

**City of Des Moines**  
**Stormwater Infrastructure Advisory Committee**  
**2020 Annual Report to City Council**

As required in the current Stormwater Infrastructure Advisory Committee Policy and Rules, a brief summary of the 2020 activities of the committee and status of the committee goals are included for submission to the City Council in this report.

**Committee Overview and Formation**

The Des Moines Stormwater Advisory Committee has had a very productive first year. They have learned a lot about how the Des Moines Stormwater Utility functions, the short-term goals and the long-term challenges. They have had the opportunity to actively engage in several of the official committee goals which included the following:

- Monitoring progress on development and execution of the Stormwater Master Plan
- Providing feedback on the stormwater project prioritization process
- Providing feedback on the annual stormwater capital budgeting process
- Providing feedback on the stormwater ordinance/policy updates
- Engaging with stormwater public outreach/education initiatives within the City
- Helping to appropriately prioritize small/neighborhood stormwater issues in the context of the larger projects/programs

The committee was officially authorized as a Department of Public Works committee in January 2020. The committee policy and rules were submitted for receipt and filing by City Council at their February 24, 2020 meeting. The committee policy and rules were updated in May 2020 to include appointment of four members of the committee by the four ward City Council members. The updated committee policy and rules were submitted for receipt and filing along with appointment of the four City Council ward members by City Council at their May 18, 2020 meeting for a total of nine active committee members.

**Committee Quarterly Meeting Overviews**

The committee held their first official meeting on February 18, 2020 at the Municipal Service Center. The meeting was focused on review of the committee policy and rules, nominations for committee chair and vice-chair, an update of the City-Wide Stormwater Master Plan, and stormwater project, budget, funding, public outreach, and ordinance/policy updates. The committee was very active in their questions about all the topics.

The committee held their second meeting on May 19, 2020 via a virtual Microsoft Teams meeting due to the COVID shutdown of Des Moines city offices. The meeting saw the election of Gloria Hoffmann as chair and Jenni Klise as the vice-chair of the committee. Both were elected by a unanimous vote of the committee. The remainder of the meeting included a Stormwater Master Plan update by the selected consultant CDM Smith, updates on sump pump policies, stormwater planning and design ordinances, Birdland Levee repair process updates, and stormwater project, budget, and funding updates.

The committee held their third meeting on August 18, 2020 via a virtual Zoom meeting again due to the COVID shutdown of Des Moines city offices. CDM Smith gave an update on the kick-off workshop for the Stormwater Master Planning efforts. City staff gave an overview of the process how stormwater issues/complaints are submitted, tracked and addressed. A Des Moines Register article on flood risk was discussed. The stormwater ordinance update associated with the regional Capital Crossroads efforts was shared with the committee. The sump pump policy and public notification procedure was reviewed, and stormwater project, budget, and funding updates were discussed.

The committee held their fourth and final meeting of the year on November 17, 2020 via a Microsoft Teams meeting again due to the COVID shutdown of Des Moines city offices. CDM Smith continued the engagement with the SIAC with the review of the communication and outreach plan for the Stormwater Master Plan. There was significant discussion between CDM Smith, City Staff, and the SIAC members regarding the information gathered and how best to approach outreach to all of the residents in the City. The annual report was reviewed by the committee, and stormwater project, budget, and funding updates were discussed.

### **Committee Actions**

The first year of the committee included a lot of education of the committee members by city staff, but the committee also provided feedback to city staff on a variety of topics.

At all the committee meetings, staff provided updates on the status of the Stormwater Master Plan. Feedback and questions from the committee were responded to by staff. At the fourth (November) meeting, the Draft Public Outreach Plan was presented to the committee and feedback was provided from the committee.

The committee wanted to communicate to Council that the Stormwater Master Plan is an expensive but essential project. The committee feels strongly that in spite of the impact of COVID-19 on resources, the City must remain committed to the completion of identified stormwater projects in a timely manner.

For stormwater projects completed or in progress, the committee recommended that the roles of LOSST dollars and stormwater fees be conveyed to the public in multiple ways including Des Moines TV Channel, Facebook, City web page, the DM Register,

CITYVIEW, DM Waterworks billing inserts, and any other viable communication channel. This effort would confirm that these funds are being utilized as promised and this would help develop trust in the City stormwater operations. Additional communication channels are always being explored to reach more of the residents of the city.

The committee reviewed the sump pump discharge ordinances and the correspondence that city staff sent to residents when nuisance complaints were received. The committee felt that initial correspondence sent to the residents was too strongly worded. The committee provided feedback on the language and city staff is working to incorporate those changes to the correspondence.

The committee identified a flood risk tool that was included in a June 2020 Des Moines Register article. The tool was developed by the First Street Foundation that provided a tool for residents across the United States to type in their address and see the flood risk of properties. This included both areas within FEMA flood zones and areas at risk of flooding outside of the regulated flood zones. The tool showed the risk of flooding, severity of flooding, and flood mitigation recommendations. It was discussed whether this tool should be promoted by the City, but at the time it was determined that the Stormwater Master Planning work would be a better tool to education and promote education of the public about flood risk within Des Moines.

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