

## Christie Administration And U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers Launch \$32.5 Million Absecon Inlet Resiliency Project

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### New Atlantic City Seawall And Boardwalk Construction To Reduce Impact Of Future Storms

**Trenton, NJ** – The Christie Administration and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) officially broke ground today on a long-awaited \$32.5 million seawall project in northern Atlantic City that will provide critical protection from Absecon Inlet during storm events, while also rebuilding the city's historic boardwalk.

DEP Commissioner Bob Martin was joined by USACE Philadelphia District Commander Lt. Col. Michael Bliss, U.S. Congressman Frank LoBiondo (NJ-02) and Atlantic City Mayor Don Guardian for the kickoff of the mostly federally-funded project that will reduce flood and coastal storm damage from Oriental Avenue to Atlantic Avenue, as well as an area adjacent to Melrose Avenue.

"This project will provide critical protection for the northern end of Atlantic City, which was battered by Superstorm Sandy and many other storm events that preceded it," Commissioner Martin said. "This partnership between the Christie Administration, the Army Corps of Engineers and Atlantic City will bring much-needed resiliency where the city meets Absecon Inlet and the reconnection of a historic boardwalk that will improve quality of life for residents and visitors of the city."

"Our team has worked closely with NJDEP and Atlantic City to move this part of the overall Absecon Island project forward," added USACE Philadelphia District Commander Lt. Col. Michael Bliss. "This is a complex undertaking that required integrating designs to rebuild the historic boardwalk and construct a seawall, which is designed to reduce storm damages."

The Absecon Inlet Coastal Storm Damage Reduction Structures project includes the construction of a large stone revetment backed by a steel sheet pile bulkhead for 1,340 feet between Oriental and Atlantic Avenues, as well as a smaller wooden bulkhead fronted by a stone revetment for 400 feet between Madison and Melrose Avenues.

The contract for the USACE-funded seawall construction was awarded to Hackensack-based J. Fletcher Creamer & Son late last year. The contractor mobilized and began demolition of the old boardwalk and debris over the summer.

Additionally, Atlantic City has designed and is funding the reconstruction of a boardwalk that will run on the landward side of the bulkhead along the inlet. The boardwalk will once again reconnect the oceanfront boardwalk at the Oriental Avenue groin to Historic Gardner's Basin.

The total contract for the project USACE project, for base and options, is \$32.5 million, with \$20 million going to bulkhead and storm reduction materials and the other \$9.3 million going toward the boardwalk. Another \$3.2 million in options for Atlantic City's boardwalk is also built in.

"While the need has never diminished, it was a long fight to secure the necessary funding and approvals to construct the seawall," said Congressman Frank LoBiondo (NJ-02). "Finally, progress is being made that will provide critical protection for residents and businesses along Absecon Inlet.

"Furthermore, reinforcing the safety and security of Gardner's Basin will allow for future development and options for new tourist attractions in Atlantic City. I'm pleased to have worked tirelessly in cooperation with my colleagues to secure the Superstorm Sandy emergency funding that allows this project to be paid for by the federal government."

"This redevelopment of the seawall and the Boardwalk is the culmination of years of work by the Congressman LoBiondo, the City, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the State Department of Environmental Protection," Mayor Guardian stated. "We thank everyone for believing in Atlantic City and making this project possible."

The Christie Administration has worked with USACE and local communities to bring added resiliency to New Jersey's coastline and tidal areas, with multiple projects largely funded by the federal Sandy Relief Act, signed into law in 2013.

Last year, USACE, in partnership with DEP, completed eight post-Sandy beach repair projects, returning roughly 45 miles of previously engineered and constructed beaches along the New Jersey coast to their original protective construction design at a cost of \$345 million.

USACE and DEP are currently undertaking a \$128 million beach and dune construction project on Long Beach Island; a \$57.6 million beach and dune project in southern Ocean City, the Strathmere section of Upper Township and Sea Isle City in Cape May County; and a \$38.2 million project to construct beaches and improve infrastructure in the area of Loch Arbour, Allenhurst and Deal in Monmouth County.

Work has yet to begin in Margate, Longport and parts of Ventnor on Atlantic County's Absecon Island; in southern Long Branch and northern Deal in Monmouth County; and in the northern Ocean County municipalities of Point Pleasant Beach, Bay Head, Mantoloking, Brick, Toms River, Lavallette, Seaside Heights, Seaside Park and Berkeley.

A \$202 million project to protect Union Beach, Monmouth County, with flood walls, levees, beaches and pumps, is expected to be launched next year.

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