

Final Notice and Public Explanation of a Proposed Activity in a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard Designated Floodplain

To: All interested Agencies, Groups and Individuals

This is to give notice that Sarasota County Resilient SRQ under 24 CFR Part 58 has conducted an evaluation as required by Executive Order 11988, as amended by Executive Order 13690, in accordance with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 in Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management. The activity is funded under Resilient SRQ's Infrastructure & Public Facilities Program HUD grant B-23-UN-12-0004. The proposed project site is at 27.361325, -82.538420 in the City of Sarasota, Florida. The extent of the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) floodplain was determined using the freeboard value approach. The proposed project, Sarasota Bay Watershed Flood and Water Quality Improvements, would upsize approximately 2,400 linear feet of stormwater piping, which would better handle future flood events. The proposed project would occur on land owned by the City of Sarasota or within rights-of-way. The project site spans approximately 35 acres. The action would occur within the 100-year and 500-year floodplain (base flood elevation 15.1 to 15.4 feet).

Sarasota County Resilient SRQ has considered the following alternatives and mitigation measures to minimize adverse impacts and to restore and preserve natural and beneficial functions and intrinsic values of the existing floodplain:

Alternative 1: (Preferred Alternative) Sarasota Bay Watershed Flood and Water Quality Improvements

Under this alternative, approximately 2,400 linear feet of existing stormwater pipes would be upsized. This would improve the area's capacity to handle large volumes of runoff and reduce the risk of flooding. Additionally, a nutrient-separating baffle box would be installed to address the area's nutrient loading issue. The box system would capture and remove sediment, vegetation, and trash before being discharged into Whitaker Bayou, which would decrease the algal blooms and other ecological issues in the Bayou and downstream areas. The Preferred Alternative (Proposed Action) would cause short-term impacts to the 100-year and 500-year floodplain, since the project site is located in "Zone AE" and "Zone X (shaded)" and would require ground disturbance. Resilient SRQ would ensure that the proper mitigation and/or minimization measures are taken. For example, best management practices (BMPs) for soil erosion and stormwater management would be applied through minimum construction standards. Long-term beneficial impacts would occur to the local community (including residents and businesses) and natural environment from a more reliable stormwater control infrastructure.

No Action Alternative [24 CFR 58.40(e)]

Under the No Action Alternative, the existing infrastructure would continue to fail (cause backups and flooding) and become even more unreliable during flood events. Maintenance activities would occur until the infrastructure completely fails. This may cause significant impacts to the surrounding community including the increased risk of flooding; and therefore, property damage

and risk of life. Additionally, this may disrupt natural ecosystems and allow for the upsurge of nutrients, contaminants, and pollutants, which affects water quality. The No Action Alternative would not achieve the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action.

Sarasota County Resilient SRQ has reevaluated alternatives to building in the floodplain and has determined that it has no practicable alternative to floodplain development. Environmental files documenting compliance with Executive Order 11988, as amended by Executive Order 13690, are available for public inspection, review, and copying upon request at the times and location delineated in the last paragraph of this notice for receipt of comments.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in floodplain and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information and request for public comment about floodplain can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks and impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in floodplain, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

Written comments must be received by Resilient SRQ at the following address on or before February 22, 2025: Resilient SRQ, 301 N. Cattlemen Rd. Suite 200 Sarasota, FL 34232 Attention Steve Hyatt, MBA, CPM, Program Management Division Manager, or by phone by calling 311 or 941-861-5000 or TTY: 7-1-1 or 1-800-955-8771 during the hours of 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Comments may also be submitted via email at shyatt@scgov.net.

Date: February 7, 2025