuts. Lack of transparency, backroom deals, lack of alignment with the BoF. I will remember. Certain folks on the BoS and BoE have lost all credibility with me.

In the economic climate, Colchester (and other towns as well) can no longer afford to remain their own islands unto themselves. It is time to take a serious look at expanded regionalization of services between towns. I think Colchester could and should lead the way in implementing those discussions, and individuals should put aside political and power aspirations to do what is best for the town and the region as a whole. The current model of running and funding the town is not sustainable any longer.

Town needs public pool!

With student enrollment diminishing why is the school budget on a constant upward spiral? Why the need for the significant number of school administrators? Unions in the town functions should be outlawed!

Schools need bigger budgets, new building is desperately needed, we cannot lose funding and have to cut corners to finish

I recommend salary caps for school and town positions. There needs to be a limit to what an individual can earn and we need to stick to those limits. It happens in the private sector and should also in the public sector.

Invest in the youth -- education, recreation, youth center, etc. -- first. Analyze needs in other departments from zero-based budgeting. Can anything be outsourced or shared with another municipality?

Please put forward a reasonable budget on the first try, and not include "fluff" items that you know won't get passed.

The process continues to be divisive. Any way that can mitigate that would be welcome. We are a community first and foremost. That typically seems to get lost during the budget season.

I understand that running our town is costly, and that everything gets more expensive over time. We can't continue to have every small town provide every type of service. We need to consolidate and collaborate with our neighbors.

sad to hear that a grant was not used and explored now defunct

Spend more money on cycling related opportunities and infrastructure

People around the town feel that many too many town employees get away with just the minimum work because of the "system". As town employees, we should be able to see a problem, grab a badge number and post a complaint. This complaint should directly change if the person is employed with the town in the future.

For 20 years I had operated a not for profit business in town, never easy at budget time. If taxes are too high you lose people always an advocate on easy spending. Children need a good education and I always felt colleges looked at Colchester as a average school.

Post mortems on if the expansion projects for the school and fleet maintenance were necessary for the town. A public review of population statistics and future projections (that are realistic based on corporation shifts) would be very interesting.

Class sizes at Bacon are WAY TOO BIG and it is affecting quality of education

with increases in taxes all the time it makes it tough for a young growing family to have a decent living. it could force us to move out of the town at some point to somewhere where it is cheaper to live.

Too much is spent on the wrong things at the library. More usable materials need to be purchased, not more services for children.

We need to keep investing in education to stay competitive

Again just no more increase in tax on families. Maybe add water taxes/usage on some homes that never was added, I do not know how that works, but I know some towns or so people have it tax free/usage. This would certainly help spending or can help reduce the tax for everyone then.

Hopefully town and state residents will make their true feelings known at the ballot box next November

What can we expect for 2018 and on in relation to property taxes and assessments.

put budget funds into a service that can pay for itself over time and NOT into depts that just ask for more and more w/o concessions - ie - BOE

The town needs to work with the state to reduce mandates that are creating the increased spending. The mandates must be reduced when the state reduces payments to fund them.

Taxes are too high as is. I don't feel like we have the quality of public services to justify the mill rate. Taxes are being spent to benefit few people while costing everyone a large amount of money

Be truthful in providing budget information. Stop tipping the scales to pass the budget.

Oh I think I've answered them all

You must be wasting money somewhere. Are public employees really worth their wage?

Why is it so hard for new businesses to be attracted to Colchester? Example is that Big Y wanted to be in Colchester and it move to Marlborough!!

Is there a way to see what initiatives/efforts have been made to bring in businesses as a way to lower/stop rises in taxes.

Again. All these social issues are causing our kids confusion. the more you try to influence our kids in those areas, sex education, the more depress and confused they are getting !

We moved here from the midwest where taxes are 1/3 what they are here and have triple the services, we are stymied as to where our tax dollars go?

Solicit donations to help with the "57" celebration or cancel it

No additional taxes. Individuals have to live on a budget. Please evaluate spending practices. .

Cuts in education through staff reductions due to declining enrollment. Some positions are just not necessary.

I am generally disappointed in the Town and decisions that have been made with spending over the last 19 years we have been residents. Not once has the mill rate seen a reduction when numerous towns in the State have done so. With the continuing reduction in the population, hard choices must be made to ensure the budget is reasonable. Why haven't there been any decreases in the overall Town budget and education budget even one year? Overall spending must be reduced as it is unreasonable for the budgets not to ever see a reduction.

