

## CITY OF HILLTOP EMERGENCY TORNADO SHELTER PROJECT

### **Project Summary**

The City of Hilltop is building a 6,000 sq. ft. emergency shelter. Both the main floor and basement will be fully accessible and constructed to meet ICC-500 standards. During emergency situations, the building will serve as the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for fire, police, and emergency services until the City of Columbia Heights can provide contract services. The storm shelter will serve as a resiliency hub, providing generators, battery backup, and HVAC during power outages and other emergencies. The shelter will have a capacity of 700 and will meet the City's goals of sheltering the entire population of manufactured home residents in the community.

The facility will also serve as an election polling location and provide office space for city hall staff, council chambers, and records storage. The main floor of the tornado shelter will have a community room with a kitchenette and serving counter that residents can rent for events. The existing City Hall and adjacent playground will be removed to make space for the new construction. A new playground will be constructed as part of the project.

### **Project Rationale**

Of the 406 housing units in the community, 266 (66%) are manufactured homes making them extremely vulnerable to tornadoes and other extreme weather. NOAA and FEMA recommend that mobile and manufactured home residents flee their homes for sturdier shelter before storms with tornadoes strikes. Minnesota law requires manufactured home parks licensed prior to 1988 to provide an approved shelter or an approved evacuation plan. All of the parks in Hilltop were licensed before 1988 and all have elected to provide an evacuation plan, none of the parks have formal tornado shelters. The intensity and frequency of storms has been increasing in recent years. On average, the City opens the tornado shelter 12-15 times per year. The current shelter only has capacity for 174 people, is difficult to access, and does not meet the needs of the community.

### **Project Cost**

The total cost is estimated at \$4.57 million.

### **Legislative Request**

The City of Hilltop is requesting \$2,273,000 in state funds to support the construction of an emergency tornado shelter at 4555 Jackson Street NE in Hilltop that will also serve as the City Hall, Emergency Operations Center, and Resilience Hub for the community of 971 residents. The project will include the demolition of the current city hall and playground and installation of a new playground. Additional funding will come from City investments, private, corporate, community foundation and government grants.

### **Contact Information**

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