# Summary of Public Outreach and Comments received for Reedsport Flood Resiliency Project, Draft Environmental Assessment, November 2022.

Planning Timeline

* September 15, 2022, FEMA shared a draft Outreach & Meeting plan with the applicant (OEM) and sub-applicant (City of Reedsport)
* October 12, 2022, FEMA shared with OEM and City the plan again and asked for comments
* October 14, 2022, Received comments from the City (AP) with specific roles and dates.

Public Outreach for the public comment period and November 15, 2022 public meeting

* Posted the Public Notice on the FEMA website (NEPA repository) and the City’s Website
* Published the public notice in the Coos Bay World (print) and World Online on 11/1/2022
* Facebook
  + City posted 4 instances of the flyer on its Facebook Page on 10/28, 11/14, and two on 11/15 (last one with the Zoom link) with a total of 1 comment, 19 shares, and 5 likes.
  + Posted on the private “Whats happening Reedsport” page
  + OEM posted the notice on November 18 on its page
  + City posted the notice on the Friends of Reedsport’s Champion Dog Park page on 11/15/22 and 10/28/22
  + City posted the notice on the Reedsport Main Street Program page on 10/28/22 with 1 share and 1 like
* FEMA sent the public notice to Federal Agencies (NMFS, USACE, FWS, ) and Tribes (CTCLUSI, CTSI, Coquille, CowCreek, and Grand Ronde) and State (DLCD, DEQ, and OEM) via email
* The City sent the public notice to State and Local agencies (DLCD, ODOT, ODFW, OHA, DEQ, DSL, SHPO, Reedsport Planning, Umpqua SWCD, Douglas County Planning) via email.
* FEMA tweeted the notice on November 18 with 3 retweets and 3 likes
* The City posted the flyer at 31 locations around the city, including a laminated one at the Dog Park and Lion’s Park
* Direct mailing to 376 residents and businesses adjacent to the levees or staging areas or soil acquisition area or individuals who have requested to be placed on the project mailing list (if any). 11/1/2022
* Direct mailing to 128 mobile park residents.
* Targeted outreach to the Reedsport High School Environmental Class / Environmental Club. Emailed the flyer to the Superintendent, Assistant, and the School Counselor for distribution and posted on the High School’s reader board.
* Extra comment cards were handed out to those who attended the 11/15/2022 public meeting for them to share with friends and neighbors.

Public Input

* 42 people attended the public meeting at the Reedsport Community Center on November 15, 2022 between 4:30pm and 6:30 pm.
  + 4 elected officials (mayor and councilors)
  + 5 city employees (City Manager, attorney, recorder, finance director and public works director)
  + 25 members of the public in person
  + 8 members of the public on Zoom
* Mayor Linda McCollum, Councilors Jeffrey Vanier, DeeDee Murphy, and Joe Liedtky. (4)
* City Manager Deanna Schafer, City Attorney Stephen H. Miller, Dep. City Recorder Courteney Davis, Finance Director Michelle Fraley, Public Works Director Kimberly Clardy (5)
* Matt Peck, Charles Hurlocker, Hailey Sheldon, Sue Vanier, Ike Launstein, Ed O’Carroll, Bob Gray, Barbara Gray, Kathleen Miller, Don M. Laskey, Bill Knerr, Fran Baumgartner, Loretta Glancey, Bob Morin, Dena Tolchinsky, Katt MacGregor, Helen Armstrong, Ed Armstrong, John Kollerup, Gary Stine, Gary Goorhuis, Jon Zwemke, Mercedes Salles, Brielle Cummings, Allen Teitzel, (25)
* Jenee Anderson, Russ Lewis, Apryl Brenner, Kathi Wall-Meyer, Robert Staehle, Robb Crocker, R. Kister, Darrin Neavoll, (8 Zoom)

3 representatives of Anderson Perry (City’s consultant), 1 from Oregon OEM, and 5 from FEMA attended.

* No emails received directly to the FEMA Comment email box
* No-one on Zoom asked to speak or submitted questions or comments in the Zoom chat.
* No verbal comments were made to the City Recorder before or after the presentation and open Q&A
* 3 Comment Cards/ emails submitted
  + One comment card dropped in the box on the 11/15 meeting
  + One comment card given to the City after the meeting (from someone who did not attend the meeting)
  + One email comment was sent to the City.
  + 2 comment cards were mailed to FEMA Region 10
* 10 members of the public spoke @ the meeting, with 1-4 comments or questions for a total of 19 comments or questions.
* Topics from meeting or comment cards and emails:
  + Non FEMA: Accessibility to top of levee, future maintenance, request for a storm drain, questions about access and right of way, schedule and phasing, design and construction, funding, and flood insurance
  + FEMA EA: Temporary recreation impacts (dog park), Noise impacts (pile driving), water quality and wetland permitting.

