

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

Date Received	Method	Name	Role/Title	Comment	Response	Associated changes to MOD
6/23/2022	Web Portal	Daniella Flanagan	Student	<p>An estimated 15,000 applications were submitted for Harvey Assistance where 1500 are rumored to have been paid out. Please locate those other applications and earmark and release funds for repairs based on updated application notes. Please contact Rev James L Caldwell for a list of 50 Harvey damaged homes that need immediate mold remediation due to prolonged Harvey damage. Support him in becoming a CHODO to allow his organization to create a branch or committee to focus on repair of these homes of #SuperSeniors those 70 + living in squalor due to Hurricane damage. Please do not release grant funding to organizations that do not have solid reputation and a daily presence/office in Fifth Ward such as Baker Ripley or Catholic Charities. Those funds do not effectively reach the community nor are they trusted. Please do not release funds to the developer Fifth Ward CRC. Funds do not get released into the community and the needle does not move forward on affordable housing, sidewalk installation, repair, environmental justice issues (air quality/creosote plume), literacy issues, broadband/WIFI access issues, programs to keep pace with the Houston Tech Hub all with tangential elements to storm recovery and resiliency. Please release fund for a Texas Congregational Disaster Resiliency campaign faith leaders like Pastor Larry Warren, Lady Taylor, and Reverend James L Caldwell could help launch to ensure that faith centers micro to macro in communities of color in Houston are linked into a disaster network and their congregants and neighbors (non-congregants) are canvassed and placed in an District wide alert system. Please release funds to shore up the largest 2 churches with proper infrastructure not in the way of a 500 year flood plain for example to install solar; satellite phones; walkie talkies, high rescue vehicle, MASH/Triage units, temporary housing, MREs, water and water filtration in case we have another Winter Storm Uri Boil Your Water set of issues ...</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/. The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for, and is not designated for individual homeowner housing recovery. The Board considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects for your area. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.</p>	None

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6/29/2022	Email	Debbie Sutherland, CPM	City Manager	<p>It frustrates me, especially as I am on the frontline having to deal with not only the emergencies that occur in our community, but the tsunami of paperwork that follows. Cities have an obligation to save their tax payers' money by securing alternate funding for damages and cleanup from various events. But at the same time, I have to wonder if it is worth it in the end.</p> <p>Time delays are costing cities more money as prices increase, deterioration awaiting funds to be procured, changes in personnel who then have to familiarize themselves with procedures, changes in procedures over time and current staff spending time otherwise spent on other projects filing, refiling, etc. My suggestion is to have a uniform method of distribution for any event. A prorated share of funds available based on damages. Simple and done! During COVID, I have seen cities receive monies that they are having to find ways to spend it while others are struggling. Also, a single portal for submissions, let the agency administering the funding use the dedicated portal. I have 3-4 portals-FEMA, TDEM, US Treasury, and the Governor's for Criminal Justice. All are different and being a small city, we cannot afford dedicated personnel to just handle these submissions. The state now provides assistance, which is great, but there is still a lot of work that falls on city staff.</p> <p>The method of distribution needs to be consistent and the administration of such programs need to be uniform.</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). Allocations to local governments are based on a formula that includes multiple factors and is applied equally across all eligible jurisdictions, including both urban and rural areas, other than jurisdictions or portions of jurisdictions within Harris County. Additionally, each county except for Harris receives a base funding allocation. An additional allocation is made to H-GAC to directly support regional and urgent need projects.</p>	None
6/29/2022	Web Portal	Lori An Gobert	Mayor	<p>Wanted to say thank you to H-GAC for its diligent efforts and hard work on a fair and equitable distribution of mitigation money. After Harris County received the \$750 million dollar allocation (60.5% of mitigation funds) the other 12 counties desperately need these remaining funds. Mid size and rural Texas towns have been under funded throughout this process and it is nice to see that H-GAC did not forget about the other 12 counties in the</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the</p>	None

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				region.	Texas General Land Office (GLO).	
6/29/2022	Web Portal	Chuck Rankin	Alderman Place 5 Columbus Texas City Council	Wanted to say thank you to H-GAC for its diligent efforts and hard work on a fair and equitable distribution of mitigation money. After Harris County received the \$750 million dollar allocation (60.5% of mitigation funds) the other 12 counties desperately need these remaining funds. Mid size and rural Texas towns have been under funded throughout this process and it is nice to see that H-GAC did not forget about the other 12 counties in the region.	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO).	None
6/30/2022	Email	Laurie B. Kincannon	Mayor, City of West Columbia	See Correspondence 1 - 6-30-22-Kincannon Thank you for providing an opportunity for the City of West Columbia - "The First Capitol of the Republic of Texas" to comment on the method of distribution for regional mitigation funds. The city spent considerable monies and staff time preparing our Round 1 application. Our five-million-dollar request scored 76.98 - 1.02 points below the last funded request. (78.00) The city respectfully suggests that H-GAC review the applications previously submitted to the GLO that remain unfunded in Round 1. The time delay incurred by this new distribution is a huge waste of time and money. In addition, the rising cost of construction due to the freeze and COVID-19 could have been avoided. Our cities could have greatly benefitted from a faster response to our citizens' needs.	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. Using that flexibility, local governments can choose to pursue eligible activities that may include projects submitted under prior competitive rounds of funding.	None
7/1/2022	Email	Keith Downey	President - Kashmere Gardens Super Neighborhood Council #52	Everyone uses the word equity but few put it into practice. When you deny funding to Harris County you are denying poorer communities to receive the necessary funding within Harris County to be able to recover from a disaster. Lets be honest funds are not spread and shared with poor communities in the way they should be across the board whether the community is urban or rural and there is no difference in larger Municipal counties. Large pools of	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the	None

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				<p>funding are nothing in the ears of residents unless the trickle down affect actually works. Up until now these communities have barely received a drop. No matter the issue. When will someone truly step up and say the buck stops here and begins with me.</p>	<p>Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/.</p>	
7/5/2022	Email	Gladys House-El	Resident	<p>This serves as my comments on the upcoming July 21, 2022 public hearing 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on the \$488 million HUD funding to Houston, Harris County et al.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who will be the contract compliance officer of these funds once awarded to the City of Houston? 2. Legal action between COH and GLO cost taxpayers \$1 million, so how will H-GAC prevent a repeat? 3. Only one Moor American among 7 contractors selected but seldom received any work to build and restore houses. How will H-GAC correct this disparity? GLO selected the 7. Injustice abounds when no one in place to monitor these dollars, contract awards and implementation. 4. Present policy of GLO contractors destroyed my fences, gate, plants and did not remove tree trunks, and told me, and GLO confirmed boldly, that contractor not responsible for replacing. Damage to my bulk appliances while in the "care" of Tegrity Home Builders damaged but again no corrective action. It took 4 months to get Tegrity back out to correct its defecting/non-conforming work to my home. My storm door never replaced due to damage caused by Tegrity. Rear screen door and bathroom window screen not replaced either. I was out of \$1,000+ that I just did not have and had to really work to recover from Tegrity's damage to my home and property. That said, there was no contract compliance officer, only office staff that was clueless on how to "make" Tegrity comply. I served notice to sue Tegrity and that got them back out. 	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). Please note, that the MOD does not currently make an allocation to Harris County or its cities. This funding program makes direct allocations to local governments and is not designated for payments to individual homeowners for home repairs. We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/.</p>	None

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				<p>5. Moving expenses and storage should be fully paid along side hotel accommodations, and homeowner should be housed at the nearest hotel to her/his home.</p> <p>6. Ombudsman division consisting of grassroots homeowners and other knowledgeable persons should be established to ensure quality treatment and service; respect and full repairs--not destruction of property.</p> <p>This is my comment and I will have more at time of public hearing. Thank you.</p>		
7/6/2022	Web Portal	Carol Horton		<p>1) Funds should be proportioned according to need! Not the humans playing God, overseeing what they can control! 2) Neither Harris County nor cities wholly within Harris County are included in this funding allocation. 3) Houston makes up more than 30% of the region's population and the bulk of the damage. Harris County cities may be eligible for re-allocated funds, if they become available.?????? REALLY???????????? 4) This distribution % is not even close to being fair and SHOULD BE-APPROPRIATED. A natural disaster sees no %. The Council is responsible for the harm repair this disaster caused. Most people don't have the money to pay for repair, and be reimbursed. Please reconsider the distribution. If this happened to you and your family, could you survive?</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/.</p>	None
7/6/2022	Web Portal	Morad Kabiri	City Manager	<p>The City of Friendswood has concerns with the reduced dollar amount presented, as well as the 50% LMI stipulation. Though we have a wide variety of housing stock, we do not have areas of concentrated LMI households. Any possibility of adjusting the stipulations, or allowing the LMI requirements to be met elsewhere within the region; thus freeing up Friendswood's full allocation amount to be utilized in Friendswood? The total funding amount itself is woefully inadequate given the damage sustained within the Clear Creek Watershed.</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO).The MOD requires each entity receiving an allocation to affirm they will use at least 50% of their funds on projects whose area of</p>	None

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					benefit includes at least 51% low-to-moderate-income individuals. There are currently no opportunities for variances from this requirement. We do not know ahead of time what projects will be proposed by entities receiving allocations, which of these projects will be accepted by GLO, or what the LMI percentages of their service areas will be. Therefore, each entity receiving an allocation is required to meet the LMI threshold individually to ensure the MOD as a whole meets the LMI threshold.	
7/6/2022	Email	Carol Horton		<p>This should be re-calculated!</p> <p>1) Funds should be proportioned according to need! Not the humans playing God, overseeing what they can control!</p> <p>2) Neither Harris County nor cities wholly within Harris County are included in this funding allocation.</p> <p>3) Houston makes up more than 30% of the region's population and the bulk of the damage.</p> <p>Harris County cities may be eligible for re-allocated funds, if they become available.?????? REALLY????????????</p> <p>4) This distribution % is not even close to being fair and SHOULD BE-APPROPRIATED.</p> <p>A natural disaster sees no %. The Council is responsible for the harm repair this disaster caused. Most people don't have the money to pay for repair, and be reimbursed. Please reconsider the distribution.</p> <p>If this happened to you and your family, could you survive?</p> <p>Respectfully,</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). Allocations to local governments are based on a formula that includes multiple factors and is applied equally across all eligible jurisdictions, including both urban and rural areas, other than jurisdictions or portions of jurisdictions within Harris County. Additionally, each county except for Harris receives a base funding allocation. An additional allocation is made to H-GAC to directly support regional and urgent need projects. We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/.</p>	

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7/7/2022	Web Portal	Ann Lents		Houston must be given a proportional share of this funding. Harris County rarely deals with damage and infrastructure in the City (apart from required Flood Control District expenditures). By not allocating funding to the City you are omitting a large portion of the region's population. How can this be fair?	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/ .	None
7/7/2022	Email	Walker Agnew, Jr		Please ensure that the City of Houston receives \$488M for flood mitigation funding. Thank you.	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/ .	None
7/8/2022	Email	Lawrence F. Labanowski		Dear Sir or Madam, I am a City of Houston resident and write to express my disappointment and concern regarding H-GAC's Board's	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region.	None

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				<p>recommendation to the Texas GLO regarding distribution of funds for flood mitigation. In summary, I believe that the City should receive a greater allocation and at least an allocation equal to its proportion of the population. I have read how the Board decided and I respectfully disagree with their position and the basis for it.</p> <p>As you know, the City suffered the greatest damage as a direct result of the flooding suffered in Harvey. That fact, in combination with the already crumbling infrastructure and outdated urban drainage system should compel that the City receive at least a fair allocation of the funds allocated. In consideration of the most vulnerable of our population who live in the Houston City limits and their lack of a voice in this matter, it seems to me that the Board should do the fair thing and vote towards increasing the City's share of those much needed funds.</p> <p>We live in a great City, one which has led the country in so many ways including how it treats its homeless and how its diverse population in relative harmony. I respectfully suggest that it would be a wonderful thing for the Board to reverse course and help the City to help itself by moving a fair share of those funds to be allocated to the City.</p> <p>Thank you. Respectfully submitted, Lawrence F. Labanowski</p>	<p>(For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/.</p>	
7/9/2022	Web Portal	Neal Ehardt		<p>Please increase Harris County's share of flood mitigation funding from 1.9% to 50%. Houston makes up more than 30% of the region's population and received the bulk of Harvey damage. Flood mitigation is expensive, especially in suburban sprawl. That's why we should focus the flood relief money in dense urban places where this limited money can provide sustainable flood relief for the greatest number of people.</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County</p>	None

