



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Joseph G. Pantalion, P.E., Director *JGP*
Watershed Protection Department

DATE: November 8, 2016

SUBJECT: Upper Onion Creek Buyouts

In response to the devastating floods that have occurred in the Onion Creek watershed over the past three years and as part of the Fiscal Year 2017 budget, the City Council approved \$1.25 million dollars for the Watershed Protection Department to initiate flood buyouts in the Onion Creek watershed between IH-35 and East Slaughter Lane. This memorandum summarizes WPD's process to complete these buyouts. The next steps in the process are to:

- Prioritize the properties to offer buyouts;
- Contact the property owners to understand their interest in a buyout; and
- Proceed with the acquisition process, including appraisals and offers.

The prioritization process will focus on helping those owner occupants who were impacted by both the 2013 and 2015 Halloween floods to recover. The prioritization will use two key factors: risk and date of ownership. The properties that have the highest risk of flooding will take priority in order of the predicted level of flooding. This order will be further adjusted to include only property owners that have owned the homes since before the 2013 Halloween flood. This process is consistent with the prioritization methodology that Council instructed staff to utilize for the Williamson Creek buyouts in September 2014.

These buyouts will be voluntary. As such, staff will contact the highest priority owners to understand their interest in a buyout. If an owner is not interested in starting the buyout process, then staff will continue to the next property owner. If an owner is interested in starting the process, then the Office of Real Estate Services staff will begin the acquisition process. Staff will begin contacting property owners this week. A typical timeline to complete the acquisition process from contacting the owner to Council approval is eight months.

If you have any questions about this process, please contact Pam Kearfott, P.E., at 512-974-3361 or Pam.Kearfott@austintexas.gov.

CC: Elaine Hart, Interim City Manager
Sue Edwards, Assistant City Manager
Lauraine Rizer, Officer of Real Estate