FEBRUARY 2015

the MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Residents and Stakeholders:

As we mark the mid-point of the winter season, I am extremely proud to highlight the outstanding work our Department of Public Works is doing to keep our passages and roadways safe for residents and visitors in East Orange.

Last year, as many of you may not so fondly recall, our entire region was pummeled with back-to-back blizzards. The vast amounts of snowfall crippled our transit systems and made traveling conditions hazardous in and around our city. Despite the effort put forth by our employees, it was during this time that I realized how ill-equipped we actually were to handle major snowstorms.

Unwilling to put our residents at such high risk during another winter season, I charged the department, under the leadership of Director Christopher Coke, to assess our needs and determine how best to leverage existing resources and make investments for our future. Upon Director Coke's recommendation, the city recently purchased five new heavy duty Ford trucks that were dual fitted with plows and salt-spreaders. We also retrofitted eight existing trucks with plows to add to our snow fleet. The additions and upgrades brought our snow fleet to a total of 18 trucks, more than double what we had last year and more than what the city has owned in many years.

I am proud to report that we were more than prepared to handle the snow removal following the first major storm to hit the city this year. Putting the new fleet to the test, we relied less on outside contractors and were able to cut our clean-up time in half. In 2014, we paid approximately $183,000 in outside service for snow at rates ranging from $175 to $225 per hour. By making a one-time investment in the new trucks, we are projected to save $366,000 over the next two years, or nearly $2 million over the next decade. DPW is a perfect example of how we are making our city become more efficient and self-sufficient every single day.

In keeping with our mission, DPW has demonstrated quite effectively our dedication to bringing East Orange residents a better quality of life. Working closely with state agencies to improve the conditions of our transit centers, the department is at the forefront of initiatives to make East Orange a sustainable, green community. We've established more days for recycling and enhanced our environmental education outreach to schools and the local community. We continue to maintain our Clean and Green/Small Tools Library, located at the Elmwood Library at 214 Elmwood Avenue, to provide residents with what they need to beautify their neighborhoods. Look for our semi-annual Spring Clean-Up/Green-Up Day this April.

As we continue to develop and grow our community, DPW is committed to following best sustainable practices to lower costs, reduce waste, conserve energy and protect the environment. Together, we are all working to make East Orange a safe and clean place to live, work and play for generations to come.

Mayor Lester E. Taylor III

Office of the Mayor, 44 City Hall Plaza, East Orange, NJ 07018 tel 973.266-5151 **fax** 973.266.5135
email constituentservices@eastorange-nj.gov