



MAYOR BYRON W. BROWN  
CITY OF BUFFALO

# FISCAL YEAR 2018-2019 RECOMMENDED BUDGET DETAIL

**ELIZABETH A. BALL**

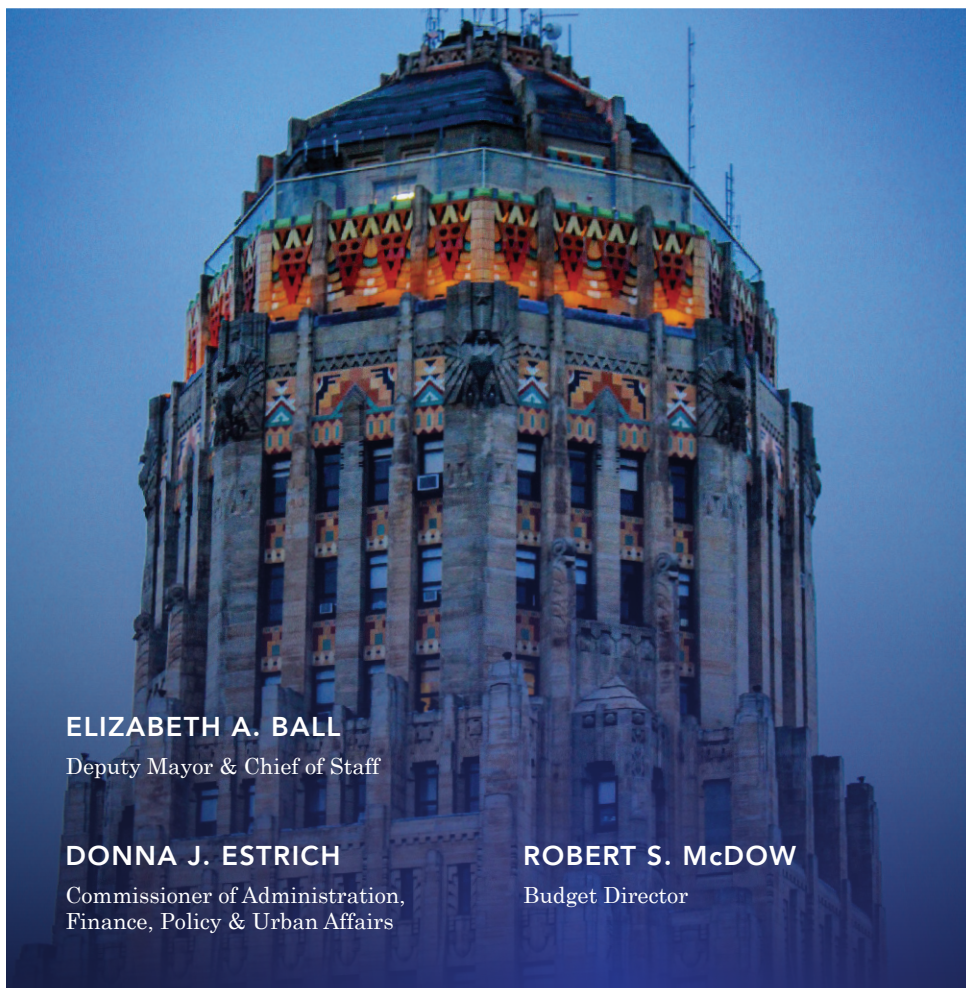
Deputy Mayor & Chief of Staff

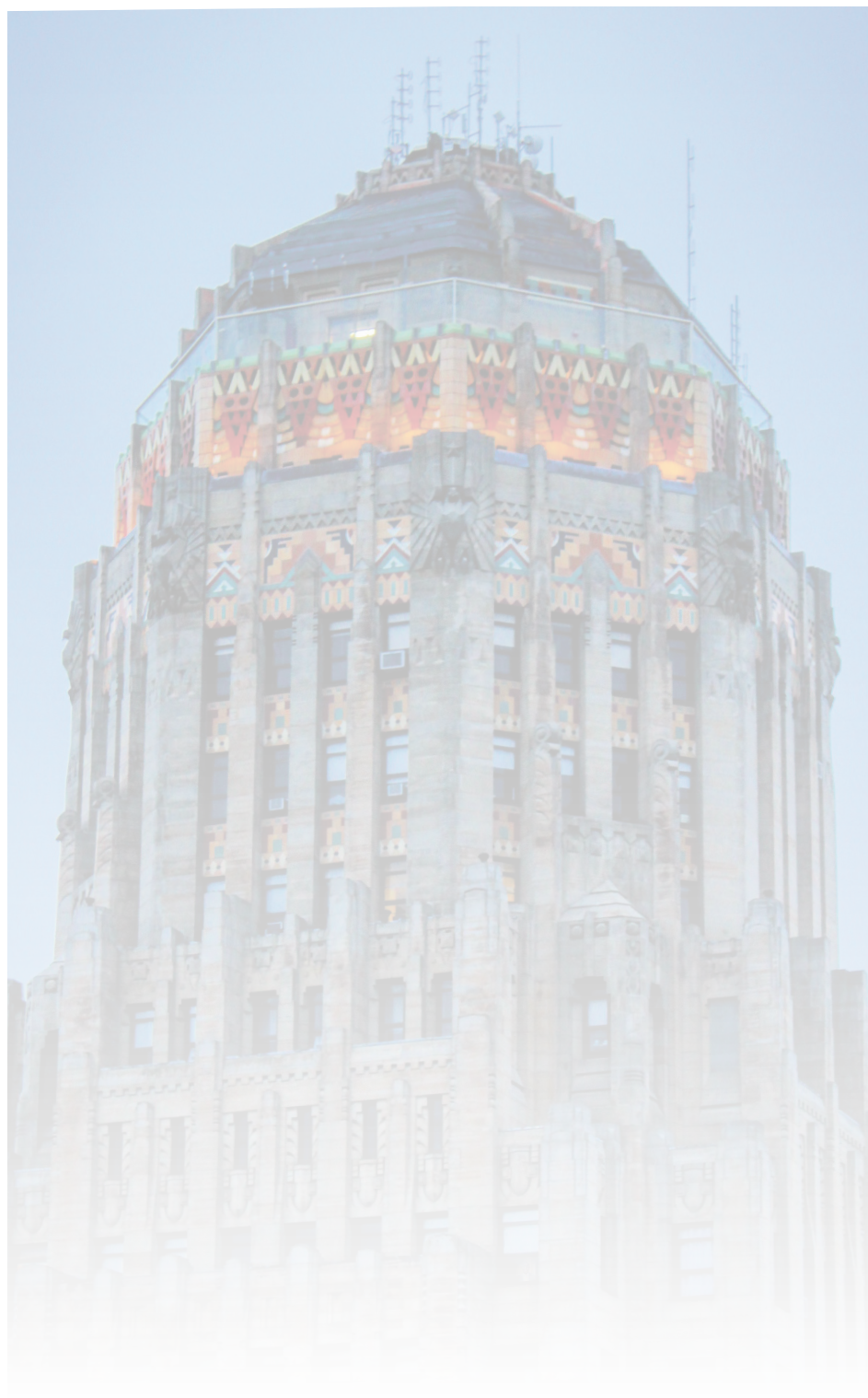
**DONNA J. ESTRICH**

Commissioner of Administration,  
Finance, Policy & Urban Affairs

**ROBERT S. McDOW**

Budget Director





# A Message from Mayor Byron W. Brown



As the City of Buffalo continues to experience strong economic growth, my Administration is recommending a realignment of our fiscal plan which reflects the shift from a stimulus fiscal policy to a long-term investment policy. This shift is consistent with our conservative, fiscally-sound and pro-growth budgeting. With increased investment and visitors coming to Buffalo, our City's expenses and potential revenues are evolving. The budget I have presented provides us with the capacity to meet these new demands. This budget allows us to tap into the resources our growing economy presents and meet the demands of all our residents. Our commitment to budget predictability and accountability remains strong and this budget proposal opens new avenues to provide effective City services and continue Buffalo's growth and progress.

