



# **City of San Marcos**

## **City Council Discussion Blanco Gardens Utilities Project**

November 4, 2020



# Agenda Item 21

Receive an update and hold discussion on the Blanco Gardens Utilities Project, and provide direction to Staff.



# **Presentation Overview**

- 1. Drainage Improvements Status Update**
- 2. Electric Utility Conversion Status Update**
- 3. Next Steps**
- 4. Questions**

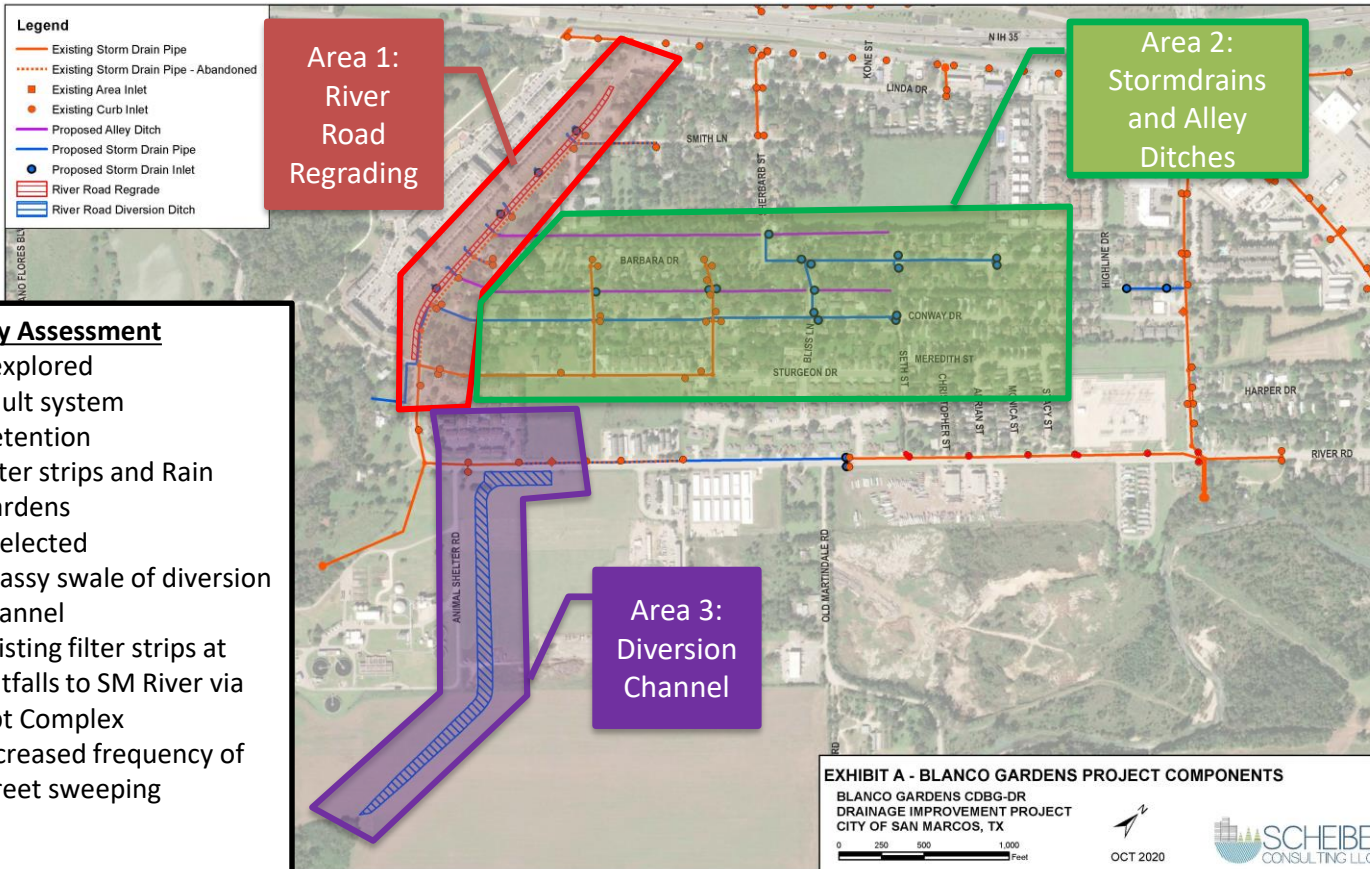


# **CDBG-DR\* Drainage Project Progress**

- **August 2, 2016** – City Council Resolution 2016-104R approved the CDBG-DR Action Plan (\$5M for Blanco Gardens)
- **November 8, 2017** – Preliminary Engineering Contract approved by Council
- **June 4, 2019** – Final Design Services approved by Council
- **June 30, 2019** – HUD Approval of Amendment #8 to Action Plan (\$8.1M)
- **September 15, 2020** – 90% Design documents complete

