



Proposed Budget

May 1, 2020 to April 30, 2021





March 31, 2021

The Proposed Budget for the May 1, 2020 to April 30, 2021 fiscal year is hereby submitted to the Members of the City Council, residents and business owners of Waukegan, and all of our stakeholders.

This budget was crafted over the past few months with a careful eye on delivering a balanced budget and ending the City's longstanding deficit. This is accomplished by a fourth consecutive budget by my administration to include no increase in headcount (this year we decrease the headcount), holding the line on our expenses, and cutting costs where possible. Although recent state legislation granted Waukegan a casino license and other new income opportunities such as legalized cannabis, it would be reckless to make plans to spend unrealized dollars. Instead, new revenues including a "push tax" on video gaming terminals and an increase in Food & Beverage Tax are assumed as part of this balancing plan. Even with these added resources, operational requests from our department heads had to be trimmed by \$6 million in order to provide for a balanced General Fund Budget. This included opting to hold off on growing our police and fire department ranks, and replacing aged vehicles in our fleet. Our City must continue to address our older, legacy infrastructure, so our reinvestment of the City's roads and water system will move forward at the current historic pace since I've become Mayor. My focus continues to be on improving residents' quality of life by delivering our core functions – police services, fire/paramedic response, code enforcement, public works, and clean water – as well as encouraging sustainable economic growth.

I must acknowledge that this proposed budget, which was months in the making, was crafted before the COVID-19 crisis hit our entire City, State, Country and even the world itself. My immediate focus is getting Waukegan through the health crisis before us. That does not mean that I, or my leadership team, has ignored the financial distress this crisis will cause. To the contrary, we recognize that a real problem exists and we will be working with our City Council to understand what the financial impacts will be for the next six to twelve months. During the first quarter of the 2020/2021 fiscal year, I will work with my team to construct a financial recovery plan, which will undoubtedly include revising our revenue projections and assessing areas where further cuts may be made.

These are unique and uncertain times but our community is "Waukegan Tough," and we will use that to get through this together. We will continue to push for a Waukegan with a thriving downtown, a rebuilt lakefront, for quality infrastructure, and a Waukegan which we can all enjoy. I know that we'll succeed because each and every one of us has big hopes and dreams for Waukegan's future.

Stay Safe & Waukegan Strong,


Samuel D. Cunningham, Jr., Mayor