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Mayor Fischer's 2021-22 budget address

April 22, 2021

2022 Budget Address



On Thursday, April 22, 2021, Mayor Greg Fischer presented his 2021-2022 budget address to Metro Council. His prepared remarks:

Good afternoon.

One year ago, I presented my fiscal 2021 budget – uncertain of what lay ahead. We didn't know the impact of COVID-19 on our health. We didn't know how our city, state, country or world would be impacted by restrictions put in place to prevent the virus' spread.

We didn't know when it would end – or where we would be when it did. And we did not yet see the demonstrations for racial justice that would roil our city and the country.

I presented the budget virtually then, just as I am doing today.

But today, we know so much more – enough to give me great hope. We're seeing a limited return of more in-person events because we've vaccinated more than 330,000 Louisvillians, edging us closer to herd immunity. We need to vaccinate about 150,000 more people to reach the stage where we can hopefully take off our masks and gather safely in public and private.

And we continue to press forward with our work on racial equity.

So today I present a budget that provides a roadmap out of 2020 and into the promising and exciting next stage of our city's history.

And that future won't look like the past we left. We've learned important lessons that must inform the decisions we make moving forward.

It is a time-tested truth that, to survive and thrive, we must adapt and evolve. And we will do that while holding onto our shared love for community, each other and the values that define the character of our city.

One of those values, as you've heard me say before, is compassion: the work we do to help other people's human potential flourish. It is an action word and a value that we must never give up on – especially when times are tough.

Compassion fuels our annual Give A Day celebration of service and volunteerism. Last year, COVID forced us to cancel Give A Day. This year, we celebrate its 10th anniversary with a MONTH-long festival of giving back and paying forward, of individual and community projects throughout our city, often reimagined to accommodate COVID protocols.

Compassion builds our social muscles and helps us become a stronger and more connected and resilient community.

Obviously, the last year has tested us.

COVID-19 has claimed over 1,000 lives in our city alone and prompted an economic downturn that has had a devastating impact on individuals, families and businesses.

Gun violence continues to claim far too many lives.

And the tragic killings of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd and too many others at the hands of law enforcement have further shaken our nation's confidence in institutions designed to protect its residents. I hope Tuesday's just verdict in the trial of Derek Chauvin brings some measure of accountability, justice and a sense of hope to our country, especially to Black Americans who have experienced generations of trauma caused by an inequitable justice system.

It's long past time for America to make good on years of unfulfilled promises and truly reimagine public safety and address racial inequities in all the systems meant to serve and protect all people, especially communities of color.

That's our commitment here in Louisville. And the city budget is one vehicle for us to make good on that commitment. So we must ask ourselves:

What are we doing to build on the economic growth we're starting to see, and to remove the barriers that keep residents from reaching their full potential?

Are we moving fast enough to make our city one of equity?

Are we investing enough and involving people enough in the decisions that impact them?

And how do we take advantage of the historic opportunities we have right now to meet the challenges of this moment?

Those questions are central to this budget proposal.

Because, as President Joe Biden has said, "Don't tell me what you value, show me your budget, and I'll tell you what you value."

Let's start with some background:

While we have no shortage of challenges, our financial picture is significantly improved from what we feared we'd be facing when we were in the depths of the pandemic.

It turns out that our mix of revenue has been a relative strength for us. Unlike some cities that are more dependent on tourism tax revenues or natural resource usage, payroll and corporate profit taxes make up about 60 percent of our city budget, and revenues from those sources are coming in higher than originally projected.

That's partly because our core business sectors, including logistics and health and aging innovation, have continued to do well even during the downturn, and other industries have held steady or are starting to recover.

In addition, our budget is strong because my team has, from the beginning of our administration, focused on innovation and efficiency. For example, just since 2017, we've reduced our headcount by more than 500 positions – or about 10 percent in order to balance our budget.

And we have one of the best budget staffs of any city government in America.

And I'd like to say a special thank-you to our outgoing Metro Government Chief Financial Officer, Daniel Frockt. Daniel has been an outstanding leader, colleague, and public servant. Our city is better off for his years of service and we wish him the best.

Under his leadership, our Office of Management and Budget was honored for the 8th year in a row by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada with their highest recognition for governmental budgeting.