I would like to see a change to the way the budgets are discussed at meetings. It is so hard to follow the discussions at the table with so many numbers being used. It would be helpful if someone could write the board members comments and even meeting participant comments on big pieces of post it paper for the people who are attending the meeting to keep track of what was said and proposed. I sit through so many meetings where comments (both board and citizen) are later misstated. This then creates a situation where the comments have to be clarified again. This creates an atmosphere that is not productive and often negative. I often feel these discussions keep going in circles. Also, I don't know how the Town or the BOE approaches making a new budget. I would like to see at least a high-level process overview. Logically I would like to know do they start with what are the fixed expenses and how much over or under the current budget are these fixed expenses.

A senior center should be looked at.

Why couldn't the budget vote take place after the town knew how much it would receive from the state ?

A senior center is needed.

Why is the town providing police coverage for traffic duty at utility work sites on state highways and neighboring towns like East Hampton, Is this overtime? Is the town being reimbursed for the manpower and vehicle use by the electric co.

Focus on balance. Raise taxes, but cut the fat in budgets where you can too. An investment in growing industry in town is critical. Let's get some commercial development in the Route 2 / Route 11 corridor so we can supplement taxes with businesses and not just property owners.

This town needs a recreational facility with indoor pool and indoor fields.

I hope you will consider North Woods for some kind of assistance in our taxes... especially since we do not rely on the town for any road services or children's education. Thank you.

Effective communication is essential to squash the misinformation that is projected by anti-budget groups in town

I have a friend who is a British citizen. He and his wife pay healthy taxes as Colchester residents. Why can't he vote on budget issues while someone paying little or no taxes, but is a citizen may? Isn't that why we rebelled against England? Taxation without representation.

**BE WARNED: ANY reduction of the Education services will prompt an AUTOMATIC NO vote on ANY budget regardless of any other changes. You must realize that a NO vote does NOT mean I disapprove of the tax rate and want it lower. It means I do not agree with the cuts to education. Consider yourself warned.**

I realize that the intent of our town's government is to provide everything to everybody. But not everybody pays for the everything part. We need to take a hard (and unfortunately, cold) look at the budget to determine how it should be could do to the state's inability to rein in its own spending. Blaming our town's financial woes on the state is merely passing the buck.

Ask for input earlier in the process before any budget decisions are made. Develop meeting protocols and expectations regarding decorum.

Please look into fire department spending. They burn up their money so they don't lose it for the next year. They hire less qualified people to work part time (per diem) than what is required for full time employment. They have officers

Why aren't cuts being made to lower the tax burden? Why aren't other methods utilized. Like cutting staff and services that only a few benefit from???

How about we get someone in Town Hall who knows what he is doing. Shilosky is an idiot.

Spending on the police department is too high. Often, we have more officers on-duty than the town needs and it wastes money. Either reduce the number of on-duty officers in a given day or spread their schedules out better so that there aren't 4 town police cars all parked together at a sandwich shop.

Leave the budget voting dates/times open longer - maybe a few days or ability to vote online.

Ask an additional question about the person answering: Are you or a member of your household employed by the Town of Colchester or the BOE. I often hear the teachers talking amongst themselves to get each other, their spouses and children to take the survey. I think this skews the answers in the direction of increased spending. Then when the vote takes place, the results do not reflect the survey results. It's important to note if you have people who have a "vested interest" answering the survey questions. Any researcher is taught this in any survey methods class.

The upper-level classes such as AP classes at Bacon Academy need to be protected and funded better this is what gives our school system a good reputation and drives people to move into town the school system seems to cater to students that do not perform or have behavioral issues and forgets about the high-performing students

I think there are better ways to use our resources then to continue spending. I rather pay for my kid preschool or recreation then have grandma next door paying for it through her taxes.

Without sounding nasty, CT is an expensive state to live in. Colchester is not unique. When people feel things are getting too expensive for them in Colchester or in CT they have the choice to move to town/state where they can live more comfortably, they shouldn't hold back the town's growth. There's a reason why I don't live in Fairfield County, there's a reason why I will not retire in CT. I know I can't afford it. It's my choice, I cannot complain about it. If you are a member of this community support it. We're all on a "fixed income" unless we're self employed. People want what they can't afford. I hope we are teaching our children about living within their means.

