

Where Great Things Are Happening!™



Neighborhood Preservation Program  
Year 2 - 2023  
Irishtown - Gloucester City, NJ





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Irishtown NPP District would like to extend its sincerest thanks to the Mayor of Gloucester City and the Common Council of Gloucester City for their dedication to the success of this program.

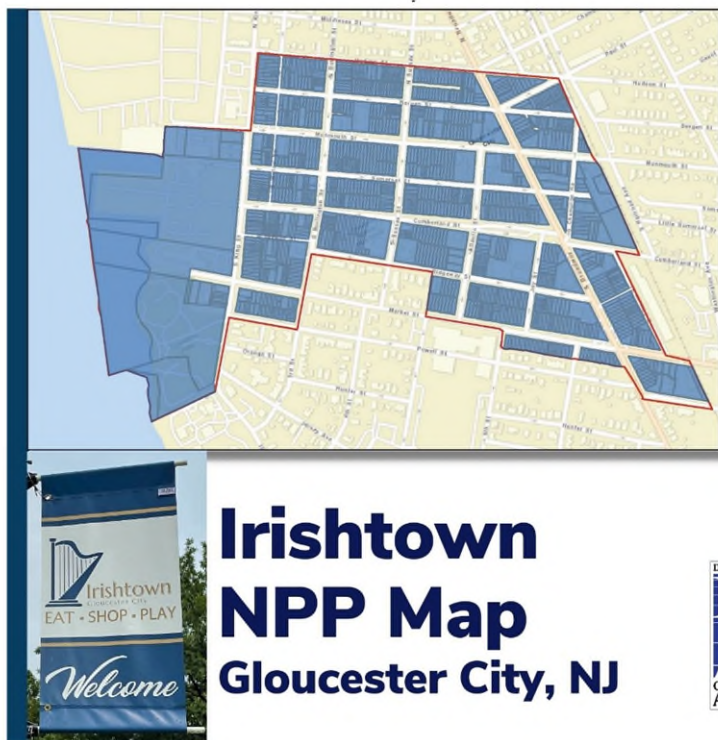
Dayl Baile, Mayor of Gloucester City  
George Berglund, 1<sup>st</sup> Ward  
James "Bowie" Johnson, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ward  
Nancy Randolph Baus, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward  
John Hutchinson  
Robert J. Page  
Derek Timm



In addition, the people of Gloucester City extend their sincerest thanks to the Stakeholder Committee assembled to guide and assist in the NPP process.

Lori Ryan, NPP Coordinator  
George Berglund, Council Member  
Kathy Carr, Carr's Hardware  
Ed Cilurso, Resident  
Patrick Hagan, Gloucester City Fire Department  
Kevin Kain, Resident

Caroline Martin, Resident  
Samantha Mayo, Resident  
Larry Spera, Hearth Community Fund and Chubby's Steakhouse  
Michaelene Stiles, Resident  
Patrick Ward, Resident



### 2022

#### Year 1

- Park improvements
- Commercial Facade Grants
- Public Art



### 2023

#### Year 2

- Park beautification
- Residential facade grants
- Safety initiative residential security camera program



## LOOKING BACK — YEAR 1

Year one NPP kicked off a conversation in the Irishtown neighborhood assessing the vision of the residents and businesses. The NPP Stakeholders committee collected ideas about how best to serve the needs of the Irishtown neighborhood, using the focus group meetings and the surveys. Branding began with new Irishtown banners which were in the neighborhood.

We added the area at Proprietors Park, which is a very much underutilized and neglected community asset. A **custom sign** was designed, built and installed by a local company Barron Iron Works. In the



spring, the Gloucester City applied for and received a Community Capital Needs grant for \$247,000 to build an inclusive playground at the Park. Construction will be completed beginning December, just prior to the 2nd Winter Wonderland festival on December 10. The first festival last year was made possible with NPP funds. Increased exposure of the park will provide a boost to economic growth in the Irishtown neighborhood, and the playground will serve a long-awaited community need for our children in the NPP neighborhood. There is a property next to the Park recently vacated by PSEG.

The City hopes to be able to take ownership of that land

and further develop the park area. NPP is a large part of the marketing program to these developers.

NPP partnered with the Gloucester City Business Association to support an existing **Summer Concert** series. The program, from June through August, performed a total of eight concerts. These concerts would previously draw a smaller group; however, this year has seen so many new visitors. We estimate that this brought close to 500 people into the park. One project for our NPP team was to provide a band shell for this pavilion stage area. We purchased an **“Irishtown” branded vinyl banner** to fit the opening, using a pulley system and can be conveniently removed when not in use. This product turned out to be just what was needed, so we can redirect those planned NPP funds. The park was host to at least five other events this summer, bringing several hundred people to the Park. Additionally, since we have lighting, the high school drama clubs have been using the pavilion to perform open stage musicals.

