

7.7 2021 Flood Mitigation and Resilience Annual Update, CD2022-0324, April 27, 2022

My name is Charlie Lund and I represent the Flood Mitigation Infrastructure sub-committee of the Hillhurst Sunnyside Community Association. For almost nine years our group has been advocating for adequate flood protection for our inner city neighbourhood.

We are generally supportive of the flood resilience program described in this annual update, with one important exception: the Kensington Community Drainage Improvement Project.

First, there are things we support.

We are pleased to see construction begin on the Upper Plateau Separation project. This important project will divert stormwater from outside Sunnyside directly to the Bow River so it does not flood our community when the river flow is high.

On the Community Drainage Improvement Project List the Hillhurst Pump Station #4 is second from the top of projects not yet started. Its construction window is 2024-2026. To meet this schedule we anticipate that design work should begin later this year.

We agree that a new or expanded reservoir on the Bow River upstream of Calgary is the best way to achieve the city's goal of resilience to a 1:200 flood. Along with the Calgary River Communities Action Group we have been communicating regularly with Alberta Environment and Parks. In these conversations we have stressed the need for upstream mitigation on the Bow River, including all the recommendations of the Bow River Working Group. A new or expanded reservoir is the most important of these, but a continuing operational agreement with TransAlta for the Ghost Reservoir, a new capability for rapid drawdown of the Ghost Reservoir, and operational strategy adjustments for Barrier Lake should not be overlooked. - What more can we do to support the City of Calgary in advocating for improved upstream mitigation?

We support the Memorial Parkway Program and its commitment to the protection of the Hillhurst-Sunnyside community while maintaining and enhancing the experience for all users. We support the priority given to completing the flood barrier and groundwater protection without necessarily waiting for finalization of the other aspects of the program, important as they may be.

With respect to provincial Flood Hazard mapping we are pleased that areas behind permanent flood barriers will be identified as "protected". The development restrictions for areas at risk of flooding are not appropriate for resilient communities. Will the city recognize protected flood fringe areas as flood resilient for the purpose of development, building and renovation rules?

There are a number of other flood mitigation projects in Hillhurst Sunnyside in design or construction. With these, and the traffic calming and streetscape projects all happening at the same time the opportunity should not be missed to collaborate between projects so as to more cost-effectively put streets back better than they were before.

We are disappointed that the city has strayed so far from the Northwest Inner City Drainage Engineering Study when designing the Kensington Community Drainage Improvement project. We do not want the benefits of the Upper Plateau Separation project to be subverted by the transfer of excess water into Sunnyside. Even after several meetings we remain concerned that the proposed option could result in flooding in Sunnyside.

With respect to predicting floods, Calgary's Flood Resilience Plan says "we may only have 24 hours or less to confirm what's coming". We agree. With this in mind we cannot understand why the city is proposing to replace the plan for a permanent Hillhurst Pump Station #3 with a number of temporary pumps. As we learned during the 2013 flood emergency it is challenging to implement temporary flood mitigation measures in the limited time available at the same time as traffic jams slow response times. Hillhurst Pump Station #3 should be built.

Will the city review and if warranted adjust the Kensington Community Drainage Improvement project to ensure that the overall intent of the Northwest Inner City Drainage Engineering Study is met? Will the city review and consider reversing the plan to replace Hillhurst Pump Station #3 with temporary pumps?

Thank you for your time and attention.

