



Hidalgo County Commissioners Court

Richard F. Cortez
County Judge

David L. Fuentes
Commissioner, Precinct 1

Eduardo "Eddie" Cantu
Commissioner, Precinct 2

Everardo "Ever" Villarreal
Commissioner, Precinct 3

Ellie Torres
Commissioner, Precinct 4

**OFFICE OF
COUNTY JUDGE
RICHARD F. CORTEZ**

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, March 10, 2021

Hidalgo County Drainage District No. 1 Awarded \$32.7 Million from Texas Water Development Board for Flood Control Project

WESLACO – At its meeting of the board of directors held this morning in Austin, the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) approved a request from Hidalgo County Drainage District No. 1 (Hidalgo County) for \$32,670,000 in financial assistance consisting of \$22,869,000 in financing and \$9,801,000 in grant from the Flood Infrastructure Fund for acquisition and construction of a flood improvement project.

The awarded funding is comprised of \$22,869,000 in financing and a \$9,801,000 grant from the Flood Infrastructure Fund (FIF), which was created to assist in financing drainage, flood mitigation, and flood control projects. Hidalgo County Drainage District No. 1's project was scored and prioritized by the TWDB in its meeting on September 17, 2020. The action taken today formally awards the funding to the District.

To reduce frequent flooding problems and to accommodate the area's future development, the District prioritized a need to expand and improve the main drainage ditch, drainage ditch laterals, regional detention facilities, culvert crossings, discharge structures, and pumps. The proposed project is located between Mile 9 North, Mile 15 North, FM 88, and the IBWC floodway, an area containing approximately 18,600 acres, just north of the cities of Weslaco and Mercedes. The project has been divided into four segments that interconnect and drain into the two outfalls that drain into the IBWC floodway. The construction of each segment is composed of channel excavation, regional detention pond excavation, embankment, gate well control structure, pump and controls, concrete rip rap, reinforced concrete boxes, and reinforced concrete pipe. The rights-of-way are limited in the area; therefore, land acquisition is included in the project. The improvements will benefit over 400 structures in the area. The project will reduce the water surface elevation by more than 1.5 feet and it will increase the storage and discharge capacity of the storm system.

Precinct 1 Commissioner David L. Fuentes was in attendance via phone conference at today's TWDB Board of Directors meeting, and thanked the Board for the award. Fuentes has been instrumental in promoting the need for adequate drainage and flood control projects after a series of extreme rain events resulted in widespread flooding in Precinct 1, impacting thousands of residents and damaging homes and properties.

Hidalgo County is home to one of the fastest growing regions in the nation. We provide health and justice to the over 800,000 residents of our county. We strive to be accessible and responsive to our citizens by providing excellent public service through the values of leadership, transparency, fairness, collaboration, respect and fiscal responsibility. Follow our social media feed at www.co.hidalgo.tx.us/followus



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"We are extremely appreciative of the Texas Water Development Board's commitment to improving our area's ability to mitigate and control the damaging effects of flooding in our region," said Fuentes. "This project is critical to meet our current needs as well as accommodate for future growth in population, saving lives, homes, and properties for years to come," Fuentes continued.

"On behalf of our community, we want to also thank Hidalgo County Commissioners Court, Texas Governor Greg Abbott, our state legislative delegation, and our team members who worked and supported our efforts to secure this funding," Fuentes added.

The project's planning phase is anticipated to end in August 2021, with the design phase commencing in November 2021. Expected construction is scheduled to begin in June 2022.

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ATTACHMENT: Photo of Texas Water Development Board Director (center), with Hidalgo County Precinct 1 Commissioner David L. Fuentes, and Hidalgo County Precinct 4 Commissioner Ellie Torres.

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