With a generous OPM contribution of \$80,000 from the Hearth Community Fund, the first major installation of public art was installed at Proprietors Park. The **Wave project** began in 2015 and was stalled due to budgetary constraints and delays at the municipal level. This project would not have been possible had it not been for its resurrection and support by the NPP team. The NPP Year 1 budget contributed \$5,000 toward this project, but the impact of this project is contagious.



The Wave Wall at sunset - Proprietors Park



Congressman Donald Norcross attended our Pack the Park Fall Festival to dedicate the artwork created by many community residents who began this project as children, some seven years ago. The park hosted over 2,000 people for this event. The festival could not have taken place without the support of the NPP.

Winter Spera, artist and architect of the Wave wall program, was featured in the local newspaper. Interestingly, the cover page also included a developer who is now interested in an abandoned school after ten years.

Six **Commercial Façade projects** were completed and these businesses have been able to leverage other funding sources to complete much needed façade and structural renovations to their property – and also to improve the streetscape of the community.





The **painted light poles** in the park were painted. The local painting contractor was quick to advertise on his social media pages when the poles were underway. It developed a marketing piece for him, and a bonus to the NPP marketing efforts.

We've learned more about what the residents want in the community. The survey was most effective in getting feedback.

We were also able to revise our budget to invest in additional electrical work. We uncovered a required upgrade the main panel box when we began the electrical project. We will be completing the project in phases to accommodate the cost and at the same time enter a new project in Year 2. Evaluating the process, the funding spent on new LED lighting was determined to be a much better return on investment.



## IT'S A WRAP

Community outreach was certainly needed for us to build our program. Our stakeholders committee includes residents from all corners of the community – those who are third generation families and those who just recently moved into the City. ***NPP tackled four of our SWOT weaknesses; addressed four of our strengths, improved three opportunities, and all of these accomplishments lead to the reduction of threats to our community.***

A new sign at the park invites guests displaying a beautiful sunset and a safe, lighted and pleasant experience. A few new trash receptacles, fresh light poles, and banners hung around the Irishtown neighborhood. Performers have additional electric sources and lighting at the stage. The new electrical work will allow for hosting even more events without unsafe electrical cords on the ground. And finally, six businesses added new signs, fencing and paint colors.

We plan another survey to seek reaction on the successes/challenges of the program, and the committee can turn **“challenges into changes”** throughout our Irishtown program.

Strengths and Assets	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restaurants</li> <li>• Historic Homes</li> <li>• <b>Cleanliness</b></li> <li>• Holt Logistics</li> <li>• Tight-Knit</li> <li>• St. Patrick's Parade</li> <li>• <b>Safe</b></li> <li>• Historic</li> <li>• Gloucester Catholic</li> <li>• St. Mary's/Churches</li> <li>• Generations of Residents</li> <li>• North Wind Schooner</li> <li>• <b>Summer Concert Series</b></li> <li>• Uniqueness</li> <li>• <b>Walkable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Near PHL Airport</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Vacancies @ Burlington St.</b></li> <li>• Landlords not fixing properties</li> <li>• <b>No Places to Go/Sit/Hang</b></li> <li>• Zoning Issues (Small Lots)</li> <li>• Parking/Parking Enforcement</li> <li>• Poor Physical Street Conditions</li> <li>• <b>Lack of Lighting @ Piers</b></li> <li>• Lack of Digital Marketing of City</li> <li>• <b>No Trash Cans/Low Usage</b></li> <li>• Flooding at Hudson and Market</li> <li>• <b>No Playground</b></li> <li>• No Corporate Sponsors</li> <li>• Truck Traffic (Holt)/Traffic Flow</li> <li>• Bus Stop @ Cabanas</li> <li>• Difficult Access</li> <li>• <b>No Wayfinding</b></li> <li>• No Real Downtown</li> <li>• City ↔ Business Communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Market</li> <li>• Potential Light Rail</li> <li>• Funding Opportunities</li> <li>• Near Large Metro (Philly)</li> <li>• <b>Riverfront</b></li> <li>• Need a Brewery</li> <li>• Many Older Buildings to Repurpose</li> <li>• Coffee shop/Diner/Breakfast Spot</li> <li>• Many Liquor Licenses Avail.</li> <li>• GC is Small/Manageable size</li> <li>• School Districts</li> <li>• <b>Marketing</b></li> <li>• <b>Need a Focal Point</b></li> <li>• Family/Community Oriented (Churches)</li> <li>• <b>Public Art</b></li> <li>• <b>Wayfinding/Clear Demarcation</b></li> <li>• <b>Combined PR/Marketing</b></li> <li>• <b>UEZ</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resistant to Change</li> <li>• Older Housing Stock/Newer Stock Elsewhere</li> <li>• Gov't Regulations</li> <li>• Lack of Gov't Follow-Through</li> <li>• <b>COVID</b></li> <li>• Too Generational</li> <li>• <b>Not Welcoming</b></li> <li>• <b>Drugs/Crime</b></li> <li>• Gloucester Catholic Declining</li> <li>• <b>Climate Change/River</b></li> <li>• Stagnation</li> <li>• Dense/More Land Elsewhere</li> <li>• <b>Perception of Crumbling Infrastructure</b></li> <li>• <b>Vacancies</b></li> <li>• Do we want people in town to own businesses?</li> <li>• Identify which businesses to attract</li> <li>• What is our target market?</li> <li>• High number of rentals</li> </ul>

