

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MAYOR BYRON W. BROWN ANNOUNCES LAUNCH OF BUFFALO URBAN
RENEWAL AGENCY “STAND UP Buffalo” INITIATIVE**

CARES Act funded programs to respond to housing & small business needs

Buffalo, N.Y. – Mayor Byron W. Brown, announced today the launch of the Small Business, Tenants, And Neighborhood Development Underwriting Program or “STAND UP Buffalo” Initiative. The initiative is comprised of a series of direct assistance grants and programs that will allow residents and business owners to respond to the unique challenges the global Coronavirus Pandemic has caused in Buffalo and cities across the nation. Eligible applicants can begin applying for assistance from BURA, and its community partners, beginning February 8, 2021.

Mayor Brown said, “For almost a year now, Buffalo’s residents and small businesses have had to find innovative ways to cope with the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the guidelines that have been put in place to help slow the spread. Today’s announcement of a new set of assistance programs will help our City’s tenants, homeowners, and entrepreneurs access the resources they need to continue operating during these difficult circumstances and give people the hope they need as the vaccine becomes more widely accessible and the end of the pandemic’s restrictions are within sight.”

The City of Buffalo received \$11 million from the CARES Act and other funding sources to fund the STAND UP Buffalo programs. From that grant, BURA proactively developed new programs to meet the specific needs which have been identified below:

- Eviction Prevention
- Foreclosure Prevention
- Fair Housing
- Owner & Rental Housing Rehab
- Microenterprise Assistance
- Digital Inclusion Analysis

HOW TO APPLY

BURA is partnering with several community agencies and entities to provide services to qualifying participants. Eligible applicants must have incomes below 80 percent of the area median income. BURA established a new Central Intake System, which residents can access by calling 2-1-1, 3-1-1, or one of the partnering agencies administering the desired services. After answering some questions, the central intake system will direct qualifying applicants to the appropriate service program so they can access the appropriate form and type of assistance.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Below is a list of community agencies that are partnering with the City to deliver these critical services to City residents and small businesses:

2-1-1 WNY

Matt Urban Center

Restoration Society

Belmont Housing Resources

Center for Elder Law and Justice

Catholic Charities

Buffalo Urban League

Old First Ward Community Association

Heart of the City Neighborhoods

University District Community Development Association

Housing Opportunities Made Equal

Neighborhood Legal Services

Westminster Economic Development Initiative

“The Matt Urban Center provides a wide range of services to the East Side of Buffalo including, home repairs and weatherization, affordable housing development, multiple programs aimed at addressing homelessness as well as robust programs for youth and seniors,” said Ben Hilligas, Executive Director. Our mission is to provide programs that revitalize neighborhoods, serve families, and change lives. When I hear ‘STAND UP Buffalo’ I immediately think of the strength and resilience of our community and the solidarity we demonstrate and represent as citizens of the City of Buffalo. We thank the Mayor for his commitment to fair and equal housing in the City of Buffalo.”

“Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME) looks forward to partnering with BURA in delivering key COVID-19 related fair housing information and services to City of Buffalo residents,” said DeAnna Eason, Executive Director. “The concurrent



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nature of both the health and housing crises facing our community only serves to elevate the importance of disseminating accurate and relevant materials to residents and area agencies. The funding provided through BURA will allow us to widely broadcast our fair housing services and engage with clients who were previously unaware of their rights within the current COVID-19 parameters.”

The City is looking to make investments that will have long-term impacts once the pandemic ends. It is estimated that nearly 2,000 residents will receive these services in 2021.

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About the City of Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency

The Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency (BURA) is a public benefit corporation that was formed by an act of the New York State Legislature in 1966. We strive to promote the expeditious undertaking, financing and completion of community development programs and create quality and vibrant urban living in Buffalo through neighborhood driven development projects.

