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CITY OF OTTAWA

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City Commissioners

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December 28, 2023

RE: Floodplain Management _ Annual Progress Report (2023)

At a regularly scheduled City Council meeting held by the City on January 16, 2024, the report contained herein, has been provided to the City Council for their review and City record. The following summary shall serve as an update and recap of floodplain management activities for the 2023 calendar year.

Background:

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) provides federally supported flood insurance for property owners located in communities that participate in the program and regulate development activities in special flood hazard areas. The City of Ottawa has been a participant in good standing with the program since 1975. The Community Rating System (CRS), which the City also participates in, analyzes the City's approach to minimizing effects and loss from flooding events occurring in the corporate limits. The Community Rating System scores these activities/flood management strategies and allows for reductions in insurance premiums for property owners within the City. Currently there are approximately 43 NFIP insurance policies within the City of Ottawa (this is down from 50 policies in 2021), with an approximate premium cost of such policies \$41,115, covering approximately \$15,092, 000 in property coverage. While structural damage has been greatly reduced in potential riverine damage due to buyouts and an aggressive floodplain management approach, City residents are still considered under insured for potential flood damage and loss.

CRS Participation:

The City of Ottawa currently has a Class 2 rating, which provides for up to a 40% reduction in flood insurance premiums to all citizens in the City. The most recent review of the City's Class 2 ranking was conducted during 2021 and concluded in 2022. The City has retained their current Class 2 ranking through the CRS program through 2023. However, results from this review demonstrated several items that should be evaluated, reviewed, and budgeted if the City intends to try and keep the Class 2 ranking in the next CRS cycle visit (2024). The following updates must be completed if the City is wanting to be considered for a Class 2 CRS ranking.

- Strengthen stormwater ordinance, administration, enforcement, variance procedures.
- Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan/Flood Management Plan. The City should continue to participate and adopt the County wide plan but should draft their own Flood Management plan to meet CRS requirements.
- Watershed Management Plan. The current plan will not meet class 2 prerequisite requirements during the next cycle visit (2024). A new watershed management plan will be required for the next CRS evaluation and must meet CRS requirements to retain the Class 2. The previous plan was completed in 2014 and did not address and model all watersheds that come through the City of Ottawa (i.e. Fox River and Illinois River watersheds). This will have to be prepared by an engineering consultant.
- Additional staffing is necessary to meet the workload associated with CRS Class 2 requirements.
- The City must update building codes prior to the 2024 CRS cycle visit, as Class 2 communities must have adopted codes no greater than 5 years old. The City currently has adopted the 2018 International Building Codes. As a prerequisite to a CRS Class 6 or better, building codes must be less than 5 years old. This would require minimal updating to the 2021 ICC Codes or the 2024 ICC Codes.

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BCEG scores will have to improve. The City currently has 5/5 BCEG Score and this would have to be improved to
a 4/4. This will require additional staff training (all inspectors), training budget line items/increases for training,
updating to newer codes, and code revisions for mandatory training/certifications for inspection staff

2022 Flood Event Summary:

O 2023 saw no flooding events. The flood action plan did not have to be activated. There were no flooding events during 2023 that caused any known damage or loss within the City of Ottawa. While the City was fortunate to not have any flooding events during 2023, it is worth noting that 6 of the highest recorded crests on record have occurred within the last 11 years in the City. Floodplain management and planning should continue to be a priority for the City.

Historic Crests	
(1) 473.72 ft on 04/19/2013	(11) 467.80 ft on 12/12/2005
(2) 472.59 ft on 05/19/2020	(12) 467.60 ft on 01/09/2008
(3) 472.21 ft on 09/16/2008	(13) 466.46 ft on 05/02/2017
(4) 471.49 ft on 02/22/2018	(14) 465.00 ft on 02/17/2008
(5) 470.83 ft on 05/02/2019	(15) 464.33 ft on 03/31/2017
(6) 470.23 ft on 03/11/2009	(16) 464.29 ft on 06/24/2010
(7) 468.87 ft on 12/29/2008	(17) 464.10 ft on 07/23/2017
(8) 468.06 ft on 12/30/2015	(18) 463.80 ft on 03/01/2007
(9) 468.00 ft on 05/13/2002	(19) 463.65 ft on 10/16/2017
(10) 467.86 ft on 06/17/2015	(20) 463.50 ft on 02/10/2008