Public Comment Counts

Public meeting: 10 spoke, raising 1-4 comments each. 19 comments

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Speaker | Instances | Questions/Comment | Type |
| Ed O’Carroll | 2 | ADA Accessible | Future |
|  |  | Schedule | Schedule |
| Fran Baumgartner | 4 | ADA Accessible  Acquiring land | Levee Path  Acquiition |
|  |  | Temp Dog | Dog |
|  |  | More FEMA $$ | Funding |
| Woman | 1 | Water Qual Cert | Impacts |
| Dena Tolchinksy | 4 | Material under  Levee wall sheet | Design |
|  |  | Impact to neighbors – sheet pile | Impacts |
|  |  | Insurance required | Insurance |
| Ed Armstrong | 3 | Impacts to neighbors | Impacts |
|  |  | Educate on ROW | Education |
|  |  | ACOE Surprises | permitting |
| Bob Morin | 1 | Maintenance | Future |
| Morin | 1 | Funding | Fnding |
| Kollerup | 1 | Schedule | Phasing |
| Miller | 1 | Insurance | Insurance |
| Cummins | 1 | Funding | Funding |
|  |  |  |  |

Comment Cards submitted or mailed

* Katie Lockard
* Ed Armstrong
* Dena Tolchinksy
* Bob and Barbara Gray

4 submissions, 10 comments

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Submission | Comment | Topic |
| 1 | Storm Drain |  |
| 2 | Dog Park | Dog |
|  | Connect dike path @ Scholfield Bridge | Path |
| 3 | Communication w neighbos | Communication |
|  | Noise pile driving mitigation | Noise |
|  | Anxiety and fear | Health |
| 4 | Business and future outside levee | Alignment |
|  |  | Noise |
|  |  | Scheduling |
|  | Fish as food | Water Quality |

