

AGENDA ITEM *D7*

7. Take all appropriate action on Transportation, Community, and System Preservation Program Grant Application for federal funds regarding the Big Creek Project.

5-27-09 COPY received

**TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNITY, AND SYSTEM PRESERVATION
PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION**

PART A. PROJECT INFORMATION

Fiscal Year Authorized:	FY09
Project Title:	Big Creek Mitigation Plan for Highway
Project Location (City/County, State):	Fort Bend County, TX
GRANTEE CONTACT INFORMATION	
Grantee Contact Name:	Mark Vogler or Jeff Janecek
Agency:	Fort Bend County Drainage District
Mailing Address (Street/P.O. Box):	P.O. Box 1028
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STATE DOT CONTACT INFORMATION	
State Contact Person:	Bob Baumgartner
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Fax:	713-802-5075
E-Mail:	rbaumga@dot.state.tx.us
FHWA DIVISION OFFICE CONTACT INFORMATION	
Division Contact Person:	Mitch Batuzich
Phone:	512-536-5905
Fax:	512-536-5990
E-Mail:	Michael.Batuzich@dot.gov
CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION	
Congress Member:	Pete Olson (formerly Nick Lampson)
Congressional District No.:	22 nd
TCSP PROGRAM FUNDS	
TCSP Program Funds:	\$380,000.
Matching Funds/In-kind Services Value:	\$95,000.00
Matching Funds/In-kind Services Source:	\$0.00
Total TCSP-Related Project Costs:	\$475,000.00

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE FHWA DIVISION OFFICE				
State Administered?		Yes		No
Division Administered?		Yes		No
“Transfer” TCSP funding for Project Administration?		Yes		No
If yes, which Federal Agency				
Will the project be obligated by September 30, 2009?		Yes		No
Date grant application approved by FHWA Division Office				

Part B. Project Abstract

(Maximum 4 sentences) Briefly describe the how the TCSP Program funds will be used to support the proposed project.

Due to financial constraints, the Drainage District is using our manpower and equipment to complete the final three segments of the Big Creek Channel Improvement project. The equipment available for use on the project is dependent upon it not being used on our daily maintenance operations throughout the County. We anticipate that the TCSP funds will serve as a benefit to the project by allowing us to purchase additional excavation equipment that can be dedicated solely to this project through its completion. This will increase the efficiency of the excavation activity and expedite the completion of the project.

Part C. Project Narrative

Describe the project and the expected results, including project goals and timeframe. Describe how the project integrates transportation, community, and system preservation plans and practices that address one or more of the following:

- 1) Improve the efficiency of the transportation system of the United States.*
- 2) Reduce the impacts of transportation on the environment.*
- 3) Reduce the need for costly future investments in public infrastructure.*
- 4) Provide efficient access to jobs, services, and centers of trade.*
- 5) Examine community development patterns and identify strategies to encourage private sector development that achieves the purposes identified in (1) through (4).*

The intent of the Big Creek channel improvement project is to significantly reduce flooding conditions by increasing the conveyance capacity through widening and deepening of the channel. Big Creek is the largest watershed in Fort Bend County and the total length of channel expansion is approximately 24 miles. The improvements are divided into five channel segments and Segments (1-3) are complete.

Construction of Segments 4 & 5 will extend the channel improvements into the upstream end of the watershed. This portion of the watershed has the least amount of channel capacity, the highest concentration of development, and is the area where the flooding impacts have been the most significant.

SH 36 also crosses Big Creek in the upper portion of the watershed. SH 36 serves as a primary thoroughfare connecting rural areas to developed communities. It is considered a major connector road between the Port at Freeport and US 59 and an evacuation route for our coastal county neighbors.

Based on the pre-project *Big Creek Drainage Improvement Study*, the completed project will produce reduce the proposed 100-year water surface elevation by greater than 1' in the vicinity of SH 36. More frequent flooding events will see a reduction in flooding by up to 2.27'. This reduction in flooding could be factored into any future improvements to SH 36 and potentially result in a cost-savings for such a project.

We are currently working on acquiring right-of-way and a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) Sec. 404 permit in order to complete Segments 4 & 5, which may take approximately one year to obtain. The total remaining length of the project is approximately 10 miles. We expect the easement and permit acquisition, the remaining channel expansion, and wetlands mitigation construction to take approximately 5 years to complete. In particular, existing areas that have right-of-way and US ACE permit clearance will be available when the equipment is purchased.

The TCSP funds will benefit the project by allowing us to purchase additional excavation equipment that can be dedicated solely to the project through its completion (with county staff operating and maintaining the equipment for the local match). This would increase the efficiency of the excavation activity and expedite the benefits of reduced flooding along SH 36.

Part D. Project Eligibility

a. Is the project located on a Federal-aid highway? (List the functional class(es) of the facility(ies) to be improved)

Yes, SH 36 within the region of the Big Creek mitigation project is functionally classified as a Rural Principal Arterial on the Federal-aid Highway Classification.

b. *If the project is not located on a Federal-aid highway, how do you consider the project eligible for assistance under Title 23 or Chapter 53 of Title 49, United States Code? (i.e., list program(s) and describe how the project meets the statutory eligibility criteria for that program.)*

Not Applicable.

c. *Is the project a corridor preservation activity necessary to implement transit-oriented development plans, traffic calming measures, or other coordinated transportation, community, and system preservation practices?*

Conducting drainage improvements along the Big Creek channel will assist in preserving the SH 36 and other major thoroughfare corridors (including the planned park and ride facilities) in the Big Creek outfall region. The projected 1-foot reduction in the area floodplain is beneficial in maintaining accessible roadways during major flood events, reducing the required detention needed for future corridor improvements along SH 36, and preserving a primary corridor that is vital for hurricane evacuations from coastal counties.