Why does the pay to play money paid by participants in school sports go to the general fund and not to the sports for which it was paid?

Its time to tighten our belts. We have a lot of whiners in this town who feel that education is the only thing we should worry about. It's not! There should also be a team to evaluate waste. I watch town trucks go back and forth all day long and wonder why...where are they going? What type of waste is there. I don't feel our town services are great - when I go for a building permit zoning and wetlands, etc are all in the same office but I have to visit each individually. Why? Can't they talk and pass the paperwork? Waste of my time.

School sports cannot be cut from the budget. You will lose students.

I think partnering with Troop K is key.

Spend some money on the downtown area, it could be a major draw for the town. Stop allowing terrible developments like Nature Ave.

**Do you have any comments that can help us better serve Colchester? Are there any services that Colchester does not provide and you wish it did?**

**Open-Ended Response**

taxes are way too high

More businesses

There are a lot of services that Colchester doesn't offer. It is merely a bedroom community. But nothing one person says or does will ever change that because no one wants to see change. You can't keep spinning your wheels in the Condense departments and schools. Put police on off shifts as needed and reduce day shift force. You don't need four policemen watching them put up a telephone pole.

Public trash pickup

Town needs an all new multi-use indoor recreation center. Town owned, with indoor pool for swimming lessons. This would bring more professional families to town, and probably more businesses to town. I would like to see an increase in urbanization of Colchester (not an attitude of trying to hold on to an old agricultural past, which will not help our town modernize).

More library hours. More indoor activities for kids to do on weekends...an indoor rec plex/community center is needed. A town pool would be a nice addition.

I wish that Colchester had a Town Pool. Towns with similar mill rates have a town pool and most of them are money makers!

Colchester needs to get out of the service business and deal only with governing. Let the private sector handle the services

Our rec fields need serious work and then need better partnerships with our club teams

second time took this survey on same IP address

yes, a pool or lake access.

Need more businesses and activities to do in town.

Increase in education budget. Cutting programs including talented and gifted along with sports, paras, etc is detrimental

I would like to see an improvement to the appearance of Main Street. Regulations on signage for businesses would make a difference.

transportation within the town

We don't need more services. We need to keep the town safe. We need good roads. An education system. The rest can be paid out of pocket. And we need to encourage new businesses, but they must be environmentally responsible. All doable.

No need for a police dept. State police can cover it

The #people in the tax offices gave attitude all the time

Provide tax cuts to businesses in town so they stick around. This place needs some better stores/ restaurants.

Senior facility with exercise equipment and rooms. There is no indoor facility in which to exercise.

Stop trying to be a city and people take care of themselves

Commercial businesses. Not "vape stores" and pawn shops !!!

A community center. Why are we getting a senior center, when a community center could serve the whole town. Senior activities during the day, other activities in the evening. A community center could provide an artistic space that the town is lacking. We could hold cultural events in it.

New senior center

It seems we need much more business development. Is it hard to be in business here? Why do we not have more businesses here? More businesses would help the tax base.

Freeze taxes for the senior people. We are tired paying all the bills and get nothing in return.

More help and information for aging. Help for aging in place.
allow more box stores. People are shopping in other towns as I do.
Thanks for the ability to provide a prospective.
More services creates more taxes.
Build a new senior center. Seniors should be a priority item going forward!
More than one Town clean up day!
A swimming place, more technology in the schools, the playground needs to be fixed at Rex Plex, it is peeling away and rusty. Street lights!! Allowing more stores to come to town. Adding an additional grocery store so we have some competition.
More variety early childhood programs i.e. music, art
Town pool.
Pool!
A town pool.
Swimming Pool
Trash disposal. We used to have that provided. Taxes were raised but we have to pay for private trash removal. Christmas tree pick up. What happened to that? Hard for seniors to deal with tree disposal.
Swimming pool for therapeutic purposes also time scheduled for public at large.
Again, open and honest communication is best.
An in door swimming pool connected with the School system open to the town voters, with senior citizen hours cut our taxes stop spending!!!
Overnight police coverage.
A new senior center building to be started.
Reduce property taxes for seniors.
This seems like a trick question, because anything anyone answers to get more will help the town justify higher taxes. not at this time
I wish we had a recreation center with a swimming pool. A senior center and youth center could both be attached.
Pool
a town swimming pool with adult hours set aside
Better services for seniors
Support local business.
Is the town still looking into providing medics instead of just EMTs on the ambulance? We need the higher level of service.
If there is any option of ever building a community pool I feel that would be very beneficial and money producing.
The town should enforce blight more and stop letting people build so much on their property that it makes other houses in the neighborhood depreciate in value.
bike lanes, more sidewalks
Senior programs that can accommodate seniors who are still working. Many times activities take place during working hours.
The tax receipts are too reliant on home property taxes. The town should allow more investment from business to diversify the tax base. This would help offset a potential tax increase if there is more tax revenue.
I would like to see funding invested into website and other IT related improvements and into the EDC so the town can better compete to lure in new businesses that will offset the tax burden on residents.
Choices. Having one major grocery store in town is leaving us vulnerable to bad store. that place is expensive and gross! Bring in competition. It's better for all of our bottom lines. Family budgets, taxes and health!

