

# **Thinking Outside the Box: Innovative Approaches to Water Resource Grants**



QUIDDITY

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# Thinking Outside the Box: Innovative Approaches to Water Resource Grants

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# Objectives



Managing Expectations



Understanding Partnership Strategies

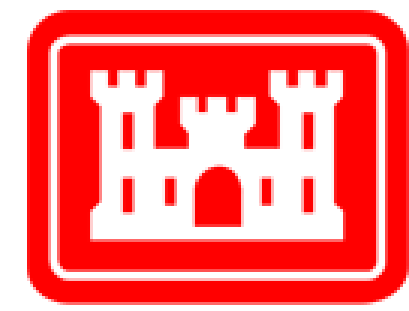


Funding Programs

# Who are y'all working with?



# FEMA



# US Army Corps of Engineers®



# Guiding Principles

There is no such thing as free money

Federal funding WILL slow your project down

You have to spend money to make money

# Managing Expectations

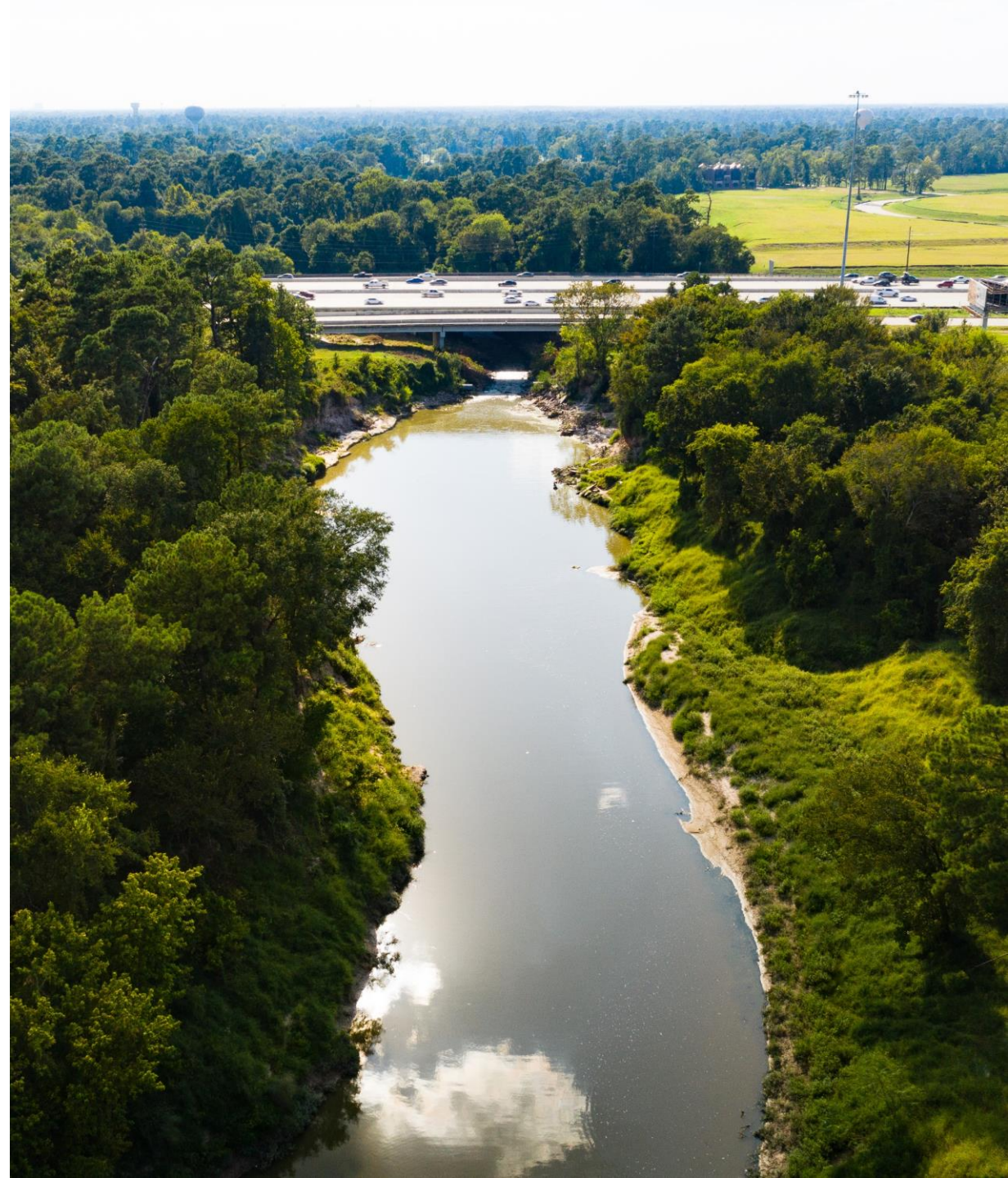
- Be patient – most partnerships take MULTIPLE YEARS
- Environmental compliance (NEPA) is a big deal, especially to the Feds
- All federal agencies have “a process”
- Grants vs Loans
  - Everybody wants a grant
  - Loans are easier to get
- Annual Funding cycles vs one-time appropriations
  - Be prepared for BOTH

