

Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact, Notice of Intent to Request Release of Funds, and Final Notice and Public Explanation of a Proposed Activity in a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) Floodplain and Wetlands

October 1, 2025

This notice shall satisfy three separate but related procedural requirements for activities to be undertaken by the City of Taft. The proposed activities provide assistance to residents still affected by the impacts of the disasters that occurred in 2015, 2016, or 2017 in Taft, Texas.

Request for Release of Funds

On or about October 17, 2025, the City of Taft will submit a request to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the release of Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) funds under Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, Public Law 93-383, as amended 42 U.S.C. 5301, to undertake a project known as the City of Taft Waterline and Sewer Line Improvements Project for the purpose of replacing 15,844 linear feet of waterlines and 3,450 linear feet of sewer lines within the city limits of Taft that were damaged during the disasters that occurred in 2015, 2016, or 2017. Waterline improvements will occur within the central northern portion of the city of Taft along Rose Street, Tutt Avenue, Victoria Avenue, Industrial Street, Park Street, Railroad Avenue, Abazola Street, and Bonita Street. The existing waterlines will be decommissioned and remain in place, and new Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) pipelines will be installed parallel to the existing waterlines via open-cut method. Sewer line improvements will occur along Farm to Market Road (FM) 631/Davis Road within a residential area in the southwestern portion of the city of Taft. Improvements include one-to-one replacement of existing sewer lines, replacement and/or rehabilitation of manholes, reconnecting existing sewer service, and completion of associated appurtenances. Existing city sewer lines will be replaced with High-Density Polyethylene (HDPE) sewer lines via pipe bursting. The total estimated funding for the Project is \$3,261,400.00, which will be funded entirely through the HUD Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) program under the General Land Office (GLO) Contract Number 24-065-121-E963. The project will benefit approximately 2,945 people, of which 63.97 percent (1,884 people) are low to moderate income.

Final Notice and Public Review of a Proposed Activity in Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) Floodplain and Wetlands

This is to give notice that the City of Taft has conducted an evaluation as required by Executive Order 11988 and 11990, in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C, Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection. The activity is funded under HUD's Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG- MIT) program, GLO Contract 24-065-121-E963.

The proposed project is in the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) floodplain and wetlands. The extent of the FFRMS floodplain was determined using the 0.2-Percent-Annual-Chance (500-year) Flood Approach (0.2PFA). The proposed City of Taft Waterline and Sewer Line Improvements project will replace approximately 15,844 linear feet of waterlines and 3,450 linear feet of sewer lines within the city limits of Taft, Texas that were damaged during the disasters that occurred in 2015, 2016, or 2017. The improvements proposed under the project are intended to reduce risk of future disaster-related loss of life, suffering and hardship, injury, and property damage.

Waterline improvements will occur within the central northern portion of the city of Taft along Rose Street, Tutt Avenue, Victoria Avenue, Industrial Street, Park Street, Railroad Avenue, Abazola Street, and Bonita Street. The existing waterlines will be decommissioned and remain in place, and new 10-inch PVC pipelines

will be installed parallel to the existing waterlines via open-cut method. Trench excavation will not exceed five feet in width or 20 feet in depth. Vegetation within the trench area will be removed during installation and replaced upon completion. A National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) riverine wetland is mapped within the project area, north of the water tower at 530 Retama Avenue. This section of the waterline will be installed via horizontal boring to cross underneath the wetland. Entry and exit bore pits will be excavated 10 feet by 15 feet and 12 feet deep on the top of the banks outside of the wetland area. Approximately 426 feet of the proposed waterline crosses the Taft High School softball field in the northern portion of the city. This section of the waterline will be replaced by the Taft Independent School District.

Sewer line improvements will occur along FM 631/Davis Road within a residential area in the southwestern portion of the city of Taft. Improvements include one-to-one replacement of existing sewer lines, replacement and/or rehabilitation of manholes, reconnecting existing sewer service, and completion of associated appurtenances. Existing city sewer lines will be replaced with 10-inch HDPE sewer lines via pipe bursting. Access pits will be excavated 10 feet by 15 feet and 15 feet deep at the launch and exit of each section of the pipe replacement. Pipe burst segments typically span 1,000 linear feet between access pits. The exact locations and number of access pits will be determined during construction based on the type of pipe bursting equipment used, as some equipment can burst for longer sections resulting in fewer access pits. Sixteen manholes in the project area will be either rehabilitated or replaced. The number of manholes that need to be replaced will be determined during construction based on their existing condition. All manholes are 48 inches in diameter and 12 to 15 feet in depth from the ground surface. Ground disturbance will occur where the manholes will be removed and replaced. Vegetation removal will be required for sewer line improvements.

Four alternate waterline routes have been evaluated in the event that right-of-way (ROW) cannot be obtained for the Proposed Action. Alternate waterline route segments will substitute segments of the preferred route, as needed, to avoid land acquisition. Ultimately, all project activities and components will occur within existing city ROW, and land acquisition will not be required.

The total project area is approximately 2.59 acres. No sewer line improvements will occur within the FFRMS floodplain or wetland area. Approximately 0.31 acres of the waterline improvements will occur within the FFRMS floodplain and approximately 0.002 acres will cross a riverine wetland. The proposed waterline routes will be collocated with the existing waterlines and will not result in new impacts within the floodplain. Improvements within the wetland area are limited to the crossing north of the water tower at 530 Retama Avenue. This section of the waterline will be installed via horizontal boring underneath the wetland and avoid impacts to the wetland.

Any construction activity (i.e., demolition, site preparation, new construction, rehabilitation, replacement, or reconstruction) in the FFRMS floodplain has the potential to directly or indirectly disturb or alter water quality by impacting stormwater runoff. Erosion or runoff during construction has the potential to transport sediment and construction waste materials into adjacent surface waters or wetlands. Altering wetlands can result in a loss of stormwater retention/detention and loss of habitat for natural plant species and wildlife species. The project will minimize these impacts by requiring applicant contractors to use appropriate best management practices (including proper site management, implementation and maintenance of erosion and sedimentation control measures, and soil stabilization) during construction activities. Construction activities shall be performed in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local environmental permitting requirements.

The City of Taft has considered the following alternatives and mitigation measures to minimize adverse impacts and to restore and preserve natural and beneficial functions and intrinsic values of the existing floodplain/wetland: 1) Relocating outside the FFRMS floodplain and 2) No Action Alternative. Relocating waterlines will likely disrupt service and require additional land acquisition and new ground disturbance, which would have greater environmental impacts. The No Action Alternative would not allow for the

replacement of water and sewer lines, leaving the aging waterlines and sewer lines vulnerable to failure, which can result in costly repairs for the community and disrupted service for residents.

The City of Taft has reevaluated alternatives to building in the floodplain and wetlands and has determined that it has no practicable alternative to floodplain/wetland development. Environmental files documenting compliance with Executive Order 11988 and Executive Order 11990 are available for public inspection, review and copying upon request at the times and location delineated in the last paragraph of this notice for receipt of comments.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in floodplains and wetlands and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information and request for public comment about floodplains and wetlands can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks and impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in floodplains and wetlands, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

Finding of No Significant Impact

The City of Taft has determined that this project will have no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) is not required. Additional project information is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR) file at City of Taft, 230 Green Avenue, Taft, TX 78390 and may be examined or copied on weekdays 8 A.M to 4:30 P.M.

Public Comments

Any individual, group, or agency may submit written comments on the ERR to the City of Taft, attention to Mayor Leonard Vasquez at 230 Green Avenue, Taft, Texas 78390 or by email to lvasquez@tafttx.gov. All comments received by October 16, 2025, will be considered by the City of Taft prior to authorizing submission of a request for release of funds. Comments should specify which Notice they are addressing.

Environmental Certification

The GLO on behalf of the City of Taft certifies to HUD that Leonard Vasquez, in his capacity as Mayor, consents to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to the environmental review process and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. HUD's approval of the certification satisfies its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act and related laws and authorities and allows the City of Taft to use Program funds.

Objections to Release of Funds

GLO will accept objections to its release of funds and the City of Taft's certification for a period of fifteen (15) days following the anticipated submission date or its actual receipt of the request (whichever is later) only if they are on one of the following bases: (a) the certification was not executed by the Certifying Officer of the City of Taft; (b) the City of Taft has omitted a step or failed to make a decision or finding required by HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58; (c) the grant recipient or other participants in the development process have committed funds, incurred costs or undertaken activities not authorized by 24 CFR Part 58 before approval of a release of funds by HUD; or (d) another Federal agency, acting pursuant to 40 CFR Part 1504, has submitted a written finding that the project is unsatisfactory from the standpoint

of environmental quality. Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedures (24 CFR Part 58, Sec 58.76) and shall be addressed to Texas General Land Office Community Development and Revitalization, 1700 N. Congress Avenue Austin, Texas 78701 or email env.reviews@recovery.texas.gov. Potential objectors should contact GLO to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

Leonard Vasquez, City of Taft, Mayor