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2017 Environmental Candidate Questionnaire for Westchester Candidates

Thank you for taking the time to fill out the New York League of Conservation Voters Questionnaire.

The New York League of Conservation Voters is the only non-partisan statewide environmental organization in New York that fights for clean water, clean air, renewable energy and open space through political action. This questionnaire is designed to elicit your views regarding what environmental, public health, clean energy and transit and environmental justice groups consider to be the most important issues of the day. Responses may inform NYLCV's educational and legislative programs and actions NYLCV takes in the election cycle.

Responses should be considered public. Although NYLCV may choose not to publicize responses to every question, verbatim responses may be reproduced and distributed publicly. If so, your responses may be shortened, if necessary, but will not be edited in substantive ways. If you choose to refer us to a position paper or website, please indicate exactly what text you would like us to cite. For candidates choosing not to respond to the questionnaire, NYLCV will note as much in its public materials.

NYLCV and its partners in the environmental policy arena believe that New York's voters are determined to make the environment a voting issue this year. Candidate positions on issues such as protecting public health, building a clean energy future, and mitigating climate change will help voters decide how to cast their ballots this election cycle. This questionnaire is one of the primary ways the public will get this information.

After receipt of your completed questionnaire, you will be invited to participate in a formal interview with our Chapter Board. The interview will provide you with an opportunity to present your credentials, elaborate on your questionnaire responses, and respond to questions. Here are a few more guidelines:

- ☒ Questionnaires are due **Friday, June 2**
- ☒ The completed questionnaire is mandatory for endorsement consideration and must be submitted via e-mail as a Microsoft Word file to: politics@nylcv.org
- ☒ To ensure your responses address the issues NYLCV and its partners are most concerned about, please review [NYLCV's 2016-17 Westchester Policy Agenda](#)
- ☒ Questions or extension requests may be directed to Joshua Klainberg (jklainberg@nylcv.org)

CAMPAIGN CONTACT INFORMATION

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PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Please share your accomplishments or experiences that indicate your commitment to advancing a pro-environment agenda. These experiences may be professional or personal.

Westchester County has a long history of environmental leadership. It is a legacy I am proudly advancing as County Executive. "Being green" starts in your own backyard, and my involvement in environmental issues reaches back to the days prior to my pursuit of elected office. My initial public service was in my town's environmental conservation organization, the Mount Pleasant Conservation Advisory Council in 1986. I was also appointed by Governor George Pataki to serve as a member of the Hudson River Valley Greenway Conservancy from 2006 until I took office as County Executive in 2010. In 2012, I was honored by Historic Hudson Valley with the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Founder's Award for my "support of the history, culture, and environment of Westchester County."



As County Executive I made a conscious and proactive decision to surround myself with environmentally enlightened deputies. In my first official act as County Executive I appointed Kevin J. Plunkett, Esq. as Deputy County Executive to serve as my chief policy advisor and chief operating officer of the County. As a practicing land use attorney in New York State for more than 30 years, Mr. Plunkett is an acknowledged environmental advocate who served as Chairman of the Hudson River Greenway Conservancy from 2000 to January 2010; as a member of the Taconic State Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation Commission, from June 2006 to January 2010; as a board member of the New York State Thruway Authority/Canal Corporation, from December June 2006 to January 2010; as a board member of the Westchester Chapter of the New York League of Conservation Voters, from 1998 to January 2010; and as an advisory board member for Teatown Lake Reservation, from 2004 to 2009. Mr. Plunkett remains an invaluable partner in promoting an environmental and sustainable viewpoint, including the preservation of open space, maintenance of infrastructure, and the advancement of sustainable development.

In addition to Mr. Plunkett, I am proud to have appointed Timothy S. Carey to be the Energy Conservation and Sustainability Director for the Westchester County Office of Energy Conservation. Mr. Carey has a lifetime of experience in environmental and energy management. While President and CEO of the Battery Park City Authority, Mr. Carey oversaw the construction of the nation's first sustainable, Gold LEED certified residential high-rise building. Mr. Carey also served as Chairman of the New York Power Authority, where he established NYPA's Office of Sustainability and promoted the largest use of biofuels at that time for electric generation at the 800MW Politti Power Plant in Queens. As a former Westchester County Legislator, he was instrumental in advocating for the development of Westchester's garbage-to-energy program, which continues to provide the county with a responsible way to dispose of waste. The use of state of the art scrubbers at use at the Charles Point facility in Peekskill ensures that the emissions generated there have a minimal impact on air quality.