# Look for Partners !!!

- Many programs encourage collaboration
- Shared and/or complimentary interests
- Adjacent jurisdictions
- Multidisciplinary
- Consider local partnerships to supplement a grant (or in lieu of)

# Think Near *and* Long Term

- Phase the project
- Different Criteria (Local, State, Federal)
  - Low to Moderate Income (LMI) and Social Vulnerability Index (SVI)
  - Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR)
- ROW Acquisition
  - Voluntary Buyouts
  - Project specific Acquisition
  - Apply for grants *after* ROW is acquired
- Incorporate into CIP/Budget
  - Use local dollars wisely





# Putting it all together

- Establish your goal, then map it out
- Identify quick wins that show progress and help now
- Use local funds smartly
  - Initiate feasibility studies in advance
  - Start components that cannot wait for grant funding
  - Be prepared for the local match requirement
  - Plan and budget 3-5 years out
- **ENGAGE WITH YOUR PARTNERS!**
- **Federal funds move SLOW!**

# Funding Flood Risk Mitigation and Repairs



Includes Local Match for Federally Funded Projects



Flood Infrastructure Fund (FIF)  
Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)



Typically 75/25 Federal/Local Share

Emergency Watershed Protection Program  
Watershed & Flood Prevention Operations



Typically 75/25 Federal/Local Share

**Damage-Related**  
Public Assistance  
Section 406  
Varies by Project\*

Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

