



The

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

DECEMBER 2014

Dear Residents and Stakeholders:

Throughout my campaign, and even after my election, the same rumors surrounding the potential sale of the East Orange Golf Course continue to swirl. Residents, golfers and others with outside interests are all wondering if or when the city will sell the golf course. As I approach the end of my first year in office, I would like to put an end to that rumor once and for all: No, we are not selling one of the city's most valuable assets.

In fact, over the past few months, my administration, with the support of the East Orange City Council, has been lobbying the state for bond financing authorization that will allow the city to renovate and upgrade the golf course, which had fallen into disrepair and decay. I am proud to say that WE were successful and our plans to transform the golf course are currently underway.

The citizens of East Orange have been very passionate about their desire to keep the golf course and I have been aggressively working to find ways to do so in a fiscally responsible manner.

Earlier this year, I made the difficult decision to temporarily close the East Orange Golf Course. For years, it had been run like a recreational facility and not a business entity. This closure was necessary to afford the city the opportunity to make the investments to infrastructure that had been neglected for far too long.

Recently, I held a Community Forum to update golfers and residents on plans for the course. Our expert team of professionals took note of all input and feedback from those in attendance. It is our goal to continue to have candid dialogue with our stakeholders in order to provide the high level of transparency that I promised to deliver when I first took office.

Despite our nation's recession, the East Orange Golf Course has the potential to lift the city's sagging economy and contribute substantially to the overall quality-of-life of our residents through employment, revenue and recreation. Market research reflects that there is a significant demand for golf in the area and an opportunity to capture a sizable share of the market primarily occupied by three of the course's closest competitors. Once renovated and marketed, the golf course can be a successful and profitable enterprise for the City of East Orange.

Reinventing and rebranding the golf course is a massive financial undertaking, but I believe the long-lasting benefits to the city will be well worth the investment. Together, let's continue to take control of our assets and make them work for us.

Happy holidays from our family to yours!

Mayor Lester E. Taylor III