



Newark Mayor Ras J. Baraka, Jersey City Mayor Steven M. Fulop and Paterson Mayor Jose Torres Launch NJ Cities Agenda; Partnership will Include Shared Interest on Public Safety, Recreation, Foreclosure

JERSEY CITY, NJ – Newark Mayor Ras J. Baraka, Jersey City Mayor Steven M. Fulop, and Paterson Mayor Jose Torres today held a press conference to announce the launching of a strategic partnership between the state's three largest cities to address a variety of urban issues including public safety, foreclosures, recreation and public health.

The partnership will include cross city initiatives to build cooperation, share best practices, and create solutions in their communities and across the state.

“We know we must take a comprehensive approach to public safety and other important issues affecting our cities, and to do so we must work together with the other large New Jersey municipalities to foster cooperation and information-sharing,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “Today's announcement is the beginning of a more in-depth conversation about how to enhance and engage our communities, work together, and develop strong partnerships.”

Examples of how the three cities could collaborate on public safety matters include sharing information, tracking criminals who may travel from city to city, trading gang intelligence and offering communal police manpower and task forces, as well working together on programs such as Cease Fire and departmental efforts for minority recruiting and exams.

The three cities could also work together by drafting purchasing agreements from vendors that would allow for bulk purchases of municipal goods thereby reducing costs, Mayor Fulop suggested.

“We see a strong potential for significant cost savings for our cities by combining and leveraging our purchasing power for large items such as salt and parks and public works equipment,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “Not only will we see a reduced costs of goods, we will have greater access to supply as a large purchaser, as in the case of salt in the winter.”

Another important issue facing cities is foreclosure, and the three mayors also discussed how they can collaborate on that issue by mandating banks holding municipal accounts work with those communities on foreclosure. In regard to recreation, the mayors see an opportunity to build healthy competition and community between the three cities by creating a midnight basketball league and other sports competitions.

“Issues that affect Jersey City also affect Newark and Paterson and we have a unique opportunity to collaborate on solutions through this new partnership,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “We recognize the challenges mayors face and by working together on solutions we will have the greatest impact.”

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In his remarks, Mayor Fulop also pointed to prisoner re-entry and job training as issues on which the three cities could collaborate and share strategies and information. Jersey City's prisoner re-entry program is quickly becoming a national model on how to offer supportive housing, jobs and social services for the re-entry community and is successfully developing partnerships with both law enforcement and the business community to provide meaningful employment and reduce recidivism.

Jersey City's job training program has also been effectively building relationships with the private and non-profit sector, to create a significant job bank and develop apprenticeship and training programs in a variety of fields. Just last week, the City announced a unique partnership with the Jersey City Medical Center- Barnabas Health in which 14 Jersey City residents will train as EMTs at no cost and be placed in local employment following the course.

In September, to further the partnership between cities, the three mayors will host a round-table discussions to be held at the Rutgers Newark Campus, in conjunction with the Rutgers Police Institute.

Among the subjects that will be discussed at the press conference and upcoming Round Tables will be shared services in tracking criminals who may travel from city to city, gang intelligence, police manpower, expansion of employment, prisoner re-entry programs, bank foreclosures, shared practices.

Partnering agencies will also include Rutgers Police Institute, Todd Clear, Provost Rutgers Newark New Jersey, Urban Mayors Association, and local and state Public Safety Officials.

“Public safety is a top priority of my administration and we cannot address it solely as a Newark issue. We must work with other municipalities in our state against it,” said **Mayor Baraka**. “We must work as a team to address crime at its roots and its results, preventing it before it happens and uniting to apprehend criminals after it does. We must provide residents, as well as offenders with alternatives to gangs and drugs, and provide them with jobs and hope. We are all in this together, and together we will eradicate crime by improving the overall quality of life in New Jersey's urban cities. I am privileged to join with my fellow mayors today in this partnership.”

Mayor Torres of Paterson has been a leader with Paterson's Cease Fire Task Force and this can serve as a model for the sharing of intelligence as it relates to gun violence and gangs. Mayor Torres credited Paterson's operation ceasefire with hundreds of successful gun-crime cases

“This is a beginning to a positive change. Our cities have lost many valuable and innocent lives,” said Mayor Torres. “This partnership will allow all three major cities to share services and help create a task force to track gang members and violent crime offenders, by sharing information and working together, we will keep criminals from abusing jurisdictional boundaries of the multiple agencies operating to protect our cities.”

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Potential Cooperative Initiatives

- Pooling police resources by sharing information, tracking criminals who may travel from city to city, trading gang intelligence and offering communal police manpower and task forces.
- Encouraging work between and among police departmental programs, such as Cease Fire.
- Sharing of police departmental efforts for minority recruiting and exams.
- Jointly agreeing to issue municipal Requests for Proposals that call for respondents to subscribe to responsible gun sales and use.
- Mandating banks that hold municipal accounts work with respective communities on foreclosure matters.
- Working in concert to create recreation leagues that foster healthy competition among our cities, such as a midnight basketball inter-city league.
- Drafting purchasing agreements from vendors that allow for bulk purchases, reducing costs.
- Encouraging cooperation between social and faith-based programs that aid prisoner re-entry.
- Providing employment training and job entry programs, using resources from three municipalities, their respective agencies and public and private partnerships, allowing for greater opportunity.

For more information, please contact **Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary, City of Jersey City, 201-376-0699** or jenniferm@jenj.org or the **City of Newark Press Office** at [\(973\) 733-8004](tel:9737338004) or the **City of Paterson Press Office, Patricia Cabrera** at [973-572-8204](tel:9735728204)./././././