



Legislation Text

File #: 08-0486, **Version:** 1

Resolution to Adopt the Strategic Water Quality Initiatives Fund Project Plan for the Footing Drain Disconnect Program (\$6,830,000.00 Over 5 Years)

This is to recommend approval of the attached resolution adopting the Strategic Water Quality Initiatives Fund (SWQIF) project plan for the Footing Drain Disconnect (FDD) Program, which is required to secure low-interest State loans. City Council adopted a project plan and SWQIF applications for this project on June 16, 2003 (R-234-6-03). As a result, beginning in 2004 the City was awarded annual SWQIF loans through 2008 for a total of \$4,510,000.00.

Under Act 451, the State of Michigan developed the SWQIF to protect and preserve the natural resources of Michigan by providing low-interest loans to communities for the design and construction of water pollution control projects. Although the exact interest rate has not yet been determined, the interest rate for these loans is typically set below market rate for 20 years.

This project plan details the implementation of the City's FDD program, which began with a Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO) prevention study in 1999. Historically, large rain events have caused widespread basement backups throughout the City. The SSO Task Force study determined that during heavy storms, rainwater from home footing drains overloads the sanitary sewer system and is the primary cause of basement backups. It was also determined that even homes with no current basement backup problems were significant contributors to the basement backup problem for neighboring homes. The SSO study identified five study areas, where more than 50% of the basement backups had occurred. After reviewing alternative solutions, the SSO Task Force recommended the implementation of a comprehensive citywide footing drain disconnection program in order to reduce the amount of rainwater flowing into the sanitary sewer system. This solution protects downstream residents and the river environment, reduces operating costs at the wastewater treatment plant and avoids higher costs associated with increasing capacity in the system.

On August 20, 2001, the City Council approved Chapter 28, Section 2:51.1 of the City Code (Ordinance No 32-01), which details the implementation of a citywide footing drain disconnection (FDD) program. In addition, An Administrative Consent Order (ACO) was signed with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) to work toward the elimination of sanitary sewer overflow and compliance with Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, Part 31.

The SSO Task Force and City Council recognized that implementation of the FDD Program would not be without challenges. Construction on private property requires effective program management, including community engagement and education, an adequate funding mechanism, responsible contractors, and flexibility to work with individual homes and homeowners. The project management team strives to provide the best possible solution for each home and funding is provided for not only the basic installation components but for restoration of finished basement areas and yards. A number of installation alternatives have been developed to help minimize disruption within the home. An ongoing monitoring program is in place to verify that the flows being removed from the sanitary

sewer system are of the magnitude expected. In addition, homeowner feedback is frequently compiled and posted on the project website to help identify areas for improvement.

The Project Plan for this phase of work will focus primarily on priority Phase 2A areas, which consist of approximately 2,330 homes or businesses that contribute flow within the five study areas. Footing Drain Disconnections for Phase 1A, homes that suffered basement backup located within the five study areas, and Phase 1B, homes that suffered basement backups located outside of the five study areas, were completed in September 2003 and June of 2006, respectively. A total of 1489 properties have been invited into the program, by receiving homeowner information packets. Approximately 1192 homes have approved funding, and approximately 1105 homes have completed the FDD work through the program.

A Public Meeting was held on May 1, 2008 to allow for public comment on the project plan for the Footing Drain Disconnect Program. The public meeting included a 25-minute presentation on alternatives investigated by the SSO Task Force and the criteria used to select Footing Drain Disconnection as the ultimate solution. The Project Plan includes a copy of the draft plan detailing the proposed program was made available for public inspection 30 days prior to the public hearing. An advertisement announcing the public meeting was placed in the Ann Arbor News and on the City's website 30 days prior to the hearing.

The attached resolution adopts the SWQIF project plan and the multi-year SWQIF applications for this project.

Prepared by: Craig Hupy, P.E., Manager, System Planning Unit

Reviewed by: Sue F. McCormick, Public Services Administrator

Approved by: Roger Fraser, City Administrator

Whereas, The Footing Drain Disconnect Program is included in the 2008-2013 Capital Improvements Plan as a multi-year citywide program:

Whereas, On August 20, 2001, the City Council approved Ordinance No. 32-01, to provide for implementation of a citywide footing drain disconnection process;

Whereas, The Strategic Water Quality Initiatives Fund (SWQIF) is intended to provide low-interest loans to construct projects that remove privately-owned sources of groundwater or storm water from the sanitary system; and

Whereas, the Project Plan was presented at a Public Hearing held on May 1, 2008 and all public comments have been considered and addressed;

RESOLVED, That City Council adopt the SWQIF project plan for the Footing Drain Disconnect Program;

RESOLVED, That the Public Services Area Administrator, a position currently held by Sue F. McCormick, is designated as the authorized representative for all activities associated with the project referenced above; and

RESOLVED, That the City Administrator is authorized to take the necessary administrative actions to implement this resolution.

