

SWIM Alert: City Council Hearing on Dec. 13th

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**Please join the SWIM Coalition and the NYC Council's Environmental Protection Committee at a City Council public hearing on wastewater infrastructure!**

**Where: City Council Chambers, City Hall (4/5/6 & R/W trains to City Hall)**  
**When: Wednesday, December 13, 10am**  
**Who: Open to the public to testify and observe**  
**Why: Voice your support for clean, fishable, swimmable waterways**

On Wednesday, December 13, at 10am, the NYC City Council Committee for Environmental Protection is holding a public hearing to review New York City's wastewater issues - including combined sewer systems, long term control plans, and stormwater infrastructure planning and policies.

***Please join us at this important event that is open to the public - whether you plan to testify or simply observe the proceedings!***

For years, as the City has developed - and then finalized - Long Term Control Plans (LTCPs) for some of the City's combined sewer outfall (CSO) areas, SWIM Coalition has called for City Council oversight of this vital process. With seven LTCPs recently approved by the State (with no public participation in that decision making process), several more in final stages of development, the City's plans to bleach open sewers in three waterways, and news about a continued lack of progress toward mandated green infrastructure stormwater control goals, the time is now to ask the City Council to reshape and refocus wastewater management in NYC.

**The opportunity to let the City Council hear our concerns has arrived. On [Wednesday, December 13th, at 10am](#), clean water, community, and open space advocates can come to City Hall to put their concerns on the record in front of City Council members, city agencies, and the media.**

We encourage all SWIM Coalition members to **attend** the hearing, **spread** the word about the hearing ([Share the Facebook Event!](#)), **call** your local Council Member and ask them to go to the hearing, or **all of the above!**

Whether you live in one of the LTCP **waterways** (such as the Bronx River or Coney Island Creek), you want to see **equitable** modernization of city stormwater rates, you want to curb the flow into the harbor of plastic and garbage **pollution**, or want to push for expanded, strategic **green infrastructure** investments, this hearing is your chance to go on public record with the changes you want to see in your watershed.

[Click here](#) for the SWIM Coalition fact sheets on the LTCPs which have been sent to the State for approval (some have been approved!), read the recently-released [SWIM principles for Long Term Control Planning](#), and check out the key talking points (below), to build your testimony for the hearing or to inform your community about this vital clean water issue facing all of New York City.

### **Four ways you can help prepare for the December 13th hearing:**

Help us spread the word about the hearing so we can pack the hearing room with concerned citizens, activists, and experts that care about clean water!

1. Join the SWIM Coalition and draft up testimony about what clean water means for your waterway! Let the City Council know that the plans DEP has proposed for our waterways do not go far enough, fast enough, and that the public expects them to do better. **The room holds 100-150 people, let's fill that room full of concerned citizens!! Let us know you're coming [here](#).**

2. Before the hearing, share SWIM Coalition's [event page on Facebook](#) to your social media networks, and connect with us at [@SWIMCoalition](#) for updates as the hearing draws closer.

3. [Click here to send an email](#) to the **City Council, the DEP Commissioner, and the Mayor letting them know you want the City** to get raw sewage out of our NYC Waterways - we want to see the City capture sewage, not just bleach our sewers!!

4. Send an email to your own networks with these talking points and calls to action:

As noted in recent SWIM Coalition [blog posts](#) the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has quietly, and without a public hearing, approved a series of **deeply flawed** Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Long Term Control Plans (LTCP) proposed by NYC DEP to address the more than 20 billion gallons of sewage

that flows into City waterways each year. Below is a quick synopsis of some of the key issues in each of the plans and [here is set of SWIM Coalition fact sheets](#) on the plans.

**The City's CSO LTCPs will not make our waterways safe for recreational activities.** In each waterbody, they will leave hundreds of millions (for some waterways, over a billion gallons) of sewage overflows annually. In many places, overflows will occur dozens of times per year. **In a nutshell, here is how we want the City DEP to improve the LTCPs:**

***Capture, don't chlorinate or divert CSOs.*** The City proposed - and the state approved - several plans to dump chlorine into sewers - to bleach our sewers - before it enters Alley Creek, Flushing Creek and the Hutchinson River. This is an unproven technology that will not make our waterways safe for recreation and will add a new toxic chemical to vulnerable habitats. In some other places, like the Bronx River, the plan is simply to divert some of the overflows to the East River - dilution and redistribution are not solutions to pollution..

***More green infrastructure and incentives for private properties.*** The City hasn't met its first major milestone under a State-mandated Green Infrastructure Plan; right now, there is no coherent strategy to make up for lost ground, let alone meet the next milestone in 2020. We want to see a more robust green infrastructure plan, with more adaptable designs for public property and real incentives for private property owners - implemented today, not tomorrow or a decade from now

***Improve transparency and take public input seriously.*** DEP and DEC have led a secretive process, and much of the public is not being informed about development of the LTCPs, or given real opportunities to weigh in on the plans before they are approved. Even the most basic information about risks to water users – when sewage overflows are occurring – is not being communicated effectively.

Join SWIM Coalition in advocating for NYC waterways, and raise your own concerns about your waterway!