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Community Drainage & Flood Resiliency Update

Since the devastating Flood of 2016, our community has remained committed to addressing drainage and flooding concerns and building a more resilient community for the future.

In the years following the flood, our City has worked tirelessly to identify drainage deficiencies and develop long-term solutions. We have engaged professional consultants to conduct comprehensive drainage studies, identify problem areas, and recommend projects that can improve our community's watersheds and reduce our vulnerability to future flooding.

We are fortunate to have a strong working relationship with Gravity Drainage District No. 5, which is responsible for many of the backyard and side-yard drainage conveyances throughout our area. Our City's Public Works Department is responsible for maintaining 40 miles of roadside drainage ditches within the City's jurisdiction, with the exception of State and Federal highways.

Since 2016, our Public Works Department has made significant investments in our local drainage infrastructure. We have replaced hundreds of defective or undersized driveway culverts and have cleaned and re-profiled many miles of roadside drainage ditches throughout our community.

We are also making progress on several larger regional projects. The City recently reached a settlement with the State of Louisiana and the design-build contractors concerning the Geaux-Wider Project. We anticipate construction beginning soon on improvements intended to mitigate the impacts of the I-12 center median barrier, which restricted the movement of floodwaters during the August 2016 flood and contributed to the severity of flooding experienced by our community.

Additionally, our community has been awarded an \$8.95 million Louisiana Watershed Initiative (LWI) grant to make significant drainage improvements. This funding represents an important investment in our long-term flood resilience.

Our Drainage Problem Is Regional. One of the most important lessons we learned through our drainage studies and years of working to address these issues is that our drainage challenges do not stop at our city limits. Water does not recognize political boundaries.

Our local drainage conveyances ultimately carry water southward into an area of Livingston Parish that historically has not had a funded drainage district responsible for maintaining those conveyances. As a result, we recognized early in this process that improvements made within our City could only go so far if the regional drainage system downstream was unable to efficiently move that water. This changed the way we approached the problem.

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We realized that this was not simply a City drainage issue. It is a regional drainage issue that requires regional cooperation. Addressing a problem of this magnitude requires municipalities, parish government, drainage districts, state agencies and other partners to work together, coordinate projects and share responsibility for improving the overall watershed.

A Major Step Forward; Building that regional partnership has not been easy, but we are proud to announce an important step forward.

In August 2026, the City partnered with Livingston Parish Government and Gravity Drainage District No. 5 to begin addressing a critical portion of the regional drainage system south of Walker.

Through a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) between these agencies, we are undertaking the cleaning of more than 19 miles of drainage ditches within an area of Livingston Parish that, based on the information available to us, has not received this level of maintenance for approximately 60 years.

This project represents much more than simply cleaning ditches. It is an important step toward restoring the regional drainage conveyance system and improving the ability of water to move through our watershed.

We recognize that there is still much work to be done. Drainage problems that developed over decades cannot be solved overnight. However, the progress being made today represents a significant commitment to protecting our residents, improving our infrastructure and strengthening our community's resilience to future flooding.

We will provide weekly updates on this regional drainage project, which started today, September 22, 2026, we will include progress reports and photographs as the work continues.

We appreciate the patience, support and partnership of our residents and our local, parish and state agencies as we continue working toward a safer and more resilient community.

We are making progress—and we are committed to keeping the work moving forward.

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