

FEMA Awards an Initial \$738K to Upgrade Sewers in Jefferson Chalmers Neighborhood

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CHICAGO – Through the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program, FEMA has awarded the first phase of an \$11M federal grant to the city of Detroit for sewer system upgrades in the Jefferson Chalmers neighborhood. The first phase—totaling \$738,161—will be used for design, engineering and environmental studies to determine the viability of the project. The second phase of the grant is contingent on the findings of this work.

Jefferson Chalmers is a low-lying neighborhood, flanked by canals and located near the Detroit River. The area experienced severe flooding in both 2021 and 2023, resulting in two presidential disaster declarations. To reduce future flood risk, the city will replace 18,800 feet of combined sewer mains, which will include both the upsizing of existing sewer mains and the installation of new relief sewers, allowing a higher conveyance of flood waters.

“Today’s federal grant to upgrade sewers in Jefferson Chalmers will better protect this community against flooding and make a real difference for local residents,” said Governor Whitmer. “After years of fighting together, I am proud that our congressional delegation, the Biden-Harris administration, and most important of all—this community—got it done. As governor, I will build on our state-level efforts, including the largest investment in water infrastructure in Michigan history, to deliver on the fundamental issues that matter most.”

“FEMA’s BRIC program provides a critical opportunity to mitigate repetitive flooding, reduce disaster suffering and minimize future disaster costs,” said FEMA Region 5 Regional Administrator Tom Sivak. “This sewer system upgrade is a proactive infrastructure investment in community resilience, supporting families and businesses in the Jefferson Chalmers community of Detroit.”

FEMA’s pre-disaster mitigation grant program, BRIC, aims to categorically shift the federal focus away from reactive disaster spending toward research-



supported, proactive investment in community resilience. The BRIC program provides funds to states, local communities, tribes, and territories for eligible mitigation measures that support a more resilient nation. For this project, FEMA will pay 75% of the \$15,036,399 eligible project cost with the remaining 25% of the costs, \$3,759,100, provided by the city of Detroit. This project will be completed in two phases. To learn more about FEMA's BRIC program, visit www.fema.gov/bric.

