

# **Lakewood & Knottwood Communities Consultation on Flood Prevention Held March 15, 2005 at Lakewood Hall**

## **Consultation Summary**

Attendance: 45

Main presenter: Paul Hoffart, Senior Engineer & Flood Prevention Project Leader for Wards 3,4 & 6, Drainage Services, City of Edmonton

### **Presentation**

Following introductions, Mr. Hoffart reviewed the drainage engineering findings for the two communities and discussed options for reducing the risk of flooding in the future. He noted that the findings showed better flood prevention requires action on the part of both the City and homeowners. System improvements for Lakewood and Knottwood under consideration by Drainage Services include:

- Building dry ponds and diverting surface stormwater to the ponds. The water would be held there until the underground system has the capacity to drain it away.
- Adding some new underground stormwater pipes to increase system capacity.
- Upgrading and increasing the size of inlets (catch basins) to improve the stormwater flow rate off the streets and into the system.
- Building a sealed, underground storage tank to relief sanitary system pressure. Sanitary water would be held there until the underground system has the capacity to drain it away.

The estimated cost of implementing these options is \$8.9 million. In addition, homeowners were asked to improve their own on-site drainage as much as possible. Options include:

- Better lot grading to ensure surface water gets away from the house.
- Repairing and maintaining good eavestroughs and downspouts.
- Having downspouts that channel water at least 6 feet away from the house. If an extension is not possible, to drain onto a splash pad.
- Installing and/or maintaining a backflow prevention valve.

### **Input from residents**

There were many clarifying questions about the presented options, mainly with regard to how water flows would be channelled to dry ponds, the sanitary storage tank and new underground pipes. It was noted by many residents that surface pooling is severe at some locations and significant intervention is required to quickly channel that water away. One individual suggested the City consider building waterways next to major roads to channel water downstream rather than creating dry ponds.

- 2 -

There were safety concerns expressed about locating a dry pond in a school yard. A couple of residents suggested the City have a “Plan B” should a dry pond in a school yard be unacceptable.

While most people in attendance thought the presented options would help reduce the risk of flooding, a few people expressed concerns about how the conclusions were reached. They suggested the City did not have correct information or a sufficient understanding about neighbourhood flood zones or high impact locations.

Many people had concerns and comments regarding backflow prevention valves. Most of these were related to the cost of installation, which exceeded the subsidy provided by the City. To control costs, it was suggested that the subsidy program allow homeowners to do the work themselves, as long as it passed inspection, or that City staff do the installations. Some people were concerned about the effectiveness of the valves or worried that those with backflow valves would add sewer line pressure to neighbours on the same street that did not have them. A few residents suggested that homeowners who did not get flooded, as well as multi-family or condominium associations, be allowed to take advantage of the backflow prevention program.

A few people questioned the wisdom of installing sump pumps. They noted pumps were expensive to install and would not necessarily work effectively where properties are in a low-lying area. One individual suggested a sump pump would work continuously in a high water table environment, only to have that water pool on the street and work its way back to homes.

There were a number of questions about the capacity of the stormwater system and its ability to deal with even a 1 in 5 year rainstorm. A few residents suggested Drainage Services focus on increasing the trunk capacity downstream to the river before making too many neighbourhood improvements. In their opinion, this was the only way significant relief could be provided to the Lakewood and Knottwood communities.

A few individuals noted there was confusing information regarding the placement of downspouts. They were unsure of whether downspouts should be disconnected from a home's sanitary line (where that is the case), the direction in which to place downspout extensions, or how far away from City or a neighbour's property an extension needed to be.

There were a couple of concerns expressed about the maintenance of catch basins, particularly keeping the inlets free of any debris that would impede water flow.

### **Next Steps**

Input from the two communities regarding system options will be incorporated into a more detailed implementation plan. This plan will be discussed with the community before being presented to City Council in the fall. Mr. Hoffart noted a number of funding options were being considered, including federal and provincial support. Implementation plan timing will depend on funding and the capacity to do the work.

Community residents will be notified of the next consultation. Additional comments or questions may be forwarded to Mr. Hoffart at 496-5537 or [paul.hoffart@edmonton.ca](mailto:paul.hoffart@edmonton.ca)

### **Other Key Contacts**

Call 496-5539 to be added to the flood prevention program mailing list or to receive future updates and notices by e-mail.

Call the 24-hour drainage hotline at 496-1717 if there is a drainage or sewer problem on your property or on your street.

More information about drainage services and the flood prevention program is available at [www.edmonton.ca/floodprevention](http://www.edmonton.ca/floodprevention)