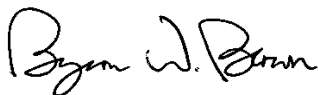
This budget also highlights innovative solutions for confronting the many challenges that cities across the nation are facing. These solutions will identify new—and previously—untapped sources of revenue for programs and services which enhance the quality of life for residents and give us the flexibility to invest in new ideas and initiatives that will ensure the continuation of our City's unprecedented growth.

Since becoming Mayor, I have worked to transform Buffalo's economy, make City service delivery more efficient and execute strategies designed to better meet the needs of our residents. The success we have enjoyed, and the renewed sense of hope people feel, is a testament to the impact of our City's revitalization. As Buffalo enters the next phase of our renaissance, this is the time to realign our revenues, maximize our potential, embrace the new technologies which are driving change, and continue the transformation we have been leading over the past 12 years.

I am confident that this Budget and 4-Year Financial Plan will continue to help spur growth, create more opportunities for residents and build on the confidence the rest of the State, nation and world have shown in Buffalo's potential.

This is our time.

Sincerely,

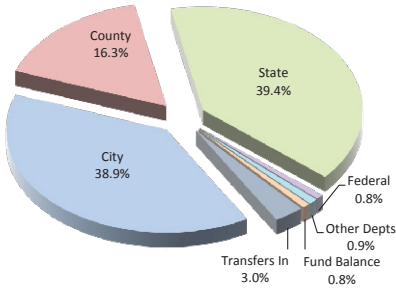
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Byron W. Brown".

Mayor Byron W. Brown

## FISCAL YEAR 2018-2019 • RECOMMENDED BUDGET DETAIL

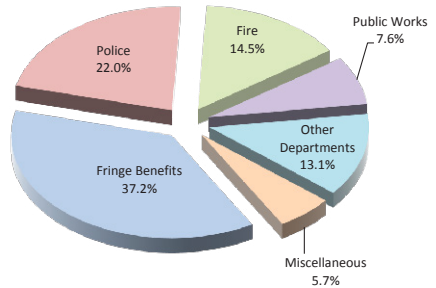
### WHERE IT COMES FROM

Revenues for the Recommended Budget  
2018-19 (in Millions)



### WHERE IT GOES

Expenses for the Recommended Budget  
2018-19 (in Millions)



For the 13th consecutive year, Mayor Byron W. Brown is recommending a balanced budget that realigns our expenses with our revenue streams, as well as promotes economic development and increases our capacity to make critical investments in City services.

## BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- The 2018-19 Budget is balanced, totaling \$513.6 million, a modest increase from last year's budget of \$13.9 million
- This budget reflects strategic investments in every area of City operations, which will help grow our economy and ensure effective delivery of services
- By realigning our tax and fee structures this budget will generate revenue streams that will decrease our reliance on the City's fund balance
- This year's budget increase stems primarily from rising health care costs, rising pension costs, higher cost of living adjustments and rising costs associated with a growing demand for more City services
- Buffalo's "Rainy Day" fund remains untouched and is funded at \$38.7 million





## REALIGNING OUR REVENUES TO REFLECT OUR ECONOMIC GROWTH

This budget will realign the revenue generated from taxes and fees to reflect the real costs of service delivery at a time when our City's economic outlook is stronger and requires these changes. The Administration is still committed to a conservative fiscal policy that encourages continued economic growth and ongoing investment in the City. A comparison of our new fees and tax structures to other similar municipalities demonstrates that Buffalo's fees and taxes are still lower than in other cities.

- The property tax realignment outlined in this budget keeps Buffalo's property taxes for homeowners and business owners low and comes after 12-years of reduced or flat taxes that helped launch our economic growth. Under the new structure, which caps growth under the 2% Property Tax Cap set by Albany, a homeowner of a \$100,000 assessed value home will pay an annual increase of \$60.
- After being held flat for 13-years, this budget proposes a modest increase to the User Fee in order to make the Solid Waste Enterprise Fund self-sustaining. Rochester residents will still pay significantly more for the smallest garbage tote than Buffalo residents will pay for the largest garbage tote.

