

FORGE RIVER Watershed Sewer Project

"Clean Water is Quality of Life"

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why does our community need a sewer system?

Decades of nitrogen pollution from outdated, poorly functioning or broken septic systems and cesspools have contributed significantly to polluting our rivers, bays and groundwater. Major rain events have led to regular flooding, and an unusually high water table has made some private waste systems inoperable much of the time.

2. How will our community benefit?

Installing sewers would be a significant improvement for our community. Better water quality will improve our quality of life in a number of ways, including helping foster economic development and property values and making our community a more attractive place to live and raise our children. We can improve opportunities for business to grow and succeed while we begin to reclaim natural assets like the Forge River and the recreational and economic benefits they provide.

3. How many commercial properties are in the sewer district?

The initial two project phases will include close to 1900 homes and about 150 commercial properties, located mainly along the Montauk Highway business corridor between the Forge River and just west of the William Floyd Parkway. Including the commercial corridor in this project recognized that true community improvement had to address both businesses and homes.

4. Why is the project good for commercial properties and the business sector?

Findings contained in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) indicate that business investment, economic activity, and employment would increase. The FEIS states that conditions would exist for commercial property values to increase, existing businesses would be able to expand, new businesses will move in, vacant parcels would be developed, and existing properties would be improved. As residential values increase, it's expected that the percentage of owner-occupied homes would increase with higher household income residents.

Got questions or comments?

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5. How will construction of the sewer project be paid for?

The project is made possible by the commitment of nearly \$168 million in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds. Without this grant funding, the cost of this project would be prohibitive for both commercial and residential property owners. However, FEMA funding can only be used for this project and will be lost if this project is not built. In addition to the FEMA funding, New York State is providing low-interest financing and a grant of \$2 million to fund design and engineering costs.

6. What costs will commercial property be responsible for?

Because of the Federal funds, there will be no cost to either residential or commercial property owners for construction of sewer lines, the sewer treatment plant and other sewer system infrastructure. However, commercial properties will be responsible for one-time costs associated with hooking up to the sewer system. This includes purchase and installation of a grinder pumps that will both hold wastewater on site and pump it to sewer lines in the street; installing lines from their grinder pump to a connection in the street; and securing and filling in existing cesspools and septic systems. They will also be responsible for ongoing maintenance of their system and will be charged for ongoing usage based on the amount of water that they use less any metered consumptive or irrigation use.

7. What are the estimated costs for commercial property owners?

Initial costs involved in “hooking up” can vary widely and depend on many factors, such as how many grinder pumps are needed, distance to the street, costs to fill in existing cesspools and septic systems, property restoration costs, and others. As a general estimate, the hook up costs for commercial properties is expected to average \$20,000. As stated above, ongoing usage costs are based on water usage. It’s worth noting that many commercial property owners already spend thousands of dollars annually to pump out, improve or repair their cesspools and septic systems.

8. Why do commercial properties have to pay for hook ups?

To make the project succeed, it had to be affordable to the almost 1,900 residential property owners who would initially be hooked up. Because residential hook-ups will be funded entirely with federal grants, residential property owners will not pay anything other than an annual maintenance costs and debt service.

9. When will the sewer district referendum be and who will be eligible to vote?

It’s important for community members to express their position on forming a new sewer district and the county legislature is expected to schedule a referendum on this and other sewer districts for January 22, 2019. To vote in the referendum, voters must live within the boundaries of the proposed sewer district and they must be registered to vote in that district.