



**IF YOU HAVE EVER WALKED THE MILL POND BRIDGE AND WALKING TRAIL,
THEN YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED WHAT MONIES DESIGNATED TO
OPEN SPACE CAN DO FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN
THROUGHOUT OUR COMMUNITY**

The Park Ridge Open Space fund for the development, maintenance, and acquisition of lands for recreation and land and water conservation purposes, as well as historic preservation. An oversight committee of local volunteer citizens advises the Borough yearly on how funds should be spent, along with final approval by the Park Ridge Mayor and Council. These funds also enable Park Ridge to leverage matching grants from the county and state. Ultimately the funds allow us to acquire, preserve, improve, and develop Park Ridge open space and recreational properties deemed appropriate for improvement.

The Municipal Open Space Trust Fund was originally approved by the voters of the Borough of Park Ridge on November 8, 2016, with funds being raised since inception of more than one million dollars. This has permitted Park Ridge to operate an Open Space, Recreation and Historic Preservation Trust Fund. The County collects an Open Space tax levy from all residents in Bergen County, if a town does not have its own Open Space Trust fund, then those mandatory county taxes collected from Park Ridge residents, would get distributed among all of the other municipalities in the county and we would be unable to apply for any matching grants.

Examples of projects completed include rehabilitation of Mill Pond Bridge and Walking Trail, the Fairview Avenue Environmental Walking Trail, rehabilitation of the borough Tennis Courts, seasonal and holiday plantings on public properties throughout the town, the foot path at Mill Pond. As recent as last year, the Borough was awarded through the 2023 Bergen County Open Space Trust Fund Historic Preservation Program a Grant Award of \$412,150 for the train station restoration. Back in 2021 a matching grant of \$92,500 for the acquisition of North 5th Street, Block 608, Lot 15 to preserve open space, in 2020 a matching grant of \$78,481 for the Memorial Park – Playground Improvements and in 2019 a matching grant of \$81,656 for Davies Field Improvements. Thanks to our open space trust fund we have also made path improvements on Sulak Lane and installed the town basketball court.

With Spring just arriving, we encourage Park Ridge residents to begin enjoying many of the beautiful, professionally created and maintained Open Space projects throughout the community.

Sincerely,

THE OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE