



July 14, 2020

Russ Poppe, P.E.
Executive Director
Harris County Flood Control District
9900 Northwest Freeway | Houston, Texas 77092
Via email: russ.poppe@hcfcd.hctx.net

RE: Community questions and concerns from Northeast Houston

Mr. Poppe,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these questions - our intent is that it sparks more dialogue between Harris County Flood Control leadership/staff and the community residents impacted by HCFCD decisions and projects.

As CEER reached out to residents and resident leaders, we found that there are a number of questions where a proper response has not been given or existing platforms provide only a partial or unclear answer. Many also report that they have received different answers from different people at the Flood Control District. **These anecdotal experiences are troubling and merit an online meeting or training that is not tied to community engagement for a particular project, but instead addresses the overlapping and intersecting concerns of the Northeast corridor.**

The community questions below come from community residents across the Northeast corridor that includes: Kashmere Gardens, Trinity Gardens, Sheldon, Fairgreen, High Meadows, Homestead Woods, Northwood Manor, Aldine, and Greenwood Village.

The list of questions and authors of the questions are not meant to be fully representative of these neighborhoods or all the people in them; we know many voices need to be included and reaching them will require collective work. The concerns laid out in this letter are broadly and deeply felt and we present them as such.

With appreciation for your work and an attitude of partnership,

Keith Downey, Kashmere Gardens Super Neighborhood Council #52
David Alamia, Sheldon SAFE Initiative
Kathy Gunter, Houston Gardens Civic Club

Genette Smith, Northwood Manor Civic Club
Shirley Ronquillo, Greenwood Village and co-founder of the Houston Department of Transformation



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COMMUNITY QUESTIONS

Clarity on the long term plan to protect the Northeast corridor

1. Exactly how much investment would it take to bring up Halls, Greens and other Northeast watersheds to a 1% flood level protection? How does that compare to other watersheds like the Buffalo Bayou watershed? What is the price tag to close the gap of watersheds left behind? What is the game plan for getting that done?
2. At the conclusion of all Flood bond spending what will the added flood protection be for Northeast Houston? Another way of asking this is, if Harvey happened again, after all construction is completed, what is the flood level reduction we can expect?
3. What are the project start and end dates of construction for all projects in Halls, Brays and Greens Bayou?
4. Why, if equity is central to planning, have we not seen any improvements already taking place in 77016, 26, 28 or 78?

Moving beyond planning or studies to moving dirt

1. The neighborhood drainage projects in Sheldon and other areas of Northeast seem to be in a constant state of study and no infrastructure/construction has occurred. Can the community receive regular updates on the progress and milestones achieved with the neighborhood drainage projects funded by the County Bond? Can target dates for construction completion dates be provided to the community?

General Flood Control operations

1. Can you hold an online training for the community to understand more about how flood projects are funded, how to read the flood control items on Commissioners Court agenda and how flood control makes decisions about how budget and resources are set aside?
2. Can we receive a bimonthly update from flood control on progress in our neighborhoods? It is impossible for us to hold the HCFCD accountable if we don't know what is happening.
3. What do you suggest we do if we hear conflicting information from one Flood Control representative to another or if we have documentation and information that conflicts with what is on your website? How are you working to address this so it doesn't happen?

Coordination with City and County

1. Flood control in Harris County consists of two legs, the Harris County Flood Control District and the City of Houston Public Works.

The problem that we have encountered is getting a partial response from one unit that addresses their responsibility and not completely solving all the issues that require addressing. To obtain information concerning flood control, we need to simultaneously address both entities to ensure all problems are identified and addressed. If not, all outlined issues will never be resolved.

The forming of a commission to address flooding issues in Houston Gardens requires both entities, Harris County Flood Control District and the City of Houston Public Works Department. Both organizations are at the table simultaneously, documenting and addressing what each will do and when. A coordinated effort will resolve the ongoing issues that we currently have. How can we make this happen?

High Meadows

1. Has the issue with Braes bayou water run off been addressed?
2. As additional development is being done in our community what steps have taken place to prevent flooding?

Homestead Detention Basin

1. We need a target or completion date for the biking & walking trail as well as fishing pond/beautification on the Homestead Detention Basin. Precinct 1 Commissioner representatives are not responding to the phone numbers/emails listed on the flyer which they sent out to the community. Why?

Hunting Bayou

1. What is the scheduled timeline of construction for the work along Hunting Bayou from Hwy 69 to the retention pond (H100-00-00-R001, H100-00-00-G020, H100-00-00-G040, H100-00-00-G070, H100-00-00-B004, H100-00-00-E005) once the project begins? Will there be liquidated damages assessed against the contractor

who will be assigned to the project if the project goes beyond the scheduled completion date?

Northwood Manor

1. After homes in my neighborhood were flooded during Hurricane Harvey and again during Tropical Storm Imelda, I began another assessment of why and what needed to be done to reduce flooding in our subdivision. I have been back and forth with Precinct 1 Commissioner and staff, Precinct Coordinator and Property Management Department Manager in HCFCD and have sent service requests to COHPW Dept. to check drains in the neighborhood after I was made aware that flood ditches/channels in the neighborhood were clogged. I want to know the status on scopes of work and project timelines to be completed before next hurricane season. We deserve better. Every family deserves to live in a safe, environmentally healthy and dry community.
2. Cutting of the grass/weeds/other greenery growing in the P125-00-00 and tributaries and/or removing trees, illegally dumped items from P125 will not suffice because the water is still standing in the flood channel from the small rains we've had so far. What is the plan and scope of work? What are the other flood projects planned and/or in progress for our area?

Aldine

1. Is the buyout program going to move forward? How much will families be given to move if the buyout will take place that will help them purchase a home and land equivalent to what they have in the current Houston market?
2. What is the status of the study for Halls Bayou P118-00-00-P005? Aside from the current maintenance project will additional work be done to help control flood water away from the Greenwood Village neighborhood?
 - a. As of 7/12/20, the Flood Control District website states \$1.3 million has been spent on this study. As a resident, it is difficult to understand how \$1.3 million can be spent on a study while this money could have been allocated to actual mitigation. What has consumed \$1.3 million thus far?
3. What are all the start and end dates for projects in our area? Where do we find that and get regular updates?
4. C-01 HALLS BAYOU TRIBUTARY P118-26-00 AND STORMWATER DETENTION BASINS P518-26-01 AND P518-26-02 states it is still in the construction phase. What is the projected completion date?
5. Excavation of Little York Basin and Hopper Basin Will P518-10-00-E002 begin as scheduled this summer of 2020?
6. When will P188-27-00 begin? No updates listed on the project page
7. Did P118-25-00 and P118-25-01 Alternative Analysis result in proposed right of way acquisition or buyouts? Several vulnerable families live along this sector of the bayou.
8. Did P118-23-00 and P118-23-02 Alternative Analysis result in proposed right of way acquisition or buyouts? Several vulnerable families live along this sector of the bayou.