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Green Roof at Historic Bishop Loughlin Memorial High School in Brooklyn Will Absorb Nearly 450,000 Gallons of Stormwater Annually and Help to Improve the Health of the East River

New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Carter Strickland and Bishop Loughlin Memorial High School President Brother Dennis Cronin today announced the recently completed installation of a 13,300 square foot green roof atop the school building, located in Brooklyn's Fort Greene neighborhood. The green roof will collect and absorb the more than 435,000 gallons of stormwater that falls on the rooftop each year, keeping it out of the City's combined sewer system, which will help to reduce overflows into the East River. The planted vegetation on the roof also acts as an insulation system that can reduce the heating and cooling costs for the building, clean the air, and provide a hands-on science and environmental curriculum for the students. The green roof was funded through a \$235,700 DEP Green Infrastructure Grant and was designed and installed by Highview Creations.

"We are looking for ways to do things differently and better at Bishop Loughlin, and the green roof project is an opportunity to do both," said Loughlin President Brother Dennis Cronin. "We see a great benefit in protecting our beautiful landmark building while also providing our students an opportunity to study the environmental issues confronting our city."

"The large green roof atop Bishop Loughlin Memorial High School will absorb the rain and snow that falls on it and thereby help to improve the health of the East

More Information

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River,” said DEP Commissioner Strickland. “By partnering with a local school we hope to foster an understanding of the important role green infrastructure can play in improving the health of our local waterways and inspire the next generation of environmental leaders in New York City.”

“The DEP funded green roof was originally designed for function, and approximately 90% of the roof is now a permeable surface that will retain significant amounts of stormwater,” said Eric Dalski, a founder of Highview Creations. “However, the green roof has also provided a local habitat and helped students and the community understand the importance of Green Infrastructure in New York City.”

The Bishop Loughlin green roof is one of the largest in Brooklyn. Prior to its installation, all the stormwater that fell on the roof drained through pipes down to the basement of the school and into the City sewer system. As part of the installation, a waterproof membrane was first applied to the formerly concrete roof. Next, a three-inch layer of specially engineered soil was added, followed by 13,300 square feet of vegetated mats. The green roof will be maintained by Bishop Loughlin and Highview Creations employees.

Like many older urban centers in the United States, New York City is largely serviced by a combined sewer system where stormwater that falls on impervious surfaces such as rooftops and streets, and wastewater from homes and businesses, are carried through a single sewer pipe to treatment plants. During heavy rainfall, the amount of stormwater entering the sewers can exceed the capacity of the system and a combination of stormwater and wastewater – called a combined sewer overflow (CSO) – can be discharged into local waterways. Since 2002, DEP has invested more than \$10 billion in upgrades to wastewater treatment plants and related efforts to reduce CSOs and today New York Harbor is cleaner and healthier than it has been in more than a century. However, CSOs remain the city’s top harbor water quality challenge.

In 2010, the City launched the NYC Green Infrastructure Plan, an alternative approach to reducing CSOs and improving water quality that combines traditional infrastructure upgrades with cost effective green infrastructure installations that capture and retain stormwater runoff before it ever enters the sewer system and can contribute to overflows. Over the next 20 years, DEP is planning for \$2.4 billion in public and private funding for targeted green infrastructure installations, as well as an estimated \$2.9 billion in cost-effective grey infrastructure upgrades, to significantly reduce CSOs. The Green Infrastructure Grant Program is one part of the Green Infrastructure Plan.

Bishop Loughlin is one of 29 different partners DEP has committed funding to since the Grant Program launched in 2011. In total, DEP has committed over \$11.5 million to its Grant Program partners who, in turn, have contributed \$5.7 million in matching funds. Not-for-profit organizations, private property owners and businesses are eligible for funding for projects that use green infrastructure to reduce or manage stormwater on private property and preference for grants is given to projects that provide cost effective stormwater controls, matching funds, and ancillary benefits such as increased shade, decreased energy use for buildings, and increased awareness about stormwater management and community stewardship.

Bishop Loughlin Memorial High School is a co-educational and college preparatory Catholic high school that draws its Christian perspective from the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church and the Lasallian tradition of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. Loughlin students, faculty, and staff are committed to an inclusive community that respects diversity in its many forms and values excellence in scholarship. <http://www.blmhs.org/>.

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, like us on Facebook at facebook.com/nycwater, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/nycwater.

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