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Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission: What's at Stake

What's Happening:

The Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission (PVSC) is considering different options for improving its sewer treatment plant. Decisions that can affect your neighborhood will be made between now and June 1, 2020. Get the facts by attending local meetings on solutions to reduce stormwater runoff and sewer overflows. Then contact your elected officials with your preferences. Sign up for the Sewage-Free Streets and Rivers campaign for updates on local meetings and other ways to get involved.

Cities that use the PVSC and the PVSC itself are required by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to evaluate options for reducing CSOs by July 2019. PVSC's evaluation of potential strategies has been published online as a draft "Development and Evaluation of Alternatives Report." After further review, PVSC will select and commit to a combination of some of the proposed strategies by June 1, 2020, the deadline for its official CSO Long Term Control Plan.

Each option will cost millions of dollars and will impact neighborhoods for decades.

CSO permittees are required to review all of these options to reduce CSOs:

- **Green infrastructure** - Nature-based solutions that capture rain where it falls, before it enters and overwhelms the combined sewer system. Examples include street trees, rain gardens, and bioswales.
- **Storage capacity within the existing system** - Using existing pipes to store stormwater.
- **Additional storage capacity in the city and/or at the treatment plant** - New storage tanks within the city or at the wastewater treatment plant.
- **Reduction of inflow and infiltration** - Fixing pipes so water does not come in or seep out through cracks.
- **Sewer separation** - Adding a pipe for stormwater to divert rain from the combined sewer system, reducing how often it overflows.
- **Treatment of CSO discharge** - Constructing a mini wastewater treatment plant at the end of the pipe.
- **CSO-related bypass of the secondary treatment portion of the sewage treatment plant** - Creating more capacity at the sewage treatment plant by bypassing the secondary treatment process of cleaning the mixture of sewage and stormwater.

Summary of PVSC's "Development and Evaluation of Alternatives Report"

Ownership and Management of CSO System Serving PVSC

- The Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission (PVSC) has assumed the lead role in coordinating the Development and Evaluation of Alternatives Regional Report on behalf of the permittees within the PVSC Treatment District. Eight (8) of the municipalities within the PVSC Treatment District have combined sewer systems (CSSs). The eight (8) PVSC CSO permittees are the City of Bayonne, City of Newark, Town of Kearny, Town of Harrison, Borough of East Newark, Jersey City Municipal Authority, City of Paterson and the North Bergen Municipal Utilities Authority.
- The PVSC treatment districts discharge into the Kill Van Kull, Upper NY Bay, Newark Bay, Hudson River, Hackensack River, Passaic River, Frank's Creek, Peripheral Ditch/Elizabeth Channel, Queen Ditch, Bellmans Creek, and Cormackill Creek.
- Number of combined sewer overflow pipes in the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission Region: PVSC does not own any of the outfalls.



PVSC selected these priority alternatives for reducing combined sewer overflows based on projected cost and the estimated reduction of overflows by volume or the number of overflows per year:

Options Considered

Projected Costs and CSO Reductions

The most cost-effective alternative for each permittee within the PVSC

- Spending \$3.2 billion would reduce the number of annual overflows system-wide to 4 CSO events per year.
- Spending \$1.5 billion would reduce the number of annual overflows system-wide to 20 CSO events per year.
- Spending \$961 million would ensure 85% capture of CSO volume.

Additional storage capacity (regional tunnels)

- Spending \$1.9 billion would reduce the number of annual overflows system-wide to 4 CSO events per year.
- Spending \$1.2 billion would reduce the number of annual overflows system-wide to 20 CSO events per year.
- Spending \$1 billion would ensure 85% capture of CSO volume.

Increased storage capacity within the existing system and increased flow to the treatment plant

- Spending \$465 million would ensure 85% capture of CSO volume.

A combination of:

- Increased storage capacity within the existing system
- Increased flow to the treatment plant
- Additional storage capacity (regional tunnels)

- Spending \$1.9 billion would reduce the number of annual overflows system-wide to 4 CSO events per year.
- Spending \$1.2 billion would reduce the number of annual overflows system-wide to 20 CSO events per year.
- Spending \$1.4 billion would ensure 85% capture of CSO volume.

Community benefits PVSC identified for green infrastructure:

Reduced surface flooding, reduced basement sewage flooding, improved air quality, reduced carbon emissions, reduced heat island effect, property value uplift, local jobs, passive and active recreational improvements, community aesthetic improvements, reduced crime, alignment with goals for a sustainable community, increased pedestrian safety through curb retrofits.

Community input gathered:

The report states that “public input has been and will continue to be solicited throughout the development of the LTCP.” The report notes that PVSC has held quarterly regional meetings, participated in municipal meetings and solicited feedback through several media platforms. The report does not include the public input that was gathered thus far.

For more information:

- Download the full report at <https://www.nj.gov/dep/dwq/cso.htm>
- To see a map of all of the outfalls in the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission service area go to: bit.ly/2kpvpAg
- PVSC CSO contact: Gregory Tramontozzi, Esq., Executive Director, 973-466-2915
- PVSC website on CSO Plan: <https://www.njcleanwaterways.com>
- Visit SewageFreeNJ.org to sign up for our newsletter

Sewage-Free Streets and Rivers is organized by its partners and an advisory board, with the support of New Jersey Future.

