



Borough of PROSPECT PARK


Mohamed T. Khairullah
Mayor

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MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Mohamed T. Khairullah
From: Intashan Chowdhury, MPA – Business Administrator 
RE: 2021 Prospect Park Year in Review
Date: December 20, 2021
CC: Municipal Council and Department Heads

In 2021, as we continue to climb out of the global pandemic, The Borough of Prospect Park (hereafter “Borough”) continues to deliver effective and efficient constituent services to its residents – all while maintaining sound fiscal practices that holds the line for taxpayers and make critical investments in infrastructure, parks, and economic development. Moreover, the Borough continues to provide strong public safety measures coupled with social net of initiatives, events, and programming that improves the quality of life of all residents. Below is a breakdown of some of the Borough’s services by the numbers and a year in review of 2021 accomplishments:

Holding the Line with Sound Fiscal Management and Long-Term Budget Practices

- Adopted a structurally sound budget with realistic revenue projections, funding, and forecasting for Borough departments.
- Renegotiated a shared services agreement with Prospect Park Board of Education to provide police services of an additional officer for an additional three (3) years, matching the first shared service agreement length which provides for a school resource officer, snow removal, and garbage / recycling pick-up services. This action solidifies revenue streams and stabilizes the tax rate to provide tax relief to Borough residents while providing essential day-to-day services and cost cutting measures for the school district
- Held salary increases to two (2) percent for municipal employees.
- Revised and adopted an updated version of the Borough’s purchasing manual which outlines the policies and procedures that enhance internal controls and efficiency for purchasing goods and services.
- **CARES Act Spending:** Secured 99% of reimbursement for projects from CARES Act funding in the amount of \$895,000.00.
- **2020 Audit Report:** no material weaknesses or changes that were significant for the Borough related to the financial reporting and statements for the calendar year 2020

2021 Prospect Park Year in Review
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Grants Administration

Grant Applications Approved, Funding Awarded: \$1,384,170.00 and 6 basketballs total awarded

- **Public Safety Grants: \$561,760.00 awarded**
 - Awarded \$500,000 for four new officer hires from the US Dept. of Justice (DOJ) COPS Hiring Program
 - Awarded \$40,760.00 for 20 body-worn cameras from the NJ Dept. of Law and Public Safety (LPS) Body-Worn Camera Grants Program
 - Awarded \$6,000.00 for officer overtime and pedestrian safety educational activities from the NJ Division of Highway Traffic Safety (DHTS) Distracted Driving Crackdown Grant
 - Awarded \$15,228.00 for Safe and Secure grant which provides for community policing services and extra patrol
- **Infrastructure and Transportation Grants: \$619,844.00 awarded**
 - Awarded \$223,000.00 for main sewer line repair project from FY2022 Congressional Appropriations (pending final approval in Congress)
 - Awarded \$311,844.00 for North 11th Street improvements through the NJ Department of Transportation (DOT) Municipal Aid Program
 - Awarded \$85,000.00 for Planten Ave improvements through the Passaic County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program
- **Parks and Recreation Grants: \$217,566.00 and 6 basketballs (in-kind value of approx. \$180) awarded**
 - Awarded \$200,000.00 for the Hofstra Park Soccer Field through the Passaic County Open Space Trust Fund
 - Awarded \$17,566.00 for inclusive summer camp through the NJ Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Recreational Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities (ROID) Program
 - Awarded Six basketballs (approx.. \$180.00 in-kind value) through the SNY Play Ball – Basketball Grants Program

Grant Applications Submitted, Pending Review: \$2,869,588.27 total requested/pending review

- **Fire: \$523,809.52 total requested**
 - Requested \$523,809.52 for a replacement fire engine from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG)
- **Infrastructure and Transportation: \$1,845,778.75 total requested**
 - Requested \$923,823.75 for North 6th St improvements from the NJ Department of Transportation (DOT) Local Freight Impact Fund (LFIF) Program
 - Requested \$921,955.00 for Fairview Ave improvements from the NJ Department of Transportation (DOT) Local Transportation Projects Fund Grant Program
- **Parks and Recreation Grants: \$500,000.00 total requested**
 - Requested \$500,000.00 for Hofstra Park soccer field from the NJ DCA Local Recreation Improvement Grant (LRIG) Program

