

Suffolk spending \$27M for new sewer connections in Town of Islip

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Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone has revealed plans for \$27 million that will be allocated for sewers. Credit: Newsday / J. Conrad Williams Jr.

By Deborah S. Morris deborah.morris@newsday.com [dsvmorris](https://www.newsday.com/dsvmorris) Updated July 19, 2023

An additional \$27 million will fund multimillion-dollar projects to connect more than 1,600 parcels to sewers in communities across the Town of Islip, according to Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone.

The money comes from Suffolk's Water Infrastructure Fund, which was created as part of the county's 2022 Operating Budget with funding from the federal American Rescue Plan Act, Bellone said Tuesday at a news conference on the shores of the Connetquot River in Oakdale.

Of the latest funding, \$20 million will go toward construction of Phase 1a and design of Phase 1b of the Oakdale/ Connetquot River Sewer Project. The Main Street business district in Holbrook will get \$5 million to help fund construction of its own long-awaited sewer project. Finally, \$2 million will go toward completing design of a project to connect 518 parcels in West Islip to the Southwest Sewer District, Bellone said.

"Protecting water quality is a defining issue for Suffolk County and our region," said Bellone, who was joined by a number of other elected officials, as well as business, environmental and community leaders.

By connecting more parcels to sewers, he said, it will help reverse decades of decline in water quality—a result of

Rep. Andrew Garbarino (R-Bayport) had previously secured \$3 million for the Holbrook project, Bellone said.

In the fall, a \$35 million FEMA grant and a \$5 million EPA grant are both expected to be awarded to the county for use to begin Phase 1a of the Oakdale project, county officials said.

Legis. Anthony Piccirillo (R-Holbrook), said getting more sewers in Oakdale and Holbrook had been a campaign promise and he was glad to see it through.

“These two projects are a culmination of working across party lines with the county executive's office to make sure a bipartisan issue like clean water and quality of life is taken care of,” he said.

Republican state Sen. Alexis Weik, who represents Oakdale, Holbrook and West Islip, said while not everyone in the community is in agreement with the projects, she considers them solutions to quality-of-life concerns.

“I’m so glad to see we are putting our money where our mouth is and taking action,” she said.

An additional benefit of sewers is reducing nitrogen discharge into the Great South Bay by thousands of pounds per year, according to county officials.

The Wastewater Infrastructure Fund includes \$125 million in funding and is also being used to advance projects in Deer Park, Mastic, Saint James, Smithtown and Wyandanch, county officials said.

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