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7/11/2022	Email	Christopher Johnston		It's very concerning that H-GAC's board recommended to the Texas GLO that the city of Houston receive only 1.9% of the \$488 million pool of flood mitigation funding. People inside the city of Houston limits experienced the most damage from Hurricane Harvey and H-GAC's assumption that Harris County receiving significant funding from the GLO means that the city of Houston doesn't need significant funding as well is flawed. Well over 2 million people live in unincorporated Harris County and, with that size of population spread across the county's 1,778 square miles, it's not likely Harris County will have dollars to spare with the city of Houston. Please reconsider your recommendation to exclude the city of Houston from receiving meaningful funding for flood mitigation. H-GAC is supposed to cooperate to solve area wide problems and it seems there is a more equitable manner of distributing these funds than what is currently proposed. Please take the entire region and its residents' unique vulnerability to flooding into consideration when finalizing the recommendations for funding. Thank you.	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/ .	None
7/11/2022	Email	Edith H. Johnson		Houston desperately needs funding for floor mitigation projects. Please do not neglect the economic engine of our region.	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you	None

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7/12/2022	Email	Sylvester L. Reeder III		<p>Houston One Voice (HOV) would like to offer the following public comments on the method of distribution for regional mitigation funds.</p> <p>HOV, a 501C3 Corp, partnered with the University of Houston, other area academic research universities, and an international engineering and architectural construction firm. Our focus is to provide municipalities, Counties and Special Purpose Districts to identify innovative strategies to have successful economic & environmental resilient, sustainable, and implementable projects.</p> <p>The State of Texas has 4500 closed Municipal solid waste landfills. Over 15 are in the Houston Metropolitan Statistical Area primarily located in marginalized communities of color. The landfills are between 50 and 200 acres ,its use is marginal or unusable land. The Texas Gulf Coast members of HGAC are constantly looking for land to retain & detain stormwater. Closed landfills typically, have not been on the tax rolls for 30 to 50 years. The challenge is how to remediate and use this land for retention and detention of storm water while increasing their tax rolls and improving the quality of life.</p> <p>For example, the Ruffino Hills Landfill in Houston Texas, located on the Keegan’s Bayou a major Tributary causes flooding to Brays Bayou. This landfill if remediated can provide a 50% reduction in flooding saving about 5,000 homes. It can also provide additional green space and transformational economic growth to a highly dense</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board’s anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects for your area. We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.</p>	None

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				<p>population of underserved Communities.</p> <p>The Houston Southwest area supports this effort. Attached represents a consensus support from HOA's, Civic Clubs, Super Neighborhoods, Management Districts , & TIRZ's representing 250,000 community stakeholders, leaders, businesses & residents. The Ruffino Hill Redevelopment research study, financed by TIRZ20, received the prestigious gold medal award from the Houston Region of the American Planning Association(APA).</p> <p>Ruffino Hills Redevelopment report is an innovative example where landfill remediation and redevelopment can be a model for communities to develop resilient , sustainable and cost effective reduction of Instances of flooding projects.</p> <p>Best Regards,</p> <p>Michael Bercu & Sylvester L. Reeder III</p>		
7/12/2022	Mail	Haywood Mack Ross		<p>See Correspondence 3 - 7-12-22-Ross RE: \$488,762,000 {nearly .5 billion dollars} Final Method of Distribution to the Texas General Land Commission</p> <p>Der Ladies and Gentlemen,</p> <p>On Monday, July 11, 2022 I, Mr. Haywood Mack Ross, visited the offices of the Houston-Galveston Area Council on Timmons Lane responding to a local Wharton paper "Solicitation for Public Comment."</p> <p>Upon arriving at the (H-GAC) office on Timmons I was ignored for a significant amount of time. I noticed a Black</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for and the funding source is not designated for direct assistance to individual residents. The Board</p>	None

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				<p>Lady and a rather large man supposedly working. After a while, a White young man showed up with a necktie on and we went to a separate room and actually talk about nothing. My interest was would a portion of the \$488,762,000 be used for housing which was never definitely addressed and this executive had no business cards; consequently I have no recall of who he is.</p> <p>Frankly, since of course I am Black, I am rather sensitive to the fact we came to no significant conclusion whatsoever making my efforts and expense of no use, and no account.</p> <p>I do hereby request, please, that I be kept informed of all initiatives proposed by the Houston-Galveston Area Council.</p> <p>Your prompt and deliberate cooperation will be immensely and tremendously appreciated.</p> <p>Thank you very much!</p>	<p>considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects for your area.</p>	
7/13/2022	Email	Patricia Dorsey	Board member of Braeburn Valley West Subdivision	<p>To Whom it May Concern:</p> <p>My name is Patricia Dorsey and I am a Board member of Braeburn Valley West Subdivision. I am opposed to H-GAC's 1.9% allotment of the \$488 million toward flood mitigation. Although the City of Houston received other monies, the share of only 1.9% of \$488 million seems quite short-sighted when it comes to the extent of damage the Houston area received and the needed monies to update a failing system. One of the biggest concerns on the west side of Houston comes from the flooding along Brays Bayou watershed. Harris County Flood Control District, in a recent study, suggested that if Ruffino Hills at the corner of Beltway 8/59/West Belfort, was converted to a multi-use flood detention area could alleviate 2000 structures from flooding downstream. Keegans, which flows into Brays Bayou and is the northern boundary of Ruffino Hills, has overflowed its banks three times: Memorial Day flood,</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced</p>	

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				<p>Tax Day Flood, and Harvey. Thirty-plus homes along Keegans, as well as our neighborhood pool and clubhouse flooded at each of these events. H-GAC should seriously consider the need to get money to this historic, underserved Riceville area, to alleviate the flooding, and Ruffino Hills would be the answer, not just for Riceville, but for Maplewood, Meyerland, Willow Meadows, and further down Braes Bayou into 610 loop homes and structures.</p> <p>I implore you to reconsider and make a positive impact for Southwest Houston now and into the future!</p> <p>Patricia Dorsey BVW-VP Neighborhoods To Trails Southwest Friends of Keegans Bayou Trails and Park District J Patrol Task Team.</p>	by your community.	
7/14/2022	Web Portal	Brenda Garcia		<p>The effects of the last major floods were devastating to Houston residents. Even those with insurance had a terrible time of getting their houses repaired. This left many long-time residents in a catch 22. Seeing as how Houstonians pay their fair share of taxes, it seems only appropriate that those same residents receive proportional funds to help them out in time of need. 1.9% funds based on 30% population (i.e. taxpayers) seems extremely unfair. Thank you for your time.</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/. The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of</p>	None

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					eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects for your area. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.	
7/14/2022	Email	Cindy Chapman	President of the Westbury Civic Club	<p>My name is Cindy Chapman, and I am President of the Westbury Civic Club, a community of 5,000 single-family homes located in the southwest area of the City of Houston. I am extremely concerned that H-GAC has recommended that only 1.9% of \$488 million of flood mitigation funds be allocated to projects located within the City of Houston, despite the fact that the bulk of the damage happened in Houston and 30% of the population lives in Houston.</p> <p>My own neighborhood of Westbury has experienced REPEAT FLOODING events. Westbury homes flooded in 2013, 2015, 2016, twice in 2017, and the worst house flooding occurred during Harvey in 2018. Flooding in our Westbury neighborhood during Harvey was severe enough that one of our elementary schools was used as a base for emergency boat and helicopter rescues during Harvey.</p> <p>Why would you purposefully exclude my neighborhood and other Houston neighborhoods from mitigation funding intended to reduce risk of flooding? The City of Houston has several projects planned in the future to reduce risk of flooding in my neighborhood, and similar flooding mitigation projects are being planned across the City of Houston. In my neighborhood, the City of Houston wants to add more stormwater detention, add excess overflow routing, and to replace the existing undersized stormwater drainage system that is more than 60 years old. My neighborhood is one of many in Houston that could</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.</p>	None

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				<p>benefit from the flood mitigation funds being allocated by H-GAC.</p> <p>I implore you to reconsider the proposed allocation of mitigation funds, so that funds are more fairly distributed to help those who experienced flooding in Houston, where the bulk of the damages were incurred. Houston has both high need and high population.</p> <p>Best regards, Cindy Chapman Westbury Civic Club, President</p>		
7/14/2022	Email	Joel Hardy for Kevin Cole	Grants/Special Projects / Mayor	<p>See Correspondence 2 - 7-14-22-Cole RE: CDBG-MIT "Round 2" Method of Distribution</p> <p>Since 1997, major storms and hurricanes have caused millions in damages to residences, commercial buildings, public facilities and infrastructure, and private property in the City of Pearland. Hurricane Harvey, alone, impacted residences and public property to the tune of \$28.9 million, mostly due to flood-related causes.</p> <p>As a result of the impacts of these disasters, flood mitigation maintains its status as a major priority in Pearland as we continue to plan for the implementation of strategies to improve our local drainage and stormwater management capacity. Our current 2019-updated Master Drainage Plan contains hundreds of millions in projects that City-led and/or Brazoria Drainage District (No . 4) efforts could be used to resolve local problems, but funding is not available.</p> <p>Therefore, the City of Pearland supports HGAC's proposed Method of Distribution (MOD) of GLO administered CDBG-MIT "Round 2" funding proposed by the Water Resources Committee, which proposes to provide the City of</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The MOD requires that cities falling within multiple counties including Harris County may not expend their allocation within the portion of the city within Harris County. The MOD requires each entity receiving an allocation to affirm they will use at least 50% of their funds on projects whose area of benefit includes at least 51% low-to-moderate-income individuals. There are currently no opportunities for variances from this requirement. This requirement is specific to this allocation of funds, and is not affected by prior competitive rounds of funding unless otherwise indicated by GLO. The period of performance for these funds is 6 years or as otherwise indicated in the GLO's State Action Plan Amendment 1 (or as may be further amended). The MOD contains a methodology for reallocation of initially-declined funds,</p>	None

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				<p>Pearland with \$14,008,900. Having said that, there are some key elements of concern that I feel must be clarified and/or instituted as the process moves forward:</p> <p>Appropriation by Jurisdiction: There are 11 cities within the HGAC region that are located in at least two (2) counties, three (3) of which are located in three (3) counties. Pearland being one of these (Brazoria - primary, Fort Bend, and Harris), there is a concern as to whether or not cities like ours will have to allocate funds to projects according to their location by county. There should be clarification included in the process that determines if allocated funds need to be spent according to their appropriation by county.</p> <p>Low-Moderate Income: Due to the preliminary allocation of GLO CDBG-Mitigation funds to certain projects prior to this Method of Distribution, clarification needs to be provided as to the LMI requirements, as that initial allocation may have the impact of adjusting the required LMI percentage on the basis of how those projects impact the overall LMI for the region.</p> <p>Period of Performance: How long will the period of performance be for using these funds?</p> <p>Redistribution of Unspent Funds - Balance of Region: All subrecipients/subawardees may not be able to spend these funds appropriately, if at all. Clarification needs to be provided as to how the MOD will accommodate redistribution of unspent funds to viable, eligible projects elsewhere in the region. This was a major issue in the aftermath of Hurricane Ike.</p> <p>Matching Funds: Clarification needs to be provided on how these funds can be used in concert with other federal and/or local matching funds (ARPA, FEMA, local bonds, etc...).</p>	<p>but was not designed to redistribute unused funds. Additional guidance on the eventual redistribution of unused funds will be developed by GLO. The MOD doe not restrict any eligible use designated in the State Action Plan Amendment 1. The use of matching funds not explicitly covered under that document is subject to further guidance and approval from GLO and/or the funding source to which the match would potentially be applied. The process for administering funds, project proposals and approvals, and reporting after the completion of the MOD will be between each entity and the GLO. H-GAC's continuing role is limited to its administration of the regional priority projects allocation. GLO will make additional guidance on the project proposal and approval phase available after the approval of the MOD. The MOD mirrors the eligibility requirements of the State Action Plan Amendment 1. The LMI requirements for HUD Exception Criteria grantees under the MOD are subject to their existing status.</p>	