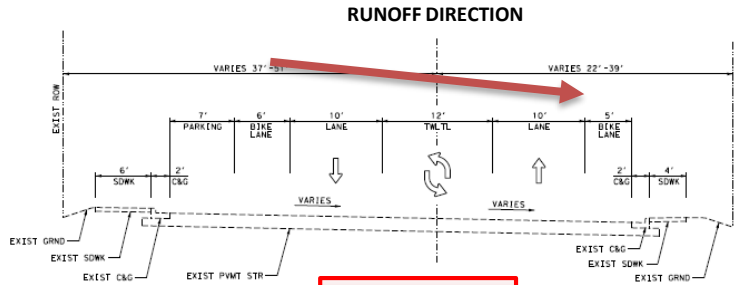
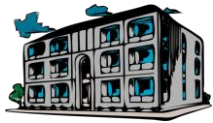
\* Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery

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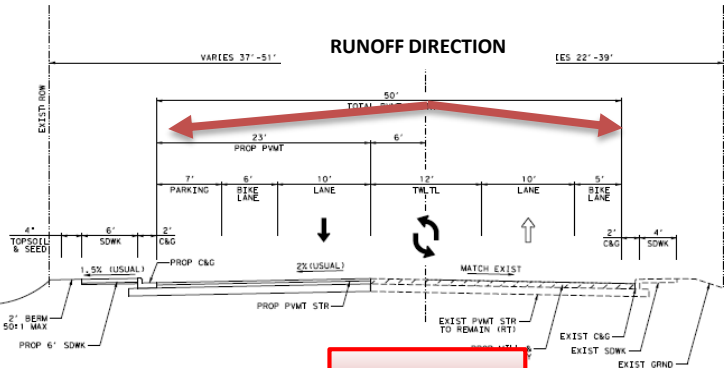
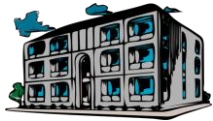




