MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City of Staunton Partners with Virginia Center for Innovative Technology for Flood Safety

Nov. 9, 2021 – The City of Staunton began its flood sensor project at the end of October with help from a unique partnership with the Commonwealth of Virginia. The nonprofit Center for Innovative Technology (CIT), with support from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science & Technology Directorate, assisted the City with the installation of two flood sensors as the next step in the city's overall flood mitigation strategy.

The flood sensors are currently collecting water level information that will validate data from yet-to-be-installed rain gauge sensors to be located throughout the city's three watersheds. Together these sensors will provide data that can ultimately be used to establish a flood warning system and enhance the city's overall stormwater management strategy. They will provide real-time, web-based information on flooding conditions that City staff will be able use in a variety of ways, such as evacuating flood prone areas, proactively detouring traffic, and floodplain and stormwater management.

These mitigation efforts come after the devastating floods in August 2020 that resulted in 166 reports of damage estimated at $3.1 million. Since that time, city staff has been working on an overall flood mitigation strategy, with the first step being a hydrologic and hydraulic analysis, which was completed in May of this year. Besides the weather sensors and warning system, additional forthcoming steps include: installation of additional flood shields and floodproofing, an ongoing public education campaign, Lewis and Peyton creeks tunnel maintenance and improvements, and exploring a supplemental flood insurance program.

"While it's impractical for the City to completely eliminate the damage of flood events like those in August of 2020," said John Glover, building official for the City of Staunton. "We can improve resiliency and reduce the impacts with efforts such as this."

CIT identified Staunton as an ideal location for flood sensors in Virginia, based on its history of flooding and ongoing flood mitigation efforts, and the City is excited for the opportunity to participate in the program.

“Flooding has such a devastating impact on communities,” said Chuck Kirby, CIT Vice President of Smart Communities. “It is a privilege for CIT to partner with the City of Staunton to provide vital smart communities technology, such as ISI Flood Sensors, that can save lives and reduce property damage when flooding occurs.”

Intellisense Systems, Inc. (ISI) is the manufacturer of the Flood Sensors supplied by CIT, on behalf of DHS, for the City of Staunton. ISI creates advanced sensing and display solutions supporting a data continuum from acquisition to visualization.

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