## FORGING AHEAD - STRATEGIC GOALS 2023

The NPP Year 2 includes \$5,000 for administration fees. This will provide support for events hosted at Proprietors Park in 2023, and marketing expenses. Lori Ryan, NPP Coordinator, will remain as coordinator for Year 2 at a \$10,000 annual stipend. Using OPM, UEZ funding purchased a portable announcement system for the park events, at a cost of \$2,100, and the City installed public WIFI at the marina and Proprietors Park using CDBG-CV1 funds.

### GOAL ONE: RESIDENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS

#### ✓ Objective One: Residential Façade Improvements

Blight and a high rental and transient population has been at issue for several years in Irishtown - the west side of the city, from Market Street over to Bergen Streets, and between Broadway and King. We are committing \$15,000 to residential home façade projects in Year Two. All projects will meet or exceed the NPP Storefront and Façade Design Standards.

### GOAL TWO: COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

#### ✓ Objective One: Commercial Façade Improvements

Revitalization efforts to bolster the businesses within the District is leveraged against our UEZ allocation, via grants and public information engagement activities. Finding ways to attract new (and former)



customers to the businesses within the Irishtown neighborhood is essential to the success of this program. Individual businesses will be expected to contribute a match to the NPP. NPP commitment: \$15,000. NPP Values: Economic, Place

### GOAL THREE: SAFETY – DISTRICT SAFETY INITIATIVE

#### ✓ Objective One: Safety Initiative

Gaining trust of the residents within the Irishtown neighborhood is essential to the success of this program. We've been able to improve Proprietors Park. But the residents need to physically "touch" NPP. So NPP will contribute \$250 to each eligible resident/property owner for supply and installation of doorbell type camera, up to a total of \$20,000.

### GOAL FOUR: IMPROVE CLEANLINESS AND BEAUTIFICATION

#### ✓ Objective One: Amenities – benches, planters and signage

The neighborhood will have a few new benches and tables installed with water-less planters. Funds here will be leveraged against corporate sponsors and local not for profit organizations. NPP will commit \$25,000 for amenities in the Irishtown neighborhood. Because we added the new sign, the "street type" signs are distracting to the entrance. To improve the entrance to the park and make it more inviting, a "park rules" sign this year will mirror the park entrance sign. Public WIFI was installed at the park using CDBG-CV1 Covid funding as OPM project. Visitors to the park to read, study, or work. Our vendor reported the first weekend that the park WIFI is "clearly being used", and by MacIntosh users as well as phone users, so people are coming. NPP Values: Place, Social, Civic

#### ✓ Objective Two: Fencing around CCN Playground

The City was awarded Community Capital Needs grant for a playground at the Park. Materials and installation are covered with the CCN Grant together with a Camden County Recreation Grant OPM of \$25,000. Funding is still needed to fence the playground for safety reasons. NPP will fence the playground using additional funds from a hopeful 2023 Camden County Recreation grant. NPP Values: Place, Social, Civic

### GOAL FIVE: PUBLIC ART

#### ✓ Objective One: Public Art

The first installation of Public Art, the Wave Wall, was completed our Year 1. NPP commits \$5,000 to the mural project this year that was delayed. NPP Values: Place, Civic

### GOAL SIX: ELECTRICAL LED UPGRADES

#### ✓ Objective One: Upgrade light standard fixtures to LED

The light standards in the park are owned by the City. The City but has been unable to appropriately maintain these. In addition to the fixtures being different shades of white and yellow, the panel boards need to be upgraded in order to provide access to electric sources. NPP is budgeting \$30,000 to fund the LED upgrade to 46 light standards. The remaining 12 light fixtures will be funded by the CDBG-CV1 grant. NPP Values: Place, Social, Civic

## CONCLUSIONS

The Irishtown NPP Stakeholder team stays cognizant of the survey results and of the NPP team assessments and recommendations from the technical assistance at the state level. For Gloucester City, NPP is not only adding social value and improving quality of life to the community, it has provided an economic boost for the first time in a decade. With the added improvement using our Community Capital Needs Grant funding to install the playground, the ability for us to market to a developer is key to the economic recovery of this City.