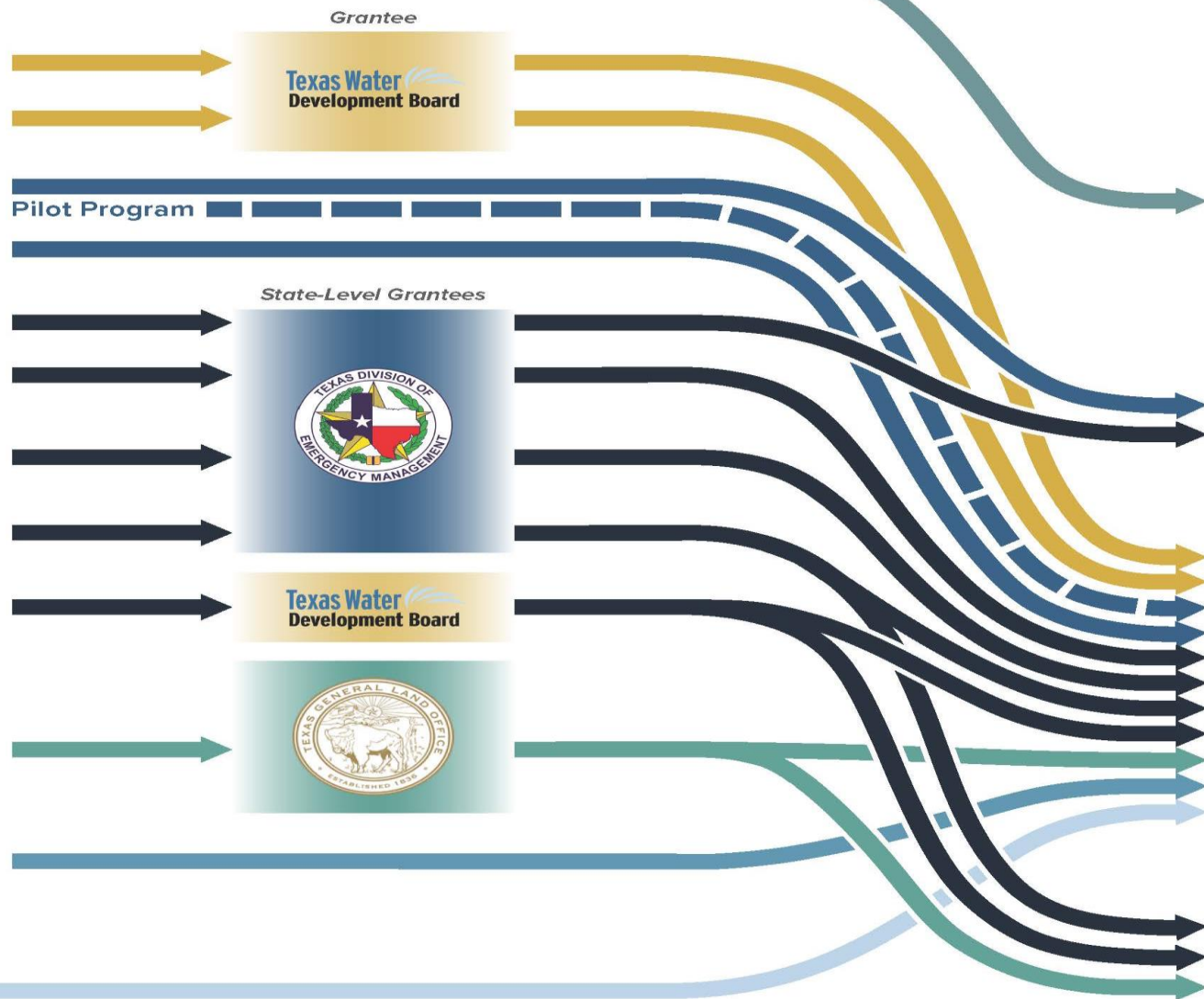
Flood Mitigation Assistance Program



Community Development Block Grants (DR and MIT)  
0% Local Match



With Federal Nexus to the Clean Water Act (CWA)



Note: Community Project Funding requests (earmarks) by Congressional Members each FY is not shown. For more information see: <https://quiddity.com/the-return-of-earmarks-in-the-federal-budget-allows-congress-to-direct-funding-to-specific-projects/>



# FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA)

- “HMA” is an umbrella for multiple funding opportunities
- *Annual* Funding Opportunities – NOFO each fall
  - Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA)
  - Building Resilient Infrastructure in Communities (BRIC)
- *One-Time* Funding Opportunities – NOFO tied to a disaster
  - Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)



# Project Phasing

Objective: Reduce Flooding through Channel Conveyance Improvements



- Channel Improvements = \$10M
- Mitigation for Channel = \$20M
- Raise Bridge = \$10M



- Total Cost = \$40M
- Benefit Cost Ratio = 0.65

# EPA – STAG/Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)



- Annual Program Managed by the State - Texas Water Development Board (TWDB)
  - Emphasis on Loans vs Grants
  - Must be in the Intended Use Plan (due ~ March 1 each year)
- Earmarks through EPA are managed directly by EPA (excludes TWDB)
  - 80/20 Split
- Strategy: Sell a Flood Control Project as Water Quality!

