

FLOOD RISK: A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

What We've Heard: Downtown & Taiga Nova Eco-Industrial Park

This document is an excerpt from the full report titled *Flood Risk: A Community Conversation Engagement Report for the period from July 29 – September 1, 2020*.

Below are the common themes specific to Downtown & Taiga Nova Eco-Industrial Park that emerged through public engagement. The overarching themes follow.

- Strong sentiment that downtown needs help now more than ever, and that the state of social profit organizations, small businesses must be considered in any decisions to be made.
- Residents expressed desire to have the berm complete, and finish mitigation, because it is considered the most economical option.
- Riverwalk Villa residents expressed uncertainty and concern about how and when structural mitigation will be complete.
- Mixed feedback about buyout option:
 - Phased approach - buy from residents when they are ready to move in 10 or 15 years
 - Buyouts of Longboat Landing, Waterways and Ptarmigan Court would stabilize housing market and be better for community long term
 - Concerns of buyout's economic effects on remaining areas (lost business/investment)
 - Would need to be "made whole" to consider a buyout
- Many residents stated that flood damage was due to sewage back-up/infrastructure failure, not overland flood waters.
- Some residents from the Hill Drive area are confident that flooding in their neighbourhood was the result of storm sewers backing up and creating overland flood issues that were not the result of a breach or failure of the current structural mitigation solution, and have asked to be bought out.
- Some residents expressed concerns about community safety: health impacts of storm/sanitation sewer impact; safety code consistency issues - pre-existing versus new code/ grandfathered; damage to roads due to flood (undermining, sinkholes, etc.); foundations/structural integrity of condos.
- Desire to see full financial impact of proposed recommended approaches to flood risk.
- Frustration about RMWB asking for undamaged property to be brought up to code.
- Ideas for alternate/additional mitigation efforts include:
 - Backflow/slucice gate valves for individual properties downtown
 - Homeowner grant program/support for valves
 - Temporary pumping for open air ditches; clarify flood drains
 - Make sandbags available for public use in flood season

FLOOD RISK: A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

Several overarching themes emerged through public engagement and were grouped in alignment with the primary objective areas of the RMWB 2020 Flood Recovery Campaign Plan:

Social (enhance the social environment and support regional governance)

- Many residents had concerns about mental health and their children's mental health.
- There is close to unanimous agreement that decisions must be made promptly and that timelines need to be communicated.
- Firm timelines need to be established and adhered to in order to allow residents to plan for their own future.
- Confusion about possible buyout processes and outcomes.

Built (enable effective reconstruction of our community, incorporating strategies to increase resilience)

- Many residents watched water come up through the sewer systems and are very interested in very interested in an investigation about how and why this happened, and what preventative measures will be taken.
- DRP funding is taking too long.
- There is a lack of trust that the RMWB will reclaim bought out properties in a timely manner, which stems from house foundations still being in the ground following the 2017 buyout of slope-impacted homes/downtown expropriations.

Economic (reinvigorate economic recovery and business resumption)

- Many residents were very concerned around the devaluation of their property, and the financial implications related to that.
- There is concern about the ripple effect of buyouts on businesses, especially in the Downtown area.
- If buyouts are pursued, 2020 assessment values are not acceptable.
- The perception exists that the release of the report has negatively impacted property values in flood-affected areas, and that realtors will not list properties right now.
- There is a lack of clarity on the availability of insurance (present and future).

Natural (assess and remediate the environmental impacts of the flood)

- Many residents are interested in the possible outcome of what would happen to lands if bought out.
- Many residents expressed concerns about health due to storm and sanitary back-up, and safety due to flooding undermining roads and structural foundations.