Over the last seven-plus years, we have implemented policies and initiated programs that encourage sustainable development, invest in open space and conservation, and promote a spirit of stewardship over our county's natural environment through partnership and volunteerism.

A few highlights include:

- **The creation in 2015 of the Westchester County Office of Energy Conservation:** This office is responsible for implementing and administering County sustainability, utility management and energy policies as it relates to green purchasing, energy conservation, solid waste recycling, green buildings, resource and water conservation, greenhouse gas reduction and leveraging of renewable power resources. The Director of Sustainability and Energy Conservation is a cabinet level position and reports to me. The Director is also a member of the County's Capital Projects Committee and leads an internal Energy Committee made up of key staff in several County departments.



- **Joining Sustainable Westchester:** The County joined Sustainable Westchester in May, with 41 other municipalities in the county who are committed to sharing ideas and resources to promote environmental stewardship and energy efficiency projects among municipal partners, residents and businesses. One key initiative that we hope to promote in the future is a countywide Solarize program, which with tremendous incentives and expertise offered through Solarize, along with Westchester's sales tax exemptions, and state and federal tax credits, have already made solar panels a real and affordable option for homeowners here. In fact, since 2010 the number of residential solar installations each year has increased 10-fold—from about 100 installations in 2010 to approximately 1,200 installations last year. We want to continue to see those numbers rise. In addition to the Solarize program, we look forward to working collaboratively with Sustainable Westchester to explore the expansion of Community Choice Aggregation, discuss the possibility of an Electric Vehicle Purchasing Consortium and other programs to enhance the cleanliness of the air, water and natural beauty of our communities.
- **Sharp decline in energy consumption across all County facilities:** Westchester County's electric bill from 2014 and 2016 is down by \$8,597,379. That is clearly a win for County taxpayers. The demand for electricity is down by 22,884 kW and energy consumption has been slashed by 10,011,752 kW over that same period. What does that mean for the environment? According to the EPA, those savings are equal to 16,327 barrels of oil, energy for 745 homes for 1 year, or the elimination of 1,489 cars for one year.
- **Tremendous success in recycling and Solid Waste Management:** Westchester County consistently performs at or near the top in all waste management performance indicators. Since 2010, the amount of County residential solid waste has decreased from 421,363 tons in 2009 to 375,009 tons in 2016, a reduction of 11% and a savings for taxpayers of almost \$4.2 million in transportation and disposal costs in 2016. Additionally, over 90% of the County's waste stream is processed using state-of-the-art waste-to-energy technology. Refuse collected from Westchester municipalities and commercial customers is delivered to the Charles Point Resource Recovery Facility, where it is transferred to utility-type boilers that recover thermal energy in the form of high-pressure steam. The steam-powered turbines generate 63,000 kilowatts of electricity an hour — enough to power 67,000 homes. Additional steam not required for electricity generation is marketed to a nearby commercial customer, White Plain's Linen, for use as a clean, reliable, and renewable energy source.

Since our \$2 million project expanding the amount and type of plastic materials accepted by the County's Materials Recovery Facility in Yonkers in 2012 to include plastics #3 through #7, our recycling average has been 52% over the past 8 years. Westchester's curbside recycling collection rate is 29% higher than New York City's.

As County Executive, I spearheaded the construction and opening of the Household-



Material Recovery Facility (H-MRF) in Valhalla. The H-MRF provides all of Westchester's residents with a conveniently located site to dispose of those household items that were once nearly impossible to get rid of – including household chemicals, pesticides, fertilizer, electronic waste, tires, Freon-containing air conditioners and refrigerators, mercury-containing thermostats, prescription and over-the-counter medications, and pretty much any other common household item you can think of. The H-MRF also offers confidential document shredding. Some of the items collected at the H-MRF like electronic waste, tires, appliances and shredded paper, are sold to recycling companies to generate new revenue for the County, while those materials that cannot be recycled are disposed of in an environmentally safe manner, thus removing thousands of pounds of harmful materials from our residents' homes. Since opening in 2012, the Household-Material Recovery Facility or H-MRF located on the County's Grasslands Campus in Valhalla has been visited by over 25,000 Westchester residents who have dropped off almost 2 million lbs. (1,977,000 lbs.) of household wastes. This includes over 26,000 lbs. of prescription and over-the-counter medications.

