


Lisa McNeilly

FROM	NAME & TITLE	LISA MCNEILLY, SUSTAINABILITY DIRECTOR	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING 8 TH FLOOR, 417 EAST FAYETTE STREET		
	SUBJECT	CITY COUNCIL BILL #21-0002R/ INVESTIGATIVE HEARING – INLAND FLOOD MITIGATION		

DATE:

TO

The Honorable President and
 Members of the City Council
 City Hall, Room 400
 100 North Holliday Street

February 22, 2021

The Office of Sustainability is in receipt of City Council Bill #21-0002R, which is for the purpose of inviting the Acting Director of the Office of Emergency Management, the Acting Director of the Department of Public Works, the Director of the Department of Planning, the Director of the Office of Sustainability, and other representatives of these agencies to provide an update on efforts to mitigate and prevent inland flooding, which is not covered by the recently passed Nuisance Flood Plan.

The Office of Sustainability supports several efforts related to flood mitigation and planning in Baltimore. First, the Office maintains the 2018 Disaster Preparedness and Planning Project (DP3), which details the City’s comprehensive strategy to mitigate existing and future hazards (including flooding) and adapt to the effects of climate change. The document presents plans to mitigate or eliminate threats and prevent damage to critical infrastructure and enhances the City’s capacity to cope with future threats.

As noted, the Office also recently finalized a Nuisance Flood Plan, as mandated by the State of Maryland, House Bill 1427 (2019). Nuisance flooding, known as “sunny day flooding,” is high tide flooding that causes disruptions to daily activities. It can occur with or without precipitation and is expected to increase in the coming years due to anticipated sea level rise. Based on guidance from the state, the Plan assesses the waterfront to identify areas that are prone to nuisance flooding, with the intention to map, track, and catalog nuisance flooding that happens from 2020 until 2025.

The Office also enforces floodplain regulations throughout the City as part of participating in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). We review permits and development projects, and perform other required activities (like public outreach to increase flood awareness) to all residents to ensure compliance with the NFIP. We are required to adopt the new Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps by June 16, 2021. As part of that approval process, we also plan to submit proposed updates to the floodplain policy (Article 7, Division 1 of the City Code) based on FEMA requirements.

Another component of our work is the Community Rating System (CRS). We were recently recertified at a Class 5 status in this voluntary program, the highest rating achieved by a Maryland jurisdiction. Because of this rating, residents within the regulated floodplain are eligible for up to a 25% discount on flood insurance policies – a savings of around \$800,000 each year.

The Office of Sustainability supports City Council Bill #21-0002R.

cc: Ms. Natasha Mehu, Mayor's Office
Ms. Nina Themelis, Mayor's Office
Mr. Matt Stegman, City Council President's Office
Ms. Nikki Thompson, City Council President's Office
Ms. Natawna Austin, Council Services
Mr. Matthew Peters, Council Services
Ms. Marcia Collins, Department of Public Works
Ms. Kim Grove, Department of Public Works
Chief James Wallace, BCFD/Office of Emergency Management
Ms. Jennifer Meleady, Office of Emergency Management
Mr. Chris Ryer, Department of Planning