



September 2016

A Report to the Austin City Council

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OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this audit were to:

- determine if the City’s stormwater infrastructure is sufficient to manage expected flows and is maintained according to an established schedule, and
- determine how the City’s infrastructure management practices compared to similar entities.

WHAT WE FOUND

On May 19, 2016, the City’s Flood Mitigation Task Force presented its final report to the City Council. The report included recommendations that addressed nearly all of the risks identified in this audit, as shown in the table below. The report also included an evaluation of stormwater infrastructure practices in peer cities. After reviewing the Watershed Protection Department’s response to the recommendations, it appears that the Department is aware of the risks related to stormwater infrastructure management and has plans to address them. As a result, we concluded our audit without conducting substantive testing and did not issue additional recommendations.

Risk Area	Summary of Task Force Recommendations	Summary of Department Responses
Maintenance of Infrastructure	Develop an asset management program	Working to improve its asset management program
Planning for Future Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate loopholes in Land Development Code • Complete local flood models • Ensure a system exists to determine if development is near known flood problem areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating in the CodeNEXT project • Flood modeling is underway • Refining tools to advise stakeholders about flood problem areas
Coordinating with Other Departments	Ensure flood problem areas are communicated to relevant stakeholders	Establishing a working group to address this issue
Flood Response Tools	Continue to update flood warning system and equipment	Several efforts are completed, underway, or planned

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Watershed Protection management reviewed the audit report, did not have comments or concerns regarding the report, and elected not to provide a written response.

BACKGROUND

In June 2015, City Council passed a resolution to create a Flood Mitigation Task Force made up of members with experience in stormwater management, engineering, emergency services, and/or flood impacts. Council directed the task force to gather information and develop recommendations to mitigate flooding in the City and surrounding areas. The included an evaluation of best practices in cities with similar flood issues.

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

This audit was conducted as part of the Office of the City Auditor's Fiscal Year 2016 Strategic Audit Plan, as presented to the City Council Audit and Finance Committee.

Scope

The audit scope included actions and activities related to stormwater management between October 1, 2013 and December 31, 2015.

Methodology

To accomplish our audit objectives, we performed the following steps:

- interviewed Watershed Protection Department personnel;
- reviewed proposed revisions to City Code;
- reviewed recommendations from the Green Infrastructure Working Group;
- reviewed the Flood Mitigation Task Force final report; and
- reviewed the Watershed Protection Department's responses to certain recommendations made by the Flood Mitigation Task Force

GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS COMPLIANCE

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

AUDIT TEAM

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