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AGENDA ITEM MEMO

BOARD MEETING DATE: May 9, 2024

TO: Board Members

THROUGH: Bryan McMath, Interim Executive Administrator
Ashley Harden, General Counsel
Matt Nelson, Deputy Executive Administrator, Office of Planning

FROM: Reem Zoun, P.E., CFM, Director, Flood Planning

SUBJECT: Publication of the Draft 2024 State Flood Plan for public comment

ACTION REQUESTED

Consider authorizing publication of the Draft 2024 State Flood Plan for public comment and posting notice of public meeting, public comment period, and intent to adopt the 2024 State Flood Plan.

BACKGROUND

The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) is required by Texas Water Code (TWC) §16.062(a) to adopt a comprehensive state flood plan that incorporates the approved regional flood plans every five years. Under TWC §16.061 the state flood plan must:

- 1) provide for orderly preparation for and response to flood conditions to protect against the loss of life and property;
- 2) be a guide to state and local flood control policy; and
- 3) contribute to water development where possible.

The state flood plan must include:

- 1) an evaluation of the condition and adequacy of flood control infrastructure on a regional basis;
- 2) a statewide, ranked list of ongoing and proposed flood control and mitigation projects and strategies necessary to protect against the loss of life and property from flooding and a discussion of how those projects and strategies might further water development, where applicable;

- 3) an analysis of completed, ongoing, and proposed flood control projects included in previous state flood plans, including which projects received funding;
- 4) an analysis of development in the 100-year floodplain areas as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency; and
- 5) legislative recommendations the board considers necessary to facilitate flood control planning and project construction.

The 2024 State Flood Plan must be adopted by the Board by September 1, 2024, and this will be Texas' first state flood plan developed through the regional flood planning process as mandated by Senate Bill 8 in 2019. The Executive Administrator (EA) incorporates information from the board-approved regional flood plans and other sources to develop the Draft 2024 State Flood Plan, which will be published for public comment.

KEY ISSUES

The Draft 2024 State Flood Plan incorporates the findings from the 2023 amended Regional Flood Plans that were recently approved by the Board. By reference, the final adopted 2024 State Flood Plan will also include a 2024 online State Flood Plan Viewer that is currently in development and will be published on or before September 1, 2024. The viewer will provide the public with much more detailed visual information and data that cannot be presented in a bound plan document.

The Draft 2024 State Flood Plan is the culmination of a first of its kind effort as envisioned by the Texas legislature. It is a product of extensive collaborative work of the fifteen regional flood groups, sponsors, Texas communities, and sister state agencies.

The plan provides the first comprehensive assessment of flood risk throughout the state. The state flood plan identifies exposure for the 1 percent (100-year) and 0.2 percent (500-year) annual chance flood hazard areas (Table 1). In addition to the 1 and 0.2 percent flood hazard areas, the regional flood planning groups also identified known flood-prone (unknown annual chance) areas based on historic flooding, feedback from public and/or local knowledge. It is important to note that not all buildings and people located within flood hazard areas for specific storm events are at risk of flooding during that event since the finished floor elevations of some buildings within the flood hazard area will likely have higher than base flood elevations.

Table 1. Estimated existing flood risks identified within Texas¹

	1 percent (100-year) floodplain	0.2 percent (500-year) floodplain²	Total
Population	2,408,600	2,811,300	5,219,900
Buildings ³	878,100	786,100	1,664,200
Residential buildings	662,100	633,600	1,295,700
Hospitals, emergency medical services, fire stations, police stations, and schools	2,924	3,334	6,258
Roadway miles	43,400	20,500	63,900
Agricultural area (acres)	10,200,000	2,454,000	12,654,000

¹Compilation of data as reported by the regional flood planning groups. Statistics are rounded.

²In addition to flood risk in 1-percent annual chance floodplain.

³Includes all residential, agricultural, commercial, industrial, power generation, public, and vacant or unknown.

The fifteen regional flood planning groups recommended over 4,600 flood risk reduction solutions which are presented in the state flood plan. The total estimated implementation cost of all recommended flood risk reduction solutions is estimated to be more than \$54.5 billion dollars.

Per TWC §16.062(b)(2) the state flood plan must include a statewide, ranked list of ongoing and proposed flood control and mitigation projects and strategies necessary to protect against the loss of life and property from flooding and a discussion of how those projects and strategies might further water development, where applicable. The initially proposed ranking method was released for stakeholder review and comment in the spring of 2023. The TWDB received helpful and constructive feedback during this time and made changes to the ranking method based on the feedback. The final method and resulting project rankings are included in the draft state flood plan.

The state flood plan includes ranked lists of 3,097 recommended flood management evaluations (FME), 615 recommended flood mitigation projects (FMP), and 771 recommended flood management strategies (FMS) that include non-recurring non-capital costs. The total estimated cost for the solutions included in the ranked lists is over \$51.9 billion.

Upon Board approval to publish the Draft 2024 State Flood Plan for public comment, the draft state flood plan will be published on the TWDB website. The EA anticipates holding one public meeting to accept public comments during the public comment period which will, in total, be at least 30 days. Notice of the public meeting and public comment period will include a physical location, with the specific public meeting attendance information to be posted prominently on the agency website.

After the public meeting and associated public comment period, comments received will be considered and, as appropriate, modifications to the plan may be made by the EA. In accordance with 31 TAC §362.4(b), the Board will publish notice of its intent to adopt the 2024 State Flood Plan in the *Texas Register* and email notice to each regional flood planning group. The notice will be published at least 30 days prior to the Board adoption of the 2024 State Flood Plan (Table 2).

The EA will present the final 2024 State Flood Plan, as revised based on public comment and to make any other necessary minor corrections, for consideration of adoption at a subsequent August Board meeting. Board adoption of the 2024 State Flood Plan will incorporate, by reference, the online State Flood Plan Viewer as an integral component of the plan. After Board adoption, the 2024 State Flood Plan document will be graphically enhanced, printed, and delivered to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the appropriate legislative committees, in late 2024.

Table 2. Tentative timeline of upcoming milestones following publication of the draft state flood plan

Milestone	Estimated date
Board approval to publish the draft 2024 State Flood Plan	May 9, 2024
Draft state flood plan published on TWDB website, and public comment period opens	May 10, 2024
Public meeting for comments	May/June 2024
Public comment period closes	Mid-June 2024
Anticipated adoption of the state flood plan	August 2024
Electronic 2024 State Flood Plan due to the Texas Legislature	September 1, 2024*

* Required.

RECOMMENDATION

The EA recommends authorizing publication of the Draft 2024 State Flood Plan for public comment, publicizing notice in the *Texas Register* of the Board's intent to adopt the 2024 State Flood Plan, publicizing associated public comment period and public meeting date, and providing notice to regional flood planning groups. The EA also recommends the authorization of additional technical corrections and non-substantive language edits, as necessary, prior to publication of the Draft 2024 State Flood Plan.