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

Mayor Fulop & Councilwoman Denise Ridley Announce Jersey City Acquisition of Port Liberte Ferry Terminal

1st time Jersey City is directly Engaging in Ferry Operations; Transportation Options Remain a Focus for Fulop Administration following Initiation of Citi Bike and Via Transportation Systems for Jersey City

JERSEY CITY - Mayor Steven M. Fulop joins **Councilwoman Denise Ridley** to introduce an ordinance acquiring the Port Liberte Ferry Terminal as the first time the City of Jersey City is formally entering into ferry operations. The new ferry terminal will allow *Jersey City to engage directly in contract negotiations for operations while also increasing ridership amongst low/moderate-income communities and expanding transportation options for faster, more direct routes to and from New York City.* The ordinance will be introduced at the next City Council meeting on June 15.

In an effort to restore the only ferry service outside of downtown, the City would acquire the Port Liberte Ferry Terminal, located on Jersey City’s southern-most coast in Greenville. Through this ordinance, the City will take an active role in subsidizing rates, increasing ridership, and significantly expanding access to the terminal for residents in the Greenville and West Side neighborhoods by leveraging the highly successful Via Jersey City.

“Over the last several years, Jersey City has engaged in expanding transportation options for our residents, and this is another step in that direction. We have been successful with both our Citi Bike and Via initiatives,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “By lowering costs and creating a more accessible terminal, we can encourage more of our local commuters to use the Port Liberte ferry to New York City.”

Currently, due to lacking access and affordability, the terminal is almost entirely limited to residents within the Port Liberte complex and, therefore, experiences low ridership and minimal weekday boat service.

When ferry service stopped in 2020, Jersey City launched an on-demand microtransit service in partnership with Via to provide a more affordable transportation option that closes transit gaps. Since the launch, Via’s data shows the City’s low-income and diverse populations have benefited the most. Via currently completes 13,000

trips per week. The Via service has been very successful in providing trips to residents in the Greenville neighborhood, with the Journal Square transportation hub being the most popular destination for commuters to then take the PATH train across the Hudson River.

“Losing the Port Liberte terminal during the height of the pandemic has resulted in our residents taking the light rail to a bus or PATH train. For many families, the longer commute is expensive and time-consuming, which, in turn, impedes residents in our lower-income areas from jobs and educational opportunities that could really enhance their quality of life. This ferry terminal will be a game-changer for so many of our residents. It opens the doors to numerous opportunities for many people on the southern end of the City. I’m excited to see more people take advantage of it,” added **Ward A Councilwoman Denise Ridley**.

After a two-year suspension due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the NY Waterway ferry out of Port Liberte is expected to resume service this summer, with its contract ending in 2023.

“With this ordinance, the City will be able to more directly impact the growth and success of the ferry service at Port Liberte. The City’s role would be to ensure a consistent flow of ridership by making the ferry terminal more accessible and the fares more affordable, specifically for low-income residents,” said **Barkha Patel, Director of the Department of Infrastructure**. “Additionally, as the owner of the terminal, the City will hold the ferry operator to the highest standards to ensure service is reliable, efficient, and best serving the needs of our residents.”

The ordinance will be introduced for a first reading at next week’s City Council meeting scheduled for 6 p.m. on June 15, 2022, inside City Hall Council Chambers.

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