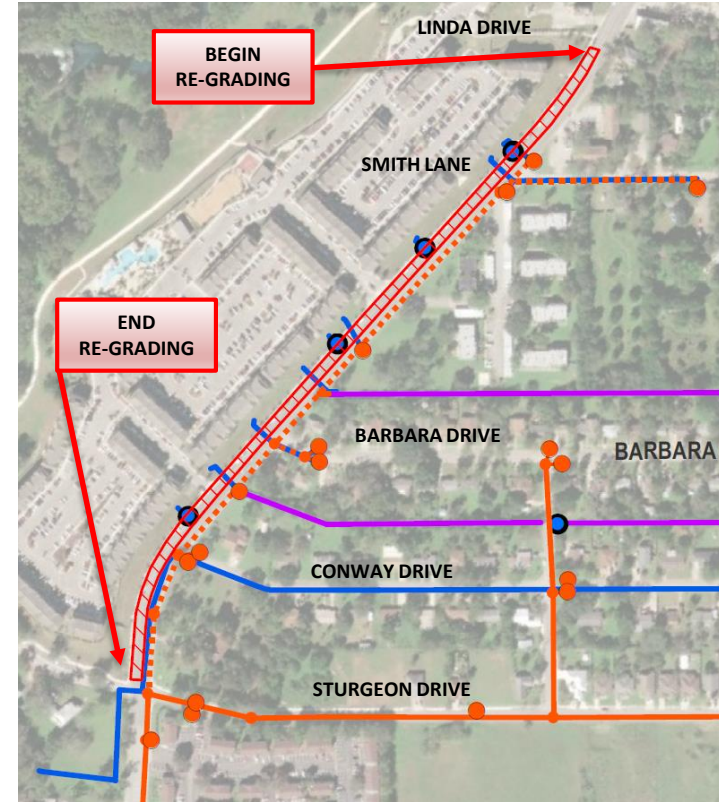
# Area 1: River Road Regrading



**EXISTING**



**PROPOSED**



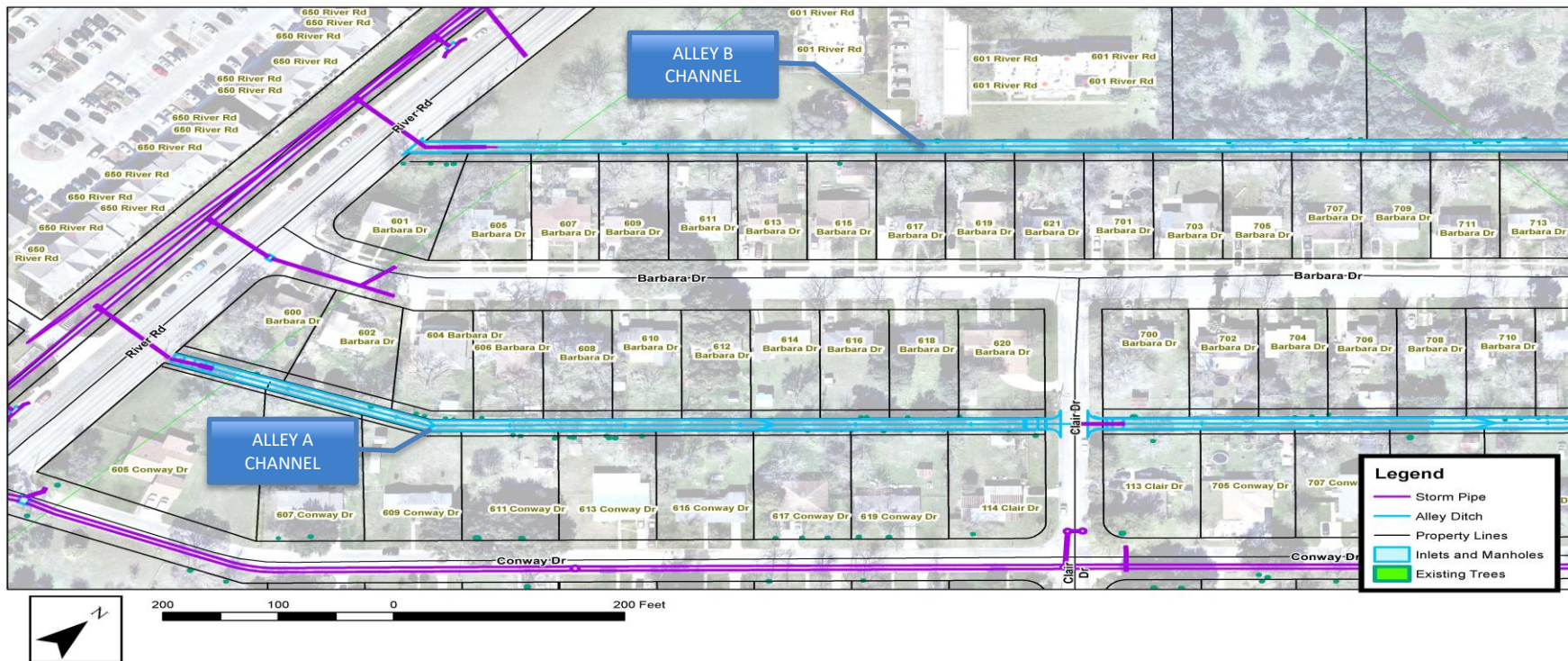
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# Area 2: Neighborhood Storm Drains and Alley Ditches

