

NORRISTOWN MOVING FORWARD

Norristown
2017

Cover photo courtesy of Brian Mclean



ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2017

Presented by Crandall O. Jones, Municipal Administrator

Brandon Ford, Special Assistant to the Administrator
Gabriela Prete, Public Information Officer



What do People have to Say about Norristown?

“ You can be immersed in culture. You can be immersed in the Old Norristown. You can be immersed in a new urban civilization. It's just so much diversity in such a small place! ”



Cover photo courtesy of Brian Mclean

ABOUT THE COVER

Nestled on the banks of the majestic Schuylkill River and in close proximity to several major highways, Norristown has served as an important transit hub for the region for much of its history.

The cover of this year's Annual Report reflects the important relationship Norristown has with its neighbors as a transportation center. In the scene, passengers travel on the Norristown High Speed Line across the Schuylkill River to one of the many communities connected to Norristown by rail, including the City of Philadelphia!

Norristown's connection with the regional transit system will only continue to grow as SEPTA continues work towards adding an extension to the High Speed Line that will go to nearby King of Prussia and as the County/State finishes up the Lafayette Street Project, which will see the installation of a new on/off-ramp to PA Turnpike that will connect right into Downtown Norristown!

Learn more about these exciting projects at www.norristown.org.

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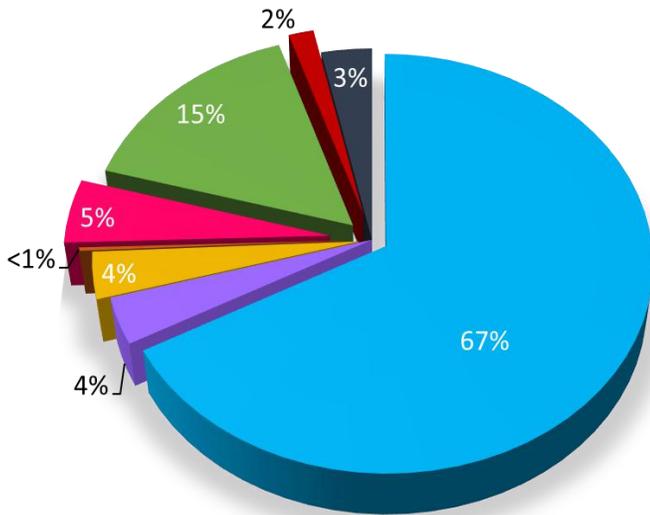
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Thank You!

Thanks to all the groups, organizations, and individuals that contributed images to make this year's Annual Report a true depiction of life in Norristown!

Norristown by the Numbers

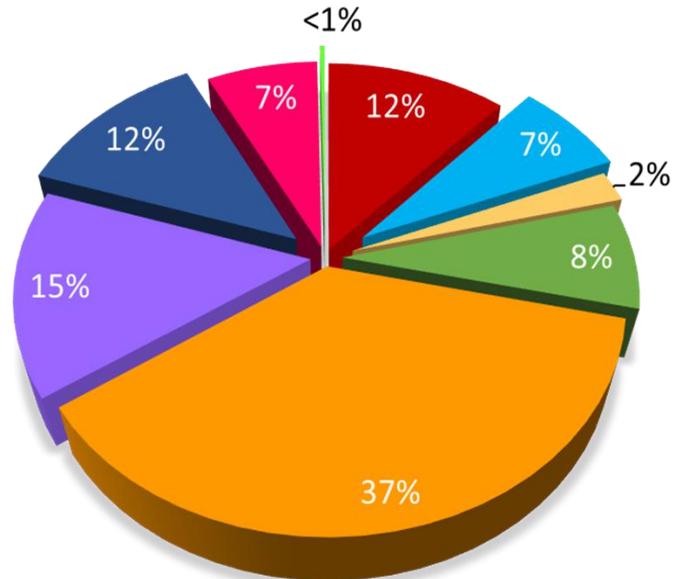


General Fund Revenues FY 2017 Adopted Where the Money Comes From

SOURCE	AMOUNT	%
Taxes	\$ 21,539,758.62	67%
Licenses & Permits	\$ 1,155,646.00	4%
Fines & Forfeitures	\$ 1,161,652.00	4%
Interest	\$ 82,000.00	<1%
Intergov. Revenues	\$ 1,589,771.41	5%
Service Fees	\$ 5,006,930.27	15%
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$ 535,606.48	2%
Fund Reserves	\$ 1,069,344.40	3%
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 32,130,709.18	100%

General Fund Expenditures FY 2017 Adopted Where the Money Goes

SOURCE	AMOUNT	%
Public Safety	\$ 11,820,835.49	37%
Pensions & Benefits	\$ 4,716,250.01	15%
Debt Service	\$ 4,000,000.00	12%
Waste Collection	\$ 2,306,308.00	7%
Council/Contributions	\$ 99,157.96	<1%
Admin. Overhead	\$ 3,739,440.64	12%
Administrative Services	\$ 2,311,979.57	7%
Planning & Development	\$ 715,149.95	2%
Public Works	\$ 2,421,587.56	8%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 32,130,709.18	100%



2016 American Community Survey Data

AGE

Under 15 years	23%
15 to 24 years	12%
25 to 34 years	20%
35 to 44 years	13%
45 to 54 years	11%
55 to 64 years	10%
65 years and older	11%

ETHNICITY

American Indian, Alaskan Native, or Other	4%
Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander	3%
Black or African American	34%
Hispanic or Latino	26%
White	33%

RESIDENCE

Single Family Detached Home	11%
Single Family Attached Home	47%
Multifamily Residence and Other	42%

GENDER

Male	51%
Female	49%

OWNERSHIP

Rent	62%
Own	38%

HOUSING

Occupied	86%
Vacant	14%

Our Community at a Glance

Norristown, Pennsylvania, was incorporated/established in 1812 and is a uniquely urban community situated in southeastern Pennsylvania just 15 miles outside the City of Philadelphia.

Encompassing a total of more than three and a half square miles and possessing a bustling population of over 34,000, Norristown is an amazingly diverse community along the majestic Schuylkill River in the heart of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Norristown enjoys a rich and diverse cultural history typified by our award-winning theaters downtown, our vibrant art scene, and the numerous historic sites around town, including Ebenezer Methodist Church, General Stewart Armory, Selma Mansion, and Rittenhouse School.

Our community also features a plethora of authentic ethnic eateries that serve up exceptional delicacies covering a range of cuisines (Japanese, Mexican, Ethiopian, Italian, and even Caribbean/Jamaican).



ESTABLISHED
1812

7
COUNCIL
MEMBERS



4 TRAIN
STATIONS



POPULATION OF
34,370



3.52
SQ MI
LAND AREA



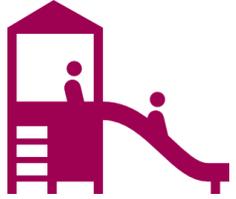
0.09
SQ MI
WATER AREA



\$44,168
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME
Was \$41,856 in 2015



