



**PRESS RELEASE**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**City of Dearborn Heights partners with Cities Initiative to develop flood control and habitat restoration designs for the North Branch of Ecorse Creek**

*Designs will provide a model for larger project to address the headwaters of Ecorse Creek*

**Dearborn Heights, Mich. – August 1, 2024** – The City of Dearborn Heights is collaborating with the Downriver Community Conference (DCC) and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative to develop designs for restoring an approximately one-mile stretch of the North Branch of Ecorse Creek (NBEC). The project will provide a model for designing flood control and ecosystem restoration plans for the full, 17-mile stretch of NBEC, which runs through seven communities before emptying into the Detroit River.

The restoration reach in Dearborn Heights will start east of Telegraph and conclude near Pardee Park. Preliminary designs, which are scheduled to be completed by the end of this year, will focus on preventing flooding and restoring habitat and public access along the creek. There will be no costs to local residents for the project. The DCC has applied for funding to expand this work to the full upstream portion of the NBEC.

“The North Branch of Ecorse Creek has experienced continuous flooding for some time, causing devastating impacts on residents,” said Mayor Bill Bazzi of Dearborn Heights. “We are excited to be working with the Cities Initiative and the Downriver Community Conference to develop long-term solutions that will protect our community and provide new benefits for residents.”

**A Long-Term Team Effort**

The DCC is leading a long-term effort to clean up one of Southeast Michigan’s most degraded creeks, reduce flood risk for residents, and provide new benefits to the community. The Army Corps of Engineers has documented average annual flood damages in the watershed of nearly \$22 million, with more than 9,000 properties impacted. Flooding following a rainstorm in August 2023 was so extreme that it led to the closure of Detroit Metro Airport in Romulus and prompted a Presidential Disaster Declaration. To this day, streambank erosion is encroaching onto residential properties, exposing foundations, and damaging infrastructure.

The Cities Initiative is proud to support the project under its Resilient Coastal Projects Initiative, which is helping cities across the Great Lakes region to protect property owners and infrastructure from the impacts of climate change. Funding is provided by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation with support from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Other partners include Friends of the Detroit River, Wayne County Drain Commission, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, and Stantec Consulting Services. The Downriver Community Conference recently submitted a proposal for a \$1 million project that would develop flood control and ecosystem restoration preliminary designs for an additional 7.5-mile stretch of NBEC, using the preliminary designs from the current one-mile stretch as a prototype and guide.

“We are thankful for the support from the Cities Initiative and Stantec to advance efforts in the North Branch of Ecorse Creek. We couldn’t do it without our other partners at Wayne County Drains and Friends of the Detroit River. We are excited to keep the momentum going with Mayor Bazzi who has been leading the charge on flood mitigation in the Ecorse Creek for several years,” said Jim Perry, DCC Executive Director.

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### **About the Resilient Coastal Projects Initiative (RCPI)**

The RCPI supports local communities in planning sustainable, fundable projects that protect shorelines and community assets. These projects address coastal hazards like flooding or erosion, while adding community benefits such as public spaces, recreation, wildlife habitat, and improved water quality.

More information on the Resilient Coastal Projects Initiative is available on the Cities Initiative’s website at: <https://glslcities.org/initiatives/resilient-coastal-projects-initiative/>

### **About the Cities Initiative**

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is a multinational coalition of local governments led by mayors and chief elected officers working collaboratively to safeguard the economic, environmental and social health of communities in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin. The organization is committed to stewarding the basin’s freshwater and ensuring that all residents have access to clean, safe and affordable water as the foundation for sustainable, vibrant, inclusive and resilient communities.

### **About the Downriver Community Conference**

The Downriver Community Conference is a partnership of 20 member communities that provides leadership in establishing common, positive goals and strategies to develop the human, social, and economic assets of the Downriver area; enhances the quality of life for area residents, workers and businesses; shapes public policy at the federal, state, regional, county, and local levels; and identifies, obtains and responsibly manages the necessary financial resources to successfully implement this vision.

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