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Utica to Receive \$11.6 Million from New York State for Next Phase of Stormwater Control Project

The New York State Environmental Facilities Corp. (EFC) today announced that \$11.6 million in grants and low-cost loans have been approved for the City of Utica to improve its wastewater collection system and prevent stormwater overflows in downtown Utica.

The city's combined sanitary and stormwater sewer system will be fortified by replacing sewer mains and repairing gaps where water can seep into the collection system and lead to overflows.

The EFC Board of Directors today approved two short-term loans – a \$2 million interest-free loan and a \$2 million low-interest loan – that will save the city \$134,500 over the cost of borrowing on its own. Utica previously received a \$5 million Water Quality Improvement Grant from the Department of Environmental Conservation and a \$1.3 million grant from the Empire State Development Corp.

“The funding provided by the State for these essential projects will go to great lengths in improving the City’s aging infrastructure and sewer system. I thank Governor Cuomo and EFC President Driscoll for once again delivering for the residents of Utica,” Utica Mayor Robert Palmieri said.

“Three state agencies are combining their resources to fortify Utica’s wastewater collection system and prevent stormwater overflows during heavy storms,” said EFC President and CEO Matthew Driscoll. “Mayor Palmieri and his staff are to be congratulated for their continuing efforts to improve the city’s wastewater systems in the most cost effective manner for city taxpayers.”

“From the very beginning of our NY Rising programs, we have worked tirelessly to promote the long-term resiliency of our State,” said Jamie Rubin, Executive Director of the Governor’s Office of Storm Recovery. “Through this project, we can come together with several other State agencies to fortify Utica’s wastewater collection system and prevent future overflows during instances of extreme weather. With this and other investments, we are continuing to work toward a stronger, better New York.”

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The next phase of work will improve sewers in an area bounded by South Street, Steuben Street, St. Vincent Street and Arthur Street. The construction is expected to begin in 2015 as the City completes the \$15 million initial phases of the infrastructure improvement program.

In addition to the \$4.13 million in low-costs loans approved today, EFC previously financed \$11.8 million for the first phases of Utica's wastewater project, which total \$15 million. That short-term financing was extended for an additional two years following a vote today by the EFC Board of Directors.

It was also announced today that the City of Utica has signed an agreement with EFC for a \$40,000 Environmental Planning Grant approved through Governor Cuomo's Regional Economic Development Initiative and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The planning grant will help develop an engineering report for evaluation of alternatives to "fortify the city's waste collection system to prevent stormwater from entering sewer mains and causing overflows."

EFC is the arm of Governor Andrew Cuomo's administration that provides low-cost loans to help local governments afford major improvements to wastewater and drinking water infrastructure. This year marks the 25th anniversary of New York's Clean Water State Revolving Fund, which assisted 130 communities in 2013-14 in financing water quality protection projects at the lowest possible cost.

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