



MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Montre' Freeman, City Manager
Dwan Bell, Public Utilities Director
Alicia Steward, Finance Director
Jon Hawley, Grants Administrator

Date: January 19, 2024

Subj: Consideration – Proposed Grant Application for Flora Street Stormwater Improvements

BACKGROUND:

On March 10, 2022, the NC Department of Environmental Quality awarded the City of Elizabeth City \$200,000 for the "Flora Street Stormwater Improvement Design Project"; the state provided this grant through a special appropriation of American Rescue Plan Act, State Fiscal Recovery Funds, rather than its typical grant programs. The project's purpose is to design a solution to the repetitive flooding around the intersection of Flora Street and Riverside Avenue, which is detrimental to the area's residences and infrastructure.

However, as the project name implies, our grant through DEQ does not include construction. Thankfully, City staff have identified a different funding opportunity to implement these much-needed stormwater improvements. This funding source is a familiar one to the City: the Disaster Relief and Mitigation (DRM) Fund, which is offered through the NC Department of Public Safety — Division of Emergency Management. The DRM Fund offers 100% grant funding for flood mitigation and resilience projects.

ANALYSIS:

The Flora design project is in advanced stages. Since beginning work in mid-2022, our project engineer, AECOM, has performed hydrologic and hydraulic modeling of the intersection, as well as wetlands surveying, geotechnical assessment, and other analyses. Based upon these analyses, and in consultation with Public Utilities, AECOM is proposing to raise the Flora and Riverside intersection (see project map) and install new catch basins and concrete drainage pipes with flap gates to limit backflow. Once constructed, these improvements will significantly reduce routine "sunny day" flooding while also reducing the severity of flooding from major storms.

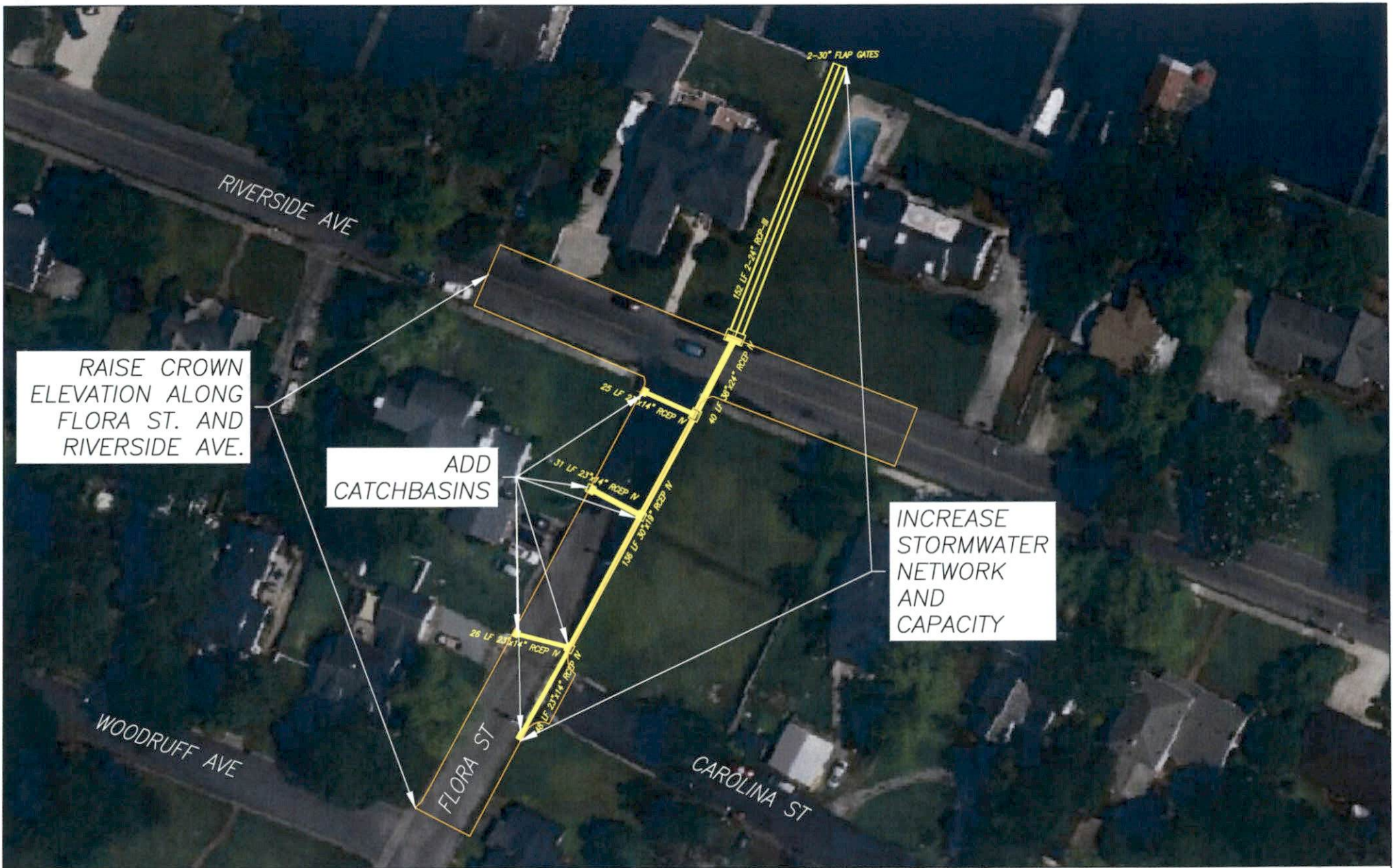
AECOM has completed 50% roadway design plans for this work, and is pushing to provide complete plans by March. The project is nearly shovel-ready, in other words. AECOM estimates it will cost \$820,000, inclusive of construction, engineering services, and contingency.

The DRM Fund is an ideal grant program to fund this work. It funds projects that mitigate flooding, ensure resilient transportation infrastructure, and reduce future damage from natural disasters. The Flora Street Stormwater Improvements would meet all these objectives. For the 2023-2024 cycle, there is also \$25 million in total funding available.

An application is due by 5:00 p.m. on January 31st. City staff therefore request Council authorization to finalize and submit the Flora Street proposal.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

By motion, authorize the submission of a grant application for the Flora Street Stormwater Improvements, as proposed herein, to the Disaster Relief and Mitigation Fund.

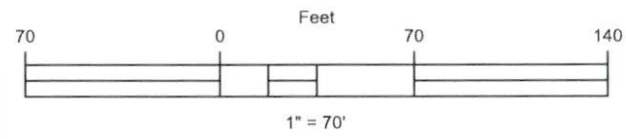


RAISE CROWN
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AECOM



ELIZABETH CITY – FLORA–RIVERSIDE
STORMWATER IMPROVEMENTS – SCENARIO B