

Flood Control and Storm Drainage Subcommittee

2024 Bond Task Force

Meeting Date: August 15, 2023	Convened: 6:05 P.M.	Adjourned: 8:15 P.M.
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Committee Members Present:

Committee Members Absent:

Anita Childress, Chair	Gloria Alvarez, District 2
Edward McCullough, District 1	Matt Canto, District 4
Dr. Andrea Hilburn, District 3	Larry Brannon, District 5
Erica Solis, District 6	
Jeremy McConnell, District 7	
Gregory Franklin, District 8	
Susan J. Falvo, District 9	
Woot Lervisit, District 10	
Macs Reynolds, District 11	
Robert Fischer, District 12	
Laurel Stone, District 13 (Virtual)	
Stephen Tordella, District 14	

Staff Present

Sarah Standifer, Director, DWU (I)	
Matt Penk, Assistant Director, DWU	
Eduardo Valerio, Assistant Director, DWU	
Natalie Wilson, Manager Water Utilities, DWU	
Abidur Khan, Engineering Program Administrator, DWU	
Mark Williams, Superintendent Water Utilities, DWU	

Discussion Items:

Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Jeremy McConnell, District 7, and was seconded by Gregory Franklin, District 8, to approve the meeting minutes of the July 20, 2023, Flood Protection and Storm Drainage Subcommittee meeting. The minutes were unanimously approved by the Subcommittee.

Public Speaker

Anita Childress, Chair, introduced speaker, J. D. Trueblood, with the Turtle Creek Association. Mr. Trueblood asked to speak to the Subcommittee to discuss flooding in the Turtle Creek area, severe bank erosion, trash in the area and dredging of the creek and ponds. The association is looking for help to address these concerns. Matt Penk, Assistant Director, DWU, explained that the dredging concern should be addressed by the Parks and Trails Subcommittee and should be placed on that Subcommittee's Needs Inventory list.

Recommended Projects and Funding Scenarios

Matt Penk presented Version 2 of the Recommended Projects and Funding Scenarios for the 2024 Bond Program. He stressed the importance of obtaining feedback from the Subcommittee on Version 2 of the Recommended Projects and Funding Scenarios. He reiterated the fact that projects not listed on the Needs Inventory will not be included in the Bond Program.

Anita Childress, Chair, explained that new equity scores have been provided to staff for incorporation into Subcommittee recommendations. She was made aware that the Needs Inventory was revised, and equity numbers changed. According to her conversation with the Bond Office Interim Director, the change has to do with how they use the "grid" versus the "census tract." She said for right now the up to 10 max point values is what we will use.

Gregory Franklin, District 8, asked if property owners on the Needs Inventory have given permission for easements on the erosion control projects. Sarah Standifer, Interim Director DWU, confirmed they have not yet obtained permission for the easements. However, at the time the property is assessed, and information is provided to the property owner, staff explains the program and requirement to grant an easement at no cost to the City.

Woot Lervisit, District 10, asked if the City has determined the number of residents affected by future improvements in the Mill Creek area in addition to the number of properties affected. Matt Penk stated that the number of residents had not been determined but that if each property was assumed to have on average at least 3 people there were at least 5,000 residents affected in the Mill Creek area.

Anita Childress told the Subcommittee that she has reached out to the Community Bond Task Force to provide guidance on dollar numbers for each Subcommittee.

Anita Childress mentioned that she was made aware that someone is questioning the use of Bond funds for private erosion control projects. She wants to know how all that will play into the private erosion projects that we have on the Needs Inventory list. Matt Penk stated he believed that would be a question addressed by the City Ordinance. Sarah Standifer explained the Ordinance was used as an instrument to address the ability to provide erosion control improvements on private property if an easement was granted to the City at no cost. She cautioned that erosion control on private property is costly and not feasible for most residents to address on their own and previous City Councils have discussed whether to continue private erosion projects and have always continued the program. An issue comes when the property owner does not want to give the City of Dallas an easement. At that point, the City must walk away from the project. We cannot do the project without an easement.

Anita Childress referenced the 2024 Bond Update City Council Briefing scheduled for Wednesday, August 16, 2023. The presentation indicates a proposed scenario where the amount of money allocated for the Flood Protection and Storm Drainage proposition is \$55,000,000. Ultimately, the City Council will decide on the allocation. The Subcommittee is here to represent Dallas residents and provide a proposal that reflects the best interest of the City and its residents. She mentioned the Task Force created an allocation poll for the Task Force members and all Subcommittee members. This might add some value to see where the Task Force members initially stand, but it is of questionable value to include every Subcommittee member. Members may not participate, those who do will advocate mostly for their own proposition, and/or Subcommittee members do not have time to focus on formulating an allocation due to their individual Subcommittee work.

Stephen Tordella, District 14, stated he did not feel the poll had any value because none of the Subcommittees know what any of the other Subcommittees are doing or what their needs are. Several Subcommittee members agreed.

Given the lack of parameters provided thus far by the Task Force and Council, Anita Childress stated that she felt the Subcommittee should hold at the \$200,000,000 scenario for now based on the inventory needs that we have.

Beginning September 26th, the Task Force recommendations will be presented to the public. Bond Town Hall meetings will held from September 26 to October 13 after the Budget Town Hall meetings have concluded.

Stephen Tordella, District 14, asked who is making the final call on funding allocations for the Bond program. Sarah explained that it will be a Council decision sometime in January/February 2024.

Woot Lervisit, District 10, asked if it is part of the Subcommittee's job to advocate for more money. Anita explained that it is the Subcommittee's job to advocate for more money and to consider what is a fair amount to request. Sarah explained that Councilmembers will review and consider each Subcommittee's recommendation.

Jeremy McConnell, District 7, said he would prefer to see projects that include "moving dirt" rather than design and engineering projects.