- Staff continue to work on projects outlined in the Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan/Flood Management Plan. This is part of LaSalle County's Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan originally adopted in October of 2008 and updated in 2015 and in 2020. This plan serves as the City's Floodplain Management Plan for CRS purposes. The current plan can be found at 2020-Natural-Hazard-Mitigation-Plan-PDF (lasallecountyil.gov). Community Risk Assessment and mitigation strategies have been reviewed and implementation strategies are ongoing. Many projects are major and have significant costs associated with implementation that will require years of funding. Deficiencies to CRS requirements were noted in the recent CRS audit. The City and Flood Commission met on several occasions during 2022 to correct deficiencies and draft an addendum to the plan, which was required to keep the City's Class 2 CRS ranking. The City's addendum to the plan can be viewed at the following link: OttawaNHMP 2022 Risk-Assessment-Update 6-7-2022 FINAL.pdf (cityofottawa.org). This took significant time and effort from staff and the Flood Commission. It has been recommended that the City investigate the creation and adoption of their own Flood Management/Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan since 2022. This plan continues to be reviewed and evaluated by the Flood Commissions on an annual basis. Attached are the mitigation strategies contained in this plan. These are evaluated at least twice per year by the City's Flood Commission. Because many of these strategies require funding and coordination amongst other departments and agencies, the City Council should also review and prioritize the plan strategies.
- O City staff and the Flood Commission reviewed and updated the Flood Threat Response/Action Plan. Minor adjustments were made to the electrical shut off procedures for Allen park, the River Walk, Fox River Park, and south end of Albion-Stevens Drive/Boat Dock. The ongoing YMCA project and Green Street elevation project should be closely monitored during construction.
- City staff and Flood Commission reviewed and updated Program for Public Information. This is typically done at least once every year with the Flood Commission. A thorough review is completed every 5 years. Minor adjustments to be made for 2023 PPI.
- Staff (Dave Noble and Mathew Stafford) attended the Annual State Floodplain and Stormwater Management Conference - March 2023.
- Staff accrued required continuing education credits for Certified Floodplain Manager's Certification (two CFM's on staff Mathew Stafford and David Noble).
- o Issued 6 floodplain permits in the City during 2023.

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FP-2023-01	2/14/2023	City of Ottawa	River Docks	West Allen Park	Mooring Dolphins (2)
			Anderson	603 Illinois	
FP-2023-02 2/14/2023	Randy Bell	Concrete	Avenue	Flood Retaining Wall	
		Grand Rapids			
FP-2023-03 2/24/2023	2/24/2023	Dan Kain	Enterprises	310 Hillside	Streambank protection
			Saucedo	201 Leeward	
FP-2023-04 4/7/2023	Mike Kasperski	Landscaping	Way	Paver/Patio Landscaping	
		City of Ottawa/St.			1
FP-2023-05 5/18/2023 G	Genevieve	City of Ottawa	Albion Drive	Landscaping/Stabilization	
			K.S. Design		
FP-2023-06	7/11/2023	Robert and Judy Dubach	Group	8 Waterside Way	Retaining Wall

Floodplain permits are required by City Code for "any man-made change to real estate including, but not necessarily limited to: (1)Demolition, construction, reconstruction, repair, placement of a building, or any structural alteration to a building; (2)Substantial improvement of an existing building; (3)Installation of a manufactured home on a site, preparing a site for a manufactured home, or installing a travel trailer on a site for more than 180 days per year; (4)Installation of utilities, construction of roads, bridges, culverts or similar projects; (5)Construction or erection of levees, dams, walls, or fences; (6)Drilling, mining, filling, dredging, grading, excavating, paving, or other alterations of the ground surface; (7)Storage of materials including the placement of gas and liquid storage tanks; and (8)Channel modifications or any other activity that might change the direction, height, or velocity of flood or surface waters.

Development does not include maintenance of existing buildings and facilities; resurfacing roads; or gardening, plowing, and similar practices that do not involve filling, grading, or construction of levees."

