

Staff Report

File #: 16-261**Version:** 1**Date:** 9/12/2016**Item #:** 9.2a.

TO: Mayor and City Council**FROM:** Councilor Chuck Bennett, Ward 1**SUBJECT:**

Creating a task force to provide recommendations to City Council regarding how to proceed with updating Salem's Floodplain Maps

Ward(s): All Wards

Councilor(s): All Councilors

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

MOTION:

I move that the City create a task force to review the issues, evaluate the options, and return to City Council with recommendations regarding how to proceed with developing updated floodplain maps, and I further move the Mayor appoint three or four Councilors to be members of this task force.

DISCUSSION:

This motion is a follow up from the July 18, 2016, Council Work Session on the project to update Salem's 2000 *Stormwater Master Plan*. This project involves extensive data collection, surveying, and stormwater modeling in the city's creek basins. One potential work product from this project are updates to floodplain maps. Salem's current maps-technically, Flood Insurance Rate Maps-are acknowledged by both the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the City to be out-of-date and based on imprecise data and antiquated analytical methods. The technical and procedural aspects of delineating new floodplain boundaries are well defined and the updated maps would represent the best available information regarding risks of flooding in the city properties. Of concern, however, is how to consider the impacts to current owners and residents of properties, including properties that could be placed for the first time in a newly defined floodplain. Also a policy consideration are the impacts to future owners and residents of these same floodplain properties.

Floodplain mapping is a very complex issue involving public and private concerns within federal regulations and regional development. The task force would gain intimate knowledge of the policy considerations and be thoughtful advisors to staff and Council. I believe the Mayor should appoint three or four councilors to the task force and these councilors should come from wards that have seen flooding in the recent past. The task force should include subject matter experts from the

engineering, development, or business community, as well as one or more representatives from Battle Creek, Mill Creek, or Pringle Creek neighborhoods. Because of their familiarity with floodplain regulations and management, I believe Public Works should be assigned the lead role in organizing, scheduling, supporting, and guiding this task force in its discussions and deliberations.

I believe this task force should be given six months to fully review the issues and evaluate the options before returning to Council with recommendations regarding how best to proceed with floodplain mapping.

Attachments:

1. None

09/06/2016