

Quarterly Newsletter

We collaborate with communities across Oakland County and throughout the region to maintain safe, reliable drainage, water and sewer systems. We work to protect public health, preserve natural resources, maintain reliable, high-quality service, ensure the value of investment and contribute to economic prosperity.

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2022 Annual Report: Innovation and Optimization in Action



I am honored to share with you our office's annual report. This year's report provides a comprehensive overview of my team's efforts from 2022 including operational activities, capital improvement projects, system details, water infrastructure solutions, public outreach efforts and more.

The dedication to the five outcomes this organization work toward everyday was demonstrated last year by the innovative work in searching for a solution to water affordability, undertaking operations for new systems, pursuing funding opportunities, adopting innovative industry-leading practices, and collaborating regionally to ensure value for water infrastructure investment.

System Details

22 Local Water Systems

176,000 people served
1,460 miles of water main
26 wellhouses and water treatment facilities
11 water storage tanks
6 water booster stations

10 Regional Sewer Systems

1 million people served
410 miles of sewer
4 retention treatment facilities
2 water resource recovery facilities
3 septage unloading facilities
17 sewage pump stations

26 Local Sewer Systems

146,000 people served
1,210 miles of sewer
7 water resource recovery facilities
3 sewage retention reservoirs
142 sewage pump stations

429 Stormwater Drains

545 miles of enclosed storm drain
215 miles of open channel storm drain
40 Lake level control/dam structures
10 pump stations

Several projects highlighted in the report show how innovation optimizes the balance among our five desired outcomes. The maintenance and operations efforts as well as overseeing planning, designing, and construction water, sewer and drain improvement projects combine to achieve the five outcomes we work to pursue. The five outcomes we work toward every day are:

1. Protect public health and safety
2. Preserve natural resources and a healthy environment
3. Maintain reliable high-quality service
4. Contribute to economic prosperity
5. Ensure value for investment

[Click here to view our 2022 Annual Report.](#)

It is an honor to serve as your Water Resources Commissioner. As we work together to move Oakland County forward, I want to thank you for partnering with us to make our county the best it can be.

Jim Nash



Community Projects Receive Funding



We are pleased to announce that three important water and sewer projects will advance because Congress approved \$6.6 million in Community Project funding. This competitive funding has been made possible due to the efforts of U.S. Senators Debbie Stabenow and Gary Peters as well as U.S. Representatives Brenda Lawrence and Elissa Slotkin as part of the 2023 Omnibus Appropriations bill.

Funding will be used to protect the well-being of Oakland County's residents as well as its environment. It also provides a significant benefit to ratepayers by offsetting costs that residents would otherwise pay to maintain and fix existing infrastructure.

The funding will be distributed as follows.

- \$1.6 million for the Royal Oak Township Water System Improvements project, supported by Lawrence. This funding will help replace aging water infrastructure to ensure its residents have access to safe and reliable drinking water.

- \$1 million toward engineering for the Northwest Sanitary Sewer project, supported by Slotkin. This funding will contribute to a larger \$80 million project that will serve Holly, Groveland and Brandon Townships and the Village of Ortonville. The sewer extension project will run from the border of Genesee County along Dixie Highway to Grange Hall Road, helping these communities address failing septic systems while protecting the environment.

- \$4 million for the Evergreen-Farmington Sanitary Drain Corrective Action Plan projects supported by Peters and Stabenow. Project funds will be used to make system improvements to limit sanitary sewer overflows while maintaining clean water.

