

Early Notice and Public Review 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 determined that the following proposed action under Infrastructure & Public Facilities Program HUD grant B-23-UN-12-0004 is located in the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) floodplain, and Resilient SRQ will be identifying and evaluating practicable alternatives to locating the action within the floodplain and the potential impacts on the floodplain from the proposed action, as required by Executive Order 11988, as amended by Executive Order 13690, in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 in Subpart C *Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands*. The targeted area for the Sarasota Bay Watershed Flood and Water Quality Improvements project encompasses the Whitaker Bayou Tributary C in the City of Sarasota, Sarasota County. The proposed project would be located in a residential area of the City of Sarasota south Booker High School. The northern boundary of the proposed project area runs from North Lemon Avenue on the west along 29th Street to Noble Avenue before turning north to 32nd Street. The boundary then turns east again and continues to Goodrich Avenue. From there the boundary runs south along Goodrich Avenue to the intersection with Dr. Martin Luther King Way. The Southern boundary runs west along Dr Martin Luther King Way to the intersection of North Lemon Avenue before turning north until reaching the 29th Street parallel. The extent of the FFRMS floodplain was determined using 0.2 percent flood approach.

The proposed project, Sarasota Bay Watershed Flood and Water Quality Improvements, includes the involves upsizing approximately 2,400 linear feet of existing stormwater pipes, thereby improving the system's capability to handle large volumes of runoff and reduce the incidence of flooding. A key component of the water quality improvement strategy is the installation of a nutrient-separating bafflebox. This innovative system is designed to capture and remove sediment, vegetation, and trash from stormwater runoff before it is discharged into Whitaker Bayou. The proposed area consists of approximately 60 homes and eight roadways, and area totaling approximately 1,552,349.17 ft² (35.64 acres). More than half of the action area lies within the FFRMS floodplain but does not include any wetlands.

The proposed project area consists of a region historically plagued by structural flooding and lacking effective water quality management systems. The mitigation benefits of this project are substantial and directly address the weaknesses exposed by Hurricane Ian.

Firstly, it aims to reduce total nitrogen loading into Whitaker Bayou, with an estimated reduction of 105.7 lb/year. This reduction is crucial for improving water quality and preventing the detrimental effects of nutrient overload, such as algal blooms, which can be exacerbated by intense storm events like Ian.

Secondly, the project will enhance flood protection for the community. By upgrading the stormwater system, five structures will be removed from the risk of flooding during a 100-year, 24-hour storm event, significantly reducing the vulnerability of these areas to future severe weather incidents.

Lastly, the project will improve 292 linear feet of roadway that currently falls below the City's adopted Level of Service (LOS) standards. This enhancement will not only improve traffic flow

and safety but also ensure that roadways are better equipped to handle stormwater runoff, thus contributing to overall flood mitigation in the area.

The implementation of this proposed project is a proactive response to the kind of challenges posed by extreme weather events such as Hurricane Ian. It aims to bolster the area's resilience against future storms, improve environmental conditions in Whitaker Bayou, and enhance the safety and quality of life for the local community.

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. Commenters are encouraged to offer alternative sites outside of the floodplain, alternative methods to serve the same project purpose, and methods to minimize and mitigate project impacts on the floodplain. 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 December 20, 2024: Resilient SRQ, 301 N. Cattlemen Rd. Suite 200 Sarasota, FL 34232 Attention Steve Hyatt, Division Manager, Program Management Division, Office of Financial Management (OFM), or by phone by calling 311 or 941-861-5309 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: December 5, 2024