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***2015 Jersey City Budget Set to be Adopted With No Tax Increase;
Second Consecutive Year Fulop Administration Presents Budget With
Reduced or Flat Taxes while Continuing to Expand Public Safety,
Parks and Recreation Programs***

Budget Reflects \$57 Million in New Tax Ratables, the Hiring of 50 New Police Officers and 30 Firefighters, 26 New Recreational Programs Citywide, 1,000 Summer Youth Jobs, Expanded Health Services and an \$8 million Street Paving Initiative; Follows Tax Cut From Prior Year

JERSEY CITY – Mayor Steven M. Fulop announced that the City Council is set to adopt the **2015 budget tonight with no tax increase** following the prior year’s **2.13 percent tax decrease** as the Fulop Administration continues to stabilize taxes while making significant and unprecedented investments in public safety, recreation, and services for residents citywide.

For the **second consecutive year, the City’s tax base grew substantially** increasing by **\$57 million in 2015** due to Fulop administration policies that have encouraged economic investment throughout the city. In 2014, the tax base grew by \$118 million, **with Jersey City now having the largest municipal tax base in the state.**

“It’s a rare accomplishment for a city in New Jersey to lower taxes and even rarer to keep taxes flat the following year, but in Jersey City that’s exactly what we’ve done two years in a row,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “Our policies to attract investment and development to Jersey City are working, and with that comes new jobs, stable taxes and more and better services for our residents.”

In addition to stabilizing taxes, in 2015 the Fulop administration **hired approximately 50 police officers and 30 firefighters**, and continued its growth of recreational offerings with now more than **26 new recreational programs offered citywide as part of the \$4.2 million expanded Recreation budget**. The Department of Health and Human Services also bolstered its senior affairs programming and healthy food access initiatives, and led the state and nation as a model municipality for Affordable Care Act enrollment with the most residents enrolled in New Jersey.

The administration has also made an unprecedented commitment to park renovations, allocating **nearly \$6 million to parks** across the city, more than any previous administration. The Jersey City Summer Works program is also **employing nearly 1,000 Jersey City students** in summer jobs and internships, a record number for two consecutive years. The administration has also implemented an **aggressive \$8 million citywide street repaving** program paving 73 streets this summer and fall, **the largest single commitment toward resurfacing in more than three decades.**

(more)

“Our residents deserve the highest quality of services and programming, and by getting Jersey City’s fiscal house in order, we’ve been able to not only deliver property tax relief, but to do so while hiring police and firefighters, adding dozens of new recreational programs, paving more streets and expanding a variety of services for residents,” added **Mayor Fulop**.

The 2015 budget reflects the following revenue and cost savings:

- Property tax ratables increased by approximately \$57 million
- Municipal Utilities Authority (MUA) revenue increased by \$4 million
- PILOT revenue increased by \$6 million
- Land sales in the amount of \$7.1 million
- Construction permits increased by \$1 million
- Parking Authority Consolidation saved approximately \$1 million (annual)
- Municipal pension changes we sought through state legislature saved \$1 million (annual)

As a direct result of incentive program changes implemented by the Fulop administration, Jersey City is currently experiencing the greatest construction activity in the City’s history, **with 7,000 units under construction** (including Journal Square for the first time in decades) and **another 19,000 approved**. This economic growth has led to the increase in the property tax base, as well as the increase in fees from construction permits.

“Growing our tax base alongside smart fiscal planning and streamlined services has been the catalyst to both lower taxes and enhance programs and services for our residents,” said **Council President Rolando Lavarro, Jr.** “The Council will continue to work with Mayor Fulop to keep taxes stable while hiring police officers and firefighters as we focus on improving public safety and providing more activities for families throughout the city.”

“With this budget, Mayor Fulop continues to be committed to growing the Jersey City tax base without raising taxes which is significant,” said **Maria Nieves, President and CEO of the Hudson County Chamber of Commerce**. “Stable tax rates are important to helping businesses large and small plan and allocate resources for future growth and play an important role in attracting new businesses.”

The administration has also developed a budget framework for the next three years to provide a better understanding of cost exposures and provide the ability to correct gradually. This practice will allow the administration to use smart fiscal planning and a long-term budget outlook to identify potential expenditures and savings. In addition to consolidating the Parking Authority into the Department of Public Safety, which was finalized last fall, the administration has announced plans to merge the Jersey City Incinerator Authority into the Department of Public Works as part of its plan to eliminate duplicative autonomous agencies. The merger is expected to save approximately \$1.5 million annually.

In 2014, the Fulop administration introduced a budget with a **2.13 percent tax decrease**, while also hiring 38 new police officers and 26 new firefighters, and investing millions of dollars into park improvements and recreation programs citywide.

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