**Questions and Answers regarding the FAST Start Program**

**What is the FAST Start Program?**

The expanded FAST Start Program is a program to complete the replacement of all lead and galvanized water service lines outside the homes in the City of Flint with copper pipes to allow Flint residents to have clean, safe drinking water from their taps. The City has retained the services of global infrastructure firm AECOM to oversee and expedite the program while maintaining industry standards.

**How is this related to the initial “FAST Start” Program that has been installing new lines?**

This is a continuation and enhancement of the “FAST Start” program, which in 2017 replaced more than 5,300 lead or galvanized service lines outside the homes and excavated over 3,700 addresses. AECOM will take the lessons learned from the FAST Start program to enhance how the 2018 work will be delivered.

**How many homes need to have their service lines replaced?**

City records indicate there are 12,000 remaining homes with lead or galvanized service lines outside the home. The team managed by AECOM will complete work on at least 6,000 residences in 2018 and complete the remaining number of homes in 2019, replacing any lead or galvanized lines outside the home with copper service lines. The number 12,000 is an estimate; as we look for lead and galvanized services outside the homes, this number will be adjusted as we confirm there is – or is not – a lead service. The goal of the program is to replace all lead and galvanized services outside the home in two years.

**When will work begin?**

Teams will begin checking and identifying service lines outside homes in March to identify which homes have lead or galvanized service lines and which homes do not. Service line replacement for homes with lead or galvanized service lines outside the homes will begin in early May.

**How will I know when they are coming to my neighborhood?**

There will be multiple notifications in each neighborhood before work begins. The notifications will include mailings, informational door hangers, and scheduled community meetings to provide details of the work, and answer specific questions related to the work that will be done in each neighborhood. In addition, a web-based link will continue to be available on the City’s website.

**Why was AECOM chosen to oversee the work?**

AECOM, a premier, fully integrated global infrastructure firm, has worked on improving drinking water systems in hundreds of cities and towns throughout North America and around the world. The manager they have brought in to run the project, Alan Wong, has over 40 years of experience managing large, complex water and wastewater programs in major cities across the globe, including Detroit, Toronto, Chicago, Boston, New York, Washington, DC, Baltimore, San Francisco, and the Ivory Coast, West Africa. Throughout his engineering career, Alan has helped cities and communities battle public health crises caused by pollution and contaminated drinking water.

**As Program Manager, what is AECOM’s role?**

AECOM will oversee the engineers selected by the City of Flint, who will design the transmission and distribution projects that receive funding from the State of Michigan, manage the construction contractors selected by the City of Flint to construct upgrades to the transmission and distribution systems, and work to develop the local workforce to create jobs for Flint residents as part of the core mission of the expanded FAST Start Program.

**Will there be opportunities for Flint residents to work on the project?**

Yes. One of AECOM’s missions under its contract is to make sure Flint residents have the first opportunity to work on the project and provide necessary job training for Flint residents so they are qualified to do the work. Mayor Weaver is committed to assuring that Flint-based businesses and Flint residents are given primary consideration for all work involved in the project.

**Which homes are having their water line replaced?**

Homes eligible to participate in the initiative are those with a lead or galvanized service line that delivers water to the home. The material of the service line will be determined by an excavation that uncovers the line, so workers can determine its composition. If it is lead or galvanized pipe outside the home, the home owner will be asked to give written consent for the City of Flint to replace the service line with a copper line.

**Will the excavation tear up my yard?**

The teams will be using a process known as hydro-excavation, which uses high pressure water to break up soil with pressurized water, and then uses an industrial vacuum to transfer the soil or debris to a debris tank. This process allows for a non-destructive and more accurate way to excavate a column of soil above the service line, so the pipe material can be identified by eye and photo-documented.

Hydro-excavation is significantly less intrusive and disturbs a much smaller area of the property, thus requiring less site restoration.  It also provides for better damage and safety control when compared to traditional excavation methods using a backhoe, and there is considerably less of a chance of damage to underground pipes, lines, and cables. If we cannot determine the material of the service line by hydro-excavation, we may need to excavate.

