



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF
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COUNTY EXECUTIVE BELLO PRESENTS PROPOSED 2026 BUDGET

The \$1.5 billion proposal again reduces the County tax rate to a historic low

ROCHESTER, NY — Monroe County Executive Adam Bello today submitted his 2026 budget proposal to the County Legislature. The roughly \$1.5 billion proposal is a disciplined financial plan that prioritizes fiscal stability, protects taxpayers, and invests in public safety and public health initiatives despite growing uncertainty in federal funding. It also continues the Bello administration's record of lowering the property tax rate, which is once again the lowest in the County's recorded history.

"The proposed 2026 County budget comes at a time of significant uncertainty, unlike anything we have faced in County government in recent years," **said County Executive Bello**. "With questions surrounding future federal support and potential funding rescissions, every decision we make today must protect Monroe County taxpayers and ensure the County's long-term stability."

Despite these challenges, the proposed budget maintains Monroe County's strong financial footing and continues to fund key priorities in public safety, public health, and quality of life improvements - all while reducing the property tax rate to its lowest level in County history.

Financial highlights:

- **Total Spending:** \$1.57 billion — a 1.9% increase over the 2025 adopted budget.
- **Full value tax rate** falls by \$0.36, to \$5.67 per \$1,000 of assessed value – a historic low. Including this budget, the Bello administration has reduced the tax rate by \$3.12 or 35% over the past six years. (2020 rate was \$8.79 per \$1,000)
- Continues to build on the sound financial practices that have resulted in the county's sixth credit rating upgrade since 2021. Fitch Ratings noting that their most recent bond rating affirmation of AA can be attributed to the county's strong financial performance, conservative budgeting, and strong fiscal controls.

Public Safety:

The 2026 budget funds several major public safety and emergency response initiatives, including:

- **MonroeAlert:** A new mass public emergency alerting system that will send urgent notifications to residents via text message, phone call, and email during life-threatening situations.
- **EMS Dashboard:** A first-of-its-kind system to help 911 dispatchers and EMS agencies share real-time data, improve response coordination, and enhance patient care.
- **Body-Worn Cameras for Probation Officers:** A significant step forward in transparency and accountability that will strengthen community trust and officer safety.

- An increase in County support in the Monroe County Sheriff's Office to help recruit and retain qualified law enforcement professionals.

Public Health and Support for Families:

The proposed budget also expands investments in public health and substance use prevention, including continued funding for the IMPACT Team, 24/7 Opioid Crisis Hotline, community Naloxone distribution boxes, and the second year of the County's "Call to Action" public education campaign.

The Office of Mental Health will also pilot a Peer Support Services Transportation Program, providing safe, supportive transport for residents in crisis to diversion services rather than emergency rooms.

Monroe County's 2026 budget continues to support working families and community well-being through major human services initiatives:

- **Childcare Expansion:** An additional \$11.2 million for daycare services to meet increased demand and ensure more families have access to reliable childcare. It also maintains the 1% parent fee and presumptions certificate program.
- **Anti-Poverty and Workforce Initiatives:** Continued implementation of Project Prosper and the Monroe Ladder Demonstration Project, funded through \$28 million in state grants received in 2025, to drive economic opportunity and upward mobility.

Bello added, "This budget is more than a financial plan—it's a roadmap for responsible governance during unpredictable times. It protects taxpayers, preserves core services, and strengthens the foundation of our community. By balancing investment with restraint, we're positioning Monroe County to weather potential challenges without sacrificing the services residents depend on every day."

The Monroe County Legislature will consider the spending plan for adoption at its meeting on December 9.

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