

Final Notice and Public Explanation of a Proposed Activity in a 100-Year Floodplain

To: All interested Agencies, Groups, and Individuals on 8/7/2024: This is to give notice that the City of Pasadena has conducted an evaluation as required by Executive Order 11988, by HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection. The activity is funded under the Community Development Block Grant Program and administered by the Texas General Land Office (GLO) ERR #24-067-032-E220. The City of Pasadena proposes a WWTP Improvements project to demolish and clear; repair and replace concrete wall/support and grating; install headwork screens, slide gates, and trench frame; improve electrical; perform site repairs/restoration; integrate SCADA; and complete associated appurtenances. The proposed improvements will occur at the Vince Bayou Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) located at the dead end of North Main Street north of Pitts Avenue (at approximately 29.71558, -95.20924), within the City of Pasadena, Harris County, Texas. The purpose of the project is to make upgrades that will prevent plant failures during severe weather events in the future. According to the Federal Flood Standard Support Tool, Climate-Informed Science Approach (CISA) data is unavailable or actionable for the project area. However, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has defined the 0.2-percent-annual-chance floodplain for the project area. According to the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Panel No. 48201C0905N effective date 5/2/2019 approximately 0.11 acres of the proposed project is located within the 1.0-percent-annual-chance floodplain (zone AE) and 0.10 acres within the 0.2-percent-annual-chance floodplain. Therefore, approximately 0.21 acres of the proposed project are located within the FFRMS floodplain. Since the proposed action is making non-substantial improvements to an existing WWTP within the floodplain, it is considered a critical action and thus requires the improvements to be elevated. All electrical components and other critical actions (activities where even a slight risk of flooding would be too great, because of the potential loss of life, injury to persons, or damage to properties) installed at the City of Pasadena's WWTP must be floodproofed or elevated 3 ft above base flood elevation (BFE). The required elevation for the electrical components must be documented on an Elevation Certificate or a Floodproofing Certificate and provided to the City of Pasadena to include in the Environmental Review Record before construction. All state and local floodplain protection procedures will be followed, along with any additional local floodplain requirements set forth by the community's Floodplain Administrator. There are many natural and beneficial functions of floodplains, which include floodwater storage and conveyance, groundwater recharge, erosion control, surface water quality maintenance, biological productivity, fish and wildlife habitats, harvest for wild & cultivated products, recreational, educational, scientific, historic, and cultural opportunities, however, the proposed project is making improvements to existing infrastructure and will not negatively impact the floodplain.

The City of Pasadena determined that the best alternatives to the proposed project are an alternative location outside of the FFRMS floodplain, an alternative method to serve the same project objective, or not to approve any action proposing the occupancy or modification of a floodplain by abandoning the project entirely. Selecting an alternative location would mean building a new WWTP. Constructing a new WWTP would likely lead to greater land disturbance, potentially impacting untouched ecosystems. Additionally, the costs associated with land acquisition, permitting, and additional infrastructure for a new site make an alternative location economically infeasible. Utilizing the existing WWTP to achieve the project's goals is the most viable option. Alternative methods such as implementing green infrastructure and retrofitting existing infrastructure to be more resilient to flooding. Due to the goal and economic constraints of the proposed project, green infrastructure implementation proved infeasible. However, the project will retrofit aspects of the existing and installed components at the WWTP to be more resilient to flooding. Examples of this include elevating the electrical improvements significantly higher than the required height. These improvements are expected to be resilient to flooding events, and such should not incur damages from floods. Abandoning the project in its entirety would more significantly and negatively affect the environment, as it would preclude the correction of the TCEQ violations/existing WWTP deficiencies. There shall be no significant increase in impervious surface and the project area will be restored to pre-project conditions upon completion. The City of Pasadena has reevaluated the alternatives to building in the FFRMS floodplain and has determined that it has no practicable alternative. The project will not have disproportionate adverse impacts on low-income or minority populations. The project was funded because conditions would be improved for low-to-moderate-income households. Environmental files that document compliance with steps 3 through 6 of Executive Order 11988 are available for public inspection, review, and copying upon request during regular business hours at the Pasadena City Hall.

There are three primary purposes for this notice: (1) People who may be affected by activities in floodplains and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be allowed to express their concerns and provide information about these areas; (2) An adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information and request for public comment about

floodplains can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks and impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas; and (3) As a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in floodplains, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk. Written comments must be received on or before 8/14/2024 by the City of Pasadena at 1149 Ellsworth Dr., Pasadena, TX 77506, (713) 475-7296. Attention: Robin Green, Director of Public Works. A full description of the project may also be reviewed during regular business hours at 1149 Ellsworth Dr., Pasadena, Texas 77506. Comments may also be submitted via email to ziqbal@pasadenatx.gov CC: sean.martineau@grantworks.net.