GLoucester City Mayor Dayl Baile, Director of Community Development, Lori Ryan, and Councilman George Berglund welcome Jamie Blanchard Royal Mile Coffee Roasters

With the assistance of OPM – UEZ funds, the City has also purchased a “grand opening” package, including ribbons, scissors and a presentation package for new businesses. The business community has suffered in the City and new businesses are beginning to open again.

In keeping the momentum, NPP strategic goals for Year 2 include additional improvements to the Park and the King Street corridor.

The City is currently negotiating with a developer for a 450-unit high rise market rate apartment complex on the river directly adjacent to the Park. The developer seeks to market to young

adults and empty nesters. This project has been formally introduced to the public and is in the process of a redevelopment plan. Additionally, in the past six months, the City has entertained several major developers to develop an area which includes some 140 acres, including Brownfields designated properties, primarily owned by the City. These properties are contaminated and were never attractive to developers until recently.

NPP and other grant programs enable the City to present a more complete economic development plan within the Irishtown neighborhood and surrounding areas.



## BUDGET: YEAR TWO – 2023

	Irishtown NPP Budget Year 2	Budget	External Funding Year 2	External Funding Source	TOTAL
ADM - Other					
	Admin Other - Events/Marketing	\$ 5,000			\$ 5,000
Minor Category Subtotal		\$ 5,000			
Major Category Subtotal		\$ 5,000			
ADM - Personnel					
	NPP Coordinator Salaries/Wages	\$ 10,000	\$ 25,000	City Match	\$ 35,000
Minor Category Subtotal		\$ 10,000			
Major Category Subtotal		\$ 10,000			
Program - Development					
	Residential Façade Program	\$ 15,000	\$ 7,500	Property Owners	\$ 22,500
	Commercial Façade Program	\$ 15,000	\$ 152,500	UEZ allocation, CDBG-CV1 and Property Owners	\$ 167,500
	Neighborhood Security Initiative - Wifi enabled security cameras at residence	\$ 20,000	\$ 5,000	CDBG-CV1	\$ 25,000
	Amenities: Fencing for CCN playground, planters and benches and signage	\$ 25,000	\$ 35,000	Community Hearth Foundation - Camden County Recreation	\$ 60,000
	Public Art - Mural from Year 1	\$ 5,000			\$ 5,000
	Electrical LED upgrade	\$ 30,000	\$ 7,500	CDBG-COVID-CV1 grant	\$ 37,500
	Public WiFi at Proprietors Park and Public Announcement System	\$ -	\$ 15,000	CDBG-COVID-CV1 grant and UEZ funds	\$ 15,000
Minor Category Subtotal		\$ 110,000			
Major Category Subtotal		\$ 110,000			
TOTAL		\$ 125,000	\$ 247,500		\$ 372,500

## TIMELINE

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Amenities Acquisition												
Amenities Implementation												
LED Upgrade Light Standards Acquisition												
LED Upgrade Light Standards												
Public Art: Acquisition												
Public Art: Implementation												
Residential Facades Application												
Residential Facades Implementation												
Commercial Façades Application												
Commercial Façades Implementation												
Neighborhood Security Initiative												
Neighborhood Security Initiative												

### YEAR THREE LOOK-AHEAD BUDGET

In Year Three, we will evaluate the success of our commercial and residential façade improvement programs and the security camera safety initiative. Participation will be evaluated to determine which programs we will continue in Years ahead. We plan to use NPP funding to replace the flagpoles in the Park and begin using the Park for additional events and programming. The concrete walk also needs repair. We will consider something to complement the Wave wall installation, such as a handprints or footprints in a colored concrete. Years 3-5 funding allocated to “other projects” will be defined as the program evolves.

	NPP	External	External Source	TOTAL
<b>Residential Façades</b>	\$ 20,000	\$ 10,000		\$ 30,000
<b>Park/Street Enhancements</b>	\$ 9,200			\$ 9,680
<b>Tree Guards</b>	\$ 20,000			\$ 12,000
<b>Safety Initiative</b>	\$ 10,000	\$ 15,000	UEZ 2023	\$ 10,000
<b>Events at Proprietors Park</b>	\$ 3,000	\$ 5,000	UEZ Corporate Sponsorships	\$ 8,000
<b>Commercial Façades</b>	\$ 25,000	\$ 10,000	Participating Businesses	\$ 35,000
<b>Economic Development</b>	\$ 5,000			\$ 5,000
<b>Other Projects</b>	\$ 7,800			\$ 12,800
<b>Administration</b>	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	City Match	\$ 50,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 125,000</b>	<b>\$ 65,000</b>		<b>\$ 172,480</b>