

PRESS RELEASE  
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## **Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams Announces a Plan to Reduce Combined Sewer Overflows**

Borough Hall, Brooklyn, NY. Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams announced the release of Stormwater Infrastructure Design Guidelines, which if implemented could prevent half a billion gallons of stormwater from entering the borough's combined sewer system. The study completed by Brooklyn Greenway Initiative was sponsored by the Brooklyn Borough Presidents Office with funding from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund.

The plan titled *The Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway: An Agent for Green Infrastructure, Climate Change Adaptation and Resiliency* details how the implementation of stormwater infrastructure during the construction of the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway can achieve the stated outcome and contribute to protection from coastal flooding as occurred during Hurricane Sandy.

The plan recommends a watershed based approach that will capture and retain at least the first 1 inch of rain that falls on the greenway, adjoining public right of way and impervious surfaces for one block upslope of the greenway. "With the greenway situated at the lowest contours of Brooklyn's East River watersheds, it is ideally situated to play a major role in stormwater management", said Milton Puryear, Co-founder of Brooklyn Greenway Initiative.

"Here in Brooklyn, we don't just 'go with the flow' when something isn't working right. When it comes to our overflow problem with our sewers, which are leading to damaging coastal floods and the release of raw sewage into our marine ecosystem, major changes are needed to protect residents, business and wildlife alike. The Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway Stormwater Management Plan, for which this office has sponsored funding over the last ten years, is a blueprint to a greener and cleaner future in our borough", said Borough President Eric Adams.

In a combined sewer system, stormwater and sanitary sewage from toilets and other waste sources enter the same pipes on the way to the City's water treatment plants. During significant rainfall, the volume of water and sewage exceeds the pipe's capacity and the excess is released into the City's surface water bodies such as the East River, Newtown Creek, the Gowanus Canal and New York Harbor.

In addition to preventing combined sewer overflow (CSO) events, the plan suggests how the greenway can be built as part of an integrated flood protection system for areas such as Red Hook and industrial areas of Sunset Park that experienced major losses from flooding during Hurricane Sandy.

The Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway is a 14-mile facility initiated by Brooklyn Greenway Initiative that is being implemented by New York City Department of Transportation (DOT). The overall project comprised of 23 individual capital projects is being implemented segment by segment at an estimated total cost in excess of \$100 million. "Because 14 miles of streets will be reconstructed as the greenway is built, this is an opportune time to install stormwater infrastructure on the most economical basis for the City", said Milton Puryear.

The first demonstration of the watershed based stormwater strategy is being implemented in Greenpoint beginning this year. NYC Department of Environmental (DEP) protection agreed to add a \$5 million high-level sewer to the West Street greenway capital project that will break ground in 2015. The high level sewer will capture stormwater from West St. and the side streets between West and Franklin Streets and release it directly to the east river. This will keep 4.5 million gallons out of the combined sewer system. The Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund recently announced a grant of \$1.9 million to allow BGI to install stormwater infrastructure further upslope between Franklin Street and Manhattan Avenue that will retain an additional 6 million gallons of stormwater annually, for a total reduction of 10 million gallons annually.

In developing the plan, BGI engaged a technical advisory committee comprised of DOT, DEP, New York City Department of Design & Construction (DDC) and others to help guide the work. BGI retained the

services or We Design, Landscape and Urban Designers, and eDesign Dynamics, engineers and hydrologists to undertake the investigations of existing conditions, stormwater quantities and potential solutions.

DOT is incorporating stormwater infrastructure in the design of upcoming greenway capital projects.

THE BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S OFFICE has sponsored funding from the New York State Department of State for planning and implementing the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway over the last ten years, including the funding for this study.

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BROOKLYN GREENWAY INITIATIVE (BGI) is the 501c3 non-profit organization committed to the establishment, development and long-term stewardship of the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway. When complete, this 14-mile landscaped route for pedestrians, runners and cyclists will connect neighborhood parks and open spaces from Greenpoint to Bay Ridge. It will incorporate green infrastructure elements and function as a commuting and recreation route for Brooklyn residents, workers and visitors.

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