



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

## Senator Kennedy, Assemblymember Wallace Join Town of Cheektowaga to Announce Millions in State Funding for Aging Sewer Infrastructure Contributing to Scajaquada Creek Pollution

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY December 14, 2017

| ISSUE: **SEWER OVERFLOWS, SEWERS, CLEAN WATER, WATER QUALITY**

*Town of Cheektowaga Awarded \$5 Million in NYS Water Quality Improvement Program Grants*

*State Money Will Be Used to Address Combined Sewer Overflows and Water Infrastructure Exacerbating Scajaquada Creek Pollution*

CHEEKTOWAGA, N.Y. – Senator Tim Kennedy (D-Buffalo) and Assemblymember Monica Wallace (D-Lancaster) joined Town of Cheektowaga Supervisor Diane Benczkowski and leadership from Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper Thursday to announce \$5 million in state funding for the town, which will be used to address combined sewer overflows and the correction of inflow and infiltration (I&I). The funding will allow the town to continue to line sanitary sewer mainline pipes and repair or replace damaged or defective pipes, ultimately reducing the amount of untreated wastewater discharged into Scajaquada Creek.

“Modernizing and improving Cheektowaga’s aging sewer treatment system is no small feat, with estimates of the total cost ranging over \$50 million. As a state, we have an obligation to assist municipalities with these heavy financial burdens,” said **Senator Tim Kennedy**. “For years, we’ve been working alongside the Town and other municipalities to ensure they have a plan in place to secure the resources they need, and move forward in executing

remediation efforts. We're proud to deliver this necessary funding to Cheektowaga as they continue to address this issue."

"The Town of Cheektowaga has been working diligently to upgrade its aging infrastructure," said **Assemblymember Monica Wallace**. "This state investment will help Cheektowaga remediate and repair aging sewer lines and reduce pollution. It is crucial that municipal and state officials work together to ensure our water supply remains clean and safe. I was happy to work with town officials and my state colleagues to support Cheektowaga's grant application for REDC finding."

"Cheektowaga takes our responsibility to reduce sanitary sewer overflows into Scajaquada Creek very serious," said **Cheektowaga Supervisor Diane Benczkowski**. "The Town has tackled this problem head-on with our aggressive plan to reline or rehabilitate the aging sanitary sewer system, which has already produced real results. We cannot do this alone though as our taxpayers are already pushed to the limits. We cannot afford to place this additional financial burden on them, which is why state funding is extremely important to complete this project. Our sanitary sewer rehab project has been a team effort all along and this grant proves once again the importance of collaborative governance. I thank Governor Cuomo, Senator Kennedy and Assemblymember Wallace for your help in securing this funding for our Town and our taxpayers, and for your continued efforts in cleaning up our waterways."

"Every strategic investment in protecting and cleaning up our water resources is an investment in our economy and quality of life," said **Jill Jedlicka, Executive Director of Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper**. "The significant commitment to water quality improvements in this year's REDC awards will not only benefit the Towns of Cheektowaga, Lancaster and Village of Depew, but the health of the entire Scajaquada Creek watershed and ultimately the Niagara River. These kinds of investments have become a priority because of the shared vision and strong voices generated from within this community. The collaboration of diverse

partners is a model that has proven successful in the past, and will continue to guide us into the future.”

The 2017-2018 state budget included \$2.5 billion as part of the Clean Water Infrastructure Act, designed to help municipalities across the state upgrade their drinking and waste water treatment infrastructure. Of that, \$1 billion was dedicated to the 2017 Water Infrastructure Improvement Act, and \$245 million for Water Quality Improvement Projects. State leaders have been working directly with both the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Town of Cheektowaga for years to find a solution to the heavy financial burden faced by the town as it seeks to modernize their sewer system.