Our city budget was inarguably strengthened by the federal government's COVID-related assistance, including \$156.7 million in federal aid that Metro Government has received since last year. Most of that funding came through the CARES Act, provided only to the 35 highest-population cities in America. Louisville qualified for that funding because of the decision made in 2003 to combine city and county governments, which resulted in today's population of approximately 775,000. That was the right idea in 2003 and we are still seeing its benefits.

Federal COVID-related funding will continue to strengthen our city's finances. The budget I present today was crafted with the knowledge that soon we'll be receiving more than \$430 million through the American Rescue Plan, or ARP. The first half of the money will arrive around May 10 with the other half a year later; these funds must all be spent by the end of 2024.

Washington is still determining eligible expenses for the ARP funding, so we did not include those funds in this budget proposal. When the guidelines are clear, my team will work with the Metro Council to determine the best way to leverage this highly unique opportunity – and take ideas we once reserved for some day and turn them into reality now.

And while the \$430 million we expect is a great deal of money, it is not nearly enough to solve all our challenges. For example, Metro has over \$2 billion in deferred maintenance costs alone. But it is a good start.

So we will use this rare opportunity to address critical priorities with a racial equity lens in areas like education, workforce development, public safety, broadband, and climate, as well as key infrastructure projects. And that should lead to significant growth in the building and construction trades, which we hope will get an additional boost from President Biden's proposed American Jobs Plan and the American Family Plan.

Thanks goes to President Biden, Vice President Harris, and our own Congressman John Yarmuth, for their tireless work to provide us with the resources necessary to support vaccination efforts, assistance for small businesses, schools and community-focused non-profits, so we can mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and build back better, together.

This one-time influx of federal funding provides us with both opportunity and responsibility. We will plan, implement, and invest every dollar with efficiency, accountability, and transparency. That's why we're working with Accelerator for America to set up our own Louisville Accelerator Team to convene leaders among our business, non-profit, foundation, faith and other partners to ensure our priorities and our resources are aligned and leveraged for maximum benefit.

We're one of only six cities in America chosen for this program, and we're confident it will help us maximize this generational opportunity.

Because now is the time to be bold in our planning and investments.

Numerous economists and bankers are optimistic on the future of our economy. Citing the vaccines and federal stimulus, JP Morgan Chase CEO Jamie Dimon earlier this month predicted a US economic boom that could easily run into 2023.

Locally, we're also seeing positive economic signs – including a pickup in tourism and investment:

Spirit airlines service is launching 5 new non-stop routes from our Muhammad Ali International Airport.

Downtown hotel occupancy is up; bourbonism is enjoying spirited growth; and the Grady Hotel and The Cambria Hotel will be opening soon downtown, along with targeted investments from our community-led Downtown Revitalization Team.

The Norton Healthcare Sports and Learning Center opened its state-of-the-art track and field facility at 30th and Ali, and its calendar is quickly filling with bookings.

On the manufacturing front, Germany based Wieland just moved their North American headquarters to Louisville. And GE Appliances continues to expand.

And we are seeing many of our local tech companies like El Toro, Untitled, DPL Financial, Capture Higher Ed, and eBlu Solutions grow and expand.

But real economic success means a recovery for everyone across the income spectrum. Our core business clusters must thrive for us to reach that goal. And we must align and build our digital workforce skills to accelerate our growth.

Here is a proof point: I mentioned that payroll taxes have been basically flat. That's good news since they were projected to decrease. But when we look closer, we see that while people at the top of the earning scale are doing well, some better than before the pandemic, people at the lower end are struggling – with lost jobs and housing, reduced income, and food insecurity.

COVID-19 has not just laid bare the existing inequities and inadequacies of our economy, it's accelerated troubling trends and left too many people with few options.

It is vital we create economic opportunities for more Louisvillians.

One crucial piece of this work is supporting small businesses, the heart and soul of our city and, collectively, our largest employer. Our Louisville Forward team has been helping small businesses for years, and certainly, that support, coupled with federal funding, has helped many of those businesses survive this past year.

This budget furthers our local commitment to small businesses with \$2.7 million in Small Business Assistance and \$1.5 million into our METCO loan program.

The tech workforce is another critical area we're developing. This budget invests \$350,000 in our Future of Work Initiative with Microsoft, furthering our depth in Artificial Intelligence, the Internet of Things, and Data Science.

