



**CENTRAL CITY PROJECT
IS FIRST CIVIL WORKS
PROJECT TO RECEIVE
U.S. ARMY CORPS
OF ENGINEERS GOOD
NEIGHBOR AWARD**



In 2011, the Trinity River Vision Central City Project Delivery Team was presented the "Good Neighbor Award" at the USACE Summer Leaders Conference for their exemplary application of the Corps' new strategy to promote sustainability and improve livability through successful community partnerships.

Brig. Gen. Thomas W. Kula, commander of the Corps' Southwestern Division said, "Central City is a great project that demonstrates partnership, strong team work and a commitment to improving the City of Fort Worth and providing important services to its citizens."

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13 November 2014

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Attn: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
CECW-CE (Lisa Kiefel)
441 G Street, NW.
Washington, DC 20314-1000

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

1. Pursuant to the provisions of references a and b in paragraph 2 below, I hereby request that the project for Central City, Fort Worth, Texas, initially authorized by reference 2c, be modified in accordance with the recommended changes contained in references 2e and f and that the Secretary be authorized to proceed directly to construction of the modified project without further study or analysis. I further request that the components of the Federal project, as modified, include all of the features identified in the Record of Decision referenced in subparagraph 2f below and construction of those features be cost shared in accordance with section 103 of Public Law 99-662 as modified (33 U.S.C. 2213).

2. References.

- a. Section 7001 of the Water Resources and Reform and Development Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-121).
- b. Federal Register notice, Vol. 79, No. 150, Proposals From Non-Federal Interests for Proposed Feasibility Studies and Proposed Modifications to Authorized Water Resources Development Projects or Feasibility Studies for Inclusion in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Annual Report, August 5, 2014.
- c. Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2005, Division C, Title I, Section 116, Section 116, Central City, Fort Worth, Texas.
- d. Project Partnership Agreement between the Department of the Army and the Tarrant Regional Water District for construction of the Central City Project, Fort Worth, Texas, September 5, 2008 (encl. 1).
- e. Upper Trinity River, Central City, Fort Worth, Texas, Modified Project Report and Supplement No. 1 to the Final Environmental Impact Statement, April 2008 (encl. 2).
- f. Record of Decision, Upper Trinity River, Central City, Fort Worth, Texas - Modified Central City Project Report and Supplement No. 1 to the Final Environmental Impact Statement, May 21, 2008 (encl. 3).
- g. Report of the Chief of Engineers, Riverside Oxbow, Upper Trinity River, Fort Worth, Texas, May 29, 2003 (encl. 4).
- h. Finding of No Significant Impact, Riverside Oxbow, Upper Trinity River, Fort Worth, Texas, May 22, 2003 (encl. 5).

CENTRAL CITY PROJECT AWARDS

Sustainability Good Neighbor Award
2011 US Army Corps of Engineers

Excellence on the Waterfront Top Honor Project
2005 The Waterfront Center

Merit Award Landscape Analysis and Planning
2005 Boston Society of Landscape Architects

Citation of Honor
2005 Texas Society of Architects

Current Planning Award
2007 Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association

CLIDE Award
2011 North Central Texas Council of Governments Center of Developmental Excellence

Public Policy and Planning Award
2007 North Central Texas Council of Governments Center of Development Excellence

Celebrating Leadership in Development Excellence Award
2003 North Central Texas Council of Governments Center of Development Excellence

Current Projects Award
2006 Midwest Section of the Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association

Community Award
2009 Fort Worth Chapter of American Institute of Architects

M/WBE Excellence Award
2009 Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce

Chairman's Award
2007 Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

- i. Summary of Project Costs, Modified Central City Project, Fort Worth, Texas, November 13, 2014 (encl. 6).
- j. Estimated Economic Benefits of the Modified Central City Project ("Trinity River Vision"), Fort Worth, Texas, November 2014 (encl. 7).
- k. Drafting Service (encl. 8)
- l. Letter of support from the City of Fort Worth, Texas (encl. 9).
- m. Letter of support from Tarrant County, Texas (encl. 10).
- n. Letter of support from the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce (encl. 11).
- o. Letter of support from the Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce (encl. 12).
- p. Letter of support from the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (encl. 13).
- q. Letter of support from Streams and Valleys, Inc. (encl. 14).

