



MEMORANDUM

Date: January 21, 2021
From: Gwyneth Teves, Community Development Director
To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
City Attorney Paul Webb
Subject: Status of City of Wharton Grant Projects Report No. 2020-11

Below, I have outlined a report on the status of the City of Wharton Grant Projects:

I. GRANT PROJECTS

Infrastructure/Construction :

1. CDBG-DR – Infrastructure

Method of Distribution approved by GLO and HUD. City has received an award of \$1,650,172.00 for infrastructure projects related to Hurricane Harvey. Jones & Carter has completed surveys and staff is currently working on easement acquisition and project budget. Anticipate acquisition and construction to begin spring/summer 2021.

2. HMGP – FEMA Shelter/Dome

The City received notification of Award on January 21, 2020. The City Council accepted the award of the funding for Phase I on 02/10/2020. WISD is responsible for all grant activities with the City Staff providing cursory review. WISD has selected Huckabee for architectural services and LTY Engineers & Kimley Horne for engineering on this project. WISD has received an extension on the deadline of Phase I to August 1, 2021.

3. 2019-2020 CDBG – South East Ave. Sanitary Sewer Repairs

City was notified of funding and is pending agreement and kick-off meeting with Tx Dept. of Agriculture. Design in progress and construction to begin summer/fall 2021.

4. City of Wharton Flood Reduction Project – The Lower Colorado River Basin Phase I, Texas WHARTON FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT PROJECT

The City of Wharton was notified that the Flood Reduction Project was funded in the early part of 2018. HDR was selected by the City Council on 06/14/19 for acquisition services.

Phase 2 Design currently under design.

84 parcels are currently designated for Phase I. 11 properties have been fully acquired, 13 are City Owned, Closings for Jan and Feb pending on 12 properties. Negotiations ongoing with 48 properties.

Housing:

5. TDHCA – HOME Reservation Participation

5 applicants were awarded funding. 1 subject declined assistance and left the program. Construction on four homes is complete and have been signed over to owners and occupied.

6. CDBG-DR – Buyouts/Acquisitions

Method of Distribution approved by GLO and HUD. City has received an award of \$1,693,784.00 for buyout/acquisition projects related to Hurricane Harvey. The guidelines have been approved by the GLO and no public comment was received during the required posting period. Intake meetings continue with property owners and GrantWorks.

7. 2016 CDBG-DR – Housing Elevation/Reconstruction

Notification of \$2,000,000 funding was received February 4, 2019. 3 applications have been approved and are in home build selection phase. City issued notice of grant in utility billing, resulting in 12 new inquiries and a new total of 5 applicants, with 1 overall program applicant withdrawal. Construction to begin on 2 homes February 1st.

8. TxDOT – Safe Routes to School

The City submitted the Preliminary Application in April 2019. The City was not selected during the 2019-2020 funding. The City was notified that the project will be recommended for the 2020-2021 funding cycle under the Transportation Alternatives Program.

Disaster Recovery (non-infrastructure or housing):

9. TDEM - Coronavirus Relief Funds

Funds made available for reimbursement of medical expenses, public health expenses, payroll expenses for public safety, public health, health care, human services, and similar employees whose services are substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency. All funds were expended and request for reimbursement has been submitted to TDEM.

10. HMGP – Critical Facility Generators

The City received notification of award by TDEM 02/18/2020. Kick-off meeting conducted with TEDM on August 6th, 2020. Engineering and design are currently underway. Installation anticipated to begin fall 2021.

II. STUDIES:

11. City of Wharton, Texas Community Wayfinding Program

City of Wharton working in partnership with the Wharton Downtown Business Association (WDBA), Wharton Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), and the Wharton Chamber of Commerce to complete a wayfinding study. Logo design has been finalized and adopted by the City Council and city staff has begun logo rollout and implementation and proposed wayfinding signage designs are currently in final stages of review with proposed implementation plan.

III. OTHER PROJECTS & EVENTS:

12. Mini Mural Art Park – Cultural Arts

City Staff is currently exploring grant opportunities and partnerships to complete this project.

13. City of Wharton “Discover Wharton” Community Marketing Campaign

City has developed “Discover Wharton” community marketing campaign in response to “Tourism Assessment” completed in Spring of 2020 by Wharton Downtown Business Association (WDBA) and approved for incorporation into Comprehensive Plan by City Council at Council meeting on May 11th, 2020.

14. Guffey Park Improvements

City Council approved Community Development Dept. to retain David Bucek as architect to design proposed improvements to Guffey Park in Council Meeting held on August 10th, 2020. Preliminary design and budget being finalized, and construction planned for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. Design and budget to be presented to City Council in February.