Future of Work also offers free technology training programs, and, along with our highly successful Code Louisville program, is key to expanding our workforce development strategy. We're doubling our investment in Code Louisville, which has now helped about 600 people find careers and earn family-supporting wages in our city's growing tech industry.

Part of our strategy is to invest in programs that have proven results. With our increased funding, we can scale these programs and increase their impact on individuals and families.

So we're proud of these efforts, but we know we must do more to improve the economic prospects for our city and our residents. That means addressing that while talent and potential are spread evenly throughout our city, opportunity and access are not.

I'm talking about equity. To realize our full potential as a city, we must increase our longstanding commitment to equity. We must create an economic ecosystem that builds, supports and encourages Black and Brown businesses, workers and communities.

And, clearly, we have a long way to go. Sadly, Louisville's stats reflect the national picture: Black Louisvillians make up 22.4 percent of our population but own only 2.4 percent of our businesses. The percentage of Blacks who own their own homes here is half the percentage of whites. The Black poverty rate in Louisville is nearly 3 times the white poverty rate.

These stats are the result of long-term structural racism across America. And they are not acceptable. That's why our city launched Build Back Better Together, which I announced in my budget address last year as our framework for creating an equitable recovery from the pandemic.

The B3T process involved broad community participation and led to immediate actions last year – including long-term systemic changes to grow and strengthen the number of Black and minority-owned business in Louisville, identifying funds, for example, for a Minority Business Incubator; expanding the Buy Black Lou vendor web portal; and GLI's establishing its Business Council to End Racism, as well as short-term measures, like expanding outdoor dining areas for restaurants.

B3T's community-driven recommendations, along with our plan for Advancing Racial Equity, will serve as the guide for investing the federal funds coming from the American Rescue Plan – and they guide many of the investments in this budget.

That includes the small business assistance and capacity building investments for our Black and Brown communities, as well as \$250,000 for our Equity in Procurement Task Force, which is working to close the community's wealth gap by supporting Black-owned and Minority-, Female- and Disabled-owned Business Enterprises through supplier diversity initiatives, particularly related to capital projects.

When I signed the executive order creating the task force last September, we estimated more than \$5 billion would be invested locally in public and private capital infrastructure investments over the next five years. That number could grow significantly with the American Rescue Plan and the proposed American Jobs Plan.

We're also investing \$50,000 to help the Black Business Association to expand its capacity and assist more Black-owned businesses or entrepreneurs to open or grow their businesses. Plus, \$100,000 to fund assistance for the Minority Business Incubator B3T helped launch. And we're funding a new full-time Louisville Forward staff position to focus specifically on business development in West Louisville.

This is an exciting time for development in West Louisville. Over the past 10 years, Metro Government has invested and worked with community partners to attract more than \$1 billion worth of investment to the nine neighborhoods of West Louisville.

And these investments are taking shape. As one proud West Louisville resident told me just the other day, you can see the difference. It's undeniable.

You can see the Norton Healthcare Sports and Learning Center.

You can see the first phase of the new Beecher Terrace, set to open in June.

You can see the Republic Bank Foundation YMCA and other changes at 18th and Broadway.

And this budget provides \$4 million in matching funds, on top of \$2 million last year, to move forward plans for Waterfront Park Phase IV, a 22-acre expansion connecting the downtown portion of the park to West Louisville.

I've always described the \$1 billion of investment in West Louisville as a down payment on the overall need. We know the need is still great. And I'm pleased there's now a new tool to help address that – the new West End Louisville Partnership.

A bipartisan piece of state legislation signed into law earlier this month will set up a 20-year Tax Increment Financing district that will enable the residents of West Louisville to have control over a new source of funding for neighborhood development projects for years to come.

I am happy to announce that my budget provides the first \$5 million in seed funding for the Partnership and, if \$10 million is raised from private sources, Metro will provide up to an additional \$5 million on June 30, 2022 in order to trigger a state match of \$10 million.

As I said, Metro has been focused on equity for my entire time as Mayor, but now we can act on our goals like never before. Something is happening in our community and our country on racial equity. There are more open, honest, and productive conversations taking place in more parts of our community than anytime I can remember.

GLI, Brown-Forman, Humana, Norton Healthcare, YUM! Brands and Thornton's, just to name a few, are all stepping up and making commitments to advance the cause of racial equity.

Here and across the country, we're seeing more and more examples of companies integrating racial justice into their policies and practices. It's exciting to see corporate America coming to the inevitable conclusion that in order to attract and retain talent, as well as customers, they must commit to equity.