- o No variances were requested or issued for floodplain ordinance regulations/requirements during 2023. A pending request has been submitted to the City for the Green Street improvement project.
- o Continued to monitor structures with cumulative damage located in the Special Flood Hazard Are (SFHA).
- A Flood Insurance Assessment (FIA) was completed and was reviewed by the Flood Commission. A new report was provided to the City in August 2023. The recent numbers have been updated in the FIA, which is contained in the City's Program for Public Information (PPI) document. Currently there are 43 NFIP insurance policies within the City of Ottawa, with an approximate total premium cost of \$41,115, covering approximately \$15,092,000 in property. While structural damage has been greatly reduced in potential riverine damage due to buyouts and an aggressive floodplain management approach, City residents are still considered under insured for potential flood damage and loss.
- o Every building/construction permit submitted in the City is verified for floodplain compliance (approximately 300).
- Continue to work on updates to the City's floodplain website (www.ottawafloods.org) and the City's website regarding flood information/dissemination. It is recommended to have this site monitored and updated routinely. It has not been updated for a couple of years. The City should consider allocating additional staff help and assistance for flood outreach, web site updating, and social media.
- o CRS Coordinator continues to review updates in the CRS Coordinator Manual to ascertain changes that will need to be made to stay compliant in preparation of future certifications of the program. We have been working on and will continue to update and change activities to accommodate new manual changes. If the City should initiate and complete other prerequisites needed to remain a CRS Class 2, additional staffing and resources should be budgeted.
- Existing stormwater basin inspections (approximately 80) and compliance reviews were completed. Stormwater plans are required and reviewed for any new developments occurring in the City. We are getting roughly 75% compliance with basin maintenance. Some basins are habitual violators with many that have not conducted maintenance for a number of years. Per the City's legal counsel, it should be a priority of the City to try and initiate maintenance agreements on some of these privately owned basins and stormwater structures, that may not have had defined maintenance agreements established when the development occurred.

Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan/Flood Management Plan Mitigation Strategies found in the 2020 LaSalle County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan_Ottawa's Risk Assessment and updated in 2022.

1. Mitigation Strategy: Inform residents on the importance of obtaining flood insurance and understanding their flood insurance policy.

Hazard Addressed: Floods

Responsible Entity or Person: Building and Zoning Official/ Ottawa Flood Commission

Benefit/Cost: High/Low

Priority: High, no change since 2015 Plan
Cost: Letters to residents/ Website maintenance

Revenue Source: Local Funds

Resources: Insurance agencies/ Federal Emergency Management Agency

Benefits: Residents should be aware that their flood insurance policy may not cover basement backups. A separate sewer and drain policy may

be required

Deadline: 1 Year / Annual Outreach **Mitigation Type:** Education and Awareness

CRS Action Strategy Classification: Property Protection Activity Activity Status: Carried over into the activities list for this plan.

2023 Comment: This is completed through several mailings and outreach initiatives on an annual basis.

2. Mitigation Strategy: Vertically realign Green Street to prevent the east side of Ottawa from being isolated during a flood event.

Hazard Addressed: Floods

Responsible Entity or Person: City Council

Benefit/Cost: High/High

Priority: Very High, no change since 2015 Plan **Cost:** Design/ Engineering/ Construction

Revenue Source: Local Funds/ State and Federal Funding

Resources: Federal Emergency Management Agency/ Illinois Emergency Management Agency/ Illinois Department of Commerce and

Economic Opportunity

Benefits: Provide emergency responders access to the east side of Ottawa at all times.

Deadline: 5 Years

Mitigation Type: Structure and Infrastructure Projects

CRS Action Strategy Classification: Structural project Activity

Activity Status: Carried over into the activities list for this plan. The City applied for PDM funding from FEMA and have been awarded.

Project is in initial implementation phase.

2023 Comment: Construction is intended to begin in 2024.

3. Mitigation Strategy: Dredge and rechannel the Fox River near the Illinois and Michigan Canal Aqueduct.

Hazard Addressed: Floods

Responsible Entity or Person: State of Illinois

Benefit/Cost: Medium/High

Priority: High, no change since 2015 Plan

Cost: Engineering/ Construction

Revenue Source: Various Sources- General Fund/ Special Appropriation/ Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Resources: Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Benefits: Lessen localized flooding.