4.2%
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
Was 5.1% in 2016



Over a
DOZEN
PUBLIC PARKS



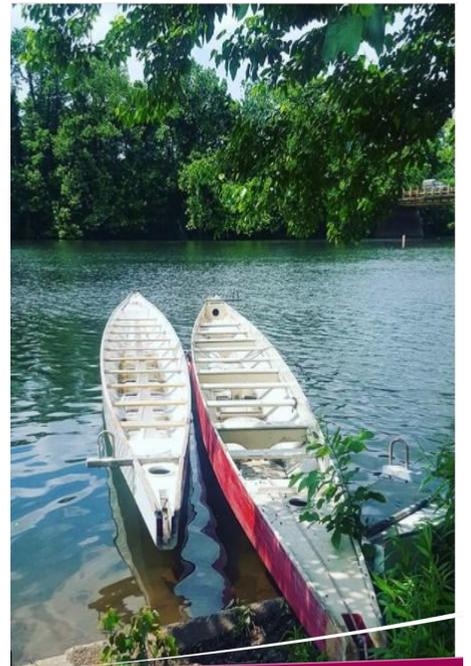
14,219
HOUSING UNITS

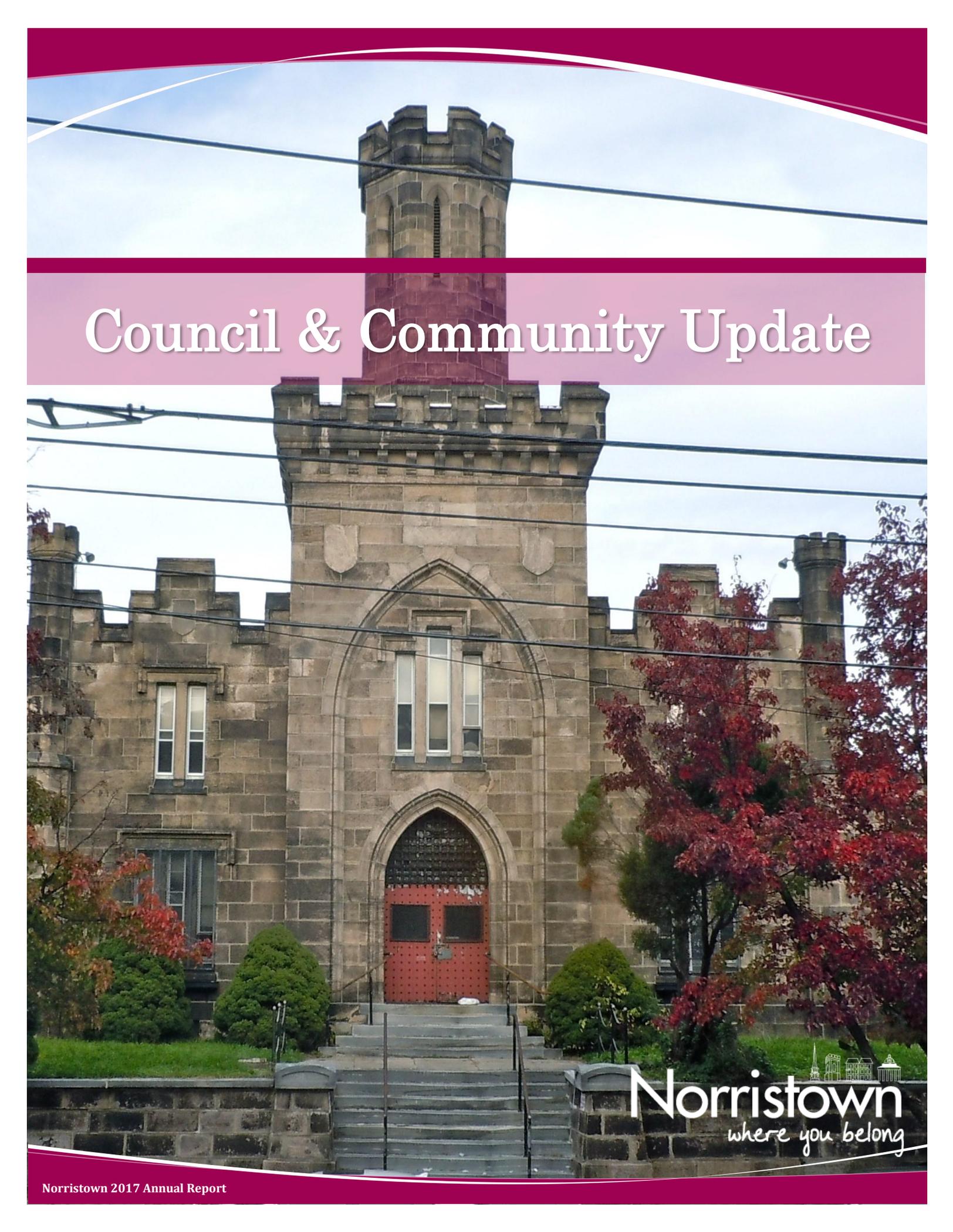
ECONOMY

At its height in decades prior to World War II, Norristown was a manufacturing and retail hub, with textile mills, cigar factories and other industries providing ample employment. Although our community has experienced some economic twists and turns since then, the last few years in Norristown has been a period marked with the arrival of new businesses, an increase in residential incomes, and a decreasing unemployment rate.

QUALITY OF LIFE

For decades, residents and visitors alike have been coming to Norristown to enjoy the scenic beauty of our riverfront, the excitement of our arts scene, and the charm of our historic sites. The vibrant quality of life in Norristown is rooted firmly in its natural and cultural heritage and carried by all who live and work here in a manner that is respectful of the past, mindful of the present, and anticipatory for the needs of the future.





Council & Community Update


Norristown
where you belong



Involving the Community

Citizen Boards & Committees

Norristown's municipal government offers numerous ways for its citizens to become actively involved in government business. In addition to the opportunity citizens have to express their thoughts at Municipal Council meetings and public hearings, Norristown residents may also apply to serve on one of our Norristown's advisory boards and committees.

Membership on these committees is open to all citizens in Norristown. Unless otherwise noted, the only requirement to serve is that the applicant must live in town. Members of these citizen groups serve without monetary compensation, with the only exception being the Zoning Hearing Board. The Municipal Council appoints members to all boards and committees, with the duties of each varying based on the function/purpose of the group. Here is a few of our more popular boards.



Planning Commission

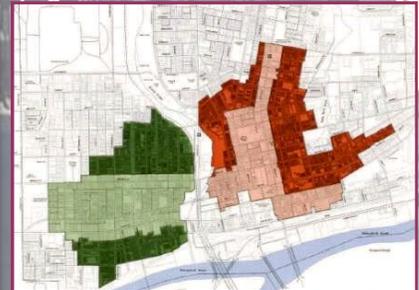
Charged with the duty of assisting municipal planning staff in guiding Norristown's long-range growth and development, the Planning Commission is responsible for reviewing development plans and providing recommendations to Municipal Council.

Our Planning Commission meets on the 2nd Tues. of each Month.

Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB)

History abounds in Norristown. As such, it is the responsibility of our HARB to preserve Norristown's historic architecture by reviewing proposed new constructions, demolitions, and exterior alterations to structures located within our two historic districts.

Our HARB meets on the 3rd Wed. of each Month.

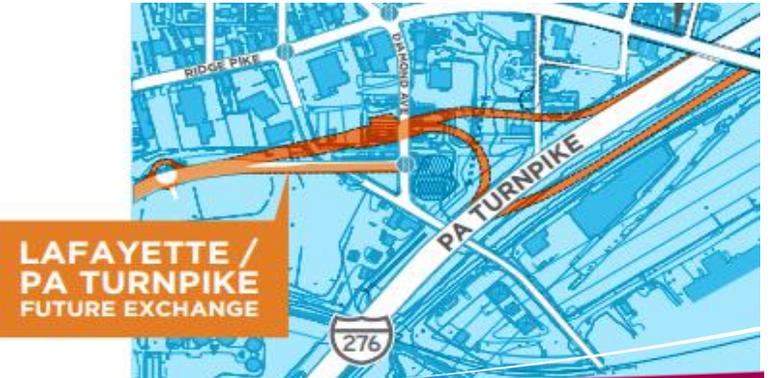
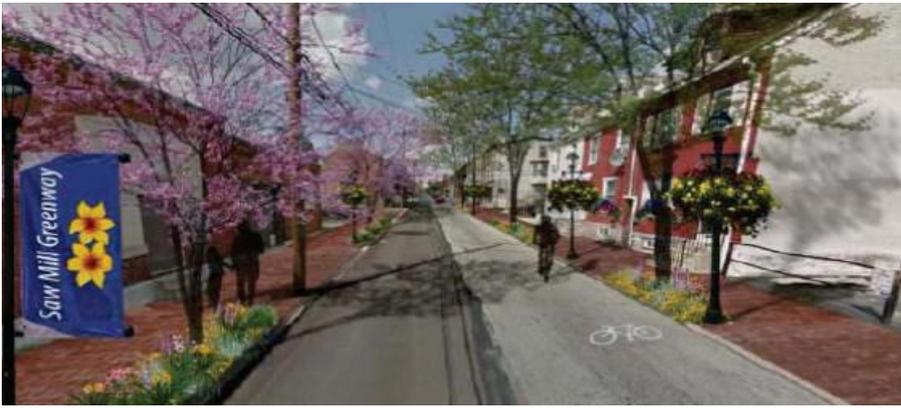


Recreation Committee

One of the most passionate groups in town, our Rec. Committee consists of committed group of residents that assist our Recreation staff in creating plans, recommending policies, and volunteering to work at community events such as our Summer Concert Series!

Our Recreation Committee meets on the 3rd Sun. of each Month.

