

**Executive Chris Ronayne**  
**2024-2025 Biennial Budget**  
**October 11, 2023, at 1pm**

- Good afternoon!
  
- Thank you's:
  - Councilman Miller and all members of the council.
  - The citizens of Cuyahoga County
  
- Their input matters and the construction of our budget both by our citizens, council members and our partners on the frontline.
  
- It's an all-in effort to deliver a budget, and I would like to thank the voters of Cuyahoga County for giving me the opportunity to make this presentation.
  
- I'd like to thank our employees throughout Cuyahoga County who work hard for the people we serve. We couldn't do it without our team.
  - OBM Director Walter Parfejewiec, Assistant Director Shawntae McCurdy and the entire OBM staff
  - Fiscal Officer Mike Chambers
  - Deputy Chief of Operations Katie Gallagher
  
- Our budget is a statement of our values, the priorities we have set, and the promises we make to our residents. It's their budget and their taxpayer dollars.

- It reflects our commitment to enhancing the lives of those we serve and the prosperity of our community.
- We are Cuyahoga! A County of opportunity. A vibrant, diverse community. We're home to more than 120 unique nationalities from all corners of the world. Every day, no matter where I go, I am reminded that we serve the people.
- This budget is more than a spending plan; it's a roadmap guiding our community's future. It's a reflection of our dedication to managing taxpayer funds while addressing the needs of our community.
- I am delivering a balanced budget for 2024-2025. The proposed budget worth **\$1.6 billion annually** prioritizes our residents' health and safety. Their well-being remains paramount. Without our health, wellness, and safety, we cannot be a vibrant community. It's at the core of what we do here in Cuyahoga County.
- The safety of our residents, no matter where they reside, is a top priority. That's why I plan to allocate over **\$360 million** to the Sheriff's Department, which includes 40 additional corrections officers.
- I want to restore staffing levels at the Juvenile Detention Center. Hiring an additional **26 officers** will help rehabilitate and support the children in our custody. The budget also includes funding for public defenders to represent those children. I want to say to our citizens who call for upstream work. We are committed to it.

- A healthy Cuyahoga County is a region where everyone thrives. Many families rely on the services and resources provided by the Department of Health and Human Services. This budget addresses a critical need for social workers and case workers. In our budget, we are planning to hire 40 additional social workers in the Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and 40 more case workers in the Division of Jobs and Family Services. We are also increasing funding for foster care and kinship care services and putting **\$2.1 million** towards Universal Pre-K.
- To continue to deliver these services and programs, HHS needs our help too. The budget recommends a **4.8-mill** tax levy renewal to go before voters in the March primary. The levy renewal was introduced to county council yesterday. It will ensure our residents receive the care, protection and support they need to lead fulfilling lives.
- I can't talk about our families without addressing their need for affordable housing. Housing shortages and exorbitant rental prices are making the American dream just that... a dream. That's why I created the Department of Housing and Community Development to implement innovative strategies and solutions to increase affordable housing and build a more robust County where all can succeed with equitable and affordable housing.
- The heartbeat of Cuyahoga County is our 6,000 employees. In recognition of their efforts, the balanced budget includes a 2% cost of living adjustment for employees.

- Our employees spend more time at work than anywhere else. That's why I want to invest in our infrastructure. Our buildings need extensive work. This budget will allocate **\$10 million** annually in capital improvements toward facilities. This is **\$3.2 million** more annually than previous years. This will only put a dent in the more than **\$229 million** in upgrades that are needed. **\$188 million** of these facility needs are for the current Justice Center Complex.
- Infrastructure is also vital to the advancement of Cuyahoga County. For the first time, the budget includes funding for an IT capital plan to address cybersecurity and infrastructure that's needed more than ever. We've seen attacks on public systems that had we thought in advance about how to build up cybersecurity infrastructure we would have averted problems.
- With a population of 1.2 million, transportation keeps us connected, vibrant, and moving forward as a community. This is what we need. This budget proposes more than **\$179 million** on a multi-modal transportation system that is accessible to all.
- Together, we can continue to work to address the needs of our community and drive Cuyahoga County toward a brighter, more prosperous future.
- Thank you for the work that we do together, and I appreciate the partnership. I look forward to a thoughtful discussion.