



DANIEL HORRIGAN, MAYOR

City of Akron

166 S. High Street  
Akron, Ohio 44308

(330)-375-2345

Fax (330)-375-2468

[www.akronohio.gov](http://www.akronohio.gov)

## PRESS RELEASE

City of Akron Press Release

Published: 12-18-2019

### **Second Amendment To Akron's CSO Consent Decree Granted, With Projected Savings Of \$77 Million**

**Akron, Ohio, December 18, 2019--** Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan is pleased to share that the Northern District of Ohio has granted the Second Amendment to the City's 2014 federally-mandated consent decree. Arguably the strictest in the nation, the over \$1 billion program requires the City to upgrade its sewer system within aggressive timelines. Over the last decade, improved technology and real-time data helped improve the original project and reduce costs. The approval of the Second Amendment is long-awaited and follows the U.S. and Ohio EPA approvals granted in 2018. The second amendment is projected to save ratepayers \$77 million—bringing the total savings over the last four years to over \$158 million.

The Second Amendment was submitted to the Court on June 5, 2018, providing for the following two modifications: (1) the replacement of the requirement to install a BioActiflo facility to treat secondary bypasses at the Water Reclamation Facility with a BioCEPT facility and (2) the replacement of the requirement to install certain "gray" storage basins with new control measures including "green" infrastructure, among other improvements.

"The second amendment is an important step forward in our efforts to clean up the river, protect our neighborhoods, and lessen the burden on our ratepayers," Mayor Dan Horrigan said.

Over the last 30 years, Akron has repaired, replaced and upgraded much of the sewer system, leading to tremendous improvement in river water quality. Signs of a healthy ecosystem have emerged: Ohio EPA biological sampling in 2017 and 2018 shows significant improvements in the Cuyahoga River and its tributaries regarding fish and bugs and the Blue Herons have returned to the River. The Cuyahoga River was named River of the Year in 2019.

Currently, 92% of all Consent Decree projects are completed or under construction. All completed projects were finished at or ahead of schedule, and are performing as anticipated or better. Eight Hundred and Twenty Six Million gallons of flow were treated early due to the Step Feed project being operational ahead of schedule. (826,000,000 above and beyond what the consent decree required).

However, the City is deeply troubled by concerning language in the Court's second order that mischaracterizes the City's diligent efforts to move this program forward. The City has kept both the state and federal EPAs up-to-date of the status of projects, as the consent decree requires—including the one project out of 24 that has experienced delays, the Ohio Canal Interceptor Tunnel.

The citizens of Akron deserve a judicial process that works—one that moves this program forward and contributes to progress. City officials are reviewing the order and determining the appropriate next steps to protect the goals of the program and the best interests of the community.

Through the integrated planning process, Mayor Horrigan will continue advocating for amendments to the remaining program to achieve the same environmental benefits while continuing to reduce cost to our ratepayers.

##

**For further information, contact:**

Ellen Lander Nischt

Press Secretary

Phone: 330-375-2325

E-mail: [ELander@akronohio.gov](mailto:ELander@akronohio.gov)