



MAYOR BYRON W. BROWN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MAYOR BYRON W. BROWN ANNOUNCES IMPORTANT UPDATES TO BUFFALO'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Buffalo, NY - Mayor Byron W. Brown and the City of Buffalo continue to work to ensure public safety, prioritize the health and welfare of residents and visitors, and reduce circles of exposure to COVID-19 in our community.

Mayor Brown stated, "As this situation continues to evolve, City operations and services, like 311, continue to function remotely whenever possible. There have been no interruptions related to Garbage collection and The Buffalo Police and Fire Departments continue to respond to calls. I also thank my Impact Team and Department of Public Works employees for working around the clock to keep our buildings clean and safe for our first responders. I want to also thank all other essential workers including healthcare workers, gas station attendants, grocery store employees and so many others, who are doing their part to provide services and help us care for each other."

Mayor Brown continued, "Early this morning, lawmakers in Washington finalized their negotiations for a \$2 trillion relief deal. While this legislation will help many of our recently unemployed workers, residents and certain business sectors, it falls short of providing the critical relief state and local governments need to effectively meet the demands which have arisen during the Covid-19 emergency. New York State will only be eligible for a fraction of the funding it will need to cover the projected \$15 billion budget shortfall it will face as a consequence of the public health and economic fall-out from this emergency. The relief bill creates an additional burden on the City of Buffalo because municipalities with a population that is less than 500,000 are not eligible for direct aid in this relief bill. The federal government's lack of direct support for medium sized cities will therefore have a profound impact on the Buffalo's fiscal outlook. It is imperative that immediate, flexible funding in the amounts reflected in the House of Representatives' version of the bill for New York State and Buffalo be made available to meet our budgetary needs at a time when revenue streams in every City Department are falling and demand for government services is rising. I stand with Governor Andrew Cuomo in calling on our federal leaders to address these issues now."

Mayor Brown again called on City residents to complete the Census forms, saying that the size of Buffalo's population does impact its share of federal funding—especially in the wake of emergencies—which we will need during the recovery process. Go to 2020Census.gov to fill out your form.

THE FOLLOWING LIST INDICATES THE LATEST UPDATES, CHANGES AND REMINDERS TO CITY OF BUFFALO GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS THAT AFFECT THE PUBLIC, EFFECTIVE WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2020.

Even in these difficult times, Mayor Brown announced continuing efforts to strengthen Buffalo's commercial corridors after the passing of the Covid-19 outbreak.

- Today, the Erie County Industrial Development Agency approved the Accelerator Fund
- This innovative \$40 million fund further advances the Cars Sharing Main Street initiative, supports the implementation of Smart City technologies, and Buffalo's pending Mobility Innovation Zones
- It also continues the Brown Administration's efforts to position Buffalo as the most Intelligent Smart City in the nation

The Buffalo Police Department secured and added 15 new cars to its fleet. The vehicles will be used as backfill in the Detectives Unit, freeing up marked vehicles to be used in patrol districts.

There are over 300 employees dedicated to delivering clean and safe water for the City of Buffalo and surrounding suburbs.

- We will continue to share our nationally recognized best practices with other municipalities as they also continue to deal with this emergency including Seattle, Houston, San Francisco, and Washington DC
- Reminder to residents: the only thing that should be flushed down the toilet is toilet paper. Flushing down wipes or other items puts a strain on the City's sewer system

A few parks updates:

- Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park is now open, but strictly for passive use. The park was closed after sustaining damage during a storm earlier this month
- Reminder: ALL City parks are open for PASSIVE USE ONLY. Please continue to practice social distancing for safety and to prevent community spread of COVID-19. All playgrounds, golf courses, skate parks and park buildings are closed until further notice

COVID-19 is having an impact on our economy. Today Mayor Brown released the following statement:

“Obviously, the news regarding local companies and organizations having to make the extremely difficult decisions to reduce their workforces and enact other cost-saving measures is devastating to many in our community. However, many major regional employers and drivers of the local economy, may decide to reduce costs now so that they have the ability to resume regular operations once the immediate public health emergency has passed. I am hopeful that the COVID-19 impacted businesses will do their utmost to support their employees during this public health crisis, with the continuation of health benefits and other accommodations that will help to prevent panic or added anxiety.”

The Buffalo Employment Training Center stands ready to help people look for new or temporary jobs. If you or someone you know is looking for work, call 856-JOBS.

- Employment counselors are working remotely so you can make an appointment to set up one on one counseling sessions
- Residents can also contact the NYS Department of Labor for unemployment assistance

BuffAlert is the quickest way to get information about the City's evolving response to this emergency.

- Nearly 65,000 subscribers have signed up since Mayor Brown launched the program during his State of the City address in February
- The City is continuing to issue alerts and other information through its BuffAlert system
- Text “Join BuffAlert” to 30890 to enroll

In closing, Mayor Brown stated, “Buffalo continues to remain strong during this uncertain time. We must continue to lean on each other to get by. Check on your neighbors, show the world that this situation will not ruin our spirit of unity, kindness and community. We are the City of Good Neighbors. We will get through this together.”

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