

This has been an amazing 69 days. Even though we have experienced quite a bit of opposition, the results we as a governing body have been able to get on behalf of our residents has been nothing short of amazing. I invite you to check out the link on our website featuring accomplishments from our first 45 days in office as well as my first 5 Council reports for abbreviated descriptions of some of the wonderful achievements as well as challenges I've faced as I work hard for the residents of Ward 1 and the citizens of College Park.

On Thursday, March 7, 2024, our governing body traveled to Washington, DC to meet with our Federal Legislators (Senator Raphael Warnock, Senator Jon Ossoff, Congressman David Scott, and Congresswoman Nikema Williams) to share our Federal Legislative Agenda for 2024. Over the past 2 years we have been able to bring in almost \$4 million in Federal assistance for College Park initiatives such as technology and equipment for our law enforcement team (\$373K), stormwater upgrades (\$800K), and water system improvements (\$2.5 million). This year we will receive \$959,752 for water system improvements and \$500k for our Finding the Flint Preserve project.

I was honored to be elected as spokesperson by my council members for the meetings our delegation held with our federal elected officials and their staff. It was a great experience and opportunity to be given on my 67th day in office.

As many of you know, I advocated with Congressman David Scott's office to not remove our funding request appropriation for the Finding the Flint project after my colleagues voted to cancel our \$218K contract with MARTA to purchase the Flint River headwaters property on Willingham and Elm Street. While advocating over the past 6 weeks, I was able to confirm that the funding we applied for could be used for the purchase of the land. I was in turn able to work with my colleagues, who did not want to spend our local taxpayer dollars on the park to agree to move forward with the MARTA contract. As a result, my legislative colleagues voted in favor of re-contracting with MARTA for the 7.5 acres at our Monday, March 4th council meeting. This was a great victory for our residents and our city. I have reached out to Aerotropolis who is also working with the Atlanta Regional Commission to let them know that we plan to move forward with this multi-regional project that will be a plus for everyone involved for years to come. Even though I had hoped for \$800K to be appropriated for this project during my original discussions, I am overjoyed that our city will receive \$500K.

During our visits with our Federal Legislators, the members of our governing body made funding asks for the following: Airport and road noise adjustments, water, wastewater and stormwater improvements, replacement of lead piping throughout the city, funding for city parks, recreation priorities and Camp Truitt development, community gardens and economic development, continued funding for Finding the Flint, road and pedestrian safety, bikes and trail networks, Law enforcement Block Grant funding, as well as fire safety upgrades and emergency medical services, and information technology/cybersecurity "machine learning AI funding.

In addition, several persons from our Ward have shared an interest in Community Gardens. After speaking with Congressman David Scott this week, I am excited about his willingness to assist our city with funding for gardens throughout the city. As you may be aware, College Park is a food desert and many of our residents do not have easy access to healthy food options. When I returned to College Park, I met with Mr. Bobby Wilson and toured the Metro Urban Farm with him. We discussed how our community can partner with him to move forward with community gardens and how we could support the Urban Farm. Mr. Wilson stated that he would be willing to train members of our community and help us in the establishment of our garden projects.

Next week, I head back to Washington for the National League of Cities Congressional City Conference. I will share more details with you after that. Have a great and productive weekend!

Putting you first,

Councilwoman Jamelle McKenzie