← Dry SWDB



SWDB with Water quality →

# Project Phasing

Objective: Reduce Flooding through Channel Conveyance Improvements

- Phase 1: Mitigation for Channel = \$20M
  - Self-performed excavation (E&R)
  - EPA Water Quality Earmark/Grant

- Phase 2: Raise Bridge = \$10M
  - DOT Grant (RAISE) or Earmark

- Phase 3: Channel Improvements = \$10M
  - Benefit Cost Ratio = 1.75
  - FEMA FMA Grant



United States Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

# EWP and WFPO

- Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP)
  - Assistance making repairs after a disaster
  - Remove debris, reshape and protect eroded streambanks, repair damages, repair levees, purchase EWP buyouts/floodplain restoration
- Watershed and Flood Preventions Operations (WFPO)
  - Emphasizes Agriculture and Rural Benefits ( $\geq 20\%$  of benefits)
  - Request assistance to develop a Preliminary Feasibility Study (PIFR)
  - Watershed plan is approved and authorized
  - Sponsor applies for funding through annual congressional appropriations



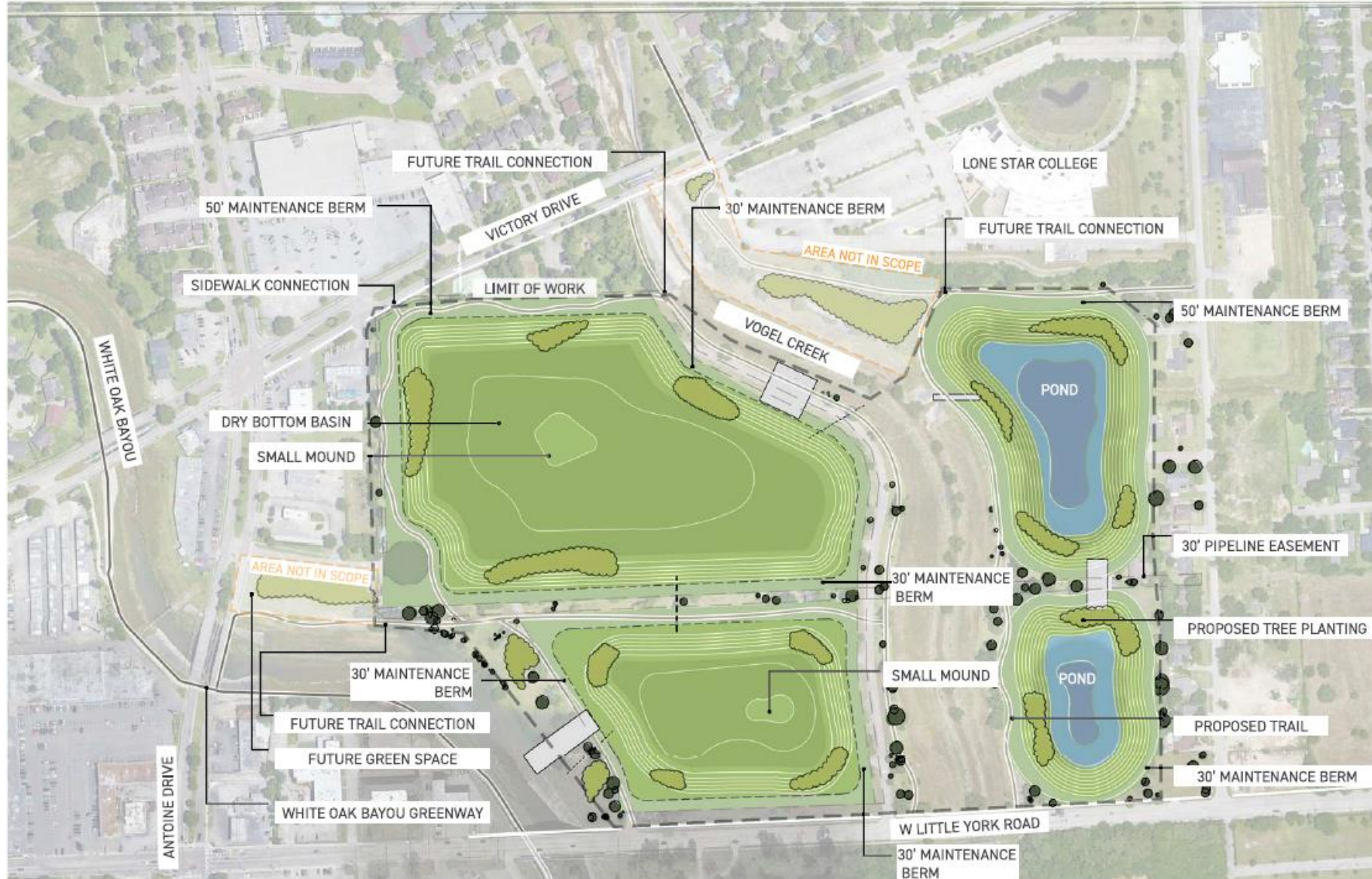
# Community Development Block Grants

## CDBG DR / MIT



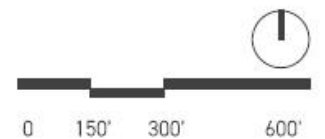
- Benefits Low to Moderate Income (LMI) areas
  - May require an Income Survey
- Multiple levels of oversight
  - Often through Council's of Government
- Compliance is essential
  - Documentation
  - Section 3
  - NEPA
- Get HELP!