Comments

* P&N
  + Highly supportive of the purpose and need for the project
  + Greatly needed. Reedsport will not flourish if it’s constantly vulnerable to flooding.
* Concerns about the businesses between the river and levee including Residential and tourist housing might be planned for this area
  + - FEMA: As it is now, City did not propose changes to the alignment.
* Noise and vibration abatement for ppl living near the construction area, exploring noise mitigation and different equipment.
* Design
  + Citizen Dena Tolchinsky asked if there was gravel or other heavier materials underneath the levee and if the project would include the installation of large boulders or a concrete wall on the water’s edge.
    - Wells responded that after boring for samples the most prominent material present is sand, silt and other organic matter resulting in the under-seepage issue that has to be mitigated and compensated for. Wells furthered explained that the issues are not on the water’s edge but the land side of the levee and little work will be done in the water excluding a few areas where there is not enough physical room to construct the levee
  + Dena Tolchinsky asked if the sheet metal (levee) wall at 13th and Juniper would be coming out.
    - Wells explained that the wall would need to be removed and replaced whether it be metal or concrete, that the material would be decided at a later date.
* Several homeowners are elderly and the project could create anxiety and fear issues
* Property Owners impact
  + City would be wise to meet with individual homeowners next to levee and explain scope of project and effects. Do not rely on word of mouth communication. Take the time prior to project to do the communication. It will reap benefits
  + Armstrong recommended the team consider speaking with each individual land/homeowner as most likely do not know where the right-of-way is.
    - Schafer added that outreach to those owners will need to happen again, since the grant process originally started in 2017, the outreach occurred in 2014/2015 and owners have more than likely changed since then.
  + Citizen Ed Armstrong asked how property owners directly adjacent to the levee be effected during construction.
    - City Manager Schafer explained that the majority of the land that the levee sits on is owned by the City with the exception of two areas.
  + Armstrong clarified that in order to compensate, that the levee wall would have to go up and out –
    - Wells confirmed. Wells added that it is the intentions of the project to remain within the existing right-of-way previously established.
  + Dena Tolchinsky added that the metal sheet wall at 13th and Juniper is the physical barrier or fence in several peoples backyard and asked how the design and construction is going to impact those homeowners.
    - Wells explained that the current right-of-way at that location is very narrow and that they would be working to keep the same alignment in that location.
  + Tolchinsky added that when the metal wall is removed those homeowners will have no back fence.
    - Schafer responded that they would be making every effort to mitigate that issue and added that is one of the reasons for tonight’s meeting. Schafer added that this particular area has been the height of discussion on how to mitigate that issue and that the team will continue those discussions.
* Acquisiton and Easements
  + Citizen Fran Baumgartner asked Schafer if the City would be acquiring the land from Coho RV Park and the U-Pull it lot.
    - Schafer clarified that those were the only two sections of the levee that the City did not own, but there were no intentions of purchasing the land in the near future.
    - Schafer further explained that there is a section of the levee behind Holly Knolls that the City is in the process of purchasing with grant funds received from the Oregon Parks & Recreation Department.
  + Citizen Bob Morin asked if the private land owners were responsible for maintaining their sections of the levee.
    - Schafer responded that the City was not required to own the land itself but was required to maintain the levee. The City maintains an easement of the levee and 15 feet on either side for that purpose.
* Long term scheduling
  + Citizen John Kollerup asked if the project(s) would commence based on the biggest need for repair or if it would all begin at the same time.
    - Schafer responded that the whole project will be designed at the same time and then submitted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for approval. However it is the intentions to work on the most critical portions of the levee first.
  + Wells responded that there are still several aspects of the project that need to be figured out and at this time they have not devised a preliminary construction schedule.
  + O’Carroll asked how long the construction was intended to take, in particular the pile driving.
    - Wells responded that different sections will take different lengths of time but at this time they don’t have any definitive timelines.
  + Morin asked when the construction was intended to begin.
    - Schafer responded that the project likely will not go out for bid until late 2023 with anticipated completion in 2025.
* Water Quality
  + Current water quality and impact on fish that might become food for residents
  + Will WQ cert be reviewed
    - Kerschke responded that the Department of Environmental Quality has already issued the water quality certification for this project
    - CWA permit not issued
    - Kerschke further explained that there are a few existing issues with the water due to stream runoff and urban runoff, which will be relatively unchanged post project completion. Kerschke continued that there would be some short-term sediment release during the project, but that will be mitigated.
    - City Manager Deanna Schafer added that separate from the Flood Reduction Resiliency Project, the City of Reedsport has been working with DEQ to make improvements to the storm water system which includes several other projects that will mitigate urban runoff. The overall project (TMDL) is statewide and the plans are available on the City website. Public Works Director Kimberly Clardy stated that the City of Reedsport is in compliance with applicable standards and there is no danger to the public.
* Dog Park
  + Please preserve and areas nearby for public and dog access.
  + Would be improved with a fence blocking it from traffic but appeal is vast space to run and not smaller fenced areas
  + Repave the dog park walking path esp NE and SE side
  + Baumgartner asked if the City has considered another area for dogs to be during the construction.
    - Schafer responded that this very question came up about six months ago and that an alternative location had been decided on, but that Schafer could not remember where that location was.
* Dike path
  + Please continue to allow walking on top
  + Baumgartner further clarified that citizens were able to walk on the levee surrounding Coho RV Park, which Schafer confirmed.
  + Connect the dike path @ scholfield bridge where peds must cross the highway with no crosswalk or go under the bridge
  + ADA Acccessibility upon completion
    - City:the levee access points will remain relatively unchanged, meaning if the access is currently accessible it will be the same when the project is complete.
    - City Manager Deanna Schafer clarified that the questions were in regard to the proposed “Levee Loop Trail” and stated that the City intends to be able to fully maintain the proposed trail and that during the design portion of this project those details and concerns will be taken into consideration.
* Permitting
  + Armstrong asked if there could be any surprises from the Corps of Engineers as the project commenced.
    - Wells responded that the Corps is the agency standards for all levees and those standards do change and evolve which could lead to unforeseen issues as we go through the project.
    - Schafer added that the levee is inspected by the Corps on a regular basis and that the City has not been notified of any serious deficiencies in the levee system.
  + Wells added that the levee is currently in a PAL, meaning that if the system were substantially damaged during a flood event the Corps would rebuild the levee free of charge to the levee existing standards.
* Put storm drain at 13th and Juniper. Only intersection with no drainage
* Funding
  + Morin asked where the other portion of funding would be coming from and whether the City would be seeking an increase in property taxes or floating bonds to fund the project.
    - Schafer responded that Representative Boomer Wright has been instrumental in securing state funding for the City. Although the cost of the project has substantially increased, because the project is anticipated to take several years to complete, the City has options available to fund the needed $3 Million to complete the project.
    - Schafer clarified that the City would not be seeking increased property taxes or floating bonds to fund the project.
  + Baumgartner asked if FEMA would be able to provide additional funding for the project due to the increase in cost.
    - Brenna responded that FEMA was not able to provide additional funding because the program is nationally competitive and as each project is selected that particular amount of money is earmarked for that project out of that funding cycle and FEMA does not keep any contingency funds.
    - Schafer added that since 2019 the State of Oregon has created several new programs to help cities maintain their levee’s this include planning funds and maintenance grants that could be available to the City.
  + Brielle Cummings asked if there was any funding available through the infrastructure finance bill in which
    - Schafer responded that is where the $1.5 Million which Representative Wright was able to secure for the City. Schafer added that the funding could not be used as matching funds for a federal grant, however the City is earmarking specific projects for that funding that can be completed in conjunction with this project.
* Insurance
  + Attorney Steve Miller asked if residents would still be able to purchase flood insurance if the project is not able to commence.
    - Schafer responded that the National Flood Insurance Program is one of the main reasons they are working toward this project as the City was notified if they failed to correct the deficiencies in the levee the residents/business owners would not be eligible to participate in the insurance program.
    - Schafer added that the City is currently still mapped into the flood insurance program, but that within the next 5 years that program could seize if the levee is not improved.
  + Tolchinsky asked if residents would be required to purchase flood insurance at the conclusion of the project.
    - Schafer responded that no one is required to purchase flood insurance.

FEMA has forwarded these comments to the City of Reedsport.