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Harrison's Sewer System: What's at Stake

What's Happening:

Harrison is considering different options for improving its outdated sewer system. 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 like Harrison were required by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to evaluate options for reducing CSOs by July 2019. Harrison's evaluation of potential strategies has been published online as a draft "Development and Evaluation of Alternatives Report." After further review, Harrison will select and commit to a combination of some of the proposed strategies by June 1, 2020, the deadline for the city's 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 Harrison's "Development and Evaluation of Alternatives Report"

Ownership and Management of CSO System Serving Harrison

- The City of Harrison owns the sewage collection system.
- The Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission treats the sewage. Harrison's report is nested within a larger document that contains PVSC's regional evaluation of alternatives report, which also has implications for the city.
- Number of combined sewer overflow pipes that discharge into the Passaic River: **7**
- Average annual number of systemwide combined sewer overflow events: **Not included in the report.**





Harrison 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

- | | |
|--|---|
| Green infrastructure | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spending \$47.5 million would manage 2.5% of impervious surface with green infrastructure.• Spending \$77 million would manage 15% of impervious surface with green infrastructure. |
| Additional storage capacity (point storage) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spending \$82 million would reduce the average number of overflows to 20 CSO events per year.• Spending \$105 million would reduce the number of overflows to 4 CSO events per year. |
| Additional storage capacity (consolidated storage) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spending \$83 million would reduce the number of overflows to 20 CSO events per year.• Spending \$100 million would reduce the number of overflows to 4 CSO events per year. |
| Additional storage capacity (tunnel) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spending \$180 million would reduce the number of overflows to 20 CSO events per year.• Spending \$193 million would reduce the number of overflows to 4 CSO events per year. |
| Sewer separation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spending \$222 million would reduce the number of overflows to 0. |
| Treatment of CSO discharge (individual sites) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spending \$137million would reduce the number of overflows to 20 CSO events per year.• Spending \$178 million would reduce the number of overflows to 4 CSO events per year. |
| Treatment of CSO discharge (consolidated) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spending \$108 million would reduce the number of overflows to 20 CSO events per year.• Spending \$144 million would reduce the number of overflows to 4 CSO events per year. |

Community benefits Harrison identified for green infrastructure:

The report notes that “the impacts of green infrastructure extend beyond CSO reduction. However, this evaluation is being conducted as an element of the development and evaluation of alternatives for compliance with the Permit.”

Community input gathered:

The report describes several outreach efforts that were conducted with Harrison Tide and the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission Supplemental CSO Team, as well as a presentation at a town caucus meeting. The report does not include the input gathered through these efforts.

For more information:

- Download the full report at <https://www.nj.gov/dep/dwq/cso.htm>
- To see a map of Harrison's outfalls go to: bit.ly/2kpvpAg
- CSO contact: Rocco Russomanno, Municipal Town Engineer, russomanno@townofharrison.com
- PVSC website on CSO Plan: <https://www.njcleanwaterways.com>
- Visit SewageFreeNJ.org to sign up for our newsletter.

