



# COUNTY OF ERIE

## OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Brenton Davis,  
Erie County Executive

November 27, 2024

Erie County Council  
140 W 6th St  
Room #114  
Erie, PA 16501

Dear Chairman Scutella and Council Colleagues:

The administration presented Erie County Council with an honest budget containing no tax increase, which Council has opted to alter against the advice of the Administration. This pathway created the proposal of a tax increase by County Council as well as the elimination and reduction of programs, services and personnel that the administration deems necessary to the proper operation of county government.

Additionally, County Council voted to alter the plans for the use of both ARPA and gaming funds. This totally disregards the carefully constructed plan offered by the administration, after input from community leaders and stakeholders that would have utilized these funds to best serve the needs of the citizens of Erie County.

The Administration has no other recourse but to VETO these proposed changes, to insure the proper functioning and effective administration of Erie County Government.

With this letter, I am returning the budget with vetoes and line item reductions, designating each budget fund and actions sheet, as follows:

### Planning Fund

**Action Sheet #3 – Vetoing the elimination of \$100,000.00 transfer from gaming fund.** This funding is to be used for the EMS scholarships. This program is critical to keeping the countywide EMS operations properly staffed to provide services.

**Action Sheet #4 – Vetoing all decreases of the transfer from ARPA and the fund balance appropriation and vetoing the reduction of pass-through grants.** The ARPA funds are needed to fund the currently occupied parks coordinator position. The fund balance is from the Marcellus Shale impact fees that can only to be used for parks projects. I am vetoing this because they are an integral part of the County's parks program, which the administration believes is



necessary to the various municipalities. (I am **not** vetoing the allocation of \$150,000 to fund the Union City Ball Park project, as this was part of the original plan).

#### **Domestic Relations Fund**

**Action Sheet #4 – Vetoing the restoration of the position that was put back even though it has been vacant for an extended period.** The position has been vacant for an extended period and the administration does not find it in the best interest of the taxpayers to require them to be burdened by the cost of positions we know will not be filled.

#### **Public Safety Fund**

**Action Sheet #4 – Vetoing the decreases of the proposed salary increases for the 911 telecommunicators.** The salary increases are necessary to attract good applicants to these positions.

#### **Gaming Fund**

**Action Sheet #2 – Vetoing the reduction of the funding for the EMS Program.** This funding is critical for the individual EMS providers to continue to maintain adequate staffing and resources to provide effective lifesaving services throughout Erie County.

**Action Sheet #3 – Vetoing the full reduction made to the municipal projects line item.** This funding is critical for the individual municipalities throughout Erie County to make necessary investments to address the aging and ineffective infrastructure. This program has a proven track record and has been the basis for transformational change.

**Action Sheet #5 – Vetoing the reduction of fund balance appropriation from the gaming fund.** The appropriation of fund balance from the gaming fund is critical to the capital stack necessary to accomplish the infrastructure projects requested by the municipalities.

#### **Pleasant Ridge Manor Fund**

**Action Sheet #2 - Vetoing the increase transfer of \$500,000 to Pleasant Ridge Manor operations.** This transfer is not necessary at this time. If additional funding is needed later in the year, it can be appropriated at that time.

#### **ARPA Fund**

**Action Sheet #2 – Vetoing the decrease in the transfer to the planning fund.** See Planning Fund Action Sheet #4 Veto.

**Action Sheet #3 – Vetoing the change in the expenditure line item removing funds from municipal infrastructure funding and moving it to DEI funding.** The Municipal Gap Program has proven to be effective for the citizens throughout Erie County. The DEI program has not demonstrated acceptable success to warrant additional funding.



**Action Sheet #4 - Vetoing the change in the expenditure line item removing funds from municipal infrastructure funding and moving it to ECGRA for child care funding.** Although I support the funding of the child care initiative at the level requested by County Council, I disagree that it should be administered by ECGRA, but instead should be administered by the Erie County Planning Department.

**Action Sheet #5 - Vetoing the change in the expenditure line item removing funds from municipal infrastructure funding and moving it to the Redevelopment Authority to fund the Grow Erie Project.** The Municipal Gap Program has proven to be effective for the citizens throughout Erie County.

**Action Sheet #7- Vetoing the reduction in Municipal infrastructure Funding and moving it to affordable housing administered through the Redevelopment Authority.** The Municipal Gap Program has proven to be effective for the citizens throughout Erie County.

### **General Fund**

**Action Sheet #11 – Vetoing the addition of wages and fringe benefits for a new position in the conduct of elections department.** Employees have been cut in various departments in this budget and that is a burden that should be carried by all. An additional position has not been needed in this area.

**Action Sheet #12 – Vetoing the reinstatement and funding of the Human Relations Bureau.** This Bureau has not functioned properly since inception, costing the tax payers hundreds of thousands of dollars for a limited return.

