

AGENDA



Thursday, April 10, 2008

**Watershed Protection and Development Review
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION**

Item No. 45

Subject: Approve an ordinance authorizing the acceptance of grant funds in the amount of \$1,672,375 from the Office of the Governor, Division of Emergency Management; and amending the 2007-2008 Operating Budget, Watershed Protection and Development Review Department Special Revenue Fund, of Ordinance No. 20070910-003 to appropriate \$1,672,375 to the DR-1606 Hurricane Rita HMGP Program for the buyout and demolition of single family houses in the floodplain of Onion Creek near the intersection of South Pleasant Valley Road and East William Cannon Boulevard.

Amount and Source of Funding: Funding in the amount up to \$1,672,375 is available in Federal Emergency Management Agency Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funding administered by the Texas Department of Public Safety Division of Emergency Management. Local matching funds are required and \$557,459 in local matching funds is available in the Fiscal Year 2007-2008 Capital Budget of the Watershed Protection and Development Review Department.

Fiscal Note: A fiscal note is attached.

For More Information: Mapi Vigil, 974-3384; Diane Gonzalez, 974-9789, Julia Lee, 974-3357

Prior Council Action: 07/27/2006 – Accepted Federal Emergency Management Agency Hazard Mitigation Program Grant in the amount of \$6,255,823.

The City of Austin submitted an original grant application to the Texas Division of Emergency Management on January 27, 2006. The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program provides cost-share funding for acquisition of flood damaged properties. The grant supports the buyout of up to 118 single-family residential structures with an original estimated cost of \$8,341,097 with a federal share of \$6,255,823. The original grant in the amount of \$6,255,823 was approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency on June 17, 2006. The project targets buyout of homes adjacent to Onion Creek upstream of the East William Cannon Drive and the Onion Creek crossing. The living space of several houses is up to 10 feet below the 100 year floodplain elevation. This area was impacted significantly during the floods of October 17, 1998 and November 15, 2001. The buyout process is voluntary; this grant program does not allow the use of eminent domain acquisition. Interested property owners are offered appraised fair market value. Owners and occupants are provided relocation assistance from the City to secure housing outside of flood hazard areas. Residual lands will be returned to the natural state. A back-up list of 34 properties was included in the City's original grant application to replace properties with title issues, properties declining the offer, or properties that have expressed no desire to participate in the voluntary program within the timeline of the grant. The City has estimated that the replacement of the original properties that have declined the offers, expressed no desire to participate in the program, or have title issues with properties from the back-up list would cost an additional \$2,229,834 with a federal share of \$1,672,375. This grant will provide 75% of the additional required funding.

The total estimated project cost is now \$10,570,931. The City of Austin will provide the required 25% matching funds of \$557,459. In addition to the City's grant matching funds, the Department has included funding in the FY2008 Capital Improvement Program Budget to continue the relocation assistance.