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City of Fort Worth Storm Water Management

***Feasible Options Study - Project Summary Update***

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**OVERVIEW**

The City of Fort Worth Stormwater Division is continuing its study of Feasible Options to address chronic flooding in the Central Arlington Heights and the Forest Park/Berry areas. The initial public meeting regarding this study was held on September 22, 2010. At this meeting the purpose and scope of the study was explained. A consultant team led by Michael Baker Jr. Inc. has been engaged to assist the city, and a community stakeholder committee has been established to assist the team in understanding the perspective of the affected communities as we work together through the challenges. A main theme introduced in the public meeting is that for a solution to be feasible, it must be **effective**, **affordable**, and **acceptable** to the community – and the goal of the City is to identify a solution that meets these criteria. The goal of this process is to determine an agreed upon solution and begin design in Spring of 2011.

**HISTORY**

Last year, a draft report was prepared, based on extensive engineering evaluation of the drainage issues in these communities that identified a range of traditional alternative solutions. Broadly speaking, these alternatives evaluated the feasibility of flood mitigation in these areas via the installation of a much larger underground pipe system and/or detaining large volumes of runoff. Though numerous alternatives and variations of the alternatives were investigated, and an extensive value engineering process conducted, no affordable options were identified. In addition, the projects would have to be constructed from downstream to upstream, meaning that phasing in the project over time in order to make it more affordable is not an attractive option since no significant flood relief would be provided for the community until the final phase of construction was completed. Further, the construction of many of these alternatives would be extremely disruptive to these communities, as they would involve significant open cutting of streets in the affected neighborhoods.

**CURRENT APPROACH**

The Feasible Options Study is attempting to identify other potential solutions to flooding that may have been overlooked by the City's traditional planning approach. Consistent with city criteria, the previous studies identified solutions that would prevent street flooding for both the frequent storm events as well as larger events up to the so-called 100-year event. The Feasible Options Study is reviewing this criterion in terms of its impact to city projects, and will consider alternatives that may

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be designed around mitigation of chronic, high probability flooding vs. a massive rain event of low probability. This Study is also looking for hybrid approaches that involve combinations of traditional and non-traditional measures that can, hopefully, be phased in over time in a way that will provide some immediate improvement while moving toward the full solution. The study team is also conducting research to seek to learn from the efforts of other communities in addressing similar challenges.

### **PROGRESS TO DATE**

There have been two meetings of the community stakeholder committee – one on October 28, 2010 and a second on December 9<sup>th</sup>. In those meetings the Study team sought to convey to the committee a thorough understanding of the nature and magnitude of the challenges and to receive from the committee input as to the nature of the solutions that would be most acceptable to the community. The input of the committee has been invaluable in this respect.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Based on the input received to date, at the next meeting the Study team plans to present the committee with a range of possible alternative solutions to progress the discussion toward a solution that is affordable, effective in mitigating flood risk, and generally acceptable to the community. Additionally the study team will report the results of research as to how other communities have addressed similar problems and will provide key data associated with the magnitude and nature of the flooding problem and the benefits of the types of alternative solutions.

The date for this meeting has not yet been set but it will likely be in early February. The date/time/location of the meeting will be advertised at least 2 weeks in advance of the meeting and the meeting will be open to the public.