



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT MITIGATION PROGRAM

Virtual Public Meeting 1 (09/15/20) Questions & Answers

The Texas General Land Office (GLO) has established a statewide competition for federal funds allocated to Texas following Hurricane Harvey. Houston Public Works hosted a virtual public engagement meeting for flood mitigation project proposals under the Community Development Block Grant Mitigation Program on **Tuesday, September 15th at 5:30 pm.**

The purpose of this meeting was to inform residents about the following applications for project funding the City plans to submit:

- Huntington Village Area
- Port Area
- Kashmere Gardens Area
- Fifth Ward Area
- Sunnyside Area
- Alief Parks Area
- Braeburn Glen Area

The applications are focused on where flooding threatens homes that meet the State application criteria.

The meeting began with a brief presentation about the program, followed by a moderated Q&A session with the Project Team members. The presentation can be found on the project website at this link: <https://www.publicworks.houstontx.gov/houston-drainage-studies>. Residents were able to submit questions and comments during the Q&A session. The questions were answered verbally by the Presenter. The questions and answers from the session are below:

Question: Will this funding be in addition to the funding already allocated for proposed work by Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD) along Hunting Bayou from last year?

- **Answer:** All of the projects the City is preparing are in consultation with Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD). The City and Flood Control are coordinating efforts to maximize public dollars and the effectiveness of the projects. HCFCD is working with the Army Corps of Engineers to make major improvements to Hunting Bayou which should provide some relief to the community. The local drainage improvements the City is proposing with this application should make conditions even better.

This applies to most of the proposed CDBG MIT projects – there are Flood Control improvements in the vicinity and the City is trying to provide even greater improvement.

Question: Thank you for this presentation. I will review the website and if I have questions - who should we contact?

- **Answer:** website: <https://www.publicworks.houstontx.gov/houston-drainage-studies> for more information. Email: drainage.study@houstontx.gov

Question: How are residents being informed about these meetings and will there be more public meetings or outreach to the community?

- **Answer:** Yes, there is another public meeting like this one on Saturday [09/19/2020] morning at 10:30. That information is available on the website and is being distributed on *Nextdoor*. It has been distributed to all of the Complete Communities through the City's Complete Communities organization.

The City Council Transportation, Technology and Infrastructure Committee (TTI) has a standard posting procedure for all public meetings, so it was included in that also.

Question: Who should be contacted for follow up?

- **Answer:** At the Houston drainage studies website there is an email listed (drainage.study@houstontx.gov) which will come to the project team who will answer all of the questions received.

Question: Cullen is maintained by TXDOT so how much will TXDOT fund? MLK was just totally reconstructed so explain why Bellfort Street east to HCFCD Drainage System isn't being upgraded because it carries the water to the Saltwater Ditch?

- **Answer:** The segment of MLK that the City is proposing for the drainage improvement in this application is not the segment that has been reconstructed. The entire length of MLK has not been reconstructed. The focus with this application is to establish trunk systems that can convey more water. This project will not provide a 100-year level of service or protection from a 100-year storm in this area. There are going to be additional improvements required both on the part of HCFCD and the City of Houston.

With respect to Cullen Blvd, TxDOT is not providing any funding for the project because this is a drainage improvement which is below TxDOT roadway infrastructure.

Question: What is the timeframe or format for public comment?

- **Answer:** All the information is available at the Houston Drainage Studies website. At the website is an email address where inquiries or comments can be submitted. (<https://www.publicworks.houstontx.gov/houston-drainage-studies>).
- The information will remain on the website beyond the CDBG MIT application period. The applications are due to the State on October 28, 2020. Comments received by September 24 will be included in the application. The official application public comment period is through September 24. The information will remain on the website and Houston Public Works will continue to respond to any inquiries about the projects, even after that date.

Question: Is a flyer available to share with community residents?

- Answer: Houston Public Works has not prepared a flyer. HPW can do something like that and put it up onto the website for folks to download and share. The information that is on the website is more application related. Those descriptions can be downloaded from the website and shared.

Question: Scott Street at Holmes Rd floods continuously for several blocks that runs through the middle of Sunnyside. MLK south of Bellfort also drains to Bellfort that's not being done by City.

- Answer: There are many drainage challenges in the Sunnyside area. The project the City is proposing in the CDBG MIT competition will not solve all of the drainage problems in the Sunnyside area. Houston Public Works has identified the improvements that can provide the greatest benefit for the amount of grant funds that are available. That is what the City is proposing for funding at this time.

Question: How much money for all these projects is the City looking for in partnerships?

- Answer: The State program limits the City to three (3) partnership applications. The applications that are being prepared for this round of the State program as a partnership are the HCFCD/Sharpstown project and it's roughly a 50-50 cost share. So, the grant funds that are available is limited to \$100 million and roughly \$50 million will go to both HCFCD and City of Houston for the improvements each is proposing under this application.
- For the Port Area project, it is again an equal split, approximately \$50 million each. The neighborhood drainage improvements proposed for the Pleasantville Area are approximately \$50 million and the Lily Pad to be created at the Harbor Street site is roughly \$50 million dollars.
- The partnership for Huntington Village flood mitigation is with the International Management District. This is an almost \$80 million project. Projects proposed and shown in the application are City of Houston drainage improvements so more than 50% of the funds are going to City of Houston. The International Management District will continue its outreach and planning in the areas to develop additional projects for sustainable development.

Question: Sharpstown has less information on the website. Will there be a substantially complete application available, and how long will the public be able to comment on that one?

- Answer: The Sharpstown project is a partnership project with Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD). HCFCD is the lead agency for that application. HCFCD is finalizing details of the application. Houston Public Works will post additional details as they become available.
- Everything that has been presented tonight is available on the City's website and pertains to applications the City of Houston will submit to the State as the primary applicant.

Question: Can you state the specific website address again so those of us who didn't see the presentation can go directly there. Thank you.

- Answer: The website is Houston Drainage Studies. If you go to the City's website for Public Works, it is Houston Drainage Studies. <https://www.publicworks.houstontx.gov/houston-drainage-studies>
- The URL has been pasted in the chat but you can also access it online by going to [publicworks.houstontx.gov/Houston-drainage-studies](https://www.publicworks.houstontx.gov/Houston-drainage-studies)

Question: Because the website posting is in a strange location under Drainage Studies, would you consider posting it on your public notice and newspaper in Public Works or tweeting about it to get more people to know about these project applications?

- Answer: Houston Public Works staff will work with the Communications team to do so. Houston Public Works has coordinated with other departments to also direct links to it from the Complete Communities page; from the Housing Department's Harvey Recovery page; from the Chief Resilience Office webpage; and the Chief Recovery Office webpage.