

Message by the Mayor
Jason F. Cilento

I would like to begin my first Message by the Mayor wishing you and your families a Happy and Healthy New Year! We are so blessed to live and do business in Dunellen and I am honored to be able to serve you as Dunellen's 22nd Mayor. I would like to recognize former Mayor Robert J. Seader and his service to Dunellen over the last 22 years. He certainly is owed a big "thank you" for leading our borough through difficult times and his push for redevelopment in Dunellen will remain a strong influence as we move forward. I would also like to welcome Trina Rios and Daniel Cole Sigmon to the Dunellen Borough Council.

As we look towards the future of Dunellen, I am excited to work with all of you to accomplish the many tasks that are set before us. There are many goals we must accomplish as a Borough: road and sewer improvements, the revitalization of our downtown, supporting our school district as they seek to make district wide enhancements, investigating further areas of shared services and keeping taxes as low as possible while maintaining quality of services.

I firmly believe in communication and transparency with residents and business owners and that is exactly the reason I will be making use of more media such as our borough's website, social media and the Next Stop! Dunellen e-newsletter, as well as traditional forms in print such as About Our Town's Community News and Dunellen's quarterly newspaper, The Dunellen Report. Through these outlets, I will continue to update residents of what is going on at Borough Hall and what capital projects, events, and redevelopment projects the Mayor and Borough Council are working on.

Here are some projects going on in 2020:

- Dunellen Stations development in the old Art Color complex
- Grove Street road improvement and Gertrude Terrace sewer rehabilitation
- South Madison Avenue road improvement
- Lincoln Avenue road improvement
- Completion of Columbia Park, including a turf field and repaired running track and new playground equipment

As Mayor, some of my goals for 2020 are:

- Continuation of the revitalization of downtown Dunellen;
- Creation of a Mayor's Traffic & Pedestrian Safety Task Force;
- Encouraging citizen engagement by promoting opportunities to serve on committees, commissions and boards;
- Creating a social media presence for the Borough of Dunellen;
- Involving residents in conversations about borough issues through a Mayor's quarterly roundtable;
- Ensuring that the CY 2020 budget is presented using an infographic to better explain our budget to the public;

- Investigating regional partnerships and shared services in the areas of municipal services, sustainable initiatives and economic development;
- Supporting Arts initiatives that improve the quality of life in Dunellen and assist in economic development of our downtown;
- Continuing to work with the Raritan Valley Rail Coalition and the Raritan Valley Mayor's Alliance to advocate for a direct peak hour train into NYC and the funding of the Gateway Tunnel;
- Continuing to seek grants for road improvements throughout Dunellen, as well as downtown beautification projects; and
- Ensuring the borough keeps its municipal tax rate as low as possible while maintaining quality of services

Beyond 2020, the Borough of Dunellen will be working on amending the FEMA Flood Map through municipal and Middlesex County culvert projects and working with the Green Brook Flood Control Commission and the US Army Corps of Engineers on addressing flooding caused by the Green Brook.

I recognize the responsibility that has been bestowed upon me by our community. I am honored to have the opportunity to serve the community that helped raise me and my family. Dunellen is a place where neighbors, friends and families come together to accomplish great things, ventures that uniquely define us as a community. We care about making this borough a great place to live, work, create and raise a family, and that is what makes our square mile the "miracle mile!"

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter. I look forward to working with you!

Respectfully,
Jason F. Cilento, Mayor
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