Garbage Tote Size	Buffalo FY 2018-19	Rochester Current
SMALL	\$162.61	\$391
MEDIUM	\$200.11	\$787
LARGE	\$237.61	\$872

*\* Rochester's fees are tiered by the number of families in the home and not the size of the tote.*

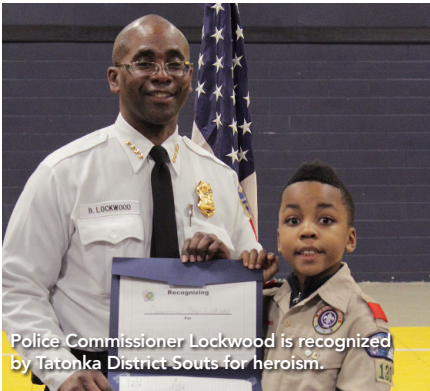
- Other licensing and permit fees are being updated in a competitive manner to continue to attract commercial activity and encourage home improvements.

## CREATIVE SOLUTIONS TO EXTERNAL CHALLENGES

The fiscal and societal environment that Buffalo, and cities like it, operate in is vastly different than the one which existed when they were established. The Mayor's budget builds on the initiatives he outlined in his State of the City Address and offers new and creative solutions to the challenges we face.

- Last year, significant changes were made to the federal tax code which could have negatively impacted residents of Buffalo. The cap on the State and Local Tax (SALT) deduction and other potential changes compelled the City to accept early payments of property taxes to protect those deductions for taxpayers. This year, Governor Cuomo proposed and signed into law a new amendment to the General Municipal Law allowing localities to form a "Charitable Gift Fund." This budget and an accompanying local law will create this type of fund.
- The new fund will enable property owners whose taxes exceed the federal tax cap to pay their property taxes into the fund and receive a tax credit worth 95% of their payment, which they can then deduct from their federal taxes. This will preserve the SALT deduction homeowners have previously had and ensure that the City is collecting the appropriate amount of property tax revenue.
- The Mayor will also launch a development campaign to encourage residents and businesses to make additional contributions to the fund. Those contributions will be used to support education, parks, cultural institutions, youth programs and other eligible services. These contributions will provide the same tax deductible eligibility.
- The Mayor has pledged that the first \$200,000 generated from this initiative will be directed towards education funding.





Police Commissioner Lockwood is recognized by Tatanka District Scouts for heroism.



Buffalo Fire Department Promotion Ceremony in March 2018.

## CREATING SAFE AND LIVABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

The City remains committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all its residents. Public safety and strong neighborhoods are the backbone of our quality of life efforts. The steady decrease in crime and growing desire among millennials, young professionals, empty-nesters and new Americans to move into the City of Buffalo is evidence of the strong returns these investments yield. This budget will continue making the critical investments to enhance the quality of life of all of our residents.

- This budget will invest \$500,000 in our Body Cam program in three police Districts in the next fiscal year. In addition to the cameras, we plan to hire several report technicians to administer this important initiative.
- This budget includes \$65,000 in new technology that will help Buffalo Police reconstruct accident and crime scenes quickly and precisely. The new system will reduce the number of officers needed at a crime scene while also yielding more accurate forensic information.
- This budget provides funding for at least 60 new police officers to the Buffalo Police Department, which will help us further reduce overtime costs and enhance our community policing efforts.
- The Buffalo Police Department will also purchase additional radar devices. As part of the Mayor's Traffic Calming Initiative, officers will respond to quality of life requests for additional enforcement by residents, Block Clubs and business owners.
- This budget allocates \$150,000 in continued funding to Buffalo Peacemakers, who have played a critical role in the nearly 40% drop in our City's violent crime rate.
- The City of Buffalo will train a new class of 60 firefighters, which will enhance services and help reduce overtime expenses.
- The Buffalo Fire Department will hire two new grant writers to secure additional revenue from state and federal funds.