Investing in Infrastructure, Open Space, Recreation, and Economic Development

- **Road Resurfacing Improvement Projects:** North 12th Street (from Haledon Avenue to Dead End) and North 12th Place (From Planten Avenue to Struyk Avenue) completed
 - Roadway improvements involved replacing bad curb sections, sidewalks, and driveways
 - Total milling, paving, equaling to 3,985 L.F. or 6,725 S.Y. and striping
 - Roadway improvement projects were majority funded through NJ DOT Municipal Aid and CDBG grants respectively
- **Enhancements to Hofstra Park:** Completed construction of FIFA regulated turf soccer field that replaced an outdated ball field with over a \$1 million in funding through partnerships via NJDEP Green Acres (first time awardees) and Passaic County Open Space
- **Completed or started the following additional capital projects:**
 - Municipal Building floor replacement of carpet to tile via CARES funding
 - Installation of protective barriers and temper glass throughout the Municipal Building via CARES funding
 - Installed thermal body temperature and security scanner via CARES funding
 - Hands-free renovations at restrooms and front door of Municipal Building as well as Hofstra Park
 - Beautification and revitalization of commercial district pavers
 - Installed garbage and recycling receptacles throughout the municipality
 - Installed electronic stop signs around schools and key areas of vehicular traffic
 - Completed implementation of Borough-Wide Striping Program
 - Borough-Wide LED Street-light replacement program in partnership with PSE&G
 - Installation of security camera at the entrance of Hofstra Park courtesy of Passaic County
 - Acquired new DPW dump n' flow unit with lift gate and snowplow via CARES Act funding
 - Began replacement of worn out or damaged street signs Borough-wide (handicap signs, no parking signs, stop signs, etc.)
- **Acquisition of property located at 333 North 8th Street (formerly Luk Oil Gas Station) to convert and construct into a parking lot thereon** to alleviate parking congestion by creating additional parking spaces for residents and commercial corridor
- **Renewed Temporary Outdoor Dining Ordinance:** Providing Borough-based business the opportunity and capacity to improve dining experiences and business operations in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic
- **Participation in the Sustainable Jersey Municipal Certification Program:** Resolution was passed to create sustainable activities and solutions that seeks to optimize quality of life for residents by ensuring that is environmental (clean land, air, and water), economic (saving tax dollars), and social objectives are balanced and mutually supportive – officially opening outlets for additional grant opportunities to meet those needs
 - Borough passed legislation authorizing and encouraging electric vehicle supply / service equipment and make-ready parking spaces ahead of State of New Jersey's goals to reduce air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector as outlined and by various programs related to NJ 2019 Energy Master Plan, Global Warming Response Act and Electric Vehicle Law

- **Adopted Land Use amendments to the development regulations** of the Borough in accordance with the recommendations of the 2021 Borough's Master Plan
 - Borough's Master Plan Re-examination Report successfully renewed after 12 years
 - Increased height (five stories) on North 8th Street (between Planten Avenue and Haledon Avenue) and Haledon Avenue (entire length) that would increase potential rateables and additional revenue streams while creating opportunities to revitalize the commercial district of the Borough in the future
- Adopted new regulations for stormwater control consistent with amendments to the NJDEP's Stormwater Management rules
- **Despite COVID-19, the Borough remained committed to continue hosting events, initiatives, and activities for the community:**
 - Continued birthday drive-by siren, Easter, and Hispanic Heritage parades courtesy of Prospect Park public safety agencies (police and fire departments)
 - Annual Borough-Wide Shred Day
 - Annual Borough-Wide Garage Sale
 - Annual Lighting of the Fanoos Ceremony
 - Annual National Day of Prayer Ceremony
 - Annual 9/11 Memorial Service and Candlelight Vigil Freedom Walk headlined by Keynote Speaker and famous photographer and journalist Thomas E. Franklin
 - 4th Annual National Night Out – 500 attendees
 - **NJ MVC Mobile Unit** set up operations in the Borough for first time ever and for a record three days serving 150 residents with various services including driver licenses, non-driver ID cards, vehicle registrations, license plates, placards, examination permits, and Real IDs
 - 12th Annual Prospect Park Day Parade, Festival and Fireworks Show – 1,000 attendees and raised over \$15,000 in event sponsorship
 - Haunted Halloween Trick N' Trunk – over 600 attendees
 - Annual Seniors & Veterans Thanksgiving Dinner – hosted and distributed meals to homes of resident seniors and veterans of the community
 - Annual Thanksgiving Turkey Giveaway – distributed 125 turkeys to residents
 - Annual Christmas Tree Lighting – included musical performances, visit from Santa, and make your own snow globes (over 100) for Borough children to enjoy
 - Resumed partnership with Passaic County Clerk's Office to offer monthly mobile office hours that include a wide range of services such as full passport services, notary oaths/renewal services, and issuance of free veteran ID cards in the Borough
 - Prospect Park Toy Giveaway – distributed 120 toys to Borough children and raised \$6,000 through private and non-profit partnerships for toys and portions of proceeds going to spreading holiday cheer for children battling cancer

