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**Mayor Fulop Announces NJ’s 1<sup>st</sup> Arts & Culture Trust Fund to Generate \$1M Annually for Arts Education and Programming Utilizing Community Input**

*Resolution to Reinstate City’s Successful Open Space Trust Fund Goes before City Council Tonight to also Set Rate at Quarter of a Penny*

JERSEY CITY - **Mayor Steven M. Fulop** joins the **Jersey City Municipal Council** to announce New Jersey’s first municipal Arts and Culture Trust Fund will generate \$1 million annually in critical long-term funding for Jersey City’s burgeoning arts community. Additionally, the City’s successful Open Space Trust Fund, to which the Arts Trust Fund is being mirrored after, will also bring in a million dollars in tax revenue every year to expand and enhance green park space citywide, based on residents’ input.



The Arts Fund is being implemented following the November 2020 election where voters largely supported the sustainable funding source’s implementation to directly benefit local artists and arts organizations, including youth and community programming, to help them grow and thrive. The City Council will vote tonight to set both tax levy rates at one-quarter of a penny.

“Arts and open space are two key quality of life components, especially in urban areas like ours, that have been severely undervalued for far too long. We actively engaged the community, and the voters responded strongly to the need for these responsible revenue streams to strengthen our City’s infrastructure. We can now take the necessary steps to do exactly that,” said **Mayor Fulop**.

The Jersey City Open Space Trust Fund was enacted by the Fulop Administration in 2016. After being put on hold last year amid the extreme financial uncertainty surrounding the pandemic, a resolution will go before City Council today to reinstate the levy.

The Open Space and the Arts Trust Funds received strong support from voters to implement an annual tax not to exceed two cents (\$0.02) per one-hundred dollars of assessed property value. Each funding source will bring in approximately \$1 million in annual revenue with the implementation of the \$.0025 tax levy.

Mayor Fulop spent two years working closely with the Jersey City Arts Council to lobby state legislators to implement the mechanisms that would allow for long-term arts funding. Jersey City was first to take action when the state bill was signed into law by the Governor in December 2019, allowing municipalities to implement an Arts and Culture Trust Fund.

“The return on investment in the arts is invaluable to the entire community, not just to artists. It’s a powerful tool with social, educational, and economic impacts that will continue to improve all of Jersey City for decades to come. The Arts Trust will generate four times more than what all of Hudson County receives from the State each year to funds arts and cultural programs. We’re extremely encouraged by the Mayor’s partnership with us to see this through after years of advocating together for this critical investment in our City,” said **Macadam Smith, Executive Director of the Jersey City Arts Council**.



As part of the administration’s commitment to expanding residents’ access to quality park space citywide, Mayor Fulop recently announced the largest widespread park improvement initiative in decades utilizing over \$2 million generated by the Jersey City Open Space Trust Fund. The first allocation of the Open Space Trust Fund is currently updating over 20 parks spanning all six wards based on community input - with the historic Reservoir 3 in The Heights being the largest funding recipient.

Access to public park space is proven to improve residents’ mental and physical health, property values, environmental impacts, community engagement, among other significant benefits.

“We created the Open Space Trust Fund Committee to equitably spread significant funding throughout all six wards utilizing community feedback,” said **Ward B Councilwoman Mira Prinz-Arey**. “Now we have the potential to create meaningful, long-term support for our arts community, and to ensure we maximize this opportunity, we are using the Open Space Trust Fund and the Open Space Trust Fund Committee as a template to navigate these uncharted waters with the hopes of encouraging others to follow suit.”

**All media inquiries should be directed to Kimberly Scalcione at [kscalcione@jcnj.org](mailto:kscalcione@jcnj.org).**