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CITY PLAN COMMISSION

Cranston City Hall
869 Park Avenue, Cranston, RI 02910

SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY AND PROVIDE FINDINGS AND POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS TO ADDRESS THE FLOODING OF THE PAWTUXET RIVER

November 24, 2025

Dear Commissioners:

The impacts of the flooding along the Pawtuxet River and its tributaries remain a significant concern to the City of Cranston and we are grateful for the Commissioners studying this issue.

From the City's standpoint, there are many constructive initiatives identified in our Comprehensive Plan and on our long-term work program; however, our ability to implement them has been limited by both capacity and specialized expertise. Floodplain management is only one of many responsibilities of planners. For this reason, we are especially appreciative of the technical assistance the City receives from RIEMA and the Pawtuxet River Watershed Authority.

The City of Cranston Comprehensive Plan has long supported the adoption of low-impact development practices, green infrastructure, and controls on impervious surface coverage for developed land. The availability of model ordinances and expert guidance would greatly assist the City in translating these concepts into effective local regulations. We believe that the recent capacity-building work of the Executive Office of Housing offers a strong example of how state and regional resources can be leveraged to strengthen local implementation.

As I send out notices to property owners about materials stored in the floodplain, I wish for assistance to help relocate businesses from the Special Flood Hazard Area.

Looking ahead, it is difficult to envision a future in which every municipality is able to independently maintain the level of in-house expertise and resources required to lead comprehensive flood-mitigation efforts. From the perspective of the Planning Department, we welcome and look forward to collaborating with regional partners to minimize future flood losses and protect the community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Beth Ashman', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Beth Ashman, AICP

City Planning Director, NFIP Designated Community Official