Deadline: 5 Years

Mitigation Type: Structures and Infrastructures

CRS Action Strategy Classification: Structural project and natural resource protection activity

Activity Status: Carried over into the activities list for this plan. Army Corps of Engineers conducted a cost-benefit analysis and project does

not meet funding requirements through ACOE funding. Continue to seek funding for project

2023 Comment: Unaware of any change/update to this strategy.

4. Mitigation Strategy: Participate in the development of a regional stormwater management ordinance that will reduce flooding and protect lives, property, and the environment.

Hazard Addressed: Floods

Responsible Entity or Person: City Council/ City Engineer

Benefit/Cost: Medium/Medium

Priority: High, no change since 2015 Plan

Cost: Staff Time

Revenue Source: Local Funds

Resources: Residents/ Public Officials/ Hydrologists/ Attorneys/ Planning Officials

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Benefits: Minimize the adverse impact of stormwater on communities.

Deadline: 4 Years

Mitigation Type: Local Plans and Regulations

CRS Action Strategy Classification: Preventative activity

Activity Status: Carried over into the activities list for this plan. Continue to check status with LaSalle County and other surrounding Counties

2023 Comment: Unaware of any change/update to this strategy.

5. Mitigation Strategy: Assist the Ottawa YMCA with identifying solutions to minimize flood damage.

Hazard Addressed: Floods

Responsible Entity or Person: Ottawa YMCA/ City Engineer/ Building and Zoning Official

Benefit/Cost: High/High

Priority: Medium, no change since 2015 Plan

Cost: Staff Time

Revenue Source: Local Funds

Resources: YMCA Staff/ City Engineers

Benefits: Provide long-term protection for an important community organization.

Deadline: 3 Years

Mitigation Type: Structure and Infrastructure Plans

CRS Action Strategy Classification: Property protection Activity

Activity Status: Carried over into the activities list for this plan. The YMCA is near ground breaking for new facility located outside of the

special flood hazard area.

2023 Comment: New YMCA is nearing completion. A buyout/demolition grant has been applied for to demolish the old YMCA and turn the area into open space.

6. Mitigation Strategy: Continue with the installation of separation ejectors to limit combined sewer overflows.

Hazard Addressed: Floods

Responsible Entity or Person: City Plumbing Inspector/ Engineer

Benefit/Cost: High/High

Priority: High, no change since 2015 Plan **Cost:** Design/ Engineering/ Construction

Revenue Source: Local Funds Resources: City Engineer

Benefits: Minimize pollution of soils and waterways. Minimize damage and property loss to structures

Deadline: 1-5 Years

Mitigation Type: Structure and Infrastructure Projects

CRS Action Strategy Classification: Property protection Activity Activity Status: Carried over into the activities list for this plan.

2023 Comment: This program has a few participants each year; however, the program could be reevaluated.

 Mitigation Strategy: Continue to pursue activities that will maintain the city's Community Rating System score to help residents save on flood insurance premiums.

Hazard Addressed: Floods

Responsible Entity or Person: City Building and Zoning Official, City Engineer, Ottawa Flood Commission

Benefit/Cost: High/Medium

Priority: High, no change since 2015 Plan Cost: Varies depending on activities/ projects

Revenue Source: Local Funds

Resources: Insurance Services Office/ Illinois Department of Natural Resources/ Illinois Emergency Management Agency

Benefits: Lower flood insurance premiums for residents/ Activities reduce the impact of flooding.

Deadline: 1-5 Years (ongoing)

Mitigation Type: Local Plans and Regulations

CRS Action Strategy Classification: Preventative and Public Information Activity

Activity Status: Carried over into the activities list for this plan.

2023 Comment: City has been given required updates needed to maintain the current CRS Class 2 (update building codes, develop watershed management plan, develop flood management plan, etc.). However, many of the items have not been completed. City must decide what direction to take regarding CRS involvement and budget accordingly.

8. Mitigation Strategy: Construct a fire station on the north side of the city.

Hazard Addressed: Tornadoes, Winter Storms, Extreme Temps, Dangerous Winds, Lightning, Hail

Responsible Entity or Person: City Council

Benefit/Cost: High/High

Priority: High, no change since 2015 Plan

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Cost: Design/ Engineering/ Construction/ Equipment/ Staffing

Revenue Source: Local Funds

Resources: N/A

Benefits: Provide increased fire protection to all businesses and residents within the City of Ottawa. Lowered insurance rates city wide.

