

City Council**Notice of Motion**

MM20.24	ACTION			Ward: All
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Reducing Runoff and Mitigating Flooding - by Mayor Olivia Chow, seconded by Councillor Jennifer McKelvie

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Mayor Olivia Chow, seconded by Councillor Jennifer McKelvie, recommends that:

1. City Council request the City Manager, in coordination with the General Manager, Toronto Water, the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer and the Executive Director, Environment and Climate, to report to City Council no later than the fourth quarter of 2024 on:
 - a. existing private property stormwater mitigation and adaptation programs offered by the City and their uptake;
 - b. an assessment of stormwater mitigation and adaptation programs previously offered for private property by the City that have been discontinued;
 - c. new or discontinued stormwater mitigation and adaptation programs for private property that could be established in the short-term;
 - d. new or discontinued stormwater mitigation and adaptation programs for private property that will require additional review and planning prior to implementation; and
 - e. public input into what programs and incentives would provide the most benefit to residential property owners to decrease impermeable surfaces and mitigate runoff;
2. City Council request the Executive Director, Environment and Climate, in collaboration with relevant Divisions, to include in the forthcoming planned resiliency report recommendations for the City of Toronto to lead by example and increase green infrastructure in boulevards, streets, parking lots, and opportunities to include green infrastructure in large-scale flood mitigation projects in their design as previously directed by City Council.
3. City Council request the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer, in consultation with the General Manager, Toronto Water and the Executive Director, Environment and Climate, through the planned consultations and development of a commercial parking levy, to assess opportunities to mitigate and adapt to stormwater runoff from large-scale industrial, commercial and institutional property paved surfaces.

Summary

As a result of climate change, Toronto is experiencing more frequent and severe storms, resulting in flooding events that impact our road and transit network, our homes and businesses, and our infrastructure. While the City must invest in meeting our emissions reduction goals, we must also invest in mitigating the impacts of climate change and making our city more resilient.

In April 2024, City Council directed staff to better integrate climate resilience across all City of Toronto operations, and to identify a list of climate resilience priorities for investment. While this work is underway, we know that flood mitigation and adaptation will be a critical component to our City's resilience strategy.

The City currently offers a Basement Flooding Protection Subsidy Program to help people install backwater valves and sump pumps, as well as free front-yard trees and subsidized backyard trees. In the past, the City offered low-cost rain barrels at Community Environment Days as part of the Voluntary Downspout Disconnection Program. This was discontinued over a decade ago. Investments in programs that help reduce paved areas, create more permeable surfaces, and increase groundwater absorption will help avoid floods. This helps people save money on clean up, save people's homes and basements from costly floods, and reduce pressure on the public infrastructure we all rely on.

While the City consults on broader stormwater mitigation policies that aim to reduce large-scale industrial, commercial and institutional paved surfaces that lead to flooding, it is essential that the City also hear from people across Toronto about how we can support homeowners, multi-residential property owners, and businesses in investing in green infrastructure and flood mitigation.

This motion asks staff to take stock of what stormwater mitigation programs we offer people, evaluate the success of past and present programs, and identify how we can offer more to help homeowners and businesses avoid costly floods.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM20.24

(<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2024/mm/bgrd/backgroundfile-247826.pdf>)