DAILY READING FILE

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
215 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107
(215) 686-2181
FAX (215) 686-2180

MICHAEL A. NUTTER
Mayor

July 12, 2011

RECEIVED
2011 JUL 19 PM 12: 22
OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

Lisa Jackson
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460-0003

Dear Administrator Jackson:

On behalf of the City of Philadelphia and our Water Department, I am writing to share the good news about our *Green City, Clean Waters* plan. On June 1, the PA Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) and PWD signed a groundbreaking agreement that allows the PWD to officially launch the implementation of its innovative strategy that uses green practices to substantially reduce Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) to its waterways.

We sincerely believe that with the implementation of *Green City, Clean Waters* as outlined in our attached program summary and attachment G of the Consent Order and Agreement, we are empowered to honor the commitments we have made to our regulators to protect and restore our waterways, while enhancing our pledge to our citizens – to endow Philadelphia with a legacy of rivers and streams that are fishable, swimmable and breathtaking. As you know, this plan also furthers our vision of Philadelphia becoming the greenest city in America.

I have also attached a sampling of the public support and enthusiastic press that we have received since the signing of our agreement. The well wishes and pledges of many city and public partners have been reaching us daily.

Thank you for your ongoing support of this program and your participation and remarks at our Earth Day celebration – it has rallied the needed momentum to move this plan forward.

I look forward to and welcome the opportunity to continue to work with you and your colleagues to make *Green City, Clean Waters* a model for America.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Nutter
Mayor

cc: Jon Capacasa, EPA
Joseph Feola, DEP
Jenifer Fields, DEP
Rina Cutler
Howard Neukrug

Green City, Clean Waters Program Summary

Total Area of the City of Philadelphia: ~92,000 acres (144 mi^2)
Combined Sewer Service Drainage Area: ~41,000 acres (64 mi^2)
Combined Sewer Service Impervious Cover: ~28,000 acres (44 mi^2)

Program Summary
Green City, Clean Waters is a 25 year program for addressing water quality goals as set by the Pennsylvania and National CSO Control Policies, with metrics and milestones developed to measure progress along the way and end goals including reducing CSO volumes by almost 8 billion gallons and converting over 9,500 acres of impervious cover to Greened Acres.

The total program cost likely will exceed $3 B with about $2B in public expenditures, of which more than $1.4B will be invested in green stormwater infrastructure.

First 5 year Deliverables:

- Implementation and Adaptive Management Plan (IAMP): PWD will develop IAMP for approval by the PADEP 6 months after signing of the COA. This IAMP will include a description of how the program will be executed and will include descriptions of the following items:
    - Adaptive Implementation: the IAMP will describe how adaptive implementation will be incorporated into the program
    - Capital Projects: the IAMP will include a list of Capital projects already completed or under way, and also the projected number and types of projects proposed to be implemented during the first 5 years
    - Green Stormwater Infrastructure data system(s): the IAMP will include a description of the Green Stormwater Infrastructure tracking system that PWD will be developing
    - Operation and Maintenance: the IAMP will include a description of the City's Operation and Maintenance plans to ensure that green stormwater infrastructure projects are operating according to design
    - Streamlining: a section of the plan that will include a descriptions of ways that PWD will seek to create or modify codes, policies, ordinances and interagency procedures to optimize implementation of the Green City, Clean Waters program
    - Sewer System Evaluation Survey (SSES): the IAMP will include a plan and schedule to address wet weather inflow and infiltration (WWII) in the City's separate sewer areas.
    - Outlying Communities report: the IAMP will include a description of the City's efforts to address wet weather peaking in the sanitary flows that are received from outlying communities under the terms of contracts (suburban wholesale wastewater customers).
    - Early Action Area project: The IAMP will include a proposal and schedule for the assessment of the effectiveness of green stormwater infrastructure in reducing combined sewer overflow volumes using early action areas.
- PWD will provide a Green Infrastructure Maintenance Manual development process plan at 12 months after signing the COA.
- PWD will provide a Comprehensive Monitoring Plan for the effectiveness of green stormwater infrastructure 18 months after signing the COA
- PWD will provide Facility Concept Plans for each of the three Water Pollution Control Plants 24 months after signing the COA
- PWD will provide an Updated Nine Minimum Controls Report 24 months after signing the COA
- PWD will provide a Tributary Water Quality Model for Bacteria 24 months after signing the COA
- PWD will provide a Tributary Water Quality Model for Dissolved Oxygen 36 months after signing the COA
- PWD will provide the First Edition of a Green Infrastructure Maintenance Manual 36 months after signing the COA
- PWD will provide a Tidal Waters Water Quality Model for Bacteria 48 months after signing the COA
- PWD will provide a Tidal Waters Water Quality Model for Dissolved Oxygen 48 months after signing the COA

Consent Order & Agreement
(Attachment G)
Deliverables

Paragraph 3.a. of the Consent Order and Agreement (COA) between Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the City of Philadelphia (City) lists ten "Deliverables" that are required to be submitted by the City within the first four years of the term of the Agreement. Descriptions of the Deliverables are presented below.

Implementation and Adaptive Management Plan:

The Implementation and Adaptive Management Plan (IAMP) will provide details on how the LTCPU CSO Program will be implemented by the City during the first five years after approval, and it will outline the City's proposal for evaluating progress and making decisions at the five-year marks throughout the term of the Consent Order and Agreement. The IAMP will describe the City's plans for tracking, reporting, and assessing progress of the CSO Program activities. It will include information about the following:

- Adaptive Implementation: The IAMP will include a description of how the City will make decisions about adapting their efforts to address future circumstances. It will outline the decision-making process that the City proposes to be used when Evaluation and Adaptation Plans (EAP) are submitted in the future at the fiveyear, ten-year, fifteen-year, and twenty-year milestone dates.
- Capital Projects: The IAMP will list those LTCPU capital projects that are already completed or under way, and also the projected number and types of projects proposed to be implemented in the four and a half years leading up to the delivery of the first Evaluation and Adaptation Plan (EAP). It will describe projects including (but not necessarily limited to) those associated with green stormwater infrastructure, sewer separation, and interceptor relining.
- Green Stormwater Infrastructure data system(s): The IAMP will describe the data system(s) that will be used to track Green Stormwater Infrastructure projects, from construction of the project through the lifetime of the project including periodic inspections and maintenance. The Plan should describe reporting formats proposed to be used in the Annual Reports and EAPs.
- Operation and Maintenance: The IAMP will describe the City's plans to ensure that green stormwater infrastructure projects are operating according to design. While a comprehensive Green Infrastructure Maintenance Manual is in development (see below), the IAMP should provide a statement of the status of this issue in the interim. The IAMP will address how the City will provide for compliance with maintenance obligations for those projects where maintenance is the responsibility of others, including private entities.
- Streamlining: The IAMP will contain a detailed report describing the ways in which City codes, ordinances, policies, and interagency procedures have been, or will need to be, modified to optimize the implementation of the LTCPU. It will also address coordination with non-City entities, and any conflicts between State requirements and the implementation goals of the CSO Program. It will include recommendations for ways to overcome potential legal issues, such as those that could arise from the State Utility Law, ownership and liability concerns, and public/private boundaries issues. This section should supplement the information already provided as part of the Approved LTCPU.
- Sewer System Evaluation Survey (SSES): The IAMP will provide a plan and schedule for the implementation of a program to address wet weather inflow and infiltration (WWII) in the City's separate sewer areas. Within 3 years of the effective date of the CO&A, the City will complete a sanitary sewer evaluation survey (SSES) to better explore the potential for further remedial controls on sanitary sewer infiltration and inflow to reduce CSOs. Within two years thereafter, the City must develop and initiate implementation of a strategy to address any WWII issues identified as having a significant potential to reduce CSO discharges. In developing the scope of work for the SSES PWD will follow the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) and the Water Environment Federation (WEF) Manual of Practice FD-6, "Existing Sewer Evaluation and Rehabilitation."
- Outlying Communities report: The IAMP will provide a description of the City's efforts to address wet weather peaking in the sanitary flows that are received from outlying communities under the terms of contracts (suburban wholesale wastewater customers). This section will describe actions taken to date as well as actions proposed for the future, and will address how the outlying communities themselves may be engaged in the effort to find opportunities and implement corrective action to reduce wet weather peak flows.
- Early Action Area project: The IAMP will include a proposal and schedule for the assessment of the effectiveness of green stormwater infrastructure in reducing combined sewer overflow volumes using early action areas. Early action areas are areas where green stormwater infrastructure will be implemented in a relatively concentrated area, and wet weather flows will be monitored, to demonstrate the impact of green stormwater infrastructure on the

CSS flows. The proposal should address the issues of scale and timing for this effort, and should also discuss the identification of candidate areas.

Green Infrastructure Maintenance Manual development process plan:

This deliverable will describe the process and schedule for developing the Green Infrastructure Maintenance Manual.

Comprehensive Monitoring Plan:

This document will contain a description of the City's plans for performing monitoring of natural and engineered systems that are associated with the CSO Program. It will address the monitoring and assessment of surface waters, ground water, rainfall, CSO discharges, sewer flows, and green infrastructure performance.

In addition to monitoring, the Plan will also address hydrologic and hydraulic modeling. The City uses modeling to support various aspects of the CSO Program. A description will be provided of the methods to be used for performance tracking of the CSO Program in the form of hydrologic/hydraulic modeling with verification using metered data, as discussed in Section 10 of the LTCPU. There will also be a discussion of how the City will handle future updates or changes to the model itself. If the City should make changes to the model, DEP will wish to have a way to make a meaningful comparison between future modeling results and the information already presented as part of this effort, including information in the September 2009 LTCPU.

Facility Concept Plans for each of the Water Pollution Control Plants:

There will be a separate Facility Concept Plan for each of the three Water Pollution Control Plants. Each Plan will describe specific engineering and construction proposed to increase the maximum wet weather flow rate through the facility, and thereby to increase the capture rate of combined sewage. These Plans will provide design and construction performance standards (in terms of "percent complete") for the fiveyear, ten-year, and fifteen-year milestone periods. These performance standards will become permit requirements by being incorporated into future versions of the NPDES permits. (Note: The Water Pollution Control Plant upgrade projects are expected to be completed at the end of the twenty-year period.)

Updated Nine Minimum Controls Report:

To support the LTCPU, the City will update the "Implementation of Nine Minimum Controls" document, which was originally submitted in September, 1995. The updated report should indicate how the City's activities are being carried out currently, and highlight how these activities may have changed as a result of new technology, new practice, or other circumstances.

Tributary Water Quality Model - Bacteria:

This report will describe the methods, and provide the results, of a project to model the receiving water quality in the Tacony/Frankford Creek and the Cobbs Creek. The work will include the collection of field data for model development and validation. The model will be used to assess the projected impact of the CSO Program in future years, and to evaluate alternative implementation options.

Tributary Water Quality Model - Dissolved oxygen:

This report will describe the methods, and provide the results, of a project to model the receiving water quality in the Tacony/Frankford Creek and the Cobbs Creek. The work will include the collection of field data for model development and validation. The model will be used to assess the projected impact of the CSO Program in future years, and to evaluate alternative implementation options.

Green Infrastructure Maintenance Manual:

The Manual will address the operation and maintenance of the full range of types of green stormwater infrastructure projects that have been, and that are proposed to be, implemented by the City as part of the CSO Program. The Manual will be designed to be used by City agencies and anyone else who has responsibility for performing maintenance of green stormwater infrastructure. The Deliverable required by the Consent Order and Agreement should be considered the "first edition" of the Manual, since it is expected that the Manual will need to be updated periodically as the technology of green stormwater infrastructure advances, and as experience is gained with specific

Philadelphia Gains Approval of Landmark Green Infrastructure Plan, a Model for Smart Water Practices Nationwide

NRDC
THE EARTH'S BEST DEFENSE

By Larry Levine, NRDC Staff

Wednesday, June 1, 2011

Philadelphia is known nationwide for its cheese steaks and the Liberty Bell – but it's now one step closer to adding "greenest city in America" to that list.

Today, the city will secure its place as a national leader in using cutting-edge techniques to clean up its rivers and other surrounding waterways. The Philadelphia Water Department and state environmental officials are signing an ambitious agreement, which commits the city to deploy, over **the next 25 years, the most comprehensive network of green infrastructure found in any** U.S. city. **Philadelphia is about to get, quite literally, a lot greener – and, as a result, its water a lot cleaner.**

Philadelphia AFTER Green City, Clean Waters Initiative

(Images courtesy of Philadelphia Water Department)

"Green infrastructure" is a collective term for smarter practices on land that stop water pollution, like green roofs, porous pavement, roadside plantings and increased park space. These methods stop rain where it falls, allowing it to filter back into the ground. That keeps it from turning into runoff that carries pollution, like oil and gas products, trash, and pet waste, from paved surfaces into the water. In the hundreds of U.S. cities where storm runoff and sewage flow through the same pipes, it also keeps rain from overloading those outdated "combined sewer systems" and triggering overflows of raw sewage -- a.k.a. poop -- directly into nearby waters.

