



City of Austin

Recommendation for Action

File #: 24-4242, **Agenda Item #:** 43.

4/18/2024

Posting Language

Approve a resolution adopting the 2023 Repetitive Loss Area Analysis prepared by the Watershed Protection Department and approve it being incorporated as an appendix to the City's Hazard Mitigation Action Plan.

Lead Department

Watershed Protection Department.

Fiscal Note

This item has no fiscal impact.

For More Information:

Kevin Shunk, Managing Engineer, Watershed Protection Department, 512-974-9176, kevin.shunk@austintexas.gov.

Additional Backup Information:

Because the City is located within an area of the country known as "Flash Flood Alley" due to significant flood risks, the City has participated in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program since 1981. This participation has, among other things, provided residents with the opportunity to purchase flood insurance from FEMA and has made the City eligible for disaster relief funding and grant funding opportunities.

In 1990, FEMA introduced the Community Rating System (CRS) as a voluntary program for recognizing and encouraging community floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum standard floodplain regulations. The CRS evaluates activities such as flood warning, floodplain mapping, higher regulatory standards, outreach programs, and the preservation of open space and natural features. Austin has participated in this program since 1991 and because of its CRS rating, residents currently receive up to a 20% discount on flood insurance premiums. In 2021, this equated to an aggregate savings of approximately \$904,000 in premiums.

As part of the City's participation in the CRS, it is required to prepare a flood risk identification tool called a Repetitive Loss Area Analysis (RLAA), which helps identify flood risk throughout the community. In preparing the RLAA, staff evaluated historic flood insurance claims, geographic data, and storm drain infrastructure and surveyed approximately 600 residents to gather more information regarding flood risk. The Watershed Protection Department will use the information obtained from the RLAA in addition to engineering models to identify flood risk throughout the community, which in turn will assist in identifying flood risk reduction solutions.

Historically, the RLAA has been an appendix in the city's Hazard Mitigation Action Plan. We recommend that this arrangement be retained.

In order for the Watershed Protect Department to complete the five-year cycle verification visit with the CRS program, the 2023 RLAA must be adopted by City Council.