# Arbor Oaks Stormwater Detention Basin



### LEGEND

- EXISTING TREE TO REMAIN
- PROPOSED TREE PLANTING
- ▬ PROPOSED TRAIL
- BOTTOM SHELF
- WETLAND SHELF
- POND
- MAINTENANCE BERM
- PROPOSED WEIR STRUCTURE
- ▬▬ Easement



# Sources of Funding

## Arbor Oaks Stormwater Detention Basin

Funding Partner	Funding Amount *
HCFCFCD	\$2,500,000
NRCS	\$8,300,000
CDBG-DR (HUD-GLO)	\$33,600,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$44,400,000</b>



HCFCFCD

\$2,500,000

NRCS

\$8,300,000



CDBG-DR (HUD-GLO)

\$33,600,000

**TOTAL**

**\$44,400,000**



\* Doesn't include 20+ years of FEMA FMA/PDM/HMGP and CDBG-DR funded voluntary home buyouts.

# USACE - Environmental Infrastructure (EI) Assistance



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**

- Section 219 of WRDA 1992
- \$80 million “authorized” for Texas (modified in 2007 and 2022)
- Planning, Design and/or Construction of
  - Water/Wastewater
  - Stormwater
  - Surface Water Protection
  - Environmental Protection
- Typically 75/25 split (federal/local)
- *Not subject to the USACE Planning Process*

# Congressional “Earmarks”

- Community Project Funding (CPF)
- Starts in Feb/Mar with next FY Budget Prep
- Not all congressional members participate
- “Hurry up, then wait”
- Typically in the \$1-5 million, up to ~\$10 million
- Funding is appropriated to a Federal Agency
- **NO COMPETITION!**
  - Compliance can be a hurdle