3. Background.

The Central City Project, Fort Worth, Texas, was initially authorized by reference 2c above to restore needed flood control benefits to an existing Federal project, the Fort Worth Floodway, that have been lost over the past 40 to 50 years, to provide substantial high-value urban ecosystem restoration and recreation benefits, and to potentially enable transformation of the Trinity River through the City of Fort Worth. Moreover, the Project is a model for comprehensive, collaborative, multi-agency problem solving as one component of a more comprehensive effort involving not only the Corps of Engineers and the Tarrant Regional Water District (the non-Federal sponsor) but also the City of Fort Worth, Tarrant County, the Texas Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Streams and Valleys, which is a local natural resource conversation group, and private developers.

However, the original project was authorized based on preliminary information. Since that time, a new, more robust report has been completed by the Corps which contains a definitive recommendation for modification of the project. This new report, referenced in subparagraph 2e above, not only recommends substantial improvements to the original project but also incorporates into the Central City project many of the environmental restoration and recreation features and benefits of the proposed Riverside Oxbow project, which was recommended for authorization by the Chief of Engineers in his report of May 29, 2003 (reference 2g).

The Riverside Oxbow project was formulated separately from Central City simply because it was initiated separately and proceeded on a separate timeline, even though the two projects are contiguous, complementary and have the same non-Federal sponsor. In 2006, the City of Fort Worth asked the Corps to investigate the benefits of combining the two projects. In its resulting review, the Corps concluded there are significant benefits to such an action, including better opportunities for hydraulic mitigation, less disruption to fish and wildlife habitat and a corresponding reduction in the need for habitat mitigation, and a substantial cost savings if the two were implemented as one project. All-in-all, the Corps report was very positive

about advantages and found no significant disadvantages to a combination. This report was also reviewed and approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Texas State Environmental Resource Agency, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Construction on the originally authorized Central City project was initiated in 2009. Financially, \$223,161,058 has been expended as of September 30, 2014 (\$28,752,000 Federal and \$194,409,058 non-Federal). Work is continuing with 32 Federal contracts issued to date, six of which are currently underway for design and construction services with four more construction contracts scheduled for award within the next year. The local sponsor has spent \$92,619,880 to date on Lands and Damages, (of which \$37,650,000 applies to the originally authorized project, and the local sponsor has received \$12,142,179.96 in LERRDS credit to date from the USACE with the remaining LERRDS waiting on certification), and \$18,909,626 in "cash match" towards construction of the originally authorized project. In accordance with the original authorization, this project requires the construction of three major bridges over the flood control channel. With the partnership of Federal Highways, Texas DOT, the City of Fort Worth, North Texas Council of Governments and Tarrant Regional Water District, all property acquisition, relocation, demolition and environmental remediation has been completed and the local share for construction (\$24,997,613) has been remitted to Texas DOT. Texas DOT has awarded a contract for \$65.4 million for all three bridges and construction is underway. Total cost for the three bridges including LERRDS is estimated at \$110,062,583. The Federal Share is \$33,033,453 (30%), the State/Regional share is \$16,573,851 (15%) and the Local share is \$60,455,279 (55%).

The original Central City authorization requires the local sponsor to relocate all utilities necessary for construction of the project. Accordingly, the local partners have undertaken the relocation of both public and franchise utilities. As of this date, 16% of the public utilities (\$13,111,143) have been relocated and 29% of the franchise utilities (\$7,442,528) have been relocated.

4. Project Purposes. As indicated in references 2e and f, the Modified Central City Project will provide benefits in the categories of flood control (flood risk management), environmental restoration and recreation.

