



Legislation Text

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City Dock Resiliency Project - For the purpose of demonstrating Annapolis City Council support for the City Dock Resiliency Project *and* the urgency of protecting Historic Downtown Annapolis along with the public safety of its residents and businesses from the constant and the growing threat of higher rising tides, as well as increasing frequent and more intense storms that cause extreme flooding and severe impacts to residents, businesses, public safety and the historic fabric of the City itself.

**CITY COUNCIL OF THE
City of Annapolis**

Resolution 3-25

Introduced by: Mayor Buckley

Co-sponsors: Aids. Schandelmeier, Pindell Charles, Gay, Savidge, Arnett, Finlayson

A **RESOLUTION** concerning

City Dock Resiliency Project

- FOR** the purpose of demonstrating Annapolis City Council support for the City Dock Resiliency Project *and* the urgency of protecting Historic Downtown Annapolis along with the public safety of its residents and businesses from the constant and the growing threat of higher rising tides, as well as increasing frequent and more intense storms that cause extreme flooding and severe impacts to residents, businesses, public safety and the historic fabric of the City itself.
- WHEREAS,** The Annapolis City Dock is one of the oldest and most historically significant waterfront districts in America; and
- WHEREAS,** The waterfront areas and Annapolis City Dock have experienced the largest increase in nuisance flooding of any City on the eastern seaboard of the United States; and
- WHEREAS,** A 2014 study conducted by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration analyzing 60 years of nuisance flooding and the average number of nuisance flooding days from 1957-1963 to 2007-2013 found that *Annapolis had the highest rate of increase at 925%*; and
- WHEREAS,** Annapolis has continued to experience significantly increased flooding since the study was issued, with 2024 being the worst flooding year on record in the City with more than 97 flooding events, a major increase from the previous record of 65 flood events in 2019; and
- WHEREAS,** Two of the top ten worst flooding events in the City's history also occurred in 2024, costing 19 small businesses more than \$700,000 in damages and lost revenue and with total costs to the

City estimated at more than \$2 million in impacts to visitation and tourism, demands on emergency services, City personnel and management costs, requiring the Mayor to declare twice a State of Emergency to provide necessary support and access County and State resources to address each crisis; and

WHEREAS, In 2019, the Mayor and City Council established a 100-member City Dock Action Committee (CDAC) comprised of experts, business and residential stakeholders, and the U.S. Navy (USNA) to chart a path forward to protect Annapolis from increasingly frequent and more severe flooding events; and

WHEREAS, The CDAC developed a multipronged Resiliency Strategy for City Dock, which included an elevated landscape to protect against flooding, deployable eight-foot flood barriers and a raised bulkhead that starts at USNA Gate Zero and connects to Compromise Street; and

WHEREAS, The Mayor and City Council took immediate successful actions to implement the City Dock Resiliency Project by creating a Public Private Partnership and developing a revenue-producing 588-car parking garage to finance flood protection at City Dock, which had the intended added benefit of allowing parking to be removed from City Dock; and

WHEREAS, The City of Annapolis has worked diligently in partnership with the State of Maryland and the Federal Government to secure additional funding for one of the largest resiliency projects in the country, and the project is now more than 90% funded and ready to commence construction; and

WHEREAS, The City of Annapolis has engaged in further extensive community consultation over five years to communicate with and gather feedback from residents, businesses and stakeholders and continuously modified the City Dock Resilience Plan to capture their concerns and priorities and ensure the plan reflects the City's economic, historic, cultural, and recreational goals and values; and

WHEREAS, The City advanced the City Dock Resiliency Project through the public review processes of the Annapolis Planning Commission and Annapolis Historic Preservation Commission, with due regard for the oversight, transparency, and formal opportunities for public comment provided by the development plan review and approval processes; and

WHEREAS, The project includes:

- elevating significant amounts of the land above flood hazard levels,
- construction of seawalls,
- raising bulkheads,
- installation of extensive stormwater management systems and infrastructure,
- upgrades of fire access routes and fire suppression systems,
- installation of modern electrical improvements,
- conversion of impervious parking surfaces into grass and plazas, which will filter stormwater,
- planting of native vegetation, including trees, and
- installation of bio-retention facilities;

all of which are essential to protect the adjoining historic buildings, City streets, and public safety generally against ongoing nuisance flooding and recurring storm events; and

WHEREAS, The City has followed and applied the City Code at each phase of City Dock Resiliency Project planning, with site plans continuously reviewed and approved by both the Annapolis Planning Commission and the Historic Preservation Commission in Spring 2024; the intent being that the plans would benefit from the review of these bodies while never relinquishing its essential governmental authority to implement such critical public infrastructure projects and never subjugating its obligation and authority to protect public safety to these important administrative bodies; and

WHEREAS, Construction was due to commence in 2024, and each month of delay brings the increasing risk of further flooding, damage and costs to the City, businesses and residents, making this the most urgent project before the City; and

WHEREAS, The coming transformation at City Dock will:

- Provide urgently needed public safety protection to our historic waterfront and the historic buildings at and near City Dock from rising water levels,
- Provide an environment where businesses can thrive, and
- Enable everyone who spends time in downtown Annapolis to enjoy its heightened potential;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL that given the approval of the City Dock Resiliency Project Site Plans and the urgent nature of this flooding crisis, the City of Annapolis City Council hereby commits to the construction of this project to avert the ongoing and increasing risks to public health and safety, as well as deliver the amenities and services identified by the Annapolis community and stakeholders over many years of consultation and public comment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL that a copy of this resolution be made publicly available to the residents and business owners of the City and sent to relevant parties, including the City of Annapolis Planning Commission; the City of Annapolis Historic Preservation Commission; Anne Arundel County Council and Executive; Maryland Departments of the Environment, Natural Resources, Transportation, and Commerce; U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency; U.S. Department of the Navy, and United States Naval Academy.

AND, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL that this resolution shall take effect upon passage.