A community center might generate more participation than a senior center. All demographics come together.
Try focusing on what you do without trying to bite off more than you can chew
Trash pickup - but that would probably increase taxes and they feel like a burden already. We have a small house - 1100 sq feet - on a .4 acre lot - and pay more than others with larger houses in other towns with similar services and school systems. Bring in more business! Why does it seem the town makes that so difficult? Encourage redevelopment of the vacant car dealerships. We don't have to lose the small town feel if business is planned right - like Tractor Supply near the highways and not the town center.
Can't wait to retire and move
Transparency and honesty
Basic services. Like keeping roads clear during a storm until after its over, 24 he police coverage instead of one or two shifts, dump hours restored.
After school child care. Community Pool.
We should work harder to bring in new businesses. The old tired "small rural community" nonsense is just that. Why should Amazon be the one that fills the void?
We need to bring more business into town to off-set the cost to taxpayers.
Swimming.
Stop raising my taxes.
Public/private partnerships are essential in this political and budgetary environment. Work more closely with non-profits to ensure that their projects are prioritized needs of he community. So much of their budgets relate to pet causes and historical areas, when the needs of the community changes constantly.
Is there any hope of redeveloping the disgusting, rotting car dealership in the historic district? Even an empty lot would be better than that eyesore. It would be a great place for a municipal pool with some event space.
Public transportation to more cities (New Haven, Groton, etc..)
Leaves/tree pick up. More variety in food.
Trash removal.
Stop watching other towns grow! Do what it takes to bring REAL business to the town. Colchester has had opportunities to do that many times and has failed. If you have to drive 20 miles to get basic necessities without paying exhorbitant prices then something is inherently wrong. A corollary to that; once my last child is out of High School we see NO benefit to staying in Colchester. Sad...
Town hall needs to be more responsive to citizens needs. Art Shilosky should not bad mouth people he doesn't agree with, he is a poor leader for Colchester.
More industry keeping with small town image. On the outskirts way out of town a big box store
tax relief for retires/seniors.
Please remember to spread the deficit throughout the town and not just focus on one area. A slight increase in the mill rate and limited cuts to the town departments will hopefully be the answer.
An actual store that would allow me to shop in Colchester - Target, Walmart. Anything at all !!
24/7 police coverage is the only thing I can think of at the moment. I think the recent crime increase is related to the lack of police presence and our rural setting.
Stop bending over backward to placate 4 or 5 people. Best of my knowledge, McNair, Kelly, Schuster, Bouchard get one vote each, same as everyone else in town
See all my previous comments.
take the no right turn on red sign out when going from rt16 to main street. Traffic is sometimes backed up to Stop and Shop
I wish Colchester were more business friendly. The Town should help citizens find reasonable solutions to problems rather than making almost every undertaking next to impossible to deal with.
Nothing is perfect but Colchester does a better job than most other towns.

as stated earlier: YMCA could bring in additional \$\$\$ to our town and would be an incredible facility for seniors as well as the community

A public swimming pool.

More hours for police coverage.

The Family and Consumer Sciences program in the Middle School never should have been cut (1 Full time & 1 part time teacher) and replaced by a teacher with an Innovations course. Nutrition, cooking skills, sewing and relationships & family are key to healthy independent living. The life skills developed in those courses are useful to every student in Colchester. Some students develop leadership skills with in these authentic learning experiences and others flourish in ways they aren't able to in traditional academic courses. Quite often learning and innovation happen together in an FCS classroom as well as many other classrooms. Innovation is a fantastic notion, but when it should be occurring in many facets of a child's education, it should not replace unique & important life skills that are key to a healthy & successful life.

