



## MEMORANDUM

**Date:** May 20, 2020  
**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. 2020-04

---

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

### I. GRANT PROJECTS

#### Infrastructure/Construction:

**1. HMGP – Warning System Mitigation (Siren Warning System)**

Application submitted 10/13/16 under the DR-4269. This project was awarded 02/26/2018 and was accepted by the City Council on 03/26/18. Scope change approval was received 02/01/2019. Befco Engineering was awarded the engineering contract on 05/13/19. The project was awarded for construction bid at the Council Meeting 02/10/2020. Sirens are on order and are anticipated to be in for installation by May 1<sup>st</sup>. Construction is underway and the siren system is anticipated to be fully functional by June 1st, 2020.

**2. 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. The City Staff met with the GLO for a kickoff meeting 02/17/2020 to review contracts and projects.

**3. HMGP – FEMA Shelter/Dome**

HMGP Application submitted by WISD for 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 and the staff attended a kickoff meeting at the WISD Administration Building on 2/18/2020. Agreement with WISD has been reviewed and approved by the School Board. Signed agreement was submitted to the City and is filed with the project. WISD is responsible for all grant activities with the City Staff providing cursory review.

**4. 2019-2020 CDBG – South East Ave. Sanitary Sewer Repairs**

Application has been submitted and we are awaiting a response.

**5. 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. City staff has been meeting with USACE staff monthly on items to be addressed. HDR was selected by the City Council on 06/14/19. The acquisition progress has started and HDR is working with the surveyors and appraisers. Impacted property owners can expect to start receiving appraisals in the next couple of months. USACE staff has indicated they will be ready for as early as Fall 2020. USACE is still in the process of contracting design firms for the remaining portions of the Flood Reduction Project and will be working concurrently on this while phase 1 is in progress.

Phase 2 Design Charette held virtually w/ USACE, Kenall, Inc., Freese & Nichols and City of Wharton staff Tuesday, April 21, 2020.

## **Housing:**

### **6. TDHCA – HOME Reservation Participation**

There were 73 applicants from throughout the city that submitted applications to participate in the program. There are currently 43 still working on applications. There are 7 applicants in title phase and 5 have been fully approved through TDHCA. 5 applicants have been awarded funding as of 7/17/19. 1 subject has declined the contract. Construction on the first home is complete and signed over and the 2<sup>nd</sup> homeowner signed closing documents 01/2020 and construction is anticipated to start this quarter. The 3<sup>rd</sup> approved home to be signed on May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

### **7. 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 City Staff met with the GLO for a kickoff meeting 02/17/2020 to review contracts and projects. The guidelines have been approved by the GLO and are out for public comment on the City of Wharton website. There will also be a public hearing for the guideline comments on the June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Council Meeting.

### **8. 2016 CDBG-DR – Housing Elevation/Reconstruction**

Notification of \$2,000,000 funding was received by city staff on February 4, 2019. This funding will assist homeowners with elevation, rehabilitation, and reconstruction of homes to address existing damage and mitigate future damage. 6 applicants have submitted applications and 4 are in the state processing. 2 are still pending additional paperwork and proof occupancy at time of disaster.

### **9. TxDOT – Safe Routes to School**

The City submitted the Preliminary Application in April 2019. City staff was notified that the preliminary application had been selected for review and City staff met with TxDOT Representative on May 10, 2019. City Staff submitted the detailed application August 15<sup>th</sup>, 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 SRTS program.

## **Disaster Recovery (non-infrastructure or housing):**

### **10. 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. Expenses of actions to facilitate compliance with COVID-19 related public health measures. Expenses associated with the provision of economic support in connection with the COVID-19 public health emergency. And any other COVID-19 – related expenses reasonably necessary to the function of government that satisfy the fund’s eligibility criteria including possible economic assistance funding.

**11. HMGP – Critical Facility Generators**

HMGP Application was submitted on 9/11/18 and we received notification of award by TDEM 02/18/2020. 1 RFI has been requested and responded to.

**12. FEMA – Temporary Housing Units**

City staff is currently aware of 1 THU still in the City.

**II. STUDIES:**

**13. Community Tourism Assessment**

City Staff supported the Wharton Downtown Business Association (WDBA) in a site visit with the Office of the Governor Economic Development and Tourism staff. The WDBA, with the help of the Wharton Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) hosted the group, taking them on an extensive tour of Wharton’s highlights to better identify ways to increase and promote tourism. Final report was presented to the City Council and approved for inclusion into the Comprehensive Plan on May 11, 2020.

**14. City of Wharton, Texas Community Wayfinding Program**

Wharton Downtown Business Association (WDBA), and Wharton Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) are working in partnership with the Wharton Chamber of Commerce and the City of Wharton complete a wayfinding study. The wayfinding study is set to begin in June with a stakeholder meeting.

**III. OTHER PROJECTS & EVENTS:**

**15. Mini Mural Art Park – Cultural Arts**

Community Development department has submitted an application to AARP for funding to establish a mini mural art park in the space adjacent to City Hall. Application is pending response, with an update expected by end of May 2020.

**16. City Department Facebook Page – Community Development**

Community Development department has established a new Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/WhartonCD](http://www.facebook.com/WhartonCD)) has a new outlet to announce events designed to improve quality of life, bring the community together, and encourage economic development.

**17. City of Wharton “Back in Business” Campaign**

Over 400 letters went out to local businesses the first 2 weeks of April giving businesses COVID 19 funding and recovery resources. Community Development has been collaborating with the WEDC, Chamber and WDBA on a weekly basis to assist in coordinating a recovery effort for local businesses. We have reached out to BCL to collaborate with them on funding for small businesses and are working with them on plans to begin implementation.