



**Rohit T. Aggarwala**  
*Commissioner*

**Anastasios Georgelis**  
*Acting Chief Operating Officer*

59-17 Junction Blvd.  
Flushing, NY 11373

Tel. 718.595.7668  
TasosG@dep.nyc.gov

February 18, 2025

Honorable Eric L. Adams  
Mayor of the City of New York  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Honorable Adrienne Adams  
Speaker of the New York City Council  
165-38A Baisley Blvd  
Jamaica, NY 11434

RE: City Council Reporting Requirements Pursuant to Local Law No. 56 of 2017,  
Council Int. No. 1198-A of 2016

Dear Mayor Adams and Speaker Adams:

This letter is submitted to provide an update to the initial report on the Southeast Queens Flood Mitigation Plan submitted on March 20, 2018, and prepared pursuant to the requirements of Local Law No. 56 of 2017, Council Int. No. 1198-A of 2016.

The intent of this report is to provide an update on the specific information required by §24-530.b of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, entitled Southeast Queens Flood Mitigation Plan (enacted by Local Law 56 of 2017). This section states,

“By no later than six months after the end of each fiscal year, beginning with the first fiscal year that commences more than one year after the effective date of the local law that added this section, the department of environmental protection shall submit to the mayor and speaker of the council a report on progress in implementing the plan required by subdivision a of this section during the prior fiscal year. Each such report shall include, but not be limited to, a description of any changes to such plan, a description of any changes in funds committed by or on behalf of the city in furtherance of such plan and a description of all funds expended by or on behalf of the city in furtherance of such plan.”

This updated report, along with the attached table, summarizes DEP’s fulfillment of the requirements for a flood mitigation plan in Queens Community Districts 12 and 13. DEP has also developed an interactive online map that shows the completed and ongoing construction in Southeast Queens. This map can be accessed by visiting: <http://www.nyc.gov/dep/seqprojects>

## **The Southeast Queens Mitigation Plan**

As the City's water and wastewater utility, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is responsible for building and maintaining sewer infrastructure to manage sanitary waste and stormwater from homes and businesses. Southeast Queens (comprised of Queens Community Districts 412 and 413) experienced rapid residential and commercial growth from the 1920s through the 1960s, and many of the natural watercourses that previously drained the area were paved over by developers, exacerbating flooding. The low-lying topography of the area and the enlargement of Idlewild/Kennedy Airport significantly complicated the installation of large storm sewers, making planned work extremely costly. Mayor de Blasio authorized \$1.5 billion over ten years for the Southeast Queens Flood Mitigation Plan. This has since been increased to \$2.6 billion through the approved 2025 September Plan.

Together with our partners at the Department of Design and Construction and the Department of Transportation, DEP has developed a four-pronged approach to improving conditions in the area:

1. Construct short-term projects, such as storm sewer extensions, targeted full size sewers, and select green infrastructure to bring near-term flooding relief.
2. Build neighborhood sewer projects where there is existing available capacity in the sewer system.
3. Create future capacity for further neighborhood sewer projects by investing in large trunk/spine sewers.
4. Evaluate opportunities to reduce groundwater flooding.

Together, these four approaches are delivering both immediate and long-lasting relief for many residents of Southeast Queens.

### **1. Short-term Projects**

DEP has conducted an extensive engineering analysis to identify areas throughout the two community boards that have had the most severe flooding complaints over the past several years. Based on this analysis, DEP will:

- a. Utilize "when and where" contracts to install 3-6 blocks of targeted full-size sewers. Our partners at DOT may also make minor roadway improvements concurrent with the installation of the sewer improvements. To date, DEP has completed three "when and where" projects, and one is in construction.
- b. Evaluate and install storm sewer extensions where there are sewers in the area with available capacity. Completed storm sewer extensions will be reported to the Council in the annual report each year.
- c. Target opportunities to install green infrastructure, such as rain gardens, subsurface retention or detention facilities, porous pavement, and/or green roofs. Green infrastructure can divert stormwater and delay it from entering the sewer system, which preserves sewer capacity and helps with water quality objectives for receiving waterbodies. DEP is also exploring connected green infrastructure for "cloudburst management" as well as larger

practices that can be implemented within medians to manage stormwater where flooding complaints have been persistent but longer term stormwater solutions are not yet viable. DEP has completed several green infrastructure projects in Southeast Queens and has several more in various design or construction phases. For more information on these projects, see the 2023 Green Infrastructure Annual Report available on DEP's website at <https://www.nyc.gov/site/dep/water/green-infrastructure.page>. This report is published annually on April 30.

## **2. Neighborhood Sewer Projects**

In most cases, DEP determined that the most effective solution to address flooding is to construct neighborhood storm sewers that take advantage of existing downstream capacity in the system. To date, DEP has completed nineteen neighborhood sewer projects and has two in construction and five in the design phase. Construction of project SEQ200592 is ongoing in 2025. This project is phase 2 of upgrading and installing new sewers in the Rosedale community. The status of all neighborhood sewer projects, including the projected registration year and funding level, can be seen in the attached table under "neighborhood sewers."

## **3. Trunk/Spine Sewers**

Trunk sewers build stormwater capacity for the future by creating new large conduits to move stormwater out of upland Southeast Queens into Jamaica Bay. In Southeast Queens, DEP must build additional trunk sewers to provide enough capacity to drain all of Community Districts 412 and 413. To date, DEP has completed one spine sewer project. Significant progress was made in 2024 in the construction of project SE885AVWE. This project is phase 2 of the 150<sup>th</sup> Street trunk, and it is being built by New York State DOT as part of the Van Wyck Expressway expansion project. Construction of project SE-842A1 is ongoing in 2025. This project is Phase 1 of the Farmer's Boulevard trunk sewer.

Over the next year, DEP will continue planning efforts on additional spine sewer projects; the funds dedicated to the spine sewers, in Holding Codes pending DEP's finalizing the scope of work, appear in the attached table. DEP will update the Council each year as we complete planning and move funds out of holding codes into project-specific budget codes.

## **4. Groundwater**

In February 2024, DEP entered into an agreement with the U.S. Geological Survey to measure groundwater table levels in Southeast Queens. The agreement will remain in effect for four years and is expected to cost \$5 million. The partnership with USGS will provide data to help inform and create an updated groundwater model, further enabling DEP to analyze the benefits of potential larger scale solutions to mitigate shallow groundwater. This effort will also create groundwater maps to inform other potential groundwater and flooding solutions, such as Bluebelt planning, on a citywide basis and provide data on salt-water intrusion inland caused by sea level rise.

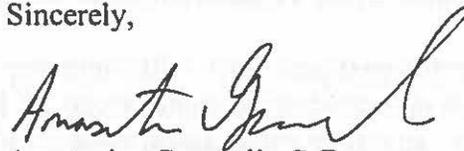
## Conclusion

To satisfy §24-530.b, DEP submits annual reports to the Council to demonstrate our progress in implementing the plan laid out above. For your convenience, the following table summarizes the total funding by project status.

<b>SEQ Flood Mitigation Plan Summary</b>		
<b>Status</b>	<b>Baseline Funding (2/28/2018)</b>	<b>Project Total Funding (12/27/24)</b>
Complete	\$23.1	\$435.3
Construction	\$144.6	\$321.9
Procurement	\$306.3	\$9.4
Design	\$187.7	\$210.7
Pre-Design	\$106.5	\$25.0
Funds in Holding Codes	\$509.0	\$841.4
Future Spine Sewer Funds	\$619.0	\$758.1
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$1,896.2 M</b>	<b>\$2,601.8 M</b>

I trust you will find this information useful. If you have any questions or comments concerning any of the information provided in this report, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Anastasios Georgelis, P.E.  
Acting Chief Operating Officer