That's a commitment I've made in every city budget I have proposed, and I'm accelerating that commitment with numerous investments in this budget, including the expansion of our Office of Equity, which coordinates our efforts to remove barriers to racial equity.

We're making investments to alleviate challenges that hit all communities, but hit Black and Brown communities the hardest, like housing insecurity.

We're tripling our investment in down payment assistance to \$3 million, which will help address the income and wealth gap that exists between majority and minority communities by helping more Louisville families become homeowners. 150 new homeowners will be created from this investment alone!

We're continuing our investment in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund with \$10M, while recognizing that our city still needs an additional 32,000 affordable housing units to accommodate people earning up to 30% of area median income. This is an ongoing challenge in which we must keep investing.

In addition, we're making investments to assist people who are experiencing homelessness in our city. Through our Office of Resilience & Community Services, we're investing \$5.9 million in housing and support services, including External Agency and Emergency Solutions Grant funds. We're investing around \$1 million to house homeless people struggling with AIDS. And there's another \$200,000 for Housing Connection funding to Neighborhood Place for helping our homeless.

That's on top of the \$1.7 million (annualized) that we directed toward Homeless and Housing Services as part of the mid-year budget adjustment in January.

All of these are critical investments that will make it possible for more people to leave the streets and find the safety and security of a home.

Beyond that, we're excited about the recently announced \$11 million in additional funds we'll receive through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's HOME Investment Partnerships Program. We will use these funds to create even more affordable housing options and provide services for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

And we expect additional funding for eviction prevention services through the ARP and the state, so we can help more people stay in the homes they have now.

As part of our equity work, we're also expanding broadband through a fiber network and we've reopened our libraries and community centers, which provide services that many of our low-income neighbors depend on for information and internet access.

This budget also funds an exciting change at our libraries. During the pandemic we stopped collecting fines for overdue books and materials. This budget makes that change permanent. Libraries around the country have eliminated overdue fines, finding that they don't really impact when people return materials, and that eliminating overdue fines doesn't lead to more unreturned materials.

Our young people and communities of color are hurt the most by these fines, with the consequence of being left unable to utilize critical library resources. I am pleased my budget eliminates this barrier.

There are many good investments in this budget, but maximizing the return on them requires another significant step: successfully reimagining and redesigning our approach to public safety.

The simple yet profound fact is that public safety in general and policing in particular are at a critical crossroads in Louisville and America. Our police officers perform a difficult, dangerous and essential job. At the same time, we must provide more accountability and transparency in policing, as part of a host of reforms intended to build police-community trust and address other structural inequities that are pervasive in our society.

We've heard the calls for defunding the police, and varying ideas for what that might look like. I believe the path for Louisville to become a city of racial justice and equity requires us to think more broadly about how to create a safe city with fewer arrests and less incarceration for non-violent offenses.

This is critical work we approach with the urgency inspired by the racial justice protests we've seen in our city and around the country.

I'd like to read something from an editorial that appeared last month in the Washington Post:

We should think about public safety the way we think about public health. No one would suggest that hospitals alone can keep a population healthy, no matter how well run they might be. A healthy community needs neighborhood clinics, health education, parks, environments free of toxins, government policies that protect the public during health emergencies, and so much more. Health isn't just about hospitals; safety isn't just about police.

This budget reflects the fact that producing safety requires a "whole of government" and "whole of city" approach – not just investments in law enforcement. We must invest in intervention, prevention, community mobilization, organizational change, and re-entry.

That means investments in clean streets and healthy neighborhoods.

That means a focus on our youth and paths to success, instead of paths to crime.

That means more resources for mental health, housing and workforce training.

And because public safety is Louisville Metro Government's single greatest responsibility, it means every single agency and office – from Parks to Public Health, from Libraries to Louisville Forward, from Sustainability to Solid Waste Management – plays a critical role in creating and delivering public safety.

The investments in this budget reflect the fact that the whole of Louisville Metro Government is committed to doing all we can to reimagine what public safety is and how it is delivered. Because public safety requires the combined efforts of social workers, nurses, community center staff, librarians, workforce trainers and police officers; plus business leaders, community activists, faith leaders and elected officials.

And it requires you, and me – each and every one of us, the whole of our city –working together to co-produce the safe city we all deserve.

