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Your Questions: Answered.

The Platte to Park Hill: Stormwater Systems program will provide critical flood protection and community improvements to the neighborhoods north and east of downtown. With no natural drainage way (e.g. a creek or stream) in this area, and an aging, century-old network of pipes, it is the most at-risk part of the city for flooding.

While improving flood protection, the program will also make valuable community improvements including increasing the size of Globeville Landing Park, adding new recreation and trail features in the Cole neighborhood, creating vital mobility connections and more.

Below you will find answers to the most common questions we have heard during our conversations with you, the community throughout the process.

Why do we need flood protection?
In recent years here in Denver and throughout Colorado, flooding has caused extensive property damage, degraded our roads, pipes and other utilities and even endangered people's lives. To date, efforts to solve these challenges have been fragmented and incremental. The city will no longer allow neighborhoods, homes, businesses and residents to remain at risk. That is why the city is taking a comprehensive approach to protect people and property while improving water quality.

Why does my neighborhood need flood protection?
The area north and east of downtown, called the Montclair Basin, is a part of Denver that is most at-risk of flooding. This is because there is no natural drainage way (e.g. a creek or stream) in this area and there is an aging, century-old network of pipes. The flooding causes significant damage to private property and critical public infrastructure. The Platte to Park Hill: Stormwater Systems program will enable waters to flow out and pool into identified areas while making improvements to your neighborhoods.

Will my neighborhood benefit from this project?
The neighborhoods of Elyria, Swansea, River North, Cole, Clayton, Skyland, Whittier, Five Points, City Park and Northeast Park Hill could see reduced flooding. In addition to decreased flooding, the program will provide many other community benefits. These include:

- About a half an acre of new parkland at Globeville Landing Park, as well as new park amenities.
- 12 acres of new recreational open space along the Cole open channel, with biking and walking trails that connect people to neighborhood destinations.
- Opportunities to improve water quality where stormwater flows through areas of natural vegetation.

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When will these projects be built?
Globeville Landing Outfall and the redesigned Globeville Landing Park would be constructed first, starting in 2016 and completing in 2019. The 39th Avenue Open Channel and the Montclair Basin stormwater detention area would likely start construction in 2017 and be completed in 2020. Construction of the Park Hill basin detention area and pipes would likely start in 2018 and be completed in 2020.

How will these projects impact my daily life?
Whenever we have a construction project, among the city's top priorities is mitigating impacts to our residents' daily lives and we believe that can be accomplished through smart management, combined with clear and consistent communication. As with all major projects in Denver, the city will develop a management plan to define how the project will be constructed. This plan will clearly outline efforts to communicate with the effected neighborhoods and the entire city.

How do you plan to pay for the projects?
Regardless of the Platte to Park Hill: Stormwater Systems program, a fee increase for the Wastewater Enterprise Fund is needed to pay for rising maintenance costs and to provide sufficient funding for robust annual capital improvement programs. Currently, the city spends an average of $20 million each year on our stormwater and drainage projects. The estimated cost to upgrade all the stormwater pipes across the entire city is approximately $1.5 billion. Over the last 20 years, Denver has increased wastewater rates only twice. A rate increase, proposed for this summer, will be necessary to address the needs of the aging system and to address the flooding and drainage problems that exist across many parts of Denver. City Council is scheduled to hear a full proposal for the rate increase in spring. If approved, the rate increase would take effect July 1, 2016.

Will the city be buying private properties for this project?
The city has eliminated the project options that would have required the purchase of a considerable amount of private properties. As we complete more detailed engineering in the next phase of the project, we will be able to determine what, if any, private properties need to be purchased.

Is this project being pursued due to I-70 reconstruction?
No. The flood protection is needed regardless of the I-70 East Project. The area north and east of downtown, called the Montclair Basin, is a part of Denver that is most at-risk of flooding. It is in the best interest of residents and businesses to construct the Platte to Park Hill: Stormwater Systems program during the same time as I-70 reconstruction as we will be able to realize critical time and cost savings.

Who are the city's partners on this project?
The Platte to Park Hill: Stormwater Systems program has multiple partners including Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the Regional Transportation District. Denver and CDOT entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) in order to ensure that the two projects would be able to coordinate during potentially overlapping construction schedules and minimize impacts to the local neighborhoods, timelines were established in the IGA to provide assurance that progress is being made and the public's funds are being utilized in a timely manner.