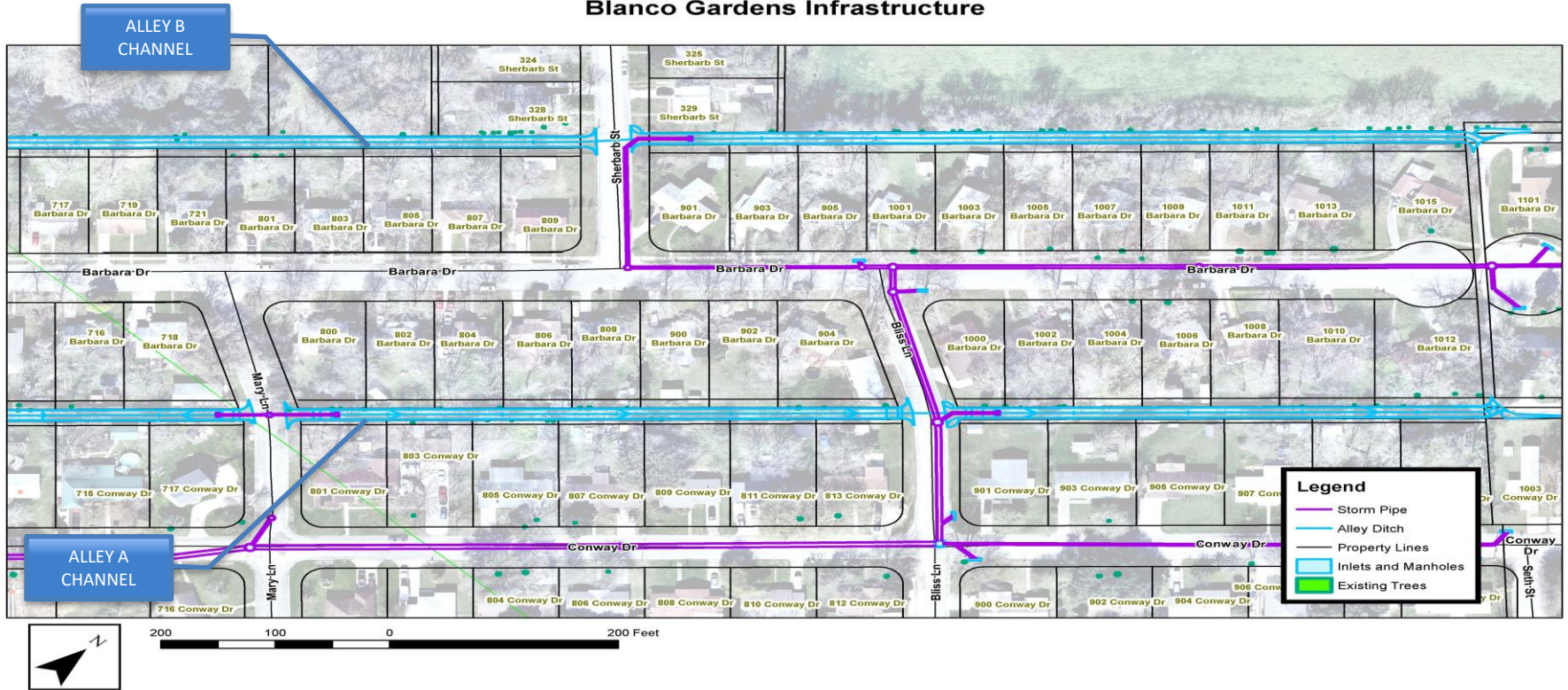
## Blanco Gardens Infrastructure





# Area 2: Neighborhood Storm Drains and Alley Ditches

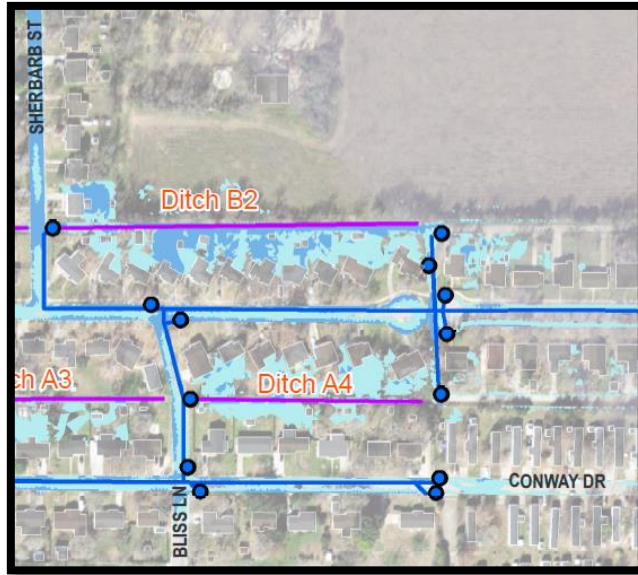
## Blanco Gardens Infrastructure



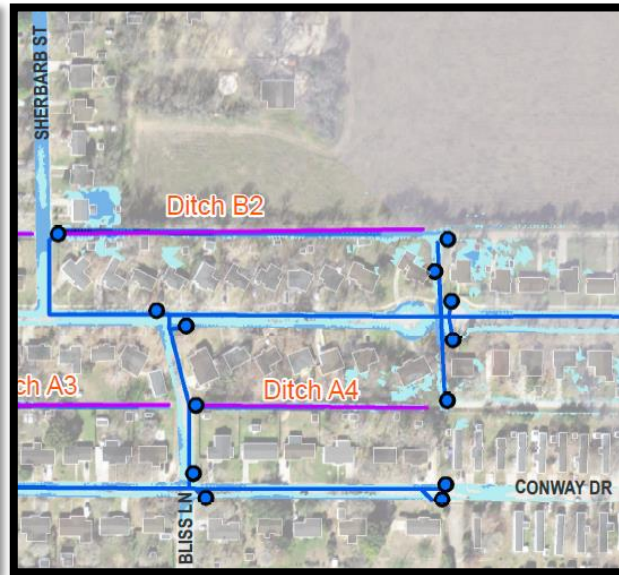




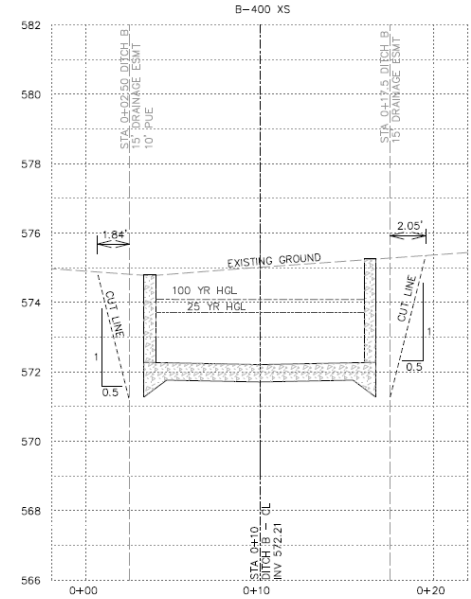
# Area 2: Neighborhood Storm Drains and Alley Ditches



FLOODING WITHOUT DITCH IMPROVEMENTS



FLOODING WITH DITCH IMPROVEMENTS



PROFILE SCALE  
VERTICAL: 10:1  
HORIZONTAL: 5:1

## REASONING FOR CONCRETE CHANNELS:

1. BETTER CONVEYANCE – SMALLER CHANNEL WITHIN EXISTING ALLEY/MIN IMPACT TO PRIVATE PROPERTY
2. STRUCTURAL SUPPORT FOR ACCESS & EASIER MAINTENANCE
3. CAPACITY TO MEET CURRENT CITY STANDARD FOR STORMWATER MANAGEMENT



