FLOODPLAIN BUYOUT PROGRAM

Storm Water Services Engineering & Mitigation Program identifies properties in the floodplain that may be acquired to reduce the potential loss of life and property damage due to flooding.

For more information:
Call 311
Or go to our website:
Stormwater.charmeck.org

FLOODPLAIN BUYOUT PROGRAM

The intent of the buyout program is to restore the natural functions of the floodplain. Some of the final uses of the buyout properties include:

- Greenway trails
- Community gardens
- Reforested natural areas
- Storm Water wetlands and retention
- Informal recreational areas

WHAT HAPPENS TO BUYOUT PROPERTIES?

BENEFITS TO OUR COMMUNITY

- Less money spent on emergency rescues
- Less money spent on disaster relief
- Restoration of the natural floodplain to enhance water quality and the ecosystem
- Increased opportunities for recreation and interaction with nature, such as creek-side greenways

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police or Fire Department crews conduct training exercises at buildings that have been acquired through the Floodplain Buyout Program.
Floodplains are mother nature’s way of slowing down water to reduce damage. They are naturally occurring areas meant to become inundated during heavy rains. This helps to filter storm water pollutants by temporarily storing flood water. Unfortunately, development has put homes, businesses, vehicles and other property in areas meant to flood, creating a costly and dangerous problem.

Buying and removing buildings from the floodplain is one of the most cost-effective ways to reduce long-term flood damage.

Since 1999, Storm Water Services has purchased over 400 flood-prone houses, apartment buildings and businesses.

Over 700 families have moved to less vulnerable locations outside the floodplain.

Floodplain buyouts are all voluntary. Owners are not forced to sell.

RISK ASSESSMENT, RISK REDUCTION PLAN

Each County floodplain property has a flood risk and priority score, as well as a risk reduction recommendation. These tools are used to prioritize and group properties that become project areas. Each year, property specific data within the plan is updated.

HOW PROPERTIES ARE CHOSEN FOR BUYOUTS

The most important criteria are a property’s overall flood risk and the cost effectiveness of a buyout.

The flood risk score of an individual property includes two main factors:

1. The likelihood of various floods occurring on that property
2. The damage (financial impacts) that will follow in the event of flooding

HOW FLOODPLAIN BUYOUTS ARE FUNDED

Floodplain buyouts are funded primarily with local dollars and federal grant money. Since 1999, the buyout program has invested $67 million in removing buildings in the floodplain (43% federal, 2% state, 48% local, 7% other).

THE BUYOUT PROCESS

IN PERSON CONSULTATION: To begin the process, the property owner will be contacted to schedule an in-person meeting with a Storm Water Services representative who will explain the acquisition process.

APPRAISAL: Storm Water Services will hire a licensed real estate appraiser to personally inspect the property and prepare a report of its value. The property owner is welcome to accompany the appraiser during the inspection.

OFFER: A written offer will be presented to the owner representing a full and fair offer of compensation and reflecting all relevant terms and conditions of the proposed acquisition.

SECOND APPRAISAL: If the property owner is not satisfied with the County’s offer package, they may pay for their own appraisal to establish a counter-offer.

CLOSING ON THE ACQUIRED PROPERTY: As the buyer, the County will cover closing costs including recording fees, evidence of title, boundary survey and legal descriptions of the real property. County excise tax on the sale price and pro-rated property tax are the responsibility of the seller.

VACATING THE PROPERTY: The seller and/or tenant will have to vacate the property prior to closing.