



# Borough Council Year-End Review

December 11, 2023

# Year-End Review: Progress in Achieving Goals



Goal 1: Fiscal Strength

Goal 2: Infrastructure & Services

Goal 3: Community Stewardship & Development

Goal 4: Openness, Responsiveness & Engagement

# Fiscal Strength

- ✓ Unanimous adoption of fiscally responsible 2023 budget
- ✓ 3rd straight year of municipal tax rate decreases
- ✓ Healthy fund balance and cash reserves
- ✓ Successful audit of 2022 finances
- ✓ Significant federal, state and county grants providing taxpayer relief:
  - \$288,000 American Rescue Plan funds towards Fire Department vehicle purchase
  - \$234,500 NJ DOT grant for Powerville Road paving
  - \$125,000 NJ DOT grant for Morris Avenue paving
  - \$70,000 NJ State Local Recreation Improvement Award for Boulevard Trolley Path
  - \$30,500 Morris County and \$7,600 NJ Historic Trust grant for Station property renovation
  - \$21,000 American Rescue Plan Firefighters Assistance Equipment grant
  - \$15,000 Highlands Plan Conformance grant
  - \$4,000 NJ Clean Fleet grant towards Police SRO vehicle purchase
  - \$2,200 NJ State Lead Grant Assistance grant
- ✓ Settlement of multi-year Police & Public Works union contracts
- ✓ Finance policy and best practices review, including revised Reserve for Uncollected Taxes policy and in-depth review of debt and debt management
- ✓ Multi-year effort to settle long-standing tax appeals to protect Borough finances substantively complete



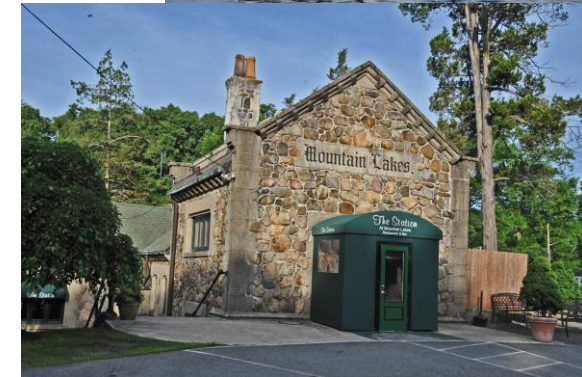
# Infrastructure & Services

- ✓ Tennis Court re-build project completed
- ✓ Significant investment in Police & Fire vehicles, equipment, and facilities
- ✓ 2023 co-op road paving projects & Morris Avenue (Powerville to Fanny)
- ✓ Historic gate lighting repaired
- ✓ Sunset Dam Project construction underway
- ✓ Addition of new quarterly curbside Bulk Trash collection services
- ✓ Elimination of Green Bag program
- ✓ Increased support for ML Public Library, including Makerspace program
- ✓ Robust recreation programs making use of improved beach facilities
- ✓ Support for traditional and new community events, including Holiday Celebrations, Art Fair, and PBA Block Party
- Borough Hall & Public Safety Facilities nearing completion
- Water Meter Replacement project 90% complete
- Review of efficiency, safety and other improvements to Recycling Center, including operating hours expansion – to continue in 2024



# Community Stewardship & Development

- ✓ New home secured for the Historic Preservation Committee at the Community Church to better preserve the Borough's historical collection and make it more accessible to the public
- ✓ Bathymetry Study completed to guide long-term planning for the health of our lakes
- ✓ Initial Phase of the Station property historic renovation completed – Construction Documents project phase is underway
- ✓ Veterans Housing project a welcome addition to our community that supports implementation of the Borough's Affordable Housing Plan
- ✓ Wawa grand opening – a new business serving residents and new commercial ratable
- ✓ Commercial Landscaping Hours ordinance adopted in response to community concerns
- ✓ Resolution to proceed with Highlands Regional Master Plan conformance to take advantage of grant funding and protect our environment – continued review will be on-going in 2024
- Review of land use ordinances for consistency, clarity and efficiency is in process – expected completion in 2024



# Openness, Responsiveness & Engagement

- ✓ Outreach to Federal, State & County levels of government on issues of importance, including securing grants to support Borough priorities and provide taxpayer relief
- ✓ Collaboration with Mountain Lakes School District on tennis court re-build project
- ✓ Borough-wide resident survey regarding Commercial Landscaping Hours
- ✓ More than 150 residents serving as Borough volunteers, including over 40 young people serving as Junior Volunteer Firefighters and Student Committee Members
- ✓ Transparent budget process and quarterly review of financials – all information shared with the public and reviewed at public meetings



# Thank You!

**It's been a busy year in the Borough with significant work accomplished in a challenging environment...**

**THANK YOU to our Borough employees, professionals and dedicated volunteers for your contributions to our community.**