

TOP STORIES

# \$600M PLEA ON SEWERS

- Sandy aid sought for pipe to empty into Atlantic
- Treated sewage from Nassau would be removed

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Local and federal officials are pushing for \$600 million in Sandy aid to fund a pipe from the Bay Park Sewage Treatment Plant that would transport treated sewage from the East Rockaway facility and another in Long Beach into the Atlantic Ocean.

The plan also calls for Long Beach to convert its treatment plant into a pumping station so that sewage could be moved from there to Bay Park for treatment and then distributed with other effluent 2 to 3 miles offshore through an outfall pipe. The switch would free up about 5 acres of waterfront property on the barrier island for redevelopment.

The estimated cost for the Long Beach conversion is \$35 million and for the outfall pipe system \$690 million, according to Nassau County documents.

Nassau County Executive Edward Mangano is meeting in Washington today with Sen. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) and Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator W. Craig Fugate to discuss Bay Park funding.

"We all remember the sewage crisis we had in the wake of Sandy and we need to avoid that again at all costs," Mangano said in a statement. "This project may be the single most important thing we can do to protect homeowners and the environment. It is a prime candidate for the money Senator Schumer fought so hard for in the relief bill."

When superstorm Sandy hit in October 2012, a 9-foot wall of

water washed over the Bay Park plant, knocking out power. More than 100 million gallons of raw sewage was dumped into waterways, and as the county worked to repair damages, another 2.2 billion gallons of partially treated sewage was released into Reynolds Channel, the waterway north of Long Beach, where effluent is regularly piped.

Scientific research done after the storm found elevated levels of heavy metals — indicators of wastewater — in sediment in the bays near the treatment plant and also offshore.

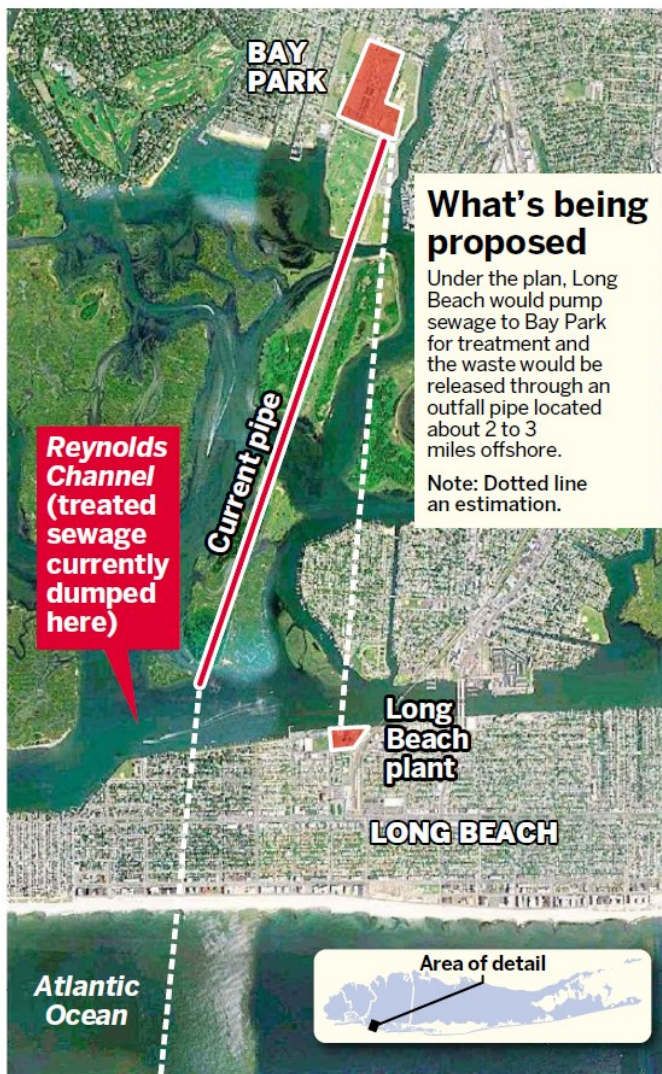
Schumer yesterday also sent letters to the federal Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Housing and Urban Development requesting funding for the outfall project at Bay Park, which serves about 500,000 residents in Nassau County.

"We watched in horror while an environmental disaster unfolded in the wake of Sandy, with sewage from the crippled Bay Park plant flowing back into homes and local waterways," Schumer said. "This outflow pipe . . . would prevent another environmental disaster."

The request is in addition to the \$730 million Nassau County has won to harden, upgrade and restore Bay Park, on which Newsday reported this past weekend.

Nassau County and Long Beach have met several times about the project. "This will truly be a game changer for the South Shore," Long Beach City Council president Scott J. Mandel said in a statement.

Schumer's office said the outfall pipe would not be covered under FEMA Sandy aid money



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because it did not exist before the storm, but funding through HUD community development block grants and an EPA revolving loan fund for wastewater projects could apply.

If funding is approved, the permitting and environmental-review process is expected to be lengthy, Nassau County Public

Works spokesman Michael Martino said.

Environmentalists for about five years have pushed for an outfall pipe, and 85 percent of nitrogen in the western bays has been traced back to Bay Park, Citizens Campaign for the Environment executive director Adrienne Esposito said.