Deadline: 5 Years

Mitigation Type: Structures and Infrastructures Project

CRS Action Strategy Classification: Emergency Services Activity Activity Status: Carried over into the activities list for this plan.

2023 Comment: Unaware of any change/update to this strategy.

9. Mitigation Strategy: Develop and implement an Emergency Operations Plan for snow removal.

Hazard Addressed: Winter Storms, Dangerous Winds

Responsible Entity or Person: City Council Benefit/Cost: High/High

Priority: Medium, no change since 2015 Plan

Cost: Staff Time

Revenue Source: Local Funds Resources: Ready.gov

Benefits: A plan to efficiently remove snow will ensure that emergency responders can access all parts of the city.

Deadline: 1 Year

Mitigation Type: Local Plans and Regulations

CRS Action Strategy Classification: Natural Resource Protection, Preventative Activity

Activity Status: Carried over into the activities list for this plan. Check with public works regarding implementation and need for review.

2023 Comment: Unaware of any change/update to this strategy. Check with public works regarding the status of this.

 Mitigation Strategy: Engage in a regional discussion on the implementation of best practices for activating early warning sirens and other warning systems during storm events.

Hazard Addressed: Tornado and Dangerous Winds

Responsible Entity or Person: A regional group consisting of County Emergency Management Agencies for Bureau/ LaSalle/ Marshall/ Putnam/ and Stark Counties, Local Fire Departments, Fire Protection Districts, County Sheriff's Departments, Local Police Departments, and Local Officials

Benefit/Cost: High/Low

Priority: Very High, no change since 2015 Plan

Cost: Staff Time

Revenue Source: Local Funds

Resources: NOAA/ Illinois Emergency Management Agency/ Policies for other communities

Benefits: Regional guidelines on activating early warning sirens can lessen public confusion and save lives.

Deadline: 1 Year

Mitigation Type: Local Plans and Regulations

CRS Action Strategy Classification: Emergency services and preventative activity

Activity Status: Carried over into the activities list for this plan.

2023 Comment: Unaware of any change/update to this strategy. Check with Fire Department, Police Department, and LaSalle County Emergency Management for updates.

11. Mitigation Strategy: Work together with partners to share resources and to create opportunities for the public to be engaged and informed about the risks of natural hazards and mitigation activities.

Hazard Addressed: Tornadoes, Floods, Winter Storms, Extreme Temps, Dangerous Winds, Lightning, Drought, Hail

Responsible Entity or Person: City Council

Benefit/Cost: Medium/Medium

Priority: High, no change since 2015 Plan

Cost: Staff Time

Revenue Source: Local Funds

Resources: Other communities/ North Central Illinois Council of Governments, Flood Commission, Upper Illinois River Flood Alliance

Benefits: Collaboration provides opportunities to share ideas and resources.

Deadline: 1-5 Years

Mitigation Type: Education and Awareness

CRS Action Strategy Classification: Preventative and Property Protection Activity

Activity Status: Carried over into the activities list for this plan.

2023 Comment: Unaware of any change/update to this strategy. City staff and departments continue to participate in training and meetings dealing with natural hazards and mitigation strategies. This strategy is vague and should be evaluated.

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12. Mitigation Strategy: Develop educational information and publicize, including preventative and preparedness safety procedures, for residents regarding all identified risks.

Hazard Addressed: All identified hazards Responsible Entity or Person: City Staff

Benefit/Cost: Medium/Low

Priority: Low, no change, new activity for this plan.

Cost: Staff time

Revenue Source: Federal, state, local or grant funds

Resources: Federal Emergency Management Agency/ Illinois Emergency Management Agency

Benefits: Increased awareness and preparedness

Deadline: 2 Years

Mitigation Type: Education and Awareness Programs

CRS Action Strategy Classification: Preventative and Property protection activity

Activity Status: New mitigation activity for this plan in 2020.

2023 Comment: The City is utilizing more social media to cover these topics. The City's Facebook page has been down for nearly a year and needs to be fixed. Facebook is the most effective social media tool for the City to disseminate information. The City continues to develop and update outreach for flooding and other natural hazards risks. This item is vague and should be evaluated.

