

CLIENT

Philadelphia Office of Sustainability

DATES

2024-2025

COLLABORATORS

Arcadis

OLIN

eDesign Dynamics

REFERENCE

Mirit Friedman,

Resilience Planner,

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BUDGET

\$80,000

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Philadelphia's Office of Sustainability (OOS) is developing a community-driven flood resilience strategy to address current and future flood risks in Eastwick. To ensure strong community buy-in, Connect the Dots designed and facilitated engagement activities alongside OOS staff and Arcadis, who managed technical analysis. The resulting strategy provides a foundation for securing grant funding to implement flood mitigation projects.

SERVICES PERFORMED

Outreach and engagement focused primarily on education and awareness of the needs unique to Eastwick, and presented possible flood mitigation measures to gauge community interest and support for different strategies. This was completed by:

- Conducting monthly meetings with the Flood Mitigation Council of Eastwick (FMCE), a group of long-time Eastwick residents that could co-create and offer feedback on the flood mitigation technical work and engagement strategies.
- Planning large public events such as a Town Hall and Open House to share with the larger community the progress of the flood mitigation strategy work.
- Implementing Chat & Chew Kits where FMCE members could conduct meetings on the go with neighbors about the flood mitigation progress.
- Building awareness of the flood mitigation strategy work at pop-ups during Eastwick Community Day in 2024 and 2025.
- Flying to promote the Open House in neighborhoods across Eastwick was completed through the support of project partners.



PROJECT OUTCOMES

Engagement Outcomes:

- Outreach through the form of flyering, pop-ups at community events and through the FMCE members was successful in communicating about the project and drove participation in the Open House
- The role of FMCE members to be both representatives of the community and ambassadors for the project helped rebuild lost trust from previous engagement approaches.

Insights and Implications:

- Measures such as levees, berms and barriers, nature-based solutions, and storm sewer infrastructure improvements were positively received while relocation or buy-out options were not.
- Fear is both a large motivator and deterrent and it's important to consider that depending on the time of year, the Eastwick community may be more discouraged at leaving their homes for events due to weather.
- Repurposing the land around the Pepper Middle School was viewed positively by the community.
- Many community members mentioned concerns with the length of time or the unclear length of time needed to implement the full flood mitigation strategy.