Have your say
on three big ideas to reduce flooding in the City of Parramatta

What is Flood Big Ideas all about?

With a grant from the Australian Government's Disaster Ready Fund, matched by Council funds, the Flood Big Ideas project is investigating upgrades to flood infrastructure that will reduce flooding in the City of Parramatta.

After reviewing 14 options, we've selected the best three (3) concept designs for the community to consider:

- Enhancing the existing Loyalty Road Flood Detention Basin, North Rocks
- Upgrading the existing McCoy Park Flood Detention Basin, Toongabbie
- Rebuilding Charles Street Weir, relocating a pipe beneath the Barry Wilde Bridge, Parramatta CBD, and removing the existing footbridge underneath Barry Wilde Bridge.

We want your help in choosing the best design for our City.

Following community consultation, this project will produce a detailed design for one (1) of these options. Additional funding will be required to build the infrastructure.

How often does Parramatta flood and is it really an issue?

From the earliest days, the Parramatta River has provided many benefits. However, the changeable nature of the river has also meant a high risk of flooding.

Currently, the Parramatta River breaks its banks around five (5) times a year. Large parts of the City of Parramatta are susceptible to flash-flooding. Our CBD is the most flash-flood affected major CBD in NSW.

Flash-flooding occurs in a matter of hours and can lead to rapid rises in water level. While big floods happened 1986 and 1988, and a smaller flood took place in 2015, any flash-flood event can cause significant damage and disruption.

In the worst possible flood, known as the Probable Maximum Flood, up to 25% of the City of Parramatta could be covered in floodwaters. The risks to our community would be high, and the flood could cause hundreds of millions of dollars (or more) in damages.

Floods affect our community in many ways:

- accidents and injuries or death
- homes, businesses and properties flooded and damaged
- services such as clean water and electricity disrupted
- creating unsafe conditions for driving or pedestrian activity
- causing unwanted pollution events
- for many people who live through a flood, normal life is put on hold for months or years.

Before we get started, what is a 1% AEP (Annual Exceedance Probability)?

When we explain the potential reduction in flood levels produced by each of the Flood Big Ideas concept designs, we are referring to flooding in a 1% AEP (Annual Exceedance Probability) event.*

A 1% AEP flood event is of a size that has a 1% chance of occurring at a particular location in any given year.

This used to be known as a '1-in-100-year' flood, a term which can be misleading as communities could experience several '1-in-100-year' floods within a decade.

Have your say on Flood Big Ideas before 5pm Friday 30 January 2026.

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Loyalty Road Flood Detention Basin, North Rocks

Located in Bidjidal Reserve, this concrete basin with its 30m walls is designed to temporarily detain floodwaters heading down Darling Mills Creek during and after storms. Sometimes called a dam, its main purpose is to help protect downstream homes and communities from flooding.

The concept design sees an existing low-flow tunnel through the bottom of the dam wall narrowed, so that water will move more slowly through the tunnel. More water would be held upstream of the wall, and the extra time required to release the water will lower the flood levels downstream.

The narrowed tunnel will still be wide enough for people to walk through during dry weather.

If built, it is expected that the upgrade to the Loyalty Road flood mitigation infrastructure will result in:

- 19cm lower flood levels from North Rocks to the Parramatta CBD*
- a reduction of around $19 million in downstream flood damages (over 50 years)
- a financial benefit to cost ratio of 16.3 to 1.

Disadvantages of the project

- the cost of the project would be about $1.1 million
- it would cost around $10,000 per year to maintain
- the tunnel at the bottom of the dam wall will be half its current diameter – people will still be able to walk through the tunnel in dry weather, but it will be narrower than it is now.

McCoy Park Flood Detention Basin, Toongabbie

With access via Mimosa Avenue, Toongabbie, the large open fields of McCoy Park were reformed to create a detention basin for floodwaters. It currently holds millions of litres of water during a flood, before slowly releasing the floodwaters.