## CREATING SAFE AND LIVABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

- Buffalo will implement a new Public Facility Maintenance and Security surcharge that will cover the costs associated with public safety and maintenance for events at City-owned venues which are attended by people who live across the region. This progressive fee will help alleviate the tax burden on City residents, who now are solely responsible for covering the costs of events that people from across the region (and beyond) currently attend and enjoy. This modest surcharge will generate approximately \$2 million in additional revenue in FY 18-19.





## SUPPORT FOR CITY YOUTH AND EDUCATION

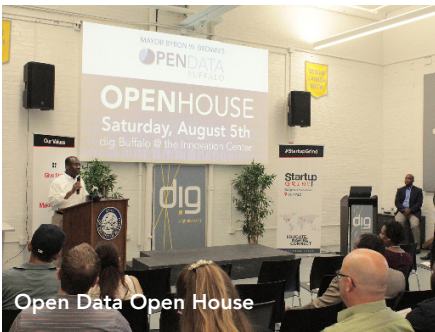
The City remains committed to ensuring that our young people have access to the opportunities they need to excel in school, the workplace and their community. We will continue making critical investments in youth programs and educational opportunities. These investments include:

- This budget maintains Mayor Brown's strong commitment to the Buffalo Public Schools by providing \$70.8 million to the Buffalo Public Schools. This figure does not include the portion of the City's sales tax paid to the County, which is directly allocated to the BPS.
- The budget provides \$500,000 to Say Yes Buffalo, fulfilling the Mayor's total commitment to this program and adding to the \$2.3 million which has already been funded. Say Yes Buffalo has played an important role in contributing to the highest college enrollment rates in our City's history.
- The Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program funding will be increased to \$1.8 million from \$1.6 million to continue and expand this valuable paid work experience for young people throughout the City.
- The Buffalo Police Athletic League will receive \$100,000 in this budget for funding to expand recreational activities for our young people. This will support our efforts to extend operating hours of Buffalo community centers on nights and weekends.
- The City will provide \$216,000 for workforce development programs, services at the Beverly Gray Business Exchange Center, and the highly attended job fairs sponsored by the Buffalo Employment Training Center, job search and resume counseling, and outreach programs to help match individuals with employment opportunities.
- This budget provides \$35,000 for AmeriCorps members serving in high-need communities throughout the City of Buffalo. These young volunteers provide critical tutoring, mentoring and anti-poverty programming.
- This budget provides \$20,000 to our highly successful Game Changers program which connects over 200 youth to mentoring and civic engagement activities through basketball.

## MAKING CITY GOVERNMENT MORE EFFECTIVE THROUGH TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER EFFICIENCIES

Technology is changing our world at an unprecedented pace. With our public-private partnership with Kaleida Health, we have been able to undertake a revamping of the City of Buffalo's entire information systems infrastructure under the leadership of a world-class CIO, Dr. Luis Taveras. In combination with other efficiencies, which have been identified by each Department, we are making government more cost-efficient while being more responsive to our residents. Some of these enhancements include:

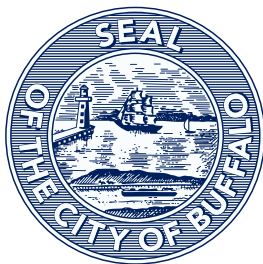
- \$150,000 for an enhanced Cybersecurity Initiative that will help protect the information of our residents and vendors, and protect City operations from cyber threats.
- \$400,000 for a state-of-the-art Dispatch and Communications System for the Buffalo Fire Department. This system will allow our dispatchers to deploy firefighters more effectively, coordinate their dispatch response across the entire City and County, and more effectively communicate with ambulance response teams. This new system will help save lives and ensure public safety.
- \$43,000 in funding for the LCP Tracker, which will help the Administration effectively monitor our minority and women owned business enterprise utilization rates on all City contracts, and help the Administration meet the aggressive 30% MWBE participation goal.



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MAYOR BYRON W. BROWN

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