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STREAMS OF WASTE; Atlanta's economic growth depends on its ability to save its urban; waterways

BYLINE: By Charles Seabrook Staff Writer; Atlanta's antiquated systemwater; wastes; atlanta; conditions; reform; attempts; facilities; construction

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Sewers serving a 10,000-acre swath of Atlanta are 60 to 100 years old and handle wastewater from many of the city's landmarks, from Grady Memorial Hospital to Peachtree Center. Most of the sewer are "combined," meaning that they transport both human wastes and stormwater. To keep from bursting when it rains, the overloaded pipes overflow at strategic points called combined sewer overflows (CSOs), sending a foul mixture of sewage and stormwater into city creeks that drain into the Chattahoochee River. During heavy rain, thousands of gallons of untreated sewage may overflow into the creeks each minute.; The deadline for cleaning up

State law says CSOs must meet clean water standards by Dec. 31, 1993. Already the city's plans are months behind. Failure to meet the deadline means the city faces \$ 100,000-a-day fines and a ban on new sewer hookups, seriously jeopardizing development of facilities for the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta.

The proposed treatment plant

The facility will occupy about 375 feet of frontage along 10th Street and 3 acres of Piedmont Park. The proposed plan includes a 9-acre lake that will encompass the Clear Creek flood plain.; The options

The city plans a \$ 90 million project to build treatment plants at five CSOs; the largest and most elaborate will be in Piedmont Park. The plants will screen out solids and treat the mixture of human wastes and stormwater with chlorine before discharging it into the creeks. Environmental groups say that is not enough to meet clean water standards, But eliminating the CSOs completely requires laying new, separate lines, a public works project that could cost between \$ 500 million and \$ 1 billion . Another alternative constructing a giant underground storage tunnel to collect and store overflows during rainstorms. The overflows would be returned to the sewers during dry weather, when the pipes could better accommodate the excess flow.; The impact on the water war

Georgia environmental officials have promised Alabama they will make Atlanta stop polluting the Chattahoochee River, a major source of Alabama's water supply. Alabama has indicated it may allow Atlanta to draw 50 percent more water from Lake Lanier, which is regulated by the Army Corps of Engineers. But if the city gets further behind in its cleanup plans, negotiations between the two states could fall apart. In addition, Alabama may object to the city's plans to withdraw up to 10 million gallons of water per day from the Chattahoochee to feed the new lake planned for Piedmont Park.; The other planned treatment sites

In addition to the one of Piedmont Park, four other treatment facilities will be built, at North Avenue CSO (near Maddox Park on North Avenue just west of the Seaboard Coastline Railroad), which overflows into Proctor Creek.

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Tanyard Creek CSO (off Deering Road adjacent to Interstate 75); Greensferry CSO (at Stafford Street adjacent to the CSX Railroad near Washington Park) which overflows into Proctor Creek; and John A. White Park in Atlanta's West End. where two CSOs overflow into Utoy Creek. A seventh CSO, which discharges into Woodall Creek, is not included in the current plans and will be eliminated later by separation of sewers.

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GRAPHIC: Illustration: diagram of the preliminary odor control system - odor control fan and ductwork Map: other creeks that carry sewage when it rains (with the following information boxes) - Glidden/Fairmont overflow runs into Woodall Creek then Peachtree Creek - North Avenue overflow runs into Proctor Creek, then the Chattahoochee River - Greensferry overflow runs into Proctor Creek, the the Chattahoochee River - Tanyard Branch overflow runs into Tanyard Creek then Peachtree Creek - Clear Creek overflow runs into Clear Creek then Peachtree Creek Illustration: the proposed treatment plant The facility will occupy about 375 feet of frontage along 10th Street and 3 acres of Piedmont Park. The proposed plan includes a 9-acre lake that will encompass the Clear Creek flood plain. Here is the latest design for the plant. Map: existing structures in Clear Creek Basin (abandoned grit removal pilot facility, existing open channel - after 1/10 inch of rainfall, this channel fills with raw sewage and stormwater, and proposed combined sewer overflow facility Map: the treatment plant location in relation to the Midtown area Paige Braddock / staff

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