



# City of Tampa

*Jane Castor, Mayor*

## Mobility Department

**Vik Bhide, Director**  
306 East Jackson Street, 6N  
Tampa, Florida 33602

Office (813) 274-3101

Fax: (813) 274-8901

Date: March 28, 2023

To: Alexander P. Awad, CRS Coordinator, Chief Planning Engineer, Stormwater Engineering Division, Mobility Department

From: Ben Allushuski, P.E., CFM, Engineer III, Stormwater Engineering Division, Mobility Department

Re: City of Tampa Floodplain Management Plan Progress Report for 2022-2023 Reporting Period

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The City of Tampa participates in the Community Rating System (CRS) administered by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The CRS is a voluntary program aimed at reducing flood risk in participating communities through the implementation of flood mitigation practices. As a CRS Class 5 community (effective October 1, 2019) the program requires annual recertification of the community's flood mitigation activities and a full audit every three (3) years. Documented activities include the issuance of elevation certificates for construction within the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA), records of inspections of City stormwater systems, and annual public outreach events to name a few. As a result of the City meeting and exceeding minimum CRS standards, policy holders in the City currently receive a 25% discount on flood insurance premiums.

As a member of the Hillsborough County Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS), the City receives CRS credit for Activity 510 and the Floodplain Management Plan (FMP). The LMS Plan is valid for five (5) years, after which time the Plan must be updated. In 2020, the Plan was formally updated and in August 2020 the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) approved the updated LMS Plan for compliance with the Federal hazard mitigation planning requirements resulting from the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 as contained in 44 CFR 201.6. The updated Plan is approved for a period of five (5) years until July 27, 2025. The LMS also submitted the Annual Update for the Plan to the FDEM on January 19, 2023, as required by 27P-22.004 of the Florida Administrative Code.

The annual progress report detailing the goals of the Floodplain Management Plan are as follows:

## **2022-2023 Floodplain Management Plan Progress Report and Goals**

### **1. *Ensure that the existing stormwater system is maintained to maximum capacity***

Staff from the Mobility Department regularly inspect and clean stormwater pipes, inlets, and ditches and coordinate with engineering staff in taking action to prevent or reduce flooding. Zone-based maintenance teams regularly inspect and clear blocked stormwater systems throughout the City, with the intent of reducing the number of reactive service requests. In the calendar year 2022, approximately 71 miles of stormwater pipe were video inspected and/or cleaned by maintenance staff. Approximately 23 miles of ditches were mowed and maintained to ensure that conveyance capacity was available during rainfall events. Approximately 250 City-owned detention and retention ponds are inspected and maintained on a periodic cycle in accordance with permit conditions issued by the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD). Stormwater pump stations are tested regularly to ensure proper functioning.

The City's Stormwater Maintenance and Operations Division has a contract to dredge the canals around the City. By doing so, the City can assure that the stormwater conveyance ways and canals are clear of brush and debris and free flowing so as to aid in the discharge of floodwaters. The City's Stormwater Maintenance and Operations Division has also implemented a ditch monitoring maintenance program that utilizes Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for the purpose of monitoring and scheduling the frequency with which the City's ditches are maintained.

In 2003, an annual non-ad valorem Service Assessment that pays for operations and maintenance of the existing stormwater system was implemented. Services include street sweeping, pond maintenance, pipeline system cleaning, outfall cleaning, ditch maintenance and miscellaneous micro-projects ancillary to maintenance activities. Also adopted in 2003, but implemented in 2016, is the Stormwater Improvement Assessment that is an annual non-ad valorem assessment that pays for capital improvements associated with the stormwater system in the City. Improvements include system capacity increases, treatment facilities such as ponds, ditches and baffle boxes, new pipelines and box culverts, pump stations, backflow valves, inlets, curb and gutter systems, as well as roadway regrading to improve flow patterns.

During calendar year 2022, residents registered 302 flood-related complaints either through the City's website or placed to the 24-hour call center. If the maintenance staff is unable to resolve the problem, it is referred to the Stormwater Engineering Division where it is evaluated for potential design solutions and prioritized as a future Capital Improvement Project (CIP). Prior to anticipated rainfall events, Stormwater Maintenance and Operations Division staff inspect flood prone areas for blocked drainage inlets and ditches. Stormwater systems are monitored by staff during periods of heavy rainfall.