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				<p>Administration: Clarification needs to be provided on how the program will be administered. Will these funds be handled entirely by HGAC for its administrative oversight and management program-wide? OR, will the GLO be the administrative agency? Will subrecipient/subaward entities need to submit project applications to secure funds? When will those parameters be made available?</p> <p>Mitigation vs Disaster Recovery: Clarification needs to be provided on the types of projects that are eligible for use of these funds. There are characteristics of a mitigation project vs a disaster recovery project that can make the latter definitively ineligible for consideration.</p> <p>HUD Exception Criteria: Existing HUD Entitlement Jurisdictions that have fewer than one-quarter of their Census block groups with 51% or more low- and moderate-income persons, do not have to meet the area-benefit requirement that 51% or more low-moderate income persons reside in the "service area" of an applicable project. Clarification needs to be made as to how these exception criteria values will be incorporated into the local requirements for these jurisdictions in meeting LMI requirements AND to the extent these have been included in the MOD. The table below shows the HUD Exception Criteria Grantees located in the HGAC region. It may be of note that Sugar Land, prior to its decision to release itself from its Entitlement Jurisdiction status, was one of these entities and may still fall within the technical parameters called for when determining Exception Criteria status if included in this MOD.</p> <p>On behalf of Pearland, I believe these comments and questions are important enough to drive the need for clarification, so our community and others can proceed accordingly when deciding how best to use these funds. The Pearland community will continue to be involved and</p>		

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				invested in regional planning efforts and I look forward to an outcome that can support substantive flood mitigation projects in our city.		
7/14/2022	Web Portal	George Frey		Justin Bower said HGAC board decisions are subjective. There are supposed to be objective scoring criteria for the projects so why also isnt the board required to make objective decisions on allocating funds to counties?	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). Allocations to local governments are based on a formula that includes multiple factors and is applied equally across all eligible jurisdictions, including both urban and rural areas, other than jurisdictions or portions of jurisdictions within Harris County. Additionally, each county except for Harris receives a base funding allocation. An additional allocation is made to H-GAC to directly support regional and urgent need projects.	None
7/16/2022	Email	Carl Christensen		<p>As a resident of a rural community, outside of Houston and Harris county, I would like to remind the committee that our town, Columbus, which is located on Interstate 10, is a major stopping point for Houston area evacuees, during hurricanes.</p> <p>Our local resources are not normally funded to handle the enormous influx of people and vehicles that occur with every major storm. Immense pressure is placed upon our limited community resources, for which local taxpayers fund and rely upon.</p> <p>A large part of these emergency efforts negatively affect the regular commerce and traffic of our area.</p> <p>Without additional funding, the fall back services that Houston and Harris county residents hope to rely upon will</p>	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). Through the flexibility of eligible uses and the emphasis on regional priorities, local governments are encouraged to work on projects of shared benefit.	None

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				not be available for them in their most dire time of need.		
7/20/2022	Verbal to Justin	John Graziano		<p>I am making these comments on behalf of myself and several hundred area residents who have met and discussed our concerns regarding, among other things, local land decisions and the use of eminent domain. While we generally support appropriate uses for eminent domain for purposes necessary to prevent homes flooding, we oppose the use of eminent domain for recreational projects or the addition of recreation in areas adjacent to private property.</p> <p>I encourage local governments pursuing flood mitigation projects to consider working with Ducks Unlimited or a similar organization to include habitat or other appropriate uses as part of design for detention basins and similar projects, but to exclude recreational elements that may impact surrounding landowners. We also encourage local governments to listen to and appreciate the concerns of rural landowners and agricultural producers in the area, seek to increase their representation in decision-making processes, and approach decision-making with a respect for private property rights. Local landowners are good stewards of the environment and should be left alone to the greatest extent possible.</p> <p>John Graziano, Montgomery County</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects for your area. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.</p>	None
7/21/2022	Oral at Public Hearing	Arnetta Bailey	Iowa Colony Council Members?	<p>Well, my name is Arnetta Murray, as you said Councilwoman in Brazoria County, my city is really the city of Iowa Colony. And I just want to make sure that the allocations are being or will be dispersed to the different towns and cities within Brazoria County. I was looking on here and I was hoping that other councilmembers from Brazoria County were here, but it looks like it's just only me. But the focus is I just want to make sure that Brazoria County as we see the possible allocation. But we just want to make sure that they get the money. As you know when</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). Allocations to local governments are based on a formula that includes</p>	None

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				the Harvey came and other storms, it's one way in basically one way out and that's 288. When 288 floods, it is horrific. So, I just want to ensure, we have small towns and cities, actually 28 in Brazoria County but the small ones such as Bailey's Prairie, Freeport, Jones Creek, even Brazoria Tx, we want to make sure that the money is given and that I can assure you that it's going to be allocated properly. Because we gotta, we can't forget the rural folks. So, I'm here speaking on behalf of the rural and all of the counties within Brazoria County. I love Harris County, I got parents in Harris County but right now I'm representing and speaking on behalf of Brazoria County. Thank you for your time and thank you for allowing me to speak.	multiple factors and is applied equally across all eligible jurisdictions, including both urban and rural areas, other than jurisdictions or portions of jurisdictions within Harris County. Additionally, each county except for Harris receives a base funding allocation. An additional allocation is made to H-GAC to directly support regional and urgent need projects. The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects for your area.	
7/21/2022	Oral at Public Hearing	Joe Campian	La Marque Councilmember District B	Thank you, Joe Compian also Councilmember District B in the city of La Marque. I'm here today to oppose the proposed mitigation method of distribution. The allocations calculation criteria is defective, specifically it's not equitable because it takes all weight to these 4 factors and specifically and particularly oppose giving equal weight to the real and property damage figures in the low and moderate income populations, especially in Galveston County. This formula deprives high or low to moderate income communities such as La Marque, with inequitable share of mitigation funds. It gives equal, furthermore it gives equal weight to real and property damage figures resulting in the value of real estates in higher income communities being considered equally with our property values such as in a smaller annual income community such as La Marque. Finally, it is, also I urge that based upon some of the missteps that have occurred in the past, that when and if a final method of distribution is agreed upon, that we all urge compliance with HUD section 3, job training and contracting opportunities. It is for these	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The MOD and the Community Development Block Grant - Mitigation funding program require each entity receiving an allocation to affirm they will use at least 50% of their funds on projects whose area of benefit includes at least 51% low-to-moderate-income individuals. There are currently no opportunities for variances from this requirement.	None

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				reasons that I oppose the proposed mitigation method of distribution plan. Thank you.		
7/21/2022	Oral at Public Hearing	Larissa Ramirez	Resident	Hi my name is Larissa Ramirez, I am a League City resident and that's my only affiliation. The reason I'm on this call today is because I have worked several years with the Harvey mitigation funds, firsthand with applicants of that program, contractors of that program and the GLO. And because of that, I hold this particular topic very dear to my heart. Because I've seen every angle, every angle of how these programs work. And I'm here to say that I agree with the method of distribution that is being presented today. And the reason being is because I feel as if this has been properly divided as it should be. For those that are advocating for the City of Houston, it's wonderful that you have that passion such as I but at the end of the day the City of Houston did get funds and they got a substantial amount of funds. And our location although it's in Galveston County is diverse and we work with diverse population, whenever I was working with the program. So, I oppose the statement saying that the GLO is, is, has racists intents or discriminatory intents, only because I've worked with every factor of these programs. So, I appreciate H-GAC and their ability to put something together and conduct the research. And I hope that the GLO still considers a lot of the population in Galveston County. You have Texas City, you have several other, Hitchcock, TX and other underserved communities in Galveston County similar to that of the City of Houston. So, if you know, unfortunately there isn't enough for everybody's drainage to be fixed and I just appreciate that, that we are also being considered.	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.	None
7/21/2022	Web Portal	Doug Beatty		Over 30% of the homes in our neighborhood were damaged during Hurricane Harvey. We have endured through Tropical Storm Allison, the several flood events caused by rainstorms, and Hurricane Ike. We have had physical damage to our property. Because we have a mortgage and we are in a flood-prone area, we must	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to	None

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				purchase flood insurance in case we need to file for compensation for damages. It is without a doubt that Houston area neighborhoods suffered during the above mentioned events and need to fund flood mitigation efforts. Please consider increasing the percentage amount to be allocated for the City of Houston and the City of Bellaire - they certainly need it.	the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). a. We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/ . Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.	
7/21/2022	Email	Sylvia Garcia	U.S. House of Representatives, District 29m Texas	<p>See Correspondence 5 7-21-22- Garcia</p> <p>Dear H-GAC Board of Directors,</p> <p>I am glad to have the opportunity to offer my comments on the flow of Community Development Block Grant - Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) funds in Houston. The need for flood relief is a difficult reality for too many Houstonians. I implore the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) to allocate a fair and equitable proportion of CD BG-MIT dollars to the City of Houston to offer much-needed assistance to its residents, some who live in my Congressional District.</p> <p>For context, in 2018, Congress appropriated \$12 Billion in CD BG-MIT funds for qualifying disasters from 2015, 2016, and 2017. Hurricane Harvey is one of these qualifying disasters, and the State of Texas received a lump sum of these dollars to be distributed by the Texas General Land Office (GLO). In turn, the GLO allocated \$488,762,000 CDBG-MIT Regional Mitigation Program funds to the H-GAC region.</p> <p>In February 2022, the H-GAC board voted to award just \$9,232,700, or 1.9% of the total dollars to the city of</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/.</p>	None

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				<p>Houston. This allocation is meager compared to the need of the most damaged area.</p> <p>The City of Houston makes up 30% of H-GAC's region's population. And, over 300,000 housing units flooded in Houston alone, with more homes impacted than after both Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Sandy. It is clear that such a large portion of the region with such widespread flood damage deserves more than a mere 1.9% of H-GAC's allotted funds. Further, Harris County's method of distribution is still incomplete, meaning the City of Houston is still left in the dark regarding how much money they may receive from the County.</p> <p>As a Member of the United States House of Representatives, it is my duty to stand up for the needs of my constituents. In more ways than one, the City of Houston has been left behind in essential flood relief. I call upon H-GAC to reconsider their method of distribution and provide the City of Houston with a larger portion of its CD BG-MIT funds. Thank you for your consideration.</p> <p>Sincerely, Sylvia Garcia Member of Congress</p>		
7/21/2022	Email	Jennifer Claridge		<p>It has come to my attention that Houston, the city with the largest flooding problem and the largest population in the state is slated to receive only 1.9% of the federal funding for flooding awarded as a response to the Harvey flooding it received in 2017.</p> <p>This does not make sense no matter how much money Harris County receives. First, the county protects the bayou structures. The city protects the roads, the homes, the businesses, and everything that exists to make Houston the economic powerhouse for Texas that it is. Without flooding mitigation for water that not only comes</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of</p>	

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				<p>out of the sky onto us, but also flows in from neighboring counties, much of the inner core of Houston would become unlivable - including the Texas Medical Center. The improvements made there after Allison cannot withstand the kinds of storms we are likely to see throughout the twenty-first century.</p> <p>Additionally, there are many people, neighborhoods, and businesses, who were unable to repair for many reasons, financial, or because they could not get permits to do so because the existing infrastructure is no longer adequate to withstand the intensity and frequency of the storms that have hit Houston over the last several years.</p> <p>As someone who had to wait years and spend enormous amounts of money waiting for a FEMA grant, the GLO, the Texas Water Board, and the City of Houston to process my elevation grant, I know what this does to real people with real families in Houston. The delays are financially devastating and lead to more and more issues for these families. For all the money to go elsewhere in the state when it is clearly most needed in Houston to repair after Harvey and to build the infrastructure for Houston to withstand the next storm without that kind of destruction, please re-evaluate how those funds are going to be allocated.</p>	<p>\$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.</p>	
7/21/2022	Web Portal	Stephen Hinson	Resident	<p>I would like to comment that I feel that it was incorrect for the board to automatically exclude Houston & Harris County from the MOD calculations, just because they had another stream of funding. It would be preferred if they were included in the calculations to at least show the expected distribution without the other stream of funding. Then I think it would be appropriate to then evaluate a specific methodology that might justify reducing the amount of distributions to Harris County and specifically Houston, as all of the listed distribution criteria would be heavily weighted to this region and are where the most</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of</p>	

