



**PARTNERSHIP  
FOR THE  
PUBLIC GOOD**

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### **Community Groups Announce their Policy Agenda for 2020**

“This is a collective vision of a more just and vibrant Buffalo,” said Partnership for the Public Good Executive Director Andrea Ó Súilleabháin, as the group unveiled its 2020 Community Agenda in a festive event at the Central Library.

“Our 304 community partners, ranging from block clubs to social service agencies, from theaters to environmental advocates, have come together to identify the top ten policy actions that local and state governments can take in the coming year to build a better region,” Ó Súilleabháin explained.

Each fall PPG leads a democratic process among its partners to determine the Community Agenda for the coming year. This year’s Agenda addresses topics such as reducing the disparate impact of traffic fines and fees, preventing unjust evictions, addressing water shut-offs that affect thousands of Buffalo households, and protecting the Outer Harbor as parkland.

In eleven years of creating and supporting a Community Agenda, PPG partners have seen many of their goals realized, on issues such as early voting, statewide climate legislation, paid family leave, raising the age of criminal responsibility, and increasing minimum wage.

“Engaging in local and state policy arenas gives us the opportunity to directly influence the decisions that affect our communities most,” said Sarah Wooton, PPG Policy Analyst. “Our Community Agenda process encourages collaboration between community groups across the region. They voice their top policy priorities for the next twelve months, and we move to advance those priorities as a collective—with the voices of those directly impacted at the forefront.”

The Community Agenda was announced to the community at an event opened by local spoken word artist Noah Barr. Speakers included Jalonda Hill and Matt Parham of the WNY Law Center, Sophia Lawrence of the WNY Youth Climate Council, Tanvier

Peart of the WNY Peace Center, Margaret Wooster of the Our Outer Harbor coalition, and more.

PPG and its partners will be visiting with elected leaders in the coming months to review the Agenda with them and ask for their support. The ten planks are titled:

1. Reduce the Disparate Impact of Traffic Fines and Fees
2. Implement a Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Program
3. Declare a Climate Emergency in Buffalo and Erie County
4. A State Park on the Outer Harbor
5. Equitable Financing for Water Bills for Low Income Individuals
6. Just Cause Eviction
7. Improve Language Access and Inclusion in Western New York
8. Dedicate New Sources of Funding to Expand and Improve Public Transportation
9. Good Food Purchasing for Buffalo Schools
10. Equitable and Increased Representation of Frontline Communities in City of Buffalo  
Public Art

The full text of each plank is available at PPG's web site, [www.ppgbuffalo.org](http://www.ppgbuffalo.org).

**Assembly Member Sean Ryan said:** “The Partnership for the Public Good continues to lead the way in setting a bold progressive agenda for our community. From protecting our climate, to investing in public transportation, standing up for vulnerable members of our community, and protecting our Outer Harbor, PPG's list of priorities for the coming year addresses many of the pressing issues facing Buffalo and Western New York. I look forward to working with PPG in the coming year to advance this important agenda which seeks to ensure equitable treatment and access for all Western New Yorkers.”

**Common Council Member David Rivera said:** “Every January I look forward to the rollout of PPG's community agenda. The process for creating the agenda is just as important as the ideas on the agenda. It is a reminder that our participation in democracy does not have to end at the voting booth as we can continue to impact our state and local governments throughout the year by pushing for important legislation and policies. Thank you to all the community partners and participants for prioritizing their ideas. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue to improve Buffalo as a welcoming, affordable, and safe place for all.”

**Common Council Member Mitch Nowakowski said:** “I'm thrilled that it is time again for PPG's annual Community Agenda roll out. It is imperative that we look at the larger scope of issues that face our City and our region in 2020 and beyond. A critical eye enhances our ability to tackle these issues in a collaborative way that benefits and strengthens our community.”