- **PACE Financing through EnergizeNY:** Since 2013, Westchester has authorized the use of \$4 million of the County's Qualified Energy Conservation Bond (QECB) to be allocated to the Energy Improvement Corporation, a local development corporation that assists commercial properties in obtaining low cost financing of energy efficiency improvements in older dwellings and buildings. Businesses, non-profits and affordable housing facilities throughout the county have taken advantage of the program to finance energy efficiency investments. We plan on submitting legislation to the Board of Legislators that will give the County the authority to access \$4 million of addition funds to continue this important program.
- **Linked disconnected portions of the Bronx River Pathway and the North and South County Trailways:** The North and South County Trailways are truly gems within our park system, providing recreation to thousands each year. Connecting them will now provide more than 36 miles of uninterrupted pathways for walkers, joggers and bikers. After more than 30 years, with cooperation at all levels of government and across many administrations, two great trailways will be even better as they are joined together.

Extension of the Bronx River Pathway from Crane Road in Scarsdale to Greenacres Avenue in Hartsdale: The 1.5-mile connection is one of the remaining projects to complete the path. When completed next year, this nearly \$7 million capital project will create an 11-mile stretch of uninterrupted pathway from Kensico Dam to Bronxville.

- **Growth of the Westchester Business Challenge:** Westchester Green Business



(WGB) identifies and works with business leaders who aspire to be a more sustainable organization and make a commitment to become a certified “Westchester Green Business” and are provided with a comprehensive toolkit to measurably decrease their company’s environmental impact. This program is a partnership between Westchester County and the Business Council of Westchester and is underwritten by platinum sponsors Con Edison, NYSEERDA and the Westchester Community Foundation. These organizations work closely with WGB staff to learn exactly where resources are wasted, identify opportunities to increase efficiency and save money, and implement the necessary changes to gain certification. The WGB program has been recognized by NYSEERDA as a replicable model and is now available to all NYS businesses. There are currently 83 active, dues paying member organizations in Westchester, 23 of which have achieved green business certification. The remaining companies are all at various stages of completing the requirements to achieve certification. Our goal, and a deliverable to NYSEERDA as part of our \$540,000 in funding through the Cleaner, Greener Communities initiative (CGC), is to be up to 140 members by this time next year.

- **Investing more than ever in infrastructure:** In the past five years we completed nearly \$1 billion in capital projects including parkways, roads and bridges; sewers, wastewater, recycling, refuse and treatment facilities; buildings, land and related infrastructure; parks, trails and recreational uses; transportation and the airport.

My 2017 capital budget totals \$303 million, the largest ever. A third of that budget is dedicated to maintaining and enhancing our parks system. Other highlights include:

- \$8.2 million for infrastructure improvements in our labs, including for alternative energy systems
- Environmental projects to improve sewers and water have a proposed cost of \$41 million for 14 projects, which include:
 - \$23.2 million for improvements to the Yonkers Joint Waste Water Treatment Plant Resource Recovery Facility
 - \$6.1 million for pumping stations county wide
 - \$5.6 million for the Mamaroneck Water Resource Recovery Facility
 - \$4 million for the Port Chester Waste Water Treatment Plant Resource Recovery Facility
- **The Westchester County Airport is slated for \$11 million in improvements, including an upgrade of the storm water management program.**



The County Airport's storm-water management upgrade, which expands the capacity of both storm-water discharge basins, has been fully designed and construction is anticipated for the third quarter of 2017. Additionally, the Airport has instituted a groundwater monitoring program, which collects and analyzes groundwater samples from wells located on the property. We continue to replace the oil-based boilers on site with a link to natural gas.

The Airport's environmental work was recognized in 2016 when we received the Jay Hollingsworth Speas Airport Award: "For building positive community relationships through collaborative efforts and neighborhood education by all airport organizations focused on improved environmental performance and reduced noise impact." The award is sponsored jointly by the American Institute of Aeronautics (AIAA), the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE) and the Airports Consultants Council (ACC).

