



# South Boulder Creek Open House Public Comments

**Date:** 11/21/13

**Meeting Location:** Manhattan Middle School

**Number of Attendees:** 102

## **Staff in Attendance:**

Susan Richstone	Dave Thacker	Chris Trice	Dean Paschall
Lesli Ellis	LaDonna Eubanks	Annie Noble	Melinda Melton
Chris Meschuk	Kurt Bauer	Rella Abernathy	Allison James
Rella Abernathy	Katie Knapp	Cindy Spence	Douglas Sullivan
Bob Harberg	Bonnie Logan	Margaret Rogers (Populus)	

## **Background and Purpose of Meeting**

The purpose of the open house was to present information on:

- Flood Recovery Information
- Flood Mapping Information  
(with approximate delineations of recent flooding for review and comment by residents)
- Impacts and status of Transportation Infrastructure
- OSMP Flood Recovery Progress (Opening of Trails and Lifting of Restrictions)
- Energy Smart Information

In addition, flood mitigation information was available to explain:

1. Source of the flood waters,
2. Existing conditions and how it affected the flooding, and
3. What the city is currently working on to help resolve flood risk

## **Summary of Public Comments**

Overall, very appreciative for staff taking the time to hold the meeting and explain the project. Residents are eager for the project to be completed and would like to have it expedited if at all possible.

## Individual Public Comments

- I did not like the format of this meeting. We need general information of:
  1. What happened?
  2. What is the city doing right now?
  3. What will the city/state do in the future to prevent this?
  4. What can citizens do to be prepared?
- It would have been very helpful to have had a presentation (Douglas Sullivan?) on the issue of sewer back-up. So many of us were affected by this in the Frasier Meadows. There was no way he could answer all questions. We need some comprehensive info on exactly what is planned to prevent sewer back-up again. Also, the impervious surface behind our houses (apartment complex) was a significant contributing factor to the flooding of adjacent houses on Qualla.
- We had 56 inches of water with sewage in our basement. It rose very fast and we lost everything – furnace, hot water heater, washer and dryer, photos, books, furniture. Great losses. I think the city is responsible for financial reimbursement, and should assure us it will not happen again and that the drains will adequately drain.
- Water flow backed up at Arapahoe. The water level reached the top at bridge / South Boulder Creek, nearly crossed median at Arapahoe immediately west of Old Tale Road. The drainage system between the golf course under Arapahoe Road was inadequate so the golf course became a huge lake. Flow from the golf course under Arapahoe Road needs to be improved.
- Thank you – this was informative and I truly hope we can make the changes that need to be made so this does not happen to any of us again.
- Would like to have had some structural presentations.
- We lost the total contents (stripped to the studs) in our home; on Morgan and a home we provide for our adult daughter with special needs; on Dartmouth Ave. Basements! FEMA has or will help with a small amount for Morgan home, none at all for the Dartmouth home. We will have to spend \$60,000 to restore the two homes. This was sewer back-up.
- We have two houses which were flooded. One house is on Fox Court (in Frasier Meadows). This house is flooded in the basement due to sewer back-up. Our neighbors of Fox Court, Fox Street, Caddo Pkwy all have the same issue – sewer back-ups. The city needs to look at solutions to fix the pipelines. We had one foot of water in the basement. The other house is on Shawnee Pl. This house has clean water coming into the basement, due to water table is so high.
- Would like an organized presentation – maybe every five minutes have spokesperson explain what they are showing with a microphone. Nevertheless, thanks for sharing information.
- The city needs to help protect homeowners from unnecessary mortgage requirements for FULL REPLACEMENT FLOOD insurance for properties 99.999% safe from being washed away & foundations damaged beyond repair. Our house at 55<sup>th</sup> and Arapahoe would only be washed away if Barker Dam breaks. To add insult to injury, we were not in the floodplain when we bought the home 22 years ago.