Stephen Tordella, District 14, stated he would like to settle on one or two larger projects and let the Councilmembers figure out smaller projects that need to be done in their districts. He said he would always be in favor of the larger projects.

Gregory Franklin, District 8, expressed concern that some of the districts do not benefit at all by larger projects. Anita Childress stated it was probably not practical that the Bond Program will be able to help every single Council District via city-wide projects, especially if the amount allocated is \$55M or something similar, as has been discussed.

Jeremy McConnell, District 7, asked for new construction, does the City have an ordinance that requires a detention on-site? How does that play into these projects? Sarah Standifer explained that private development construction, not individual residential, requires that the post construction stormwater discharge does not exceed the pre-construction value and that often requires onsite detention or stormwater infrastructure improvements by the developer to handle the increased flows. For Stormwater, there is no cost participation with private development.

Jeremy asked if there was any commercial development that would affect some of these projects in a way that if they go forward maybe it does not need to go on the Needs Inventory because it is going to be picked up privately. Sarah explained as the private developer permits projects, the City does look at that. However, many development projects are contemplated but change in score, get delayed, or never occur. For this purpose, the City just keeps moving forward and if they see a private development projects that gets permitted and built that address something on the needs inventory, staff will pull the City project and swap it.

Woot Lervisit, District 10, stated he likes engineering projects. They provide foresight.

Susan Falvo, District 9, asked how the Cultural and Performing Arts people come up with their numbers. Anita Childress said she was not aware of how other Subcommittees come up with their numbers.

Dr. Andrea Hilburn, District 3, informed the Subcommittee that the 2017 Bond Subcommittee that she participated on decided to go with big projects. There were no small projects. Upon presentation, the City Manager sent it back and said there was no way they could do the big projects and not do something for the residents of the City.

Anita Childress stated that the Subcommittee should consider its approach and present the top three or four large projects, as well as other projects by district, to the Task Force irrespective of the cost. No matter what the dollar amount is, we provide the Task Force with the “state of flooding” and allow the Task Force to tell us which direction to proceed.

Dr. Andrea Hilburn, District 3, said that even though we are given a budget of what we can work with, she thinks the Subcommittee needs to look at the true picture and figure out what is best and give the Task Force the scenario of what is needed. She continued to say that the Subcommittee may not get all the money, but may get more than what they are currently proposing.

Stephen Tordella, District 14, asked what are the costs of projects on other Subcommittees? He feels road, storm and flood protection are way more expensive. He shared that, in his opinion, fixing up a police station may be less expensive than tearing up a road. \$55M gets Storm nothing. The Mill Creek engineering is one of the most important projects. He asked if we know the big budget items on other committees?

Anita Childress explained that no one has said, and the Task Force has not shared the budget on other Subcommittee’s projects. She does not know what Streets or Parks has allotted for their projects.

Dr. Hilburn suggested that some of the projects may be overlapping between Subcommittees and we may get more if the Subcommittees collaborated. She also noted she was getting phone calls from other Subcommittee members.

Matt Penk stated that what he is understanding from the conversation is that the Subcommittee wants to get some big things done, but we want a balance. He stated he has reached out to Public Works to collaborate with them on projects, but they were waiting to update all the street conditions in their needs inventory.

Stephen Tordella, District 14, asked where the first draft number of \$55M came from and what the idea was behind it. He stated it feels that no one at City Hall/City staff wants to take ownership of the value of the numbers proposed. He suggested that the Subcommittee take advantage of the indecisiveness and propose goals for what is needed and what we recommend. Anita Childress agreed that, given the lack of direction thus far, the Subcommittee could give the number they believe is needed.

Erica Solis, District 6, stated that based on the education that she has gained from being on the Subcommittee it would allow her to go speak to the community on the subject and express the needs of the City. Sarah Standifer stated that if the Subcommittee members wanted to do that, staff could give them some guiding principles to help stick to the presentation so that it states what the Subcommittee wants to do. She stated that as cuts are made, priorities need to be made.

Jeremy McConnell, District 7, said he would like to draw a line, moving forward, that \$55M is not going to work for us.

Stephen Tordella, District 14, stated that the Subcommittee should give a number and let the Task Force tell us no.

Edward McCullough, District 1, asked about the Trinity River Channel Project. Matt Penk explained it is currently in the Capital Improvement Plan but is about 9-10 years out. Edward asked if there is a deadline to meet regulatory requirements. Sarah stated that there are portions that have to be done now. It will take a couple of years to design and a couple of years to construct.

Jeremy McConnell, District 7, said his personal preference would be in looking at options of \$100M and \$150M, at the \$150M level, keep the two big projects in. At the \$100M level, those get deleted.

Anita Childress asked the Subcommittee if they want to proceed based on the slides in the presentation and come back next week (August 22nd).

Stephen Tordella, District 14, stated that he felt the risk of flood protection is so much greater than a park or other items proposed in the bond program.

Anita Childress asked the Subcommittee to consider what message the Subcommittee wants to give. She encouraged the Subcommittee to do what is in the best interest of the City.

It was the consensus of the group to go forward with the \$200M scenario.

Jeremy McDonnell, District 7, stated he will support the Subcommittee as a whole, but feels there is a lot of importance to the erosion control projects. He feels we do have some responsibility to help single-family homes. There are several tributaries in his district that contribute to erosion. The projects in the district listed on the Needs Inventory are important.

Matt Penk stated the Subcommittee will meet next week, August 22nd. The Subcommittee Chair will provide a recommendation to the Task Force on August 29th. October 19th is tentatively set for a Subcommittee meeting to discuss the Town Hall feedback.

Anita Childress informed the Subcommittee that the Task Force will present to Council on December 6th.

Action Items:
N/A