**Action Sheet #13 – Vetoing the creation and funding of a Civil Rights Investigator for the Human Relations Bureau.** This Bureau has not functioned properly since inception, costing the tax payers hundreds of thousands of dollars for a limited return.

**Action Sheet #17 – Vetoing the elimination of the Administrative Assistant position in the County Executive's Office.** Elimination of this position would significantly hinder the operation of the County Executive's Office and the ability to provide the necessary services to the citizens of Erie County.

**Action Sheet #20 – Vetoing the elimination of the Economic Development Department and all associated revenues and expenditures.** The Economic Development Department has proven to be very effective in its efforts to expand new business attraction and expansion opportunities. The Erie County Economic Development Department has cultivated more potential new business opportunities than any other organization in the past decade.

**Action Sheet #25 – Vetoing the reduction of the wages and fringe benefits of the Manager of Procurement.** The manager of Procurement has taken on the burden of all purchasing duties for the County of Erie with only herself and one assistant. Other managers with similar responsibilities are making significantly more compensation.



**Action Sheet #27 – Vetoing the Elimination of wages and fringe benefits for the Public Information Officer position under the Director of Administration Department.** This position is an integral part of disseminating information related to Erie County business and eliminating it would drastically limit the ability to inform the public of important matters regarding Erie County operations.

**Action Sheet #30 – Vetoing the restriction placed on the funding of the Fly Erie Fund which requires the removal of the County Executive from the board of the organization prior to receiving the funds.** It is inappropriate to dictate the makeup of a board of a non-county organization. Further, the board position is reserved for the seated county executive so that the county can have some oversight over the expenditure of the county funds.

**Action Sheet #34 – Vetoing the addition of a Database Administrator position into the Court's computer department and all associated wages and fringe benefits.** The Court's IT Department is sufficiently staffed and there is no need for additional personnel at this time.

**Action Sheet #35 – Vetoing the reinstatement of two vacant Court Reporter positions and all associated wages and fringe benefits.** Employees have been cut in various departments in this budget and that is a burden that should be carried by all. These positions have been vacant for an extended period of time and there are still vacant Court Reporter positions in the budget that remained unfilled.

**Action Sheet #40 – Vetoing the reinstatement of a vacant Civil Records Clerk in the Prothonotary Department and all associated wages and fringe benefits.** Employees have been cut in various departments in this budget and that is a burden that should be carried by all. These positions have been vacant for an extended period of time and there are still vacant positions in the Prothonotary's budget that remained unfilled.

**Action Sheet #43 – Vetoing the addition of a Deputy Sheriff Position and all associated wages and fringe benefits in the Sheriff's Office budget.** Employees have been cut in various departments in this budget and that is a burden that should be carried by all. There are multiple vacant deputy positions in the Sheriff's budget that remain unfilled. New positions should not be added until the existing openings can be filled.

**Action Sheet #44 - Vetoing the addition of a Deputy Sheriff Position and all associated wages and fringe benefits in the Sheriff's Office budget.** Employees have been cut in various departments in this budget and that is a burden that should be carried by all. There are multiple vacant deputy positions in the Sheriff's budget that remain unfilled. New positions should not be added until the existing openings can be filled.

**Action Sheet #45- Line-Item Reduction to \$50,000.00 and reduction of all associated fringe benefits in the overtime line item of the Sheriff's Department Budget.** There are currently enough funds in the Sheriff's Office wage lines to cover any additional overtime expenses that would be necessary throughout the year.

**Action Sheet #52 - Line-Item Reduction to \$50,000.00 and reduction of all associated fringe benefits in the overtime line item of the District Attorney's Office.** There are currently enough funds in the District Attorney wage lines to cover any additional overtime expenses that would be



necessary throughout the year.

**Action Sheet #60 – Vetoing the elimination of the Community Expense line item in the Erie County Prison Budget.** This line item funds the Community Works Program which allows low risk inmates to receive job training in areas where they may be able to gain employment upon release


**Action Sheet #66 – Vetoing the increase to the Pleasant Ridge Manor transfer out line.** This increase is unnecessary at this time. If additional funding is needed later in the year, it can be appropriated at that time.

**Action Sheet #67 – Vetoing the reduction in the transfer in from the Gaming Revenue Fund to the General Fund.** This transfer is necessary to accomplish the budget plan without overburdening the taxpayers of Erie County with a tax increase.

**Action Sheet #73 – Vetoing proposed tax millage increase.** This tax millage increase is not necessary under the proposed budget plan. The County of Erie has a healthy fund balance that is available to use as an alternative to a tax increase. This strategy has been used in 8 of the last 11 budgets. There are savings throughout the year from unfilled positions and various line items not being fully spent or drawn down, resulting in the fund balance not being used.

I encourage you to sustain these vetoes and line-item reductions as I believe they are all in the best interest of the citizens of Erie County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Davis", written in a cursive style.

Brenton D. Davis  
Erie County Executive