For a full list of our boards & commissions as well as how to apply to serve on one, visit our webpage!
<http://www.norristown.org/boards-and-committees.html>



Representing Your Interests

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL 2017

The Municipality of Norristown operates under a council-manager form of government. While it is the responsibility of the Municipal Administrator to oversee the day-to-day operations of the Municipality, it is the Municipal Council of Norristown, headed by the Council President, that provide the strategic vision to ensure the future of Norristown is bright and full of opportunity!

As elected representatives of the residents of Norristown, the Municipal Council consists of seven (7) members of the community that meet regularly twice every month to enact laws and provide municipal staff with direction pertaining to the services provided by the Municipality.



Derrick Perry
Council Vice President
AT-LARGE



Heather Lewis
DISTRICT TWO



Valerie Scott Cooper
DISTRICT THREE



Hakim Jones
DISTRICT FOUR



Olivia Brady
AT-LARGE



Suanne Gardiner
AT-LARGE

FROM YOUR COUNCIL PRESIDENT

It has been yet another exciting year for Norristown! From new developments to working our way towards the acquisition of a Rec Center for our local youth, the Municipality has been able to achieve so much in the last twelve months.

I am extremely thankful that I have the honor of continuing to serve as Norristown's Council President and lead the Municipality in one of the most exciting times in our community's history!

Revitalization was in full swing this past year as we welcomed several new businesses and residential developments in town. Council also explored new ways to promote public engagement through our summer listening tour, for which we gained significant insight in how residents felt about public safety, code enforcement, and economic development efforts in our town.

The year 2017 also saw the start of Norristown's first-ever Capital Improvement

Plan, which will invest \$10 Million into some long overdue improvements in the community, and, after decades of talk, the State has agreed to work with Council on the future of the State Hospital!

I look forward to working with all of you over the coming year to make 2018 an even better year for Norristown!



Sonya D. Sanders

Sonya D. Sanders
Municipal Council President



Enacting Effective Governance

MESSAGE FROM THE MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATOR

As the Municipal Administrator of Norristown, it is my pleasure to submit this annual report on behalf of the entire municipal staff for fiscal year 2017.

This past year has been one of the most exciting since the start of my tenure in 2013. Thanks to the continued efforts of Council and Staff, we are seeing some truly dynamic changes in the community as well as in our daily operations that have the potential to be transformative for Norristown.

Our Financial Strength

The financial well-being of the Municipality continues to grow stronger every year. This fiscal strength was reaffirmed when Norristown was awarded a **favorable AA- bond rating**. Since this was Norristown's first bond rating in several years, the fact that we were able to achieve such a high rating is a testament to our sound financial practices and the responsible stewardship of public funds.

Investing in the Community

The strength of the Municipality's finances allowed us to re-finance our debt, lower our interest rates, and initiate a \$10 million borrowing without increasing our yearly payments or impacting our operating budget. The funds for Norristown's first-ever **Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)** have already been put to use in acquiring two new street

sweepers and vehicles & equipment for our Police and Codes Departments. In the coming year, CIP funds will also be used to acquire property to **promote economic development**, improve Norristown's parks and recreational spaces, and start **renovations to Municipal Hall** to make it easier for everyone to do business with the Municipality.

A New Home for Recreation

Another use of the funds will be to **acquire a Recreation Center**. For years, the Greater Norristown Police Athletic League provided quality recreational services at their location on Harding Blvd. Although we are sad to see them go, the impending dissolution of PAL provided Norristown with an opportunity to purchase the building to use as a new home for our Recreation Department program. As 2017 comes to a close, PAL and the Municipality are working out the final details of that purchase. Once the agreement is finalized, renovations will start to accommodate future recreational plans for the Norristown Recreation Center.

Our Economic Renaissance

In addition to all of the projects staff is working on, 2017 saw a **flurry of activity in private and public development in town**. The opening of Luxor II on the former site of 770 Sandy Street brought a decades-old saga to a bright end and marked the second residential development from

Westrum Development. Likewise, developer Progressive Housing Ventures has started work on their third owner-occupied housing project in town. Regarding commercial and future development projects, the arrival of Crazy Aaron's Thinking Putty, a potential new private development project on main street, and the continued work on Lafayette Street that will connect straight to the PA Turnpike illustrates **Norristown's growing appeal to businesses** that want easy and direct access to an extensive transit hub in close proximity to a major metro area!

I encourage our citizens to stay involved and would like to personally thank each of our community leaders, businesses, residents, and other partners for their continued efforts in making Norristown the best it can be! I look forward to continue serving as Municipal Administrator in this exhilarating time of growth for Norristown!

With every good wish,



Crandall O. Jones, ICMA-CM
Municipal Administrator

Achieving our Goals in 2017



GOAL 1

Ensuring Public Safety

We are determined to ensure a safe environment for everyone who lives and works in Norristown.

Feeling safe is a fundamental right for every community. Thanks to the dedication of the members of our police and fire departments, the Municipality has made significant steps in combating crime in our community and ensuring the safety of everyone in Norristown.

Spearheaded by our charismatic Police and Fire Chiefs and their respective staffs, Norristown's community-oriented safety strategies address the issues of public safety while building rapport and establishing lasting relationships with our residents.

It is, in great part, thanks to the efforts of Norristown's public safety personnel that crime continues to trend downward. Their efforts have even garnered regional and national attention with our public safety leadership being asked to share their experiences with other in-state and out-of-state communities!

4 Years

straight of
crime reduction

4 Years of Reduced Crime
(calendar years 2014-2017)

2017 marked the 4th straight year of crime reduction in Norristown!

43%

decrease in
crime over 3 Yrs.

Crime Rate in Norristown
(3 year comparison)

Norristown's crime rate continues to **decline**, with a 43% decrease occurring over a three year period.

4% Fewer

Emergency
Dispatches

429 Smoke & Combination
Detectors **Installed**

21% Decrease in the
amount of property value
loss due to Fire damage

0 Fire
Casualties
in 2017

Achieving our Goals in 2017

GOAL
2

Fostering Development

We are committed towards fostering a local economy that supports a vibrant and diverse business base.



Norristown
Chamber of Commerce

Where Business and Community Come Together

Fostering a vibrant and diverse local economy is essential for any town in the midst of revitalization. A sound local economy attracts investment, increases the tax base, creates employment opportunities, and generates public revenues that can be allocated towards enhancing municipal services.

Council and staff work diligently with partners in the public & private sectors to promote economic growth and development in Norristown. Between meetings with developers to the issuance of construction permits, the Municipality has experienced a noticeable increase in local economic activity in our community.

This change, along with the formation of Norristown's very own Chamber of Commerce by local businesses seeking to promote a stronger and more interconnected business community in town and the impending addition of a brand new on/off ramp to PA Turnpike in Norristown, others are seeing the economic potential of our community.



\$380 Over
Million
in State and County Projects

State/County Investment

Thanks to the Lafayette Street & County Redevelopment Project, Norristown will see over \$380 Million in public projects!

50 More than
Meetings
with New/Potential Businesses

4% Increase
in 2017
Use Registration Applications



More Construction

Norristown experienced a 27% increase in the number of building-related permits issued in 2017!

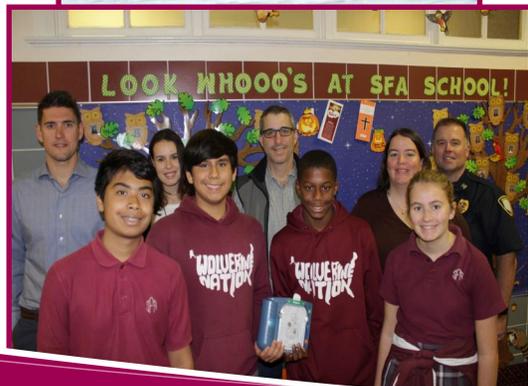
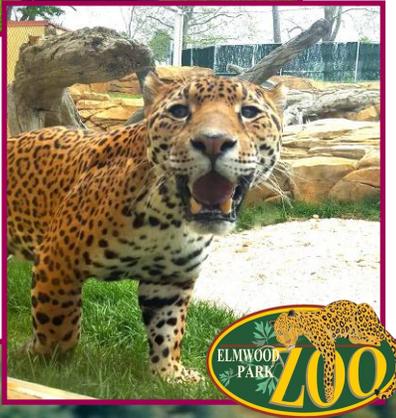
27%
Increase in
Building Permits

18% Inc.
in Contractors Registered
to work in Norristown

15% Inc.
in electrical, plumbing,
and mechanical permits



Achieving our Goals in 2017



GOAL 3

Promoting our Livability

We are devoted to improving our environment and promoting a higher quality of life for all in Norristown.

