

A CITIZEN'S GUIDE TO A **RAINREADY ROBBINS**



A RainReady Robbins would be a community where all residents and businesses benefit from flood relief in a way that also brings neighborhood beautification, retail activity, jobs, recreation, and habitat conservation. In this community, public investment is transparent and fair.

In order to better understand Robbins' flooding risk, the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the RainReady Robbins Steering Committee, and the Village of Robbins joined together in February 2016. Throughout the year, this group met regularly, hosted community meetings, went door-to-door in the neighborhood, held seven educational workshops and five Steering Committee meetings, and reviewed hundreds of plans and studies. 72 Robbins residents filled out our flooding survey.

Together, we have established a shared vision and a path toward a more flood-resilient Robbins: The RainReady Robbins Plan. This Citizen's Guide to a RainReady Robbins covers the highlights of the plan, for more information visit www.rainready.org/calumet-corridor.

A Path Forward

Residents and municipal leaders in the Village of Robbins are motivated to address flooding in a way that spurs economic development and creates a more beautiful place to live and work. The regional stormwater utility, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD), is currently conducting a study on Midlothian Creek that seeks to create these opportunities in Robbins. The path forward for the community involves active partnerships to support the residents' vision for prosperity and investment in green infrastructure solutions.

Equipped with the RainReady Plan, the Village now has a roadmap for reducing flooding issues in a way that strengthens neighborhoods and businesses, and brings new life to vacant areas of town. With modern and well-maintained infrastructure, the Village will be prepared to weather future storms—both large and small.

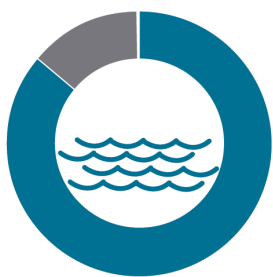
**KEEP READING FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE
PATH AHEAD FOR ROBBINS!**



Understanding the Problem

Like many of its neighbors, Robbins has long been plagued by chronic flooding. In recent years, the scope and severity of the floods have become significantly worse. A combination of aging and limited infrastructure and changes in regional climate have left many Robbins residents and infrastructure systems vulnerable to flooding. From 2007 to 2011, 316 flood-related insurance claims were filed in Robbins, with more than \$941,901 paid out in damages. In 2015, Robbins was identified by Cook County as the area “most impacted and distressed” by the April 2013 flooding disaster (DR-4116). Strategic policy changes and coordinated investment in green and grey infrastructure will mitigate chronic flooding issues in the Village.

RainReady Robbins Survey Results



Respondents experiencing flooding problems*

72 survey respondents

\$2,431 is the average amount spent on stormwater-related repairs

\$780 is the average amount residents are willing to invest to reduce risk of future damage

How does water enter properties?



- 18 Backing up through drains
- 17 Seeping through walls
- 6 Flowing through doors/windows
- 18 Pooling/ponding in yard
- 9 Overflow from street, creek, nearby body of water
- 3 Other
- 2 Don't know

What is the level of worry about flooding's impact on property value?



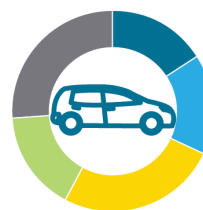
- Extremely worried 26%
- Very worried 21%
- Moderately worried 26%
- Slightly worried 11%
- Not at all worried 16%

How much do heavy rains impact quality of life?



- 31% A great deal
- 19% A lot
- 38% A moderate amount
- 13% A little
- 19% Not at all

How much do heavy rains impact commute or other travel?



- A great deal 16%
- A lot 16%
- A moderate amount 26%
- A little 16%
- Not at all 26%

What is the preparedness of the community to work together to find a solution?



- 24% Extremely prepared
- 6% Very prepared
- 12% Moderately prepared
- 6% Slightly prepared
- 53% Not at all prepared

How effective will local government officials be in addressing flooding issues?



- Extremely well 0%
- Very well 0%
- Moderately well 32%
- Slightly well 21%
- Not at all well 47%

Data Source: CNT Survey, 2016

*Respondents who answered “Yes, I experience problems” and “I do not experience problems anymore” were grouped into the “Yes” category because both sets of respondents experience ongoing flooding problems or have experienced problems in the past, respectively.