How will you ensure that the stormwater doesn't cause public health or quality-of-life problems?
Water quality and public health are of paramount importance. The stormwater detention area and the open channel along 39th Avenue will provide opportunities for filtration and water quality benefits. The

city will also implement additional efforts including increased frequency of maintenance, ongoing development of water quality facilities, and implementation of green infrastructure projects.

Is the city conducting a National Environment Policy Act (NEPA) study?
NEPA applies to "federal actions," including projects undertaken directly by federal agencies, projects receiving federal funding, and certain projects that require approvals or permits from federal agencies. Where applicable, we follow the NEPA requirements.

Why did you select City Park Golf Course for stormwater detention?
Stormwater detention must be located in areas that are large enough to temporarily hold the volume of water that comes with major storms and low enough to naturally collect the water. After analyzing all feasible options in the area, and considering technical merits and community input, City Park Golf Course was selected for water detention because it will protect significantly more homes and businesses; utilizes an existing city asset, reduces the need for private property acquisition; and creates better opportunities for future needed stormwater improvements.

What will the golf course look like after the detention is put in?
Simply put, it will continue to look and function as a golf course. In fact, City Park Golf Course already has a smaller level of stormwater detention integrated into it. Integrating stormwater detention in golf courses is a very common practice. Two other good local examples include Lakewood Country Club (in Lakewood) and Common Grounds Golf Course (in Aurora). While there are feasibility studies that confirm the course can accommodate stormwater detention and remain both an enjoyable course to play and a terrific neighborhood amenity, the design process that will determine the ultimate layout and design is just beginning. The project team will work with the community as it develops design.

How can I be part of the design process?
Community input will continue to be collected throughout the preliminary design phase. The project team will provide multiple opportunities for you to be a collaborative partner in the design process. To get involved, email or call the project team (PlatteToParkHill@denvergov.org / 303-223-6585).

What will happen to the City Park Golf Course staff and the First Tee program during construction?
We are working closely with Denver Golf and First Tee. It is likely that Golf Course staff will have opportunities to be reassigned to other positions during construction. There are no plans to dismiss any staff as a result of this project. We will also work closely with First Tee to develop a plan to help their program continue through construction and beyond.

Will this project take out any trees in the golf course?
Conceptual studies show that it's likely that some trees will need to be replaced. The city is placing a priority on trying to avoid impacts to large trees – especially those on the edge of the course that create a visual buffer for nearby neighbors – to the greatest extent possible as the design is developed. The design process will include working with arborists and other forestry experts on strategies to minimize tree impact and preserve tree health. For those trees that do need to be removed as part of the project, the city's policy is to replace the level of tree canopy coverage, not number of trees. This means that, rather than replacing one large tree with one smaller one, one large tree is typically replaced by multiple smaller trees that create the same level of canopy coverage.

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Will the city protect the historic integrity of City Park Golf Course?
The golf course was originally built in 1913 and is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. Like any active golf course, it is regularly upgraded and enhanced. As part of increasing the amount of stormwater detention currently provided on the course, we are conducting a historic resource analysis in collaboration with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to ensure we are protecting the historic integrity of the golf course.

Is this project part of past planning efforts?
Denver's 2014 Stormwater Master Plan provided the foundation for the Platte to Park Hill: Stormwater Systems program. This included the identification of catastrophic flooding potential during a 100-year flood event (a storm that has a 1% of happening every year). The Platte to Park Hill: Stormwater Systems program is focused on addressing this level of flooding. Since the 2014 master plan was released, additional analysis revealed that we have a larger flood risk and greater challenges that need to be solved for in order to adequately protect people and property throughout the city, especially within basins that do not have an open channel drainage way, like the Montclair Basin.

What have you done to inform and educate me and my neighbors about this project?
We have been working closely with the community since the fall of 2015. We regularly meet with a Stakeholder Working Group made-up of more than 20 neighborhood and community representatives. These individuals provide input on behalf of their neighbors and also help us share information with the community. In addition, our team has attended nearly 90 community meetings with more than 1,600 individuals. More than 150 comments have been submitted and that input helps shape the decision making process. Our smaller meetings have been diverse and included briefings with neighborhood organizations, small group meetings, living room information sessions and one-on-one meetings with community leaders, and more. We have also hosted public, open-house and community meetings, and conducted taken community members on tours of project areas and similar facilities in the metro area. In addition, we have a robust project website (www.denvergov.org/PlattetoParkHill) and a project hotline (303-223-6585) to serve as resources for community members that choose not to participate in meetings. Public input will continue to be critical as the project moves into preliminary design and we hope you will remain active and involved with us.