13. Mitigation Strategy: Update City's Emergency Response Plan at least every 2 years. Include pre-planning emergency facilities such as

warming centers temporary shelters to the plan.

Hazard Addressed: Multiple (Flooding, Tornado, Extreme Temperatures, Etc.

Response Entity or Person: City and County EMS

Benefit/Cost: High/Low

Priority: High, new activity for this plan

Cost: Staff time, Facility cost Revenue Source: Local

Resources: City, County, Red Cross, other

Benefits: Provide sheltering list options before a disaster

Deadline: 2 Years

Mitigation Type: Local plans and preparedness

CRS Action Strategy Classification: Emergency Services, preventative, and property protection activity

Activity Status: New mitigation activity for this plan.

2023 Comment: Unaware of any change/update to this strategy. Coordinate with PD, FD, and LaSalle

County Emergency Management to update these plans and procedures.

14. Mitigation Strategy: Discourage development in the flood plain to enhance open space, natural floodplain function, decrease emergence

response, and lessen property damage Hazard Addressed: Flooding Response Entity or Person: City Benefit/Cost: High/Medium

Priority: High, new activity for this plan

Cost: Staff time Revenue Source: Local Resources: City, IDNR, FEMA

Benefits: Enhance/increase open space, natural floodplain function/habitat, decrease emergency response, lessen property damage

Deadline: 2 Years (update Municipal Code and Floodplain Ordinance)

Mitigation Type: Local plans and preparedness.

CRS Action Strategy Classification: Natural resource protection activity

Activity Status: New mitigation activity for this plan.

2023 Comment: Current ordinances and codes seem to be upholding this strategy within the City of Ottawa.

15. Mitigation Strategy: Create and Implement a City Tree Inventory and Tree Management Plan

Hazard Addressed: Tornado, Thunderstorm Response Entity or Person: City of Ottawa

Benefit/Cost: High/Medium

Priority: High, new activity for this plan Cost: Staff time, Contractors, Equipment

Revenue Source: Local, Potential grant opportunities

Resources: City, IDNR, USDA-Forestry

Benefits: Lessen property damage, Enhance tree diversity, Enhance wildlife/habitat, lessen public fear of tree damage, reduce carbon footprint,

decrease damage, loss of life

Deadline: Ongoing. Evaluate annually

Mitigation Type: Local plans and preparedness

CRS Action Strategy Classification: Natural resource protection, preventative, property protection activity

Activity Status: New mitigation activity for this plan.

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Phone: 815-433-0161 Fax: 815-433-2270 www.cityofottawa.org 2023 Comment: City Tree Inventory has been completed. City Tree Management Plan is currently being implemented. Annual meeting with City departments and tree board should be scheduled to assess implementation thus far.

16. Mitigation Strategy: Post event damage assessment coordination

Hazard Addressed: Multiple Response Entity or Person: City Benefit/Cost: Medium/Low

Priority: Medium, new activity for this plan

Cost: Staff time

Revenue Source: Local, State, Federal, independent humanitarian groups (i.e. Red Cross)

Resources: City,

Benefits: Reduce duplicate assessments, reduce potential of conflicting assessments, provide streamlined accurate assessments to property

owners

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Deadline: Coordinate within 1 year.

Mitigation Type: Local preparedness and coordination CRS Action Strategy Classification: Preventative activity Activity Status: New mitigation activity for this plan.

2023 Comment: Unaware of any change/update to this strategy.

17. Mitigation Strategy: Create a City Urban Flood Plan

Hazard Addressed: Flooding Response Entity or Person: City Benefit/Cost: High/Medium

Priority: Medium, new activity for this plan

Cost: Staff time

Revenue Source: Local (potential grant funding for development of plan)

Resources: City, IDNR-OWR, FEMA

Benefits: Reduce flooding and damage to property occurring outside of floodzones, enhance habitat, improve water quality

Deadline: 2-5 year Plan Development.

Mitigation Type: Local preparedness, preventative measure

CRS Action Strategy Classification: Preventative and property protection activity

Activity Status: New mitigation activity for this plan.

2023 Comment: Unaware of any change/update to this strategy. Most flooding and loss occur in areas outside of the "mapped floodzones". Urban Flood Planning should become a priority for the City.

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