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## City Begins Work to Increase Sewer Capacity and Reduce Flooding in Laurelton Neighborhood

**\$18 Million Project Will Add Nearly Four Miles of Sewers to Help Reduce Flooding and Pollution Discharges into Jamaica Bay**

**A Map of the Project Area, Diagram and Photos Can be Viewed on [DEP's Flickr Page](#)**

Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Emily Lloyd and Department of Design and Construction (DDC) Commissioner Dr. Feniosky Peña-Mora today announced that the City has begun an \$18 million project that will significantly increase sewer capacity to better manage stormwater and reduce flooding in the Laurelton neighborhood of Queens. The community is currently served by a combined sewer system, which carries wastewater from homes and businesses, and stormwater that falls on the streets, through a single sewer pipe to a treatment plant. The project will add 142 catch basins to neighborhood streets to allow precipitation to drain from the roadways, and nearly four miles of new sewer lines to create additional capacity within the drainage system. While the roadway is opened to add the sewers, more than three miles of new water mains will be built to replace the aging delivery system currently serving the area. Construction began over the summer and is expected to be completed during the summer of 2016. DEP is funding the \$18 million project and DDC is managing the construction.

"This \$18 million investment in the Laurelton community will help to better drain precipitation from the roadways, reduce localized flooding and protect the homes

More Information

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and property of neighborhood residents,” said **DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd**. “Upgrading the drainage system throughout southeast Queens is a priority for DEP and we will continue to work with Councilman Richards to identify projects and with our partners at DDC to ensure the work is done quickly, professionally and with minimal disruption.”

“We are going to work diligently to address the serious concerns of Southeast Queens’ residents regarding flooding and drainage problems they have been experiencing,” noted **DDC Commissioner Dr. Feniosky Peña-Mora**. “This project should bring significant relief to homeowners and businesses that have been coping with persistent flooding, and will make these streets more resilient when adverse weather strikes. We are proud to work with our partners at DEP to bring these much-needed infrastructure improvements to the neighborhood, and we pledge to work with elected officials, community leaders and local residents during our construction so that their concerns are heard. We know that our projects impact people’s day to day lives in a direct manner. Our staff will always be extremely responsive to quality of life concerns that neighborhood residents may have during our construction efforts. Our mandate is to deliver our projects in a timely manner, while continually keeping safety in mind, and with an eye always to being a good neighbor in those communities experiencing our construction.”

“The persistent flooding in Laurelton has had a significant negative impact on the neighborhood’s quality of life for far too long,” said **Queens Borough President Melinda Katz**. “Thankfully, this \$18 million project to expand the neighborhood’s sewer capacity will address the flooding problem and provide residents with much needed relief from the property damage, inconvenience and safety risks that flooding can bring. I commend the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Design and Construction for collaborating on this important project that will make future rainstorms much less burdensome on the Laurelton community.”

“Neighborhoods throughout Southeast Queens have long been subjected to flooded streets and excessive ponding whenever it rained,” said **Council Member Donovan Richards, Chair to the Committee on Environmental Protection**. “Today’s announcement on the upcoming installation of additional sewer infrastructure in Laurelton is welcome news. This project will not only alleviate flooding, but will also greatly improve the quality of life for those in the 31st district. I look forward to a continued partnership with the Department of Environmental Protection to equitably serve all New Yorkers through continued improvement and regular maintenance of our sewer system.”

During heavy rainstorms the amount of stormwater entering the existing combined sewer can cause it to overflow a diluted mix of untreated wastewater into local waterways. In order to reduce these types of events, the project includes the installation of 12,329 feet of separated storm sewers. The storm sewers will only collect the precipitation that drains through the catch basins on the streets and will then divert it directly into newly constructed natural basins where the water will be held and sediments will settle out, before it overflows into Conselyea’s Creek. By keeping stormwater out of the combined sewer system, the likelihood of an overflow is significantly reduced. In addition, by reducing the volume of flow in the combined sewer system that eventually ends up at a wastewater treatment plant, the costs for chemicals and electricity to clean the wastewater is reduced and the creation of greenhouse gases is avoided. The project will also include the construction of 8,503 feet of combined sewers. Built to newer design standards, they will provide additional drainage capacity.

The work will also include the construction of 17,700 feet of new ductile iron distribution water mains, which are between eight and 12 inches in diameter. The new mains will help to improve the pressure and quality of the water, while also providing a critical redundancy to the distribution system that will help to minimize disruption to consumers during future maintenance work. Work will also include the installation of 43 fire hydrants, 30 trees and new sidewalks and curbs.

Over the last decade DEP has invested more than \$2.5 billion to upgrade sewers citywide, with approximately \$500 million dedicated to improving the drainage system in Queens. Over the next 10 years DEP has budgeted similar amounts to increase capacity, extend the system to underserved neighborhoods and ensure that the infrastructure remains in a state of good repair.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of water each day to more than nine million residents, including eight 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 \$14 billion in investments over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. This capital program is responsible for critical projects like City Water Tunnel No. 3; the Staten Island Bluebelt program, an ecologically sound and cost-effective stormwater management system; the city's Watershed Protection Program, which protects sensitive lands upstate near the city's reservoirs in order to maintain their high water quality; and the installation of more than 820,000 Automated Meter Reading devices, which will allow customers to track their daily water use, more easily manage their accounts and be alerted to potential leaks on their properties. For more information, visit [nyc.gov/dep](http://nyc.gov/dep), like us on Facebook at [facebook.com/nycwater](https://facebook.com/nycwater), or follow us on Twitter at [twitter.com/nycwater](https://twitter.com/nycwater).

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