

# Community Flooding Prevention in Action

## Village of Midlothian



Flooding in Midlothian is not a new problem. Like much of Chicago, the local ecology was characterized by meandering creeks and marshland prior to urbanization. When the area began to develop in the mid-20th century, the creeks were channelized and the watershed paved over, creating the problem of urban water management. In the last two decades, the flood risk inherent to Midlothian's natural ecology has been worsened by the addition of more impervious surfaces, an aging infrastructure, and higher intensity storms caused by climate change. Today, Midlothian residents and businesses may experience damaging floods from relatively minor storm events.

To help the Village develop solutions to the destructive flooding they face year after year, CNT is helping them develop a RainReady plan of action. In carrying out this work, we took extra care to look for synergies among the Midlothian's economic, transportation and stormwater needs so that investments could be leveraged to provide multiple benefits to the community. We found several, including a complete street on 147th Street that would support implementation of green infrastructure, active transportation facilities, and economic stimuli through placemaking activities and potential redevelopment sites on Cicero Avenue.

We also assembled a Midlothian RainReady Steering Committee. The committee, which meets monthly, is made up of community leaders, Village staff, engineers, and flood activists. Funding opportunities and strategic partners have already been identified to help the Village further the plan.

Helping communities like Midlothian develop RainReady Plans is an important first step in building community capacity for resilient solutions to the increasingly frequent and severe rainstorms that climate change is expected to bring. Connecting leaders, residents, and technical experts through this process makes it possible to develop affordable, effective solutions that can benefit everyone.



### ABOUT THE PROPERTY

- Population: 14,924
- Steering committee members: 9
- Core partner: Chicago District of the US Army Corps of Engineers

### FLOODING ISSUES

- Overbanking from Natalie Creek
- Sanitary sewer backup
- Storm sewer backup
- Groundwater seepage in basements

### RECOMMENDED RAINREADY UPGRADES TO:

- Natalie Creek
- Homes
- Streets
- Village

**SEE REVERSE FOR MORE DETAILS**

To learn more about the program, visit:

**[WWW.RAINREADY.ORG](http://WWW.RAINREADY.ORG)**

If you have questions about the program, please contact:

**[INFO@RAINREADY.ORG](mailto:INFO@RAINREADY.ORG)**



## RECOMMENDED RAINREADY UPGRADES

**Natalie Creek:** Create a plan for Natalie Creek that minimizes destructive overbank flooding, improves water quality, and provides a beautiful place for residents and visitors to walk, run, and bike. Repair the existing recreational trail network and work with upstream partners to extend the trail, add lighting and benches, and increase stormwater capacity.



**Homes:** Establish a coordinated, property-by-property program that helps homeowners manage rainfall and reduce flood risk through low-cost landscaping, plumbing, and building improvements. Start in neighborhoods that experience overland flooding from storm sewers.



**Streets:** Inaugurate a street-by-street program that upgrades village roads to manage stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces. Start with a plan for 147th Street that includes permeable paving, bioswales, tree planting, bike lanes, and benches to simultaneously reduce flooding, enhance business opportunity, and improve the quality of village life.



**Village:** Initiate a village-wide program to help residents and businesses get ready for rain while also bringing economic investment and beautification. This requires improved building standards, better floodplain mapping, increased tree plantings, creative use of vacant properties, and generalized street enhancements.

RainReady services are available to participating communities. Towns or cities wishing to offer the services to their residents will draw up a memorandum of agreement with CNT and agree to cover the costs of managing the program.

RainReady<sup>SM</sup> is a program of the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT), a Chicago-based nonprofit research and advocacy organization committed to improving urban economies and environments across the United States.



© 2015 CENTER FOR NEIGHBORHOOD TECHNOLOGY | [WWW.CNT.ORG](http://WWW.CNT.ORG)