5. Rights-of-way. Nearly all of the rights-of-way required for the originally authorized Central City Project have been acquired and a substantial portion of those needed for the modified project are also available. As of this date, 79% of the total property required for this project has been acquired. Of the property required for the By-Pass Channel component of the project, 89% has been acquired. Work toward acquiring the remaining property is ongoing. Of the property already acquired, 87% of the relocations of existing property owners are complete and 52% of the property has undergone demolition of the surface structures (\$4,866,507). Environmental Remediation (HTRW) has begun with cleanup of 21 properties underway (\$5,508,796).

6. Local Sponsorship and Ability to Provide Local Share. As with the original Central City project, the Tarrant Regional Water District (TRWD) will serve as the non-Federal sponsor for the modified project. TRWD remains unequivocally committed to completing the modified project, and has received support from both the City of Fort Worth and Tarrant County, financially and politically. TRWD along with the City of Fort Worth and Tarrant County, additionally, put a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIF) in place that is dedicated for the sole purpose of contributing to this project. This TIF is expected to contribute \$320,000,000 to the project and has contributed \$99,279,538 thus far. The TIF is backstopped by Oil and Gas earnings from TRWD should the need arise.

As a further indication of the extent of TRWD's support for the project, it has created a separate subordinate entity called the Trinity River Vision Authority (TRVA). The TRVA is responsible for the implementation of the Trinity River Vision (TRV) – a master plan for the Trinity River in Fort Worth, of which the Central City Project forms an essential part. The master plan for the Trinity River is a concept literally decades in the making. Encouraged by community volunteers in the 1980's, developed by urban designers and specialty consultants in the 1990's, and adopted by Fort Worth's City Council in 2003, the Trinity River Vision Master Plan encompasses 88 miles of the Trinity River and its greenbelts and tributaries throughout the Fort Worth area. The "vision" has always been to advocate for this natural resource, keeping the river beautiful, accessible, enjoyable, and productive thus insuring it remains a valuable asset for the entire community. The Federal project, Central City, is an essential component of this plan.

7. Other Local Support. In addition to TRWD's sponsorship and support, local support for the project remains high as well. Letters from the City of Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce, Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and Streams and Valleys, Inc. are enclosed (enclosures 9 through 14) indicating their continued support for the project.

8. Project Benefits. The University of North Texas (UNT) Center for Economic Development and Research was retained to conduct a study of the modified project's monetary and non-monetary benefits. The results of this study (enclosure 7) are contained in an update of UNT's original report on this project entitled "Economic and Fiscal Impacts of the Corps of Engineers' Trinity River Vision Project in Tarrant County, Texas," prepared in February 2005.

This update, entitled "Estimated Economic Benefits of the Modified Central City Project (Trinity River Vision), Fort Worth, Texas," concludes that the Modified Central City Project yields a benefit to cost ratio of 1.99 to 1. Total regional and national economic impacts from the project's construction and the subsequent build-out of developable land are estimated to generate \$7.9 billion, of which \$3.4 billion of that are national impacts outside the Tarrant County region. The modified project is also estimated to employ more than 29,600 full-time persons when the project is fully built out.

Additional environmental benefits have been identified with the development of this project. Within the footprint of this project is an old industrial part of the downtown city area. Because of this project, 127 acres of contaminated soil will be cleaned up to residential standards. This is the largest single environmental cleanup ever undertaken within the City of Fort Worth.

The Ecosystem Restoration component of this project will provide for over 80,000 native trees to be planted in an area that will create a large urban park within the central core of the City. The Trinity River was channelized and straightened back in the 1960's. This project will re-connect a portion of the old river channel and one major stream that was cut off from water flow when the new channel was created. Upon completion, this project will provide a continuous flow of water to over 2 miles of river channel and streams that are dry today.

9. Revised Cost Estimate. An updated project cost estimate has been completed consistent with Corps policies and procedures (encl. 6) showing a revised total project cost of \$810,000,000, with an estimated Federal cost of \$520,207,000 and an estimated non-Federal cost of \$289,793,000.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'JMO', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

James M. Oliver
General Manager