- **Protecting our children from toxic toys and apparel:** I am proud to have worked with the NYLCV and our Board of Legislators to pass a law banning the sale of children's toys and apparel that contain lead and other pernicious chemicals. With litigation now concluded in another jurisdiction, we are moving ahead with the promulgation of rules, as well as a robust educational outreach to vendors, through the county's Consumer Protection Department.
- **Finalizing participation in the NYLCVEF Electric Vehicle Pledge:** Westchester County is close to joining the New York League of Conservation Voters Education Fund, Sustainable Westchester and other municipal leaders in Westchester County by pledging to integrate Zero Emissions Vehicles (ZEVs) into our municipal fleet.
- **Actively Seeking NYSERDA's "Clean Energy Communities" Designation:** We are in the final stages of seeking to become the fourth county in the state to be designated as a Clean Energy Community. In the coming weeks, I am submitting legislation to the Board of Legislators seeking an Act requiring that the County undergo an annual benchmarking of energy use information for each building that is County owned. With that requirement fulfilled, Westchester is confident that the remaining three "High Impact Action Items" will be met, and in some cases, superseded.
- **Protecting the Hudson River:** I was one of the first elected officials to publicly oppose the Coast Guard's misguided plan to allow anchored oil barges in the Hudson River.
- **Adhering to State and Federal Environmental Laws:** When the Governor and Entergy announced plans to close Indian Point by 2021, I became concerned about the absence of a replacement plan for the clean energy the plant now produces — about 25% of Westchester and New York City's electricity. I was also distressed to learn no Environmental Impact Statement, as prescribed by law, was undertaken much less completed before this decision was made.



I therefore made the decision to file suit in my capacity as County Executive and as an individual in an effort to require the State of New York to undergo a complete SEQRA review prior to the closure of the Buchanan facility. My lawsuit has nothing to do with the debate over nuclear energy; it has to do with safety and the rule of law. The issue isn't whether Indian Point stays open; it's that any plan to close the plant must comply with hardfought environmental laws. If our environmental laws are to mean anything, they must apply to a nuclear power plant that affects the lives and livelihoods of nine million New Yorkers. By moving forward on the closure without the required environmental reviews, the state puts the public at risk by failing to examine:

- whether replacing zero-emission nuclear power with fossil fuels will contribute to climate change;
- whether the decommissioning of the plant will require a taxpayer bailout since current funds are estimated to be more than \$1 billion short of what will be needed;
- whether the public will be exposed to health and safety dangers from leaving spent, radioactive fuel rods on site for a period estimated to range from 60 years to forever;
- whether sufficient energy sources will be available to replace the loss of 2,000 megawatts of electricity so that rolling blackouts can be avoided;
- whether the anticipated increases in electric bills will cause economic hardships for individuals, families, and businesses, particularly among minorities, low-income residents, seniors and others on fixed incomes, and
- whether the loss of thousands of jobs and a billion dollars of economic activity will devastate local communities and the county at large. (Payment in Lieu of Taxes losses alone are estimated at \$72 million for Westchester County, the Town of Cortlandt, the Village of Buchanan and the 2,500-student Hendrick Hudson School District).

We must not rush to close the plant without knowing the environmental, social and economic impacts that closure will have, not only for Westchester but for the entire region. Only then can we properly prepare to meet the challenges the closure may present. The site will house spent nuclear fuel rods for the next 60 years, for example, as it undergoes the decommissioning process. It concerns me that the law was completely ignored and that the alternatives to producing clean energy are not feasible by 2021. The only energy generation options available to replace what will be lost at Indian Point will undoubtedly add GHG to the atmosphere.



In order to ensure the County implements environmentally sustainable goals, as County Executive, I continue to charge every County department to:

- Forge partnerships with citizens and organizations dedicated to the goal of a greener Westchester;
- Promote and maintain mass transit for moving more people and encouraging smart development;
- Utilize energy conservation technologies, saving green by going green;
- Invest in infrastructure that protects and preserves our environment while increasing efficiency;
- Protect, preserve and expand Westchester's open spaces;
- Encourage environmental volunteerism;
- Partner with local business to encourage green practices;
- Recognize outstanding environmental leadership.

