

Council Q&A
November 8, 2015 City Council Meeting
Agenda Items #3 & 4

Late Backup

Item 3. Approve an ordinance waiving certain requirements for the acquisition of properties in the 25-year and 100-year floodplain.

Item 4. Consider and take appropriate action related to the flood event beginning on October 30, 2015.

1. How many homes are left to be bought out?

A: In Lower Onion Creek Project Area, as of November 1, 2015 there were 270 properties that have not been acquired. In the Williamson Creek Project Area, there are currently 63 remaining properties to be acquired, 38 of which are currently approved by Council for buyouts.

2. Of those homes, how many are strictly city money? How many getting FEMA reimbursement? How many Corps reimbursement?

A: Of the remaining properties in the Lower Onion Creek Project Area, 26 are part of the partnership project with the US Army Corps of Engineers, and 4 are part of a federal grant project with FEMA. As of November 1, 2015, the remaining 240 properties are currently being funded solely with City money. In the Williamson Creek Project Area, all of the properties are being funded solely with City money.

3. Of the homes that have been bought out since our last council action in March (I believe), how many of those folks relocated within Austin?

A: We have closed on 94 homes since March 5, 2015. Of those homes 64 were owner occupied. Of the 64 owner occupied homes, 59 families have claimed their relocation benefits, and 30 of those families have remained in Austin.

4. Of the homes that have been bought out since our last council action in March (I believe), how many of those folks have bought homes outside of Austin and of those where did they end up?

A: Of the 64 owner occupied homes purchased since March 5, 2015, 59 families have claimed their relocation benefits, and 29 of those families relocated to the following Cities: 2 –Bastrop, 9 - Buda, 1 - Del Rio, 1 - Del Valle, 1 - Elgin, 10 - Kyle, 2 - Pflugerville, 2 - Round Rock, 1 - San Marcos.

5. Does the proposed policy for the Sunday meeting mean we are doing pre-flood appraisal and are we deducting insurance if they claim a structure insurance claim?

A: Yes, it is staff's recommendation to stay consistent among multiple funding sources and deduct insurance proceeds from the pre-flood fair market value of the property and add in any receipted repairs completed on the home.

6. If we deduct insurance claim, and someone gets a check from insurance and uses a portion to make house livable until they get bought out, will that money they spent be deducted from their offer?

A: No, as long as the owner keeps receipts for any repairs completed on the home, those funds will be added back into any deducted insurance claim and the offer.

7. Of the homes left to be bought out with city money, do we know how many are in a situation where will need to deduct insurance claims from 2013? If we know, do we know what the cost would be to the city if we don't deduct? I understand we wouldn't know who will make insurance claim this time....just trying to figure out best option/advice to give folks.

A: Staff's recommendation is to not deduct any flood insurance claims from the 2013 storm, however, we are confirming with our federal partners whether or not that is acceptable.

8. If someone got a post-flood (2013 flood) offer (and we didn't factor whether they got or how they used insurance money) and they turned down that offer, and assuming recommendations as it passes Sunday, could they choose whether they want to go with initial offer (even though 30 days may have expired) or can they choose to go with new policy (pre-flood for 2015). Which I'm thinking would really be the same....right? Post-flood offer of 2013 would be essentially the same as pre-flood for 2015...correct?

A: Correct, all outstanding offers are pre-flood offers (pre-2015 flood) and would now need to consider any insurance claims following the 2015 event. At this time those offers are still on the table for those owners and they do have the option to accept the offer that was made prior to the 2015 event. Staff's recommendation is to not deduct any flood insurance claims from the 2013 storm, however, we are confirming with our federal partners whether or not that is acceptable.

9. What happens in this scenario – I got an insurance check for 2013 flood for structure damage, I was in the phase where we were doing post-flood appraisal and it didn't matter what I did with my insurance check....I got an offer and turned it down. Now I want an offer, can I get old offer, or if I get a new offer and it is pre-flood 2015, do we now count insurance check (from 2013). And same scenario, I make a new claim, does the pre-flood offer (following direction from Sunday meeting assuming it goes that way) mean we deduct 2013 check and 2015 check?

A: Staff's recommendation is to not deduct any flood insurance claims from the 2013 storm, however, we are confirming with our federal partners whether or not that is acceptable. Only a claim made following the 2015 event would be taken into consideration for any outstanding offers that the City has made. In the given example, the offer on the table is the pre-flood offer and is open to the owner to accept, only the insurance claim following the 2015 event would be considered when deducting from the offer amount based on staff's recommendation.

10. If we continue with our current process (with regards to timeline), can we get all folks bought out (who want to be bought out), out within a year?

A: No, following the current timeline, the buyout process would be initiated for all property owners who want to start the process within 14 months. It could take up to 30 months to close on the properties of those owners that accept our offer and are able to convey clear title, find a replacement home and close. Situations in which an owner has trouble conveying clear title, has credit issues, is building a new home and it will not be ready until a later date, or some other extenuating circumstances will also lengthen the timeline.

11. If we chose an expedited process (4-6 months), I understand that could cost an additional 15-20 million. Is that still the estimate? Would that number go down (and how much) if the majority of folks left, bought outside of Austin?

A: Our estimate is that the expedited process to have all offers out within 6 months and have the majority of the owners closed within 12 months would cost an estimated \$15 – \$20 million. Situations in which an owner has trouble conveying clear title, has credit issues, is building a new home and it will not be ready until a later date, or some other extenuating circumstances will also lengthen the timeline. There could be some cost savings, but the displaces would still be made eligible for relocation benefits based on housing within the Austin metro area. Due to the costs and availability those funds would still be extended to them to use, although they may not purchase up to the full benefit amount.

12. Do we have any idea of how many people need temporary housing?

A: No, the Office of Real Estate Services and Watershed Protection do not have a sense of how many people need temporary housing.