



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

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Agenda Item Number: 5.

Agenda Date: 1/25/2018

In Control: Community Health and Equity Committee

DEPARTMENT: Transportation & Capital Improvements

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Mike Frisbie, P.E.

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: All

SUBJECT:

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Map Update

SUMMARY:

Briefing on the FEMA map update process and timeline.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

At the City Council B Session on November 1, 2017, Transportation and Capital Improvements (TCI) presented model results of a Hurricane Harvey type storm hitting San Antonio. As a follow up to this presentation, staff was asked to identify San Antonio's areas of risk in order to assess our resilience and better prepare for future storms. After looking at our processes, infrastructure and regulations, it was determined that our floodplain maps which should be the most accurate prediction of flood risk are currently outdated.

ISSUE:

Floodplain maps as approved by FEMA serve to accurately identify if properties fall within various levels of riverine flood risk. This flood risk assessment determines if a property will be required to purchase flood insurance and how much the flood insurance will cost. The accuracy of this assessment is critical in communicating with property owners their risk as well as making sure our vulnerable populations have protection in the case of catastrophic losses.

In addition to insurance, TCI utilizes these flood maps in the development of projects for our future projects database. These future projects are planned and designed to alleviate the flooding identified on these maps. If the maps are outdated, projects may not be designed to accurately address the existing flooding issues. Projects from this list are funded primarily through the city's bond programs and Bexar County Flood Control Program.

As the FEMA delegate for our area, the San Antonio River Authority (SARA) is responsible for submitting any changes to the federal map. Currently map updates are done on a project by project basis looking at the impact adjacent to the project site. The last city-wide update was completed in 2008 and adopted by council in 2010. Since that time, increased development has caused major changes in overall city watershed drainage that needs to be captured and reflected on our maps.

In order to address this issue, TCI has partnered with the San Antonio River Authority to update our maps city wide. This update will consist of three large sections: hydrology, hydraulics, and mapping which will take into consideration the impact of existing topography, soils, impervious cover, rainfall and infrastructure. Based on the last city wide map update process, it is estimated that the entire process will take approximately three years. 2018 will focus primarily on surveying, hydrology and hydraulics. 2019 will consist of mapping and a community review process with adoption of the map in 2020.

While this update process is taking place, staff will be simultaneously applying for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS). CRS offers reduced flood insurance rates for communities that exceed minimum FEMA requirements. Our application is anticipated to be submitted late 2018 or early 2019 (pending FEMA availability) with acceptance approximately one year after.

ALTERNATIVES:

This briefing is for informational purposes only.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This briefing is for informational purposes only.

RECOMMENDATION:

At the request of the Community Health and Equity Committee Chairwoman Council Member Sandoval, a briefing on the FEMA map update process will be provided to the Community Health and Equity Committee.