This all makes for not only cleaner waterways, but also, as Philadelphia recognizes, all-around healthier, more pleasant places to live. By accounting for a range of social, economic, and environmental benefits that come from adding green spaces to city neighborhoods, Philadelphia has projected that a green approach to reducing sewer overflows will yield more than two dollars in benefits for every dollar invested!

It's no wonder that other cities around the country – from New York to Los Angeles, Kansas City to Cleveland – have been looking to green infrastructure to help clean up their waters in recent years. Green infrastructure is widely recognized as often the best and most cost-effective way to do the job. But Philly is the first to embrace these smarter water practices with such enthusiasm, by committing to a comprehensive citywide program that will benefit **its neighborhoods and its rivers alike.**

Cities **around the nation should take note. Under the** plan approved **today, Philadelphia will transform at least one-third of the impervious areas (think concrete and asphalt)** served **by its combined sewer system into "greened acres" -- spaces that use green infrastructure like roadside planting strips, rain gardens, trees and tree boxes, porous pavement, cisterns, and other features to infiltrate, or otherwise collect,** [redacted] widespread use of green infrastructure. Working with two local organizations, Penn Future and Clean Water Action, we offered recommendations to the city and the state and federal environmental agencies that oversee its clean water programs, on how to strengthen the plan even further, to ensure it succeeds over the long term.

So we're pleased to see that, in today's agreement, state environmental regulators took a number of our recommendations to heart, signing-off on a beefed-up version of the original plan that includes stricter limits on both the **total volume of sewage overflows and the amount of key pollutants released into city waterways. The agreement includes final limits the city must meet at the end of 25 years, as well as enforceable, interim targets for the 5-, 10-, 15-, and 20-year marks, to ensure the city makes steady progress over time.**

(The agreement also leaves some key issues unresolved, at least for now. For example, while the Clean Water Act requires protection of each and every one of the city's rivers and creeks, the agreement only sets pollution limits on a citywide basis, and does not appear to guarantee specific levels of pollution reduction for any individual waterway.)

The approved plan now serves as city's official "Long Term Control Plan." All cities with combined sewer overflows must develop and implement such plans under the federal Clean Water Act. But Philadelphia's is unique in the nation. It is the first to:

> Invest more in green infrastructure than in traditional ("gray") infrastructure, like costly holding tanks and tunnels;
>
> Rely on green infrastructure for a majority of the required reductions in sewage overflows;
>
> Include enforceable requirements for thousands of acres to be retrofitted with green infrastructure, *citywide*; and
>
> Leverage investments from the private sector to help satisfy pollution reduction requirements.

Still, many challenges lie ahead, especially for the city's Water Department, which bears primary responsibility for implementing this visionary program. The plan's long-term success will hinge on active participation by community organizations, businesses, private property owners, and, especially, a wide range of other city agencies. (For example, the city Streets Department just completed its first porous street last month, in cooperation with the Water Department.)

Of course, if done right, it will all be well worth the effort. Key next steps for the Water Department include developing detailed protocols to design, install, and maintain thousands of new green infrastructure installations throughout the city, and to monitor their effectiveness at reducing sewer overflows. Within the next six months, the Water Department will also submit plans for "early action areas" within the city to target first, with focused greening efforts. And the city must also get to work on "streamlining" various local codes, ordinances, policies, and inter-agency procedures, identifying and resolving any barriers to smooth implementation of the program.

In the coming months and years, NRDC and our local partners will remain deeply engaged, tracking the city's implementation and contributing our expertise to help make it a success. And even as the Philadelphia story unfolds, we'll continue working to make green infrastructure the centerpiece of smarter water management nationwide.

Philadelphia Gains Approval of Landmark Green Infrastructure Plan, a Model for Smart Water Practices Nationwide

NRDC
THE EARTH'S BEST DEFENSE

By Larry Levine, NRDC Staff

Wednesday, June 1, 2011

Philadelphia is known nationwide for its cheese steaks and the Liberty Bell – but it's now one step closer to adding "greenest city in America" to that list.

Today, the city will secure its place as a national leader in using cutting-edge techniques to clean up its rivers and other surrounding waterways. The Philadelphia Water Department and state environmental officials are signing an ambitious agreement, which commits the city to deploy, over the next 25 years, the most comprehensive network of green infrastructure found in any U.S. city. Philadelphia is about to get, quite literally, a lot greener – and, as a result, its water a lot cleaner.

Philadelphia AFTER Green City, Clean Waters Initiative

(Images courtesy of Philadelphia Water Department)

"Green infrastructure" is a collective term for smarter practices on land that stop water pollution, like green roofs, porous pavement, roadside plantings and increased park space. These methods stop rain where it falls, allowing it to filter back into the ground. That keeps it from turning into runoff that carries pollution, like oil and gas products, trash, and pet waste, from paved surfaces into the water. In the hundreds of U.S. cities where storm runoff and sewage flow through the same pipes, it also keeps rain from overloading those outdated "combined sewer systems" and triggering overflows of raw sewage -- a.k.a. poop -- directly into nearby waters.

This all makes for not only cleaner waterways, but also, as Philadelphia recognizes, all-around healthier, more pleasant places to live. By accounting for a range of social, economic, and environmental benefits that come from adding green spaces to city neighborhoods, Philadelphia has projected that a green approach to reducing sewer overflows will yield more than two dollars in benefits for every dollar invested!

It's no wonder that other cities around the country – from New York to Los Angeles, Kansas City to Cleveland – have been looking to green infrastructure to help clean up their waters in recent years. Green infrastructure is widely recognized as often the best and most cost-effective way to do the job. But Philly is the first to embrace these smarter water practices with such enthusiasm, by committing to a comprehensive citywide program that will benefit its neighborhoods and its rivers alike.

Cities around the nation should take note. Under the plan approved today, Philadelphia will transform at least one-third of the impervious areas (think concrete and asphalt) served by its combined sewer system into "greened acres" -- spaces that use green infrastructure like roadside planting strips, rain gardens, trees and tree boxes, porous pavement, cisterns, and other features to infiltrate, or otherwise collect, the first inch of runoff from any storm. That amounts to keeping 80-90% of annual rainfall from these areas out of the city's over-burdened sewer system.

In combination with targeted investments in sewage treatment plant expansions, these green approaches will reduce Philadelphia's annual sewer overflows by nearly 8 *billion* gallons per year. The majority of this improvement will come from the intensive greening efforts to keep water out of the sewers -- at a cost billions of dollars less than the more "traditional" approach of building underground storage tunnels to deal with runoff after it's already entered the sewer system.

When Philadelphia first proposed its *Green City, Clean Waters* program in 2009, NRDC commissioned a review by independent experts, which found that the city's plan was based on solid -- even conservative -- projections of how much sewage pollution it could prevent through widespread use of green infrastructure. Working with two local organizations, Penn Future and Clean Water Action, we offered recommendations to the city and the state and federal environmental agencies that oversee its clean water programs, on how to strengthen the plan even further, to ensure it succeeds over the long term.

So we're pleased to see that, in today's agreement, state environmental regulators took a number of our recommendations to heart, signing-off on a beefed-up version of the original plan that includes stricter limits on both the total volume of sewage overflows and the amount of key pollutants released into city waterways. The agreement includes final limits the city must meet at the end of 25 years, as well as enforceable, interim targets for the 5-, 10-, 15-, and 20-year marks, to ensure the city makes steady progress over time.

Philadelphia Gains Approval of Landmark Green Infrastructure Plan, a Model for Smart Water Practices Nationwide

(The agreement also leaves some key issues unresolved, at least for now. For example, while the Clean Water Act requires protection of each and every one of the city's rivers and creeks, the agreement only sets pollution limits on a citywide basis, and does not appear to guarantee specific levels of pollution reduction for any individual waterway.)

The approved plan now serves as city's official "Long Term Control Plan." All cities with combined sewer overflows must develop and implement such plans under the federal Clean Water Act. But Philadelphia's is unique in the nation. It is the first to:

Invest more in green infrastructure than in traditional ("gray") infrastructure, like costly holding tanks and tunnels;

Rely on green infrastructure for a majority of the required reductions in sewage overflows;

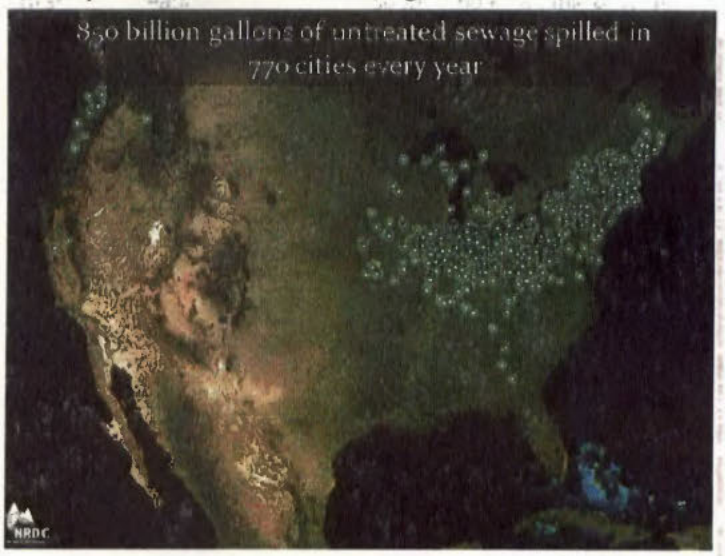
Include enforceable requirements for thousands of acres to be retrofitted with green infrastructure, *citywide*; and

Leverage investments from the private sector to help satisfy pollution reduction requirements.

Still, many challenges lie ahead, especially for the city's Water Department, which bears primary responsibility for implementing this visionary program. The plan's long-term success will hinge on active participation by community organizations, businesses, private property owners, and, especially, a wide range of other city agencies. (For example, the city Streets Department just completed its first porous street last month, in cooperation with the Water Department.)

Of course, if done right, it will all be well worth the effort. Key next steps for the Water Department include developing detailed protocols to design, install, and maintain thousands of new green infrastructure installations throughout the city, and to monitor their effectiveness at reducing sewer overflows. Within the next six months, the Water Department will also submit plans for "early action areas" within the city to target first, with focused greening efforts. And the city must also get to work on "streamlining" various local codes, ordinances, policies, and inter-agency procedures, identifying and resolving any barriers to smooth implementation of the program.

In the coming months and years, NRDC and our local partners will remain deeply engaged, tracking the city's implementation and contributing our expertise to help make it a success. And even as the Philadelphia story unfolds, we'll continue working to make green infrastructure the centerpiece of smarter water management nationwide.



Green City, Clean Waters

The Green City Clean Waters plan details the Philadelphia Water Department's vision for protecting and enhancing our watersheds by managing stormwater with innovative green infrastructure, maximizing economic, social, and environmental benefits to Philadelphia and creating a green legacy for future generations.

What Our Partners are Saying

"Philadelphia has proposed Green City, Clean Waters, a novel initiative that will invest $2 billion over the next 25 years to green our city's stormwater infrastructure and recreate the natural processes that keep storm water out of our systems," said Mayor Michael A. Nutter. "Currently under consideration by the U.S. EPA and approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, this plan will make our city greener, healthier and more liveable." - Mayor Michael Nutter, City of Philadelphia

"The Mayor's commitment to making Philadelphia the greenest city in America is well served by this innovative program that encourages water infrastructure to be spent in a sustainable fashion. This ground-breaking $2 billion plan will produce financial, environmental and social benefits over the next 25 years. I believe it will become the national model for stormwater management." - Rina Cutler, Deputy Mayor of Transportation and Utilities, City of Philadelphia

"Green City, Clean Waters will be transformative for Philadelphia. The 25 year plan will invest $2 billion in our infrastructure and communities, yielding tremendous benefits for our environment and water quality, while at the same time improving quality of life and stimulating economic development." – Katherine Gajewski, Director of Mayor's Office of Sustainability, City of Philadelphia

"Instead of investing in one project that treats one concern, green infrastructure allows us to protect the health of our waters, save money and make our communities more attractive places to buy homes and build businesses." "We want to use the win-win strategies we see here [Big Green Block, Philadelphia] and other projects throughout the city to make every community healthier, more prosperous and more sustainable." - Lisa Jackson, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator

"Cities across the nation are now looking at Philadelphia as the preeminent model for managing stormwater through green infrastructure." "This approach will benefit Philadelphians by protecting their drinking water, making rivers and streams more attractive recreation amenities, and supporting economic growth." - Paul King, President & CEO, Pennsylvania Environmental Council

"The Philadelphia Water Department's Green City, Clean Waters initiative is a terrific way to clean up our environment and grow the economy. It is an outside-the-box, innovative, cost-effective, and green solution to the problem of sewer overflows that will improve our rivers, make our water safer, and make Philadelphia a more vibrant place to live, work, and play." - Brian Glass, Senior Attorney for Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future (PennFuture)

"Philadelphia is setting a national model for smarter, greener ways to clean up troubled rivers, lakes and beaches. Green infrastructure is often the best and most cost-effective way to tackle water pollution. The city is pioneering a broad investment in measures that not only deliver cleaner water, but dramatically improve the overall health and quality of life for its residents at the same time. The rest of the country would be wise to take notice." - Lawrence Levine, Natural Resources Defense Council, Senior Water Attorney

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK:

visit us: www.phillywatersheds.org
email us: questions@phillywatersheds.org

Forbes

Pennsylvania, Philly Sign $2 Billion Landmark Clean Water Plan

By Joann Loviglio, Associated Press

June 01, 2011

PHILADELPHIA -- Pennsylvania and the city of Philadelphia have embarked on what environmental officials say is the largest project in the U.S. to reduce stormwater pollution through eco-friendly measures, such as porous asphalt and rooftop gardens.

