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Department of Environmental Protection to Invest Over \$22 Million to Expand and Upgrade Its Kingston Facility

Commissioner Christopher O. Ward of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced today that the agency will invest over \$22 million in the next three years to expand and upgrade its facility at 71 Smith Avenue in Kingston, NY. Included in the project will be a new water testing lab, expanded office space, a new garage and storage area and a grade-level pedestrian railroad crossing.

Design of the new space is being performed by AHSC Architects of Tarrytown. Construction is scheduled to begin in April 2004 and be completed by late 2006.

"This project is indicative of the City's dual commitment to protecting the water supply and promoting economic growth throughout the watershed," said Commissioner Ward. "This will be a significant boost for Kingston, providing jobs and lifting the local economy. I'd like to thank Kingston for its cooperation and support, particularly Mayor Sottile's office for the ongoing efforts to assist with our expansion plan."

"I am very pleased by the major commitment the New York City DEP has made to their facility in Kingston," said Kingston Mayor James Sottile. "We have been working with the Department to provide assistance during their planning efforts, and the new investment and jobs are very welcome news for our economy."

The DEP currently has 90 employees based at 71 Smith Street. Following the expansion in 2006, that number will rise to 240. To date, approximately 15 percent of the DEP's Kingston staff have relocated their families to the Kingston area.

In addition to a new, state-of-the-art water testing laboratory and a new garage for DEP's fleet of vehicles, the expansion will include a DEP Police Academy. A grade-level pedestrian railroad crossing will also be constructed.

The boost to Kingston's economy will be felt in a trickle-down effect for reasons other than construction costs and an increase in the number of people in the area. Currently,

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about half of the facility's maintenance and operational contracts are with established Kingston businesses. Those contracts will increase in value as the facility expands, and future service providers will benefit accordingly.

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