Investing in Trendsetting Innovation, Technology, and Cybersecurity Improvements

- **Hired a new IT vendor (Quikteks)** that paved the way for improvements in day-to-day technological operations and saved taxpayer dollars long-term serving both PD and the Borough (first-time ever merging)

- **Adopted a 2-year Technology Plan** – first municipality in Passaic County to design a plan that outlined goals, budget planning, strengths, and areas of improvements related to technology needs long-term
- **Launched new Borough website** – affording the opportunity to conduct municipal services in two clicks or less while cutting costs by switching vendors (Revize)
 - Online payments including ability to pay taxes online now available
 - Service request portal and online fillable forms
 - Virtual tour of the Borough
 - Online Municipal Code and Interactive Zoning Map available
- **Borough Hall at Your Fingertips:** Partnered with GoGov to create a custom branded mobile app called ‘MyProspectPark’ that improves customer service by reporting issues or view important agency information all in one convenient location - set to launch in January 2022
 - Service Portal - Allows for centralizing and organizing easy resident service requests submissions
 - Track and Progress Messages - Residents can check the status of their issues at their convenience. Real time push notifications & alerts proactively keep them up to date as their issues are resolved.
 - Provide FAQs and information about municipal services through fully searchable knowledgebase
 - Reporting and Workflow improvements – serves as resource to structure back-end task management and opportunities to make data-driven decisions
 - Will compliment CodeRED emergency and community notification system
- **Digitization of Borough documents and files** – first municipality in the State of New Jersey to utilize CARES funding to organize, scan, digitize all Borough files on a secure cloud-based platform for every department
- Re-wired the municipal building to **install a new wireless system** for the Borough to improve internet connectivity utilizing CARES funding
- **Moving towards the future - Cloud-Based solutions**
 - Third-party technology service providers and equipment stored in the cloud
 - Office 365 licensing with multi-factor authentication fully installed and now available for PD and Borough - generating cost savings and greater security
 - Replacing aging server with a new operating system with back-up cloud feature solutions – lowering crashes and server shutdowns
 - Security assessments routinely performed – closing security loopholes and corners
 - Borough’s Courtroom and Council Chambers recording system and sound system upgraded
 - Automated service improvements to increase efficiency in the following departments via cloud-based software including Animal licensing, electronic requisitions, and permitting and code enforcement for 2022
- **Remote Policy and Capabilities for Employees and Governing Body**
 - Borough Hall employees and governing body members receiving mobile devices including laptops, iPads, and surface tablets providing opportunities to work from home on needed and crisis basis as well as ability to host meetings online
 - ISO reporting for NFIRS for Fire Department can be done virtually anywhere other than Firehouse

- **Switched cell phone providers to AT&T First Net** – a government co-operative agreement that created cost saving measures for Borough-paid cell phone users while prioritizing cellular traffic for first responders and municipal employees that use them
- **Switched mailing system** that generated long term savings on postage and mailing along with cutting edge technology to improve daily operations for municipal employees

Public Health Initiatives on the Front Lines of COVID-19

- Through partnerships with City of Paterson Health Department shared services and partnerships with local pharmacies hosting vaccine clinics, the Borough achieved the state goal of 70% vaccination rate for the resident adult population
- Hosted an infectious disease workshop for Borough residents through a partnership with Passaic County Health Department
- Hosted the Borough's 3rd Annual Health Fair that offers helpful educational seminars, free screenings from physicians and specialists, COVID-19 vaccine and testing, among other wide range of health services
- Hosted four blood drives which was a result of large blood shortages due to COVID-19
- Hosted four flu clinic dates for residents and annual rabies clinic for Borough pet owners

Public Safety

- Implemented Community Policing Division within the Prospect Park Police Department
- Secured new portable radios to enhance communications for Prospect Park Police Department and Fire Department via CARES Act funding
- Hired three (3) full-time police officers to increase patrol activity
- Mobile radar speed trailer to slow down motorists and provide community communications / messaging
- Switched Fire Department's electronic dispatch to I am Responding dispatch for members to be alerted for calls – generating cost savings and providing better user engagement for members
- No major fires noted within the Borough
- New monitors installed in the Firehouses and Borough Hall for emergency management

Conclusion

I want to thank the members of the Prospect Park governing body including Mayor Khairullah and Municipal Council for vision and leadership in helping guide these important projects and initiatives into fruition. The Borough of Prospect Park continues to move in the right direction under your stewardship. I also want to recognize the department heads, employees, municipal professionals, our government partners at every level and volunteers of the Borough who continues to collaborate and work hard so hard to deliver efficient and effective municipal operations and services to our residents.

I am certain that in 2022 we will continue to grow, adapt, and improve for Prospect Park and its residents.
