



STEVEN M. FULOP  
MAYOR OF JERSEY CITY

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### ***Jersey City Launches Year of Water to Expand Green Infrastructure and Support Water Stewardship throughout 2017***

*Initiative will further promote the education of sustainability and clean water throughout the city*

JERSEY CITY –**Mayor Steven M. Fulop** is announcing 2017 as a ‘**Year of Water for Jersey City,**’ which will include a variety of initiatives, events, and programming designed to raise awareness around water infrastructure and conservation within the Jersey City community. 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, what green infrastructure is, and what individuals can do to help improve stormwater management throughout the city. Through the Year of Water, the City will engage city departments, community organizations, and residents in committing to the cause. In light of the federal government’s retreat from climate change and sustainability issues, it is more vital than ever for cities to take sustainability action at the local level.

“With climate change posing a serious threat to our planet, we are facing a crossroads on how to properly address this issue” said **Mayor Fulop**. “Throughout our administration, we have focused on green initiatives such as taking steps to reduce our carbon footprint or instituting a citywide cleanup. This education process is the latest step to encourage our residents to be proactive in ensuring a cleaner and more sustainable community for decades to come.”

Today, 40 percent of Jersey City is within a FEMA flood zone and 62 percent of the area in the city is covered by impermeable surfaces such as buildings, concrete and asphalt, which block water from entering the ground. Jersey City’s sewer system is primarily combined, which means that water from storm drains in the streets joins with wastewater from buildings in the same sewer pipes. When these sewer pipes are filled beyond regular treatment capacity, the excess water, mixed with partially treated sewage, overflows through one of the 21 combined sewer outfalls into the Hudson River and the Hackensack River.

Throughout the year, the City will install green infrastructure such as rain gardens, bioswales, and porous pavement, using City Hall as a demonstration site. Green infrastructure creates permeable surfaces, allowing stormwater to be naturally absorbed where it falls instead of flowing into City sewers. Reducing the amount of stormwater that drains into the City’s combined sewer system is a cost-effective way to control localized flooding and reduce pollution in local waterways like the Hudson and Hackensack Rivers. Green infrastructure can also help to beautify neighborhoods, improve air quality, and reduce the City’s carbon footprint.

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Jersey City is also currently developing a citywide resiliency plan to provide strategies and frameworks for improving the City's ability to withstand and recover from the effects of storm surges and rising sea levels.

“We are looking forward to partnering with the Office of Innovation, Rutgers University, and several non-profit groups such as Sustainable JC, to install and promote green Infrastructure projects,” said Thomas Gibbons, Jersey City Municipal Utilities Authority board member. “These projects are an important component of our long-term stormwater management plan and will help us ensure a more sustainable future for Jersey City.”

Jersey City is currently a member of Jersey Water Works, which is a collaborative effort to solve complex problems regarding water infrastructure throughout New Jersey.

Throughout the year, the City will roll out various water stewardship initiatives as part of the Year of Water. If you would like to get involved, please visit <http://water.innovatejerseycity.org>

*Year of Water is part of a multi-year strategic sustainability effort and is a collaboration with the Office of Innovation, to be followed by 2018: Year of Energy and 2019: Year of Sustainable Neighborhoods.*

**All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary to Mayor Steven M. Fulop at [jenniferm@jcnj.org](mailto:jenniferm@jcnj.org) or [201-376-0699](tel:201-376-0699). ////**