

To: The Honorable Board of Finance

From: Benjamin G. Blake, Mayor

Date: January 23, 2018

Subject: GENERAL BUDGET for FY July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019

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In accordance with Article VI, Section 1 of the Charter of the City of Milford, I respectfully submit, herewith, the general government portion of the City budget for fiscal year 2018-2019.

Over the past several years, Milford has seen significant changes - good changes - healthy changes - necessary changes. Our city is keeping pace with an ever-changing world and embracing and implementing new platforms to better engage residents, new technologies to better manage operations, and new processes to better deliver critical services. At the same time, Milford continues to honor its heritage by preserving its quaint New England character.

While transformative changes have allowed our community to flourish, we have nonetheless maintained our traditional approach to budgeting. This practice of conservative financial planning has paid dividends with Milford realizing tax cuts for residents and businesses for each of the past two years. For the first time ever, Milford taxpayers experienced back-to-back decreases in the amount of local taxes due in both 2017 and 2018.

In addition to tax cuts, Milford has done much to improve our community. We have made great efforts to restructure operations to maximize the effectiveness of local government. Our progressive, thrift-driven philosophy has not only saved the City money, but enhanced the services we provide our citizens. It is through these types of strategies that we are financially able to take on projects that make our community more attractive.

From paving more miles of street than ever before, to making Milford a more walk-able and bike-able town, to building new world-class recreational facilities, to creating more downtown parking, we have been able to do more and invest more in improvements that make Milford more livable. Even in these difficult times when the State and Federal governments exhibit instability, Milford continues to chart a solid and steady course toward prosperity.

Despite our unremitting drive to enhance our City, we must continue to balance our investments in the infrastructure, programs, and people that improve our local quality of life with our ability to support those investments.

For these reasons, our workforce is leaner and more streamlined and our reliance on efficient management is more crucial than ever.

This 2018-2019 Mayor's Budget strikes that delicate balance between services and funding as it lays the groundwork for another responsible fiscal year. This suggested financial plan holds spending increases to a minimum while preserving core municipal functions. The recommendation also recognizes potential revenue growth while accounting for the annual increases to cost drivers such as our pension contributions, salaries, and health care.

Ultimately, this 2018-2019 budget proposal reflects a solid foundation upon which your board, the Finance Board, as well as the Board of Aldermen, may discuss and debate Milford's future. As you ready for the task ahead, I thank you for your willingness to affect positive change while serving our wonderful community and helping to support the financial well-being of this incredible City. Please know that I am grateful for the good work and hard work of our volunteer Boards that sustain, strengthen and support the *Small City with a Big Heart*.