## **2. *Address stormwater flooding for the 5-year rainfall event***

Design of new stormwater systems is based on a 5-year rainfall return interval. A 5-year rainfall is a rainfall event with a 20% probability of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. Designing systems to convey runoff for a 5-year storm provides reasonable protection against high intensity, short duration events commonly experienced in Tampa.

During calendar year 2022, fifty-two (52) stormwater Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects were either in design, construction, or completed. Work performed by private consultants and property acquisitions also contributed to flood risk mitigation through the CIP program. The Fiscal Year 2023 CIP total budget for all projects was approximately \$29.8 million.

The City has leveraged grant funding through SWFWMD and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) towards flood mitigation efforts, water quality improvements and addressing sea level rise. Prominently, a \$32 million SWFWMD Cooperative Funding grant (N773) for the design and construction of the Cypress Street Outfall project was recently completed. Currently under construction is a \$32.2 million grant for the Southeast Seminole Heights Flood Relief project (N949), and construction recently started on an approximately \$45 million project for the Lower Peninsula Southeast Region Stormwater Improvements. Legislative appropriations of \$1,000,000 and \$75,000 were also granted and administered through agreements with FDEP for the Hyde Park Groundwater Diversion project and a Davis Islands Pilot Study, respectively. The City was also recently awarded \$5 million through FDEP's Resilient Florida Grant Program for the Lamb Avenue Canal Rehabilitation for Flood Relief project. The grant agreement will be funded by the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) under the American Rescue Plan Act.

As previously stated above, the City of Tampa Mobility Department implemented an Improvement Assessment in 2016. The annual assessment fee pays for capital improvements associated with the stormwater system. The amount billed by the City in FY 2022 was \$16,044,954.92. These funds will be used for projects only within the Central and Lower Basin Improvement Area.

The City of Tampa Mobility Department has implemented a supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system that allows engineers in the office and maintenance crews in the field to remotely monitor and operate stormwater pump stations for flood prevention purposes, as well as to receive real-time information on ditch stages so that preventative measures can be taken when emergency flood stages are approaching.

## **3. *Ensure new and redevelopment is done in a manner consistent with protecting both property and contents from flooding***

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) guidelines for permitting new development in the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) are followed in the issuance of construction permits.

Permitting, Zoning, and Stormwater Engineering staff ensure compliance with City of Tampa stormwater site development regulations pursuant to Stormwater Technical Standards. Stormwater Technical Standards include on-site retention and attenuation requirements for residential sites exceeding 50% impervious area and water quality treatment for new commercial developments. The Stormwater Engineering Division maintains and publishes a list of properties prone to localized flooding known as the "Stormwater Advisory List." Development in these areas is subject to additional storage and attenuation requirements to mitigate adverse impacts to surrounding or downstream properties.

#### **4. *Reduce Coastal Flooding and Repetitive Loss properties***

The Stormwater Engineering Division continues to monitor the information on repetitive flood loss properties provided by FEMA through the NFIP. Each year the Stormwater Engineering Division informs over 600 residents that live in close proximity to repetitive loss properties of the flood risk in their area. Information about the National Flood Insurance Program and FEMA assistance to homeowners for flood-proofing properties are provided to the residents, as well as information on City services to assist residents in protecting their homes from flooding.

#### **5. *Ensure the public is informed on its role in flood protection***

Staff from the Stormwater Engineering Division regularly participate in outreach events to educate the public on flood protection measures and environmental stewardship. The City will participate in the Tampa Bay Water Days event at the Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI) on March 24-25, 2023. City staff will operate a booth promoting stormwater pollution prevention best practices, public reporting of illicit discharges, and flood preparedness. Staff will also distribute reusable grocery bags with the City's pollution line (813-274-3101) to remind the public to report pollution, as well as hand-out bone-shaped pet waste bags to encourage picking up after pets, and educational brochures on flooding and hurricane preparedness.

In addition to the repetitive loss mail outs that are sent out on an annual basis, the Stormwater Engineering Division also sends out an educational Flood Protection brochure as an insert in all utility bills starting in February and concluding in March of the same year. The brochures will also be included in all e-bills. The Stormwater Engineering Division also participates in various other public events to inform residents about flood protection and staff are always able to help residents individually if they have questions about protecting their property. There are also numerous resources available online through the City's Flood Protection website that includes helpful information and additional links.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the Floodplain Management Plan or the Floodplain Management Progress Report, please contact me by email at [ben.allushuski@tampagov.net](mailto:ben.allushuski@tampagov.net).