The state and city, the country's fifth largest with 1.5 million people, signed a "Green City, Clean Waters" plan Wednesday, kicking off a 25-year, $2 billion effort to modify infrastructure to reduce the amount of rainwater tainted with road oil, litter and raw sewage flowing into rivers and streams.

Officials with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and national environmental groups said the initiative should serve as a blueprint for cities and towns nationwide. The changes are expected to reduce by 5 billion to 8 billion gallons the amount of sewer overflow going into the city's waterways each year, including the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers. That represents an 80 percent to 90 percent reduction.

"Philadelphia is setting the national model for how to clean up troubled waterways, and how to do it right," said Lawrence Levine of the Natural Resources Defense Council, one of several environmental advocacy groups that helped the city develop the plan.

Funding over the lifetime of the project will come from a combination of city water fees, state and federal grants and loans, as well as support from private investors and foundations. The Pennsylvania and the Philadelphia water departments are spearheading the project, which also includes roadside plantings and thousands of new trees.

The Philadelphia Water Department estimates the improvements would add $8 to a typical resident's monthly water bill over the next two decades. But Levine said the "Green City" plan is less expensive than other infrastructure expansions the city considered.

"Philadelphia's visionary approach ... is great for the environment, and for the economy," said Brian Glass of PennFuture, an environmental group. "It will save Philadelphians real money, while making the city of brotherly love a more vibrant place to live, work and play."

Sixty percent of Philadelphia has what is called a "combined sewer system," which allows runoff from streets and wastewater from bathrooms and kitchens to flow through the same pipes. The drainage system can handle that in dry weather, properly sending wastewater to water treatment plants and storm water to streams, but during rains it overflows and sends storm water laced with motor oil, trash, and human waste pouring into surrounding waterways and raising bacteria levels.

More than a decade ago, officials ruled out separating storm water and sanitary lines as was done in newer parts of the city because that would mean reconfiguring 1,600 miles of pipes at enormous expense. Other traditional options - a huge expansion of the city's three sewage plants or construction of gigantic underground tanks to hold overflows - were less efficient and prohibitively expensive.

The city then began working with state officials and environmental consultants on a major departure from the conventional approaches. They crafted a plan to install green roofs on city buildings, plant trees and other vegetation along sidewalks, and repave streets, basketball courts and parking lots with porous asphalt and concrete that let rainwater flow through.

Water Department Commissioner Howard Neukrug said the goal is to improve the health of the city's creeks and rivers and "achieve a host of tangible environmental, social and economic benefits" from cleaner air, improved quality of life and the creation of jobs. The initial steps include a six-month citywide assessment to determine which neighborhoods to target first.

"We are thrilled and grateful that DEP has recognized the incredible environmental and public value of this plan, (which) makes significant progress toward Philadelphia becoming the greenest city in the country," Mayor Michael Nutter said.

The city has already begun to roll out some elements of the initiative. Last month, it paved a small Philadelphia street with porous asphalt, which looks like traditional impervious blacktop but has tiny spaces so storm water can drain through the surface into a bed of stones below, then seep into the soil underneath, instead of rushing into storm drains and sewers and creating potholes in winter.

The Philadelphia Inquirer

Thursday, June 2, 2011

Philadelphia Moves Ahead With 25-year Water-Management Plan

By Sandy Bauers, Inquirer Staff Writer

Philadelphia got the green light Wednesday for a $2 billion storm-water plan that will transform the way the city deals with rain. The 25-year plan, which has been hailed as a national model, envisions green roofs on office buildings, porous pavement on city streets and parking lots, and plants and trees with tubs of gravel below ground to hold water and stall runoff in a storm. All would be designed to let rainwater seep back into the ground rather than gush into an aged sewer system where it mixes with raw sewage and overflows into streams and basements.

Officials of the city Water Department and the state Department of Environmental Protection on Wednesday signed a consent agreement - constituting official approval of the plan - in the atrium of the DEP regional headquarters in Norristown. In front of a 5,000-gallon cistern that collects rainwater for flushing the building's toilets, they clinked glasses of public water in a toast. Called "Green City, Clean Waters" and proposed in 2009, the plan "is our pledge and our investment to make our rivers and streams fishable, swimmable, and breathtaking," said Howard Neukrug, the city water commissioner.

The agreement "signals our recognition that the best way to manage storm-water runoff is to control it at its source," said Jenifer Fields, head of the DEP's regional water-quality program. Although the plan remains controversial among some business owners for its fees, it has the mayor's support. Officials contend the plan - because of all the trees and plants - will help beautify the city, revitalize neighborhoods, clean the air, cool the region, and save energy.

They also say the plan is cheaper and better than the route some cities have taken - building miles-long underground tunnels that act as giant reservoirs for storm water until it can be gradually pumped out and treated at a sewer plant. "It's extremely innovative," said Robert Traver, a Villanova University professor of civil engineering and a national storm-water expert. "Other places are watching this, and they're going to be following our lead." Some projects are already in place. Far more are coming.

The problem the plan attempts to solve is called "combined sewer overflows." While some cities have separate systems - one for regular sewage, another for storm water - most of Philadelphia has a combined system, sending all water waste into one matrix of pipelines. This works when the weather is dry. But when it rains, the system becomes overwhelmed, and storm water that is now carrying raw sewage and other contaminants gushes into streams.

One group that has opposed the plan from the outset is the Unified Building Owners of Philadelphia, which represents 100 of the largest businesses in Philadelphia, according to its chair, Stuart Parmet. It was formed specifically to fight one part of the plan - a new way to charge for storm-water treatment. Previously, businesses were charged based on the water they used, on the notion that what goes into a building eventually comes out.

Now, however, fees are based on a recognition that properties produce storm water when it rains, and the city bears the expense for treating it. The problem is that businesses with little water use, but with large roofs and parking lots that rainwater sluices from, face steep hikes. Parmet, owner of American Box & Recycling Co., said his monthly fees would increase from $300 to $4,900. In a tight economy and with many jobs going to the suburbs, this is a fee Philadelphia businesses can ill afford, he said.

The Water Department has agreed to cap the increases at 10 percent a year for the next two years, but Parmet said the plan was still "ineffective and inappropriate." Businesses can avoid the fee by putting in gardens or porous pavement to reduce runoff. But Parmet said it would cost his company $350,000 to meet the specs. "To renovate something or make it green would have been great if they gave us eight or nine years to plan," he said. "So people wouldn't have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to blacktop areas or put new roofs on."

Others praised the new fee structure as equitable. Overall, "this is the kind of technology we wish more cities were using to manage storm water," said Brady Russell, eastern Pennsylvania director of Clean Water Action. "High fives all around." But he is worried about the maintenance that many projects will need. Porous streets have to be vacuumed so debris doesn't clog the pores. Rain gardens have to be weeded. "This is going to be throughout the city, on land owned by multiple agencies," Russell said. "The Water Department is going to have to keep an eye on it all." Lawrence Levine, senior water attorney at the Natural Resources Defense Council, a New York-based nonprofit advocacy group, called the plan "a national model for how to clean up polluted urban waterways."

Levine said it's the first plan he knows of in which a city will get credit for managing storm water when private property owners install green infrastructure. The city now requires large developments or redevelopments to install systems to capture runoff. The Water Department is developing plans for homes, schools, public facilities, parking lots, industry, and others, offering technical assistance, design services, and incentives for green storm-water projects.

Although the plan was formally approved Wednesday, the city has been incorporating and recognizing projects for more than a year. Columbus Square in South Philadelphia has huge planters that detour rainwater. Nearby at Second and Reed, a playground incorporates garden areas to hold runoff.

On Earth Day, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency administrator Lisa P. Jackson came to town for a tree-planting in a rain garden at Kensington High School for the Creative and Performing Arts - one part of a "Big Green Block Initiative" that is a prime example of what could happen throughout the city, Neukrug said. Not long after, Mayor Nutter dedicated the city's first street with porous pavement - the 800 block of Percy Street in Bella Vista - by pelting the pavement with water balloons and watching the liquid disappear. Percy was chosen because the street needed other repairs, a tactic officials plan to repeat. Repaving streets just for the sake of going green would cost too much.

Eventually, says the Water Department's deputy commissioner of environmental services, Chris Crockett, projects that are actually visible - like the planters - "are going to be as commonplace as manhole lids."

The Philadelphia Inquirer

Saturday, June 4, 2011

Inquirer Editorial: Stormwater Solution

Having Philadelphia hailed by influential environmental groups for its plan to deal with storm runoff that contributes to water pollution is a win-win for the city.

If the plan given official approval on Wednesday works as designed, Philadelphia in coming years will be greener - with more parkland, gardens, trees, and cutting-edge streets and paving that soak up water, instead of letting it run down the drain.

With it being so important for a city's image and growth to create positive buzz, it's also an achievement that other metropolitan areas are said to be watching Philadelphia.

According to a New York-based environmental group, the city is being seen as "a national model for how to clean up polluted urban waterways."

The Water Department-led effort to minimize rain runoff that triggers polluting sewage overflows will rely on infrastructure improvements that permit water to percolate into the ground rather than storm drains.

That's a far greener and less intrusive approach than the most likely alternative - which would be tunneling deep underground to create caverns where storm water is held and then pumped out to be treated, as is being done by the District of Columbia.

So, rather than a major, costly public-works project to build storm-water holding tanks, the city's strategy is to let a thousand smaller infrastructure projects bloom - both public and private.

Some streets due for reconstruction will be repaved by the city with porous materials, as was already done on the 800 block of Percy Street in Bella Vista as a pilot effort. Street trees, similarly, could be fitted with catch basins to collect water, and paved areas around city facilities will be converted into green spaces.

Over a 25-year span, the city will devote $2 billion to these upgrades. Much of the heavy lifting on this plan, though, must be done by private property owners. That's a potential strength, but could become a pitfall, if not enough property owners opt in.

No doubt, some building owners will understand the value and move ahead with projects such as creating green roofs that soak up water. But there are hundreds of other business properties with vast parking and other impervious surfaces whose conversion would be costly, yet help make a big dent in water pollution.

A looming hike in storm-water management fees on properties blamed for runoff has put those owners on notice that they could save on fees by going green. At the same time, the city will need to come up with positive incentives for owners to make conversions in this effort to tame the rain.

Michael A. Nutter, Mayor
City of Philadelphia
215 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Lisa Jackson, Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460-0003

DC & Phila. GI Initiatives

Shawn Garvin to: Richard Windsor, Bob Perciasepe, Cynthia Giles-AA, Nancy Stoner, Arvin Ganesan, Sarah Pallone, Janet Woodka 09/11/2012 06:10 PM

FYI - Just want to give you a quick heads up on the Green Infrastructure Initiatives for DC Water/District Government and the City of Philadelphia.

DC Water/District Government -
I had a call today with DC General Manager George Hawkins and DC City Administrator Allen Lew. I was joined by Water Director Jon Capacasa, and Allen was joined by DC DOE Interim Director Keith Anderson (a few other staffers from DC Water/DC Gov't joined the call). The current status of the agreement is that we seem to be very close. DC Water currently has the pen and are responding to our last round of comments. (b) (5) They are going to spend the rest of this week coordinating with District government and will send us an updated final draft by the middle of next week. We will then have a call to work out any remaining issues. We seem to be in agreement in concept on the rollout and plan to work out the details when we have an agreement in principle. We are looking to get that done in the next two weeks. (b) (5)

City of Philadelphia -
We are moving closer to the next step of the Philly GI Initiative. We have the draft Administrative Order on Consent done. It has been reviewed by Cynthia and OECA, Regional Counsel here, and Bill and I are taking a final look. The hope is that it will be signed on Thursday, and then it will be sent to the City for the final signatures. We look at this as a continuation of what we announced on April 10, 2012, so we are not planning a whole lot of fanfare. A brief summary of what is in the agreement is below.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you - Shawn

A Commitment to Complete an Administrative Order on Consent (AOC)

One commitment of the Partnership Agreement is that EPA and the City would enter into a joint Administrative Order on Consent to guide the next 4-5 years of activity under this program. The purpose of this as described by the Agreement is "to ensure that the Green City, Clean Waters program meets the requirements of the Clean Water Act and is legally authorized and protected." The AOC will shore up some areas of the program to meet obligations under the National CSO Policy and the Clean Water Act.

The Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) has now been successfully negotiated with the Water Department, concurrences obtained from OECA, Regional Counsel and Region 3 organizations, and signatures of the City and EPA are being secured this week to make the order effective. Since the Partnership Agreement was a major news item itself and this is a product of the Agreement, EPA does not plan a press event or release at this time. A Desk Statement will be available for questions.

Provisions of the Order:
The 7-page Order on Consent is significantly more streamlined and builds off the prior State Order for long term compliance with the CSO Policy. The Order's provisions:

- Recognize the City's work to develop Long Term Control Plans and the Green City Clean Water Program
- Recognize the Partnership Agreement that EPA and the City have signed
- Recognize the prior PA DEP Order of June 2011 and seeks in great measure to build off the milestones and deliverables of that Order while providing an EPA oversight role of specific products

    - For example, it directs submission to EPA of the Comprehensive Monitoring Plan to help evaluate the effectiveness of the green and grey controls being installed
- In 2016, direct the City to submit a first Evaluation and Adaptation Plan as well as the results of additional water quality analysis, results of modeling work, and updated financial capability analysis, for EPA's review to determine if changes to the LTCP or their implementation plan is warranted. This review will have a focus of ensuring continued regulatory compliance by the City over the long term.
- Direct the City to document the dry weather overflows which have occurred from the system since 2007
- No penalty is associated with this AOC

Next Steps

The City of Philadelphia has signaled their concurrence with the Order's provisions. We will now move to affix four signatures from the Water Protection Division Director for Region III, the City Water Commissioner, General Counsel and Deputy Water Commissioner. Once the signatures are affixed the Order becomes effective and EPA will work closely with the City to monitor its implementation. Coordination with PA DEP has been ongoing and they will receive a copy as well. Congressional notification to Congresswoman Schwartz will be done.

Fw: CEQ Chair Calls Green Infrastructure Key To Cities ' Environmental, Economic Success

Sarah Pallone to: Richard Windsor 10/16/2012 06:29 AM

FYI
Charles Imohiosen

----- Original Message -----
From: Charles Imohiosen
Sent: 10/15/2012 11:06 PM EDT
To: Nancy Stoner; Bob Perciasepe; "Sarah Pallone" <pallone.sarah@epa.gov>
Subject: CEQ Chair Calls Green Infrastructure Key To Cities' Environmental, Economic Success

Daily Environment Report: News Archive > 2012 > October > 10/16/2012 > News >

CEQ Chair Calls Green Infrastructure Key To Cities' Environmental, Economic Success

By Bebe Raupe

CINCINNATI—Meeting the challenges of converting America to green infrastructure will take innovation and ingenuity, resources the nation has in abundance, the head of the White House Council on Environmental Quality said Oct. 15.

Delivering the keynote address to the Urban Water Sustainability Leadership Conference, CEQ Chair Nancy Sutley said that moving away from traditional "grey" infrastructure to "green" demands long-term planning and investments that will remake communities for decades to come.

Although in some areas financing has proven problematic, because green infrastructure savings do not have an established track record, communities working to implement sustainability measures know this is the way to set themselves up for both environmental and economic success, Sutley said.

Since 80 percent of Americans live in urban areas that need to thrive in the years ahead, the White House considers green infrastructure development an important goal, she said, noting that CEQ and the Environmental Protection Agency met in September with various stakeholders to discuss and identify barriers facing its widespread adoption.

Green infrastructure refers to strategic planting of trees, grass, plants, and other natural systems on roofs and along roads and sidewalks to enable greater capture of rainwater by the soil—often before it comes into contact with paved surface and picks up pollutants—instead of flowing into sewer systems.

Movement Begins Locally

Movement toward green infrastructure begins on the local level, Sutley said, noting two ways mentioned at the White House for circumventing financial obstacles are for communities to forge public-private partnerships or integrate several projects together to increase funding opportunities.

Hoping to encourage integrated green infrastructure developments, the Obama administration has given $1.7 billion in partnership grants to 550 communities, she said, in the belief that "the strength of the economy hinges on environmental sustainability."

At a panel discussing the "triple bottom line"—environmental, economic, and social—of water sustainability, water management officials from major cities said the federal government could take more direct steps to foster development of green infrastructure.

Adel Hagekhalil, assistant director of the Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation, said wastewater management

goals are measured in a permit-limit “old way,” but green infrastructure calls for a more adaptive approach.

If EPA could develop specific, yet adaptive, language, it would give communities “more security” that they are meeting regulatory requirements while making these changes, Hagekhalil said.

He also suggested that EPA establish a green infrastructure liaison to smooth interactions between a city, federal EPA, and the agency's regional offices related to the community's grey-to-green transformation, since municipal officials often get conflicting messages from the different levels of EPA.

Consent Decrees Seen as Obstacles

Howard Neukrug, Philadelphia Water Department commissioner, said the grey-to-green shift does not necessarily have to occur as a result of a consent decree negotiated by a city with EPA.
Philadelphia does not have a consent decree, Neukrug said, and its “Green Cities, Clean Water” combined sewer overflow program is considered one of the nation's most progressive.

Neukrug said some existing agreements may be hampering cities' progress toward green infrastructure, and perhaps these should be re-evaluated or even renegotiated.

With regard to sustaining Philadelphia's green infrastructure advances, Neukrug said the city plans to institutionalize every part of its program over a 25-year period using an integrated system of regulations, fees, and incentives, moving the green momentum into the private realm so that eventually the water department will only provide oversight.

Philadelphia knows, for example, how much it costs to build green acreage, he said, so now it is offering $3.5 million in grants to private entities that can build it for the water department at a lower cost, which will save the city money while encouraging small business development.
The conference runs through Oct. 17.

Charles Imohiosen
Counselor to the Deputy Administrator
Office of the Administrator
US Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

****
Sent via Blackberry

Fw: Draft Message to POTUS
Diane Thompson to: Richard Windsor 04/11/2012 02:36 PM

History: This message has been replied to.

Thoughts?

(b) (5)

.

Chris L. Busch
Office of the Administrator | US EPA
Office: (202) 250-8798
Mobile: (b) (6)

Diane Thompson Can you tighten up? It seems redundant -----... 04/11/2012 11:38:47 AM

From: Diane Thompson/DC/USEPA/US
To: Christopher Busch/DC/USEPA/US@EPA
Date: 04/11/2012 11:38 AM
Subject: Re: Message to POTUS

(b) (5)

Christopher Busch

----- Original Message -----
From: Christopher Busch
Sent: 04/10/2012 11:50 AM EDT
To: Diane Thompson
Subject: Message to POTUS

Diane- Draft message below from the Phili event today. Also including the policy calendar blurb where I got the info. Jose had a look as well.

Chris

Draft Message to POTUS

(b) (5)

Policy calendar blurb:

Administrator Jackson may attend a Philadelphia Partnership Agreement Signing Ceremony with Mayor Nutter in Philadelphia, PA. During this event, Administrator Jackson expects to sign the Green City Clean Waters Partnership Agreement with the City of Philadelphia. The agreement recognizes the City's innovative approach for stormwater management to reduce water pollution from combined sewers and establishes a unique federal - city partnership to oversee the implementation of Green City Clean Waters. The Green City Clean Waters program is pioneering broad investment in green stormwater management practices that not only reduce the sewer overflows to the City's waterways, but also result in the enhancement of communities and the overall urban environment. The agreement may serve as a national model for cities embracing green infrastructure.

Chris L. Busch
Office of the Administrator | US EPA
Office: (202) 250-8798
Mobile: (b) (6)

Fw: MAYOR NUTTER ISSUES STATEMENT ON PARTNERSHIP WITH EPA

Shawn Garvin to: Richard Windsor, Bob Perciasepe 05/31/2012 06:38 PM
Cc: Nancy Stoner

Administrator and Deputy Administrator,

I thought you would like to see this.

Thank you - Shawn

Shawn M. Garvin
Regional Administrator
EPA Region III

---- Forwarded by Shawn Garvin/R3/USEPA/US on 05/31/2012 06:36 PM -----

From: Howard.Neukrug@phila.gov
To: Jon Capacasa/R3/USEPA/US@EPA, Shawn Garvin/R3/USEPA/US@EPA
Date: 05/31/2012 03:38 PM
Subject: MAYOR NUTTER ISSUES STATEMENT ON PARTNERSHIP WITH EPA

City of Philadelphia

MAYOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Michael A. Nutter, Mayor
Mark McDonald, Press Secretary
Office: 215-686-6210
Cell: 267-303-9248

Thursday, May 31, 2012 **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

MAYOR NUTTER ISSUES STATEMENT ON PARTNERSHIP WITH EPA

Philadelphia, May 31, 2012 Mayor Michael A. Nutter issued the following statement regarding the leadership and partnership of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):

The Clean Water Act was a defining piece of American legislation that created a greener, more sustainable nation. Reflecting on the 40th Anniversary of this legislation, we are reminded how vital it is to protect our water sources now and for future generations.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, under the leadership of Administrator Lisa Jackson, has worked in partnership with the City of Philadelphia and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on a state-of-the-art stormwater management system that will save billions of taxpayer dollars. The EPA signed an historic agreement allowing Philadelphia to implement *Green City, Clean Waters*, our city's 25 year, $2 billion plan to invest in stormwater infrastructure. This plan creates affordable, green solutions that will uphold important quality standards set forth under the Clean Water Act.

The EPA and Administrator Jackson have been stalwart partners with cities across the nation as we work to build a more competitive and more sustainable America. In the 40 years since the passage of the Clean Water Act, they continue to collaborate with cities and municipalities to create the green infrastructure that will be a foundation for our nation's growth for decades to come.

City of Philadelphia

LIFE • LIBERTY • AND YOU™

5-31 MAYOR NUTTER ISSUES STATEMENT ON PARTNERSHIP WITH EPA.docx

Fw: Revised Message to POTUS

Diane Thompson to: Richard Windsor 04/11/2012 05:09 PM

History: This message has been replied to.

I think this works --

****

On Tuesday, Philadelphia Mayor Nutter and I signed the Green City Clean Waters Partnership Agreement between the city and EPA at a ceremony in Philadelphia. This pioneering agreement establishes a unique federal - city partnership. The partnership will oversee the Green City Clean Waters program which is undertaking broad investment in various techniques and methods that intercept rain water at the source, retaining and allowing it to flow into the ground which allows soil and plants to recycle it back to the atmosphere, rather than becoming stormwater that runs off and triggers sewer overflows that pollute our waterways. Examples in practice include things like green roofs, additional green spaces in the urban environment and permeable pavements. These efforts will not only reduce pollution, but enhance communities and the urban environment.

Chris L. Busch
Office of the Administrator | US EPA
Office: (202) 250-8798
Mobile: (b) (6)

Green Cities, Clean Waters Clips

Andra Belknap to: Richard Windsor, Bob Perciasepe, Bob Sussman, Diane Thompson, Arvin Ganesan, Jose Lozano, Michael Goo, Bicky Corman, 04/11/2012 04:17 PM

This message is digitally signed.

See below and attached:

Philadelphia clips 041112.docx

Green Cities, Clean Waters Clips
April 11, 2012

Bloomberg BNA
EPA, Philadelphia Sign $2 Billion Agreement to Use Green Infrastructure to Manage Flows
April 11, 2012

CBS Philly
Philadelphia Signs Agreement with EPA To Fund Green Infrastructure Plans
By Cherri Gregg
April 10, 2012

Philadelphia Enquirer
Nutter signs water pact
By Vinny Vella
April 11, 2012

Philadelphia Enquirer
Phila. Embarks on green stormwater management
By Sandy Bauers
April 11, 2012

FULL TEXT

Bloomberg BNA
By Amena Saiyid
EPA, Philadelphia Sign $2 Billion Agreement to Use Green Infrastructure to Manage Flows
April 11, 2012

The Environmental Protection Agency and city of Philadelphia signed an agreement April 10 that represents a $2 billion investment in porous pavements, rain gardens, grassy swales, and other green infrastructure techniques to help the city manage stormwater overflows.