As detailed herein, as County Executive I proudly promote our environment with specific actions that include legislative initiatives. In addition, I am proud to continue legislative initiatives that predated my role as County Executive, and to support bipartisan legislation with the Board of Legislators. I continue to authorize millions of dollars in capital spending to preserve and protect our vital infrastructure, from our wastewater treatment plants to our sewer systems, which affect all of our residents. In addition we continue to address the extremely difficult issues of flooding by not only committing millions of dollars, but by also encouraging volunteerism. Finally, all of these efforts are being approached with a proper planning perspective, with an eye towards the environment, sustainability and future technologies so that we may leave Westchester in a better, more sustainable, place than when we got here.

ISSUES



Please indicate your level of commitment to, and if applicable your recent personal and professional activity with respect to, the following issues:

(To ensure your responses address the issues NYLCV and its partners are most concerned about, please review [NYLCV's 2016-17 Westchester Policy Agenda](#))

2. Sustainable Development: Advancing modernized zoning to encourage mixed land use and compact development

Proper planning is essential to institute comprehensive policies to deal with the significant environmental issues our communities all face.

Accordingly, I have continued to advocate Westchester 2025, a web based tool developed by Westchester County for municipalities to use in their comprehensive planning. We recently assisted Rye Brook, New Castle and North Castle, and this year will be providing special project assistance for Tarrytown and Buchanan.

I am proud to support and encourage Westchester 2025, and my introduction to this valuable program on the County website can be found at: <http://westchester2025.westchestergov.com/>

The County also prepared information for municipal officials and others on flooding and facilitated the development of a countywide hazard mitigation plan, adopted by FEMA in 2016, and has submitted a grant application to prepare a countywide resiliency plan, both of which will identify strategies to reduce risk and make Westchester more resilient to natural hazards like coastal and inland flooding. Information on these efforts can be found at www.westchestergov.com/flooding and www.westchestergov.com/hazardmitigation.

3. Invasive Species: Educating the public on this problem and implementing better management practices

All County departments continue to comply with Executive Order 1-2001, which encourages sustainable landscapes by promoting planting of native plants. The County Parks Department promotes invasive species monitoring and removal through projects at many of our parks and in collaboration with the Lower Hudson Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM).

Specific projects have included partnering with the Bronx River Parkway Reservation Conservancy in order to document the newly occurring *Corydalis incisa* on the Reservation, as well to coordinate with intensive invasive vine removal. Efforts also include Mile-a-minute control through various County parks using weevils, and Mugwort control on the Croton Point



landfill.

Westchester Community College's Native Plant Center continues to educate people about the environmental necessity, economic value, and natural beauty of maintaining native plants in Westchester and the region.

4. Cleaner Air: Speeding up conversions and retrofits of home heating oil No. 6 and No. 4 to more efficient heating systems

Understanding the harmful effects that No. 6 and No. 4 home heating oils have on our air quality and by extension our public health, I worked in a bipartisan manner to enact a law to ban the use of these types of home heating oils in Westchester County. The Department of Health maintains a list of buildings that use No.'s 6 & 4 and will be engaging in a public education campaign to induce conversion to alternative heating systems as the July 31, 2018 (For No. 6) and July 31, 2021 prohibition deadlines approach. I will direct my Economic Development Office to promote opportunities for these entities to secure low-cost financing through our partnerships to convert their units to No. 2 oil or to pursue other, more energy efficient and environmentally sound alternatives.

5. Expanding Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure: Facilitating the development of a larger network of charging stations that will encourage more municipalities, businesses and individuals to switch to EVs in the coming years

We have a number of ongoing initiatives to encourage the use of EV's. The rehabilitation of the County-owned parking lot at North White Plains train station will include 10 EV charging stations. In the coming weeks we will announce an agreement with the Board of Legislators to pass a law requiring Westchester County to include EV charging stations at all new county parking facilities and to include them in rehabilitation projects for existing parking structures. As stated earlier, the County plans on joining the Zero Emissions Vehicle (ZEV) Pledge.

We continue to utilize a wide range of fuel efficient vehicles at all of our facilities, including:

- Electric ground service equipment vehicles at County Airport;
- 200 hybrid cars, including two plug-in hybrid cars on order for use by the County's motor pool;
- Westchester is a part of a ten electric transit bus pilot study being conducted by the MTA, in conjunction with Con Edison and NYPA.
- Use 5% biofuel in existing diesel vehicles, especially those that transport children.

The County continues to require ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel and has had that requirement since



before it was federally mandated. We are actively investigating the use of B20 (diesel with 20% soybean oil) for various heavy duty on-road trucks for use by our DPW&T Road Maintenance Division.

