



MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Finance Committee

FROM: Rich Olson, City Manager
June Brooks, Planning Director

DATE: July 30, 2016

REF: **Consideration** - Call for a Public Hearing to obtain citizen comment regarding an application to the North Carolina Department of Commerce Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program for the Raw Water Transmission Main Project

BACKGROUND:

This request is for the Finance Committee to recommend that the City Council call for a Public Hearing to be held on August 22, 2016 to obtain public comment on a site specific proposal for CDBG funding to replace the raw water transmission line from the Wellfield to the end of Phase 1 at Knobbs Creek.

ANALYSIS:

The CDBG Infrastructure Program, administered by the Department of Commerce, offers funding assistance to non-entitlement communities for infrastructure upgrades. Thirty-three million dollars is available in a competitive grant process for infrastructure needs. The general public hearing to gain citizen comment is being held during the City Council meeting of August 8, 2016.

A project specific public hearing must be held in order to apply for the grant funding. This is one of two hearings being requested in order to allow staff to make application in this round of grant funding. A description of the Raw Water Transmission Main Project is as follows:

Raw Water Transmission Main Replacement Project

The City of Elizabeth City Raw Water Transmission Main Replacement Project consists of replacing the existing raw water transmission lines that serve as the sole supply of water to Elizabeth City's Water Treatment Plant. The current transmission mains, a 10" cast iron main and a 12" cast iron main, were installed over 70 years ago. The existing 10" main is becoming brittle and has broken several times in the past two to three years. The existing 12" main is exposed to vehicular traffic at a creek crossing. Due to budget constraints, the replacement project was planned for two phases. Phase 1 was funded in part with help from the Supplemental Grants Program-Clean Water Partners Infrastructure Program in 2012. The City is now asking for funding through the North Carolina Department of Commerce CDBG Infrastructure Program to fund the second phase of this project.

Phase two of this project involves the replacement of the existing 10" cast iron raw water transmission main with a new 14" PVC raw water transmission main beginning at Wellfield Road and continuing to the end of the Phase I project just north of Knobbs Creek. In the first phase of the project, the older 10" pipe was replaced with a 14" PVC pipe from the Water Treatment Plant to and then under Knobbs Creek. In the first phase of the project, the City also replaced the 12" pipe exposure to vehicular traffic with a 14" pipe under Knobbs Creek. The estimated cost of the project is \$800,000. No local match is anticipated.

The critical need to replace the raw water transmission pipe in Elizabeth City is mentioned in a letter to Mr. Paul Fredette, PE, Utilities Director, from Mr. David Tawes, of NCDENR -Public Water Supply, dated January 11, 2008.

The benefit of this project is to protect the sole water supply of the City of Elizabeth City and provide uninterrupted service to its 6,273 residential and 1,007 commercial customers depending daily on the water system. The City has a 57% low-moderate income population.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION - A critical situation for a public water supply facility is the complete shutdown of its water supply system. Antiquated pipes with a history of frequent breaks present a potential situation on a daily basis that will shut down the Elizabeth City water supply. Breaks in the 10" transmission main are becoming more frequent. Several factors contribute to the increase in breaks in the transmission lines including deterioration due to age and inability to handle the pressure from the raw water pumps. Each transmission line break results in an interruption in the only water supply to the water treatment plant. With a current average demand of just over 2 MGD, Elizabeth City only has the ability to store one day's raw water supply at the treatment plant.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

By motion, recommend that the City Council call for a Public Hearing to be held on Monday, August 22, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. (or as soon thereafter as the agenda allows) in Council Chambers of the Municipal Administration Building, 306 E. Colonial Avenue to gather citizen input regarding Small Cities CDBG Infrastructure Grant funding for the replacement of the raw water transmission line from the Wellfield to the end of Phase 1 at Knobbs Creek.

RCO/vdw