Under the agreement, EPA will partner with Philadelphia on the city's 25-year Green City, Clean Waters plan, which aims to protect and enhance urban watersheds by managing stormwater with green infrastructure techniques.

The pact will allow Philadelphia to supplement traditional pipes and concrete infrastructure with green infrastructure such as porous pavements that mimic nature's water retention abilities.

EPA will provide technical assistance to Philadelphia--including identifying and promoting higher-performing green infrastructure designs--and join forces in several demonstration projects,

including greening a school's gardens and revitalizing a low-income neighborhood with green designs. It also will offer research and technical assistance, help monitor the effectiveness and evaluate the benefits of the program through cooperation on water quality monitoring and modeling work.

According to EPA, green infrastructure methods intercept rain water at the source, retaining and allowing it to flow into the ground and allowing soil and plants to recycle it back to the atmosphere, preventing it from becoming stormwater that runs off, triggering sewer overflows and polluting waterways.

Green infrastructure techniques include porous pavements, grassy swales, and rooftop rain gardens, among others.

The April 10 accord paves the way for an administrative consent order between Philadelphia and EPA that is to be issued later this year. The agreement did not specify when the consent order would be issued.

The pact comes less than a month after New York state and New York City reached a final agreement calling for the city to invest $187 million in the next three years in green infrastructure to control combined sewer overflows, with an estimated $2.4 billion investment over 18 years expected.

Builds on 2011 Agreement With Commonwealth.
Larry Levine, a Natural Resources Defense Council senior attorney who was present at the signing in Philadelphia, told BNA the agreement between EPA and Philadelphia is significant because EPA is endorsing the approach Philadelphia is taking to use green infrastructure as a solution to manage sewer overflows on a large scale.

He said the partnership and ensuing administrative consent order would build upon the agreement that Philadelphia reached with the commonwealth of Pennsylvania in June 2011. That state administrative consent order allowed the use of green infrastructure in addition to the traditional gray infrastructure that consists of a 3,000 mile system of pipes, manholes, storm drains, and control chambers that are at least 100 years old.

Philadelphia's Green City, Clean Waters initiative was a result of that state agreement.

EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson touted the April 10 agreement as a unique federal-city partnership designed to ensure the success of the Green City, Clean Waters Plan and as a national model for cities embracing green stormwater infrastructure. Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter (D) said the Green City, Clean Waters plan is the city's solution for revitalizing urban rivers and streams.

Where other cities are challenged by very expensive commitments for tunnels, tanks, and other gray infrastructure, we have worked with the state and the EPA to take this greener, more fiscally prudent approach that will realize multiple benefits, Nutter said at the signing.

EPA's water and enforcement offices signed a memo in 2011 that endorsed the use of green infrastructure for managing stormwater. EPA also has been encouraging the use of green infrastructure in its integrated planning approach for managing both stormwater and wastewater, and soliciting comment on how best to use this approach in assisting publicly owned wastewater plants and municipalities to manage stormwater.

CBS Philly
Philadelphia Signs Agreement with EPA To Fund Green Infrastructure Plans
By Cherri Gregg
April 10, 2012

PHILADELPHIA (CBS) - - The City of Philadelphia and the US Environmental Protection Agency signed an agreement today that signed an agreement Tuesday that represents a $2 billion dollar investment in the city s green infrastructure.

It's been nearly forty years since Congress passed the Clean Water Act, yet drinking water is still threatened due to aging infrastructure. That's why Mayor Michael Nutter says Philadelphia is leading the nation by partnering with the EPA to install new green technology to protect the city's water ways from pollution.

"We will transform a third of our paved surfaces, like streets, parking lots and sidewalks, with green areas that will capture rain water and allow for higher capacity from our existing systems."

Over the next 25 years, Nutter says the Green City, Clean Waters partnership will also install porous pavement and help transform the city's three water department treatment plants so that they can treat more storm water.

"It's my hope that our plan will become a national model for other cities."

EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson says the investment will help the city save on energy costs and will create new jobs and green spaces.

Philadelphia Enquirer
Nutter signs water pact
By Vinny Vella
April 11, 2012

MAYOR NUTTER signed an agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency Tuesday that gives the green light to a $2 billion investment in the city's infrastructure.

The "Green City, Clean Waters" partnership will, over the next 25 years, upgrade streets, parking lots and other paved surfaces to better manage storm-water runoff.

The current "gray" surfaces are nonporous and allow excess rainwater to flood the sewers, which leads to industrial and human waste being discharged into natural waterways.

The partnership will make these surfaces more porous and able to absorb the rainwater as it accumulates.

Philadelphia Enquirer
Phila. Embarks on green stormwater management
By Sandy Bauers
April 11, 2012

Philadelphia's $2 billion plan to manage its storm water with green methods - porous pavement, green roofs, and a plethora of trees - got the official nod Tuesday from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson joined Mayor Nutter and other officials at the Fairmount Water Works to sign the agreement for a 25-year plan that has been described as one of the most innovative and ambitious in the nation.

It will transform not only how the city handles storm water - treating it as a resource instead of a waste product - but also how the city looks.

Greenery planted to soak up rainwater will also beautify streets, which could increase property values. Shaded homes will be cooler in summer, which could lower electricity bills. Air quality should improve. "The city has earned a place as a national and global leader on sustainable innovation and clean water protection," Jackson said at the signing, noting that it was a fitting way to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Clean Water Act this year.

Dozens of civic and environmental leaders attended the event.

Larry Levine, a water scientist with the Natural Resources Defense Council, a national environmental nonprofit, called the plan "the most comprehensive green infrastructure program found in any U.S. city."

Others, including Syracuse, Cleveland, and New York, are following Philadelphia's lead, he said. Philadelphia's problem is that about 60 percent of the city's sewers are a combined system that carries both sewage and storm water.

During heavy rainfall, the system overflows, and untreated water containing raw sewage, litter, road pollution, and other substances spurts from more than 150 overflow pipes into streams and rivers. The overflows total about 14 billion gallons a year.

Many other large cities have decided to build massive - and hugely expensive - underground tunnels to solve the problem. Washington proposed three of them, the largest eight miles long and 23 feet in diameter.

Philadelphia had considered it, but then realized it might be looking at the wrong end of the pipe. Instead of managing what came out of the sewer system, perhaps it could manage the water before it enters the system.

Officials proposed the plan, "Green City, Clean Waters," in 2009. It wasn't just innovative. It was complicated and lengthy - 3,369 pages. So regulators were wary. Verifying the expected results would take time.

The state approved the plan in 2011. Officials had hoped that federal approval would come by Earth Day that year, but it took 12 more months to analyze the data and conclude that the plan will work. The approach has won the praise of environmental officials nationwide.

Later this month, the Clean Water America Alliance, a nonprofit water sustainability organization headed by former EPA assistant water administrator Ben Grumbles, will name Philadelphia one of six national 2012 prize winners for its storm water plan.

"This provides hope for communities around the country," Grumbles said of the plan.

He praised the collaboration and partnership aspects, "so that the enforcement agencies don't just feel like this is a leap of faith. They feel like there will be accountability and a way to measure results under the Clean Water Act."

Carol R. Collier, executive director of the Delaware River Basin Commission, said that "what's going to make a difference is actions on the ground, and that's exactly what Philadelphia Water Department is doing."

The city also is pursuing creative funding. It instituted a controversial storm water fee based not on the city water that a building uses - long considered a proxy for what goes down the drain - but on the amount of impervious surface a business has.

The city also has built partnerships with other organizations to green their facilities, bit by bit. For instance, more than 65 green roofs have been installed on city buildings, with 45 more planned. By Tuesday's signing, the city had built the first 32 "green street" blocks, putting storm water planters near Columbus Square, and installing a tree "trench" along Montgomery Avenue near Blair Street.

Officials have been holding "Soak It Up Philly" celebrations to get out the message. After Percy Street was repaved with porous asphalt, Nutter showed up for the fun. "I poured a gallon of water on the street, and it disappeared."

By year's end, the department expects to begin construction on 215 more blocks.

About 15 parks have been transformed, getting new trees or underground basins to stall and absorb runoff.

Six city schools have gotten greener. The Kensington Creative and Performing Arts High School now has a green roof, an infiltration basin, tree trenches, rain gardens, and porous pavement.

A storm water wetland has been built at Saylor Grove near Lincoln Drive; rain gardens and underground cisterns are a new addition to Liberty Lands Park at North Third and Wildey Streets.

A "depaving" project - converting an impervious parking lot into a porous one - is under way on Eadom Street.

"We didn't just start a revolution," said city water commissioner Howard Neukrug, who championed the idea. He said it was more of an evolution - "one step at a time, figuring out how to redesign the

Andra Belknap
Assistant Press Secretary
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
202.564.0369
belknap.andra@epa.gov

Pa., Philly sign 25-year, $2 billion plan to clean water through 'green' infrastructure

Charles Imohiosen to: Richard Windsor, Bob Perciasepe 06/02/2011 07:36 AM

History: This message has been replied to and forwarded.

Pa., Philly sign 25-year, $2 billion plan to clean water through 'green' infrastructure

By Associated Press,

PHILADELPHIA – Pennsylvania and the city of Philadelphia have embarked on what environmental officials say is the largest project in the U.S. to reduce stormwater pollution through eco-friendly measures, such as porous asphalt and rooftop gardens.

The state and city, the country's fifth largest with 1.5 million people, signed a "Green City, Clean Waters" plan Wednesday, kicking off a 25-year, $2 billion effort to modify infrastructure to reduce the amount of rainwater tainted with road oil, litter and raw sewage flowing into rivers and streams.

Officials with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and national environmental groups said the initiative should serve as a blueprint for cities and towns nationwide. The changes are expected to reduce by 5 billion to 8 billion gallons the amount of sewer overflow going into the city's waterways each year, including the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers. That represents an 80 percent to 90 percent reduction.

"Philadelphia is setting the national model for how to clean up troubled waterways, and how to do it right," said Lawrence Levine of the Natural Resources Defense Council, one of several environmental advocacy groups that helped the city develop the plan.

Funding over the lifetime of the project will come from a combination of city water fees, state and federal grants and loans, as well as support from private investors and foundations. The Pennsylvania and the Philadelphia water departments are spearheading the project, which also includes roadside plantings and thousands of new trees.

The Philadelphia Water Department estimates the improvements would add $8 to a typical resident's monthly water bill over the next two decades. But Levine said the "Green City" plan is less expensive than other infrastructure expansions the city considered.

"Philadelphia's visionary approach ... is great for the environment, and for the economy," said Brian Glass of PennFuture, an environmental group. "It will save Philadelphians real money, while making the city of brotherly love a more vibrant place to live, work and play."

Sixty percent of Philadelphia has what is called a "combined sewer system," which allows runoff from streets and wastewater from bathrooms and kitchens to flow through the same pipes. The drainage system can handle that in dry weather, properly sending wastewater to water treatment plants and storm water to streams, but during rains it overflows and sends storm water laced with motor oil, trash, and human waste pouring into surrounding waterways and raising bacteria levels.

More than a decade ago, officials ruled out separating storm water and sanitary lines as was done in newer parts of the city because that would mean reconfiguring 1,600 miles of pipes at enormous expense. Other traditional options – a huge expansion of the city's three sewage plants or construction of gigantic underground tanks to hold overflows – were less efficient and prohibitively expensive.

The city then began working with state officials and environmental consultants on a major departure from the conventional approaches. They crafted a plan to install green roofs on city buildings, plant trees and other vegetation along sidewalks, and repave streets, basketball courts and parking lots with porous

asphalt and concrete that let rainwater flow through.

Water Department Commissioner Howard Neukrug said the goal is to improve the health of the city's creeks and rivers and "achieve a host of tangible environmental, social and economic benefits" from cleaner air, improved quality of life and the creation of jobs. The initial steps include a six-month citywide assessment to determine which neighborhoods to target first.

"We are thrilled and grateful that DEP has recognized the incredible environmental and public value of this plan, (which) makes significant progress toward Philadelphia becoming the greenest city in the country," Mayor Michael Nutter said.

The city has already begun to roll out some elements of the initiative. Last month, it paved a small Philadelphia street with porous asphalt, which looks like traditional impervious blacktop but has tiny spaces so storm water can drain through the surface into a bed of stones below, then seep into the soil underneath, instead of rushing into storm drains and sewers and creating potholes in winter.