Thank you for taking the time to ask for input.

Thanks for doing an awesome job!

Fix the traffic lights and no turn on reds in the center of town. Put it back to the way it was. Punishing all residents in town over a few Neanderthals who couldn't be responsible for crossing the street on their own is a disservice to the majority. Stop trying to legislate responsibility and hold people accountable for their actions.

Enough with the Chinese Restaurants. Attract bigger business.

Why is the town in the entertainment business? Limit services for that which is required to enhance quality of life. Coddling and entertainment in this budgetary environment is criminal!

An independent police department

Bike lanes through center of town. Indicate clear right of way.. Could simply be paint.

No more tax increases!! Reduce spending, especially unnecessary education spending. Fix roads and expand public utilities (water & sewer).

Swimming. Subsidize Colchester seniors and disabled swimming costs, partially, at newly refurbished Hemlocks pool

Better animal control services. Trash and recycling pickup. Better plowing and salting of side roads.

Can you please look into making the town green a rotary to prevent the traffic back ups at all the different intersections surrounding it?

Colchester is a great town in which to raise a family safely and happily. It should work to create a retail corridor off Route 2 to increase the tax base while not increasing traffic in town (much like Lisbon Landing does).

The leadership of Colchester needs to continue to pursue new thinking, new ways of collaborating within our own town and with our neighboring communities. There have been strides in this area but we need to continue. How can we provide services for less cost? How can we increase our revenue in ways other than simply raising taxes?

We need a stronger business community and a more vibrant, walkable, attractive downtown. We also need housing options that offer more density and affordability so young people will want to move here and empty nesters who want to trade down to smaller quarters don't have to leave.

Homeless shelter

use of airline trail to help build a better money maker for the town and business

Recreation activities (flag football) for adults

Fix the downtown so people will want to go there and spend money, more restaurants and cultural events and opportunities, foster a pedestrian and cycling friendly atmosphere.

I feel in general Colchester does a good job at community outreach. The school system's management however is terrible. Having experienced many schools management, I've never seen a organization as closed off as the Colchester BOE. More focus needs to go into working the public from the superintendent down through the principals.

Colchester is a great town and it is very difficult to make everyone happy. Colchester needs to listen to its people they are struggling to make ends meet. Families have to work and it cost a lot to live in Connecticut.



get more businesses in town to subsidize the tax issue.

I would just reiterate that I think there is a lot of room for economic development. I would like to see less stores like the pawn shop, vape store and dollar store, and more independent, destination type places. For example, what are we doing with the old Bacon Academy building? Could we get an investor to consider doing something similar to what they did in Middletown with the armory. Or, I visited Portland Oregon and they restore old buildings and turn them into lodging and dining venues...Really cool stuff, and I think Colchester and surrounding areas would embrace it. See the link <https://www.mcmenamins.com/>

A better holiday homecoming - great night to showcase local business, have more activities. Call 57 Fest something else as it is no longer #57 on the list.

A common sentiment - more businesses in town means more revenue generated

Can Colchester find a way to increase income rather than raising taxes or reducing services? Such as enticing investment to promote commercial growth either through retail or industrial facilities without ruining the rural environment? I think the future of Colchester is critical to this growth as we have the same problems of the state and can't keep raising taxes and reducing services as this will have a long-term effect on Colchester and its economics.

Jeanie (I think is her name) in the Town Clerk's Office is a great employee, she is always helpful with the questions we have. If she doesn't have an answer, she tries to find it. She is always friendly as well. Hire more employees like her.

reduce red tape - P&Z commission makes doing business, or improving life - IMPOSSIBLE!!!! They should be disbanded or at minimum - a new slate should be installed

Pay attention to declining enrollment prior to major school renovations.

No reason we need all these vice principals and principal Combine some schools

Police are rude and don't care about concerns. They claim they are too busy to help me out.

More low income housing

Economic development so that families do not have to drive to Waterford or Norwich to afford groceries or buy other items like socks and underwear for kids.

Vote out Art Shilosky and his minions.

Pick up from your property like leaves that other towns have.

Too late for me. I'm out of here.

Stop with the nontax paying apartments. You'll never get as much in taxes and support as you do from single family homes. The other folks are burdens to the school system.

