



October 7, 2026

Dear Residents,

I am writing to provide an update on the City's efforts to address the persistent flooding impacting the Toilsome Brook neighborhood. The City recognizes that increasingly intense storms in recent years have contributed to more frequent flooding, causing significant impacts to private property in your area. Below is an overview of the work completed to date, the mitigation strategies currently under consideration, and the anticipated next steps:

- In 2024, the City secured a grant from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) to conduct a flood resilience study of the Toilsome Brook floodplain.
- Engineering firms Weston & Sampson and Fuss & O'Neill surveyed the area, gathered input and data from residents, and evaluated potential strategies to reduce flooding.
- In August 2026, these firms presented their findings to City officials and identified several potential flood mitigation strategies for the neighborhood.
- The City has applied for funding through CT DEEP's Climate Resilience Fund to: 1) advance the design of the flood resilience improvements in the middle and upper watershed (underground flood storage, culvert upsizing, and stream channel/floodplain improvements; and 2) to study the lower portion of the watershed to determine additional flood mitigation efforts. The City's grant application was selected for an award pending additional funding for the grant program from the State Bond Commission.
- The City will continue to work with WestCog (Western Connecticut Council of Governments) to explore FEMA funding for the acquisition of private residential properties that are chronically flooded and whose owners wish to consider this option.

One proposed project would create underground stormwater storage beneath the AITE/Rippowam athletic fields. The system would temporarily store both stormwater and flood flows from Toilsome Brook during heavy rainfall and release them more slowly over time, helping to reduce downstream flooding, lower water levels in streams and drainage systems, and improve flood protection for the surrounding community. The City has successfully implemented similar underground storage systems at Strawberry Hill and Rogers School, which have helped manage stormwater and reduce flooding impacts on surrounding neighborhoods. Other improvements include expanding stream channels and widening culverts to increase their capacity to carry stormwater.

It is important to note that these proposed projects are currently estimated to cost approximately \$58 million. If the decision is made to pursue these projects, securing the necessary federal and city funding to advance them through design and implementation is expected to take several years, and potentially up to a decade to complete.

The City's Engineering Team, in partnership with Weston & Sampson and Fuss & O'Neill, will host a virtual community meeting on Wednesday, October 21 from 6:00 – 8:00 pm to present the findings of the Toilsome Brook Flood Resilience Plan, including the recommended flood mitigation and resilience strategies developed through the planning and engineering process. If you have questions about the meeting, please contact David Black with Weston & Sampson at Black.David@wseinc.com. We hope you will be able to attend.

Sincerely,

Caroline Simmons
Mayor