**Are old copper service lines being replaced?**

Copper lines are being used to replace the lead and galvanized lines. There is no need to replace existing copper lines because copper lines have a long history of safely conveying drinking water. No other material has such a long-term, proven record of reliable, leak-free service in the widest variety of systems and settings. Copper tubing protects the water system from outside contamination in the underground environment, and does so with a proven, lengthy life-cycle.

**When the line replacement is completed, how will I know if my home is “lead free”?**

There are two ways to know if your home is lead free: first by visually observing that there is no lead in the home by looking at the piping materials in the home, beginning where the water line enters the home. If a home has a finished basement and the pipes are not visible, then we will take a water sample at the tap and measure to determine if there is lead in the water.

**Where does Flint’s water come from now? Will that change?**

Flint has signed a 30-year contract with the Great Lakes Water Authority to provide water to Flint.

**What is happening with the Lead Homeowner “registration”?**

All active water accounts will be contacted by the City of Flint to seek their consent to opt-in to the lead service line replacement program. Homeowners who do not choose to provide their consent will be given two additional opportunities to provide their consent. After those two attempts, if a homeowner chooses not to give their consent, they will be moved into the next phase of the program, which takes place in 2019.

**Will my meter be replaced when the line is replaced? Will that change my billing?**

Water meters will be replaced as part of the expanded FAST Start Program. In the current phase, the lead and galvanized service lines will initially be replaced separately from the water meters. As soon as they can be replaced together, they will be. For the next phase in 2019, the water meters and lead services should be replaced at the same time, where possible.

**Will my water rates change with the expanded program?**

The objective of the expanded FAST Start Program is to install improvements that enable the system to operate at a lower cost, which should result in lower rates.

**What types of jobs are available as part of the expanded program?**

The types of jobs that are available as part of this program include construction jobs, field inspector jobs and equipment operator jobs. There are also opportunities for vendors who can provide materials and supplies for the program. The expanded FAST Start program will be actively seeking candidates for jobs and for vendors throughout the life of the program, including summer interns.

**Where should I go for communications about the program?**

You can go to the Flint City website, <https://www.cityofflint.com/>, for information, or call (810) 410-1133.

**How will I know if my street will get torn up?**

We will notify each neighborhood before work begins in their area. The notification will include door hangers, community meetings, letters and community engagement teams that will be talking to residents on an ongoing basis.

**How will the program select what neighborhoods are being worked on?**

Criteria that will be used to determine replacement priorities include whether the home has the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) status, other public health issues that need to be recognized and the density of homes in an area. In addition, we will add other homes to the priority list to ensure that there is replacement work being done throughout the city.

**How will street restoration issues and other landscaping issues be handled?**

Restoration will be accomplished by the same contractor that does the lead service line replacement. The contractor will be cleared to move to the next home on their list once they have agreed to the restoration work schedule approved by AECOM and the City. We will also look for opportunities so that if there are other city landscaping beautification projects planned we can do them at the same time.

I**f the replacement requires drilling inside the home, what steps will be taken to remediate any hazards, such as asbestos?**

If drilling inside the home is required, proper safety precautions will be taken to deal with ambient dust and possible asbestos exposure.

**What steps are being taken to determine if the water is safe and will stay safe?**

After the lead or galvanized service lines outside the home have been replaced, the new copper service lines will be flushed to remove any extraneous lead that is released during replacement process. After flushing, the filters will be replaced as well. Moving forward the City is required to regularly test the quality of water in the system that is being distributed to homes. Those test results have to be made public. In addition, the city is working to identify outside funding sources that would allow every home to have water sampled from their tap at regular intervals.

**What impact will this program have on housing stock and value of real estate restored?**

When this program is completed it is anticipated there will be positive impact to the property values in the community. If the water system is safe, that will remove one major concern related to property values.

**Where is the money coming from for this program?**

There are multiple funding sources that this program relies on. Each of these funding sources is in the process of evaluating the current funding available and the possible need for additional funds.