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Jersey City Launches Sustainability Initiatives to address Climate Change Issues, Focusing on Storm Water Management; Education and Awareness Campaign Includes an Adopt-A-Catch Basin Program

Urban Centers have Potential to Make Significant Impact on Reducing Climate Change; Office of Sustainability to be Launched to address range of citywide sustainability practices and initiatives

JERSEY CITY — As part of the Fulop Administration’s continued focus on enhancing sustainability in Jersey City, the city has launched a series of initiatives aimed at tackling issues related to climate change initially focusing on storm water management, specifically reducing flooding and limiting pollution of our waterways. This education and awareness campaign includes an Adopt-A-Catch Basin program and green infrastructure installations such as bioswales, rain gardens and permeable pavement.

“The issue of climate change is one we are intimately familiar with in Jersey City having experienced Hurricane Irene and Hurricane Sandy,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “And now that the United States has pulled out of the Paris Climate Accord, cities in America must become more engaged to actively combat the effects of climate change.

“Our goal is to bring attention to this issue while taking real steps that the public can be part of. Most people understand the importance of recycling and reducing our carbon footprint, but not everyone understands the importance of storm water management, especially in regard to a city and its infrastructure,” added **Mayor Fulop**.

The Adopt-A-Catch Basin program is designed to increase community involvement through pledging to keep catch basins free and clear of garbage at the street level. Catch basins are storm sewer inlets designed to collect water during storm events, and are the first step in stormwater drainage systems. When storms occur, water and other items on the street (i.e. pet waste, oil, litter, leaves, etc.) enter the storm sewer through the catch basins. This debris is carried into the storm sewer system and discharged directly into our streams and rivers – clogging drains and flooding local streets which can have impact during major storms.

Residents can adopt a catch basin at no cost and pledge to keep it free of litter and debris. In turn, the city will provide a broom and dustpan, as well as sponsor a mural at the site to better visually identify the catch basin and remind residents of the challenges associated with city sewers.

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So far, nearly 70 catch basins have been adopted. To sign up to adopt a catch basin, visit water.innovatejerseycity.org, and fill out the form.

The City is also seeking to install green infrastructure on a large scale across the city to divert storm water runoff from entering the sewer system. The first green infrastructure in public streets in the city has been installed as samples and demonstrations at City Hall and on the Pedestrian Mall, and includes three bioswale, a rain garden, permeable pavement, and a rain barrel. The city has also installed green infrastructure elements in recent park projects at Berry Lane Park and Riverview Fisk Park.

The purpose of bioswales, rain gardens, permeable pavement, and other types of green infrastructure is to capture, absorb, or divert storm water from urban areas before it causes local flooding or enters the sewer system. Green infrastructure allows storm water to be absorbed by plants, penetrate into the natural soil beneath streets, parking lots, and sidewalks, or be retained and released slowly into sewers at a rate that has less harmful impacts.

In April, the Fulop administration announced that 2017 is the “Year of Water” for Jersey City. Since then, various events and initiatives have been put in place to increase awareness around storm water management and water conservation in Jersey City. The first phase of the “Year of Water” will focus on education, awareness, and community involvement. The Fulop administration is also taking steps to ensure the city’s water infrastructure is prepared to meet residents’ needs for decades to come.

Year of Water initiatives will support the entire Jersey City community in understanding how the city’s stormwater system operates, the value and purpose of green infrastructure is, and what individuals can do to help improve stormwater management throughout the city.

Later this year, the administration will be creating an Office of Sustainability to continue the work of the Office of Innovation in addressing a range of citywide sustainable practices and initiatives including collaborating with our local partners to establish green infrastructure standards for the city, identify priority areas for big green infrastructure projects, and tighten storm water runoff limits across the city for new developments.

All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary to Mayor Steven M. Fulop at jenniferm@jcnj.org or 201-376-0699.