That's a truth embraced by our reform-focused Chief of Police, Erika Shields. She and her team are implementing recommendations from Hillard Heintze's top-to-bottom review of LMPD, plus numerous others. They understand we need to focus on equitable policing, on changes in how we train, and – as we've been reminded of recently – on how our officers engage with the public they've dedicated themselves to serve and protect.

Our independent Civilian Review and Accountability Board is now in place and is in the process of selecting the right person to lead the Office of Inspector General.

This budget funds that office while also enhancing our work to actively recruit more women and people of color to serve as police officers, firefighters, and Emergency Service professionals. Our goal is that the recruit classes funded in this budget will be our most diverse ever.

At the same time, as I said, this budget reflects the reality that public safety is something that every Metro agency – and institutions throughout our city – must help create.

That's why we are quadrupling our investment in capacity-building and violence prevention programs from \$5 million to \$19 million.

We're investing nearly \$5 million in new deflection and diversion programs – because we know some situations are best served by a social service response, not a law enforcement response, particularly when dealing with people who are struggling with homelessness, mental health challenges or substance use.

We're reinstating the nurse triage program in our MetroSafe 911 Center. This program helps EMS and police by more intensely triaging calls and diverting them – when appropriate – to transportation or home health advice, eliminating unnecessary EMS and police runs.

We're increasing funding for the Office for Safe & Healthy Neighborhoods, or OSHN, to expand proven programs like Pivot to Peace, a hospital-based partnership that focuses on victims of violence and has reduced injury recidivism among participants by 95 percent. We're investing \$4.5 million to expand Pivot to Peace and other related violence reduction efforts.

This budget includes \$550,000 in funding for the Group Violence Intervention initiative. Launched late last year, GVI holds our most violent offenders accountable for their actions, while also offering community services to divert them from a path of gun violence, incarceration and tragedy.

And we will be investing nearly half a million dollars in our Synergy program to help build a greater sense of trust, respect and legitimacy between police officers and those they serve through honest, open conversations and community problem solving on public safety.

These investments plus many others are designed so our citizens and police officers can co-produce public safety and thereby enhance police-community legitimacy.

We're also providing more pathways to opportunity, especially for our youth who lack hope in the future and who are coming of age at a time of more rapid global, technological and societal change than any generation in human history.

It's our job to help them expand their options and find their way.

When I talk with young people who've been involved with the justice system, it's heartbreaking how many are there because of bad decisions made out of desperation, out of the belief they had no way to create a life free of violence or incarceration.

This ties in with my earlier points about equity, economic opportunity and preventing violence.

The investments we're making for our youth in this budget will also help make us a safer, more prosperous and more equitable city.

Like Evolve502. This is game changer our city. Post-secondary education is the No. 1 disruptor of poverty. And through Evolve502, our city is opening the doors to out-of-school-time assistance and college scholarships to every JCPS high school student.

This budget invests \$3 million for Evolve502 Promise scholarships, which will unlock matching funds from the CE&S Foundation, getting us closer to making those scholarships a long-term investment in our youth, and the path to an affordable higher education that every family deserves. It took 10 years and a lot of hard work from a lot of people to make Evolve502 a reality, maximizing it as a lynchpin in our efforts to build one of the best talent development system in America.

Our Future of Work initiative is also working with JCPS to create new tech pathways in their Academies of Louisville, and sponsoring tech training through trusted community-based organizations like the Louisville Central Community Center and AMPED. And we're doubling the budget for SummerWorks to one million dollars as we work to bring all of our education and workforce development efforts into alignment.

In addition to these capacity building initiatives, we're devoting resources to help youth who've been involved with the justice system find a better way after leaving it.

Like Reimage, a collaboration with KentuckianaWorks that's helping to break the cycle of incarceration and recidivism by connecting justice-involved youth to education, training and careers in key fields such as IT, manufacturing, construction and more. More than 800 young people have enrolled in Reimage, and participants' recidivism rate in their first year has remained under 10 percent. The national average is 44 percent. This program works!

Reimage is actively recruiting young people and businesses to provide more opportunities. Earlier this month a group of Reimage participants graduated from a training class at U ASK Academy Sales. They interviewed with representatives from local car dealerships and all nine were offered full-time jobs on the spot.

As we prepare our young people for the future, we must also ensure a better future for the next generations.

Fulfilling our responsibility to respond to the global climate emergency is one way to do so.