Planning the Solutions

The path ahead for Robbins requires coordinated action at multiple scales. Fortunately, community residents, municipal staff, and elected representatives are aligned in their desire for a more beautiful, flood-resilient community. The RainReady Plan recommends the following priority projects from a comprehensive list of recommendations:

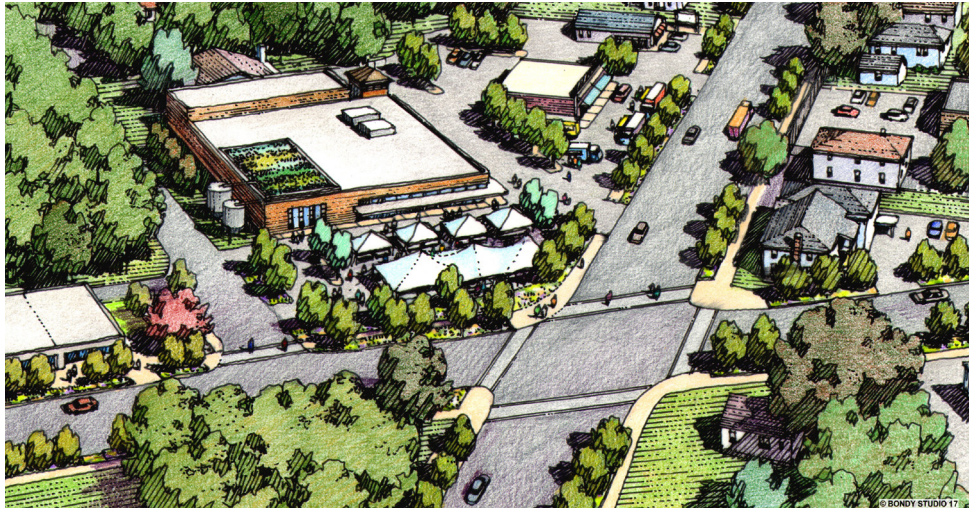
NEW OPEN SPACES – ROBBINS PARK

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District is currently working with the Village of Robbins on a new plan to reduce flooding and create new recreational and economic opportunity in eastern Robbins, where Midlothian Creek takes a sharp turn. Tentatively named Robbins Park, the project is envisioned as a place for families to enjoy outdoor activities while keeping water out of the neighborhood.



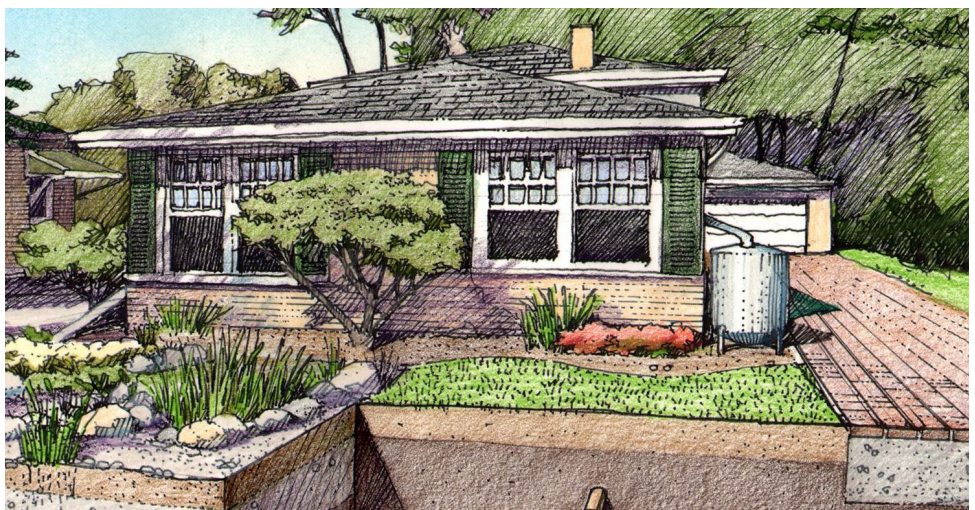
ROBBINS' "NEW TOWN CENTER"

Robbins can create a New Town Center area that will spur economic development, reduce flooding in the surrounding neighborhoods, and connect residents to the proposed Robbins Park. Beautiful streets could capture stormwater through bioswales, tree plantings and permeable pavement.



RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM

Establish a residential cost-sharing program to help homeowners recover from past storms and prepare for future storms. Under this program, residents would receive financial support for a complete home inspection and improvements targeted to reduce risk, like check valves, overhead sewers, and a rain garden.



Quick Steps

We know that residents experience flooding every summer, and the need for help is urgent. Here are 7 solutions that homeowners should consider to reduce their risk today:

- **ASSESS YOUR PROPERTY.**

The first step to solving your flood problem is to understand how water falls on your property and flows through your pipes. If you have significant problems, you may need the help of an engineer, plumber, electrician, or landscape designer.

- **MAKE YARD IMPROVEMENTS.**

In order to reduce flooding, capture stormwater runoff using rain gardens, swales, dry wells, permeable paving, rain barrels, or cisterns.

- **ELEVATE YOUR APPLIANCES.**

If water regularly enters your home, place appliances, furnaces, hot water heaters, and electrical panels above the typical flood level on wood or concrete blocks.

- **HAVE YOUR BUILDING SEWERS CHECKED.**

Faulty pipes connecting your home to the municipal sewer system can exacerbate foundation damage and flooding in your home. Ensure that grease, waste, or tree roots are not obstructing the pipe and preventing wastewater from leaving the house.

- **RECLAIM YOUR PARKWAY.**

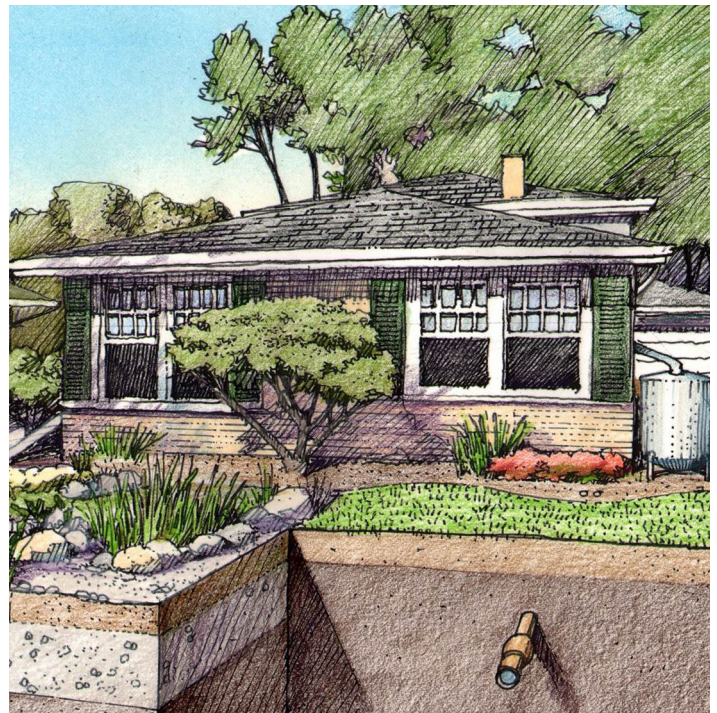
The strips between sidewalks and streets can be transformed into attractive green spaces that absorb stormwater runoff, reduce municipal maintenance costs, and beautify streets. Be sure to check your municipal code for which plants are permitted.

- **GET INSURED.**

There are several options available to protect you against the risk of water damage, including home insurance policies, flood insurance riders, and the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), established by FEMA and administered by your local insurance companies.

- **ADVOCATE FOR THE RAINREADY PLAN.**

This plan outlines solutions to community wide flooding. Get involved in your local Steering Committee to make sure the plan is implemented!



GET INVOLVED!

Community leaders joined together in 2016 to form the RainReady Robbins Steering Committee. The Committee seeks to raise the quality of life in the Village through investment in economic development, education, and beautification. The Committee will work to support the establishment of new businesses that attract residents to spend their money in Robbins and invite visitors to do the same. The Committee will also create new opportunities for recreation and community gardens in vacant and underused areas. A sense of place will be established through improved communication, beautification projects, and new activities for youth and seniors.

The RainReady Robbins Steering Committee meets monthly!

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