

# **\$8 million granted by Texas GLO for historic disaster mitigation projects in Matagorda County**

*Funds to improve drainage, water and wastewater infrastructure approved for Matagorda County and City of Palacios*

AUSTIN - Today Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush, Texas State Senator Lois W. Kolkhorst, County Judge Nate McDonald and Mayor Linh Chau announced the Texas General Land Office (GLO) approved \$8 million in flood mitigation projects to improve drainage, water and wastewater infrastructure in Matagorda County and the City of Palacios. These infrastructure projects will directly benefit thousands of residents in majority low-to-moderate income (LMI) areas.

“Texas has a great need for better protection against hurricanes and other natural disasters all along our coast and in many inland communities,” said Commissioner Bush. “This need is evident in Matagorda County where improved drainage is vital to protecting vulnerable communities and the families who call them home. These awards represent positive, generational change for so many communities like the cities of Palacios and Blessing that have rarely had access to the funding needed to protect their residents.”

“Here in coastal Matagorda County our drainage systems are of huge importance in moving flood waters out of our communities and into our bays and the Gulf of Mexico,” said Nate McDonald, Matagorda County Judge. “This \$8.1 million in funding from Commissioner George P. Bush and the GLO will be instrumental in improving our drainage systems and will also serve to upgrade our water and sanitary sewer systems in key parts of the county. This will go a long way in helping protect our residents, especially the majority of whom are considered low-to moderate-income families.”

“Locally, our drainage and flood control systems are undersized and inadequate to handle heavy rain events especially during tropical storms and hurricanes. Failure of these systems prevent residents and first responders from traversing the streets resulting in delayed response time and jeopardizing lives,” said Mayor Linh Chau. “This \$5 million in funding from Commissioner George P. Bush and the GLO will be instrumental in improving our flood control systems in key areas of the city.”

Texas State Senator Lois W. Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) offered her support for the grant saying, “The damage done by floods and hurricanes in our area has been a major issue. That's why I commend Commissioner Bush for recognizing our local needs and allocating these funds. This goes a long way to solve real problems and is a great example of the federal, state and local governments working together.”

In May 2020, Commissioner George P. Bush announced the [kick-off of the application process](#) for the first round of more than \$2.3 billion in Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to protect Texas communities hit by Hurricane Harvey and severe flooding in 2015 and 2016. During the first round, the GLO conducted three competitive application programs from the [CDBG-MIT Action Plan](#). Those programs include:

- 2015 Floods State Mitigation Competition – GLO [awarded](#) \$31,426,781 to four grantees.
- 2016 Floods State Mitigation Competition – GLO [awarded](#) 21 grantees with \$135,462,438.
- Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition Round 1 (\$1 billion of \$2,144,776,720 total).

Applications closed for the first round of funding October 28, 2020, and the GLO evaluated all 290 submitted applications in accordance with the HUD approved scoring criteria. Eligible applications with the highest scores were awarded funds. The second round of the competition will award the remaining \$1,144,776,720 in mitigation funding to Hurricane Harvey eligible entities.

HUD defines mitigation as activities that increase resilience to disasters and reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of loss of life, injury, damage to and loss of property, and suffering and hardship, by lessening the impact of future disasters. HUD requires that at least 50% of total funds must be used for activities benefiting low- to moderate-income (LMI) persons.

The State of Texas CDBG Mitigation Action Plan: Building Stronger for a Resilient Future outlines the use of funds, programs, eligible applicants, and eligibility criteria as required by HUD. The plan was sent to HUD on February 3, 2020, after an extraordinary public outreach effort including a 50-day public comment period and eight regional public hearings, far-surpassing HUD requirements. HUD approved the plan March 31, 2020. For more information, please visit [recovery.texas.gov/mitigation](https://recovery.texas.gov/mitigation).

*Matagorda County: Blessing CDP Drainage, Water, and Wastewater Collection System Improvements - \$3,111,098*

LMI Percentage: 76.38%

Matagorda County's location and its topography are such that hurricanes, tropical storms, and flooding impact the Town of Blessing. Matagorda County Water Control and Improvement District No.5 (WCID No. 5) provides water and sanitary sewer service for the Town of Blessing. The county is seeking grant funding to make improvements to its drainage, water, and wastewater systems. All these systems are interconnected and failure of one during a natural disaster means problems for all.

The county will execute the following mitigation measures:

- 1) Install or upgrade culverts.
- 2) Deepen and regrade ditches city-wide, including 87,492 feet of roadside ditches.
- 3) Construct a new water plant to include:
  - a. Ground Storage Tank
  - b. Hydropneumatics Tank
  - c. Two (2) Booster Pumps
  - d. Chlorine Disinfection System
- 4) Rehabilitate a sanitary sewer line and manholes around the city.

*City of Palacios: Flood Mitigation Improvements Project - \$5,014,832*

LMI Percentage: 57.10%

The project consists of constructing improvements throughout the city of Palacios to eliminate known flooding areas. Heavy rainfall events, which typically occur during hurricanes and tropical storms, cause flooding which prevent residents and first responders from traversing the streets. These proposed improvements will be citywide. Construction will occur along the following streets: Gray, Green, Lucas, Perryman, Main, Welch, 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup>, Moore, and Morton streets.

Improvements will include:

- Construct new storm sewer systems to enhance the capacity of the existing under-sized system, install new storm sewers and approximately 50 inlets, for a total of 14,325 linear feet (LF)
- Replace and/or install roadside and driveway culverts, a total of 3,525 LF
- Clean and grade existing roadside ditches on many of the streets mentioned above and an area outfall ditch specifically along Gray Street, a total of 14,000 LF

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