



MAYOR BYRON W. BROWN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MAYOR BYRON W. BROWN ANNOUNCES IMPORTANT UPDATES

Recovery journey begins: City of Buffalo's Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget takes effect

Buffalo, NY – The City of Buffalo's 2020-2021 fiscal year began today as a key component of Mayor Byron W. Brown's recovery agenda. The budget, a \$519 million spending plan, protects public health during the COVID-19 pandemic, keeps residents employed and supports our youth and community services, while also providing tax relief to homeowners citywide.

Mayor Brown stated, "Before the COVID-19 crisis, the City of Buffalo was experiencing unprecedented economic success. This budget will get our City back on its feet, resume positive economic momentum and retool our community for the future."

To learn more about the 2020-2021 budget, visit www.buffalony.gov.

Mayor Brown announces extension of Alternate Street Parking suspension

Due to demand by residents, Mayor Brown, in conjunction with the Buffalo Common Council, has extended the suspension of the 9 am to 4 pm alternate side of the street parking regulations. The regulations were set to resume today but have been extended until September. All other regulations are in effect at this time.

Reform Agenda Amnesty Programs begin

Three new programs outlined by Mayor Brown to assist low-income City residents are now in effect.

The Parking Amnesty Program waives the late fees of any ticket issued prior to June 30, 2019. The City will send letters to every person who has been issued a ticket that is eligible for the amnesty waiver detailing how they can pay the ticket while observing the physical and social distancing required to protect public health.

The Water Bill Amnesty Program waives any late fees or interest for individuals who have had their service turned off due to delinquent payments. Over the course of the last three months, over 200 residents have had their water services restored and no residents have had their water service shut-off as part of the Mayor's efforts to protect public health during the COVID-19 pandemic response. All of those residents, along with any others, will be eligible for the amnesty program.

The Buffalo Motorist Assistance Program will give residents pleading guilty to low-level moving or equipment violations an opportunity to demonstrate their income status and arrange a fine that may be lower than the former flat fines which were previously applied.

All three programs continue until the end of the year. For more information on these programs, visit www.buffalony.gov.

Metered parking returns

All on-street parking meters that were suspended in mid-March due to the COVID-19 emergency are now back in effect.

Residents are encouraged to download Buffalo Roam, the City of Buffalo's official parking app, which allows motorists to forego coin/credit card payments at the meters, and instead pay from their mobile device. The app is available for download from the Apple App Store and Google Play.

City Hall prepares for Phase Four

With the start of Governor Andrew Cuomo's fourth phase of New York Forward, preparations are currently underway to ensure the safe return of certain public services at Buffalo City Hall. Guidelines for residents to pay bills in person, including sewer, tax, user fee and parking, will be issued this week and will go into effect on Monday, July 6th. Residents are still encouraged to pay bills online or by mail whenever possible. All other services at Buffalo City Hall will remain as appointment-only until further notice.

Be safe this Independence Day Weekend

While the 4th of July holiday weekend is traditionally a time to gather with family and friends, Mayor Brown continues to stress caution.

Mayor Brown stated, "I cannot emphasize enough the importance of continuing to cover your faces, practice safe physical distancing and to refrain from large gatherings over this holiday weekend. We have the power to keep this outbreak at a level where our health systems can manage it. We cannot let our guard down."

Mayor Brown also reminds residents that most fireworks can be dangerous, and are illegal within the City limits.

The Buffalo Zoo reopens Thursday

After closing in March due to the global coronavirus pandemic, the Buffalo Zoo will reopen to 'members only' on Thursday, July 2nd, with enhanced health and safety measures in place. The general public will be admitted starting Friday, July 3rd.

The Zoo is taking several precautions to protect visitors, employees and the animals, including:

- The Zoo will be closed on Tuesdays for deep cleaning and disinfection;
- Temperature checks using no-touch forehead thermometers will be required for all guests and employees;
- Required masks/face coverings for all guests age two and above;
- A dedicated cleaning and disinfection team;
- Reduced daily guest capacity to assist with social distancing;
- Required advance online ticket purchase at BuffaloZoo.org, timed entry and touchless, cashless transactions;
- Modifications to some guest pathways and closures of some exhibit features.

For details and information, visit buffalozoo.org.

Keep cool: Three splash pads open in City of Buffalo parks

Mayor Brown is reminding families that the splash pads are open at MLK, Jr. Park, Roosevelt Park and the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park. The splash pads will be open 7 days a week, from 11am to 7 pm, through Labor Day. Attendants will be on hand to ensure safe physical distancing, and fewer spray towers will be operating to create more space between visitors.

The City's outdoor pools will remain closed this summer due to the difficulties of ensuring safe social distancing.

City playgrounds to reopen on July 10th

The more than 60 playgrounds and fitness stations located throughout the City of Buffalo will reopen on Friday, July 10. City playgrounds are cleaned weekly, however, play equipment is not sterilized. If parents or their children feel sick, they are asked to stay home. Playground users are also asked to wash their hands frequently, including before and after using play equipment. Signage will be posted at all playgrounds and fitness stations with health safety reminders.

The City is accepting applications for picnic shelters. Applicants are restricted to rental of a single shelter for groups of 25 people or less. Park bathroom facilities will remain closed until further notice, with portable toilets now available. Park shelter applications are available on at: www.buffalony.gov/364/Park-Rental-Events-Permit.