___

Online:

http://www.phillywatersheds.org

Copyright 2011 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed

Charles Imohiosen
Counselor to the Deputy Administrator
Office of the Administrator
US Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

****
Sent via Blackberry

Re: Can u see if I
Sarah Pallone to: Richard Windsor 05/31/2012 08:45 PM

Already did!
Richard Windsor

----- Original Message -----
From: Richard Windsor
Sent: 05/31/2012 08:44 PM EDT
To: Sarah Pallone
Subject: Re: Can u see if I

Might want to let David know as well.
Sarah Pallone

----- Original Message -----
From: Sarah Pallone
Sent: 05/31/2012 07:03 PM EDT
To: Richard Windsor
Subject: Re: Can u see if I

Also, went through complete history...looks like your meeting request was made by me in a series of emails with USCM staff. At one point, we had a date of 8/2/11 which was cancelled by them. My last request was made on 9/14/11. In addition to those emails, Cynthia and Nancy sent a letter to Tom Cochran offering to meet with mayors as well, which culminated in a meeting with USCM leadership that you were supposed to attend, but had to pull out at the last minute. Bob, Cynthia and Nancy attended and the memo was born a month later. The request for you to meet with Tom never materialized into a meeting.

Sarah Hospodor-Pallone
Deputy Associate Administrator
for Intergovernmental Relations
Office of the Administrator
202-564-7178
pallone.sarah@epa.gov

Richard Windsor No biggie ----- Original Message ----- 05/31/2012 06:57:07 PM

From: Richard Windsor/DC/USEPA/US
To: Sarah Pallone/DC/USEPA/US@EPA
Date: 05/31/2012 06:57 PM
Subject: Re: Can u see if I

No biggie

Sarah Pallone

----- Original Message -----
From: Sarah Pallone
Sent: 05/31/2012 06:56 PM EDT
To: Richard Windsor
Subject: Re: Can u see if I

I tried my contact w/the same result. I will keep at it!
Richard Windsor

----- Original Message -----
From: Richard Windsor

Sent: 05/31/2012 06:54 PM EDT
To: Sarah Pallone
Subject: Re: Can u see if I

I just tried. But he didn't pick up so I thought it might help to give a heads up. Tx.
Sarah Pallone

----- Original Message -----
From: Sarah Pallone
Sent: 05/31/2012 06:53 PM EDT
To: Richard Windsor
Subject: Re: Can u see if I

The best way to reach Mayor Nutter would be on his cell: (b) (6)

FYI:

Thursday, May 31, 2012 **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

MAYOR NUTTER ISSUES STATEMENT ON PARTNERSHIP WITH EPA

Philadelphia, May 31, 2012 Mayor Michael A. Nutter issued the following statement regarding the leadership and partnership of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):

The Clean Water Act was a defining piece of American legislation that created a greener, more sustainable nation. Reflecting on the 40th Anniversary of this legislation, we are reminded how vital it is to protect our water sources now and for future generations.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, under the leadership of Administrator Lisa Jackson, has worked in partnership with the City of Philadelphia and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on a state-of-the-art stormwater management system that will save billions of taxpayer dollars. The EPA signed an historic agreement allowing Philadelphia to implement *Green City, Clean Waters* , our city s 25 year, $2 billion plan to invest in stormwater infrastructure. This plan creates affordable, green solutions that will uphold important quality standards set forth under the Clean Water Act.

The EPA and Administrator Jackson have been stalwart partners with cities across the nation as we work to build a more competitive and more sustainable America. In the 40 years since the passage of the Clean Water Act, they continue to collaborate with cities and municipalities to create the green infrastructure that will be a foundation for our nation s growth for decades to come.

Sarah Hospodor-Pallone

Deputy Associate Administrator
for Intergovernmental Relations
Office of the Administrator
202-564-7178
pallone.sarah@epa.gov

Richard Windsor | Might call Mayor Nutter tonight? Mainly a TY. tx. | 05/31/2012 06:43:50 PM

From: Richard Windsor/DC/USEPA/US
To: "Sarah Pallone" <pallone.sarah@epa.gov>
Date: 05/31/2012 06:43 PM
Subject: Can u see if I

Might call Mayor Nutter tonight? Mainly a TY. tx.

Re: Can u see if I
Richard Windsor to: Sarah Pallone 05/31/2012 08:43 PM

Tx
Sarah Pallone

----- Original Message -----
From: Sarah Pallone
Sent: 05/31/2012 07:03 PM EDT
To: Richard Windsor
Subject: Re: Can u see if I

Also, went through complete history...looks like your meeting request was made by me in a series of emails with USCM staff. At one point, we had a date of 8/2/11 which was cancelled by them. My last request was made on 9/14/11. In addition to those emails, Cynthia and Nancy sent a letter to Tom Cochran offering to meet with mayors as well, which culminated in a meeting with USCM leadership that you were supposed to attend, but had to pull out at the last minute. Bob, Cynthia and Nancy attended and the memo was born a month later. The request for you to meet with Tom never materialized into a meeting.

Sarah Hospodor-Pallone
Deputy Associate Administrator
for Intergovernmental Relations
Office of the Administrator
202-564-7178
pallone.sarah@epa.gov

Richard Windsor No biggie ----- Original Message ----- 05/31/2012 06:57:07 PM

From: Richard Windsor/DC/USEPA/US
To: Sarah Pallone/DC/USEPA/US@EPA
Date: 05/31/2012 06:57 PM
Subject: Re: Can u see if I

No biggie

Sarah Pallone

----- Original Message -----
From: Sarah Pallone
Sent: 05/31/2012 06:56 PM EDT
To: Richard Windsor
Subject: Re: Can u see if I

I tried my contact w/the same result. I will keep at it!
Richard Windsor

----- Original Message -----
From: Richard Windsor
Sent: 05/31/2012 06:54 PM EDT
To: Sarah Pallone
Subject: Re: Can u see if I

I just tried. But he didn't pick up so I thought it might help to give a heads up. Tx.
Sarah Pallone

----- Original Message -----
From: Sarah Pallone

Sent: 05/31/2012 06:53 PM EDT
To: Richard Windsor
Subject: Re: Can u see if I

The best way to reach Mayor Nutter would be on his cell: (b) (6)

FYI:

Thursday, May 31, 2012 **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

MAYOR NUTTER ISSUES STATEMENT ON PARTNERSHIP WITH EPA

Philadelphia, May 31, 2012 Mayor Michael A. Nutter issued the following statement regarding the leadership and partnership of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):

The Clean Water Act was a defining piece of American legislation that created a greener, more sustainable nation. Reflecting on the 40th Anniversary of this legislation, we are reminded how vital it is to protect our water sources now and for future generations.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, under the leadership of Administrator Lisa Jackson, has worked in partnership with the City of Philadelphia and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on a state-of-the-art stormwater management system that will save billions of taxpayer dollars. The EPA signed an historic agreement allowing Philadelphia to implement *Green City, Clean Waters* , our city s 25 year, $2 billion plan to invest in stormwater infrastructure. This plan creates affordable, green solutions that will uphold important quality standards set forth under the Clean Water Act.

The EPA and Administrator Jackson have been stalwart partners with cities across the nation as we work to build a more competitive and more sustainable America. In the 40 years since the passage of the Clean Water Act, they continue to collaborate with cities and municipalities to create the green infrastructure that will be a foundation for our nation s growth for decades to come.

Sarah Hospodor-Pallone
Deputy Associate Administrator
for Intergovernmental Relations
Office of the Administrator
202-564-7178
pallone.sarah@epa.gov

Richard Windsor Might call Mayor Nutter tonight? Mainly a TY. tx. 05/31/2012 06:43:50 PM

From: Richard Windsor/DC/USEPA/US
To: "Sarah Pallone" <pallone.sarah@epa.gov>
Date: 05/31/2012 06:43 PM
Subject: Can u see if I

Might call Mayor Nutter tonight? Mainly a TY. tx.

Re: Can u see if I
Sarah Pallone to: Richard Windsor 05/31/2012 07:11 PM

I am getting a message to him now that you are trying to reach him.

Sarah Hospodor-Pallone
Deputy Associate Administrator
for Intergovernmental Relations
Office of the Administrator
202-564-7178
pallone.sarah@epa.gov

Richard Windsor No biggie ----- Original Message ----- 05/31/2012 06:57:07 PM

From: Richard Windsor/DC/USEPA/US
To: Sarah Pallone/DC/USEPA/US@EPA
Date: 05/31/2012 06:57 PM
Subject: Re: Can u see if I

No biggie

Sarah Pallone

----- Original Message -----
From: Sarah Pallone
Sent: 05/31/2012 06:56 PM EDT
To: Richard Windsor
Subject: Re: Can u see if I

I tried my contact w/the same result. I will keep at it!

Richard Windsor

----- Original Message -----
From: Richard Windsor
Sent: 05/31/2012 06:54 PM EDT
To: Sarah Pallone
Subject: Re: Can u see if I

I just tried. But he didn't pick up so I thought it might help to give a heads up. Tx.

Sarah Pallone

----- Original Message -----
From: Sarah Pallone
Sent: 05/31/2012 06:53 PM EDT
To: Richard Windsor
Subject: Re: Can u see if I

The best way to reach Mayor Nutter would be on his cell: (b) (6)

FYI:

Thursday, May 31, 2012 **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

MAYOR NUTTER ISSUES STATEMENT ON PARTNERSHIP WITH EPA

Philadelphia, May 31, 2012 Mayor Michael A. Nutter issued the following statement regarding the leadership and partnership of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):

The Clean Water Act was a defining piece of American legislation that created a greener, more sustainable nation. Reflecting on the 40th Anniversary of this legislation, we are reminded how vital it is to protect our water sources now and for future generations.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, under the leadership of Administrator Lisa Jackson, has worked in partnership with the City of Philadelphia and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on a state-of-the-art stormwater management system that will save billions of taxpayer dollars. The EPA signed an historic agreement allowing Philadelphia to implement *Green City, Clean Waters* , our city s 25 year, $2 billion plan to invest in stormwater infrastructure. This plan creates affordable, green solutions that will uphold important quality standards set forth under the Clean Water Act.

The EPA and Administrator Jackson have been stalwart partners with cities across the nation as we work to build a more competitive and more sustainable America. In the 40 years since the passage of the Clean Water Act, they continue to collaborate with cities and municipalities to create the green infrastructure that will be a foundation for our nation s growth for decades to come.

Sarah Hospodor-Pallone
Deputy Associate Administrator
for Intergovernmental Relations
Office of the Administrator
202-564-7178
pallone.sarah@epa.gov

Richard Windsor | Might call Mayor Nutter tonight? Mainly a TY. tx. | 05/31/2012 06:43:50 PM

From: Richard Windsor/DC/USEPA/US
To: "Sarah Pallone" <pallone.sarah@epa.gov>
Date: 05/31/2012 06:43 PM
Subject: Can u see if I

Might call Mayor Nutter tonight? Mainly a TY. tx.

Re: Draft Message to POTUS
Richard Windsor to: Diane Thompson 04/11/2012 02:46 PM

(b) (5)

Diane Thompson

----- Original Message -----
From: Diane Thompson
Sent: 04/11/2012 02:36 PM EDT
To: Richard Windsor
Subject: Fw: Draft Message to POTUS

Thoughts?

(b) (5)

Chris L. Busch
Office of the Administrator | US EPA
Office: (202) 250-8798
Mobile: (b) (6)

Diane Thompson Can you tighten up? It seems redundant -----... 04/11/2012 11:38:47 AM

From: Diane Thompson/DC/USEPA/US
To: Christopher Busch/DC/USEPA/US@EPA
Date: 04/11/2012 11:38 AM
Subject: Re: Message to POTUS

(b) (5)

Christopher Busch

----- Original Message -----
From: Christopher Busch
Sent: 04/10/2012 11:50 AM EDT
To: Diane Thompson
Subject: Message to POTUS

Diane- Draft message below from the Phili event today. Also including the policy calendar blurb where I got the info. Jose had a look as well.

Chris

Draft Message to POTUS

(b) (5)

(b) (5)

Policy calendar blurb:
Administrator Jackson may attend a Philadelphia Partnership Agreement Signing Ceremony with Mayor Nutter in Philadelphia, PA. During this event, Administrator Jackson expects to sign the Green City Clean Waters Partnership Agreement with the City of Philadelphia. The agreement recognizes the City's innovative approach for stormwater management to reduce water pollution from combined sewers and establishes a unique federal - city partnership to oversee the implementation of Green City Clean Waters. The Green City Clean Waters program is pioneering broad investment in green stormwater management practices that not only reduce the sewer overflows to the City's waterways, but also result in the enhancement of communities and the overall urban environment. The agreement may serve as a national model for cities embracing green infrastructure.