- Property managers and those people hired by them have made our property in the 4800 block of Osage unlivable and turned it into an unnecessary construction camp. Many first time young owners are being lied to and are fearful to move ahead on their own. It is our intention to bring our rental up to standard on our own and maintain a high standard in doing so - once the “mitigation experts” the management company and unskilled people being hired to do the work leave. They do not know what they are doing (no plan or knowledge) and are asking lots of money from fearful, first time buyers who are waiting for FEMA and insurance payoffs which is being promised to them.
- Thanks for doing this. Learned a lot.
- Extremely well put together. Valuable information. Maps of floodwater areas provided some answers and visualization. It was terrifying to be out and about Sept. 11-12. Increased my confidence about Boulder addressing issues. Now we need to check with the meteorologists to find out why area residents were not given urgent notices to prepare to evacuate the evening of Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>.
- If there is ever a flood/sewer problem again, it would be really nice if the city would provide port-a-potties or a location for impacted residents to use the toilet.
- If they put the 22” pipe in the ditch that runs parallel to Manhattan Dr. (east side) from Illini Way north, what happens with water that currently may drain into the ditch – like the Hogan/Pancost property (and the sump pumps of houses along Cimmaron Way and Manhattan)
- 1.) Sewers: Is the city overbuilt for the sewer capacity? We keep approving high density townhouse developments. Can the system really handle all the toilets, washers, etc.? Don’t just blame it on the unusual level of rainfall. Reassure every homeowner that their toilets won’t geyser and they won’t have sewage in their basements. We live in a first world country and city. 2.) When we bought 22 years ago, we were NOT in the flood plain. We were recently rezoned INTO the floodplain. Why? Too much paving over and favoring new development over existing homeowners (BCHosp, Home Depot, Pelaton, Univ. S Campus and now threatened development in wetlands by E. Boulder Rec.) Where does it stop? How about NOW while we regroup from the flood. 3.) Please STOP catering to whining cyclists and dog walkers. People have bigger problems than selfish recreationists.
- Thank you for offering this public forum. Great turn out!
- It’s important that the Hogan/Pancost land should not be allowed to be developed. Instead, use it as a flood retention area. I liked the opportunity to talk to staff. I think the website will be very beneficial. I have contributed on it, but: 1.) No indication data and pictures were received when “submit” was activated. 2.) This is 2<sup>nd</sup> day after submit and there is no indication of it being accepted.
- Street drainage is very poor in my neighborhood. All cul-de-sac streets WEST of Merritt Drive drain onto Merritt, lead North to the bend in Merritt just before it intersects with Eisenhower Dr. Also, the transportation/street maintenance departments DO NOT pay attention to or fine homeowners who have vegetation falling over onto Merritt Dr. and

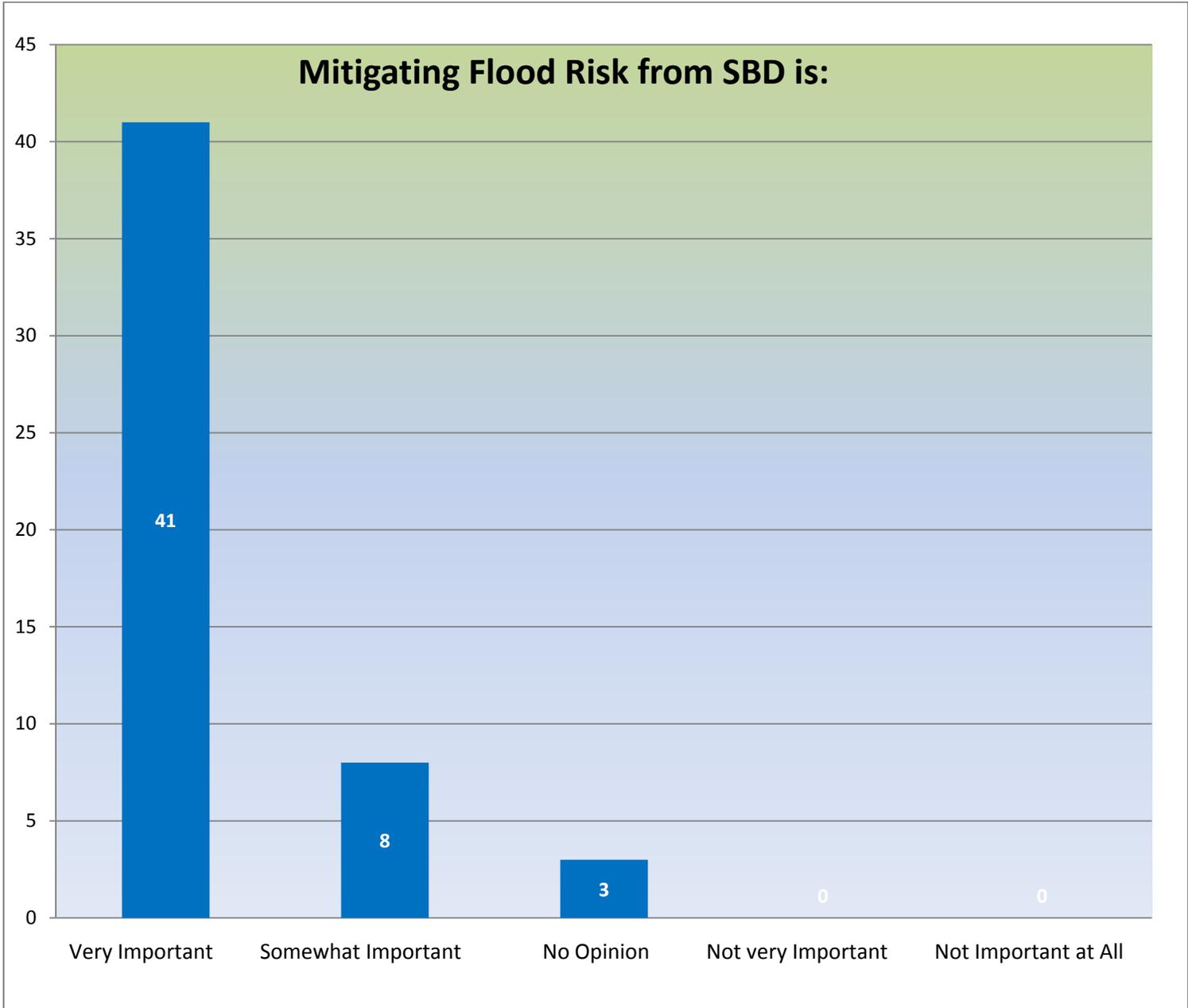
thus blocking the water flow from all of the cul-de-sac streets and Merritt Dr. Cul-de-sacs west of Merritt are: Ellsworth Place, Forsythe, Gallatin Pl, Holmes Pl and Ingersoll.

