



Legislation Text

File #: 21-6471, **Version:** 1

Department: Commissioner, Precinct 1

Department Head/Elected Official: Commissioner Ellis

Regular or Supplemental RCA: Regular RCA

Type of Request: Discussion Item

Project ID (if applicable): N/A

Vendor/Entity Legal Name (if applicable): N/A

MWDBE Participation (if applicable): N/A

Request Summary (Agenda Caption):

Request for discussion and possible action regarding the Texas Water Development Board's recent rejection of four Harris County Flood Control Department grant applications for flood projects in the Halls Bayou Watershed due to Benefit Cost Ratio less than one (1.0).

Background and Discussion:

In 2019, the Texas Legislature passed SB7, which was then approved by voters through constitutional amendment. The bill created the Flood Infrastructure Fund (FIF) and charged the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) with distributing \$790M for flood risk reduction projects across the state. Thereafter, the TWDB created the Flood Intended Use Plan, laying out criteria for selection of projects that would receive funding from the FIF. The Flood Intended Use Plan discusses Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) for project applications, though BCR was not included as a part of TWDB's scoring criteria for the grants.

Use of the BCR in grant programs has consistently disadvantaged projects in lower income areas (where property values are low, the calculated avoided damages for a project are also low). In 2020, Harris County Flood Control District submitted nine (9) applications to the TWDB for FIF grant funding. Seven of these projects are in the Halls and Greens Bayou watersheds.

The law does not require a BCR greater than 1.0. The initial abridged application scoring in the FIUP already provided project scoring based on metrics of the project merits, including equity such as need and distribution benefits. Thus far, one project in Harris County was approved for FIF funding by the TWDB (\$3.88M) for the Halls Bayou Drainage Project Bond C-28 & C-29. The County's four remaining projects were rejected. These projects represent nearly \$27M in potential additional funding.

Expected Impact:

Without FIF funding, HCFD will need to continue to seek additional partner funds for these projects or the County will need to find ways to ensure adequate funding is provided for completion which could involve utilization of Flood Resilience Trust funds. FCD will need to continue work with the TWDB on revising its Flood Intended Use Plan to better align the awarding of all future grants to areas of the state that predictably

experience a disproportionate amount of damages from flooding events.

Alternative Options: Complete these projects using Harris County Flood Resilience Trust funds.

Alignment with Goal(s):

- Justice and Safety
- Economic Opportunity
- Housing
- Public Health
- Transportation
- Flooding
- Environment
- Governance and Customer Service

Prior Court Action (if any): N/A

Date	Agenda Item #	Action Taken

Location: N/A

Address (if applicable): N/A

Precinct(s): Countywide

Fiscal and Personnel Summary				
Service Name	-	FY 21-22	Estimates	
			FY 22	Next 3 FYs
Incremental Expenditures				
Labor Expenditures	-	-	-	-
Non-Labor Expenditures	-	-	-	-
Total Incremental Expenditures	-	-	-	-
Funding Sources (General Fund, PIC Fund, Debt or CP, Grants, or Other - Please Specify)				
Existing Budget	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
Total Current Budget	-	-	-	-
Additional Budget Requested	-	-	-	-

	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
Total Additional Budget Requested	-	-	-	-
Total Funding Sources	-	-	-	-
Personnel (Fill out section only if requesting new PCNs)				
Current Position Count for Service	-	-	-	-
Additional Positions Requested	-	-	-	-
Total Personnel	-	-	-	-

Anticipated Implementation Date: N/A

Emergency/Disaster Recovery Note: Not an emergency, disaster, or COVID-19 related item

Contact(s) name, title, department: Mark Anderson, Lead Policy Advisor, Harris County Precinct One

Attachments (if applicable): N/A