Chris L. Busch
Office of the Administrator | US EPA
Office: (202) 250-8798
Mobile: (b) (6)

Re: For your review - Op-ed on stormwater framework

Richard Windsor to: Brendan Gilfillan 06/13/2012 10:41 AM

Cc: Alisha Johnson, "Stephanie Epner", "Michael Moats"

Looks great. Tx. Assume Cynthia and Nancy Stoner have signed off as well. Lisa

Brendan Gilfillan	Hey boss - just moving this back up in your inbox...	06/13/2012 10:28:25 AM

From: Brendan Gilfillan/DC/USEPA/US
To: Alisha Johnson/DC/USEPA/US@EPA
Cc: "Stephanie Epner" <Epner.Stephanie@epamail.epa.gov>, "Michael Moats" <Moats.Michael@epamail.epa.gov>, "Richard Windsor" <Windsor.Richard@epamail.epa.gov>
Date: 06/13/2012 10:28 AM
Subject: Re: For your review - Op-ed on stormwater framework

Hey boss - just moving this back up in your inbox. Thanks

Alisha Johnson	Administrator, Below is an op-ed on today's Inte...	06/12/2012 08:27:58 PM

Re: For your review - Op-ed on stormwater framework

Brendan Gilfillan to: Alisha Johnson 06/13/2012 10:28 AM

Cc: "Stephanie Epner", "Michael Moats", "Richard Windsor"

History: This message has been replied to.

Hey boss - just moving this back up in your inbox. Thanks

Alisha Johnson Administrator, Below is an op-ed on today's Inte... 06/12/2012 08:27:58 PM

From: Alisha Johnson/DC/USEPA/US
To: "Richard Windsor" <Windsor.Richard@epamail.epa.gov>
Cc: "Stephanie Epner" <Epner.Stephanie@epamail.epa.gov>, "Michael Moats" <Moats.Michael@epamail.epa.gov>, "Brendan Gilfillan" <Gilfillan.Brendan@epamail.epa.gov>
Date: 06/12/2012 08:27 PM
Subject: For your review - Op-ed on stormwater framework

Administrator,
Below is an op-ed on today's Integrated Municipal Stormwater and Wastewater Planning Approach Framework announcement. We'd like to have this as a joint op-ed from you and Mayor Nutter. Please let us know if you have any edits.

Thank you!

(b) (5)

(b) (5)

Re: Fw: Some background
James O'Hara to: Sarah Pallone 10/24/2012 09:58 AM
Cc: "James O'Hara", "Bob Perciasepe", "Richard Windsor"

tnx

Sarah Pallone FYI ----- Original Message ----- 10/24/2012 09:19:05 AM

From: Sarah Pallone/DC/USEPA/US
To: "Bob Perciasepe" <Perciasepe.Bob@epamail.epa.gov>, "Richard Windsor" <Windsor.Richard@epamail.epa.gov>
Cc: "James O'Hara" <O'Hara.James@epamail.epa.gov>
Date: 10/24/2012 09:19 AM
Subject: Fw: Some background

FYI

From: Andrew Stober [Andrew.Stober phila.gov]
Sent: 10 24 2012 01:06 PM GMT
To: Sarah Pallone
Subject: Re: Some background

I am sure the Mayor will send to the Administrator. Here is what was submitted to the WSJ.

Dear Sir:

I must disagree with your October 22 editorial, The Obama Storm Tax. Philadelphia's recent experiences working with the EPA have resulted in a smart, integrated approach to urban water sustainability. The EPA understands that the path to clean water is through collaboration and partnership and by investing limited resources wisely. The EPA under President Obama has in fact been a refreshing change for America's mayors who had overpriced stormwater solutions dictated to them for decades.

This past April the EPA and the City of Philadelphia signed the Green City Clean Waters Partnership Agreement. This historic agreement recognizes Philadelphia's innovative green infrastructure approach to stormwater management as the best means to reduce water pollution from combined sewers. Our agreement established a unique federal - city partnership to oversee our regulatory compliance and will serve as a model for cities embracing green infrastructure.

The Green City Clean Waters Plan layers green technologies modeled on natural practices on top of the city's 3,000 mile sewer network – Philadelphia's 20th century investment in traditional "gray" infrastructure. Green stormwater infrastructure captures rainwater on the surface and allows it to soak into the ground – transforming streets, parking lots, schools, and public spaces into urban landscapes that reduce sewer overflows to our waterways and enhancing our communities. Philadelphia is investing $2.4 billion – a cost based upon what our citizens can afford - over the next 25 years to make our

waterways cherished and thriving destinations. Our investments are structured to provide health, economic, and social benefits to transform Philadelphia into a truly sustainable city.

Philadelphia is not alone in working with the EPA to implement green infrastructure. The EPA has amended agreements with cities across America to include green infrastructure and is working with other cities on partnership agreements similar to Philadelphia's. I would call that visionary.

Mayor Michael A. Nutter
City of Philadelphia

From: Pallone.Sarah epamail.epa.gov [mailto:Pallone.Sarah epamail.epa.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, October 23, 2012 01:01 PM
To: Andrew Stober
Subject: Some background

Per our earlier conversation, this is our draft desk statement (waiting for final clearance) and some key highlights of the work we have been doing with a number of cities.

Draft Statement
No American wants raw sewage or other harmful pollution flowing through the waterways in their communities. EPA has worked closely with many local governments and the United States Conference of Mayors to identify innovative and cost-effective solutions to achieve clean water. This integrated and collaborative approach is helping communities prioritize their clean water investments to address the most serious water issues first and provides flexibility to use cost-effective storm and wastewater management solutions such as green infrastructure

Examples of EPA Working with Communities on Green Infrastructure and Integrated Approaches to Managing Stormwater and Wastewater

Philadelphia: EPA has signed a partnership agreement with the City and is working with them on an Administrative Order, both of which will be tools for working with Philadelphia to ensure that their green infrastructure approach succeeds.

St Louis: The consent decree includes a $100 million green infrastructure program to reduce storm water flows through a storm water retrofit program, focused in sewersheds that drain to the Mississippi River.

NEORSD (Cleveland): The consent decree includes $42 million in green infrastructure investments. It provides flexibility to substitute green infrastructure for grey elements where appropriate.

Kansas City: The consent decree includes the use of green infrastructure to supplement grey elements in its implementation of overflow control measures. The City will initiate pilot projects to implement green infrastructure technologies that will allow them to propose expansion of green infrastructure throughout its entire combined system.

Indianapolis: EPA and the City amended the consent decree utilizing a path similar to the recently proposed integrated planning approach. The amendment adopted alternative solutions that will achieve

greater control of overflows at a lower cost.

Baltimore: The City has been working on an integrated plan and we are in discussions with them regarding a path forward that will meet the City's challenges and protect human health and the environment.

Louisville: The 2009 consent decree amendment has some excellent early examples of integrated planning, including prioritization of work on CSOs, SSOs and at the wastewater treatment plant – as well as green infrastructure pilots where EPA's ORD is collaborating with the city.

Hamilton County (Cincinnati): The 2010 CD amendment brought together CSO and SSO CDs into a single integrated plan that includes green infrastructure and a watershed based-approach.

Sarah Hospodor-Pallone
Deputy Associate Administrator
for Intergovernmental Relations
Office of the Administrator
202-564-7178
pallone.sarah@epa.gov

Re: Pa., Philly sign 25-year, $2 billion plan to clean water through 'green' infrastructure

Shawn Garvin to: Richard Windsor 06/02/2011 09:58 AM

Cc: Seth Oster, Adora Andy, Bob Perciasepe

(b) (5)

I believe I am scheduled to get a more detailed briefing tomorrow. Let me know if you have any questions. We are looking to schedule a briefing for you in the near future. I will find out where our schedulers are with this briefing.

Below is the desk statement we had put together.

Thank you - Shawn

"We believe today's action is an important step toward implementing the necessary measures for controlling Philadelphia's sewer overflows. As evidenced by EPA's recently announced Green Infrastructure strategy, EPA strongly supports use of green infrastructure as part of the solution for controlling stormwater.

Green infrastructure decreases pollution to local waterways by treating rain where it falls and keeping polluted stormwater from entering sewer systems. In addition to protecting public health by decreasing water pollution, green infrastructure provides many community benefits including revitalizing neighborhoods, creating jobs, saving energy, and increasing recreational and green space.

EPA will continue working closely with the City and state on Philadelphia's updated CSO Plan to help ensure that it meets all water quality standards especially in smaller streams impacted by overflows.

EPA has recently incorporated green technologies in wet weather pollution control plans into federal consent agreements in Kansas City and the Cleveland area. We are confident that we will soon be completing such an agreement with Philadelphia."

###

Sent by EPA Wireless E-Mail Services

Richard Windsor

----- Original Message -----

From: Richard Windsor
Sent: 06/02/2011 07:40 AM EDT
To: Shawn Garvin
Cc: Seth Oster; Adora Andy; Bob Perciasepe
Subject: Fw: Pa., Philly sign 25-year, $2 billion plan to clean water through 'green' infrastructure

Shawn,

I'll give you a call to discuss. Where are we? Thanks, Lisa

----- Forwarded by Richard Windsor/DC/USEPA/US on 06/02/2011 07:38 AM -----

From: Charles Imohiosen/DC/USEPA/US
To: "Richard Windsor" <Windsor.Richard@epamail.epa.gov>, "Bob Perciasepe" <Perciasepe.Bob@epamail.epa.gov>
Date: 06/02/2011 07:36 AM
Subject: Pa., Philly sign 25-year, $2 billion plan to clean water through 'green' infrastructure

Pa., Philly sign 25-year, $2 billion plan to clean water through 'green' infrastructure

OBJ OBJ

By Associated Press,

PHILADELPHIA – Pennsylvania and the city of Philadelphia have embarked on what environmental officials say is the largest project in the U.S. to reduce stormwater pollution through eco-friendly measures, such as porous asphalt and rooftop gardens.

The state and city, the country's fifth largest with 1.5 million people, signed a "Green City, Clean Waters" plan Wednesday, kicking off a 25-year, $2 billion effort to modify infrastructure to reduce the amount of rainwater tainted with road oil, litter and raw sewage flowing into rivers and streams.

Officials with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and national environmental groups said the initiative should serve as a blueprint for cities and towns nationwide. The changes are expected to reduce by 5 billion to 8 billion gallons the amount of sewer overflow going into the city's waterways each year, including the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers. That represents an 80 percent to 90 percent reduction.

"Philadelphia is setting the national model for how to clean up troubled waterways, and how to do it right," said Lawrence Levine of the Natural Resources Defense Council, one of several environmental advocacy groups that helped the city develop the plan.

Funding over the lifetime of the project will come from a combination of city water fees, state and federal grants and loans, as well as support from private investors and foundations. The Pennsylvania and the Philadelphia water departments are spearheading the project, which also includes roadside plantings and thousands of new trees.

The Philadelphia Water Department estimates the improvements would add $8 to a typical resident's monthly water bill over the next two decades. But Levine said the "Green City" plan is less expensive than other infrastructure expansions the city considered.

"Philadelphia's visionary approach ... is great for the environment, and for the economy," said Brian Glass of PennFuture, an environmental group. "It will save Philadelphians real money, while making the city of brotherly love a more vibrant place to live, work and play."

Sixty percent of Philadelphia has what is called a "combined sewer system," which allows runoff from streets and wastewater from bathrooms and kitchens to flow through the same pipes. The drainage system can handle that in dry weather, properly sending wastewater to water treatment plants and storm water to streams, but during rains it overflows and sends storm water laced with motor oil, trash, and human waste pouring into surrounding waterways and raising bacteria levels.

More than a decade ago, officials ruled out separating storm water and sanitary lines as was done in newer parts of the city because that would mean reconfiguring 1,600 miles of pipes at enormous expense. Other traditional options – a huge expansion of the city's three sewage plants or construction of gigantic underground tanks to hold overflows – were less efficient and prohibitively expensive.

The city then began working with state officials and environmental consultants on a major departure from the conventional approaches. They crafted a plan to install green roofs on city buildings, plant trees and other vegetation along sidewalks, and repave streets, basketball courts and parking lots with porous asphalt and concrete that let rainwater flow through.

Water Department Commissioner Howard Neukrug said the goal is to improve the health of the city's creeks and rivers and "achieve a host of tangible environmental, social and economic benefits" from cleaner air, improved quality of life and the creation of jobs. The initial steps include a six-month citywide assessment to determine which neighborhoods to target first.

"We are thrilled and grateful that DEP has recognized the incredible environmental and public value of this plan, (which) makes significant progress toward Philadelphia becoming the greenest city in the country," Mayor Michael Nutter said.

The city has already begun to roll out some elements of the initiative. Last month, it paved a small Philadelphia street with porous asphalt, which looks like traditional impervious blacktop but has tiny spaces so storm water can drain through the surface into a bed of stones below, then seep into the soil underneath, instead of rushing into storm drains and sewers and creating potholes in winter.