## **Area 2: Alley Drainage Considerations**

- **Relocation Coordination – Opportunity to replace dated infrastructure**
  - Gas
  - Electric
  - Franchise Utilities
- **Obstructions in Public Utility/Drainage Easement:**
  - Mitigation for impacted trees in coordination with City Arborist
  - 8 shed obstructions (out of 175 lots) moved at City expense
  - Temporary fencing by City during construction
  - Fencing replacement by City at completion of construction

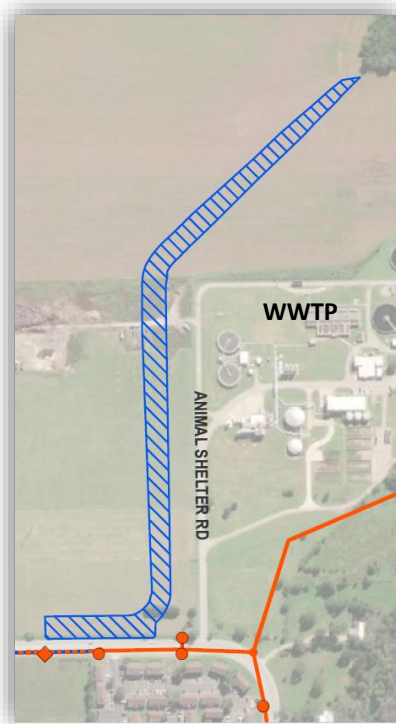


# Area 3: Diversion Channel

## BLANCO GARDENS DIVERISON CHANNEL COMPLETE

### Diversion Channel Benefits

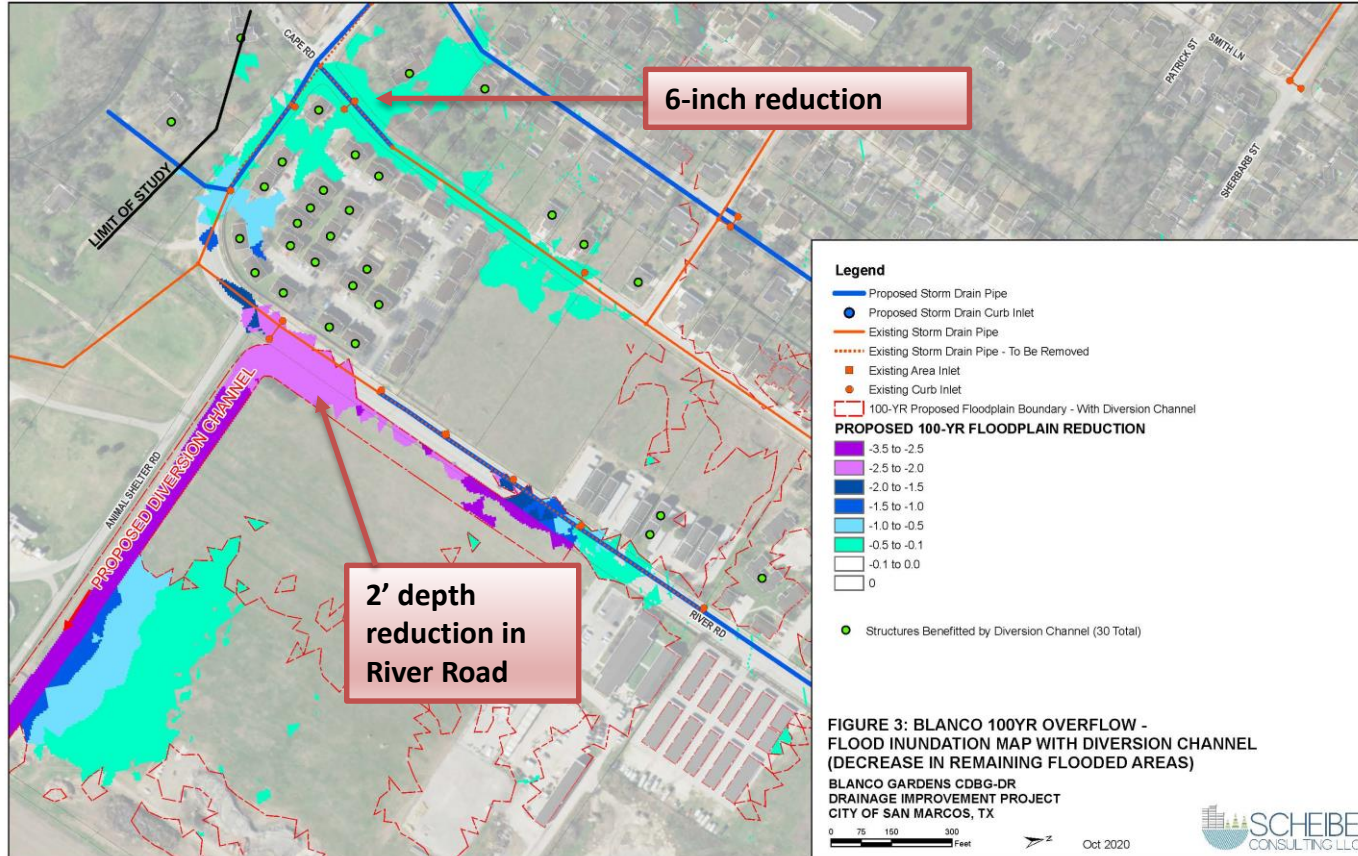
- Protection before Riverine project
- Reduces a portion of overflow into the neighborhood during flooding of Blanco River
- Approximately **30** existing structures to benefit directly
- Provides reduction to the 100-yr floodplain
- Funded from Woods settlement
- Grass channel provides WQ treatment.