6. Sustainable Public Access Management: Making significant impacts on energy use and the environment simply by deciding to spend money and deploy resources wisely

The County conducted a high-level energy audit of County-owned facilities in 2008 as part of the Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant Program, which I see as a baseline to our eventual, annual benchmarking program to satisfy NYSERDA's Clean Communities Program. Along with that effort, the County Capital Projects Energy group studies and reviews capital projects and departmental processes to ensure that energy efficient designs and goals are considered as projects are designed.

The County is making a substantial investment in upgrading the energy-efficient LED lighting in our buildings and on all County-owned roads. A project to replace all 240 lights on the Bronx River Parkway (which is 40% of the total street lights the county maintains) is in design phase.

Our Department of Information Technology has been a key player in our energy management plan. Through server virtualization and consolidation, the purchase of energy-efficient laptops and PC's, a complete redesign and the upgrade of our data centers, our DoIT team has consumed 20% less energy in the past year alone. The use of a program called Night Watchman powers off computers automatically at night, which has generated \$100,000 in energy savings annually.

As mentioned earlier, our energy management in the past three years alone has yielded substantial monetary and energy use savings. I am confident that regular study, installation of LED lighting and other initiatives will continue to provide savings in the future.

7. Transportation: Maximizing environmentally friendly mobility options in and around residential and commercial centers

At the center of our transportation policy is the Bee-Line. The Bee-Line is Westchester County's bus system, serving over 30 million passengers annually. Riding public transit helps our environment by reducing air pollution and traffic congestion. I am very excited about the upgrades we are making to our Bee Line fleet, which includes 100 forty foot hybrid buses and the purchase of 78 hybrid sixty foot (articulated) buses.

One of the Bee Line System's busiest corridors is the Central Park Avenue routes between White Plains to Yonkers. We recently implemented a signal priority system that decreases an



estimated 15 minutes off of our routes. That saves our commuters time and saves the county on fuel costs.

In addition to the Bee Line System, we continue to encourage carpooling through the County's Smart Commute Program.

8. Sustainable & Transit-Oriented Development: Creating livable and sustainable communities that permit increased density and diversity in our downtowns and neighborhoods

Westchester County's roads are multi-jurisdictional. Some roads are maintained by the New York State Department of Transportation, some by local municipalities, others by Westchester County and many others by all.

Making more of our roads accessible and safer for all types of users is the reason I signed the Complete Streets law in 2013. That law requires the County's Department of Public Works and Transportation to consider and incorporate greater use of Westchester roadways and thoroughfares by bicyclists and pedestrians to reduce congestion and pollution caused by motor vehicles.

A transit oriented development ("TOD") project that is moving forward is in White Plains. The County is partnering with NYSDOT and the City we are to optimize the use of the Bee-Line Terminal in White Plains, and take advantage of its proximity to Metro North Railroad. The design of this TOD zone will include open space, bike and pedestrian infrastructure and smaller parking footprint.

9. Open Space Preservation: Planning strategies such as clustering, creating pocket parks in developed areas, and encouraging biotic corridors in less densely populated areas

Although Westchester County has limited land use authority, it participates in open space acquisition and preservation efforts whenever possible. The county has a major responsibility to preserve the quality of life in Westchester by protecting its scenic quality, environmental integrity and recreational opportunities. Land acquisition is not the sole means by which the county can achieve this goal. The county may serve as facilitator for protection/preservation actions which may be undertaken by the state, municipalities and private organizations such as land trusts.

The Westchester Legacy Program is a county initiative to acquire, protect and enhance open space lands in Westchester County. To date, the Legacy Program is credited with preserving over 2,000 acres of open space in Westchester County. The acquired properties include linear parks, urban parks, active recreation facilities as well as large tracts of open space forever preserved in their natural state.



10. Natural Resource Protection: Comprehensively managing and protecting regional natural resources (i.e., air, water and land)

As part of the New York City Watershed, Westchester's commitment to preserving water quality is a responsibility that not only affects our residents' quality of life, but also that of millions of others beyond our borders. Understanding this, I partner with municipalities to acquire tracts of land for open space adjacent to the watershed, and streamlined the approval process for municipalities in the NYC watershed to use East of Hudson funds. Since 2013, Water Quality Improvement Project expenditures for East of Hudson funds equals \$11,327,300, which has funded 10 total projects to support the implementation of water quality investments in the Croton and Kensico watersheds.