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

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				impact of mitigation funding will be achieved. Please reconsider excluding them from the start and incorporate a more reasoned approach to MOD.	their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/ .	
7/21/2022	Email	Larry Schwartz	Resident	<p>I am a citizen of Houston, living in the Meyerland area of SW Houston. We have endured a number of floods from my earliest recollection in the early 1980's until 2017 when Harvey struck. It is my opinion that the City of Houston as well as Harris County as the epicenter of the wrath of Harvey in 2017 deserve more funding to both mitigate and potentially stop flooding.</p> <p>As one who has followed the Project Brays from the 1980's until near completion in 2022. It is my observation that more work is needed to reduce the risk to the population. We have residents who have just re-entered their homes after Harvey reconstruction. Many homes have been demolished and others have been elevated to rise out of the flood plain.</p> <p>With so little available land and so much development there are few opportunities for detention properties and development. We need additional funds to catch up to where we should have been if not having been struck in 2015, 2016 and 2017 with significant flooding. Our accessibility to safe emergency facilities, continuous power to homes and businesses as well as programs to rebuild housing that was lost in Harvey are human rights.</p> <p>It has been totally unfair that the GLO in their lack of compassion decided that Federal Funding to Houston and Harris County was not needed. Given the lack of funding for flood improvements both the City and County need those funds to prepare for the future floods that will come. With global warming we can only expect storms and hurricanes to worsen and grow in strength and</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.</p>	None

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				<p>devastation. The time to act is now!</p> <p>Please fund monies to the City of Houston as well as Harris County, to prevent future catastrophes.</p> <p>Larry Schwartz</p>		
7/21/2022	Email	Cliff Haehl	Resident	<p>I am a City of Houston resident and my home flooded in Harvey.</p> <p>The vast majority of flood-related damage from Hurricane Harvey occurred in Southeast Texas, and in terms of sheer numbers of citizens, to Houston residents in particular.</p> <p>While a significant amount of federal funding has been properly provided to Harris County, remember that the Greater Houston area is almost 10,000 square miles, so that money will be spread over a very large area.</p> <p>This email is to strongly recommend that H-GAC revise it's recommendation to the Texas GLO, to allocate a MINIMUM of 25% of available \$488 million to the City of Houston.</p> <p>This will impact the most people, drainage mitigation work is still badly needed, and it is simply the right thing to do. The two allocations (county and City) are separate in their impact.</p> <p>Ask yourself: "If I didn't know about the federal money for the County, what would my recommendation be for a fair City of Houston portion?"</p> <p>Cliff Haehl</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.</p>	None

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7/21/2022	Email	Sylvester Turner	Houston Mayor	<p>See Correspondence 6-7-21-22-Turner</p> <p>Dear Members of the H-GAC Board, Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on HGAC's proposed Method of Distribution. Before offering my own comments, I wish to thank Council Member Sallie Alcorn for her leadership not just as a member of the HGAC Board, but as an advocate for the people of Houston.</p> <p>Both Council Member Alcorn and I believe that the decision by this board to continue with the current Method of Distribution that allocates to the City of Houston less than 2% of available CD BG-MIT monies will not address the needs of the people of Houston and this region.</p> <p>Northeast Houston, Sunnyside, Acres Homes, the East End, and so many other communities were vulnerable during Harvey and without a sufficient allocation and investment of CDBGMIT funds, these communities will suffer again and again with every future major flooding event.</p> <p>While all of our communities were affected, those that were most severely impacted and will continue to be vulnerable are our historical communities of color. HUD has already found that GLO has discriminated against this minority population, but HGAC can stop that inequity by not following GLO's lead. We are a region, and by working together we can serve all people - no matter their color or creed.</p> <p>Less than 2% of funding for a population that makes up over 30% of the HGAC region cannot stand. What meaningful infrastructure investments can we put in place with only \$9 million in a city that spans over 665 square miles and nearly 2.3 million people?</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/.</p>	

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				<p>At the end of the day, let us not forget that we are talking about people, our people, not just dollars whenever we are choosing the Method of Distribution. Because yes, it is a choice. We can choose to work together to invest the funds equitably for the most impacted communities as was intended by Congress.</p> <p>Sincerely, Sylvester Turner Mayor</p>		
7/21/2022	Oral at Public Hearing	Sallie Alcorn	Houston City Council Member	<p>I'm Sallie Alcorn, Houston City Council Member and H-GAC board member.</p> <p>When it comes to flooding, it is Houston – the most populous city in the 13-county region – that has borne its undue share of the burden. The 2015 and 2016 floods impacted 26,000 Houston homes. In 2017, Hurricane Harvey flooded nearly 350,000 residences with an estimated \$16 billion in damage.</p> <p>When Congress passed legislation in 2018 to provide funding for Texas and other states affected by disasters, the allocation was based on events in 2015, 2016, and 2017. As is well known, Houston was severely and disproportionately impacted by disasters in all three of these years. Flood mitigation needed in Houston and Harris County was a key factor in determining the amount of federal funding to authorize and send to the state of Texas. I have spoken to several of our federal elected officials and believe me, all of them expected Houston to receive significant funding from this legislation – none intended Houston to be completely left out of the mix. The Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition which resulted in Houston receiving ZERO dollars is under a cloud of scrutiny. In March 2022, HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity concluded that the GLO's process was discriminatory and in noncompliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 109 of the Housing</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments along with all other comments we received, including H-GAC's responses and a summary of the comments by locale and category, to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/.</p>	None

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				<p>and Community Development Act of 1974.</p> <p>And now, with the H-GAC MOD, Houston is again being excluded from funding. This decision by the board was predicated on the fact that Harris County, after originally also being left out of the GLO’s statewide competition, was subsequently awarded \$750 million. It’s important to note, as of today, we have NO information from Harris County on how it plans to distribute this \$750 million - there is not even a release date for the county’s draft MOD. So how can we move forward with H-GAC's MOD without this information?</p> <p>Over the course of this MOD process, H-GAC has received numerous comments in support of Houston receiving an increased share of funding. What do we plan to do with these comments? When people complained to the GLO during its process that Houston wasn’t getting funding, they were directed to participate in the public hearing on the draft H-GAC MOD. Basically, the GLO was saying you have another bite at the apple through the council of governments. So here we are.</p> <p>It’s important the public knows their comments will be taken seriously and changes to the MOD will be incorporated. I certainly hope we are not just using these hearings as an opportunity to check a box before rubber-stamping the MOD.</p> <p>Early in the MOD process before it was announced Harris County would receive a separate allocation, Houston was anticipated to receive 35% of H-GAC's initial funding. This makes much more sense. In keeping with this logic, Houston deserves at least a 30% share which would be \$148 million.</p> <p>So, I am urging H-GAC to do two things. Delay consideration of the MOD until after the Harris County’s MOD is released. Secondly, increase Houston’s share of this funding to at least 30%, a more proportional \$148 million. Thank you.</p>		
7/21/2022	Oral at Public	Stephen Costello	City of Houston, Chief	Good Evening, thank you for the opportunity to address H-	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method	None

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	Hearing		Recovery Officer	<p>GAC with respect to the proposed Method of Distribution of the CDBG MIT funds. My name is Stephen Costello, here representing the City of Houston as the Chief Recovery Officer. My role as the Chief Recovery Officer is to work with federal and state agencies assisting the city in our recovery efforts. Specifically, FEMA has a mitigation grant funds administrated by Texas Department Division of Emergency Management and HUD’s CDBG MIT funds that are administrated by the General Land Office. I had the opportunity to address the Board on the draft MOD on Board Meeting in February 15th. The following comments I believe are pertinent and my observations may be repetitive, however I believe are noteworthy and includes some current items that have occurred post the February Board Meeting. First, as Councilmember Alcorn has indicated the enabling congressional legislation that created these funds was a direct response to extreme weather-related events that occurred between 2015 and Hurricane Harvey. The City of Houston is the only major metropolitan community in the region impacted by all 3 events. H-GAC method of distribution recommendations omitting the City of Houston from substantial flooding funding just defies logic, and we believe it is totally inequitable. The GLO amended action plan that has provided the \$488 million dollars to H-GAC and the \$750 million dollars to Harris County has yet to be approved by HUD. Further, on March 4th as Councilmember Alcorn has indicated HUD issued a letter finding non-compliant with title 6 in section 109 concerning GLO’s design and operation of the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition Fund, which is exactly where these funds are coming from. Based on GLO’s response to HUD, HUD then issued a letter on May 16th, a formal letter of determination of non-compliance. Specifically stating GLO’s discrimination of Black and Hispanic residents. The H-GAC Board has penalized all cities within Harris County based on GLO’s proposed award of \$750 million dollars to</p>	<p>of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board’s anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. This allocation was approved on March 18, 2022 as part of GLO's State Action Plan Amendment 1. You can find more information on Harris County's program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.</p>	

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				Harris County. Without any knowledge of how the County will distribute these CDBG Mid funds or even if the amended state action plan has been approved by HUD. At the February Board Meeting members of H-GAC's water resources committee publicly stated that the method of distribution would be re-visited based on Harris County's proposed method of distribution, to date Harris County has yet to make that available. Absent the approved state amended action plan, resolution of the discrimination issue and information associated with Harris County's method of distribution, any effort to identify the local H-GAC's method of distribution is premature. Respectfully I ask that the board table this issue at this time. Thank you.		
7/21/2022	Oral at Public Hearing	Amy Peck	Houston City Council Member, District A	Good evening my name is Amy Peck, address is City of Houston and I represent District A in Northwest Houston. I am speaking today to oppose the preliminary method of distribution of the \$488 million dollars CDBG Mitigation funding. And I'm advocating for the City of Houston to receive more than the proposed 1.9% of the total. To put this in perspective a little, I have over \$130 million dollars of identified flooding mitigation projects needed in my district alone. These are just areas that have been pre-engineered and does not even include need and projects on other parts of my district that do not have a cost associated with it. All of the neighborhoods included in this \$130 million dollars are low to moderate income areas and none of this money is included in the city's capital improvement plan. The \$9 million dollars that is being proposed for the City of Houston wouldn't even be enough for one of these needed projects in my district alone. I am aware that Harris County will receive the \$750 million dollars for flooding mitigation but there's no guarantee that any of this money will be appropriated inside the City of Houston. Even if they do spend some of this money inside the City of Houston, it still would not be enough to mitigate significant flooding issues. Houston is going to continue to flood unless we take real measures now.	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/ .	None

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				These measures must include a regional solution because the implications of Houston’s flooding go far beyond the cities boundaries and this money is part of that solution. We are talking about real people here, lives that could be lost, property that will be lost and the Board has an opportunity right here to make the difference. And I urge the Board to consider the impact that this will have on people when they take this vote. Thank you.		
7/21/2022	Oral at Public Hearing	Charles Goforth	President, Brays Bayou Association	Hi I’m Charles Goforth, I am President of the Brays Bayou Association and we were founded back in 1983 after a series of devastating floods throughout Houston. Sound familiar? Back then there really wasn’t many funds appropriated or this kind of avenue to do repairs. So, the Brays Bayou Association advocated for Project Brays. So, through our initial studies that we funded we were able to get Harris County Flood Control District and Army Corps of Engineers to do the \$500 million dollar Project Brays. With that being said, all roads point to Houston. The City of Houston is integral to everything in the Harris, the Houston Galveston Area Council. It is the center of it. We need to have the funds distributed to the areas that need it the most. And what I mean need it the most, our bayous flow more of a east west direction, west to the east, excuse me. Our infrastructure is the oldest infrastructure in the region. Our work base is the driving factor of the region. So, I’m kind of at a loss that we’re being left out of the funding. I won’t say entirely left out of the funding, but I will concur with Councilmember Alcorn, 35% of the general funds that are coming out of this \$488 million dollars is appropriate. We’re not asking for everything, but we need to have a chunk of the appropriate funds. I appreciate your time and once again, all roads lead through Houston. As Houston goes the region goes. Thank you.	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board’s anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/ . Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.	None
7/21/2022	Oral at Public Hearing	Sylvester "Skip" Reeder	Member of Houston One Voice	Thank you. I’m with Houston One Voice. Houston One Voice was engaged to do a study of the Rufino landfill opportunity. A Rufino landfill was a landfill that had been	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region.	None

