



PROJECT GROUNDWORK  
your pipeline to clean water

# Lick Run FAQs

The Lick Run Project – part of the Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati's (MSD) solution for Lower Mill Creek – will eliminate about 400 million gallons of combined sewer overflows (CSOs) into the Mill Creek each year during a typical year of rain. This fact sheet answers commonly asked questions about the project.

## 1. What is the Lick Run Project?

The Lick Run Project is comprised of 12 separate stormwater management projects to collect stormwater from the Lick Run watershed and convey or carry it to the Mill Creek. Each of the 12 projects is designed, bid and constructed separately. The projects include underground storm sewers and green infrastructure such as a bioswales, rain gardens, stormwater detention basins and stream restoration. The Lick Run Greenway is one of the 12 projects and includes a bioengineered stream along with a special wetlands area and rain gardens.

## 2. Was the Lick Run Project approved?

Yes, the Lick Run Project was officially approved by the U.S. EPA and other regulators in May 2013 as part of MSD's Lower Mill Creek Partial Remedy. The U.S. EPA also approved projects in the West Fork, Kings Run and Bloody Run watersheds. For more information, please visit [www.projectgroundwork.org/lowermillcreek](http://www.projectgroundwork.org/lowermillcreek).

## 3. Is MSD still going to build a tunnel?

No, MSD will not build a tunnel as part of the Lower Mill Creek Partial Remedy.

## 4. What is the Lick Run Master Plan and was it approved?

The Lick Run Master Plan is a master planning document that covers project background, technical foundations, community needs, an exploration of alternatives, a base plan for the Lick Run Greenway, and a long-term watershed vision plan. The master plan was developed with extensive community input during 2011 and 2012 and was approved by the City Planning Commission and Cincinnati City Council in 2013. It is available online at [www.projectgroundwork.org/lickrun](http://www.projectgroundwork.org/lickrun) or by contacting MSD Engineering Customer Service at (513) 557-3594 or [MSD.Communications@cincinnati-oh.gov](mailto:MSD.Communications@cincinnati-oh.gov).

## 5. How much will the Lick Run Project cost?

The Lick Run Project is estimated to cost about \$193 million (in 2006 dollars) to design and construct. The Lick Run Greenway portion of the project is \$89.9 million.

## 6. How much will sewer bills go up as a result of the Lick Run Project?

Sewer bills will not go up specifically as a result of the Lick Run Project.

The Lick Run Project is part of Project Groundwork, a multi-year program to rebuild and improve MSD's sewer system. Project Groundwork includes hundreds of sewer improvements and stormwater management projects across MSD's service area.

Project Groundwork is primarily funded by MSD customers (ratepayers) because there is no government funding source to pay for the sewer improvements. Therefore, MSD ratepayers are supporting the cost of the entire program and not any one project in particular.

Rate increases are needed to fund the anticipated costs associated with Project Groundwork. The Hamilton County Commissioners approve all MSD rate increases and MSD conducts rate studies to determine future rate and debt service coverage needs.

MSD seeks grant funding and/or low-interest loans wherever possible to offset the costs of Project Groundwork.

## 7. Will all stormwater be removed from the combined sewer system in Lick Run?

No. It is too costly and not feasible to fully separate all stormwater from the combined sewer system in Lick Run.

The Lick Run Project will keep nearly half a billion gallons of stormwater out of the combined sewer system annually, during a typical year of rain. This will result in the elimination of about 400 million gallons of CSOs at CSO 5 (an outfall at the end of Queen City Avenue) annually.

## 8. Will the 20-foot-diameter brick Lick Run combined sewer in South Fairmount be removed as part of the Lick Run Project?

No, the combined sewer will stay in place and will continue to convey sanitary sewage and a smaller volume of stormwater to the Mill Creek treatment plant.

9. Will there continue to be overflows from CSO 5 into the Mill Creek?

Yes. We are eliminating the vast majority of overflows, but there is still the potential for some overflows to occur because we are not removing all the stormwater from the combined sewer system.

10. What is the Lick Run Greenway?

The Lick Run Greenway is a stormwater conveyance system to carry or convey stormwater from the Lick Run watershed to the Mill Creek. The Greenway will be about 1.5 miles long and will run from old Queen City Avenue to the Mill Creek between Queen City and Westwood avenues.

It includes the following features:

- 1-mile-long urban waterway (constructed channel that mimics a natural stream)
- 1.5-mile-long stormwater conveyance box running beneath the entire system to handle runoff from large storms
- Wetland forebay and bioinfiltration basins along old Queen City Avenue
- Headwaters area near White Street where the urban waterway will start
- Pond feature between Harrison Avenue and State Street

11. How will traffic be affected by the Lick Run Project?

Many of the Lick Run projects will cause impacts on traffic once they go into construction, including temporary or long-term lane and/or road closures. Each project has its own Maintenance of Traffic plan which must be approved by the Cincinnati Department of Transportation and Engineering. We try to keep traffic disruptions to a minimum, but lane and road closures are needed to complete projects and to keep our construction contractors safe.

12. How many properties does MSD currently own (title transferred to MSD)?

MSD has secured 91 project parcels to make room for the Lick Run Greenway project. MSD is currently negotiating with the Family Dollar store in South Fairmount to purchase and relocate the store.

13. Is MSD going to demolish structures on purchased properties?

Yes, MSD has demolished 80 structures (including garages and large sheds) in the project area to make room for the Lick Run Greenway. The remaining structures (11) will be demolished by this fall. The Port of Greater Cincinnati Development Authority is assisting MSD with demolitions.

14. Will all the properties in the corridor be purchased and demolished?

No, there are at least six properties that will remain, as they are not in the path of the Lick Run Greenway or in the 100-year floodplain. Examples include the strip mall on Queen City Avenue at Grand Avenue and the Cincinnati Fire Station on State Avenue.

15. What has MSD done to help mitigate the loss of potentially historic properties?

MSD has prepared a mitigation plan that is available online at [www.projectgroundwork.org/lickrun](http://www.projectgroundwork.org/lickrun) or by contacting MSD Engineering Customer Service at (513) 557-3594 or MSD.Communications@cincinnati-oh.gov.

To date, two local artists have developed a video history of South Fairmount, MSD is working on signage that will include historical/cultural information, and a local plant nursery has cloned second-generation moon trees that will be planted along the Greenway.

16. Is MSD going to sell or auction property they don't need for the Lick Run Greenway?

At this point, no decision has been made about property not needed for the project. If MSD does determine that property is not needed, per Ohio Revised Code (ORC), any excess property would be put out to bid to the public.

17. What transportation-related changes will be made to Queen City and Westwood avenues?

At this time, the City of Cincinnati has decided not to pursue any transportation-related changes along Queen City and Westwood avenues due to cost.