- Thank you. Well organized and good info. Appreciate the information.

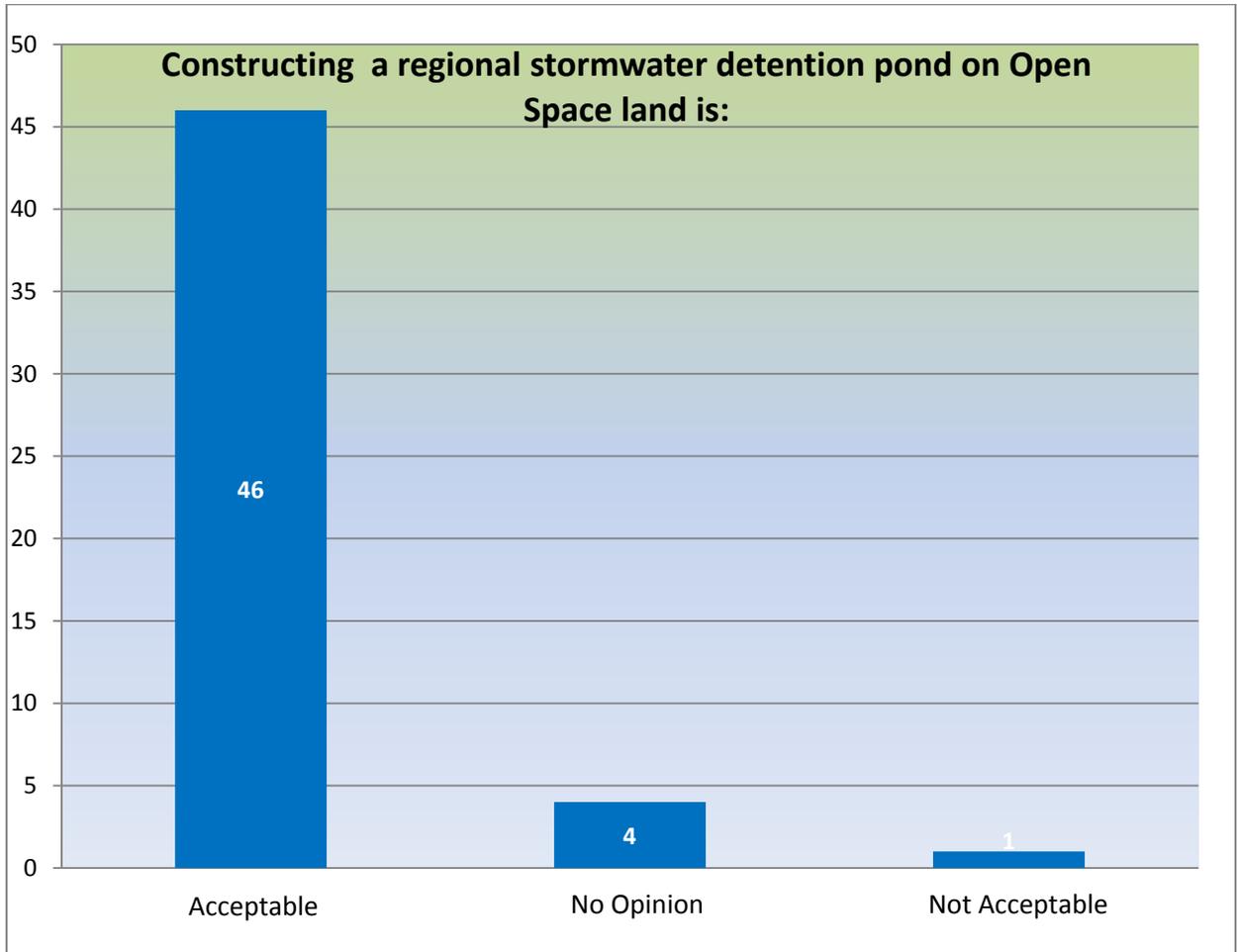
### Results from Comment Sheets: (questionnaire)