From our riverfront and local zoo (Elmwood Park Zoo) to the hundreds of acres of park land, including the renown Norristown Farm Park, our natural beauty is a sight to behold (not many communities can brag about having their very own zoo)!

Over the past few years, the Municipality and its partners have increased our efforts to capitalize on our natural and cultural assets to promote a higher quality of life for our residents and attract families to come here and call Norristown home.

We have also taken action in our pledge to improve the sustainability of Norristown. Between the formation of Keep Norristown Beautiful and our involvement with the National League of Cities Resiliency efforts (see page 19), we are aiming to become more sustainable than ever before!

27% Lower Carbon Footprint than the average of neighboring communities

Lower Carbon Footprint

Based on carbon emission data from UC-Berkley, Norristown (19401) has a lower footprint than the regional average!

Source:

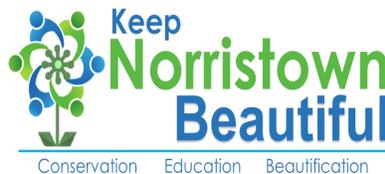
<http://coolclimate.berkeley.edu/maps>

1 New Affiliation

dedicated to litter reduction, education, & beautification

Keep Norristown Beautiful

In 2017, Council authorized staff to start the process for Norristown to create a new group, Keep Norristown Beautiful, to tackle the ongoing issue of litter in our community. Look for their events in 2018!



More than 10,000 attended our 2017 community events

5.2% Increase in Single-Stream Recycling 2,175.75 tons in 2017

Maintained Over 155 Acres of Public Parks

Achieving our Goals in 2017

GOAL
4

Enhancing Service

We are dedicated to enhancing our efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of public services.

Good quality public services are critical to the lives of citizens, and ensuring the provision of those services is an essential function of local government. As your government, it is our solemn duty to constantly find ways of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the services we provide to our residents.

Because of this ongoing commitment, the Municipality continues to face this challenge head-on as we strive to partner with other public organizations as well as private entities to improve the services we provide while attempting to reduce the costs of those services. Just this past year, we facilitated a partnership that resulted in an additional 83.7 lane miles paved in addition to what the Municipality had planned in our local road repair program. We also worked with the new Norristown Chamber of Commerce to support local businesses.



83.7 Lane Miles Paved
In partnership with PA American Water

Public/Private Partnerships

Thanks to a new agreement, PA American Water will be paving additional roadways in lieu of permit fees!

30% Increase
in NSBAC client businesses

Assisting Small Businesses

In 2017, Norristown's Small Business Assistance Center saw a 30% increase in active clients!

Over 500 Hours
of municipal staff training completed

Over 80
Leadership Academy Graduates

More than 60
Public Meetings Held in 2017

245 Right-to-Know Requests
Processed in 2017



Investing in our Community



**\$10 Million
Investment**

NO INCREASE IN OUR
DEBT SERVICE PAYMENTS

One of Our Brand
New Street Sweepers



NORRISTOWN'S FIRST-EVER CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is a short-range blueprint, usually spanning four to ten years, that outlines a strategic path and a means of funding for immediate improvements that are intended to improve municipal services and enhance the quality of life of everyone in our community!

Our CIP for 2017-2021 is the first of its kind for Norristown, aimed at tackling immediate needs as well as identifying and addressing the long-term desires of the community. "Continued reinvestment in and improvements to Norristown's existing assets combined with new strategic investments is crucial to Norristown's future," said council president Sonya Sanders.

WHAT WILL BE IMPROVED?

Our CIP projects are grouped into six different categories:

PARK IMPROVEMENTS

ECONOMIC DEV.

FACILITY ACQUISITION

VEHICLES & EQUIPMENT

FACILITY RENOVATIONS

CIP projects are based on three public meetings held in Sept. and Oct. of 2016 aimed at raising awareness and hear from residents as to what they wanted to see happen in Norristown. The input of council and staff were also used to determine the priority of CIP projects.

Will the CIP increase taxes for residents?

NO
CIP will
not impact
taxes

Thanks to the financial stewardship of Council and staff, Norristown's fiscal stability has allowed us to restructure our existing debt so that the CIP can be funded **WITHOUT** increasing taxes or adding to what Norristown already pays for existing debt. This strategy is a standard approach taken by many local governments throughout the United States.

Investing in our Community

Norristown Capital Improvement Plan

Saying that we are going to invest in the community is one thing, but actually doing it is another! Here are some of the ways in which the Municipality have already used CIP funds to invest in the Norristown community!

What's been done so far.....



Soon after Council approved the financing for our CIP, the Municipality got to work making some immediate improvements. In addition to acquiring two street sweepers with improved cleaning capabilities, we also acquired and installed new equipment in our police vehicles, purchased new vehicles for our code department and ordered the construction of a new fire engine.



CIP Projects accomplished in 2017:

- ✓ Put 2 new street sweepers into operation
- ✓ Ordered a brand new fire engine to be built
- ✓ Acquired vehicles & field equipment for our Code Dept.
- ✓ Installed new in-vehicle computers for our Police Cruisers

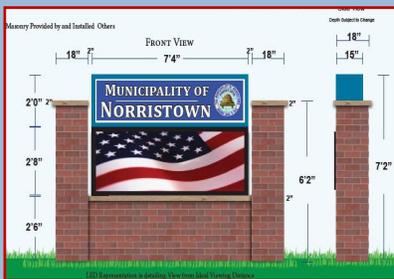
What's on its way.....



The Municipality has some major projects lined up for the near future as part of our first-ever Capital Improvement Plan. Here are just a few things that we are working on over the course of 2018:

Upcoming Projects (note this is not a comprehensive list)

- ✓ Finalizing the purchase of the PAL Building for use as the NEW Norristown Recreation Center.
- ✓ Taking steps towards the implementation of the Riverfront Park Master Plan (available online)
- ✓ Improving our computer network with 2 new servers
- ✓ Replacing the outdoor sign at Municipal Hall with a new electronic one with a scrolling marquee
- ✓ Completing the process of hiring a construction manager to oversee the renovations of municipal hall.



Want to learn more about how the Municipality has and will be using the CIP funds to invest in Norristown? Be sure to stay informed by visiting our website and following us on Facebook!



Cultivating Revitalization

What's planned for the future of Norristown?

Patience is a virtue, and Norristown has had plenty of it while working and waiting for the community to recover from the economic hardships of the 1990s and early 2000s. Over the past few years, that patience (and the dedicated work of countless others) has started to pay off as the revitalization of Norristown kicked into high gear. Here are just a few of the public and private development projects contributing to Norristown's renaissance:

Montgomery Park Senior Living



Norristown Centre Shopping Complex



Arbor Knoll Residences



Local Road Repair Program



County Campus Project



Riverfront Redevelopment



Lafayette Street Corridor



NEW PA Turnpike Interchange



Collaborating with other Cities



NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES (NLC)

Established in 1926, the National League of Cities (NLC) has served as a valuable resource to and a staunch advocate for cities, villages, and towns in the United States. By working together and learning from each others' experiences, the over 19,000 members of the NLC are dedicated to:

- Promoting innovation and proven strategies in municipal governance,
- Developing local officials to serve as ethical, effective, and engaged leaders,
- Helping city leaders build better communities.

COUNCIL WOMAN SCOTT-COOPER ELECTED TO NLC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Municipality of Norristown jumped into our new membership in NLC with both feet, sending several Councilmembers to conferences in Alabama, Washington D.C., and North Carolina. While there, our local officials gained insight from their peers and brought the lessons they learned back with them to implement in Norristown!

One of the highlights of Norristown's first year in NLC has been **the election of Councilwoman Valerie Scott-Cooper to the NLC Board of Directors!** Her election by the membership of the NLC increases the visibility of Norristown on the state and national stage. In addition to her election, the work she has done with Councilwoman Heather Lewis and municipal staff in Norristown's Resiliency Initiative (see page 23) has resulted in NLC asking Councilwoman Scott-Cooper to serve as a panelist to discuss resiliency at one of their national conferences!



