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Mayor Fulop & JCRA Announce \$1.1 Million Green Acres Grant Approved for Construction of Pavilion in Berry Lane Park in Bergen-Lafayette

Grant is one of Several Awarded as Fulop Administration Fast Tracks Construction; Park Will Increase Jersey City’s Open Space by 9 Percent

JERSEY CITY – Mayor Steven M. Fulop and the Jersey City Redevelopment Agency announced today that the **New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)** has approved a **\$1.1 million Green Acres grant** for the development of **Berry Lane Park**, the 17-acre park under construction in Bergen-Lafayette which has been fast-tracked for completion by the Fulop administration. The award is one of several grants the Fulop Administration has received for Berry Lane, which will be the **City’s largest municipal park increasing open space in Jersey City by nine percent.**

“This Green Acres grant from the DEP speaks to the importance of Berry Lane Park and how increasing open space in our cities is vital,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “Berry Lane will be a recreational jewel for our residents and it is exciting to see how quickly construction is moving so residents of Bergen-Lafayette and the entire city can begin enjoying the park later this year.”

Berry Lane Park is an ambitious project that will ultimately transform 17-acres of brownfields of former rail yards, junkyards and industrial facilities into a **dynamic recreational facility** in the heart of the city as part of Mayor Fulop’s commitment to invest in and enhance the quality of life of previously overlooked neighborhoods.

The **\$1.1 million Green Acres grant** will contribute to the construction of a center park pavilion building located alongside the towpath of the Historic Morris Canal. The building design is inspired by coal ore, the principal material that was historically moved along the Morris Canal.

The park will include two basketball courts, two tennis courts, a baseball field, a soccer field, a dog run, a spray park, a skatepark, an adult fitness course and a playground. These active recreation components will provide opportunities to this neighborhood where more than 60 percent of residents are children under 18 years of age.

Additional passive recreation areas – including a total of nearly 700 new trees, sitting areas, and a rain garden – will also be included in the park. The park’s design also incorporates historical features of the former Morris Canal, including the first portion of the Morris Canal Greenway to be built in Jersey City.

“I am so excited that we are one step closer to our finish line with Berry Lane Park,” said **Ward F Councilwoman Diane Coleman**. “This grant funding is another resource to help us reach completion and the we are thankful for the award.”

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Since taking office, Mayor Fulop has made investing in parks a priority with \$6 million - primarily grant funding - allocated to improve 12 parks throughout the city. Berry Lane has been an administration priority, with the JCRA seeking grant funding to move the project to completion on an aggressive schedule.

In 2014, the City completed renovations to Mary Benson Park and Leonard Gordon Playground. Boyd-McGuiness Park is currently under construction in Ward B and renovations to five additional parks are scheduled for 2015, including Columbia Park, First Street Park, and the playground at Pershing Field Park.

In addition to the latest Green Acres award, the Fulop Administration has also been the recipient of several competitive grants for Berry Lane Park.

In October 2014, the City was awarded a \$5 million grant from the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (EDA) for the park's completion, allowing expedited construction to be completed this year. The award, which the City aggressively pursued, is the maximum amount an applicant can receive.

The Fulop Administration has also been awarded a \$25,000 grant from the Tony Hawk Foundation to install a state-of-the-art skate park and a \$173,500 grant from the Baseball Tomorrow Fund to install field lighting and a scoreboard at the park's baseball field, creating a dynamic recreational facility.

Created in 1961, the Green Acres Program was formed to meet the growing recreation and conservation needs of New Jersey. With the help of both public and nonprofit partners, the program has protected 680,000 acres of open space and aided hundreds of outdoor recreational facilities, maintaining their commitment to improving quality of life for all New Jersey residents and to preserving the state's natural, historic, and cultural heritage.

All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary for Mayor Steven M. Fulop at 201-547-4836 or 201-376-0699.////