



**MAYOR JUSTIN M. ELICKER
CITY OF NEW HAVEN**

February 28, 2025

Dear fellow residents,

In accordance with our City Charter, I'm pleased to share my proposed budget for the Fiscal Year 2025-2026.

The proposed **\$703.7 million budget** represents an increase of \$24.6 million, or 3.6 percent, from the previous year's budget. Complementing the General Fund budget, I've also submitted a proposed Capital Budget of \$60 million (which is done once every other year) and a proposed Special Revenue Funds budget of \$62.6 million (which is largely federal grants).

At a time of tremendous uncertainty, confusion, and chaos coming from the *federal government* in Washington, D.C. with threats of federal funding freezes in the current budget year and the potential for draconian cuts in the coming year, we're committed to continuing to chart a different course in New Haven.

We will continue to have a *local government* in New Haven that is professional, predictable, and reliable and we will advance a *city budget* that is responsible, provides uninterrupted services to residents, supports our most vulnerable residents, treats our city employees with dignity, respect, and gratitude for the work they do, and meets our financial obligations as a city.

People want and deserve a government that provides peace of mind and that they know they can rely on to deliver the day-to-day services that they need to go about their lives. And, building on the progress we've made over the past five years, we're committed to doing everything within our power to maintain a high level of city services and high quality of life for our residents.

The proposed FY 2025-26 budget follows five consecutive years of balanced budgets and budget surpluses, which has resulted in approximately \$50 million in budget reserve funds and [bond rating upgrades by independent financial rating agencies](#).

In recent years, this has enabled us to [expand city services and programs related to public safety, housing, education, youth programming and employment, parks, and transportation, among other areas](#).

For this coming year, however, given all the uncertainty surrounding federal funds, I am submitting a proposed budget that **maintains the current level of city services across departments and covers rising fixed costs, but that refrains from significant new financial commitments**.

Within this framework, some highlights from the proposed budget include:

- **Public Safety:** Underwriting the newly adopted [police contract](#) that will help retain existing officers, attract and recruit new officers, and strengthen the ranks of the department.

- **Education:** Increasing the budget for New Haven Public Schools by \$5 million to help cover the costs of our existing teaching staff and programs, allocating an additional \$1.5 million of American Rescue Plan funds so we can continue the [New Haven Tutoring Initiative](#) (which provides afterschool and summer tutoring in reading and math to struggling students), and committing \$15 million in the Capital Budget for school building and facility improvements.
- **Growth-focused positions:** Proposing thirteen new full-time positions across seven different departments to help manage the city's inclusive growth, development, and infrastructure needs. These positions – spanning the Office of Building Inspection & Enforcement, Community Resilience Department, Engineering Department, Economic Development Administration, Finance Department, Parks Department, and Transportation, Traffic, & Parking Department – total approximately \$1 million in costs -- and, importantly, are partially offset through a projected \$402,000 in revenue generation.

To meet these obligations, the budget proposes a **0.9 mill rate increase** or 2.3 percent, increasing the mill rate from 38.50 to 39.40. Except for the previous two years, this represents the lowest tax rate residents would have over the course of two decades. New Haven's tax rate remains lower than many other Connecticut municipalities, including those of similar size (such as Bridgeport, Hartford, and Waterbury) and those in the area (such as Hamden and West Haven).

Now, the process turns to the Board of Alders for their review and consideration and to New Haven residents who will have the opportunity to provide their thoughts and input as well.

To this end, the **Finance Committee will be holding a series of budget workshops, public hearings, and deliberations in March, April, and May.** The currently scheduled dates can be found at bit.ly/BOABudgetHearingSchedule2025 and will be posted on a rolling basis on the Board of Alders webpage at newhavenct.gov/alders. These meetings can be attended in-person and will also be streamed on the Board of Alders YouTube page at youtube.com/@boardofalders8363.

I'll also be hosting **budget town halls** for residents to learn more about the budget, ask questions, and provide input and feedback on the proposals. The first will be on Tuesday, March 18th at 6 pm at High School in the Community (175 Water Street) and the second will be on Wednesday, March 26th at 6:30 pm at L.W. Beecher School (100 Jewell Street).

Per the City Charter, a final budget must be approved by the Board of Alders by the first Monday in June, which is June 2nd.

I look forward to engaging with the Board of Alders and city residents in passing a budget that reflects our values, delivers for New Haveners, and supports our continued growth as a city where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Always serving you,



Justin Elicker
Mayor, City of New Haven