

# Flood Resilient Arlington Making Space for Stormwater - Overland Relief Pathway



## Loss of Streams and Floodplains

From the 1930s to the 1950s, Arlington was the fastest growing county in the nation. At that time, there were no regulations to protect streams, or to manage stormwater from new construction. As Arlington rapidly grew, two thirds of Arlington's streams and floodplains were buried in stormwater pipes, and homes and businesses were built over top. These former stream valleys have a higher risk of flooding due to their low elevation, despite the underground stormwater pipes.



## What is overland relief?

Modern stormwater design requires "overland relief", which is a safe pathway for floodwaters during storm events. If Arlington were built today, regulations would require overland relief to sufficiently pass the 100 year storm. Buildings, fences or other obstructions would not be allowed in the path of flood waters, and public easements would always be required. However, these requirements cannot be applied retroactively.



## System Constraints

In Waverly Hills, Arlington's historical development pattern resulted in a stormwater system that weaves between homes, lacks public easements for improvements, and has insufficient space for overland relief for larger storm events. This development pattern has contributed to the flash flooding and property loss experienced in the Waverly Hills neighborhood. The County worked with WHCA for several years to explore multiple stormwater system upgrades to reduce flood risk. However, because of the system constraints, no infrastructure improvements were identified that could sufficiently reduce flood risk.

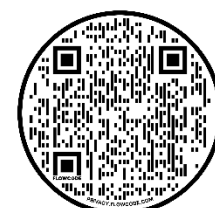
## Overland Relief Pathway

To reduce flood risk for the community and better respond to future climate change, the voluntary property acquisition program was established. The County is purchasing some properties on a voluntary basis to provide overland relief, expand the storm system capacity and reduce flood risk to the community. Creating an overland relief pathway will provide space for floodwaters during large storms.



## Reducing Runoff at Home

Interested in learning how you can reduce runoff on your property? Scan the QR codes below with your phone's camera to learn how to reduce runoff at home or reduce your flood risk.



Stormwater at Home



Reduce your Risk of Flooding





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