PENNSYLVANIA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

On a separate, but equally exciting note, **Municipal Council Vice President Derrick Perry was appointed to the Board of Directors for the Pennsylvania Municipal League (PML)!**



As the state affiliate of the National League of Cities, PML consists of communities from all across Pennsylvania. The Board of Directors oversees the administration of services offered by PML including legislative advocacy, government consulting, municipal insurance trusts, education and training certification programs, and publications designed to educate and inform members.

You can learn more about NLC by visiting www.nlc.org, and more about PML by visiting www.pml.org.



Moving Towards Resiliency

WHAT IS RESILIENCY AND WHY SHOULD WE CARE?



At its core, a resilient community is one that is thriving and evolving rather than simply surviving. Resilient cities are adaptive, competitive, and equitable, and address a wide range of public issues including economic, environmental and social challenges.

The status quo might be comfortable, but we as a community have a responsibility to adapt to our changing social, economic, and natural environment. We must acknowledge our vulnerabilities, confront our weaknesses, and act on tomorrow's risks in a collaborative and equitable fashion.

Whether resiliency in Norristown is addressed by changing the way we think about financing redevelopment projects or in how we use data to inform our decision-making process, incorporating resiliency into how we think and approach issues will help prepare Norristown for a brighter and more prosperous future.



NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES RESILIENCY COMPETITION

Last fall, the National League of Cities and the Institute for Building Technology & Safety (IBTS) invited cities from around the nation to enter a competition to highlight local resiliency efforts.

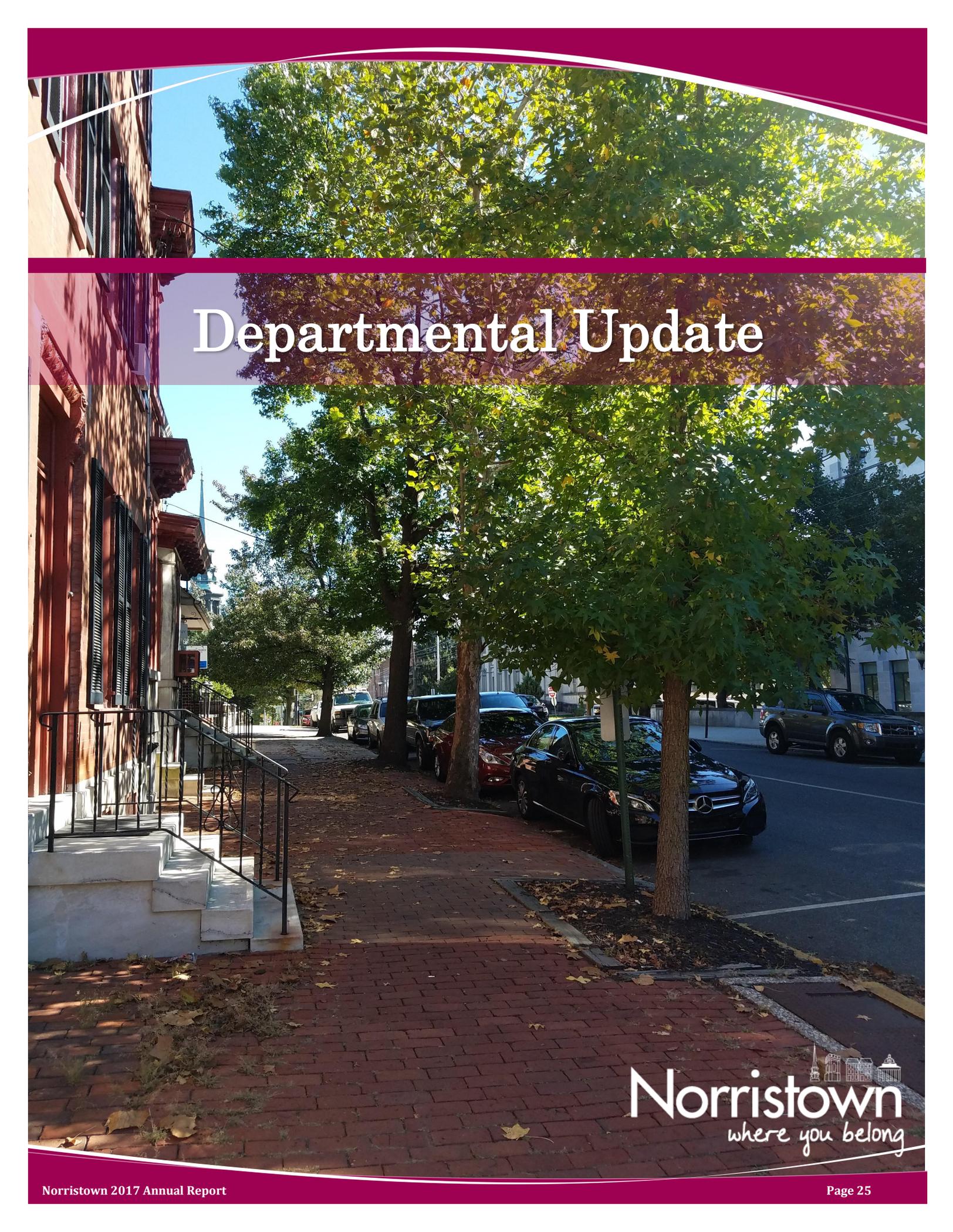
Of the hundreds of entries, Norristown was selected as one of the two finalists in the competition! As a finalist, council, staff, and the Municipality's local partners met with experts in resiliency from NLC and IBTS for a two day visit to Norristown and

an assessment of our town's current resiliency. While in town, our visitors received a warm Norristown welcome as well as a tour around our community.

Announced in late February, Norristown has selected as the winner of the National League of Cities Small Cities Resiliency Competition! As the winner, Norristown will receive **over \$40,000** in expert assistance in making our plan for a more resilient Norristown a reality!







Departmental Update



Norristown
where you belong



Office of the Municipal Administrator

The Office of the Municipal Administrator carries out the vision and goals of Norristown’s Municipal Council by providing general administrative management, policy direction, and oversight of municipal operations (includes HR & public information depts.).

Administration & HR Budgets:

\$580,198.56



Featured Accomplishments

✓ Outstanding Bond Rating of Aa-

For the first time in years, the Municipality was able to enter the fiscal bond market and received an exceptional credit rating of (Aa-) from the Standard & Poor’s Credit Agency due to our good financial standing.

✓ Implementing our Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

Approved in 2016, Norristown’s first CIP will result in \$10 million in investment for much needed improvements to public equipment and facilities. See pages 18-19 for all the details!

✓ Collaboration with Norristown Chamber of Commerce

The Office of the Administrator is pleased to have started working with and assisting the new Norristown Chamber of Commerce. Formed early in 2017, the Chamber is a group of local businesses that we are excited to collaborate with in promoting a more business-friendly community.

Things to Look Forward to in 2018

✓ Establishing Keep Norristown Beautiful

In 2017, Norristown started the process to create a local affiliate of the national non-profit Keep America Beautiful. The job of Keep Norristown Beautiful will be to leverage public and private resources as well as local volunteers to promote community beautification efforts, sustainability education and litter reduction.

✓ NLC Sustainable Cities Institute Resiliency Competition

Over the last year, the Municipality has increased its efforts in finding and competing for new funding opportunities. Spearheaded by the Office of the Administrator, **Norristown won two of those competitions**, the Small Cities Resiliency Competition (see page 23) and a grant competition offered by the National Resource Network for the development of a long-term financial plan for the Municipality.

✓ Implementing an Employee Fitness Initiative

A healthy workplace is a productive workplace! Winning yet another grant, our Human Resources staff implemented an employee health initiative featuring a competitive fit-bit program amongst municipal staff. The goal is to promote a healthier and more productive workplace.



Aa-

MOODY'S BOND
RATING



New Laws in Norristown

Every year the Municipal Council of Norristown passes laws and enacts rules and regulations aimed at ensuring public safety and improving the quality of life of everyone who lives, works, or visits our community. Here are a few of the laws they passed in 2017:

Laws Adopted in 2017:

✓ Ordinance 17-02: Issuing General Obligation Notes

At their March 21 workshop meeting, Council approved an ordinance that authorized the issuance of two general obligation bonds, totaling \$10 Million, to fund Norristown's first-ever Capital Improvement Plan.

