

Dear Mayor Rector and City Council,

The Environmental Advisory Board (EAB) received a presentation in July about the Community Rating System (CRS), a voluntary incentive program through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management practices that exceed the minimum requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to reduce flood insurance rates for residents who live in participating communities. More than 1,500 communities participate nationwide. The CRS rating card allows for a rating from 1 to 10 with lower score translating to larger discount on flood insurance from the NFIP for all members of the participating community. The score is determined through the implementation of 19 credited activities organized under four categories which include Public Information Activities, Mapping and Regulations, Flood Damage Reduction Activities, and Warning and Response.

Sarah Kessler, CFM, environmental specialist for the city, gave a very detailed presentation on the program and the city's recent CRS rating increase from a 6 to a 5. During the presentation, the EAB was informed that Pinellas County was given the CRS rating of 2. This means that residents that reside in unincorporated areas of Pinellas County are granted a larger discount on their flood insurance than residents of the City of Clearwater due to the difference in CRS rating.

As the city looks to protect its residents from sea level rise with higher standards of development, there are additional areas for improvement that the city can invest in to raise its CRS rating. These areas include flood hazard mapping, repetitive loss analysis, and drainage system maintenance. Each investment in activities to improve the city's CRS rating correlate to a safer community and considerable savings for its 8,500 flood insurance policy holders.

To make Clearwater a more resilient community, while meeting the city's stormwater master plan, GreenPrint plan for sustainability, and meet the goals in Clearwater 2045, the city's comprehensive plan, the Environmental Advisory Board recommends that the improvement of the City of Clearwater's CRS Rating from a 5 to a 2, be made a priority and asks for the support of the City Council to achieve this.

Respectfully,

Jared Leone
Chair

Glenna Wentworth
Vice Chair

Kelly Dobbin
Member

Jason Drizd
Member

Michael Rubino
Member