There are two major, award-winning infrastructure projects that have been completed this term that we are particularly proud of:

- **\$250 million New Rochelle Water Resource Recovery Facility Project**
 - As a result of the project, a new two-stage biological aerated filtration system has reduced nitrogen discharge to the Long Island Sound by nearly 87 percent, from 2,000 pounds per day to approximately 250 pounds per day
 - Project consisted of upgrades to every process to meet new permitting requirements. The project also includes Ultra Violet light disinfection systems that replaced chlorine disinfection, and upgrades to the headworks and secondary treatment system to increase the plant's capacity from 13.6 MGD to 20.6 MGD, a 51 percent improvement
 - Winner of the 2016 Project of the Year, New York State Society of Professional Engineers

- **\$12 million Water District One UV Treatment Systems**
 - Saved \$92 million compared to the original project proposal
 - Construction of two prefabricated UV treatment systems adjacent to existing water lines in White Plains. The project design reduced long-term energy and maintenance costs for ratepayers by incorporating the UV facilities into the district without using pump stations.
 - 2017 Medium-Sized Project of the Year by the New York Section of the American Water Works Association

We also provide incentives for communities, property owners and developers to manage stormwater on-site with a variety of technologies such as green roofs, bioswales, rain gardens and rain barrels, and implement strategies outlined in storm water management plans. For



example, through our Local Development Corporation the county is supporting the creation of a rain garden at Hendrick Hudson Free Library. The County has also offered rain barrels to residents in water districts served by the County.

As a lifelong Westchester resident, I recognize the significant issue of flooding caused by intense rainfall and storm surges. Major tributaries, roadways and parkway systems in Westchester, including two of our major roadways, the Saw Mill River Parkway and the Hutchinson River Parkway, are owned and under the jurisdiction of the State of New York, limiting opportunities for the County to address flooding. The Bronx River Reservation and Bronx River Parkway are owned and operated by Westchester County allowing for better opportunities for flood mitigation.

A comprehensive solution is clearly required to address many of the County's flooding issues. Since taking office I consistently work with our State and Federal elected officials to address these issues and I travelled to Washington DC to meet with and request assistance of the Army Corps of Engineers. The causes of flooding in this county are a result of many complex factors that cannot be fixed overnight or without significant capital investments beyond the means of the county. But the county can and must continue to do whatever it can on its own.

Since taking office I have implemented a number of specific initiatives, including legislation and Capital Projects, to address these concerns. In the Capital Budget over my eight years in office I requested appropriations for over \$15 million in additional Capital Expenditures for Flood Mitigation and Stormwater Management. And, in early 2012, I designated \$9 million for a number of specific capital projects I directed be commenced to address chronic flooding along the Bronx River and Sound Shore.

The Bronx River projects include:

- Mount Vernon/Yonkers: Oak Street pump station rehabilitation. The project rehabilitated the Oak St Pump Station at the Bronx River Parkway.
- Yonkers/Eastchester/Scarsdale: Bronx River channel re-alignment and bank stabilization at Garth Woods., Design will be completed in 2018. Construction will begin in 2019.
- Greenburgh: Fisher Lane/Bronx River Parkway stormwater wetland restoration and stream bank stabilization. Construction has been completed.
- Eastchester/Yonkers: Harney Road vicinity stream bank stabilization and channel modification. Initial construction has begun and will be fully completed in 2018.
- Yonkers/Bronxville: Bronx River/Sprain Brook Confluence channel clearing and restoration: Initial construction has begun and will be fully completed in 2018.



I also was proud to sign legislation in 2010 that established a Stormwater Management Program and a Stormwater Advisory Board, recognizing that storm water management transcends municipal borders. My planning commissioner chairs this board, which formulates a watershed-based reconnaissance stormwater management plan that calls for recommendations for action to curtail and mitigate flooding in the County.