Today, of course, is Earth Day, which reminds us that, even as we contend with the pressing and individual concerns of the moment, we cannot lose sight of the fact that climate change threatens all of us and our very existence.

This budget continues our investment in greenhouse gas reduction efforts, providing incentives for cool roofs and other measures to reduce pollution and counter the urban heat island effect, which compromises the health of too many Louisvillians. This budget also invests \$600,000 in Environmental Resiliency efforts to improve air quality. And it reflects our new partnership with the National Renewable Energy Lab, which will help us achieve the goals set by Metro Council of 100 percent renewable energy by 2030 and 100 percent clean energy by 2035.

I'm also happy to announce that our city will be going to all LED street lights over the next five years as part of recently concluded negotiations with LG&E.

And as further evidence of our commitment to sustainability, I'm proud to announce that I will be issuing an executive order that prioritizes the purchase of electric and hybrid vehicles, green equipment and necessary infrastructure, to support Metro Government's transition to electric vehicles.

Of course, protecting our environment also means preserving and, when we can, expanding our city's green spaces. This budget funds projects in Elliott Park and Chickasaw Park – and, in both of these, we're working with Olmsted Park Conservancy, a tremendous partner, through a matching fund program, which adds value to the city's investment.

We're also funding tree-planting, park clean-ups, the continued growth of the Louisville Loop, Newburg Park, the Southwick Community Center, Russell Lee Park, Hayes Kennedy and Champion Parks, Waterfront Phase IV, as mentioned, and the next steps for the Shawnee Outdoor Learning Center.

We will also invest in expanding efforts like our Clean Collaborative, which is helping revitalize our roadways and our neighborhoods, with graffiti removal and in the upkeep of vacant lots, which is both a beautification effort and can contribute to public safety as well.

And on the subject of beautification, I've always said the arts are the soul of our city. And this budget also invests in new public art projects. The arts help make our city unique and we will invest \$100,000 in a competition to create new works of public art that reflect the spirit, character and values of our city.

And to implement and make all of our investments successful, we will continue to lean on the sustained excellence and dedication of our Metro Government team – the 5,000 public servants who devote themselves to our city every day. In a historically difficult and demanding year, our Metro team has worked long hours and fought through challenges and uncertainty day and night to serve our city.

Metro Government is one team, but we have two different compensation methods for union and non-union employees. Our non-union Metro employees have received little or no salary increases for the past two years, so I'm happy to announce that they will receive a 3% salary increase in this budget. In addition, per a recent ordinance passed by Metro Council and signed into law earlier this month, this budget also funds 12 weeks of paid leave for all Metro Government employees welcoming a child by birth or adoption, a benefit we encourage other Louisville employers to provide to recruit and retain more talent in our city.

Much of our team's productivity is driven by technology. This budget supports that with \$30 million in upgrades so we can better serve the public, including improving our award-winning 911 and Cybersecurity systems. The budget also funds needed maintenance and repairs to our libraries, the Zoo, Parks, Fleet and Facilities and more.

We're also investing \$20 million in paving for this coming fiscal year, which will allow us to pave an additional 200 lane miles of roadways. And we'll invest \$2 million to complete more than 25,000 feet of sidewalk repairs as well.

One reason I highlight our investments in paving is to reflect the fact that while this budget certainly invests in many exciting new initiatives, we also must take care of basic city services like paving.

As I said, the reality is that in our city, everything truly is connected – our streets, our goals, and our futures.

And if the last year has taught us anything, it's that, while we can't predict the future, we can and must prepare. We must plan and adapt while we cultivate in our community the timeless qualities that will help guide our future: resilience, innovation, equity and compassion.

And we must do this together. This moment and the challenges and opportunities it offers are too big for any one person or organization to take on alone.

I look forward to working with you, Metro Council members, on the priorities laid out in this budget and on the upcoming ARP funds so we can build back better, together.

We've always had ideas, dreams, aspirations. Because of the federal funding coming our way we will have resources to make more of them real.

After a very turbulent year, let's create a future that skillfully adapts to a changing world, while still embracing the spirit and character of the city we love.

Let's build a model for other cities to follow. A model that defeats the pandemic, lifts up our economy and realizes racial equity. Let's show the country and the world: This is how we claim the future for our community. This is how Louisville moves forward. Together.

Thank you. And God bless the people of Louisville.

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