# Area 3: Diversion Channel







# Community Outreach

- **CDBG-DR Action Plan** – Public meetings/notices
- **Community Meetings** – December 4, 2019
- **Digital Media** – CIP/Flood Recovery websites, Blanco Gardens Facebook
- **Newspaper Notices** – Multiple postings/opportunities for public input via environmental assessment process
- **Direct Contact** – 9/2 letter (concerned residents), 9/29 letter (reassured residents), phone and email responses to both, phone bank direct calls, door-to-door



# Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: Do we have to pay for anything?**

**A: No, project funds will cover fence removal and replacement, relocation of sheds or hinderances within construction areas.**

**Q: Is the City acquiring any of my property near the alleyway?**

**A: No, the project will only utilize the existing drainage easement in the alleyway as it was originally intended, and the existing public utility easement as defined by the subdivisions.**

**Q: Why concrete? Why can we not regrade and provide vegetative channel?**

**A: We did explore and prefer this option. However, it is not feasible for the conditions. Being so shallow, erosion and weathering in minor events and soil settling will cause an unfair distribution of flooding in future larger, catastrophic events for individual residents. Concrete contains the 25 and 100 year events within the channel and allows for consistent and more regular maintenance along with a feasible constructability at such a shallow slope.**

**Q: What about my pets?**

**A: Temporary fencing will be put in place during construction activities until full replacement is accomplished.**

**Q: What can I do to help?**

**A: Clear out any personal items, debris, waste, etc. that you do not wish to be disturbed, relocate a safe distance from fence/property line.**



# Next Steps – Drainage Project

- **Oct/Nov 2020:**
  - Alley/easement staking and
  - Electric construction begins
- **Nov 2020:**
  - Environmental Clearance
  - HUD Release of construction funds
- **Jan – Mar 2021:** Bidding and award of construction contract
- **April 2021:** Start Construction
- **Sept 2022:** Construction complete!

