

Town of Hermosa, South Dakota

2023 Accomplishments

Severe rainstorms cause sudden flash floods in the Town of Hermosa, South Dakota (pop. 397) located in Custer County. Battle Creek runs just south of town with a secondary channel and floodplain extending through the southern portion of town. Old Dairy Drainage runs west to east across the northern extents of town. These waterways and the town's stormwater system flood during significant rain events, overtopping roads and damaging infrastructure. In 2007, significant flooding washed out the railroad embankment and moved three homes off their foundations.



Photo: Town of Hermosa

FloodWise Community since July 2023

Headwaters project funding 2023: \$24,500

2023 FloodWise Deliverables

- Engaged stakeholders regarding community flood and drainage resiliency. This included facilitation of monthly stakeholder flood mitigation meetings.
- Scoped the problem, contracted a consultant, and funded an engineer to research previous community flood-related studies and conduct a town-wide drainage assessment and improvement plan.
- Visited the site and facilitated a public meeting to present preliminary drainage findings and gather additional information from residents.
- Assisted engineer in identifying preliminary flood and drainage mitigation projects.
- Assisted Town of Hermosa in assessing flood-related issues then writing and submitting a \$458,850 grant proposal to FEMA's BRIC program.



Photo: Headwaters Economics

Community Engagement

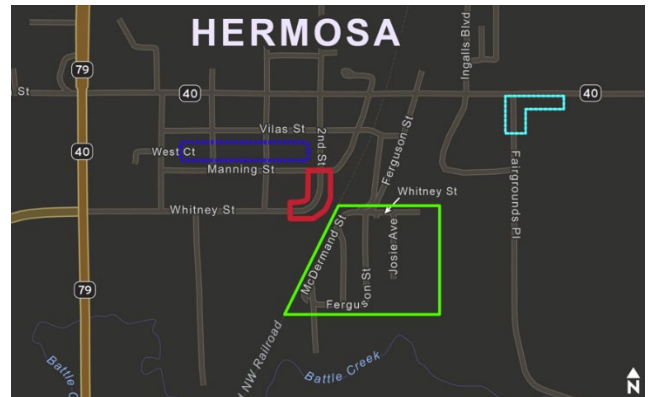
Through discussions with Custer County, FloodWise Community Assistance reached out to the Town of Hermosa in early summer and offered to assist with flood mitigation. By midsummer a Memorandum of Understanding was signed and meetings were underway to define problems and determine goals. FloodWise staff conducted monthly stakeholder meetings and one public meeting to discuss town flood and drainage mitigation work. FloodWise staff also made a site visit and met with key stakeholders in November.

Drainage Assessment and Improvement Plan

FloodWise hired Claycomb Engineering to conduct a town-wide drainage assessment and develop a drainage improvement plan. This drainage improvement plan is a key step in identifying and prioritizing flood mitigation projects that will reduce the risk of future flooding to the community. This plan was instrumental in preparing the grant application discussed below.

Grant Proposal for Custer County

The Town of Hermosa is a FEMA-designated Community Disaster Resilience Zone due to its high levels of social vulnerability and natural hazard risk. FloodWise hired KLJ Engineering to prepare the grant proposal required to apply for FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant program. FloodWise staff also assisted with the grant application. The proposal requests \$458,850 to complete a scoping project to prioritize projects, conduct feasibility and benefit-cost analyses, and design engineered solutions. This work builds on the drainage assessment and improvement plan funded by FloodWise in 2023. The goal of the county's scoping project is to be shovel-ready for future FEMA-BRIC applications.



Map: KLJ Engineering

Next Steps

- If the Hermosa FEMA-BRIC grant is awarded, help create and circulate a Request for Proposals for services needed to implement the grant.
- If the proposal is not awarded, continue to seek funding for this work.

About FloodWise Community Assistance & Headwaters Economics

FloodWise Community Assistance is a program of Headwaters Economics that provides free technical assistance to decrease flood risk and strengthen communities.

Headwaters Economics is an independent, nonprofit research group whose mission is to improve community development and land management decisions. <https://headwaterseconomics.org/>