



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:**  
**{{item.tracking\_number}}**

---

**Agenda Item Number:** 2

**Agenda Date:** September 22, 2022

**In Control:** Planning and Community Development Committee

---

**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. After completing 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 regularly.

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. On May 7, 2022, the voters passed all six propositions of the 2022-2027 Bond Program, including Proposition B for Drainage & Flood Control.

On May 25, 2022, the Governance Committee referred this item to the Planning and Community Development Committee.

### **ISSUE:**

The CCR noted the following recommendations as part of the Bond Committee's final report on December 15, 2021 to include advising the City Council and City staff on the comprehensive flood management and drainage master plan with project priorities, provide a transparent process to prioritizing City investments regarding drainage and to explore policies and actions that can reduce the worsening of flooding.

Staff supports establishing a Storm Water Management Advisory Committee (SWMAC) to enhance drainage-related engagement and planning. The Council appointees to the SWMAC will be responsible for either sitting on their respective watershed working groups or appointing alternate working group members as appropriate.

The 13-member SWMAC will be comprised of:

- One (1) Committee Chair appointed by the Mayor (preferably a member who served on the 2022 Community Bond Committee for Drainage & Flood Management).
- Three (3) Individuals representing the Salado/Cibolo Creek watershed each appointed from Council Districts 2, 9 and 10.
- Three (3) Individuals representing the Leon Creek/Medina River watershed each appointed from Council Districts 4, 6 and 8.
- Three (3) Individuals representing the Upper San Antonio River watershed each appointed from Council Districts 1, 3 and 5.
- One (1) Individual representing and appointed by Council District 7.
- One (1) Individual as an Environmental Representative
- One (1) Individual as a Development Community Representative

Staff also agreed with the recommendation denoted within the CCR that watershed working groups also be established. The watershed working groups will be grouped based on the current watershed structure utilized by Public Works, resulting in three (3) major drainage area work groups. A diagram illustrating the composition of the proposed SWMAC and watershed working groups is included in Attachment A. The denoted associated environmental and development representatives, will either serve on each working group themselves or appoint alternate working

group members.

For the first several months after the establishment of the committee, it is anticipated that all selected representatives from both the SWMAC and watershed working groups would meet to discuss essential topics potentially including storm water engineering and drainage principles, watershed master planning, grey infrastructure vs. 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 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 committee and watershed working groups 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 working groups and/or the committee, this schedule will ensure they have ample time to consider issues in each watershed and the City as a whole.

Within the working groups, members will receive detailed information about the projects and challenges within their watersheds and will be asked to recommend priorities to the steering committee for consideration. At the SWMAC level, members can provide endorsement for recommendations related to projects, policies, and practices related to storm water management within the City of San Antonio. Critical to this effort will be a watershed-based review of Public Works current scoring criteria for local flooding projects; steering committee members will have the opportunity to recommend modifications to the criteria, which may influence the future selection of drainage projects as funding becomes available.

All SWMAC and working group members will be essential to the City's public outreach efforts. As part of those efforts, it is expected that they will serve a major role in ensuring outreach related to the City's participation in the Community Rating System (CRS) is successful and reviewed periodically. Members will be asked to provide feedback on current outreach initiatives and recommend improved public engagement related to flooding and storm water.

Because storm water management has a broad impact that affects 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 relevant committee and working group meetings 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, the Planning and Community Development Committee could recommend not to proceed with creating an Advisory Committee on Flooding and Storm Water Management.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the Planning and Community Development Committee forwards this item to the full City Council for approval.