#### Questions:

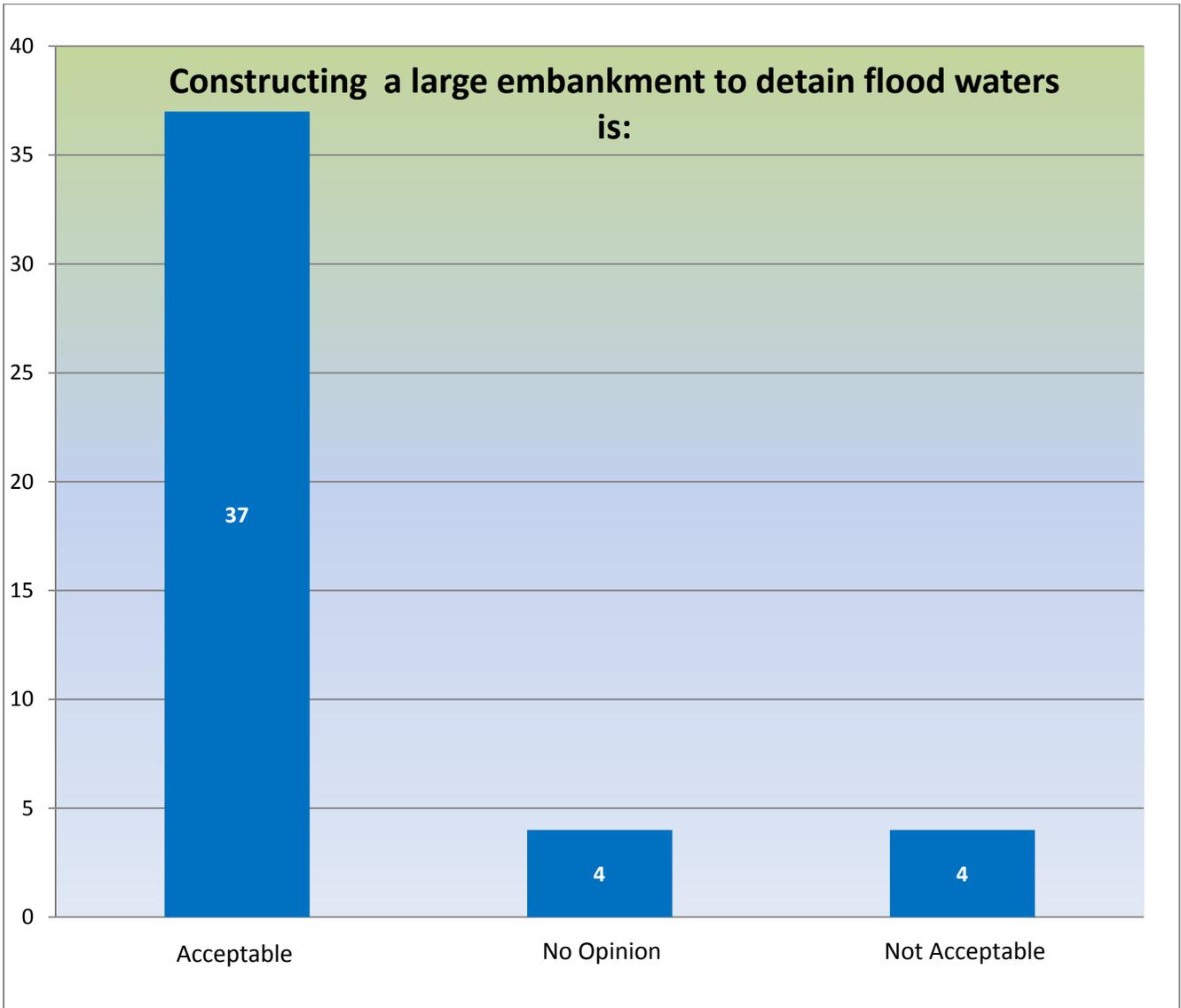
1. Mitigating flood risk from SBC is:



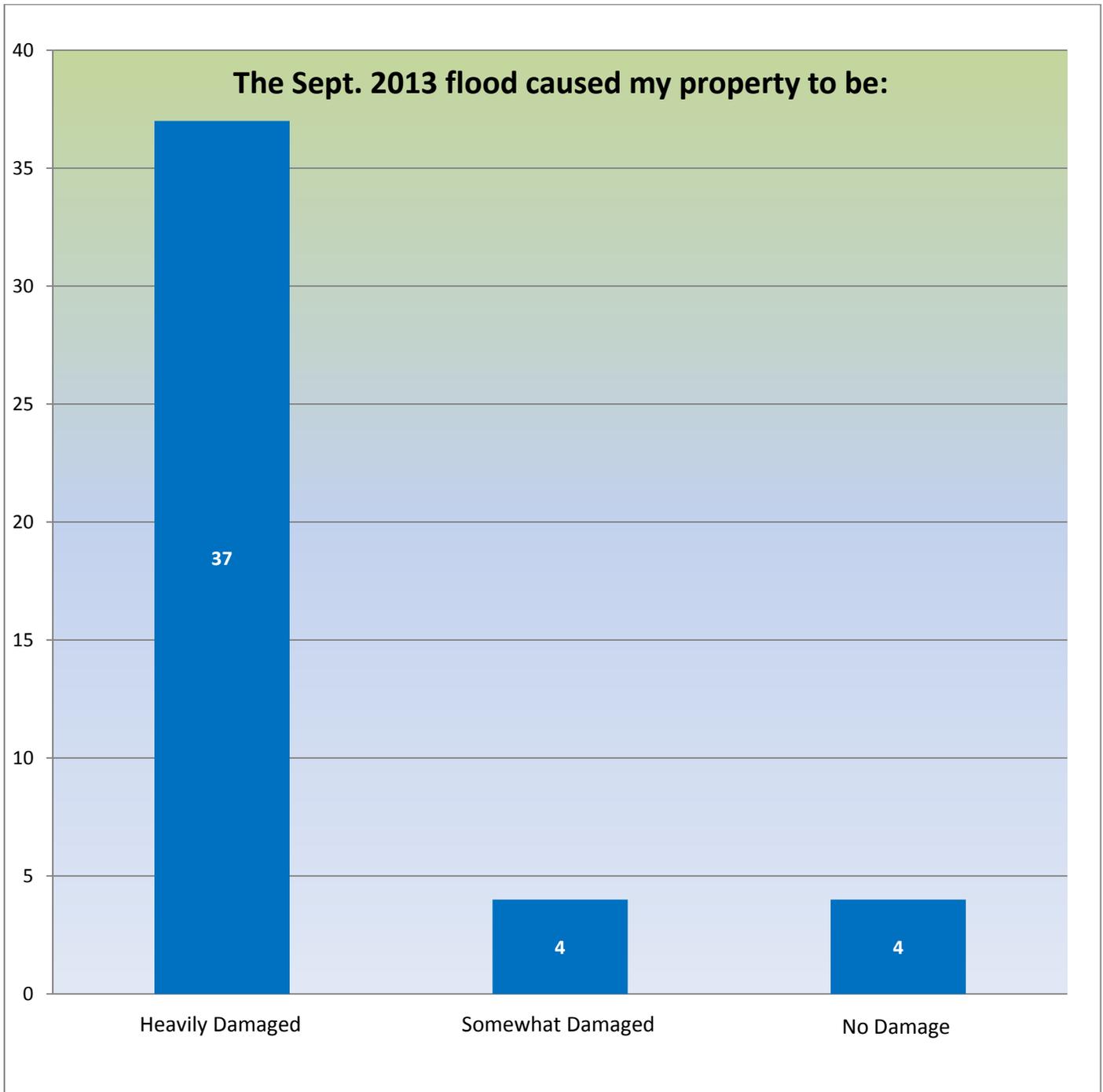
2. Constructing a regional stormwater detention pond on Open Space Land is:



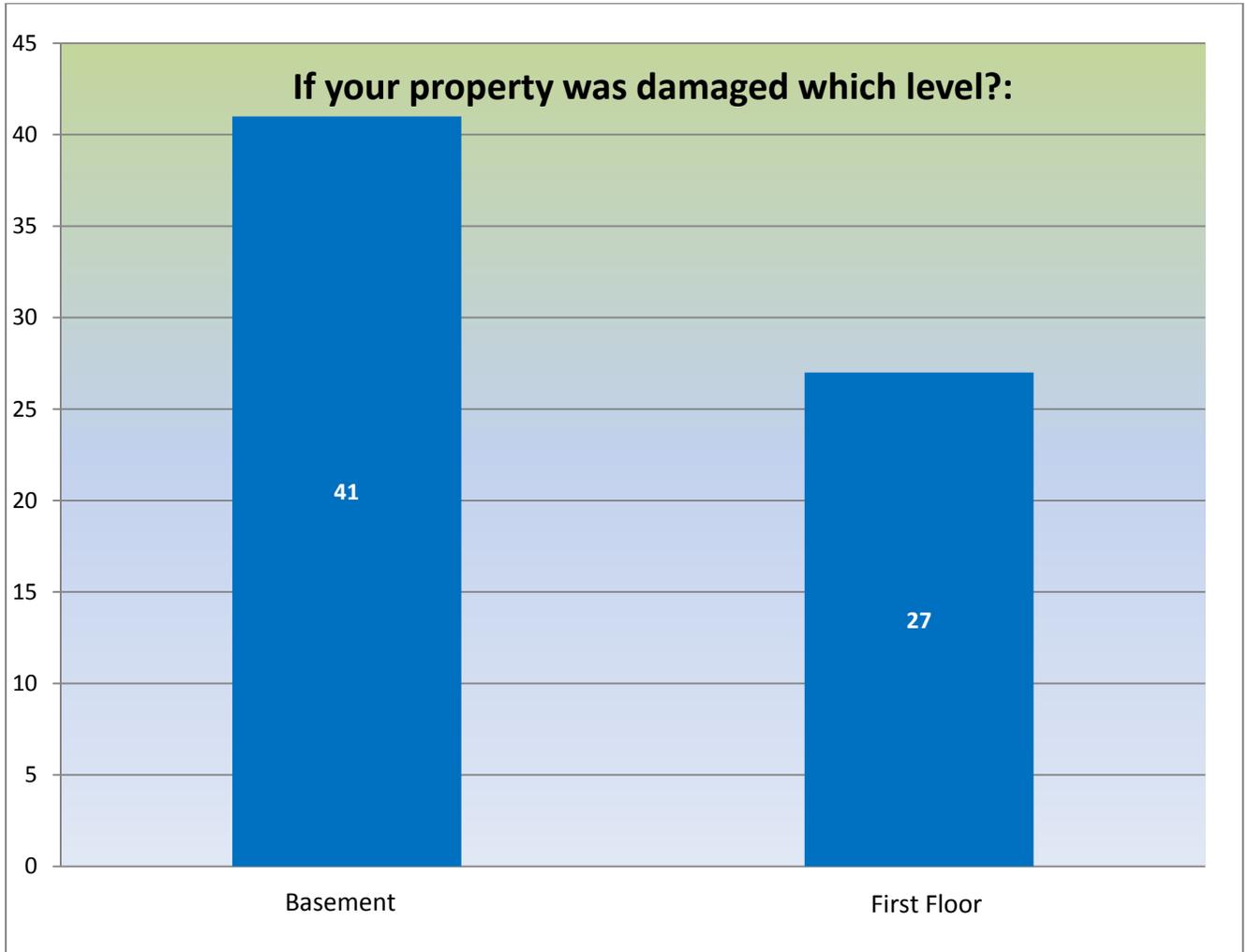
3. Constructing a large embankment to detain flood waters is:



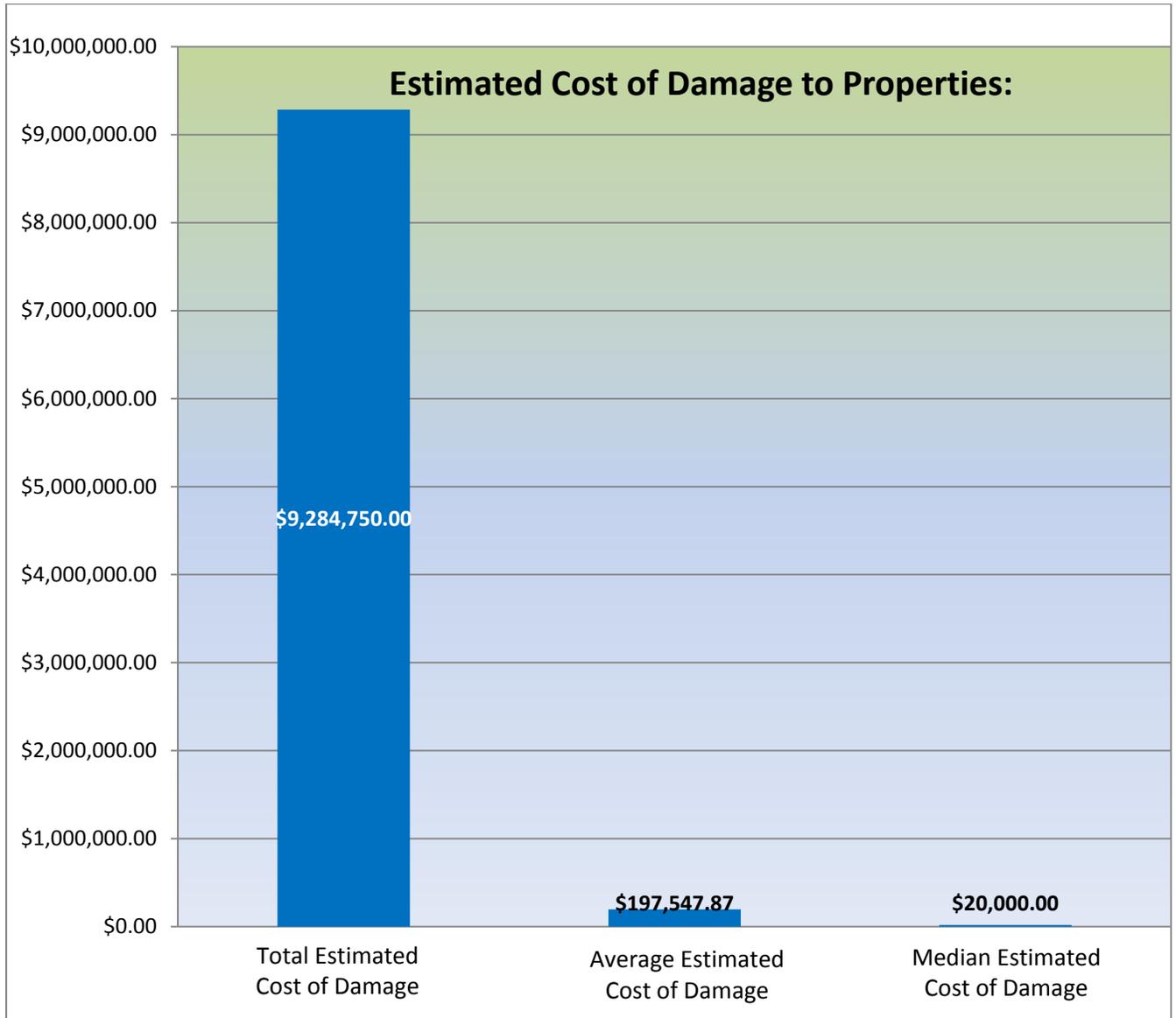
4. The Sept. 2013 flood caused my property to be:



5. If your property was damaged:



**Estimated Cost of Damage to Properties (as reported by 47 people). The \$9.2 million total cost of damages includes \$7 million damage from Frasier Meadows.**



### Other comments and concerns for staff to consider:

- I maintained water out of my unit for 25 hours straight. At 9:15 p.m. (9/12/13) water entered through windows and filled 4 feet into 18 units and all units are displaced (18 of 62 units destroyed/uninhabitable)
- consider flood mitigation to be the utmost priority for the city.
- Our neighborhood tends to flood at a heavy rain – e.g. the streets in Central City Park west of 55<sup>th</sup> run deep! So we have insufficient drainage anyway.
- E. Boulder Ditch needs to eliminate low spots on embankments! Cause of flooding on Simmons Dr.
- (landlord of 4990 Qualla Dr.) Our house is on Qualla Dr. Boulder, 80303. All houses on south side of Qualla Dr. have an apartment directly behind them. There is impervious surface in the all of the apartments in the complex. All downspouts are directed to the backyards of the houses. We were taking on water to the basements 2 days prior to the flood. How can this be fixed?
- On Qualla Dr: We were flooded from 3 sources. 1) South Boulder Creek 2) Surface wash 3) sewer backup. Proposed mitigation addresses South Boulder Creek. Number 2 was the result of apartments at Osage and Thunderbird that have no detention – we are their detention pond – parking lot and flat roofs. Number 3, sewer backup is not acceptable – we need a program to provide check valves funded by the city for our flood-prone properties. We’re not the city’s overflow flow for sewer.
- On Parkway Dr.: All of our damage was due to Boulder sewer water coming in thru the drain in the basement – 56 inches!
- Thank you for holding this event.
- On Manhattan Dr.: Sewage backup a main problem – ruined basement.
- On Kewanee Dr.: The city of Boulder has been aware of the flood threat from S. Boulder Creek for many years. It is imperative that the city not delay any longer in constructing a flood retention berm on the south/west side of US36. This should/could have been done years ago if the city made it a priority.
- on Love Ct: We had a 50 foot wide river touching our house nights of 9/11 and 9/12. Sewer came in on 9/12.
- On Lodge Ln: Please let flood maps folks know they should check with residents on the streets west of Lodge Lane, west of 55<sup>th</sup> and south of Arapahoe – I don’t think there was any flooding of residential streets in the area. No flooding (surface water) behind our house either.
- On Omaha Pl, 303.499.4667: At least 7 of the 14 houses on Omaha Place, (those with finished basement levels) suffered damage due to rising groundwater. There was significant surface water running off the park soccer fields and the parking lot toward the Omaha Place houses.
- Would be helpful to have a map or website to show which streets were flooded. Our street (Kewanee Dr.) flooded but wasn’t represented on map.

