

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: SEPTEMBER 20, 2023

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JOHN HILL, CHAIR, AD HOC STORMWATER UTILITY AND FLOOD MITIGATION ADVISORY GROUP

TITLE: Support of Flood Mitigation Pilot Grant Program Updates under Consideration

ISSUE: Consideration of changes to the Flood Mitigation Pilot Grant to remove the requirement to provide documentation of past flooding for eligibility, and to increase the maximum allowable grant match for association common area properties.

RECOMMENDATION: The Ad Hoc Stormwater Utility and Flood Mitigation Advisory Group supports staff recommendations to be presented to City Council at the October 24, 2023, Legislative Session as follows:

1. Remove the requirement to provide documentation of past flooding back to July 8, 2019, to allow for all properties eligibility to apply for the grant regardless of whether the property flooded in the past.
2. The framework that increases the maximum allowable grant match for common areas from \$5,000 to \$25,000.

DISCUSSION: The Ad Hoc Group is aware of the many successful application for the Flood Mitigation Pilot Grant has received since it was first launched in August 2021 as part of the new Flood Action Alexandria Program. The Group supports the approach to incentivize private property owners to install flood mitigation practices to protect their property and people from the increased urban flash flooding occurring because of Climate Change. The Grant program is a good way for property owners to get some more immediate relief while City staff works on Spot Improvement and Large Capacity capital projects that take longer to design and construct. We believe that adequate time has passed to target properties that flooded by requiring the documentation of past flooding, so we support removing that requirement and opening it more broadly to all properties in the City to allow for properties to not only receive the grant to protect against repeat flooding, but to receive grant funding for proactively installing flood mitigation practices.

The Ad Hoc Group has heard from the community that there is a desire for properties with association common areas to receive grants above the current \$5,000 level for flood mitigation practices installed on common areas given that all tenants have use of this property. Staff has

worked with the Ad Hoc on potential approaches and supports the current staff recommendation to provide up to \$25,000 of matching reimbursement grant funding for the installation of eligible flood mitigation practices on association common area properties.

Staff will continue to work with the Ad Hoc in considering the appropriate level of reimbursement as the program continues to mature.

CC: Daniel Medina, Flood Action Program Manager, DPI

Jesse E. Maines, Stormwater Management Division Chief, T&ES