All basketball courts and outdoor hockey courts will remain closed until further notice. City tennis courts are open at 50 percent capacity on a first-come, first-served basis.

The Delaware Park, South Park and Cazenovia Park golf courses are open. Tee times can be reserved through the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy at: www.bfloparks.org/golf.

All City parks remain open for passive use from sunrise to sunset, with visitors asked to follow social distancing practices. All park activities are prohibited after dark.

Enjoy the great outdoors safely in the City of Buffalo this Independence Day Weekend

Mayor Brown encourages residents to get outside and safely enjoy the City's many great parks this Independence Day Weekend. The City of Buffalo's "Walking Parks and Trails" is the ultimate guide, providing maps of 25 different walking, jogging and cycling paths residents can utilize for exercise and recreation. The guide was produced in partnership with the Olmsted Parks Conservancy and the Tift Nature Preserve to give people more options for passive outdoor activities as they continue to maintain safe physical distancing while they engage in their exercise routines. The free guide is available at: www.buffalony.gov.

Mayor Brown continues to call on community to boost Census participation

Mayor Brown continues to encourage residents to complete their 2020 Census questionnaires. The City's Census response rate as of Wednesday, July 1st, is 49.3%. Mayor Brown set a goal of 100% participation. An accurate count gives the City the chance to access hundreds of millions of dollars in federal aid that fund infrastructure improvements, education, critical community programming and much more. Complete your questionnaire at 2020Census.gov.

Tune in Sunday to "Talk of the Town with Mayor Byron Brown"

Mayor Brown continues to expand efforts to keep residents informed on important updates in our community. Tune in to his new radio show, "Talk of the Town with Mayor Byron Brown," Sunday, July 5th, at 1pm on the legendary WUFO Mix 1080 AM/Power 96.5 for the latest on what is happening in the City of Buffalo.

City of Buffalo continues to support businesses in reopening

The City of Buffalo continues to offer assistance to eligible restaurants interested in offering outdoor dining services. Per New York State regulations, outdoor tables must be spaced six feet apart, all staff must wear face coverings and customers must also wear face coverings when not seated. Restaurants can submit open public space use plans at buffalony.gov/reopenbuffalo.

The Buffalo Employment and Training Center continues to connect residents to jobs

Residents looking for work can get assistance through the Buffalo Employment and Training Center by calling 856-JOBS. Employment counselors are available for remote counseling sessions. 145 residents have been placed in positions since the beginning of the COVID-19 emergency.

Help restore the local blood supply, donate today

Looking for a way to give back to your community? ConnectLife is welcoming more donors to give blood. Donating is safe and physical distancing precautions are in place to protect donors. To make an appointment or to host a blood drive, visit connectlifegiveblood.org.

COVID-19 testing available

Find the closest COVID-19 test site near you by visiting covid19.buffalony.gov. The map contains a complete listing of all COVID-19 testing sites, with addresses, which are located throughout the City, contact information for setting up an appointment, hours of operation and whether the site requires a prescription by a doctor for testing.

Reminder: Bulk trash pickup resumes in July

The 2020 City of Buffalo Bulk Trash Collection and Tire Drop Off will return in July. Due to the COVID-19 emergency, the City postponed the spring collection.

The updated Bulk Trash schedule is as follows:

Ellicott- July 12
Fillmore- July 19
Niagara- July 26
Masten- August 9
Lovejoy- August 16
South- August 23
Delaware- August 30
North- September 13
University- September 20

Additionally, City residents can dispose of up to 4 old car tires per event, at no cost, at the Buffalo Broadway Garage, located at 197 Broadway, between 7:30 am and 3 pm on July 25th and September 12th. For more information, contact the City's Call and Resolution Center at 311.

Apply today for virtual summer camps

City of Buffalo parents are encouraged to enroll their children in free virtual summer camps, hosted in partnership with Buffalo Public Schools, the Police Athletic League of Buffalo, Inc. and Say Yes Buffalo. The summer camps, held exclusively online to protect families during the COVID-19 pandemic, will have academic support and enrichment activities, including physical play and exercises, visual and performing arts and virtual educational field trips. The camps run Monday through Friday from 9:30 am to 1 pm and be held from July 20th through August 14th. The deadline to register is Friday, July 24th.

The free virtual summer camps are for students in grades Pre-K through 6th. Students must be at least 5 years old by July 6th. All participants must be a Buffalo School student, attending either a district or charter school.

To apply, visit www.sayyesbuffalo.org/summer2020 or call 247-5310 extension 218 to request a paper applications to be mailed to:

Say Yes Buffalo
712 Main St.
Buffalo, NY
14202

Improving literacy: Mayor Brown's Virtual Reading Rules! Summer Reading Challenge

Mayor Brown urges all Buffalo school students to take part in his Virtual Reading Rules! Kid's Summer Reading Challenge. His 19th Challenge and Awards Ceremony for Champion Readers will take place completely online this year. Every student who reads 10 books plus writes 10 book summaries, now through August 14, 2020, will be eligible to win even more amazing Raffle Prizes in July & August plus bonus prizes at Mayor Brown's Virtual Graduation & Awards Ceremony on Saturday, August 29, 2020.

Mayor Brown established this significant educational program 19 years ago when he received alarming statistics about local students who were testing below the New York State average in English Language Arts and Literacy. Since then, over 20,000 children from the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Region have improved their literacy proficiency skills by participating in Reading Rules! To learn more about the challenge, visit buffalony.gov.

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