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DEP (718) 595-6600; DDC (718) 391-1583

Bluebelt Expansion on Staten Island’s South Shore Recognized by Sustainability Institute



\$48 Million Project, Largest Ever Expansion of the Bluebelt System, to be Completed Later This Year

Construction of Catch Basins, Storm Sewers and Wetlands will Reduce Street Flooding; Nearly 600 Homes to Connect to the City Sewer System

Photos of the Work and a Map of the Area are Available on DEP’s Flickr Page

The New York City Departments of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Design and Construction (DDC) today announced that the ongoing \$48 million expansion of the Staten Island Bluebelt in the South Shore’s Woodrow area has received the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure’s (ISI) Envision Silver Award. The Award recognizes projects that foster a dramatic and necessary improvement in the sustainability, performance and resiliency of infrastructure. The selection process reviews project performance across 60 sustainability criteria, including community, quality of life, management, planning, materials, energy, water, environmental impacts, emissions, and resilience.

Currently, very few streets in this area are equipped with catch basins or storm sewers and roadway flooding often occurs during heavy rain storms. The project will add more than three miles of storm sewers, install hundreds of catch basins, replace existing water mains, and include the largest ever expansion of the Bluebelt system. The catch basins will allow precipitation to drain from the roadways into the new storm sewers which will then direct it to the Bluebelt wetland where it will be naturally filtered to protect the environment. In addition, four miles of new sanitary sewers will be installed that will allow nearly 600

More Information

NYC Department of Environmental Protection
Public Affairs

59-17 Junction Boulevard
19th Floor
Flushing, NY 11373
(718) 595-6600

<div data-bbox="66 71 328 92">Testimony & Public Comments</div> <div data-bbox="50 111 298 338"><ul style="list-style-type: none">› Capital Projects› Careers at DEP› Environmental Reviews› Interagency MOUs› A to Z Index› Contact Us</div>	<div data-bbox="410 71 1179 157"><p>homes to connect to the City sewer system, and discontinue the use of septic tanks. The project, which is expected to be completed later this year, is being funded by DEP and managed by DDC.</p></div> <div data-bbox="410 178 1193 329"><p>“The Bluebelt system on Staten Island has proven to effectively manage stormwater and this \$48 million investment is the largest ever expansion of the program,” said DEP Acting Commissioner Vincent Sapienza. “We thank our partners at DDC for professionally managing this project, which will improve the quality of life for residents and raise the value of their properties.”</p></div> <div data-bbox="410 352 1193 533"><p>“The Bluebelt system has proven to be an environmentally sustainable and cost effective way to manage stormwater drainage in Staten Island, while preserving and enhancing beautiful wetland ecosystems,” said DDC Commissioner Feniosky Peña-Mora. “We’re very pleased to partner with DEP to help the people of Staten Island, and we are honored to collect our first Envision Award from the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure.”</p></div> <div data-bbox="410 556 1206 800"><p>The award winning Bluebelt program preserves natural drainage corridors such as streams and ponds, and optimizes them to help control and filter stormwater. As part of this project, the stormwater that is collected from local roadways will be directed to a new wetland that will be built on City-owned property at the east end of Sheldon Avenue. The work will include the planting of 723 canopy trees, 166 shrubs, 36,850 plants and wildflowers, and 115,000 square feet of seeding. The Bluebelt will hold and naturally filter the stormwater before it eventually drains into the Arthur Kill.</p></div> <div data-bbox="410 823 1203 1129"><p>Over the last ten years DEP has built Bluebelts for approximately one third of Staten Island’s land area. In the South Richmond and mid-Island areas, the City has purchased approximately 400 acres of wetland property for Bluebelts that provide drainage for 19 watersheds, covering about 14,000 acres. The Bluebelts also provide important open spaces and serve as a habitat for diverse wildlife. Expanding the use of Bluebelts to reduce flooding and improve the water quality of New York Harbor is one of the operational goals outlined in <i>Strategy 2011-2014</i>, a far-reaching strategic plan that lays out 100 distinct initiatives to make DEP the safest, most efficient, cost-effective, and transparent water utility in the nation.</p></div> <div data-bbox="410 1152 1211 1333"><p>While the roadway is opened to add the new sewers the City will also upgrade the drinking water delivery system by replacing the old cast iron water mains with new ductile iron mains. As part of the project, 12,580 linear feet of 8 and 12-inch diameter distribution water mains will be installed. Upgrading the water main network will help to ensure a reliable supply of high quality drinking water for area residents and businesses.</p></div> <div data-bbox="410 1356 1203 1600"><p>ISI describes its Envision process as a rating system for sustainable infrastructure providing “a holistic framework for evaluating and rating the community, environmental, and economic benefits of all types and sizes of infrastructure projects.” It covers a broad range of criteria to address a project’s impact on the surrounding community and environment, technical considerations regarding materials and processes, and other critical choices spanning a project’s lifecycle. Envision also helps communities and elected officials make responsible choices about their natural resources.</p></div> <div data-bbox="410 1623 1208 1837"><p>The ISI’s Envision Silver Award is granted when a project fosters a dramatic and necessary improvement in the sustainability performance and resiliency of infrastructure, and is issued as a result of an independent peer-review process conducted and overseen by the ISI. The evaluation assesses project performance across 60 sustainability criteria addressing a wide range of indicators including community, quality of life, management, planning, materials, energy, water, environmental impacts, emissions, and resilience.</p></div> <div data-bbox="410 1860 1203 1978"><p>DEP manages New York City’s water supply, providing approximately 1 billion gallons of high-quality water each day to more than 9 million residents, including 8.5 million in New York City. The water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, comprising 21 reservoirs and three</p></div>
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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 \$14 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, like us on Facebook at facebook.com/nycwater, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/nycwater.

The Department of Design and Construction is the City's primary capital construction project manager. In supporting Mayor de Blasio's lenses 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, new or upgraded roadways, sewers, water mains in all five boroughs. To manage this \$15 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.

 [All Press Releases](#)