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				closed for 40 years. They asked us to review that landfill to determine what could possibly that landfill be used for. All of our members of our community said that what we need the most is to protect ourselves from flooding. And looking at Houston One Voice is a nonprofit corporation that partners with the University of Houston and the research universities and detention basin, landfill was 144 acres. 2500 acre feet of detention space and 800 million gallons of storage water. Right now, the only thing that is keeping us from doing that is money. I want you to know who I'm talking to. I am speaking to our neighbors of the 13 counties. I want you to know that the ability to convert that landfill into a detention basin will save 5,000 homes downstream. We know unequivocally that it will reduce the flooding precipitously downstream. Our study and the ability to do that is going to take money. But more importantly It's going to give you those 12 counties a prototype based on the most economical, the most efficacious approach to turning a landfill of which you have hundreds of. The City of Houston has 15 of them, between 750 acres to 3,000 acres that could be used for landfills in this community. What the study would do and what the conversion of this landfill would do will give you that prototype that we can do all of those the same in your communities where you have hundreds. Today if you establish a landfill you're going to take, most of that landfill will be taken off the tax rolls in perpetuity...	(For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects for your area. We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/ . Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.	
7/21/2022	Oral at Public Hearing	Naomi Ostfeld	Brays Oak Super Neighborhood Council 38	My name is Naomi Ostfeld... I am here on behalf of the Brays Oak Super Neighborhood Council 36- The Brays Oak Super Neighborhood requests that the H-GAC revise its current MOD provisions, which excludes cities located in Harris County from funding consideration until the reallocation of declined funds. If there are no declined funds Houston and other cities in Harris County will receive 0 dollars from the H-GAC. We all believe these provisions are inconsistent with the intent express and the GLO staff responses in the state action plan amendment 1.	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The City of Houston's allocation under the conditionally-approved MOD is	None

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				<p>If the H-GAC disagrees, then as an alternative the Super Neighborhood requests that the H-GAC wait to submit its MOD plan to the GLO until Harris County publishes its MOD plan and the 2 can be coordinated. In amendment 1 section 5.4.5.4 the GLO states that “funds from the Harris County MOD may be allocated to” Harris County cities and towns located within Harris County and special purposes districts. The GLO wrote MAY, not shall or will or must. The decision regarding who receives an allocation is discretionary with Harris County. The primary concern is that each proposed project must mitigate one of the identifiable risks contained under section 5.4.5.1. Therefore, it is possible that none of the cities will receive an allocation. As discussed earlier, the GLO is giving H-GAC \$488,762,000 dollars and Harris County \$750 million for a total of \$1,238,762,000 dollars. In response to received comment in which the commentors stated that Houston will still receive \$0 dollars for its mitigation projects, the GLO staff response included the following “the City of Houston is an eligible entity in both the Harris County mitigation method of distribution and the regional mitigation program where the Houston Galveston Area Council method of distribution.” In response to a Houston City Councilmember the discussed needed drainage projects in her district but does not have any funding for it, the GLO staff included in its response “the GLO encourages the commentor to participate in the public planning meeting and the...”</p>	<p>\$9,232,700. We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/. The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects for your area. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.</p>	
7/21/2022	Oral at Public Hearing	David Wheaton	Brays Oak Super Neighborhood Council 38	<p>My name is David Wheaton, I represent Texas Housers. I want to reiterate what a lot of people have said so far today. Which is, I think the H-GAC should modify the method of distribution to give increased funding to Houston, specifically, and also Harris County. Houston and Harris County region make up about 70% of all Black and Hispanic, non-white folks in the Houston Galveston Area Council’s area. So, leaving out Harris County and the City of Houston, would greatly discriminate against Black and</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board’s anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you</p>	None

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				Brown Texans in the gulf coast area. I also think that again, Houston has a lot of neighborhoods that have been historically disinvested from and this is where we see a lot of increased flooding when we do have a hurricane season. And so, to ignore these neighborhoods would be a travesty because this billion-dollar program that the federal government gave funds to, specifically laid out that these funds are supposed to go to disinvested communities. And so we are truly missing the point and missing the action of giving these funds to disinvested communities so that they can have better flood resilience when the next storm hits. Those are my thoughts.	to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/ . Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your communities.	
7/21/2022	Oral at Public Hearing	Gladys House-El	CDC of Freedmen's Town	It is unfortunate that funding is going to the City of Houston and the General Land Office because the City of Houston continues to withhold the necessary funding to assist the disadvantaged communities. And I am just alarmed that the funding, so much funding keeps being allotted to the City of Houston and there are no checks and balances and so forth. And then on the other hand when you look at the general land office, it is extremely racist. On down to the contractors, a handful of contractors that they have selected to do work on the Hurricane Harvey housing deal. And I can attest firsthand to the blatant racism. How they destroy, the contractors destroy your property with impunity and there's no one to really talk to or complain to. So, you're going to have to ensure H-GAC, that they're going to be contract compliance officers in place, similar to like an ombudsman. Because we need someone to be our voice, because right now the City of Houston and GLO, they are both evil and they ended up suing each other wasting nearly a million of our tax dollars. And still the end result was get in there and provide the services to the persons who are targeted and really need the funding. So I really hope that H-GAC would get with HUD and everyone else who is responsible for this funding to ensure that the racism, the discrimination on both parties will cease. And	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/ . Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.	None

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

Date Received	Method	Name	Role/Title	Comment	Response	Associated changes to MOD
				not continue with impunity and it's like both entities are being rewarded for their injustices against my communities and my businesses and my people. Thank you so much, Peace		
7/21/2022	Oral at Public Hearing	Roy Lira	Houston Super Neighborhood Alliance	My name is Roy Lira, affiliated with the Houston Super Neighborhood Alliance. I'm speaking in favor of delaying and revamping the funds allocation process. As a Houston, as a resident of Houston's East end and vice chair of the Houston Super Neighborhood Alliance I've had the opportunity to speak with and visit other representatives of underserved communities within the City of Houston. Although the GLO published criteria that is intended to serve these residents at greatest risks, once again with the distribution formula these areas will be victims of a process intended to directly help them. Removing Houston from funds distribution creates, will create unintended quality of life and economic consequences that go beyond the City of Houston when we look at the economic impact of cities, of areas of residents that rely on the City of Houston for work. My asks include delay the Board vote until Harris County releases their distribution formula and even after Harris County distribution plan is published, recalculate the amount allocated to Houston that more fairly represents the 30% population within the Eastex area. Thank you.	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/ . Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.	None
7/21/2022	Oral at Public Hearing	George Frey	Houston SuperNeighborhood-14	Hello, George Frey from Houston, TX. I had previously commented and asking why the Harris County was omitted from the calculations and was told in a previous meeting that it was a subjective, entirely subjective, decision by the Board. And I just question if it really should be subjective given all the other attempts to make this an objective and quantitative assessment. And to me the easiest action would be to just use these exact same formulas, including Harris County in the mix to see where the proportion would lie. Thank you.	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of	None

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Date Received	Method	Name	Role/Title	Comment	Response	Associated changes to MOD
					\$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/ .	
7/21/2022	Oral at Public Hearing	Bridgette Murray	President, Pleasantville Area Super Neighborhood Council	Thank you for the opportunity. My name is Bridgette Murray, I'm also president of the Pleasantville Area Super Neighborhood Council here in Houston, TX, As you all know both the city and Harris County did submit projects for funding for these mitigation dollars and the City of Houston projects were not considered or funded at this time. So, my question is if you all do make a decision to provide funding to the City of Houston, will those projects be considered? Or will we have to go through a re-application process? A project was submitted for our community and I live near the Port of Houston, just 2 miles away and the project was intended to alleviate flooding. In addition, a lot of these port communities are located in the San Jacinto River watershed and yet we received no funds from that particular watershed from any of the flooding issues that have been ongoing for many years. The inequity suffered by these vulnerable populations due to flooding should be elevated for funding. And we all know that the dollars that are being considered here tonight may not cover all of the expenses throughout the City of Houston, but we have many vulnerable communities throughout the City of Houston that deserve funding. And I do appreciate all of the comments from the City Councilmembers and City Representatives here tonight. So, thank you.	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects for your area. We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/ . Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.	None
7/21/2022	Email	Karla Cisneros	Houston City Council Member, District H	See Correspondence 4 - 7-21-22-Cisneros Dear Board Members, As the City Council Member for District H in the City of Houston, I am writing to urge reasonableness and to voice	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the	None

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				<p>my deep concern and opposition to the current recommendation that severely underfunds low- and moderate-income residents of Houston.</p> <p>The proposed MOD for the \$488 million in funds to address flooding is unfair and is a severe blow to the exact communities that these Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds were designed to help. Adoption of this recommendation compounds the very harmful impact of the decision in February of this year to only award 1.9% of the Texas GLO funding to the City of Houston, when almost one third of the H-GAC's population falls within the City of Houston. And despite the funding that was allocated to Harris County, it still remains to be seen what portion of that award to Harris County last February, will be invested in the City of Houston.</p> <p>Please reconsider the formula and adopt a Method of Distribution that fairly, responsibly, and equitably serves all those who are desperately in need of assistance for flooding mitigation, even if they live in Houston.</p> <p>Sincerely, Karla Cisneros Council Member, District H</p>	<p>H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/.</p>	
7/21/2022	Oral at Public Hearing	Danielle Goshen	Policy Specialist/National Wildlife Federation	<p>Thank you, my name is Danielle Goshen and I'm the Policy Specialist/Counsel for National Wildlife Federation in Austin, TX. Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments. Under H-GAC's proposed Method of Distribution Harris County municipalities and jurisdiction are not eligible to receive distribution from the COG. H-GAC reasons that since Harris County was allocated \$750 million by the GLO and state action plan amendment 1 that it is already receiving its fair share. In order to ensure equitable results however, Harris County, The City of Houston and other municipalities within the county's jurisdiction must not be left out of an allocation. First,</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO).</p> <p>We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input</p>	None

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				<p>under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition, Harris County and The City of Houston originally were set to receive 0 funds under the CDBG MIT program. After notice that this would occur, Texas Housers and Northeast Action Collective filed a complaint with HUD alleging a violation of Title 6. Earlier this year HUD agreed with the complainants and found that the GLO’s prioritization factors worked to discriminate based on the basis of race and national origin particularly against Black residents in violation of Title 6. After significant political backlash from these events the GLO amended its state action plan to provide that \$750 million dollars to Harris County to distribute. The impetus for providing these funds to Harris County for its own method of distribution was due to the GLO’s discrimination under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition, which was always separate from the allocation that the GLO gave to the COGs for their own method of distribution. The 2nd reason is that the COG wished to remove or the 2nd reason that this would produce inequitable results is that if the COG wished to remove eligibility for entities that received funds under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition it shouldn’t single out Harris County alone. Nowhere else in the COG’s method of distribution does H-GAC remove other entities that receive funding under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition from eligibility to receive funds. 3rd removing Harris County and municipalities within its jurisdiction from the method of distribution, removes the most eligible and most diverse region within the COG from eligibility. Doing so would therefore hinder equitable outcomes and could arise to violation of Title 6 as well. Additionally, we need to burn some delays and the method of distribution. So, moving on, the distribution factors used could also be tweaked to better distribute funds equitably across the region. We believe that H-GAC should focus on ensuring the greatest amount of funds for those areas most vulnerable to</p>	<p>during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/.</p> <p>Regarding the question of using Social Vulnerability Index data, H-GAC used the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) population data as an equity factor instead of the Social Vulnerability Index (SVI), because LMI data directly captures areas with low-income households and is available at the Census-Block group-level. Conversely, SVI is a complex factor derived from multiple variables and is unavailable for some entities in the H-GAC region. A fundamental focus of our review of allocation formula and data factors was that they should be straightforward, universally available, and applicable for all entities potentially receiving allocations.</p> <p>Regarding the comment on green and natural infrastructure, the H-GAC Board considered the potential eligible uses for allocations. To allow for the greatest degree of flexibility for our local governments, the Board decided to retain all eligible activities, including natural infrastructure, outlined in the Texas General Land Office’s State Action Plan Amendment 1. We encourage you to work with local entities receiving allocations to prioritize natural and green infrastructure projects in their project proposals.</p>	

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				hazards. So, using different tools like the CDC's social vulnerability index can be used to as a distribution factor to help identify those areas most vulnerable to hazards. Further using personal and real property damage as a distribution factor may lead to inequitable results by disproportionately providing funds to higher income areas and could eliminate the effect of using low to moderate income populations as a distribution factor. So, we really want to recommend considering either reducing the weight for...		
7/21/2022	Email	Virgil W. Fisher		<p>Ladies and Gentlemen of H-GAC,</p> <p>Please reconsider your suggested percentage of distribution of mitigation monies to the City of Houston. As you know, Houston received the full brunt of Harvey; my house flooded along with 15 other homes in just my block. Federal and/or state funds going to the county means Harris County, not Houston, TX. Please approve an equitable amount of funds to the City of Houston.</p> <p>Sincerely, Virgil W. Fisher</p>	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/ . Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.	None
7/21/2022	Email	Unknown		I have always believed that the counties are ultimately the branch of government responsible for flood control and should be in charge of distributing funds as the county sees fit. As a Houston citizen I feel that we should get our fair share but for what purpose? On all of our water bills we pay a fee toward drainage. How much of that is currently being spent for what it was originally intended? The city has mismanaged that fund since inception. It's a good thing they call it a fee because if it were a tax... well	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you	None