Do not get any public services where we live in Colchester- no water, no sewer, no trash pick up, no street lights, new horrible "paving" job on our street, EMS took over 30 mins to get to our neighbor's house for an emergency...if you are going to raise taxes, we need something. It's ridiculous that the town center has all these services and we pay the same tax rate.

Attracting different businesses to Colchester should be a focus. Different restaurants would certainly be welcomed.

Maintain what we have.

street and road upkeep

Youth and/or Adult Volleyball Programs and Leagues

Annual Sticker for transfer station for residents (one time fee)

I love this town and I thank you for your dedication and hard work!

Waste removal for areas other than city limits and if you don't offer the service to those areas, there should be an allotment per month or week to bring your trash to the Transfer Station. It is unreasonable not to offer something to residents who pay the same taxes as residents within City Limits.

Pool.

At this time, the services offered in this town meet my needs. If they did not, and my needs were critical then I would move.

Projects that raises our citizens up should be addressed; e.g. senior center, youth center

I wish the town website had information of the various non-profit organizations in town and what they provide to enhance the community and opportunities for individuals to participate.

Transportation, similar to the buses that run and connect the towns along the CT River.

If I think of any I will let you know but not at the moment

It's depressing to see how many boards and commissions need people to serve. I'm over that part of my life, but I wish I saw more interest in what is going on.

We desperately need a community based Senior Center with facilities for Seniors and all residents. We have spent enough on schools!!

Colchester has no in town recreation sports program to speak of. If it doesn't involve a travel sport it doesn't rate any interest of any kind in this town. Look at Tolland's and Coventry's town rec sports program..need I say anymore

Invest in public safety. I know there are huge expenses coming up in the next few years that should be budgeted for now, not bonded for then. Things like SCBA, a new ladder truck, new engine. All necessary and big expenses, so let's

A pool!

Make the town more attractive to development

Reduce taxes

Swimming pool

Get that closed auto dealership building either rented or sold with a good retail/ restaurant business. Thank you.

A public sledding hill and ice skating pond.

Some members on the Board of Finance seem to have forgotten that they were elected to represent the people of Colchester. Some seem more interested in being vindictive or furthering their own agenda then serving the town. Our

Would like a few more restaurant choices that aren't pizza related.

town hall needs to reach out to in town businesses - been here with two companies for 6 years - no one has yet to contact me even to say welcome

LOL. the basic "services" that are provided aren't provided as they should be. focus on the simple things. Stop trying to be every body's mom and dad. let people take care of themselves.

Start being honest with the taxpayers and stop blowing smoke up our \*\*\*\*\* just to get the budget passed!

Keep the good old boys from blocking progress such as increased shopping to increase our tax base.

could you hire retired Military to do traffic patrol. It is expensive to have your police use their time (not doing police work/spending their overtime hours) sitting behind construction workers.

if services are not currently provided and people want them they should move to a town that does provide them, taxes should not go up EVERY year

More economic development. Bring in a few big box stores or other small-to-medium sized businesses to increase funding and spend in the town.

Time to reduce spending and live within our means! why isn't the Public aware of union negotiations and the constant wage increase in public jobs; which have far out paced the private sector. It is killing the taxpayer and driving small businesses away.

Free garbage and recycle pick up!

Of course there is. I think the traffic issue through the center of town keeps people away. I have heard it many times from people in Hebron, Lebanon, Salem etc. They avoid Colchester because it takes too long to get through town. They get one Route 2 and they conduct business elsewhere. The issue of the timing of the lights has never really been addressed and is negatively affecting businesses. There's probably little to no cost involved in getting the state to correct that issue. Residents have been complaining for years & nothing has been done.

pool

I really wish you would give all seniors without children in the schools a tax break. I know you support needy seniors, but each year, our discretionary income goes down. When living on a fixed income, we eventually will not be able to

Stop approving and building low income housing. It will have a negative effect on housing prices long term and will be a drain on the town budget as people in these income levels will require more of the town services thus necessitating an eventual tax increase. The town should be approving more medium to upper level housing to increase the tax base.

Colchester would be wise to invest in municipal broadband internet. With net neutrality eliminated, this is an important topic to the younger generation and will encourage young families and small businesses to grow in Colchester.

The land on Old Amston by the airline trail would be a great opportunity for recreation. Parking, restrooms, a ball field, and maybe less garbage, etc. Just a thought - better than building another useless building.

TRANSPARENCY SOFTWARE.

Enrichment education for higher order thinkers that actually have the potential to put Colchester on the map.