



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

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Agenda Item Number: 4

Agenda Date: May 25, 2022

In Control: Governance Committee Meeting

DEPARTMENT: Public Works Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Razi Hosseini

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Establishing an Advisory Committee on Flooding and Storm Water Management

SUMMARY:

On March 25, 2022, Councilmembers Ana Sandoval and Teri Castillo issued a Council Consideration Request (CCR) requesting the establishment of an Advisory Committee on Flooding and Storm Water Management.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Watershed Improvement Advisory Committee (WIAC) was established in 2003 to serve in an advisory capacity to the Bexar Regional Watershed Management partners (BRWM) regarding the development of watershed master plans and to support the Bexar County Flood Control Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) from 2007-2017. Citizen representatives were selected by the City, Bexar County, and the San Antonio River Authority on a watershed-basis. Following the completion of the County's 10-year CIP, Bexar County discontinued the WIAC. Currently, there

is no standing citizen committee that addresses flooding and storm water management issues on a regular basis.

The 2022 Community Bond Committee on Drainage and Flood Management recommended the creation of a citizen advisory body to support enhanced flood management within the City of San Antonio. Due to the complex nature of engineering principles and the City's extensive drainage needs, which currently total \$3.2 billion, Committee members supported the establishment of a standing committee to review storm water master plans and project scoring criteria in between Bond cycles.

ISSUE:

The CCR noted the following recommendations as part of the Bond Committee's final report on December 15, 2021:

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;
3. Explore policies and action that can reduce the [worsening of] flooding [by] development and climate change."

On May 7, 2022, the voters passed all six propositions of the 2022-2027 Bond Program, including Proposition B for Drainage & Flood Control. Staff is in support of establishing an Advisory Committee on Flooding and Storm Water Management to enhance drainage-related engagement and planning in between Bond cycles. Staff is also in agreement with the CCR that a watershed-level approach be taken, with subcommittees based on watersheds and a steering committee with members selected from those subcommittees. The watershed groupings are based on the current structure utilized by Public Works Storm Water Engineering staff during project development and delivery. As such, staff proposes the steering committee as follows:

- Seven (7) positions consisting of representatives from each of the watershed working groups (Salado Creek/Cibolo Creek (2), Leon Creek/Medina River (2), and Upper San Antonio (3)).
- 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

Subcommittee working groups as recommended as listed in Appendix A. It is recommended that each Council District select one representative that may serve on multiple subcommittees, and that the Councilmembers of each watershed group collaborate to select the development community representative and environmental representative that will serve on each subcommittee; these representatives may be the same for all three subcommittees if so desired by the City Council.

For the initial six to 12 months following the establishment of the committee, it is anticipated that all selected representatives from both the steering committee and watershed subcommittees would meet monthly to discuss essential topics including but not limited to storm water engineering and

drainage principles, watershed master planning, grey infrastructure and nature-based design elements, current project statuses, storm water-related codes, and funding availability for flooding and storm water management. This master curriculum will ensure all members have the necessary technical and working knowledge to examine the City's current storm water programs and make associated recommendations.

Once a baseline in storm water topics is established, it is recommended that the steering and watershed subcommittees meet quarterly on a rotating basis so that no member will be required to attend more than one meeting per month. Because some members will serve on multiple subcommittees and/or the steering committee, this schedule will ensure they have ample time to dedicate to the consideration of issues in each watershed and the City as a whole.

Within the subcommittees, members will receive detailed information about the projects and challenges within their watersheds and will be asked to develop watershed-based priorities. Critical to this effort will be a watershed-based review of Public Works current scoring criteria for local flooding projects; subcommittee members will have the opportunity to modify the criteria and influence the future selection of drainage projects as funding becomes available.

The steering committee will be critical to public outreach efforts, and it is expected that it will serve a major role in ensuring outreach related to the City's participating in the Community Rating System (CRS) is successful and reviewed periodically. Committee members will be asked to provide feedback on current efforts and provide recommendations for improved public engagement related to flooding and storm water.

Because storm water management has broad impact that affect multiple stakeholders, it is recommended that in addition to Public Works staff, liaisons be identified from the following community partners:

- Bexar County
- San Antonio River Authority
- San Antonio Water System
- Texas Department of Transportation
- United States Geological Survey

Liaisons will be expected to have representation at each committee and subcommittee meeting to answer relevant questions and escalate any issues within their jurisdiction. Committee members may identify additional stakeholders requiring liaisons as needed.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this briefing.

ALTERNATIVES:

As an alternative, Governance Committee could recommend not to proceed with creation of an Advisory Committee on Flooding and Storm Water Management.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends referral to the Community Health, Environment, and Culture Committee for discussion.