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				<p>you know the story about the original Tea Party, taxation without representation.</p> <p>I for one would like to see a city plan for drainage and detention before asking for handouts that no one in town knows where it will actually end up.</p>	to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/ . Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.	
7/21/2022	Email	Charlyn Graham	Resident	<p>Please allocate a greater percentage of the flood funds to Houston.</p> <p>Charlyn Graham resident</p>	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board’s anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/ .	None
7/22/2022	Web Portal	barry Cohen	National Algae Association 501(c)6	<p>Dear HGAC: Heavy rainfalls creating nutrient runoff (N+P) at non-point sources are entering waterways in 50 states creating harmful algae blooms in lakes and coastlines. Decades of research, testing and monitoring alone have not fixed these devastating water quality problems. They worsen every year affecting fishing, swimming, tourism, real estate values and are a health risk to humans and animals. We would like to discuss potential collaboration with On Location Nutrient Runoff Capture, Recycling and Repurposing Pilot Tests at Non-Point Sources to reduce nutrient runoff entering waterways and On Board Algae Bloom and HAB Remediation, Capture, Recycling (clean</p>	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board’s anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of	None

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				water back to waterbodies) and Repurposing Pilot Tests on lakes and coastlines, we are facilitating. Thanks	eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects for your area. We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/ . Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.	
7/23/2022	Web Portal	Josh Wallenstein	The Wallenstein Law Group	The City of Houston, making up over 30% of this region's population, is slated to receive merely 1.9% of Hurricane Harvey funds provided for flood mitigation. These numbers are so dissimilar that they give rise to conspiracy theories and those of political malice. Houston was UNDER WATER. The economic devastation was unimaginable. Recognizing the devastation, the federal government delivered funding to help. Your decision to shave off a pittance of that funding to our city, the engine of the Gulf Coast and home to the 4th largest city in the country, is simply obscene and indefensible. We need help to rebuild. We will remember your generosity. Please reconsider.	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/ . Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.	None
7/25/2022	Email	Leticia Plummer	Houston City Council Member, At-Large 4	See Correspondence 7-7-25-22 Plummer Dear fellow H-GAC Board Members,	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region.	None

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				<p>I urge you to reconsider the proposed Method of Distribution for the \$488 million Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds and work towards a method that is more equitable.</p> <p>Over the last few years, I have spent a considerable amount of time with communities who have continuously suffered since Hurricane Harvey. Every episode of rain brings the risk of homes flooding in our underserved neighborhoods, where our communities of color reside. It is, therefore, extremely disappointing that the board wants to continue with the current Method of Distribution by allocating a mere 1.9% of the available CDBG-MIT funds to Houston when our city accounts for 30% of H-GAC's region.</p> <p>The General Land Office has already failed these communities when it discriminated and denied them much deserved flood mitigation money. In addition, Harris County has not decided the Method of Distribution for the funding it received, which leaves the most impacted people, yet again, in a precarious situation.</p> <p>I hope the board will consider the history of risks to the impacted communities and develop an equitable Method of Delivery for the CDBG-MIT funds.</p> <p>Sincerely, Council Member Leticia Plummer, DDS At-Large 4</p>	<p>(For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/.</p>	
7/25/2022	Web Portal	David Douglas	Eng. Administrator, Liberty County	<p>Liberty County desires to do a county wide drainage plan and study. A study of this type is long over due and will allow the county to begin mitigating drainage problem areas that are identified in the study. GLO has indicated that funding for this type of study is available in the CDBG-MIT grant program. Liberty County has been allocated approximately 21.2 million dollars from the CDBG-MIT program and proposes to use approximately 15 million for</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the</p>	<p>The MOD may be revised, pending H-GAC Board direction, to include planning-only activities and make them LMI neutral.</p>

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				the afore referenced study and plan. GLO has indicated that there is no LMI requirement on study and planning grants. HGAC has developed a MOD for the CDBG-MIT grant and that MOD has a LMI requirement. Liberty County respectfully suggests that the HGAC MOD be evaluated in respect to LMI requirements and that the COG consider a variance for entities that wish to do studies and plans.	Texas General Land Office (GLO). The MOD does not currently include planning projects without a built component in excess of applicable funding caps outlined in the GLO's State Action Plan Amendment 1. However, GLO has indicated that such potential projects could be considered if the H-GAC MOD specifically added them as an eligible activity, and that they would not need to meet the national objective for LMI. We encourage the Board of Directors to consider this issue as the revision and approval of the MOD is being discussed at a future Board meeting.	
7/25/2022	Email	Nate McDonald	Matagorda County Judge	See Correspondence 8 7-25-22-McDonaldH-GAC Staff and Board Members,Please accept this writing as my public comments with regard to the preliminary Method of Distribution (MOD) for U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Mitigation funds to be provided for our region.In that th H-GAC Water Committee and staff worked for many months to promulgate a fair and equitable MOD for the 13 counties of the H-GAC, that was debated by and approved by the elected officials who comprise the Water Committee with multiple scenario input from H-GAC staff, then sent to the full H-GAC Board of Directors, which is comprised of elected leaders from each of our region's counties, as well as elected leaders from each of our region's largest cities; my belief is that this MOD has been transparently and publicly vetted, and was approved for submittal to the TX GLO by a public vote by the majority of the H-GAC Board of Directors present at the February 15, 2022, H-GAC Board Meeting.This MOD is the culmination of, m many cases, years of planning, studies and modeling to bring forward shovel ready projects within this entirety of our region. Most are multi-jurisdictional projects that have much benefit for both upstream and downstream partners. There are no jurisdictions who will have 100% of their mitigation needs met, but by working together as a region, we will have prioritized the biggest needs and met	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO).	None

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				many of those.As we know that Harris County received a direct appropriation of 750 million dollars and that the other twelve counties have 469 million dollars to divide between them, my belief is that Harris _County has plenty of mitigation funds to Spend with the cities within Harris County and that some very good projects can be accomplished in the balance of the region with the other 469 million dollars, if this MOD is given final approval by the TX GLO and HUD.There are rainy more mitigation needs in our region than just those that reside in Harris County, thus I urge the TXGLO and HUD to approve this preliminary MOD as written and allow our region to access these funds and build out the mitigation projects in each of our counties. Thank you for allowing me to make these comments and please have a good day.Best regards,Nate McDonald County Judge Matagorda County		
7/26/2022	Email	James Thurmond		<p>The HGAC statement on the MOD webpage that “Neither Harris County nor cities wholly within Harris County are included in this funding allocation” absolutely does not make sense to me. It is neither logical or rational from the perspective of where the greatest number of people live and where the most damage occurred.</p> <p>I am a retired city manager with 30 years of experience in four different Texas cities, the last one being Missouri City, where I currently reside. So, as far as my personal self-interest based on my place of residence, I should be overwhelmed with HGAC’s generosity to the 12 HGAC counties included in the funding MOD because it includes my home county of Fort Bend County and that portion of Missouri City in Harris County, but ethically, it is not right.</p> <p>The fourth tenet of the Texas City Management Association Code of Ethics states “Recognize that the chief function of local government at all times is to serve the best interests of all of the people.” Admittedly, this code is applicable only to city managers and within their</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board’s anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/.</p>	None

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				<p>respective jurisdictions. However, it has been argued that a manager’s responsibility should include his/her neighboring jurisdictions especially when there are boundary-crossing problems. The same should be true for all public officials when confronted with a problem that cross boundaries.</p> <p>Simply put, HGAC is composed of over 130 local governments, and while their first legal obligation is to look out for the interests of their specific jurisdictions, it seems to me that when a problem crosses jurisdictional boundaries, then they should be looking out for all the jurisdictions which suffered from the problem – i.e., Harvey flooding.</p> <p>Perhaps, I am missing something that justifies the deletion of the Harris County and its cities from the CDBG funding. If I am, please advise.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into the HGAC MOD for Harvey related CDBG Mitigation funds.</p> <p>James Thurmond</p>		
7/26/2022	Email	Peggy Zahler		<p>As a League City citizen and someone who flooded during Hurricane Harvey, I believe it important that all our citizens in the region benefit from flood mitigation programs.</p> <p>Flooding knows no boundaries nor was my financial status checked before the waters came rushing into my house at midnight. With 3 feet of water in my house caused by a damming effect at I45 and Clear Creek, I understand no detention pond or revised drainage plan will address this regional watershed threat.</p> <p>The dynamics of a watershed are complex and regional solutions cross many boundaries. I understand nuisance flooding or street flooding impacting mobility. With</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board’s anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The MOD requires each entity receiving an allocation to affirm they will use at least 50% of their funds on projects whose area of benefit includes at least 51% low-to-moderate-income individuals. There are currently no opportunities for variances from this requirement because it stems from</p>	None

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				<p>opportunities afforded a community, the emphasis on life and safety seem to be paramount when looking to the future. Looking at a project from a total benefit perspective and not pitting income households against each other seems like a better approach to keeping us all safe.</p> <p>I am unable to control what happens upstream or downstream from me. There is ample data identifying problem areas in regional watersheds. I request that we assess large regional projects which cross several communities. Street drainage projects and localized flooding, impacting small areas, should be viewed and assessed differently than the type of regional projects needed to address watershed issues. With the extreme weather conditions, houses several blocks from the watershed can be flooded with property values of all negatively impacted. Flooding in neighborhoods can determine the future viability of a subdivision.</p> <p>I request that we use this opportunity to have serious discussions about the implications of a significant emphasis on the LMI component for regional projects that can impact thousands. Perhaps, a different perspective of how to view the importance of regional projects is necessary to assure we are using the public's money to address and solve problems.</p> <p>Peggy Zahler</p>	<p>the funding source itself. The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects for your area. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.</p>	
7/27/2022	Email	David Forster		<p>Dear Sirs,</p> <p>I would like to offer two comments on the proposed allocation methodology:</p> <p>1) The allocation should consider the merits of proposed projects not only to the population residing within the area of allocation, but to the population residing upstream</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the</p>	None

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				<p>of a potential project. As an example, allocating \$5 million to an upstream project that benefits only those living upstream is not as effective as an allocation of \$5 million to a downstream project that benefits both the upstream and downstream populations. I suggest that the population allocation portion of the funds should not consider only the population living in the political boundaries of the allocated area, but also all impacted populations upstream.</p> <p>2) In the interest of treating all people equally, the LMI allocation part of the formula should be eliminated. Reallocating this weighting equally to the other categories would be a better representation of the damage done by flooding and therefore the most effective way to allocate funds to where they can potentially have the most impact. The Population category already weights allocated funding to more highly populated areas, which ensures funding is allocated to the greatest number of affected individuals regardless of their socioeconomic status. Furthermore, areas of high population density would receive larger allocations and higher population density areas are likely to already have more LMI individuals.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration,</p>	<p>Texas General Land Office (GLO). The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects for your area. The MOD, and the funding source itself, requires each entity receiving an allocation to affirm they will use at least 50% of their funds on projects whose area of benefit includes at least 51% low-to-moderate-income individuals. There are currently no opportunities for variances from this requirement.</p>	
7/27/2022	Web Portal	Shelley Skeele		<p>I live in the Longwood subdivision of Friendswood bordered by Clear Creek to the north. Though I personally haven't flooded my house was next in Harvey and all of the houses nearer the creek did flood. The low point at the intersection of Steele Drive and Myrtlewood was impassable for many days. My neighbor, who was 9 months pregnant, had to be canoed to my house after her home and flooded and she needed to get to the hospital to deliver her child. Another neighbor was recently bought out by FEMA or the City, and the house torn down due to multiple floodings. I pray that we get some relief from the flooding of Clear Creek into the Longwood subdivision.</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of</p>	None

