



# City of Orange Township

29 North Day Street  
Orange, New Jersey 07050

## ***News Release***

For Release: Immediate

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### **Orange Council Confirms Valerie Jackson as Director of Planning and Economic Development and Darrell Holcomb as Director of Community Services**

#### **Statement by Eldridge Hawkins, Jr.**

“I am pleased that the City Council has unanimously confirmed the appointments of Valerie Jackson as Director of Planning and Economic Development and Darrell Holcomb as Director of Community Services.

“**Valerie Jackson** is a talented and energetic government and development professional who demonstrated her ability while serving as Assistant Director of Planning and Economic Development since 2005 and as Acting Director in my administration.

“Valerie has a passion for Orange, is a resident of Orange, and has been instrumental in securing and managing grants for Main Street development and other economic development projects. As Mayor, I intend to aggressively seek government and private sector funding to redevelop Orange. Valerie has proven her ability to identify and secure outside sources of development grants. She has taken the lead in identifying projects for inclusion in the federal stimulus package, in developing programs to deal with the foreclosure crisis, and in improving code enforcement as part of our Quality of Life Task Force.

“My goal is to attract new tax-paying businesses and help our existing businesses to grow and thrive. This is absolutely essential to relieving our property tax burden. Valerie Jackson will lead the work of our administration to show businesses they can make money in Orange. She is working to make it appealing for developers to come here and renovate many of our vacant and dilapidated buildings. She is working to expand our retail and commercial base.

“**Darrell Holcomb** is also a talented government professional and human services specialist who demonstrated his ability while serving as Assistant Director of Community Services since 1998 and as Acting Director in my administration. Despite funding cuts caused by the present recession, Darrell has maintained a high level of services and managed his budget reduction skillfully and intelligently. While serving as Assistant Director, he identified service gaps in the areas of health, economic opportunities, education and social services and recommended programs to meet those needs.

“For the past decade, Darrell Holcomb has overseen the day-to-day operations of our Recreation, Nursing, Health, Older Adults and Cultural Affairs Divisions. He facilitated the start up of a Federally Qualified Health Center in Orange, coordinated the work of the Orange Municipal Alliance, and managed transportation contracts including shuttle bus services to NJ Transit trains. Darrell is highly visible in the community: planning successful public events, coordinating with our schools, working with seniors and expanding recreation programs.

Darrell Holcomb is in the midst of a year-long effort to upgrade the facilities and programming of the municipal cable channel. He is also expanding the hours of the health office once a month, targeting previously underserved groups in the City's diverse population, increasing collaboration with groups both inside and outside of Orange to reduce the cost of services, and expanding health education.

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