The proposed concept design for McCoy Park is to raise the existing soil and turf levee walls (which have a concrete core) by one (1) metre. Additional two (2) metre high levee walls would be built on the industrial area side of McCoy Park to increase the amount of floodwater that can be (temporarily) stored.

The new levee walls will look exactly like the existing walls with the concrete buried in the middle of the earth mound. Initially, the top of the concrete wall will be visible at the same level as the new earth mound. However, over time it will be covered and look like McCoy Park's existing natural grass basin.

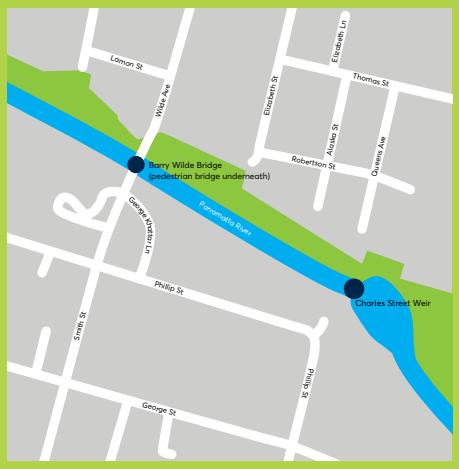
If built, it is expected that the upgrade to the McCoy Park Flood Detention Basin will:

- lower floodwaters downstream in Toongabbie Creek resulting in less flooding in the Toongabbie area with a 7cm reduction in flood levels*
- reduce flooding further downstream, all the way to the Parramatta, with 5cm less water at the Parramatta CBD*
- reduce flood damages downstream by around $16 million (over 50 years)
- deliver a financial benefit to cost ratio of 0.5 to 1.

Disadvantages of the project

- The cost of the project would be about $31.6 million.
- It would cost around $50,000 per year to maintain.
- The new walls around some sections of McCoy Park basin will make it harder to access the inner parts of the park. However, wherever possible, gates, stairs or ramps will be provided to facilitate access in and out of the park.

Charles Street Weir and Barry Wilde Bridge, Parramatta River in the CBD



In this proposal, the Charles Street Weir will be removed and replaced with a new weir that will have automatic flood gates that can be opened when a flood is coming and kept closed at all other times. Flood gates are located underneath the weir.

The new weir will be wider – increasing from around 1.5m to 4.8m. This will allow better access for pedestrians and cyclists crossing the Parramatta River.

The 1970s Barry Wilde Bridge with its celebrated fountain and light display, will remain in place. However, the pedestrian bridge underneath the road bridge will be removed. The Sydney Water pipeline, currently visible alongside the pedestrian bridge, will be relocated underneath the riverbed.

These improvements will substantially speed the movement of floodwaters through the CBD and reduce flooding.

If built, it has been estimated that:

- flood levels would be reduced by around 66cm for about 2km upstream of Charles Street Weir, significantly reducing flood risks in the CBD*
- flood damages in the CBD would be reduced by around $23 million (over 50 years)
- a financial benefit to cost ratio of 1.2 to 1 would be delivered.

Disadvantages of the project

- The cost of the project would be about $18 million
- It would cost around $100,000 per year to maintain
- The project will remove the current low level footbridge underneath Barry Wilde Bridge. However, access across the Parramatta River will still be available via the main Barry Wilde Bridge, via the improved Charles Street Weir crossing, or via the Lennox Bridge close to Riverside Theatres.

How do I have a say?

Feedback is welcome until 5pm Friday 30 January 2026.

Scan the QR code or visit our project page **cityofparramatta.co/flood-big-ideas**

You can see all the concept designs, find answers to frequently asked questions, and more.

You can also use the calendar to make a 15-minute phone booking with our flood team or make in-person appointments at our community drop-ins.

For enquiries, please email **catchment@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au** or contact City of Parramatta on **1300 617 058**.

Australian Government

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The Reducing flooding in the Parramatta CBD and City of Parramatta Local Government Area project received funding from the Australian Government.