Additional projects that the County is undertaking in order to address flooding and responses to increased rainfall and storm surges include:

- The replacement of a sewer line and removal of a bridge pier in the Mamaroneck River on Anita Lane in the Village of Mamaroneck.
- Restoration of the Bronx River (west and east banks) near the County Center. Two separate projects reinforced the river's severely eroded embankments and restored adjoining wetland to mitigate the impacts of flooding and protect county infrastructure, and was conducted and partially funded in coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
- Restoration of 18 acres of floodplain along the Mamaroneck River at Saxon Woods Park. The county restored nine acres in 2010/11 and another nine in 2015/16. The restored floodplain will improve the flood-prone river's ability to store and dissipate flood waters during severe storms.
- Replacement of a 60-inch pipe in Tarrytown to reduce stormwater flow. Working in partnership with the Village of Tarrytown, this Loh Park neighborhood project is part of the stormwater management program, with the County contributing up to 50% toward the project cost.
- The County has been awarded a \$475,000 grant by the New York State DEC, to be matched with \$250,000 in county capital funds, to stabilize the severely eroding banks of Fulton Brook, which runs into the Bronx River immediately north of the County Center. Sediment has accumulated in the brook and at the junction of the brook and river, which restricts flows, thereby contributing to flooding.
- Using state funding, the county is undertaking several smaller projects to alleviate flooding and manage stormwater runoff in county parks through its Soil and Water Conservation District.

Additionally, I launched River Rescue, a public-private project began in 2012 to help prevent future flooding by cleaning the banks of the Bronx River with volunteers from the community, including the Turf and Landscape Association. River Rescue encourages the community to participate in cleaning their communities and local streams, assist the flow of waterways, and prepare the waterways for larger capital flood mitigation projects.



11. Energy: Achieving energy efficiency in residential and commercial settings, in existing and new buildings, and with cutting-edge technology and the smarter use of older technology

Westchester County has always led the way when it comes to seeking opportunities to become more energy efficient. As I mentioned earlier, the County has made real, measurable progress in energy efficiency. The good news is that many Westchester businesses and residents are joining in on that trend. This is a remarkable time for the energy efficiency movement and with our partnerships with Sustainable Westchester, Energize NY and others, I expect that Westchester County will continue toward a path of relying more and more on renewable resources to power our busy lives.

Our Office of Energy Conservation has been central to these achievements. Working with professionals in every department, OEC ensures that we have the focus to explore all the potential technologies that could be leveraged to make our current and future facilities more energy efficient, by

- Continuing to Purchase Energy Star-rated equipment; and
- Installing solar and wind generation equipment on public buildings.
 - Solar (photovoltaic) applications are being used at various County properties and buildings, such as the roof of the County Parking Lot in White Plains, which has 460 working Solar panels. Westchester Community College has 2 buildings with Solar panels: Tech with 33 working panels and Physical Education with 64 working panels paired with a solar hot water system. OEC and DPW&T are studying the possibility of placing solar on our Labs & Research building and the Department of Environmental Facilities has recently requested design funding for replacement of existing Solar panels at the Yonkers Wastewater Treatment Plant. DEF also has design funding for solar on the roofs at the Mamaroneck and Port Chester Wastewater Treatment Plants.
 - The OEC is exploring a pilot program for a Wind/Solar Off-Grid Lighting solution at Westchester Community College
 - Westchester County developed a Microgrids proposal and has supported NY Sun and other clean energy, distributed energy and efficiency investments.

12. Farms and Local Food: Managing development and providing access to healthy, fresh foods

Westchester has a rich agricultural history that continues today, even as the county develops into a more densely populated suburban landscape. Many of Westchester's most celebrated eateries have pioneered the farm-to-table approach that emphasizes local food. Our



agricultural policy is to conserve, protect and encourage the development and improvement of agricultural land as a valued natural and ecological resource, for production of food and other products which provide needed open spaces for clean air and water.

The Westchester County Agricultural District was created in 2001 with an eight-year review period. The modified district was recertified by the state on Sept 19, 2011 with 70 farms comprising over 6,600 acres of land. Since then, over 800 additional acres have been added to the district. The Westchester Agricultural District is currently under review for recertification before the anniversary date of July 19, 2017.

Hilltop Hanover Farm has numerous events and grows a wide variety of produce. Children of all ages can visit with animals and learn about the history of Westchester agriculture at the Alfred B. DelBello Muscote Farm Park in Somers. The County also provides a number of other farmland protection programs, including the Westchester County Agricultural District, to protect our farms from development and preserve a valuable local source of healthy food. The County has even developed a Farm Map to attract tourists and other visitors to Westchester Farms, and to show how vital farms are to our region.

