



MATT TUERK
MAYOR

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To: Allentown City Council
From: Mayor Matt Tuerk
Date: November 8, 2023
Subject: Veto of the Budget Amendment Ordinance with 0% Property Tax Increase

Dear Members of the City Council,

I have spent a lot of time with your budget amendment, which proposes a 0% property tax increase and will force our city to make substantial cuts. After a lot of thought, I have decided to exercise my veto power on this ordinance. My reasoning is straightforward: if we implement a budget that does not adequately increase revenue, we won't be able to keep doing things that all our residents consider important.

The proposed cuts to our budget will force a reduction in city services that are crucial to the quality of life of Allentown's people. While the elimination of property tax increases appears beneficial in the short term, it will diminish the quality of life and public services that our residents rely on and deserve.

As a city, we pride ourselves on being fiscally responsible while also ensuring that our citizens are getting necessary services. This includes maintaining our parks, ensuring traffic safety, and keeping our streets clean. It is essential that we uphold these standards to continue to foster a safe, clean, and healthy Allentown.

The City of Allentown, like many other municipal governments, is facing the challenges posed by increasing costs and inflation. Departments across the city feel the burden of higher prices for materials, such as road salt, pool maintenance materials, vaccines, and police and fire uniforms.

As Mayor, I understand the need for fiscal prudence and am prepared to work toward a compromise with Council. We all value not just essential services, but the things that bring us together, like our annual Fourth of July fireworks display, Lights in the Parkway, and other special events. The unfortunate reality is that these things are on the line with City Council's proposed budget.

I ask you to explore alternative solutions that would avoid service reductions. Together, we can formulate a budget that maintains fiscal responsibility without diminishing the essential services that our residents have come to expect.

I am truly grateful to you for your service to our community. I know that we can work this out together.

Respectfully,

Matt Tuerk
Mayor