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					eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects for your area. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.	
7/27/2022	Web Portal	Karla Sinclair		<p>Hello, I would like to give you a very brief background about the area of Friendswood that I live in - Longwood Park. We are right on the border of where Pearland and Friendswood meet (Off of Dixie Farm Road and near FM518 roughly). The creek is on the next block away from my home. I used to have a backyard neighbor. After 4 or 5 times flooding, they finally gave up and took a buy out and had to move away from the home they had lived in for many many years. The lot next to them had already been a tear-down. The lot 2 doors down ended up having to be torn down and they did re-build on blocks at a higher level. Numerous other houses in our area have flooded as well. From what I understand, Harris County and Pearland have made major improvements to get the water out of their areas flowing down towards Galveston or Clear Lake faster so now the much smaller (less tax dollars available) Friendswood gets a ton of water from the rain plus what flows from upstream and then it bottlenecks in Friendswood and causes major flooding for us because improvements have not been made to the jagged creek and plugs in the creek to get the water moving on its way. PLEASE consider providing funds for our area so that improvements can be made so that my neighborhood as well as many other neighborhoods do not experience the horrible flooding situations that we have in the past. Thank you!</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects for your area. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.</p>	None
7/27/2022	Web Portal	Missy Powers		<p>Polly Ranch Estates (neighborhood in Friendswood) borders Clear Creek and Chigger Creek. As a resident of a home that has flooded, (most have in the neighborhood)</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region.</p>	None

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				I'm asking for high consideration for our area to be included in the distribution of funds. Thank you!	(For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects for your area. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.	
7/27/2022	Web Portal	Barbara McClellan		I am very concerned about flooding risk on Galveston County. In particular in Friendswood, where we have seen increased flooding in northern Friendswood after Brazoria County completed flood mitigation efforts for their residents. Clear Creek is unable to handle the increased volume of water coming from Brazoria and funds to mitigate flood risk in Friendswood and Galveston County are critical. Thank you	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects for your area. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.	None

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7/27/2022	Web Portal	Melissa Burkett		Friendswood has historically been a pinch point for flooding. The main artery, Clear Creek, is fed by three other creeks. Much work has been done on these creeks, making the water come down faster, but Clear Creek has too many bends, curves, vegetation growth, etc. to accommodate this water. Over the years of living in Friendswood, it takes less and less rain to create a flooding situation. A small community with a small tax base, we are in desperate need of state, regional and federal relief. Rising taxes will never be enough to pay for the projects needed to reduce flooding in our community. Our area and city governments are actively working on this relief but they need assistance. Going back many years, we have continually suffered during minor, major and the "super major" storms.	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects for your area. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.	None
7/27/2022	Web Portal	Tesa Wroblewski	Director Disaster Recovery and Grants, City of Galveston	The City of Galveston (City) is in agreement with the HGAC Method of Distribution (MOD) and extends its support of finalization of the MOD in its current form. The City believes that the Council has achieved its goal to develop a formula basis for funding distribution based on objective, replicable, and verifiable data that takes into account both the vulnerable populations within all area counties and the impacts that future disasters will have on the region. The City further believes that the MOD meets the Council's guiding principles in that the MOD is an accessible, understandable, and universally applicable allocation formula that has been informed by transparency and inclusivity. While we are sympathetic to and understand the tremendous need in Harris County and, in particular, the City of Houston, the City of Galveston believes that the Council has appropriately considered the Harris County allocation and the significant resources that will be made	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO).	None

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				available through the regional mitigation process for those communities. Delay of the HGAC MOD approval until the Harris County process is complete would put vulnerable communities and citizens in the other 12 counties at a significant disadvantage and cost precious time that, quite frankly, we don't have in the face of potential future disasters. The City of Galveston urges the Council to proceed forward with submission of the MOD for Texas General Land Office approval.		
7/27/2022	Web Portal	nancy Lauritsen		I live in Friendswood, Galveston County and flooded at my house from hurricane Harvey. The water rushing through Clear Creek bottlenecked at Dixie FM and the banks overflowed. There is also a Plug at the golf course on 2351, that is slowing the water flow from Clear Creek to Clear Lake. Funds are needed so this widespread damage does not happen again.	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects for your area. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.	None
7/27/2022	Email	Edward Pollard	Houston City Council Member, District J	See Correspondence 9 7-27-22-Pollard Dear Members of the H-GAC Board, I am writing to express my opposition to the current Method of Distribution for the CDBG-MIT monies. Under the current MOD, the city of Houston is allocated less than 2% of the available CDBG-MIT funds. Given that Houston's	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the	None

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				<p>population comprises over 30% of the HGAC region, 1.9% of H-GAC's funding does not sufficiently cover Houston and the surrounding region. Additionally, Harris County's MOD is unclear regarding how much funding the city will receive. This creates another obstacle towards helping the people of Houston.</p> <p>During Hurricane Harvey, more than 300,000 housing units flooded across Houston. While the entire city was negatively impacted, District J communities were some of the most harmed. Minority communities are the most vulnerable to major flooding because they have been historically underfunded by the GLO and other entities. This type of discrimination against minority populations further perpetuates flood relief disparities. Within District J, these underfunded communities include Sharpstown, Braeburn, Gulfton, Alief, Westwood, Richmond Plaza South, and St. George. These areas are still suffering from Harvey, and they require adequate investment to improve drainage and other flood reducing infrastructure. Without the necessary funding, these communities will continue to struggle following every major flooding event.</p> <p>As the Council Member for District J, I must advocate for the needs of my constituents. I implore HGAC to allocate more funds to the people who need it the most. We must use the CDBG-MIT funds as they were intended and equitably invest in our communities. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working together on better serving the people of Houston.</p> <p>Best regards, Council Member Edward Pollard District J</p>	<p>Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/.</p>	
7/27/2022	Email	Cyrus Reed and Grank Bates	Sierra Club, Lone Star Chapter	<p>See Correspondence 18 7-27-22-Reed-Bates</p> <p>To Whom It May Concern at H-GAC:</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region.</p>	None

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				<p>The Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club is the state chapter of the Sierra Club, and the Houston Regional Group represents the Sierra Club in counties in the larger H-GAC area. We have roughly 28,000 members in Texas, including approximately 5,000 in the H-GAC region. We participated in public meetings and the comment period with the GLO’s initial MIT-CDBG plan and were supportive of including specific money for the Council of Governments for future distribution as part of that plan. We have had a chance to review the Houston-Galveston Area Council’s (H-GAC) Method of Distribution (MOD) for \$488,772,000 in Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Regional Mitigation Program funds. We do appreciate the opportunity to offer brief comments, but are very disappointed that the draft plan appears to cut out opportunities for funding in the area that was most impacted by Hurricane Harvey, as well as the lack of detail to the importance of green infrastructure.</p> <p>We have three main comments: 1. Don’t remove Harris County from funding consideration; 2. Amend the Method of Distribution to better center equity; 3. Prioritize natural and green infrastructure and smart land use and development.</p> <p>1. Do Not Remove Harris County and Municipalities Within Harris County from Eligibility</p> <p>Under its proposal, H-GAC’s MOD would specifically exclude Harris County and municipalities within its jurisdiction from a distribution by the COG. The rationale in excluding Harris County from the \$488 million is that Harris County has been pegged for a future allocation of \$750 million by the GLO in its State Action Plan through</p>	<p>(For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board’s anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/. Regarding the question of using Social Vulnerability Index data, H-GAC used the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) population data as an equity factor instead of the Social Vulnerability Index (SVI), because LMI data directly captures areas with low-income households and is available at the Census-Block group-level. Conversely, SVI is a complex factor derived from multiple variables and is unavailable for some of entities in the H-GAC region. A fundamental focus of our review of allocation formula and data factors was that they should be straightforward, universally available and applicable for all entities potentially receiving allocations. The MOD focuses on equity through its use of LMI data as an indicator of vulnerable populations in determining allocations and its LMI requirements for use of the funds. The MOD requires each entity receiving an allocation to affirm they will use at least 50% of their funds on projects whose area of benefit includes at least 51% low-to-moderate-income individuals. There are currently no opportunities for variances from this requirement. The Board of Directors elected to retain all eligible activities available under the GLO’s State Action Plan Amendment 1, including natural and green</p>	

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				<p>Amendment No 1, and will develop its own distribution method. However, that amendment was needed due to the GLO’s initial lack of funding provided for Harris County, and was the result of the rejection of the GLO’s plan by HUD, and is unrelated to this pot of money.</p> <p>In fact, Harris county and the City of Houston had the largest number of households impacted, the largest disaster damage score, the biggest low-to-moderate income population, and the highest population in the floodplain. Indeed, Amendment No. 1 only occurred after Texas Housers and Northeast Action Collective filed a complaint with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), “alleging that GLO’s design and operation of the Competition discriminated on the basis of race and national origin through the use of scoring criteria that substantially disadvantaged Black and Hispanic residents.”</p> <p>Earlier this year, HUD required the GLO to enter into a Voluntary Compliance Agreement (VCA) to avoid further scrutiny by the United States Department of Justice (DOJ). In the meantime, as a result, the GLO has amended its State Action Plan (Amendment 1) to include the Harris County Mitigation Method of Distribution – providing \$750 million to the county to distribute. Amendment 1 more than doubled the funding in the Regional Mitigation Program – the GLO’s second largest program – from \$500 million to nearly \$1.2 billion. Importantly, the programs that the GLO amended in order to provide funds to the Harris County Mitigation MOD were always separate from the Regional Mitigation Program – and nowhere under the State Action Plan was there any discussion about excluding Harris County or municipalities within its jurisdiction from the Regional Mitigation Program due to Amendment 1.</p> <p>It makes no sense to cut Harris County and its cities out of</p>	<p>infrastructure projects. The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects, and consider natural infrastructure options and ways to ensure equitable outcomes.</p>	

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				<p>the allocation simply because Harris County will be getting a separate portion of funding. Instead, we should consider equitable funding as a whole, including the H-GAC initial pot of \$488 million being discussed.</p> <p>In fact, the GLO has already awarded money to many jurisdictions that are part of the H-GAC under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition. If the COG wished to remove eligibility for entities that received funds under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition, it should not single out Harris County and municipalities within its jurisdiction from eligibility. Nowhere else in the COG’s MOD does H-GAC remove other entities, or reduce the amount of funding eligible to those entities, if they received funding under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition. Therefore, we believe that the COG unjustly singles out Harris County and municipalities within its jurisdiction for exclusion.</p> <p>In addition, removing Harris County from the H-GAC MOD opens the COG up to a Title VI complaint since it excludes the most diverse region within the COG from eligibility. If an investigation did occur, it could open the COG up to timely delays – harming the region as a whole.</p> <p>We strongly urge H-GAC to allow Harris County and the municipalities within its jurisdiction eligibility to receive funds. While we do not have a specific number to suggest, we would note that the City of Houston has recommended that 30%, or \$148 million, of the COG’s funds should go to the city. We believe that assuring that 30 to 40 percent of the funds go to the City of Houston and Harris County is appropriate.</p> <p>Distribution Factors Should Focus on Ensuring Equitable Distribution of H-GAC COG</p>		

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				<p>MOD Funds</p> <p>The COG MOD should allocate funds to mitigate disasters in the areas of highest vulnerability and the areas most at risk due to hazards. One way to achieve this would be for the CDC’s Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) to be added to the distribution factors. Entities with high SVI scores should be prioritized for distribution of funds under the MOD. Providing equity in funding to areas and peoples that are most vulnerable is key.</p> <p>Under the current proposed framework, H-GAC puts a high value on personal and real property damage as a distribution factor. This tends to disproportionately provide funds to high income areas. Thus, areas that are less vulnerable may under the MOD that is proposed may benefit more than more vulnerable areas. Instead, the MOD should prioritize equity and vulnerable areas.</p> <p>. We recommend reducing the weighting of personal and real property compared to other factors that would distribute funds to the most vulnerable areas with the highest risk. We do not object to giving personal and real property damage some consideration but believe it is over-emphasized in the proposed MOD.</p> <p>Prioritize natural or green infrastructure projects and also projects to make the coast more resilient through local land use and building codes.</p> <p>Natural or green infrastructure projects were heavily encouraged for the use of CDBG-MIT funds in the GLO’s State Action Plan. However, out of the 81 projects that were chosen for initial funding by the GLO, only one project incorporated natural infrastructure features.</p> <p>Green and natural infrastructure projects benefit</p>		