- On Morgan Dr.: We also own a home at 2900 Dartmouth Av. to provide a home for our adult daughter who needs 24-hour care. Her basement flooded with raw sewage stripped to studs. FEMA pays nothing for second home.
- On Aztec Dr.: Along with surface flood mitigation, the city also needs to develop a sanitary sewer flood mitigation plan. My entire neighborhood was ravaged by sewer backup. I had over 2 feet in my basement for approx. 48 hours.
- Does the city have a groundwater master plan and will it address basement flooding? After seeing the results of the 9-13 flood, do you believe the master plan will help those affected by groundwater flooding?
- Frasier Meadows – largest single loss in the entire state of Colorado per FEMA comment to us. Do what is necessary to mitigate further events.
- On Crescent Dr.: I would like you to consider raising the north side of the ditch along Baseline Rd. The overflow came north along the public service easement and then east through 3 rooms of our house.
- On Ricara Dr: Our understanding is the 100-year flood plan is basically man-made. It is appropriate to mitigate this issue.
- On Qualla Dr.: Most if not all of my damage was from sewer backup and not flood water per se. The raging river that came down Qualla came onto the lawn, but did not hit the house.
- On Pennsylvania Av: Would like to see curb and gutter – i.e. storm drain installed on Pennsylvania Ave south side between Brooklawn running east to Sycamore. There is chronic standing water on easement adjoining Pennsylvania on south side after significant rain fall or snow melt.
- On Manhattan Dr: Is there a way to use the space on the CU South Campus in flood mitigation? I like the idea of the Manhattan School fields becoming water storage. I'm thinking it makes more sense to keep them grass than making them turf.
- On Shawnee Pl: Our house was flooded in the basement with clean water from the concrete, due to high water table.
- On Gapter Rd: The irrigation ditch east of Cherryvale breached and flooded our block.
- On Fox Ct: Our house was flooded in the basement with over 1 foot of water. Our basement is 700 ft<sup>2</sup>, 90% furnished and stored with many valuable items. The basement was flooded due to sewer water backup.
- on Shawnee Pl: Thank you for hosting this timely and informative open house. It's reassuring to me that you're collecting so much information from the community. Please keep us posted on further events. Enjoyed the information sheet also, and able to speak with staff too.
- On Oneida St: Flood was not quite as bad as modeling predicted for 100-year flood.
- On Manhattan Dr: Absolutely do NOT allow housing on Hogan/Pancost property. They will be stranded – “we were”! Use this meadow for flood control and retention.
- On White Pl: My damage was caused by ground water. Are there any flood mitigation plans for rising ground water?
- Foothills Express way berm held water in back yards of west side of (waste)? causing basement flooding and sewer pressurization.

- On Manhattan Dr.: Mitigation on Manhattan – school field good idea. We would be interested to hear / receive documentation of the mitigation plan.
- On Lodge Lane: When we bought 22 years ago we were not in the floodplain. In the recent revision we were forced to buy insurance because the back lowest corner is in the floodplain. We are very angry that more recent development has caused us to be placed in the floodplain at great cost for insurance. The floodplain mapping needs to be revised to reflect actual flooding. We bought the basic fed insurance coverage up to \$30K. People nearby were not forced to buy flood insurance and they were flooded. We are hiring an engineering study to appeal the insurance requirement. The mortgage company is now requiring full replacement cost flood insurance despite the now obviously miniscule possibility that our house at 55<sup>th</sup> and Arapahoe would be washed away (perhaps if Barker Dam breaks away). Thanks for the open house.
- On Cherryvale Rd: With the current plan for the 580 acre ft retention, once capacity is met, you need to direct the overflow into the current flood path and not re-direct it into the floodplain. Otherwise, you are causing more damage to the drainage that is not part of the retention network – drawing provided on comment sheet.
- on Centennial Trail: It seems obvious the new flood map was not correct. Although our property is now considered a risk under the new flood map, there was no flooding on my property. Our damage resulted from sewer backup.
- on Crescent Dr.: Please do this again! Very helpful and healing for the community. Thanks!