

The Proposed Bowness Berm: Two Perspectives

City Of Calgary

Reducing flood risk for Bowness

Printed as submitted by the City of Calgary.

The City of Calgary is committed to making Calgary a safe, flood resilient community. The 2013 flood caused significant social and economic disruption, and unprecedented damages. The City's flood mitigation plan for the Bow River is a combination of a new upstream reservoir, continuation of the provincial agreement with TransAlta for modified operations of the Ghost Reservoir and barriers in Bowness, Sunnyside, the downtown core and Pearce Estate Park/Inglewood.

We are early in the planning and design stage for the proposed barriers. At a Bowness community session in January, we shared the conceptual alignment for a barrier to mitigate against river flooding and reduce damages from groundwater and sewer backup for more than 350 private properties and municipal infrastructure. A barrier along the riverbank between the CP Rail tracks and Shouldice Bridge, with the TransAlta agreement, would reduce the annual risk of flooding in Bowness from 12% to under 5%. Adding a new reservoir upstream of Calgary with the TransAlta agreement and barrier would further reduce the flood risk to 0.5% each year.

We compiled a 'What We Heard' report from the January session. We also heard concerns at a Standing Policy Committee of Council in February that the project risks dividing the community and changing the natural river environment. We respect all of your input -- you are the experts on your community. We also recognize that our proposal directly affects riverfront property owners and their day-to-day life.

The design process requires input from property owners, the community and working groups such as 'Bowness Responsible Flood Mitigation'. We are in the process of hiring a consulting engineer and a contract should be in place this spring. We plan to engage with residents in the fall when we should have more information to share. Our goal is to find a flood mitigation solution that protects the community and respects private property owners.

Information about the project can be found at engage.calgary.ca/bowness-flood-barrier-project. We will inform citizens of the fall engagement opportunities once details are finalized. The project's email is BownessBarrier@calgary.ca.

Bowness Responsible Flood Mitigation

Reducing flood risk for Bowness

Printed as submitted by Bowness Responsible Flood Mitigation (BRFM) an independent resident-led initiative.

Let's Protect Bowness! Bowness Responsible Flood Mitigation (BRFM) is a newly formed group of concerned Bownesians eager for the most effective Flood Mitigation for our Bowness, the City and the Province.

In January 2018, the message received from the City is they are proceeding with a Bowness berm and future consultation is only about design.

Approved is a berm to prevent "overland" flooding at the 1:20 year level 'in conjunction' with a new upstream reservoir. The flood of 2013 was near 1:80-year event. The City described the reservoir as the "cake" and a Bowness berm as the "icing" on the cake.

Why should we be concerned?

1. Upstream Bow River Reservoir

- It is widely agreed we need to stop the water before it gets to the City in order to provide proper protection.
- The upstream reservoir is not only for the benefit of Bowness but other downstream residential communities and our economic engine of downtown Calgary.
- Why is the City proceeding at this time, when the final outcome of the reservoir might change the necessity or design of a berm?
- If a berm is built first, will the upstream reservoir be forgotten?

2. Groundwater Flooding

- A berm does not address groundwater flooding which we understand effected approximately 80% of the Bowness homes that flooded in 2013.
- If we are still at risk of groundwater damage with a berm, is a berm effective?

3. Environmental Impacts

- The City is proposing an average 30-foot-wide berm, which requires the cutting down of hundreds of mature trees, the very trees that stabilize the riverbank and provide a home to osprey, bald eagles, etc.
- How does a berm affect fish and river health and other wildlife habitat?

4. Cost Benefit Analysis

- Is a berm a responsible and effective use of tax dollars?
- Multiple requests to the City to provide the cost benefit analysis for Bowness have not been fulfilled.
- We are concerned that given the minimal consultation with local stakeholders during the decision process, that many economic, social and environmental costs may have been underestimated or missed altogether.

BRFM wants the best for Bowness, the City and the Province. So, let's do what Bownesians have always done and stand together to ensure Responsible and Effective Flood Mitigation. If you would like to get involved or have opinions/concerns you would like to share, please get in touch with us at: info@bownessrfm.ca and <http://www.bownessrfm.ca>