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***** PRESS RELEASE *****

Fulop Administration Completes Over 25 Major Park Improvement Projects at Neighborhood Parks Citywide

JERSEY CITY, NJ – Mayor Steven M. Fulop joins the **Departments of Infrastructure and Recreation and Youth Development (RYD)** to announce the *completion of over 25 park improvement projects spanning the City to provide intrinsic recreational and environmental benefits to Jersey City residents and the overall community*. Utilizing community input and \$846,000 in Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) awarded to Jersey City, this is among the largest citywide park improvement projects in decades.

“In Jersey City, we have made a commitment to open space by not only renovating parks but also opening new parks, whether it’s Coles Street Park or Fairmount Park or Bethune Park or even Berry Lane Park, which didn’t exist ten years ago and has become one of the most popular parks in our City,” **Mayor Fulop** said at a press conference Friday in Bayside Park. “We are opening new parks throughout Jersey City. It is a big accomplishment, especially considering Jersey City is one of the most densely populated cities in the region.”

With each park upgrade and expansion project, the Fulop Administration works closely with community groups like the **Jersey City Parks Coalition (JCPC)** and solicits feedback from surrounding residents and park maintenance crews to identify what necessary improvements that will best attract more local families and residents to use the neighborhood parks most accessible to them.

Chris Perez is a JCPC Board Trustee who founded the **Bayside Park Neighborhood Association**, a volunteer community organization that worked closely on the park upgrades in Bayside Park. “We appreciate Jersey City’s response to our needs and investment to improve Bayside Park over the past 12 years. Progress in the park is an ongoing team effort involving support from volunteers and community organizations. We look forward to Jersey City’s continued commitment to Bayside Park and open spaces all about the City.”

Since March, more than 25 park improvement projects have been completed in all six wards, as follows:

- Ward A – 8
- Ward B – 5
- Ward C – 3
- Ward D – 1
- Ward E – 5
- Ward F – 5

“We changed our permitting process to make it more accessible. All of our fields now have a QR code to scan to access our parks, and since June, we’ve had 1,000 kids use our fields here at Bayside Park. That didn’t used to happen. That happened as a result of the purposeful efforts by the City in terms of staffing, permitting, and allocating monies for upgrades. We are doing that in every park across the City to improve people’s experiences,” added **Lucinda McLaughlin, RYD Director**. “We are activating underutilized parks by using federal funding for projects big and small, such as slide repairs, new safety surfaces, pitchers mounds, soccer goals, and more. It doesn’t happen by accident. It happens with important investments of resources and community partnerships.”

PARK PROJECTS COMPLETED IN 2023

IMPROVEMENTS, REPAIRS, AND INSTALLATIONS



Bayside Park is a prime example of the administration’s innovative and cost-effective approaches. The in-house team repurposed salvaged pieces from the refurbished basketball court in Lena Edwards Park to resurface three Bayside basketball courts, essentially providing the community with new courts at two separate parks for the price of one.

Construction on several major park projects began in 2023 and will be finished in the new year, including:

- Bergen Square – New plaza and park.
- Reservoir 3 – Safety upgrades and a new continuous recreational path for public use after years of being closed off.
- Leonard Gordon Park – Safety upgrades with future phases to follow.
- Riverview Park Field – New turf field to make the space more usable for free play.

“Densely populated areas like Jersey City tend to have smaller pocket parks, and so we are strategically working to improve existing open space areas significantly and are also taking our efforts a step further by identifying opportunities to create new parks that never existed to ensure community access to parks and open space and reap all of the benefits that come from that,” said **Barkha Patel, Director of the Department of Infrastructure**. “With each project, we are also being intentional about incorporating sustainability elements such as subsurface stormwater retention.”

“Over the last 14 months, the JCPC and residents have observed the steady progress made to improve Jersey City Parks and park amenities across all wards of the City. We thank Mayor Fulop and his administration for their commitment to invest funding toward open space and much-needed park maintenance to improve

the quality of life for our residents,” added **Paula Mahayosnand, President of the Jersey City Parks Coalition.**

All media inquiries should be directed to Kimberly Scalcione at KScalcione@jcnj.org.