DISASTER RECOVERY FUNDS EXTENDED COVID DEADLINE  
DECEMBER 2023



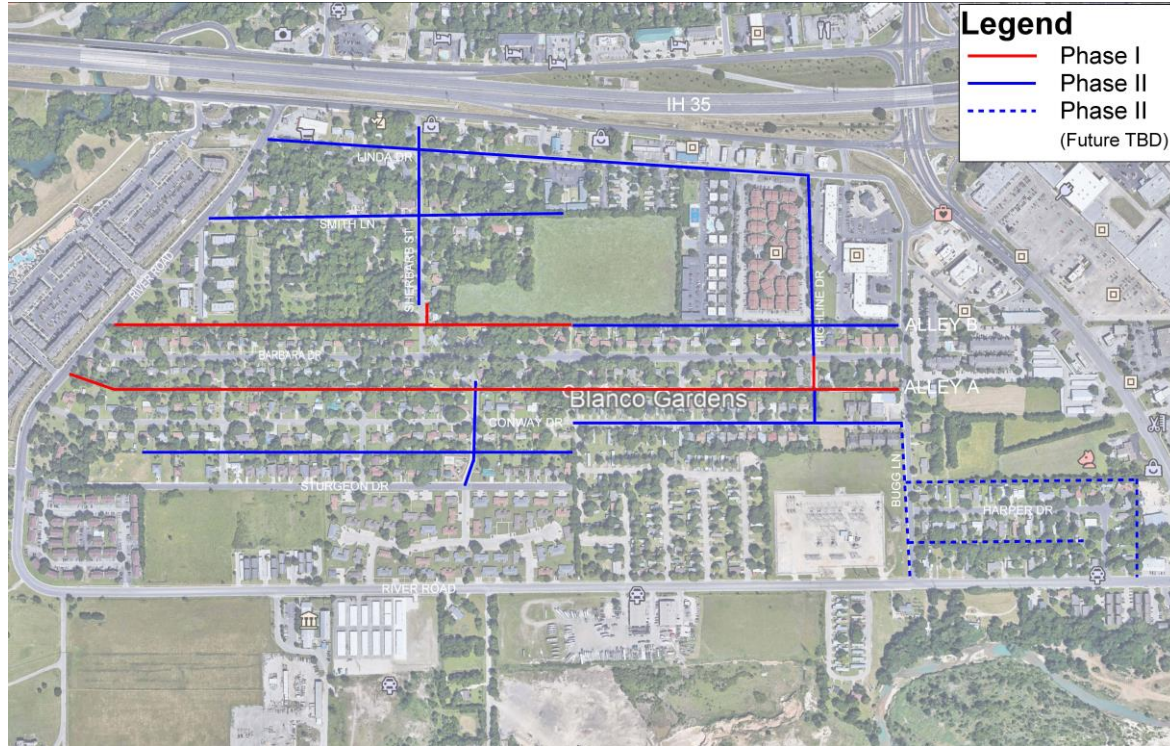
# Blanco Gardens Electric Reliability

- **Lowest reliability in SMEU service area.**
  - 9 times more likely to have an outage than average SMEU customers
  - For every minute the average SMEU customer is without power, a Blanco Gardens customer should expect to be out 32 minutes
- **Common causes**
  - Vegetation and Animals
  - Equipment failure
  - “Unknown” where there is no evidence or exact cause
- **Equipment replacement in last 3 years**
  - 4 poles (rotted)
  - 5 transformers (failed in service due to age)





# Blanco Gardens Electric Scope





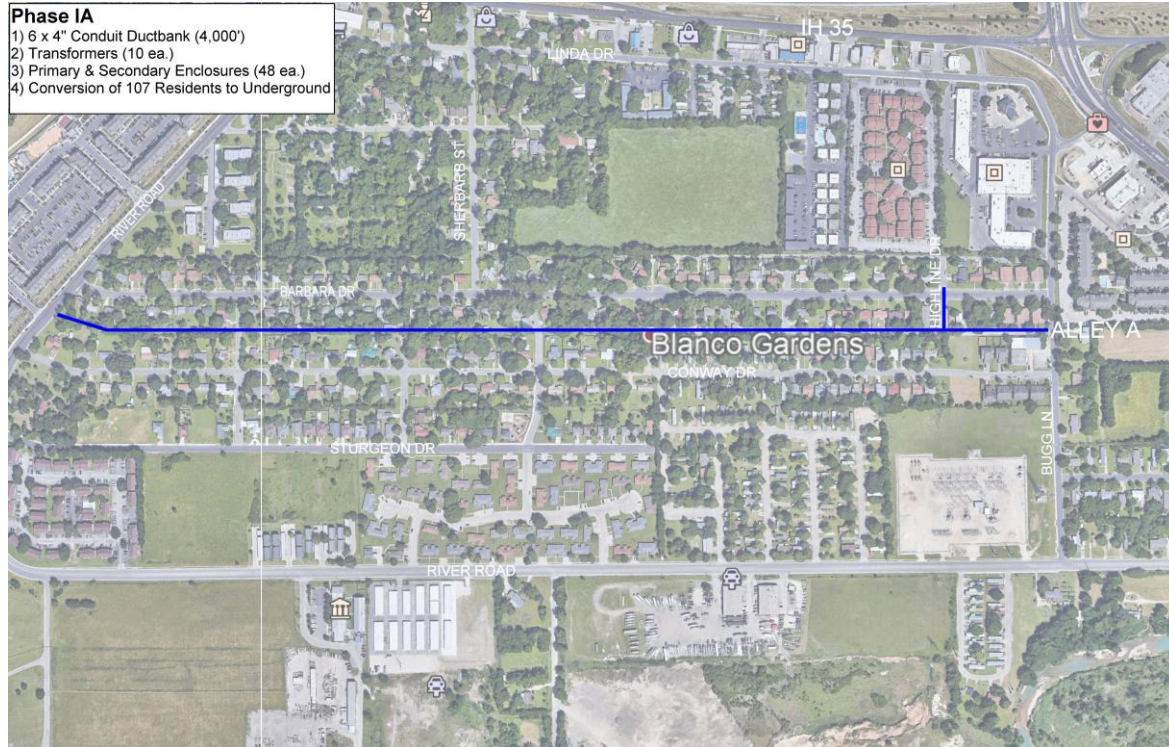
# Blanco Gardens Electric - Phase I, Alley B







# Blanco Gardens Electric - Phase I, Alley A





# Blanco Gardens Electric - Phase II

- Phase IIA**
- 1) 6 x 4" Conduit Ductbank (3,000')
  - 2) Transformers (15 ea.)
  - 3) Primary & Secondary Enclosures (24 ea.)
  - 4) Conversion of 75 Residents to Underground

