



## A MESSAGE FROM MAYOR BYRON W. BROWN



My Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Adopted Budget builds on the foundation of fiscal stability, continuing economic recovery and innovation, and provides a blueprint for “Post-Pause” Prosperity across the City of Buffalo.

I am very proud that my Administration’s steady, smart, and meticulously planned approach for weathering the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the City of Buffalo Budget last year was successful. We realized at the outset of the crisis that the physical distancing meant to slow the spread of the virus would adversely impact our budget, however, my Administration also recognized that the worst thing to do during an economic or unemployment crisis was to lay people off or increase taxes. That is why the City borrowed money at record low

interest rates to ensure our workforce remained intact and that critical frontline and emergency services that keep our community safe and our City running were maintained. I am happy to report that because of this approach, not one City employee was laid off as a result of the pandemic, our budget is balanced, and we are exceeding revenue expectations in many areas.

By correctly anticipating the arrival of federal disaster relief funding my Administration was able to balance the budget without enacting austerity measures that would have harmed residents and businesses or relying on the use of the Emergency Stabilization Fund. That influx of resources to the City of Buffalo throughout the pandemic allowed the City to accelerate efforts designed to combat the persistent problems facing our most vulnerable residents. We have utilized the targeted funding for pandemic relief to prevent evictions and foreclosures, rapidly rehouse residents who were housing insecure, and provide resources which homeowners and small landlords can use to improve the quality of their homes. We also provided millions in micro-enterprise assistance and enhanced digital inclusion programs in underserved neighborhoods. Buffalo is now poised to significantly benefit from President Biden’s American Rescue Plan which will give an added boost to our local economy and firmly set Buffalo on our way to a full economic recovery.

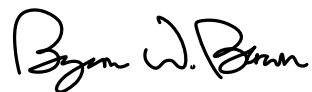
To continue to propel the City of Buffalo forward, this Adopted Budget makes critical investments in our neighborhoods and facilities, expands job opportunities, restores recreational services for our young people and seniors, reduces police spending while providing the resources for increased training, and reduces property taxes for homeowners across the City of Buffalo. Moderate fee increases in certain areas associated with the implementation of the pro-active rental inspection and other permits are included

in this budget, as these fee increases will directly fund resident services and programs, including: the revolving loan fund and lead education and mitigation programs. The City of Buffalo will also be able to completely repay last year's short-term borrowing before the end of the current fiscal year, while closing the projected gap which resulted from lost revenues due to the COVID-19 pandemic and positions us to resume normal revenue generation and expenditures over the next two years.

In order to be complete, "recovery" must also include a deliberate effort to finally address the economic disparities which have resulted from the persistent gaps that existed along racial lines in Buffalo for far too long. Separate from this Adopted Budget, the spending plan that I will propose in conjunction with the release of the funding from the American Rescue Plan will enable us to accelerate our community investments, enhance our People's Infrastructure Agenda to have a real and immediate impact on the lives of residents in neighborhoods across Buffalo, and will make up for the time lost on other projects due to restrictions that were enforced to keep people safe during the pandemic. By heeding the advice of economic experts and weathering the storm without an overreaction that could have threatened our ability to recover, the City is quickly approaching a time when our fiscal position will be the best it has ever been in modern times. That stability will enable this Administration to tremendously help businesses and households across the City of Good Neighbors.

The toll that the past year has taken on us cannot be fully measured yet, but what we can measure are the sacrifices that were made to overcome the crisis, the adaptations we made to reset our goals and the effectiveness of the tools we used to accelerate our forward momentum. We built a system which transitioned City services to electronic and virtual platforms wherever possible to keep the City of Buffalo fully operational and responsive. We developed and executed plans, with immense support from our municipal labor unions, to keep both our frontline workers and our residents safe. We scaled up our services and doubled down on our critical investments. We advanced our commitment in the quest for equity, opportunity, and justice for all. We identified best practices and sensible solutions to the problems plaguing municipalities across the country, and emerged as a leader in innovation, collaboration, and service delivery. This Adopted Budget demonstrates that we will remain steadfast in our commitment to be good neighbors, to positively impact every community, and to make the investments so that every day we are becoming a stronger, safer, and smarter City of Buffalo.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Byron W. Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Byron W. Brown  
Mayor