

Dear Buena Borough Residents,

1/7/25

As we step into the new year, I want to extend my best wishes for a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2025. The Mayor and Council have been working diligently throughout 2024, and I'd like to share some of the key accomplishments we've achieved during this time:

- **Manhole Cover Repairs:** We successfully repaired and repaved 20 manhole covers along Central Avenue in the Minotola section of the Borough, enhancing both traffic safety and road quality.
- **Road Reconstruction Funding:** We secured \$1.3 million in funding to support much-needed road reconstruction projects.
- **Drainage and Brewster Road Improvements:** Atlantic County Executive Dennis Levinson has pledged to address drainage issues and fully reconstruct Brewster Road.
- **Health Insurance Savings:** By changing the health insurance carrier for Borough employees, we've made significant savings for local taxpayers.
- **Buena Borough Volunteer Fire Department:** The creation of the Volunteer Fire Department has brought additional savings to our community.
- **Route 40 Drainage Project:** The New Jersey Department of Transportation has committed to a major drainage project on Route 40, from Central Avenue, to Kimberly Lane. The conceptual phase is set to complete in summer 2025, with construction anticipated to begin in late 2027. Both the Borough and Atlantic County are working together to ensure the success of this project.
- **Maurelli Building Demolition:** The demolition of the old Maurelli building has been completed, along with site cleanup and leveling, all funded through a CDBG grant from Atlantic County.
- **USDA Housing Assistance:** Representatives from USDA Rural Development Housing presented valuable programs aimed at assisting local residents.
- **Host Community Agreement:** Borough Council passed the first-ever Host Community Agreement for a Class I cannabis cultivation facility and a Class V retail sales store.
- **Liberty Village II:** The 55+ Liberty Village II housing complex in Landisville is now complete, featuring 44 new homes.
- **Senior Services Partnership:** We've entered into a three-year agreement with Atlantic County to use the Louise Basile Center to provide senior services to the western end of the county.
- **Sewer Line Upgrades:** The Borough has collaborated with the Buena Municipal Utilities Authority to apply for funding to replace sewer lines and reconstruct Summer Road (Landisville) and West Avenue (Minotola) through a \$3 million loan forgiveness program via the NJ Infrastructure Bank.

As we move into 2025, we are focused on several exciting projects and goals for the year ahead:

- **Grant Pursuits:** We will continue working with Aubrey Associates, our grant advisor, to secure funding for initiatives that benefit the Borough, including a grant for lighting and pole upgrades at Bruno Melini Park.

- **ADA Building Improvements:** Work on ADA building improvements at the Louise Basile Center and Borough Hall, funded by CDBG, is already underway with Capri Construction.
- **Bruno Melini Park Upgrades:** We plan to complete capital projects at Bruno Melini Park, including bathroom and tennis court improvements.
- **Landfill Closure:** We will continue to pursue the closure of the landfill in collaboration with the NJDEP and the Pinelands Commission.
- **Trash Collection Review:** We will analyze cost-saving proposals from the Atlantic County Utilities Authority (ACUA) for our waste collection services.
- **Affordable Housing Obligations:** We will work with the Department of Community Affairs to address our municipality's affordable housing obligations for Round Four (2025-2035).
- **New Business:** We look forward to welcoming **Buena Connection Brewing Company LLC** to our community, located at 112 Wheat Rd. Their operations are expected to begin soon.

Back in August, I provided a newsletter update on the town's progress, and I plan to send out another update in March with more exciting developments.

Thank you for your continued support as we work together to improve our community.

**Sincerely,**  
Joseph Baruffi  
Mayor, Buena Borough