



## Recommendation for Action

**File #: 22-1838, Agenda Item #: 30.**

**5/19/2022**

### **Posting Language**

Approve a resolution authorizing the submittal of the Fallwell Lane, Sand Hill Energy Center, and the South Austin Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Access and Flood Potential Mitigation projects as candidates for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant programs.

### **Lead Department**

Public Works Department.

### **Fiscal Note**

This item has no fiscal impact.

### **For More Information:**

Inquiries should be directed to Richard Mendoza (512) 974-7190, Kristi Fenton (512) 974-9770, or project manager Craig McColloch (512) 974-2968.

### **Additional Backup Information:**

The City of Austin seeks funding for a flood control project to protect critical infrastructure through the Federal Emergency Management Agency Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant programs including Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC), the Texas COVID-19 Pandemic (DR4485), and Flood Mitigation Assistance. Funds from these grant programs are to be awarded on a competitive basis for hazard mitigation. The maximum grant award could exceed \$30 million or more per application.

Per the resolution under consideration for this item, Council authorizes the City Manager to submit an application for design and/or construction funding of the Fallwell Lane, Sand Hill Energy Center, and South Austin Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Access and Flood Potential Mitigation projects. After award of any grant funds, Council will obligate local match funds by entering into an Agreement for Award. Final applications for the BRIC and COVID programs are anticipated to be due before the end of 2022.

The Fallwell Lane project (District 2) includes roadway, levee, floodwall, and stream restoration components to protect Austin Energy's Sand Hill Energy Center (AE-SHEC) and the South Austin Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (AW-SAR) from the Atlas 14 100-year flood event. Fallwell Lane is the sole access to these critical facilities, and access to the two facilities would be preserved throughout the project.

In the October 2013 and October 2015 flood events (approximate 50-year to 75-year flood events compared to the Atlas 14 100-year event), flood water from Onion Creek left its normal channel and flowed overland to the Colorado River, submerging and damaging Fallwell Lane, and isolating both critical facilities. The AE-SHEC raw water intake was also destroyed.

Rebuilding or improving the roadway alone will not prevent future flood events from submerging Fallwell Lane and isolating and/or flooding AE-SHEC and AW-SAR. Furthermore, the levees and flood walls protecting the two facilities are not adequate to protect them from a reasonably foreseeable future flood event. Preliminary engineering analysis resulted in an alternative that would leverage funds from the stakeholder departments into a single project that would:

- Provide access during a 100-year flood event
- Control or prevent Onion Creek overflow
- Stabilize the bank of the Colorado River
- Protect an AE substation adjacent to Fallwell Lane
- Protect AE-SHEC and AW-SAR from flooding

Stakeholder departments have committed a total of approximately \$14 million for a Phase 1 project, leaving a shortfall of approximately \$120 million, partially offset by a pending \$8.8 million United States Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant Mitigation grant award from a previous grant application. Public Works is proceeding with a Phase 1 project using available funds that would relocate the at-risk portion of Fallwell Lane to the south, away from the Colorado River. The Phase 1 project will also improve the remaining portion of Fallwell Lane leading into the two facilities, install shoring along the Colorado River to protect the Onion Creek substation from bank erosion, and relocate at-risk water lines along Fallwell Lane. \$5,500,000 of the available funds derive from the 2016 Mobility Bond.

The Phase 1 project does not protect AE-SHEC and AW-SAR from flooding, and Fallwell Lane will still be inundated in a major flood event. The existing levees and flood walls protecting the two facilities are not adequate to protect them from a reasonably foreseeable future flood event.

**Strategic Outcome(s):**

Safety, Government that Works for All, Health and Environment, Mobility.