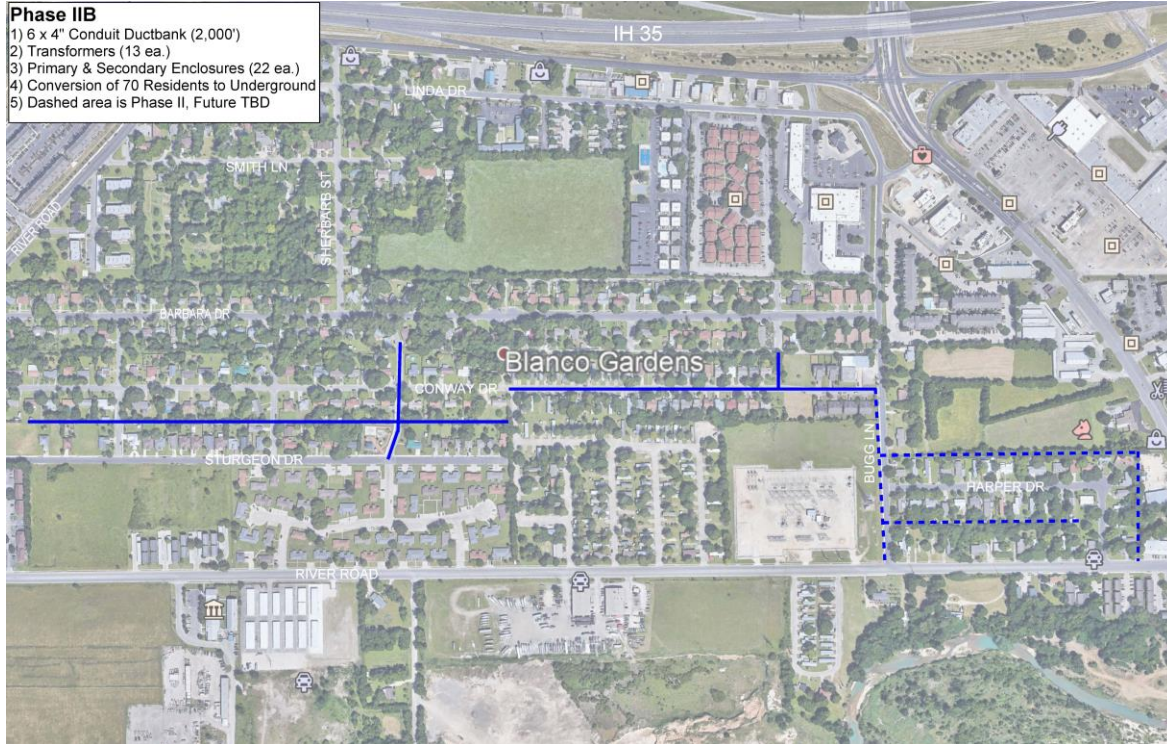






# Blanco Gardens Neighborhood Phase II B

- Phase IIB**
- 1) 6 x 4" Conduit Ductbank (2,000')
  - 2) Transformers (13 ea.)
  - 3) Primary & Secondary Enclosures (22 ea.)
  - 4) Conversion of 70 Residents to Underground
  - 5) Dashed area is Phase II, Future TBD





# **Selection of Underground Option**

- **Aging electric infrastructure requires wholesale upgrade**
- **In Kind Replacement or Underground Conversion – A Life Cycle Assessment**
  - ~\$6.8M In Kind Replacement
  - ~\$7.2M Underground Conversion
- **Underground is both more reliable and more resilient**
- **Underground installation is now the standard for new developments throughout the City**



# Temporary Right of Entry (TROE) Agreements

	Residences	TROEs Rec'd	Outstanding	Pct Complete
Alley B	49	49	0	100%
Alley A	107	67	40	63%
Phase II	145	0	145	n/a

- ❖ Construction begins on Alley B
- ❖ TROEs required to provide new service outside of the Public Utility Easement (PUE) from alley to house meter



# Customer Comments / Feedback

- **Necessity of electric work?**
  - Improved reliability
  - Replacement of aging infrastructure
- **Charges to homeowners?**
  - No new service charges
  - City will relocate buildings and / or fences as needed with project funds
  - Damage to grass will be addressed by project
- **Overwhelming Majority of Interactions were positive !**





# **Project Gains**

- **Higher reliability**
- **Better resiliency**
- **Lower maintenance costs**
- **Improved Aesthetics**
- **Improved safety (for both public and SMEU)**

**= GREATLY IMPROVED CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE**



# **Next Steps – Electric Conversion**

- **Surveyors are working in Alley B now**
- **Electrical Constructors are mobilizing now and will start trenching soon**
- **TROE acquisition in Alley A continues**
- **Phase I completion in April 2021**
- **Phase II completion end of year 2023**



# Questions?

BG Project information: <http://sanmarcostx.gov/2969/Blanco-Gardens-Drainage-Improvements>

Contact us at 512.393.8130 or [enginfo@sanmarcostx.gov](mailto:enginfo@sanmarcostx.gov)