✓ Ordinance 17-11: East Elm Street Dedication as a Public Roadway

Did you know that not every road in Norristown is owned and maintained by the Municipality? Some roads are owned by a higher level of government, such as DeKalb and Markley Streets (both owned by the State), while others are privately owned. Ordinance 17-11 made a privately-owned portion of East Elm Street into a public roadway that will now be maintained by the Norristown Public Works Department.

✓ Ordinance 17-16: 340 Harding Blvd. Acquisition

One of the most exciting projects undertaken by the Municipality in 2017 is the acquisition of a dedicated space to serve as a Recreation Center for the entire community! Ordinance 17-16 authorizes the Municipality to purchase the soon-to-be former PAL building on Harding Blvd. to transform it into the Norristown Rec Center!

✓ Ordinance 17-20: Municipal Budget for 2018

At the end of every year, Council must adopt a budget for the upcoming year. For the first time in four (4) years, a tax increase was approved for the 2018 fiscal year. The additional tax revenue will be used towards hiring two (2) new police officers, two (2) new firefighters, one new (1) code enforcement officer, and creating the position of recreation manager.

What We are Working on for 2018:

✓ New Food Truck Rules and Regulations

Food Trucks, and other mobile food vendors (i.e. ice cream trucks, canteen trucks, etc.), are growing in popularity across the nation. As a result, the Municipality is working on new policies and procedures for all food trucks operating in Norristown which will most likely include an annual license issued by the Municipality. All food trucks will be required to follow these new regulations. **Check back in 2018!**

175 New Resolutions passed in 2017

20 New Ordinances passed in 2017

- Ord. 17-01: Zoning Amendment
- Ord. 17-02: General Obligation Bond
- Ord. 17-03: Bond Issuance
- Ord. 17-04: Code Amendments
- Ord. 17-05: Right-of-Way Vacation (220 W. Main)
- Ord. 17-06: PA Infrastructure Loan
- Ord. 17-07: Right-of-Way Vacation (High Street)
- Ord. 17-08: Public Bidding Amendment
- Ord. 17-09: Group Homes Zoning Amendment
- Ord. 17-10: Swimming Pool Regulations
- Ord. 17-11: Deed of Dedication (East Elm Street)
- Ord. 17-12: Unused
- Ord. 17-13: Use & Occupancy Regulations Amendment
- Ord. 17-14: Restrictive Parking (North 00 Block Main St.)
- Ord. 17-15: SALDO Amendment
- Ord. 17-16: 340 Harding Blvd. (PAL) Acquisition
- Ord. 17-17: Green Street One-Way Designation
- Ord. 17-18: CDBG Budget for 2018
- Ord. 17-19: Zoning Amendment (200 E. Logan Street)
- Ord. 17-20: Municipal Budget for 2018

What's the Difference? Resolutions vs. Ordinances

The Municipal Council of Norristown can take official action on any issue in town by either issuing a resolution or adopting an ordinance. **But what is the difference?**

Resolutions are general statements of the Council and/or Municipality's position or policy on a particular subject or topic. An example is Norristown Res. 17-171 which stated the Municipality's support for SEPTA's planned extension of the Norristown High Speed Line into King of Prussia.

Ordinances are local rules or laws that regulate persons or property and usually relate to matters of a general and permanent nature. A good example of a local ordinance is Ord. 17-10 which amended the required height for fences surrounding fenced-in residential swimming pools.

All legislation is available online after adoption.



Public Information Office

Our Public Information Office disseminates pertinent information to the community and serves as an essential connection between the Municipality and its citizens through publications, press releases, cable television, as well as the municipal app & website.

Featured Accomplishments

✓ Revamped Citizen Leadership Academy

This past year saw significant changes to our Citizen Leadership Academy (CLA) as staff aimed to make each week more interactive and give participants an opportunity to gain first-hand experience in addressing real local issues. From building a simulated budget to working in teams to develop tangible solutions to pressing community problems that they were able to pitch directly to Council, the Norristown CLA is one of our most popular and educational programs!

✓ Coordinating a NEW Council Listening Tour

For the first time in years, Council took their show on the road to get feedback from residents in a series of Listening Tours around Norristown! Focusing on the topics of Public Safety, Code Enforcement, & Economic Development, Council obtained significant input that will help inform their decisions over the course of the next year.

✓ Launching a Landlord Newsletter

One of the most engaging initiatives undertaken by our Public Info Office is to increase the Municipality's engagement with property owners. In addition to our annual landlord expo, the PIO launched the first issues of "Building Connections" in 2017! "Connections" is a seasonal newsletter emailed directly to property owners with pertinent information related to property upkeep, Norristown's rental license process, and other building maintenance/safety issues. *Email our Public Information Officer at gprete@norristown.org to sign up to receive the next issue!*

Things to Look Forward to in 2018

✓ Initiated the Development of a Brand New Website

The municipal website will experience a significant overall in 2018 as the Municipality has partnered with CivicPlus for the development of a brand new website! We will still be found at www.norristown.org, but will have new features including, but not limited to:

- **Resident Request Tracker** - follow your request as it is received, assigned to a staff member, and resolved
- **Subscription Notifications** - sign up to receive automatic notifications when agendas are posted, events scheduled, and more!

NEW WEBSITE...
Coming soon!





Norristown Recreation

Our Recreation Dept. provides the community with an array of diverse, affordable, and creative rec programs and opportunities throughout the year. From monthly game nights to our basketball league, our rec programs cater to young and old alike!

Featured Accomplishments

✓ Summer Concert Series

2017 was another great year for Norristown's Annual Summer Concert Series at Elmwood Park! Thanks to the on-going support of the Arcadia Foundation, Norristown Recreation hosted **more than twenty concerts** this past summer (2017)! The popularity of the concerts continues to grow ever year, with over 7,000 people attending our 2017 summer program, and the addition of **even more concerts on select Thursday nights!** We look forward to continue this proud Norristown tradition in 2018!

✓ Youth Camp & Seasonal Programming

Throughout the year, Norristown Recreation offers a variety programs and events for local youth and adults. Summer is by far our busiest time of year, with outdoor Basketball and Baseball in full swing! Soccer, game nights, and ninja warrior training programs are also available.

✓ Norristown Car Show & Music Fest 2017

Another time-honored event in which Norristown Recreation is involved in planning is the Annual Car Show! Every year, hundreds of people descend on our Main Street to show off their wheels and admire the sights of the show. In 2017, the show had more than 250 cars participate and teamed up with World Café Live and Norristown's Five Saints Distillery to offer live music, a beer garden, and food from local merchants!

Things to Look Forward to in 2018

✓ Norristown Recreation Center

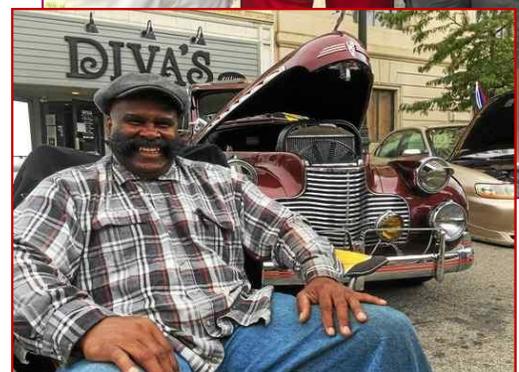
One of the most exciting events to look forward to in the coming year will be Recreation's move to the former PAL building. The Municipality and the Norristown PAL are currently working out the final details of the purchase agreement, but once signed and approved by state officials, the building on Harding Blvd. will become the Norristown Recreation Center!

✓ Expanded Recreation Programming

With the addition of a new facility, Norristown Recreation will be looking to expanded its existing line-up of programs and activities to offer an even more diverse array of activities for all of Norristown to enjoy! Be sure to stay tuned for the latest program offerings in 2018!

Recreation Budget:

\$280,870.40





Planning & Municipal Development

Our Department of Planning & Development is committed to sound land use management through effective planning that enhances the quality of life in Norristown's neighborhoods, as well as encouraging economic growth to create a vibrant downtown and riverfront.

Featured Accomplishments

✓ Launched NorristownNow.org

One exciting achievement that occurred this past year was the launch of a microsite to assist potential developers find valuable information on the Municipality's economic climate, incentives to develop, and other pertinent pieces of information. The new microsite is a one-stop-shop for developers to find the resources they need for doing business in Norristown!

