



**CITY OF SAN ANTONIO  
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
COUNCIL CONSIDERATION REQUEST**

TO:	Mayor and City Council
FROM:	Councilwoman Ana E. Sandoval, District 7; Councilwoman Teri Castillo, District 5
COPIES TO:	Erik Walsh, City Manager; Debbie Racca-Sittre, Interim City Clerk; Andy Segovia, City Attorney; John Peterek, Assistant to the City Manager; Emily McGinn, Assistant to City Council
SUBJECT:	Establishing an Advisory Committee on Flooding and Stormwater Management
DATE:	March 25, 2022

COSA - CITY CLERK  
2022 MAR 28 PM 01:56:51

Issue Proposed for Consideration

We ask for your support for the inclusion of the following item on the agenda of the earliest available meeting of the Governance Committee:

Establishing an Advisory Committee on Flooding and Stormwater Management as recommended by the 2022 Community Bond Committee on Drainage and Flood Management.

Brief Background

The 2022 Community Bond Committee on Drainage and Flood Management identified ways to refine the City's approach to flood management. One of their strongest recommendations is the creation of a citizen advisory committee on stormwater and flood management. The committee's December 15, 2021 recommendation is attached. (pg. 4).

As the committee wrote, "Recognizing this real threat ... requires more on-going involvement by the citizens of San Antonio. The technical complexities involved in identifying flood and drainage projects and establishing priorities requires a more educated and involved citizenry to increase awareness and understanding of the engineering approaches, while also promoting more proactive and comprehensive policies and city actions to address flood and drainage challenges. The city has standing citizen committees to advise of parks and linear trails, housing, development review, and others, establishing an official citizen committee will add more transparency and accountability for the public investment and tracking of the benefits from those investments (pg. 4)."

We cannot expect this level of analysis with committees that are formed for each bond cycle. This work and level of analysis is better suited for a standing committee.



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In the words of the bond committee, such a committee should, at minimum, (1) “advise City Council and City staff in the creation of a comprehensive flood management and drainage master plan with project priorities,” (2) “provide a transparent process to prioritize City investments” as they relate to flood mitigation, and (3) “explore policies and action that can reduce the [worsening of] flooding [by] development and climate change.” Additionally, we recommend that the committee advise on project scoring criteria, review progress on watershed master plans, and review the City’s Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit, which addresses system maintenance and discharge.

We recommend members receive: baseline knowledge on stormwater, drainage, and watershed dynamics; an introduction to the current watershed master plans; an overview of grey and green infrastructure elements; updates on the progress of drainage and flood control projects; information on funding resources available for flood and stormwater management.

For success, it is critical that the committee address flooding and stormwater management not through a neighborhood vs. neighborhood approach, but rather through a watershed-level perspective. This approach supports more optimal decision-making and effective use of limited resources.

We believe the committee structure most supportive of the watershed level approach would consist of a steering committee with representation from all watersheds and supported by working groups focused on individual watersheds. Given that residents outside of the City’s boundaries but within the County are affected by what happens in each watershed, we recommend including County representation as part of this committee structure.

We propose that the steering committee consist of eleven (11) positions, as follows<sup>1</sup>:

- Seven (7) positions for representatives from each of the watershed working groups (Cibolo Creek (1), Leon Creek (1), Medina River (1), Upper San Antonio (3), and Salado Creek (1))
- One (1) position for a chairperson from the 2022 Community Bond Committee on Drainage & Flood Management
- One (1) position for an environmental representative
- One (1) position from the development community
- One (1) position for a representative from Bexar County

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<sup>1</sup> In the interest of avoiding potential conflicts of interest, positions should not be held by someone employed by a company that pursues stormwater and flood management projects funded by the City, County, or River Authority.





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The seven representatives from the watershed working groups should be selected from the Council District representatives in the working groups. The steering committee should aim to balance geographical representation. In the interest of balance, the steering committee should not have multiple watershed representatives from the same Council District.

We propose that each watershed working group include citizen representatives from each City Council District and County Precinct within those watersheds. A map of watersheds and jurisdictions is attached (pg. 7). A table outlining the proposed composition of each working group, based on the map, is attached to this document (pg. 6).

Given that flooding and stormwater management in the San Antonio is addressed and funded by multiple agencies, we strongly recommend that the Committee structure be supported by liaisons from the City of San Antonio Public Works Stormwater Division, Bexar County, the San Antonio River Authority, SAWS, and the U.S. Geological Survey, as feasible. Further, we recommend that the committee establish a level of coordination with the Bexar Regional Watershed Management Partnership.

This proposal incorporates feedback from representatives of the San Antonio River Authority, the Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance, Bond Committee chairs, and the Precinct 2 County Commissioner's Office.

With federal infrastructure funds and severe storms in our future, the creation of a Citizen Committee on Flooding & Stormwater Management is urgent and timely. We ask for the support of our colleagues in establishing this committee.

