



2024 Chef of the Year

Hersh K. Parekh

Deputy Chief of Intergovernmental Affairs
Port Authority of NY & NJ



HERSH PAREKH serves as Deputy Chief of Intergovernmental Affairs at the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. In this role, Hersh works closely with elected officials and other government partners at the local, state, and federal level, along with business, faith, civic, education, and other community leaders and stakeholders. The focus of this work is to ensure there is regular engagement, open lines of communication, and opportunities for partnership in relation to the agency's transportation infrastructure facilities and large capital projects. Some of the agency's recent and current major capital projects where Hersh has provided strategic support are the \$8 Billion Whole New LGA program, \$19 Billion New JFK program, and \$10 Billion new Midtown Bus Terminal program. His work has included negotiating to help advance projects and navigating regulatory approval and permitting processes, while also prioritizing the interests of the community and mitigating project impacts.

In the community, Hersh has delivered significant benefits such as STEM educational programming for hundreds of elementary and middle-school students, capacity building programming for local and diverse businesses, millions of dollars in scholarships for high school students, and job training and placement support for thousands of local residents. In addition, he works closely with colleagues across the agency to ensure contracting opportunities are available and accessible for disadvantaged, diverse, and local business enterprises. Under Hersh's leadership, the Port Authority and its private partners at the LaGuardia Redevelopment Program awarded more than \$2 billion in contracts to MWBEs, a historic amount in the State of New York. Additionally, more than \$850 million in contracts were awarded to local businesses around LGA. He expects to surpass that record-breaking participation at the JFK Redevelopment Program, ensuring that the economic benefits from these projects continue accruing to the community.

Hersh has worked in politics and government for 15 years. Before coming to the Port Authority, Hersh spent 4½ years working for Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, first as the Queens Regional Representative, and then as the Director of Downstate Regional and Intergovernmental Affairs. He is a native of Queens, NY, and a proud graduate of The Bronx High School of Science, Boston University, and the Maurice A. Deane School of Law at Hofstra University. Hersh is also an attorney admitted to the bar in New York and New Jersey.