

\$9.3 million granted by Texas GLO for historic disaster mitigation projects in Waller County

Funds to improve drainage infrastructure approved for the city of Hempstead

AUSTIN - Today Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush, Texas State Senator Lois W. Kolkhorst, County Judge Trey Duhon and Mayor Dave Shelburne announce the Texas General Land Office (GLO) approved \$9.3 million in flood mitigation projects to improve drainage infrastructure in Waller County's city of Hempstead. These infrastructure projects will directly benefit residents in a majority low-to-moderate income (LMI) area who have faced repetitive storm damage in 2015, 2016, and in 2017 with Hurricane Harvey.

"Many of our communities across Texas are in need of improved drainage for many years or even decades," said Commissioner Bush. "This project in Waller County will benefit Hempstead residents for generations by protecting lives, homes, and businesses and enhance the quality of life and local economy. These solutions promote sound long-term recovery and GLO is proud to help address this tremendous need."

"Families in Waller County are no strangers to repetitive flooding affecting their neighborhoods, schools, businesses, and lives," said Waller County Judge Trey Duhon. "Mitigation projects can be expensive, and federal funding for these types of projects are rarely available for less urban communities like Hempstead. I want to thank Commissioner Bush for funding this important, citywide drainage project to alleviate flooding in our area, protect vulnerable homes, and preserving the Waller County way of life."

"The city of Hempstead has had continued issues with drainage and flooding that directly affect the health and safety of all our residents, especially during major rain events" said Mayor Dave Shelburne "This \$9.3 million in much needed funding from the GLO will help us improve our citywide drainage system and prevent flooding and even create new economic development opportunities for our community."

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.

City of Hempstead: Citywide Drainage Project - \$9,395,324
LMI Percentage: 71.77

The city of Hempstead has had continued issues with local drainage and sporadic flooding during major storm events causing mobility restrictions. These issues directly and indirectly affect the health and safety of all the residents within the community. The city will improve local drainage to mitigate the effect of storm events that impair citizen mobility. In addition, the city will provide two (2) detention facilities to mitigate the effects of the enhanced drainage and the increased storm water flows from new economic development opportunities in the city.

The citywide drainage project encompasses the following:

- 1) Comprehensive regrading program for the open channel drainage systems throughout the city. This will be accomplished by channel staking, elevation setting, regrading, and shaping 110,000 linear feet (LF) of drainage.
- 2) Hydraulically enhance and revegetate approximately 4,400 LF of the stream to prevent additional and future erosion. The detention areas on both Blasingame and Clear Creeks will provide additional capacity for mitigation of storm water flows generated throughout the city limits to be mitigated before draining to the south of the city.

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