Submitted for Council consideration by:

Councilwoman Ana E. Sandoval, District 7

Councilwoman Teri Castillo, District 5

Supporting Councilmembers' Signatures

District

1.	10
2.	9
3.	6



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*Drainage & Flood Management Community Bond Committee's Recommendation  
to Create Resident Committee on Flooding and Stormwater Management*

*December 15, 2021*

**4. Recommendation for City Council to establish an official city committee comprised of citizens representing all watersheds and council districts within the city to inform and engage residents and advise city council and city staff in the creation of a comprehensive flood management and drainage master plan with project priorities. The development of master plan and tracking achievement toward defined outcomes to build resiliency will provide a transparent process to prioritize city investments from various public funding sources to address the current threat of flooding to life and property, while also exploring policies and action that can reduce the future impact to flooding from development and climate change. Membership on the committee should include relevant experts (e.g. civil engineer) and liaisons from partner entities (e.g. the San Antonio River Authority and Bexar County).**

- Recommended motion from
  - Committee Co-Chairs – Chris & Suzanne
  - D10 Committee Member – Patrice Melancon
  - D10 Committee Member – Paul Royal-Priest
  - D7 Committee Member – Bianca Maldonado
  - D1 Committee Member – Caleb Etheredge
  - D8 Committee Members – Christopher Fullerton, Mario Aguilar, Gib Hafernick

Justification: The committee members are unified that the bond process is not adequate to completely understand and assess the flood and drainage needs; project benefits and determine investment priorities. Trying to digest all the related information once every five years prior to a bond proposal is not realistic. The committee members believe the bond process results either in a “rubber stamping” of projects proposed by the city staff or a determination that one district’s residents are more worthy of investment to address flood/drainage threats than another. Neither of those options promotes a comprehensive committee analysis that factors in, for example, the complexities of the upstream/downstream dynamics of a watershed; the ability to assess options in capital projects approaches; maximize project benefits; and understand the impact of changing floodplains; increased development and future challenges to adapt to climate change. More importantly, the current bond process lacks a meaningful way to truly conduct a technical and cost analysis and/or evaluation of the comments shared by the citizens. If citizen comments during the bond process refer to a threat or project the city staff is not prepared to present, the committee cannot make a meaningful determination to consider recommending the project.

Flooding is the greatest threat to people and property. Recognizing this real threat has resulted in improved collaborations between governmental partners through the Bexar Regional Management Program, but also requires more on-going involvement by the citizens of San Antonio. The technical complexities involved in identifying flood and drainage projects and





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establishing priorities requires a more educated and involved citizenry to increase awareness and understanding of the engineering approaches, while also promoting more proactive and comprehensive policies and city actions to address flood and drainage challenges. The city has standing citizen committees to advise of parks and linear trails, housing, development review, and others, establishing an official citizen committee will add more transparency and accountability for the public investment and tracking of the benefits from those investments.

The timing for the creation of a citizen committee to review and advise on flood and drainage project priorities also aligns with the recently initiated State Flood Planning process and increased interest in the State to establish state standards to address flooding threats as well as increase the availability of state funding. In addition, the recently enacted Federal Infrastructure legislation has identified significant funding to mitigate flood threats and build more resilient communities.

*Taken from page 5 of the "FY 2022 Bond Committee Motions & Recommendations: Drainage & Flood Management", accessible at*

<https://www.sanantonio.gov/Portals/0/Files/CityBond/2022Bond/DrainageMotionsRecommendationsUpdate.pdf?ver=2021-12-15-133217-463>

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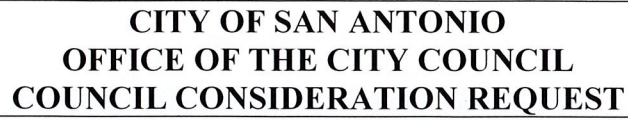
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*Proposed Composition for Committee Working Groups*

<b>Watershed</b>	<b>Council Representatives</b>	<b>Precinct Representatives</b>	<b>At-Large Representatives</b>
<b>Cibolo Creek</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• District 2</li><li>• District 10</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Precinct 4</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development community representative</li><li>• Environmental representative</li></ul>
<b>Leon Creek</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• District 4</li><li>• District 5</li><li>• District 6</li><li>• District 7</li><li>• District 8</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Precinct 1</li><li>• Precinct 2</li><li>• Precinct 3</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development community representative</li><li>• Environmental representative</li></ul>
<b>Medina River</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• District 3</li><li>• District 4</li><li>• District 6</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Precinct 1</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development community representative</li><li>• Environmental representative</li></ul>
<b>Upper San Antonio River</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• District 1</li><li>• District 2</li><li>• District 3</li><li>• District 4</li><li>• District 5</li><li>• District 6</li><li>• District 7</li><li>• District 8</li><li>• District 9</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Precinct 1</li><li>• Precinct 2</li><li>• Precinct 3</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development community representative</li><li>• Environmental representative</li></ul>
<b>Salado Creek</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• District 2</li><li>• District 3</li><li>• District 9</li><li>• District 10</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Precinct 3</li><li>• Precinct 4</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development community representative</li><li>• Environmental representative</li></ul>

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## Watersheds with Districts and Precincts