___

Online:

http://www.phillywatersheds.org

Copyright 2011 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed

Charles Imohiosen
Counselor to the Deputy Administrator
Office of the Administrator
US Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

****
Sent via Blackberry

Re: Revised Message to POTUS
Richard Windsor to: Diane Thompson 04/11/2012 05:19 PM

Agree. Tx!
Diane Thompson

----- Original Message -----
From: Diane Thompson
Sent: 04/11/2012 05:09 PM EDT
To: Richard Windsor
Subject: Fw: Revised Message to POTUS
I think this works --

****

On Tuesday, Philadelphia Mayor Nutter and I signed the Green City Clean Waters Partnership Agreement between the city and EPA at a ceremony in Philadelphia. This pioneering agreement establishes a unique federal - city partnership. The partnership will oversee the Green City Clean Waters program which is undertaking broad investment in various techniques and methods that intercept rain water at the source, retaining and allowing it to flow into the ground which allows soil and plants to recycle it back to the atmosphere, rather than becoming stormwater that runs off and triggers sewer overflows that pollute our waterways. Examples in practice include things like green roofs, additional green spaces in the urban environment and permeable pavements. These efforts will not only reduce pollution, but enhance communities and the urban environment.

Chris L. Busch
Office of the Administrator | US EPA
Office: (202) 250-8798
Mobile: (b) (6)

Re: Some background
Sarah Pallone to: Richard Windsor 10/24/2012 09:26 AM

Indeed!

From: Richard Windsor
Sent: 10 24 2012 09:24 AM EDT
To: Sarah Pallone
Subject: Re: Some background

That's great. The WSJ editorial page is absolute trash.

From: Sarah Pallone
Sent: 10 24 2012 09:19 AM EDT
To: Bob Perciasepe; Richard Windsor
Cc: James O'Hara
Subject: Fw: Some background

FYI

From: Andrew Stober [Andrew.Stober phila.gov]
Sent: 10 24 2012 01:06 PM GMT
To: Sarah Pallone
Subject: Re: Some background

I am sure the Mayor will send to the Administrator. Here is what was submitted to the WSJ.

Dear Sir:

I must disagree with your October 22 editorial, The Obama Storm Tax. Philadelphia's recent experiences working with the EPA have resulted in a smart, integrated approach to urban water sustainability. The EPA understands that the path to clean water is through collaboration and partnership and by investing limited resources wisely. The EPA under President Obama has in fact been a refreshing change for America's mayors who had overpriced stormwater solutions dictated to them for decades.

This past April the EPA and the City of Philadelphia signed the Green City Clean Waters Partnership Agreement. This historic agreement recognizes Philadelphia's innovative green infrastructure approach to stormwater management as the best means to reduce water pollution from combined sewers. Our agreement established a unique federal - city partnership to oversee our regulatory compliance and will serve as a model for cities embracing green infrastructure.

The Green City Clean Waters Plan layers green technologies modeled on natural practices on top of the city's 3,000 mile sewer network – Philadelphia's 20th century investment in traditional "gray" infrastructure. Green stormwater infrastructure captures rainwater on the surface and allows it to soak into the ground – transforming streets, parking lots, schools, and public spaces into urban landscapes that reduce sewer overflows to our waterways and enhancing our communities. Philadelphia is investing $2.4 billion – a cost based upon what our citizens can afford - over the next 25 years to make our waterways cherished and thriving destinations. Our investments are structured to provide health, economic, and social benefits to transform Philadelphia into a truly sustainable city.

Philadelphia is not alone in working with the EPA to implement green infrastructure. The EPA has amended agreements with cities across America to include green infrastructure and is working with other cities on partnership agreements similar to Philadelphia's. I would call that visionary.

Mayor Michael A. Nutter
City of Philadelphia

From: Pallone.Sarah epamail.epa.gov [mailto:Pallone.Sarah epamail.epa.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, October 23, 2012 01:01 PM
To: Andrew Stober
Subject: Some background

Per our earlier conversation, this is our draft desk statement (waiting for final clearance) and some key highlights of the work we have been doing with a number of cities.

Draft Statement
No American wants raw sewage or other harmful pollution flowing through the waterways in their communities. EPA has worked closely with many local governments and the United States Conference of Mayors to identify innovative and cost-effective solutions to achieve clean water. This integrated and collaborative approach is helping communities prioritize their clean water investments to address the most serious water issues first and provides flexibility to use cost-effective storm and wastewater management solutions such as green infrastructure

Examples of EPA Working with Communities on Green Infrastructure and Integrated Approaches to Managing Stormwater and Wastewater

Philadelphia: EPA has signed a partnership agreement with the City and is working with them on an Administrative Order, both of which will be tools for working with Philadelphia to ensure that their green infrastructure approach succeeds.

St Louis: The consent decree includes a $100 million green infrastructure program to reduce storm water flows through a storm water retrofit program, focused in sewersheds that drain to the Mississippi River.

NEORSD (Cleveland): The consent decree includes $42 million in green infrastructure investments. It provides flexibility to substitute green infrastructure for grey elements where appropriate.

Kansas City: The consent decree includes the use of green infrastructure to supplement grey elements in its implementation of overflow control measures. The City will initiate pilot projects to implement green infrastructure technologies that will allow them to propose expansion of green infrastructure throughout its entire combined system.

Indianapolis: EPA and the City amended the consent decree utilizing a path similar to the recently proposed integrated planning approach. The amendment adopted alternative solutions that will achieve greater control of overflows at a lower cost.

Baltimore: The City has been working on an integrated plan and we are in discussions with them regarding a path forward that will meet the City's challenges and protect human health and the environment.

Louisville: The 2009 consent decree amendment has some excellent early examples of integrated planning, including prioritization of work on CSOs, SSOs and at the wastewater treatment plant – as well as green infrastructure pilots where EPA's ORD is collaborating with the city.

Hamilton County (Cincinnati): The 2010 CD amendment brought together CSO and SSO CDs into a single integrated plan that includes green infrastructure and a watershed based-approach.

Sarah Hospodor-Pallone
Deputy Associate Administrator
for Intergovernmental Relations
Office of the Administrator
202-564-7178
pallone.sarah@epa.gov

Re: THE ROOT: Environmental Justice: What's EPA's Plan?

Richard Windsor to: Alisha Johnson 08/29/2011 09:35 AM

Cool. Tx.
Alisha Johnson

----- Original Message -----
From: Alisha Johnson
Sent: 08/29/2011 09:32 AM EDT
To: Richard Windsor; Brendan Gilfillan; Seth Oster; Betsaida Alcantara; Michael Moats; Vicki Ekstrom; Dru Ealons; Stephanie Owens; Lisa Garcia
Subject: THE ROOT: Environmental Justice: What's EPA's Plan?

Environmental Justice: What's EPA's Plan?

The Root
By Cynthia Gordy
Posted: August 27, 2011 at 4:32 PM

Administrator Lisa P. Jackson says all people deserve clean communities. Here's what she's done.

In a cavernous ballroom at Washington, D.C.'s convention center last Friday, nearly 2,000 guests gathered for the "Women Who Dare to Dream" luncheon honoring women of the civil rights movement. Originally planned as a lead-up to the postponed Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial dedication, the glittering affair featured remarks and performances from civil rights activist Myrlie Evers-Williams, poet Maya Angelou, farmworkers activist Dolores Huerta, singer Lalah Hathaway and Bernice King. Also on the program: Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa P. Jackson, who spoke of how the civil rights movement informs her work.

"The struggle began fighting against obvious injustice -- 'Whites Only' signs and terrible racial violence. Today the struggle continues in the fight against things that are harder to see -- disparities in economic opportunity, achievement gaps in our schools, deeply ingrained institutional prejudices," Jackson said during her turn at the podium.

"The environmental movement took shape in much the same way, with people organizing against obvious issues like rivers so polluted they were literally catching on fire. After years of progress, we are fighting challenges that are harder to see -- invisible toxins in our water and air, or disparities between rich and poor in the burden of environmental degradation."

It is this challenge of upholding environmental justice -- the fair treatment of all communities when it comes to protection from environmental and health hazards -- that Jackson has taken on from her first day on the job in 2009. Yet when decades of decision making and neglect have left mostly poor and minority communities with an overwhelmingly disproportionate share of landfills, nuclear waste, factories, polluted air and contaminated water, it will take quite some time getting there.

Under Jackson's watch, the EPA has introduced new regulations to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide from power plants, factories and cars; added dozens of new federal regulators to crack down on industries that don't comply with environmental laws; and appointed a senior adviser for environmental justice. To help Americans understand how these issues affect their health, she and other EPA officials have also traveled around the country to forums and town halls, talking with and listening to communities that carry most of the burden.

Jackson briefly spoke to The Root about some of the results of her environmental-justice efforts. Here the Cabinet member and Princeton-trained chemical engineer shares new air and water initiatives; how she can't "wave a magic wand" for overnight change; and why we shouldn't count out the importance of organized, empowered communities.

The Root: You've framed your work as a civil rights issue, but it can be hard for people to get passionate about things like regulating carbon dioxide and testing the quality of streams and rivers. How would you rate your success in trying to get more African Americans to care and participate?

Lisa P. Jackson: I think we have made great progress, and we've done it at a time when people would like to argue that no one cares because they're worried about the economy. And yet we've seen community after community saying, "Of course we want jobs and economic prosperity, but we know what happens if someone's not there to protect our health, air and water at the same time."

It's been a two-way street. We are spending more time at EPA speaking to communities of color about these issues, but we are also spending more time listening and trying to incorporate their unique point of view into the issues we deal with.

TR: Last year you joined the Congressional Black Caucus for a multicity tour of communities burdened by environmental hazards, and promised to follow up with an action plan for each stop. What were some measurable changes that came as a result?

LPJ: Some of them were sort of qualitative changes -- better relationships between the community and local officials. In a couple of communities [in Savannah, Ga., and Mossville, La.] where they were doing Superfund site cleanups, the site managers hadn't really established relationships to hear the concerns of the black community. Now there are meetings where the community sits and goes over in detail engineering plans and community outreach plans.

We had another community [in Greenville, Miss.] with real concerns that Superfund contracting wasn't open to local black-owned small businesses, and we've changed our procurement requirements to make sure that the contract language seeks out those businesses to give them a fair shake.

We've also worked to bring our SmartWay initiative to reduce diesel emissions to port communities. A lot of communities of color are in urban areas around big ports with lots of bus and diesel traffic, and this program can make a tremendous difference.

TR: A major problem has always been where things are located -- elementary schools sited near diesel-spewing highways, for example, or toxic-waste sites in poor neighborhoods. Given the lack of EPA jurisdiction over city planning, what is the agency doing to protect people's health in those cases?

LPJ: First we need to help communities be empowered with knowledge about why these decisions are so important. And then we need to get an empowered community a seat at the table. So, no, EPA and the federal government are never going to be in charge of siting [deciding where sites are located], but we can put information in the hands of communities. For example, our Sustainable Communities efforts work with HUD, Transportation and EPA to make walkable, livable communities that are affordable for people.

We also have school-siting guidance, which is totally voluntary, but in a lot of minority communities, schools are built on old [abandoned industrial] Brownfield sites. So [our guidance says that] it's important to make sure those sites are cleaned up before the school comes in. We almost act like the communities' consultant. We give them information on highly technical issues that make them understand how a decision will affect their health on the ground.

TR: You mentioned voluntary "guidance" as part of your environmental-justice work. Much of your newly released Plan EJ 2014 (a blueprint for integrating environmental justice into both federal and local decision making) involves guidance for local officials -- an approach that assumes politicians and businesses are willing to take extra steps to protect poor communities. How do you convince people that these aren't just mere suggestions with no teeth?

LPJ: There are regulations on the book right now -- our civil rights laws -- that are the remedy when people feel that they've been wronged. What we've learned is that getting to the problem after it's already happened is really a problem. The real cure is here is communities who speak up and are in the process

at the beginning, whatever it may be, whether it's a cleanup process or a siting process.

One could wish that we could wave a wand and mandate environmental justice everywhere, but instead what Plan EJ 2014 does is have specific steps that we're committing to -- to continue to put information out on how to write permits, how to do an EJ analysis quantitatively when you write a permit, or how to do enforcement to ensure that we're concentrating on those communities that have disproportionate impact and that have been neglected.

TR: Speaking of enforcement, one of EPA's stated goals for the next few years is to keep raw sewage and storm water out of sewers, a problem caused by outdated infrastructure in cities across the country. How are you cracking down on such a prevalent issue?

LPJ: Mayor Michael Nutter of Philadelphia has a "Green City, Clean Waters" program, with this whole idea of making the city green. Part of that is around water infrastructure -- taking up pavement and putting in rain gardens, parks and open spaces where water can seep into the ground. That sounds kind of "bugs and bunny"-ish, but putting green space in the heart of the urban jungle has a wonderful impact on water quality and a great impact on the community as a whole.

EPA is holding Michael Nutter and the city of Philadelphia up as an example of our overall work on sustainability. We're negotiating with him a consent decree that changes his obligation to do just what we call "gray infrastructure" to address storm water, and puts green infrastructure as a major focus.

Cynthia Gordy is The Root's Washington reporter.