

Mayor Brown proposes \$21 million capital budget



Buffalo Mayor Byron W. Brown, accompanied by Buffalo Zoo President Donna Fernandes, unveils the city's \$21 million capital budget Friday at a news conference at the zoo, which is slated to receive \$550,000 for its new Arctic Edge polar bear habitat. *Derek Gee/Buffalo News*

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on November 2, 2012 - 4:12 PM, updated November 2, 2012 at 11:26 PM

The Buffalo Zoo could be moving a little closer to its goal of constructing a new polar bear exhibit, thanks to additional funding earmarked in the City of Buffalo's 2013 capital budget.

Mayor Byron W. Brown highlighted the proposed \$21 million spending plan Friday morning at the zoo, which will receive \$550,000 next year – the same amount the city provided in the current budget.

Zoo officials hope to start construction on the new Arctic Edge exhibit by next summer, said Zoo President Donna Fernandes.

“We have an \$18 million capital campaign, and with the additional funding from the city, the zoo is at around \$12.4 million towards the goal,” she said.

Other highlights of the plan include \$6 million for citywide infrastructure projects such as replacing curbs, sidewalks, streets and streetscapes in neighborhoods, Brown said.

“As we are building our waterfront, as we are building our medical [corridor] ... we’ll also focus on our neighborhoods, too,” he said.

About \$1.8 million was allotted for upgrades like paving, lighting, curbing, pool improvements and new skate parks where applicable in the Olmsted Parks system, as well as LaSalle, Roosevelt and Broderick parks.

Police, fire buildings and community centers like JFK and Pratt Willert are among the 244 municipal structures for which Brown set aside \$1.6 million for improvements, primarily code issues “we may need to address,” said Public Works Commissioner Steven J. Stepniak.

More than \$1.3 million is designated for The Hatch restaurant at Erie Basin Marina for alterations and for building an addition to the waterfront restaurant.

The mayor earmarked \$802,000 for improvements to Ellicott Street at the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus for extra amenities and a new irrigation system that “will make it a complete project,” Stempniak said.

And \$750,000 was set aside to address structural issues and concrete improvements at Coca-Cola Field.

Other highlights of the proposed 2013 spending plan include:

- \$3.2 million for demolition on buildings and structures.
- \$1.4 million for fire and snow equipment.
- \$757,560 to arts and cultural organizations.
- \$642,000 for citywide tree removal and planting.
- \$500,000 for street lighting.
- \$347,750 for city libraries.
- \$250,000 for lighting improvements to the Johnnie B. Wiley Amateur Athletic Sports Pavilion.
- \$250,000 for Allen Street streetscape projects.
- \$214,000 for exterior renovation efforts at the casino at Martin Luther King Park.

The Common Council has until Dec. 15 to adopt the recommended budget.

<http://www.buffalonews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20121102/CITYANDREGION/121109821&sp-tk=27F01119C6FCD57A7F747E4602801BFF77F983C9CBED9ED38E1100EC1930F33C4504F4D7830D4278302DAA10802F7C6767676E5A9206DEE4645ADBBA8FACE0C6CD3E442C1E93B91F4EC8DBF742C43B62653D2602E05A87358F669CF6ADB119CCFF290A6FF561F6CAFC2BC1C32744A1E9DDAFAFC60034410028B254BB1FE5C1C096C33A60F3C119EBFFEDD8A8705EAA09AC2B9542E0546057A17D4EFC22301CC14AF4FB8>