

PRESS RELEASE

\$28 million granted by Texas GLO for historic disaster mitigation projects in Bastrop County

Funds to improve roads and drainage facilities approved for Bastrop, Elgin and Smithville

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AUSTIN — Today Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush and Smithville Mayor Joanna Morgan announce the Texas General Land Office (GLO) approved more than \$28 million in flood mitigation projects to improve roads and drainage facilities in the Bastrop County cities of Bastrop, Elgin and Smithville. These infrastructure projects will directly benefit thousands of residents in majority low-to-moderate income (LMI) areas that have faced repetitive storm damage in 2015, 2016, and in 2017 with Hurricane Harvey.

“Texas has led the nation in disaster declarations, and Bastrop County has had more than its fair share of repetitive flooding and destructive wildfires,” said Commissioner Bush. “Many of the areas hit hardest by natural disasters have never had access to funding for critical infrastructure projects to mitigate flooding and protect residents. The historic funding we’re announcing today will go directly to projects that will help fortify Texas homes, businesses and critical infrastructure against future disasters for generations.”

“The importance of extending Agnes to our community cannot be overstated,” said Bastrop Mayor Connie Schroeder. “By approving this project, the General Land Office is providing east/west connectivity that currently does not exist. Upon completion of the roadway, emergency response time will be dramatically improved. Multi-modal mobility for the community and promotion of economic development are additional benefits. We are grateful for the approval of this grant.”

“As Mayor of Elgin, and on behalf of our Council, Staff and Citizens, we are extremely excited and thankful to the Texas General Land Office and the Department of Housing and Urban Development for this grant selection,” said Elgin Mayor Ron Ramirez. “This money will allow us to make major impacts on improving our affected neighborhoods and making a safer Elgin for all.”

“Since 2015, the City of Smithville has had five federally declared flooding disasters, highlighting our critical need for better drainage,” said City of Smithville Mayor Joanna Morgan. “We need drainage and roadway improvements so during disasters neighborhood flooding is reduced, residents are better able to evacuate, and our first responders can get where they’re needed. Flooding conditions in parts of town also impact our opportunities for economic growth since drainage problems inhibit further development. With this \$12.9 million in funding, we can make improvements now that will help protect our residents for generations.”

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 Bastrop: Agnes Road Extension Project - \$4,240,329.20

LMI Percentage: 63.89 %

Texas Highway 71 through Bastrop is a designated major hurricane evacuation route as well as an evacuation route for other flood-related events throughout central Texas. During these times when traffic is heavy or stopped along the route through Bastrop, Highway 71 is impassable, and first responders have difficulty providing service south of the highway and west of the river due to a lack of alternate east and west connector roads. The extension of Agnes Road will reduce the response time of first responders to these rapidly developing areas on the southwest side of the city by providing an alternate route from Fire Station 1 to this southwest area of Bastrop.

The project will improve a roadway with the acquisition of two partial tracts of vacant land and the construction of a two-lane asphalt pavement section with concrete curb and gutter from Home Depot Way to the existing Agnes Road.

City of Elgin: Roadway Flooding Prevention Project - \$10,946,981

LMI Percentage: 58.03%

During heavy rain and storm events, the high traffic roadways in Elgin become impassable. This project will correct the flooding and drainage issues; giving an alternative route that is needed for residents and emergency service vehicles to access the area - preserving life and property and reduce hardship for residents. The project will reconstruct channels, and a detention pond to ensure water does not flood roads or existing infrastructure systems; to ensure better stormwater routing and a safer route of travel for pedestrians and vehicles.

- Upgrade the drainage systems (curb inlets, storm sewer) to pass the minimum storm event
- Replace and design the culvert crossings at US 290 and Central Avenue to pass the 25 to 50-year storm events- Installing sidewalk bridges
- Install a storm sewer system along County Line Road consisting of 25 curb inlets, four manholes, and 6,076 LF of reinforced concrete pipe (RCP)
- Install 5,936 SY of new sidewalk along Kennedy Street and along both sides of County Line Road: and 3,037 LF (east side)
- Reconstruct the detention pond at the Neidig Elementary School on County Line Road
- Provide 7,089 LF of trench protection for the installation of storm sewer: 1,013 LF on Kennedy Street and Central Avenue and 6,076 LF on County Line Road
- Relocate the power poles along both sides of Kennedy Street
- Right-of-way acquisition on both sides of County Line Road, along Kennedy Street and County Line Road, and Kennedy Street and Building demolition site

City of Smithville: Drainage Improvement Project - \$12,966,041

LMI Percentage: 55.79%

Historically, during heavy rainfall events, the city of Smithville has experienced flooding in various parts of the city. Generally, existing terrain within the city is extremely flat with elevations typically varying between 0.2% to 1.0%. Primary means of storm water collection is through a combination of open ditches, curb and gutter, and an existing storm sewer system with sizes typically ranging between 12-30 inches in diameter. Runoff that is collected either drains to Willow Creek which is located on the south and east sides of the city, Gazley Creek which is located on the west side of the city, or the Colorado River which is located on the north side. During such storm events, the existing storm sewer system, ditches, and streets are overwhelmed and unable to quickly convey storm water runoff resulting in flooding of residential neighborhoods, businesses, and over existing City streets. The project will upgrade the existing storm sewer system along NE/NW 2nd Street from Gresham Street to Ramona and reconstruct the existing streets to properly drain into the new storm sewer system. Project details include the following:

- Construct a regional detention pond at the east end of Martin Luther King Drive and SE 4th Install approximately 4,500 LF of new storm sewer to this pond (along SE 4th Street, Martin Luther King Drive, Bunte Street, SE 2nd Street, and Gentry Street).
- Extend the storm sewer along Garwood Street and enlarge the storm sewer along Byrne Street, totaling approximately 2,730 LF of new storm sewer.

- Construct a regional detention pond north of the railroad right-of-way south of Loop 230 and southeast of the intersection of McSweeney Street and NE 1st. Install approximately 1,980 LF of new storm sewer from the pond north to Loop 230, east to Faulkner Road, north to Oak Meadows Drive and east to Lueders Lane.