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## City Announces Construction Underway on \$39 Million Mid-Island Bluebelt Phase II



**New Sewers, Catch Basins and Wetlands will Improve Roadway Drainage and Mitigate Flooding in Dongan Hills and Grant City; \$25 Million Phase I was Completed in 2018**

**A Map of the Project Area and Photos of the Work are Available on [DEP's Flickr Page](#)**

New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Vincent Sapienza and Department of Design and Construction (DDC) Commissioner Lorraine Grillo today announced that work has begun on the \$39 million Phase II of the New Creek Bluebelt on Staten Island. Located in the Dongan Hills and Grant City neighborhoods, where roadway flooding often occurs during heavy rainstorms, the project includes two, of what will eventually be 19, Bluebelt wetlands that will receive and naturally filter the stormwater that falls in the area. The work will also include the construction of more than three miles of new sewers and nearly two miles of water mains, as well as the addition of more than 80 catch basins and 35 fire hydrants. The project is being jointly funded by DEP and an \$11 million U.S. Department of Agriculture grant, which was secured by Senator Charles Schumer. DDC is managing the construction, which is anticipated to be completed in 2021. The [\\$25 million Phase I](#) was completed in 2018.

More Information

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“The Mid-Island Bluebelt is not only a beautiful addition to the neighborhood, it is a critical piece of infrastructure that will improve roadway drainage and reduce flooding, raise nearby property values, protect the health of New York Harbor and allow for construction of the East Shore seawall,” said **DEP Commissioner Vincent Sapienza**. “We thank our partners at DDC for professionally managing these important projects and the elected officials for their advocacy on behalf on their constituents.”

“Bluebelts have preserved and beautified open space in Staten Island while saving billions of dollars in sewer construction and maintenance costs,” said **DDC Commissioner Lorraine Grillo**. “The New Creek Bluebelt will benefit thousands of borough residents while helping to manage stormwater and reduce flooding across hundreds of acres. We’re very pleased to work with our partners at DEP to keep expanding the Bluebelt system.”

“Throughout my tenure as an elected official, I have worked to create the effort to build Bluebelts and install sewer systems after hearing countless complaints from residents in our low-lying areas. I also supported and am pleased to have helped to save a critical portion of Last Chance Pond from development over a decade ago, which is crucial to the ultimate success of this Bluebelt for Dongan Hills and Grant City residents,” said **Borough President James Oddo**. “The Bluebelt system is designed to direct storm water away from neighborhoods and into streams and ponds that are engineered to biologically clean the water. Not only does this allow residents to gain the benefits of reduced flooding, but also increases natural areas for enjoying the health benefits of outdoor recreation. This is a win for nature and for people.”

“The Mid-Island Bluebelt project will not only go a long way towards keeping homes and roads free of flooding—but will also play a critical role in the East Shore Seawall project. When it comes to our infrastructure, projects like this show the importance of all levels of government working together,” said **Congressman Max Rose**.

“The Bluebelt wetlands and installation of new sewers, water mains, and catch basins are critical investments to protect the surrounding neighborhoods that have long suffered from severe flooding,” said **Assembly Member Nicole Malliotakis**. “The completion of these projects can’t come fast enough for the people of Grant City and Dongan Hills.”

“The Mid-Island Bluebelt project, along with the miles of sewers, water mains and infrastructure that connects it, not only will help protect so many communities and residents on Staten Island from chronic flooding, it has changed the way we think about water management in a major city,” said **City Council Minority Leader Steven Matteo**. “After many years of advocacy and working with my colleagues in government to move this forward, I am extremely pleased to see this plan move toward reality.”

The award winning Bluebelt program preserves natural drainage corridors such as streams and ponds, and optimizes them to help control and filter stormwater. During this Phase II of the New Creek Bluebelt project, two new wetlands will be built at Last Chance Pond Park, which is owned by both DEP and NYC Parks. Stormwater collected from surrounding roadways will be directed to this enhanced waterway, or Bluebelt wetland, which will allow the water to be naturally filtered to protect the health of New Creek and New York Harbor.

Construction will include a new 8.8-acre freshwater wetland between Zoe Street and Husson Street, and another 0.1-acre freshwater wetland between Husson Street and Hylan Boulevard. These wetlands will slow the stormwater down after it empties from the sewer system and detain it, allowing it to be naturally filtered. The water will then flow over a weir to be built on the upstream side of New Creek at Hylan Boulevard. In a later capital project, the culvert that conveys the Creek under Hylan Boulevard will be replaced and more wetlands created on the downstream side of Hylan Boulevard. Eventually, the system connects to stormwater flow from the recently completed Phase I of the Bluebelt south of

Olympia Boulevard near Slater Boulevard, and then empties into lower New York Harbor.

Prior to the project, much of this property was covered with *Phragmites australis*, or common reed grass, which is prone to brush fires. By removing the *Phragmites* and adding more diverse wetland plantings, the threat of brush fires will be reduced and the area will likely attract more wildlife. The work will include the installation of more than 61,000 herbaceous plants, including wildflowers, 295 woody shrubs and 342 trees.

For more than 20 years, DEP has built Bluebelts throughout Staten Island. In the south Richmond and Mid-Island areas, the City has purchased approximately 400 acres to construct the Bluebelt systems that support better drainage and wetland preservation with naturalized infrastructure. The Bluebelts also provide important open spaces and serve as a habitat for diverse wildlife. More than 70 Bluebelts have been built across Staten Island, with additional sites under construction now and others being planned for the future.

The project also includes the construction of approximately 8,500 linear feet of stormwater sewers and 9,200 linear feet of sanitary sewers along portions of Husson Street, Hamden Avenue, Hunter Avenue, Bowden Street, Cascade Street, Adams Avenue, Hull Avenue, Jefferson Avenue, Stobe Avenue, South Railroad, Zoe Street, Seaver Avenue, Naughton Avenue, Dongan Hills Avenue, Vera Street and Joyce Street.

While the roadway is open to install the sewers, almost 10,000 linear feet of new water mains will also be built to replace the older cast iron pipes. This will improve water distribution in the area while the 35 new hydrants slated to be installed will ensure firefighters have ready access to the City's water supply. Construction will also include 84 catch basins and nine stormwater chambers to create additional capacity in the neighborhood's drainage system.

This project is partially funded by a grant secured by Senator Charles Schumer from the US Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service. The \$11 million grant is part of the Federal program to address the damage done by Superstorm Sandy.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing approximately 1 billion gallons of high quality drinking water each day to more than 9 million residents, including 8.6 million in New York City. The water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, comprising 19 reservoirs and three controlled lakes. Approximately 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels and aqueducts bring water to homes and businesses throughout the five boroughs, and 7,500 miles of sewer lines and 96 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 in the upstate watershed. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program, with a planned \$19.7 billion in investments over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. For more information, visit [nyc.gov/dep](https://nyc.gov/dep), like us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).

The Department of Design and Construction is the City's primary capital construction project manager. In supporting Mayor de Blasio's long-term vision of growth, sustainability, resiliency, equity and healthy living, DDC provides communities with new or renovated public buildings such as such as firehouses, libraries, police precincts, and new or upgraded roads, sewers and water mains in all five boroughs. To manage this \$14 billion portfolio, DDC partners with other City agencies, architects and consultants, whose experience bring efficient, innovative and environmentally-conscious design and construction strategies to City projects. For more information, please visit [nyc.gov/ddc](https://nyc.gov/ddc).

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