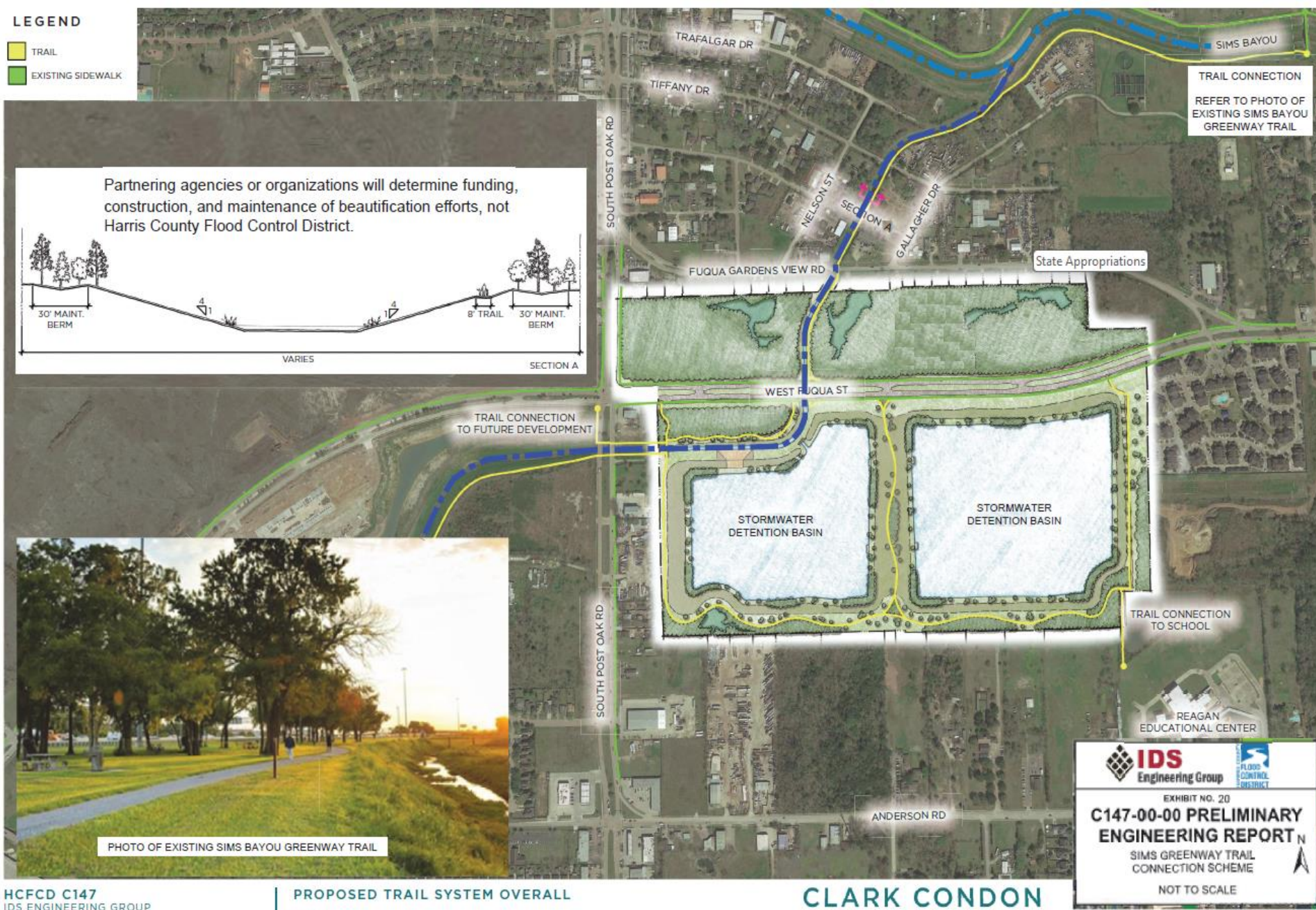


# TWDB Flood Infrastructure Fund (FIF)



- Project must be in the State Flood Plan (through RFPG's)
  - \$54 Billion plan (and growing)
  - Updated every five years
  - Amendment process coming
- More Loans than Grants
- More than \$1 Billion since 2019
- Two step application process

# S. Post Oak Stormwater Detention Basin and Channel Conveyance










HCFCFD C147  
IDS ENGINEERING GROUP  
118-070

PROPOSED TRAIL SYSTEM OVERALL  
01.22.20



# Sources of Funding

## S. Post Oak Stormwater Detention Basin and Channel Conveyance Improvements

		Funding Partner	Funding Amount		
  	→	HCFCFCD	\$4,500,000	←	  FEMA
	→	FEMA-LPDM	\$9,886,000		
	→	TWDB-FIF	\$10,525,000		
		CDBG-MIT	\$34,160,000	←	 
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$35,086,000</b>		



# Key Take Aways



TAKE THE QUICK  
WIN



PHASE YOUR  
PROJECT



KEEP LOOKING  
AHEAD



ENGAGE WITH  
YOUR PARTNERS (AT  
ALL LEVELS)



FEDERAL FUNDS  
MOVE SLOW!





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**Thank You!**

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