✓ Managed over \$4 Million in Intergovernmental Grant Funds

Norristown actively pursues County, State, and Federal grant funding opportunities to utilize for the benefit of the community. In 2017, our Planning Dept. effectively managed over \$4 Million in grant funds acquired from programs sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Pennsylvania Dept. of Transportation, and Montgomery County. The funds from these grants are utilized for a variety of programs including, but not limited to, our Single Family Owner Occupied Rehabilitation Program (15 homes in process) and our First-time Homebuyer Initiative.

✓ Retail Recruiter for Downtown Norristown

Another exciting achievement in 2017 was the addition of a part-time Retail Recruiter who will be tasked with seeking out developers to invest in downtown Norristown and building relationships with developers, landlords, and prospective retailers to promote a vibrant and thriving Downtown Business District in Norristown.

Things to Look Forward to in 2018

✓ Riverfront Feasibility Study

Norristown's majestic riverfront is one of our strongest, yet underutilized, assets. Last year, we initiated a partnership with Langan Engineering to start thinking about development possibilities along the Schuylkill. We held one public meeting in late 2017 to hear the suggestions of residents and businesses and will hold similar meetings in 2018.

Visit www.Norristown.org & www.NorristownNow.org to see what all the excitement is about!

Planning & Development Budget:

\$715,149.95





Small Business Assistance Center

The Norristown Small Business Assistance Center (NSBAC) is an exciting public-private partnership with the Enterprise Center Capital Corp. The Center provides **FREE technical and financial assistance** to qualifying small businesses (5 employees or less)!

Are you an owner of a small business or entrepreneur looking to start one in Norristown? If you are, the NSBAC can provide vital assistance and resources to help you take your small business to the next level or hit the ground running with your new venture at NO COST for qualifying businesses!

What NSBAC Does and How They Can Help You!

✓ Technical Assistance and Consulting Services

- Review and enhance your business plan.
- Assist you in submitting business loan applications.
- Provide financial literacy as well as credit counseling.
- Serve as an entrepreneurial mentor and business coach.

✓ Training and Personal Support

- Employee recruitment and screening services
- Business development workshops
- Year-round business training opportunities

✓ NSBAC Micro-Loan Program

- Managed by the Enterprise Center Capital, our Micro-Loan program offers loans to qualifying small businesses in Norristown in amounts ranging from \$2,500 to \$50,000.

“Norristown is probably the best location that I could have picked to place my business.”

“WE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A GREAT INVESTMENT AND IT HAS PANNEED OUT TO BE JUST THAT.”

Contact NSBAC to start getting the help you need to grow your business!

NSBAC Consultant
Malyka Sankofa
msankofa@norristown.org



LAUNCH PAD



Ready to Start Your Own Business?
Norristown residents are eligible for a **FREE** small business workshop!

Tuesday, March 20th 5:30-7:30 PM
Montgomery County Norristown Public Library
1001 Powell Street, Community Room

Learn from experts about everything you need to launch a successful business!
Business Planning - Marketing - Licensing - Financing...and more!

To register for a workshop: call 610-277-1085
email msankofa@norristown.org
or visit <https://launchpadnorristown.eventbrite.com>

Sponsored by the Norristown Municipality through the Norristown Small Business Assistance Center





Police Department

Norristown PD is dedicated to maintaining order by recognizing and resolving community issues, and apprehending criminals. The Norristown PD strives to provide quality service to residents with innovative, collaborative and transparent solutions.

Message from Chief Talbot:

I am extremely pleased with the progress that the NPD made in 2017. The men and women of the department, both sworn and non-sworn, continue to work extremely hard to make Norristown a great place to live and work. The reason for our success can be firmly attributed to the dedication and commitment that they have shown all year long. Here are a few of our achievements:

Featured Accomplishments

✓ Making Norristown a Safer Community

Overall crime was down 3 percent from last year. This is the 4th straight year of crime reduction. Looking at the trend in crime patterns since we implemented our new policing strategy, overall serious crimes are down 34 percent and violent crime is down 43 percent.

✓ Emphasizing Community in Community Policing

In 2017 we initiated our Police Chief's Advisory Board. The board consists of 20 stakeholders who have agreed to serve the community by providing feedback and comments on policing in Norristown. We also facilitated a training on implicit bias that was attended by a joint delegation from the NAACP and the Montgomery County Chief's association.

✓ Our 40 Point Plan to Reduce Gun Violence

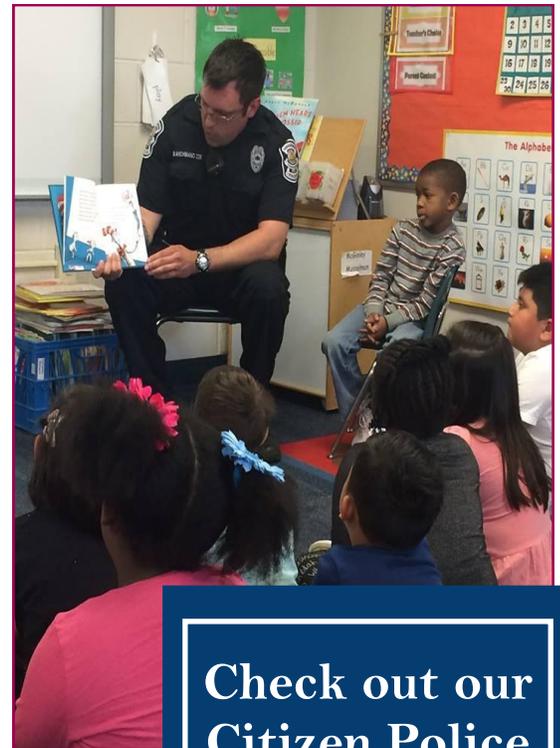
In 2017, NPD introduced our 40 point plan for reducing gun violence. Through our plan, we aspire to focus on what works: best practices in gun violence reduction strategies, enhanced collaboration with stakeholders, changing the behaviors of the a small percentage of people who are driving gun violence, concentrating on gun violence hotspots, and eliminating drug markets. Please visit the NPD at www.norristown.org for details.

Things to Look Forward to in 2018

✓ Aiming to Reduce Crime Even Further in Norristown

Over the course of 2018, NPD intends to increase the quality of living in Norristown by reducing Part 1 crimes by 10% as measured against the total number of crimes in 2017, reduce violent crime by a total of 10%, reduce fatal and non-fatal shootings by 10% as compared to the averages during the years of 2014-2017, and lead the Neighborhood Watch and other community based programs to a higher level of performance. One of our goals is to increase their membership by 30%.

Police Budget:
\$8,499,728.21



**Check out our
Citizen Police
Academy!**



Fire Department

Norristown Fire is dedicated to safeguarding the lives and property of Norristown residents and businesses through compassionate service, high quality emergency management, effective leadership, advanced training, and education.

Featured Accomplishments

✓ A NEW Records Management System

Norristown Fire Dept. is committed to improving operational efficiency. As part of that effort, we acquired and installed a new records management system. With the new software, Norristown Fire will have a faster and more reliable database for record retention!

✓ Capital Improvements for Norristown Fire

As part of Norristown's first Capital Improvement Plan, Norristown Fire completed some improvements to the exhaust system in our fire stations, purchased new Hurst Rescue Hydraulic Equipment, and ordered a brand new FIRE ENGINE!

✓ Regional Fire Safety Campaign

We also enhanced our community fire prevention risk effort by establishing a regional fire safety school education campaign within the Norristown Area School District with our partners in the West Norriton, and East Norriton Fire Departments.

✓ Committed to Improving our ISO Rating (Again)

A Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating is a statistical assessment of risk that insurance providers use to calculate insurance rates that they will charge in communities. Commonly used throughout the nation, the ISO evaluates the ability of communities to prevent and suppress fires. ISO ratings range from 1 to 10, with 1 being the best score.

Due to the tireless work of our Fire Department, Norristown's ISO rating improved from a 4 to a 3 in 2016. Dedicated to providing the highest quality of service, Norristown Fire is committed to continuing to work towards improving that ISO rating until Norristown has one of best in the nation!

Things to Look Forward to in 2018

✓ More Improvements for Norristown Fire

The upcoming year will see some more capital improvements in Norristown Fire. We will be replacing the sprinkler and fire alarm systems for our Norris, Montgomery, and Fairmount fire stations. We will also be looking to restructure our command staff to promote efficiency without having to hire additional personnel.

