



NEWS RELEASE

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Pritzker Administration Awards \$682,467 in Rebuild Illinois Capital Funding to the City of Berwyn to Address Stormwater Runoff

Illinois EPA Green Infrastructure Grant Opportunity program to fund implementation project

SPRINGFIELD — Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Director John Kim announced the City of Berwyn will receive almost \$682,500 in Green Infrastructure Grant Opportunity (GIGO) funding to implement the Berwyn Green Alleys project to install three 'green alleys' within the northern part of the City of Berwyn. A green alley is created when a portion of the existing concrete in the alley is removed and replaced with a gravel subbase with a layer of permeable pavers on top.

The project will allow rainfall and snowmelt to drain between the permeable pavers down into the gravel subbase and the soil below. The increased water infiltration will keep rainwater close to where it falls and will reduce the amount of stormwater runoff. The Green Alley Program was developed through a city-wide alley inventory that identified alleys with poor pavement conditions, have a history of holding water, and have suitable soil for green infrastructure application.

"Protecting Illinois communities and businesses from persistent flooding and water damage is a top priority for my administration which is why the Rebuild Illinois capital plan has funding specifically dedicated to green infrastructure initiatives," **said Governor JB Pritzker**. "Through the Berwyn Green Alleys project, the residents of Berwyn will have increased protection against excess stormwater and peace of mind that their homes and families are safe."

The three alleys for this project were chosen as high-priority areas by the City. The volume of total stormwater runoff estimated to be captured in these three green alleys is calculated to be almost 93,000 gallons per year. The City of Berwyn has already installed 15 green alleys and has plans to implement another 16. The City applied for a GIGO grant from Illinois EPA with a total project budget of \$909,956, with Illinois EPA providing \$682,467 in grant funds and the City providing \$227,489 in match.

"This project is part of the larger Berwyn Green Alley Program, which promotes the use of green infrastructure practices within public alleyways to reduce community flood damage and the amount of stormwater runoff," **said Director Kim**. "The project has been designed to reduce the amount of flood damage to local households and reduce the amount of stormwater delivered into the combined sewer system. This helps protect the local homes and the water quality of the downstream creeks and rivers."

Berwyn GIGO Grant/2

“The City of Berwyn is an urban, dense community with an aged combined sewer system unable to handle today’s demands and storm trends. For several years, residents have experienced sewer backups into homes and businesses during heavy storm events, causing unsafe conditions and costly repairs. To alleviate this issue, the City adopted a Stormwater Management Plan to address flooding and combined sewer overflows, which included the Green Alley program,” **said Nicole L. Campbell, Senior Engineer.** “The reduction of combined sewer overflows ultimately provides for the health and welfare to those in the City.”

The GIGO Grant Program is a competitive financial assistance grant program established to help protect Illinois’ water resources. The GIGO Program is funded through the Rebuild Illinois Capital Plan. The funds are used to implement green infrastructure best management practices to control stormwater runoff. Stormwater runoff causes flooding and carries pollutants into waterways such as rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands, and even groundwater.

For additional information on Illinois’ Green Infrastructure Grant Opportunities Grant Program, please visit <https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/water-quality/surface-water/Pages/green-infrastructure.aspx>.

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