

ADAMS & CRIPE

Maplewood Township Committee

Storm Water Management Plan for Maplewood

As our planet warms and storm intensity increases, the risk of catastrophic flooding in NJ is, unfortunately, increasing. NJ residents regularly see swollen riverbanks, manholes and catch basins that bubble over, sewage backups and wet basements. Most residents find it necessary to install new stormwater infrastructure in their homes such as French drains, sump pumps, and backflow protectors. Aging and failing municipal stormwater infrastructure coupled with stronger storms creates a serious risk to property and life.

An effective **Stormwater Management Plan** is increasingly essential in NJ as climate change intensifies storms, housing needs increase density and our infrastructure ages. A multipronged Stormwater Management Plan has beneficial **Economic, Quality of Life and Environmental Impacts** by:

Decreasing Flooding Costs

Flooding is a large financial burden to residents as they both clean up and rebuild.

Reduces Homeowner's Insurance Costs and Claims

Homes that have never experienced flooding are now seeing wet basements spurring the realization that flooding claims are not always covered by their policies. Insurance companies are responding to an increase in claims by limiting those they provide coverage to. Homeowners are experiencing dropped coverage from their providers.

Improves Quality of Life

Home flooding is a stressor for homeowners from the initial clean up to seeking and managing contractors to rebuild. Many homeowners go on to add costly new waterproofing and mitigation infrastructure like French drains and sump pumps.

Improves the Health of our Waterways

Quickly sending all our stormwater to the local waterway increases contaminants and quickly overwhelms the banks decreasing the overall health of the waterway ecosystem and drinking water quality. Green infrastructure can help to slow the rate of flow and encourage water to infiltrate the ground, reducing run off to our waterways.

Improves Property Values

New flood disclosure laws, effective March 2024 may deter buyers and negatively impact housing values. An effective Stormwater Management Plan helps to protect those values and ease buyer concerns.

Adams/Cripe Stormwater Management Plan:

Create a Stormwater Utility

Maplewood's proposed Stormwater Utility is a penny tax creating a dedicated source of funding for upgrades to stormwater infrastructure. The average \$80/year cost stands to save stakeholders the much greater cost of repeated flooding. This dedicated source of funding would reduce the need to bond funds for related capital projects, thus reducing town debt load. Dedicated funding would assure regular maintenance of the system as a whole.

Seek and Apply for Grants

The Federal Infrastructure Bill & NJ DEP/EPA recognize the need to upgrade aging infrastructure and make grants available. Maplewood was recently awarded a \$960,000 federal grant to remedy a problem area. Such grants assist stakeholders in shouldering the costs of necessary upgrades.

Add Green Infrastructure

Regular road maintenance projects provide a perfect opportunity for the addition of rain garden bioswales and additional street trees. Green Infrastructure allows stormwater to penetrate the subsoil and filters pollutants onsite before the flow is allowed to overwhelm local infrastructure and waterways.

Smart Development

New construction provides an excellent opportunity to partner with builders to construct stormwater smart developments that retain stormwater onsite and minimize runoff to the storm sewer system. Newly strengthened NJDEP Stormwater and Inland Flooding regulations provide guidance for Best Management Practices.

Strategic Upgrades

Partnership with residents and town engineering is integral in identifying areas with critical infrastructure needs to prioritize the most urgent work.

Regional Partnerships

Watersheds and stormwater systems span several neighboring towns. Regional partnerships are integral in building lasting infrastructure upgrades that protect our larger community.