

CITY OF ASBURY PARK
ONE MUNICIPAL PLAZA
ASBURY PARK, NJ 07712

PHONE: (732) 775 – 2100
FAX: (732) 775 - 0441



CITY COUNCIL
JOHN MOOR, MAYOR
AMY QUINN, DEPUTY MAYOR
YVONNE CLAYTON
JESSE KENDLE
JOE WOERNER

MICHAEL CAPABIANCO, CITY MANAGER

STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS: LOOKING BACK AT 2015, FORWARD TO 2016
Delivered by City Manager Michael Capabianco, February 10 2016

2/11/15, Asbury Park -- As a new year begins and the city looks towards its future, it is also necessary to look back at where we came from.

The first measuring stick is the simplest: How valuable is the property in the City?

Investment in the City is at a fever pitch, and continues to grow. From 2015 to 2016, there was an \$80-million-dollar increase in the value of City property. This January, the Building Department tripled the previous year's permit fees from \$22,000 to \$66,000.

As investment opportunities improve, so too has safety and quality of life in Asbury Park. According to Uniform Crime Reporting data, crime is at its lowest point since 1979. More patrols, more officers on foot and more officers on bikes have resulted in the decrease.

Asbury Park is also a more and more popular destination for visitors. That's why Travel & Leisure named the City the 10th best place to travel in the entire world for 2016 in their December issue.

These travelers included those with big-name recognition, like renowned chef and bestselling author Anthony Bordain, who stopped in the City for his TV show, taking in a meal at Frank's Deli and some pinball at the Silverball Museum.

Over 300,000 people visited the beach this year. Let's repeat that number: 300,000. Thankfully, these 300,000 people didn't turn into zombies as part of the back-from-the-dead Zombie Walk, or the newly formed Quality of Life Committee would have had their hands full.

Along with the new and exciting, in 2015 Asbury celebrated its past. The historic Crane House, home of American novelist Stephen Crane, was added to the National Register of Historic Places in September. Historical exhibits highlighted the sounds of jazz, gospel, and rhythm and blues history on the west side. The music scene stayed jazzy thanks to the Chamber of Commerce's jazz festival in August, where people's blues went away as they rocked in the street.

Documenting both new and old was APTV, Asbury Park's cable and online public access provider. We need to thank the volunteers who make APTV work, who donated their time to make the channel even better with improvements such as the PTZ cameras which went live at the end of the year.

In 2016, the volunteers have a goal of broadcasting more City events than ever before. Again, we truly need to thank them for the time they spend delivering a fantastic product.

Let us not forget all the new businesses that chose to call our great City home last year. This is a partial list of new business that opened in 2015 and if we missed you, we are sorry:

Rebel Supply (retail), Asbury Ale House (bar), House of Independents (theater/music/dance), Bonney Read (restaurant), North Beach food truck court (restaurant), Uncorked (retail), Purple Glaze (restaurant), United by Blue (retail), Kur wellness (spa), Cross and Orange (restaurant), Asbury Festhalle and Biergarten (bar/restaurant), Daley Practice (yoga)

And we must give thanks from the bottoms of our stomachs and wallets to the restaurants, retail establishments, and all other businesses that have stayed with us over the years. You are the bedrock of the community.

At this time we need to stop and thank all the organizations, businesses, volunteers, residents, and everyone else who has helped continue to make the City great. Without you, we would not be anywhere close to the revival that we are experiencing.

So what will your City be doing in 2016?

Construction, Building, and Development:

- So far, just in the first half of January, our building permits are double what we did in 2015. Warm weather has benefited the construction industry as development has not stopped.
- We will finish construction and dedication of the Springwood Avenue Park, the first park built by the city on the west side, and promote continued development in the Springwood Avenue Corridor.
- We will oversee the development of the Salvation Army site with the opening of the Asbury Hotel and the anticipated development of 1101 Ocean Ave, and the start of construction on the 5th Avenue Pavilion.
- We will designate the City as a Transit Village.
- We will continue to work with our partners to move forward with the Boston Way project, Turf Club, and Michael's Renaissance Village.
- We will complete the Master Plan Reexamination Report and update the property maintenance code from the current 1999 BOCA Code to the 2012 or 2015 International Property Maintenance Code.
- We will work to obtain more grant funds for capital improvements to the City's properties, such as City Hall and the Transportation Center.
- We will implement an annual road improvement program and continue to invest in the road infrastructure. Roads will actually be paved in 2016.

Workforce Development and Employment:

- A four-year Workforce Development Plan will be started. The goal of this Plan is to be a guide to help our residents obtain jobs by identifying and breaking down barriers. For projects that require City Council approval, workplace development will be a continued requirement.
- Amendments are planned to the Waterfront Redevelopment Plan and the Central Business District Plan.
- We will implement the Set Aside Program to help minority and women businesses obtain City contracts.
- We will expand the existing activities to hire local residents for all jobs, including the seasonal beach jobs.

Changes within City Administrations:

- The accreditation of the Police Department will start, along with updates to the Asbury Park Police Department's policies and procedures. Additional police updates will include body cameras within the police department in which the City also a grant for purchase of said cameras.
- There will be a closed-circuit camera system for the Police Department that will monitor various streets and the schools, which will go online within the next two months.
- We will work to improve the relationship between the public and City Hall staff, including communications through the website, social media, and the press.
- We will improve City operations by implementing updated technology; especially in Code and Administration.
- We will hire a parking consultant to address the decade-long issues with parking in Asbury Park.
- We will stabilize the tax rate with multi-year budgeting.
- We will increase the services offered within the Social Services Department to include various intervention programs aimed at our youth.
- We will create of a Business Committee.
- We will expand partnerships with the Board of Education and Housing Authority.

Recreation and Quality of Life:

- We will increase and promote residential recycling collection; create new vehicles to increase public recycling and trash collection along the walkable commercial corridors, as well as leading a spring citywide cleanup.
- We will implement free WiFi on the boardwalk and beach.
- We will increase recreational opportunities for everyone, especially our youth.

As everyone can see, 2016 holds a lot of promise, a lot of activities and we expect a lot of results. We appreciate everyone's patience and support as we continue to push the City forward.

CONTACT

Hannah Walker
 Director of Communications
 732-502-5749

communications@cityofasburypark.com