Fire Budget:
\$2,478,886.55



Our
NEW
Logo!





Code Enforcement Department

Norristown Code Enforcement issues construction permits and inspects work for compliance with local, state, and federal building codes, rental housing, contractor licensing and permitting, property maintenance, and our historic district guidelines.

Featured Accomplishments

✓ Increased Number of Inspections

This past year continued to see an increase in the overall efficiency and effectiveness of our Code employees to inspect residential (owner-occupied and rental) units in the Municipality. By the end of 2017, our Code staff completed an astonishing **19,054 inspections!** That is nearly a 12% INCREASE over the number of inspections completed in 2016!

✓ Achieving Higher Compliance

Despite the increased number of inspections that Codes completed in 2017, the total **number of violations issued in 2017 DECREASED 14%** as compared to the number of violations issued in 2016. When coupled with the increased number of inspections, the decrease in violations indicates that the number of residential units in compliance with our code is rising!

✓ Streamlined Rental License Process

Working in collaboration with Norristown's Finance staff, our Codes Dept. streamlined the Annual Rental License Process to improve communication regarding the process and implementing new internal procedures to make obtaining the annual license easier and faster than before!

✓ Landlord Engagement Initiative

Our Code Enforcement Dept. is committed to working with ALL property owners to promote the safety and compliance of every residential and commercial unit in Norristown. As such, Norristown Codes has started a landlord newsletter with our Public Information Office and have helped coordinate an annual landlord expo to help keep the community informed!

Things to Look Forward to in 2018

✓ Coordinating with Keep Norristown Beautiful

Enforcing laws regarding litter and the accumulation of rubbish/garbage is one of the many tasks handled by our Code Enforcement Team. Over the course of the upcoming year, Codes will be working with Keep Norristown Beautiful to tackle the issue of litter before it becomes a problem through public awareness initiatives and through the creation of a comprehensive index of the most heavily littered areas in town that will guide additional municipal and volunteer clean-up efforts!

Code Enforcement Budget:

\$842,220.73



What are some of the primary services provided by Norristown Code:



Inspections

Investigate Complaints
Routine Inspections



Plan Reviews

New Construction
Renovations
Historic District



Permits/Licenses

Contractor Registration
Building Permits
Rental License





Public Works Department

Our Public Works Department provides essential services to our citizens by maintaining local streets, managing Norristown's storm water system, up-keeping our parks and performing leaf collection and snow removal during the fall and winter months.

Public Works Budget:
\$2,421,587.56



Featured Accomplishments

✓ Alley Paving Initiative

Norristown Public Works is proud to announce that it will be continuing its Alley Paving Initiative aimed at paving the worst public alleyways in Norristown! Our crews were able to repave ten (10) alleys in 2017 spanning over 3,800 feet of alleyway! **Look for more alleys to be done in 2018!**

✓ Enhanced Snow Removal Procedures

Over the past year, Norristown Public Works has continued to enhance our snow and ice operations. In 2017, the Department released its new “playbook” for tackling snow and ice storms. They also launched a public portal for residents to track our Snowplows as they work to keep our local streets clear of ice and snow when winter weather hits.

✓ Our Newly BUILT Brining Machine!

Brining is an important method of combating the accumulation of ice on local roadways during the winter months. To step up Norristown's ability to keep the streets clear of ice, our Public Works crews showed off their ingenuity by building their own Brine Machine! The NEW brining machine is working great and has been put to good use in the 2017-18 winter season (*see the it at work in the bottom right picture*).



Things to Look Forward to in 2018

✓ Pothole Patching Taskforce

The upcoming year (2018) will see the creation of a dedicated crew of Public Works Employees that will tackle the task of filling all visible potholes in the Municipality. Armed with newly purchased road repair equipment, acquired as part of Norristown's CIP program, our Patching Taskforce is estimated to fill around 5,000 potholes before May 2018.

✓ Riverfront Park Restoration

As part of the Municipality's partnership with the John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove, Norristown Public Works will be working with Audubon's professional staff, a watershed fellow from the William Penn Foundation, and Keep Norristown Beautiful to continue the process of restoring and reinforcing the waterfront at Norristown's Riverfront Park.





Financial Report

5,000
21,500
54,144
80,644
\$1,332,75

Balance Sheet

Assets

Current Assets
Cash
Acco
In



FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Fiscal Year 2016 began January 1, 2016 and ended on December 31, 2016. At the conclusion of every fiscal year, the Municipality works with a third-party firm to review financial transactions and provide a clear-cut summary of the financial operations of the Municipality over the course of the fiscal year.

As you can probably imagine, this is an extremely thorough process that takes quite some time to complete. Norristown's Audit for fiscal year 2017 will not be completed until summer of 2018. The information contained in the table below provide a quick glimpse of Norristown's 2016 fiscal year based on our 2016 Audit. The public is more than welcome to view all of our completed audits by visiting our Finance Department webpage at <http://www.norristown.org/finance.html>

For the Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2016

GENERAL FUND

Assets and Deferred Outflows	\$ 12,494,563
Liabilities and Deferred Inflows	2,432,090
Fund Balance (At End of Year)	10,062,473
Revenues	30,586,628
Expenditures	27,706,300
Transfers Out	4,151,175
Other Financing Sources	814,901
Changes in Fund Balance	-455,946

What is a General Fund?

Norristown's General Fund is the primary fund or account for the Municipality. It is similar to a general ledger account in the private sector, and records all assets and liabilities of the government that are not assigned to a special purpose fund. The General Fund provides the resources necessary to sustain day-to-day activities and thus pays all administrative and operating expenses for non-special purpose activities. When local officials talk about "balancing the budget," they typically mean balancing the budget for the general fund.

What is a Special-Purpose Fund?

Sometimes Federal or State guidelines, grant obligations, and other reasons require local governments to set up accounts separate from the General Fund to isolate resources that are to be designated for a specific/special-purpose. Purposes include, but are not limited to: liquid fuels, debt service, community development, pension trusts, and capital projects. Norristown has a few of these funds that can all be found on our Audit reports!

Contact Information

Need to contact the Municipality but not sure where to start? Here is a list of contact information for the primary points of contact for many of the services that we provide to the Norristown community.

Have a Question about a Municipal Service?

Call Administration at 610-270-0421 for the following:

Meeting & Agendas	Council Questions
Right-to-Know Requests	Block Party Applications
Boards & Committees	Handicap Parking Requests
Renting Muni Hall	Special Events

Call Human Resources at 610-279-3673 for the following:

Job Openings (first check online at www.norristown.org)

Call Public Info at 610-270-0429 for the following:

Press Releases	Citizens Leadership Academy
Website Questions	Norristown Municipal APP

Call Recreation at 610-270-0467 for the following:

Recreation Programs	Summer Camp
Our Concert Series	Park Rentals

Call Code Enforcement at 610-270-0441 for the following:

Building Permits	Contractor Registration
Rental Licenses	Use & Occupancy
Historic District Architectural Review Questions	

Call Planning & Dev. at 610-270-0451 for the following:

Land Development	Subdivisions
Zoning Hearing Board	Planning Commission

Call Public Works at 610-270-0437 for the following:

Park Maintenance	Street Maintenance
Street Light Outage	Report a Pothole
Dumpster Permit	Open Street Permit
Snow Removal	Leaf Collection
Stormwater Management	

Department Contact Information

Administration	610-270-0421
Human Resources	610-279-3673
Public Information	610-270-0429
Recreation	610-270-0467
Finance - Taxes	610-270-0431
Finance - Parking Tickets	610-270-0426
Police (Non-emergency)	610-270-0977
Fire (Non-emergency)	610-292-8281
Code Enforcement	610-270-0441
Planning & Development	610-270-0451
Public Works	610-270-0437

More Contact Information

Municipal Residential Trash Hauler J.P. Mascaro	610-272-2751
Norristown Municipal Sewer Authority	610-270-3190
Norristown Area School District	610-630-5000
Berkeimer Associates (Non-property tax collector)	610-279-7500
Montgomery County - Norristown Public Library	610-278-5100
PECO - Power Utility	800-841-4141
PA American Water Co.	800-565-7292
AQUA Pennsylvania	877-987-2782

MUNICIPALITY OF NORRISTOWN

235 East Airy Street / Norristown, PA / 19401

www.Norristown.org



610-272-8080