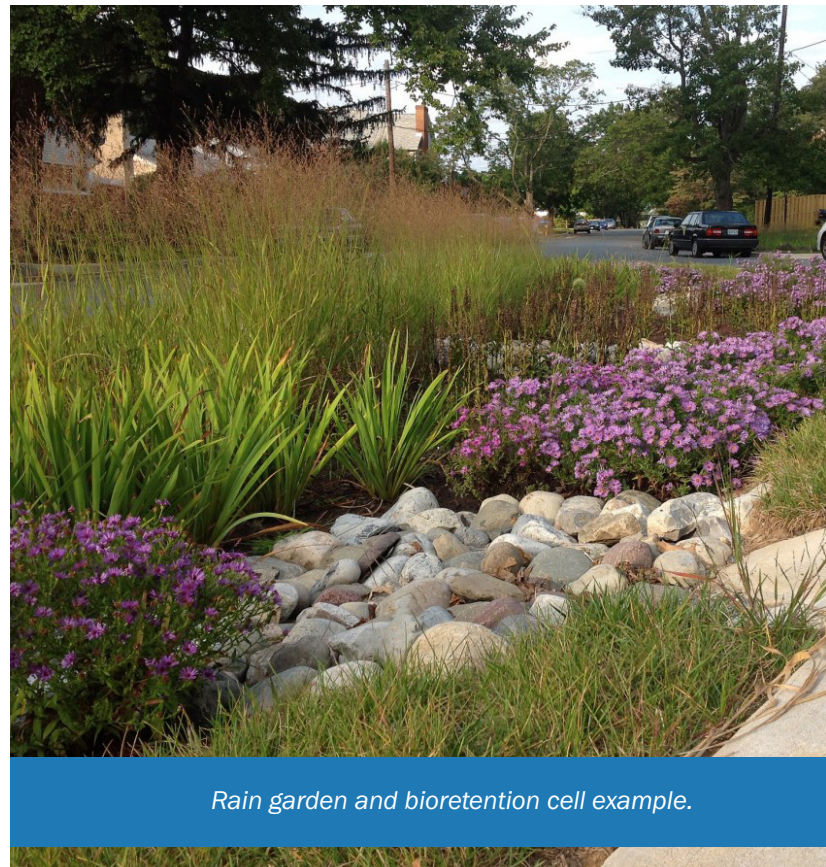


Hydrant, Royal Oak Township

We have started a new stormwater improvement project in Pontiac named Norton Street Innovation. This project will improve water quality and create a gathering space for the community to enjoy. The \$1.3 million project is being funded with 100% loan forgiveness by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy's Clean Water State Revolving Fund and the American Rescue Plan.

The goals for this project are to utilize bioretention cells to beautify the space and temporarily capture stormwater runoff before it enters the Augusta Drain, plant native trees and plants to absorb and filter stormwater, and reduce pollutants from entering the Clinton River.

The Augusta Drain property is 5 acres of open land along Norton Street from North Johnson Street to Sanderson Avenue. Pre-construction has started, and crews have completed soil infiltration and boring tests to better understand the soil composition. Testing is done to verify how quickly the soil can absorb water. Crews are expected to break ground on construction this fall. To stay up to date on project progress, visit oakgov.com/nortonstreet.



Rain garden and bioretention cell example.

Update: Job Shadow Success



It has been one year since our office launched our first ever job shadow program. The program has one important goal: to educate the public about the careers available in the water industry. We are thrilled to report that we have met and surpassed this goal.

In our first year we hosted 12 shadows for 20 people. 39% of the shadows have come from employee referrals, 33% from career fairs or out-reach events, 22% from organic Google traffic and the remaining 6% came from Facebook. Participants have shadowed individually or part of a group. Each day is customized to fit the interests of the individual. Because the water industry has such a wide range of careers, we have something for everyone. From sustainability to water operations to construction and engineering, we have a career for every interest.

We are also thrilled to share that three participants have subsequently obtained full-time employment with our organization, and all have learned about the importance of a career in water. Each shadow is considered successful because after spending the day

with our water professionals, the participant will never interact with water the same way as before. This is true because each participant experiences firsthand how much time and resources are committed to keeping our water clean and moving through the system.

Here's what two participants said about the program:

"It was a pleasure being able to experience something like this, and the opportunity to gain experience about something so important yet unknown. It was an experience I'll never forget." -*Juan*

"It was helpful to see everything up close, and I'm interested in working in the industry. I think the job shadow program that you have is really great and it gives me a lot to think about." -*Jennifer*

Visit oakgov.com/wrcjobshadow to request a job shadow. The programs we offer include environment and sustainability, water operations, drain and sewer operations, facility operations and construction projects and engineering.



Chief Engineer Joel Brown giving a tour of the Oakland-Macomb Interceptor Drain to a program participant.