



Legislation Text

File #: 22-575, **Version:** 1

City Council Meeting Date: September 6, 2022

To: Mayor and City Council
City Administrator

From: Cole Johnson, Water Quality Technician
Sean Simonson, Engineering Manager
David E. Bennett, Public Works Director/City Engineer

Review and Discuss Draft Surface Water Management - Flood Control Policy as it relates to the Neighborhood Flooding Issues Discussion.

Action Requested:

Review and Discuss Draft Surface Water Management - Flood Control Policy as it relates to the Neighborhood Flooding Issues Discussion

Summary Report:

Northfield City Staff began discussions with City Council at the November 9, 2021 City Council Work Session to inform them of localized flooding issues throughout the City and begin conversations about strategies on how to mitigate these problems. The proposed mitigation strategies presented to Council ranged from storm sewer infrastructure modification, property acquisition, and home modification of private property.

City Council appeared to be mostly in favor of the storm sewer infrastructure modifications but had some reservation and questions about the modification and/or acquisition of private property. These questions were answered at a follow-up presentation on March 1, 2022. Summary of the questions are provided below.

1. Resident feedback on the home modification proposals.
 - a. 2 open to discussion/participation
 - b. 2 on board and willing to participate
 - c. 1 not willing to participate
2. What other cities are doing related to flooding?
 - a. A detailed spreadsheet of the City responses to the questionnaire has been included (Attachment 1).
3. Insurance and City liability related to modifying private property.
 - a. City not responsible for acts of nature.
 - b. Liability for home conversions would transfer to the contractor if flooding occurred due to poor workmanship.
 - c. Insurance suggested City have the homeowner sign a waiver stating the property owner cannot hold City liable if flooding occurs after improvement is complete.

Residents affected by the proposed home modifications were also invited to speak to Council at this meeting.

Staff also provided further infrastructure modifications to lessen the number of proposed home modifications. These proposals that were discussed at the March 1, 2022 meeting are summarized in the attached PowerPoint (Attachment 2).

From the March 1, 2022 City Council Meeting and Presentation, City Council requested a policy be created to better define where and when the City may participate in flood mitigation projects that impact private property. In the attached draft policy, (Attachment 3) it is explained what existing policies, plans, permits, and ordinances are used to manage the Surface Water Management System. The policy also defines what scenarios are not available for public assistance as well as when the City may choose to participate. As defined in the policy, the City also reserves the right to not participate in an applicable project based on feasibility of the improvement and available funding. The policy also addresses and acknowledges that climate change will play a large role in surface water management and what the City can incorporate into planning processes to better adapt to more intense storm events in the future.

City staff are asking Council to review the attached policy, provide input where they see fit based on desired outcomes and goals as a City. City Staff intends to bring the draft policy back to City Council to be adopted on September 20, 2022 if no changes are made to the policy.

The policy does not obligate the City to pursuing conversions or acquisition of properties. However, staff would also like to get feedback to pursue conversion or acquisition of the properties or not.

Alternative Options:

N/A

Financial Impacts:

\$3,000,000 - \$4,000,000

Tentative Timelines:

- September 20, 2022 - Consider Policy Adoption
- September 20, 2022 - Consider Motion to Direct Staff to further explore acquisition or private modification of properties
- 2023-2024 Programming of Improvements into CIP