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				<p>communities year- round, reducing risks from multiple hazards such as improving air and water quality and mitigating urban heat island effect, while also providing recreational spaces for communities. There are vast areas of native prairie and important woodland lands that can and should be protected and could be an important asset in protecting coastal communities.</p> <p>Due to the importance of green and natural infrastructure projects, we urge H-GAC to promote green and natural infrastructure by reconsidering a set aside for natural or green infrastructure projects. This can be done by making natural or green infrastructure a regional priority and limiting subrecipients in the region to projects that meet that priority. Even in “traditional” infrastructure projects H-GAC can provide additional consideration if those projects include some attention to green design and infrastructure as part of the overall project.</p> <p>In addition, prioritizing projects that involve comprehensive land use ordinances and adoption of modern building codes – such as the suite of 2021 International Code Council - can assure that new construction is built in appropriate non-flood-prone areas and built to standards meant to withstand hurricanes and reduce water and energy use. It is vital for cities and counties to invest in modernizing our land use ordinances and adopting and enforcing modern building codes.</p> <hr/> <p>The Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club and the Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club appreciate this opportunity to submit these brief comments,</p> <p>Cyrus Reed, PhD</p>		

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Date Received	Method	Name	Role/Title	Comment	Response	Associated changes to MOD
				<p>Conservation Director Sierra Club, Lone Star Chapter Cyrus.reed@sierraclub.org</p> <p>Frank Blake Conservation Committee Houston Group, Sierra Club frankblake@juno.com</p>		
7/27/2022	Email	Ronald Lovely		<p>If we don't fix Clear Creek it doesn't matter how much money jurisdictions get for their neighborhoods. You can't keep pushing more water into Clear Creek and get less flooding until we lower the elevation of flow in Clear Creek. Clear Creek is the cause of catastrophic flooding of neighborhoods in the Clear Creek watershed.</p> <p>Please allocate all money to watersheds based on the number of flooded structures from the most recent catastrophic flood. That would be Harvey. Please allocate all money for the Clear Creek watershed toward the goal of terracing Clear Creek to lower the elevation of water in Clear Creek during a flood. This will make a place for the water to go. Jurisdictions can then use their local funding to get water out of their neighborhoods without flooding their downstream neighbors. Please allocate all HGAC funds for the Clear Creek Watershed toward lowering the elevation of water in Clear Creek so that jurisdictions can move water out of their neighborhoods without flooding their downstream neighbors.</p> <p>We have to lower the flow of water in Clear Creek to save neighborhoods. Otherwise moving water out of neighborhoods to Clear Creek just floods other neighborhoods. Thank you.</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). Allocations to local governments are based on a formula that includes multiple factors and is applied equally across all eligible jurisdictions, including both urban and rural areas, other than jurisdictions or portions of jurisdictions within Harris County. Additionally, each county except for Harris receives a base funding allocation. An additional allocation is made to H-GAC to directly support regional and urgent need projects. The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects for your area. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.</p>	None

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

Date Received	Method	Name	Role/Title	Comment	Response	Associated changes to MOD
7/28/2022	Email	Maureen Viaclovsky		Many of us are So Frustrated with the delay in & lack of substantial flood control efforts in Friendswood anywhere near us! It has been nearly 5 years since we were flooded & we have seen no major changes to prevent the threat of flooding again in our area! We live in Polly Ranch near Chigger Creek & Clear Creek and we request flood mitigation that will help us - PLEASE!	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects for your area. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.	None
7/28/2022	Web Portal	Chuck Stansy		The army core of engineers Brazoria County, Harris County, Harris County drainage association, and Pearland, have spent 50 years making sure they could drain their part of the 260 square mile water shed out to clear lake. I wish that Galveston County and down stream municipalities would have had as much foresight. It is getting worse, not better!	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). Thank you for providing insights on flooding challenges in your community.	None
7/28/2022	Email	Nick Kornuta	Flooding and Drainage Committee Chair, Super Neighborhood 17, Eldridge/West Oaks	Dear H-GAC, We wish to provide feedback on the MOD for the Flood Mitigation Funding, as it pertains to the City of Houston (CoH), on behalf of Super Neighborhood 17 (SN17).	Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to	None

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

Date Received	Method	Name	Role/Title	Comment	Response	Associated changes to MOD
				<p>SN 17 lies entirely within the boundaries of the CoH. While we are in Harris County, our infrastructure is maintained by CoH and not Harris County Pct 4, as would be the case for other large areas of west Harris County. SN 17 has as its northern boundary, Buffalo Bayou. As such we experienced widespread damage from Hurricane Harvey's flooding. And, much of this damage was compounded by the old and improperly maintained drainage system that is managed by CoH.</p> <p>There is a very distinct difference in jurisdiction for Harris County and CoH. As you must know, about one half of Harris County's ~4.5 million residents live within the CoH. The other half are in the County's jurisdiction and their infrastructure is managed by Commissioner's Court. It seems unimaginable that the CoH is only scheduled to receive 1.9% of the \$488 M in funds to be distributed by the H-GAC in the upcoming process. Statistically, a huge portion of those affected by the damage wrought by Harvey are within the CoH. The funds made available to help mitigate future disasters should be allocated accordingly. To bring the greatest benefit for the money spent. And, considering that many low income families live in the CoH and they often do not have their voices heard, great care should be taken to be certain that funds are equitably shared among those jurisdictions that can can do the most good with those dollars.</p> <p>We are therefore providing our feedback, in the strongest possible way, to significantly increase the portion of the funding allocated to the CoH in the upcoming process.</p> <p>Very sincerely,</p> <p>Nick Kornuta Flooding & Drainage Committee Chair, SN 17 On behalf of Super Neighborhood 17, Eldridge/West Oaks</p>	<p>the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community.</p>	

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

Date Received	Method	Name	Role/Title	Comment	Response	Associated changes to MOD
7/28/2022	Email	Tina Peterson	Executive Director, Harris County Flood Control District	<p>See Correspondence 11 728-22-Peterson</p> <p>The purpose of this letter is to provide public comments on the Houston-Galveston Area Council's (H-GAC) draft Method of Distribution (MOD) for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) funding. In February of 2018, the United States Congress appropriated billions of dollars to mitigate the catastrophic damages of extreme weather related events for regions impacted between 2015 and 2017, including Hurricane Harvey, and Harris County is the only County in Texas to have been impacted by Presidentially declared flooding disasters in all three years.</p> <p>The Texas General Land Office (GLO) received more than \$4 Billion to distribute in accordance with criteria established by Congress and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The GLO then appropriated \$488 million to H-GAC, of which Harris County is a part of. Inexplicably, the H-GAC's draft MOD specifically excludes all agencies within the geographical limits of Harris County from any of that funding – with the exception of declined funding that may be reallocated to cities (or portions thereof) located in Harris County.</p> <p>While the MOD states that the reason for this exclusion is because the GLO has separately appropriated \$750 million to Harris County, it provides no statistical measure for this exclusion and does not consider the percent of H-GAC population within Harris County identified by HUD as most impacted and distressed. For example, 73 percent of the low to moderate income population across all of H-GAC's 13 counties resides within Harris County. Further, the GLO's amended Action Plan appropriating funds to Harris County has not yet been approved by HUD, and their original Action Plan was found to be discriminatory to Black and Hispanic residences.</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/. Thank you for providing insights into the flooding challenges faced by your community, and for the District's continuing efforts to improve conditions for its constituents.</p>	None

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

Date Received	Method	Name	Role/Title	Comment	Response	Associated changes to MOD
				<p>For these reasons, the Harris County Flood Control District believes approval of the H-GAC MOD at this time would be pre-mature, and respectfully requests that the MOD be revised to include eligible agencies within Harris County.</p> <p>Sincerely, Tina Peterson PhD, PE, Executive Director</p>		
7/28/2022	Email	Abbie Kamin	Houston City Council Member, District C	<p>See Correspondence 13 7-28-22-Kamin</p> <p>Dear Members of the H-GAC Board of Directors, As the Houston City Council Member for District C, I represent nearly 250,000 residents and some of the neighborhoods hardest hit by flooding in the city, including areas with the most repetitive instances of flooding in the entire region. I also serve as Chair of our city's Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee and have the privilege to serve as an alternate at TPC on behalf of the City of Houston.</p> <p>I respectfully submit the following for the record, raising strong objections to the proposed method of distribution (MOD) of Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) funds as I did in previous testimony at the February 15, 2022 Board Meeting before this body. Flood prone communities in my district and across the city deserve protection. Additional funds must be allocated to the City of Houston under the Houston-Galveston Area Council's (H-GAC) proposed allocation scheme. Alternatively, this item should be tabled or delayed until a more appropriate time.</p> <p>The proposed MOD unjustifiably allocates a mere 1.9% of H-GAC's \$488,762,000, to the City of Houston. This small of an allocation runs contrary to the Congressional intent for these funds and the demographic and hydrological realities of the region over which H-GAC has jurisdiction.</p> <p>The overwhelming population Houston represents when</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/.</p>	None

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

Date Received	Method	Name	Role/Title	Comment	Response	Associated changes to MOD
				<p>compared to other areas should be considered to ensure funds are fairly and equitably allocated. Houston is home to over 2.3 million people, making up 31% of the entire population H-GAC serves. Its population size is also more than 15 times larger than the next largest member city. Despite representing millions of Texans, the current plan allocates fewer funds to Houston than some of the significantly less populous members, including, in one case, \$2.5 million less than a County with a population of less than 42,000.</p> <p>Jurisdictions with significant flooding history should receive a larger portion of funds as intended by Congress. Houston is the only major city in the region to experience consecutive declared flood disasters in 2015, 2016, and 2017. The funds at issue were allocated by Congress as a response to the weather-related disasters from 2015 to Hurricane Harvey. Looking beyond Harvey, the challenges continue. The City of Houston has experienced at least seven federally declared disasters in six years.</p> <p>H-GAC should not stray from proportional distribution models previously followed in dolling out federal disaster dollars. Houston sustained approximately 50% of the statewide damage in Hurricane Harvey. Recovery from this disaster was the impetus for these dollars to be distributed by H-GAC. Previously, the City of Houston received 25% of total CDBG-DR17 dollars (with Harris County receiving an independent 25%), and about 40% of FEMA hazard mitigation dollars in the aftermath of the disaster. H-GAC should follow common-sense, proportional standards based on damage sustained to ensure lives and the greater regional economy is not at risk.</p> <p>H-GAC should not rely on GLO’s proposed award to Harris County in the determination of funding amounts for the</p>		

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

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				<p>City of Houston. The obvious and blatant issues with GLO’s own funding scheme- that is the source of these funds- is currently being challenged and is not final. As such, H-GAC should, at the very least, delay or table this item until the matter is settled in the eyes of Federal Departments involved. Furthermore, the funding scheme by the GLO, and its de minimis allocation to Harris County should not be considered in the distribution model this body uses. Not only is Harris County a separate and independent jurisdiction from the City of Houston, \$750 million directed from GLO between two of the largest populations and the hardest hit by natural disasters, is wholly insufficient and should not be the basis of this body’s proposal to allocate a mere 1.9% of funds to Houston. It is not known whether Houston will receive any of the funds GLO allocated to Harris County, and it should not be assumed that it will. Any allocation to Houston should be considered independent of Harris County.</p> <p>The ability of the city to effectively protect our communities does not just depend on county bayous and rivers, but on the ability of our urban drainage systems to convey stormwater to larger channels. As a city we are doing all we can with what we have, but it is not enough. Without an adequate and proportional CDBG-MIT allocation, we will not have the drainage capacity to protect lives and livelihoods. Failing to provide that funding will have significant upstream and downstream outfall impacts, putting not only my district’s neighborhoods at substantial risk, but many of the surrounding communities in the H-GAC region. We are all in this together. Without the proper investment in Houston, H-GAC as a whole will not be able to thrive as it has for so many years.</p> <p>I appreciate H-GAC leadership and staff for their work, and the Board’s consideration of the sizeable objections</p>		

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

Date Received	Method	Name	Role/Title	Comment	Response	Associated changes to MOD
				<p>presented by the public. I respectfully request reconsideration of the method of distribution. Alternatively, I ask that this item be tabled or suspended until such time that other funding distributions are finalized.</p> <p>Respectfully, Abbie Kamin Houston City Council Member, District C Chair, Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee</p>		
7/28/2022	Email	Mary Nan Huffman	Houston City Council Member, District G	<p>See Correspondence 14 7-28-22-Huffman</p> <p>Dear Houston-Galveston Area Council Board of Directors,</p> <p>Following Hurricane Harvey in 2017, Houston was left with \$16 billion in residential damage and nearly 100,000 flooded houses. Almost five years later, the effects of this storm are still being felt in the communities that I represent on Houston's west side.</p> <p>In response to the devastation that was endured by our region, the Texas General Land Office (GLO) allocated \$488,762,000 in federal CDBG,MIT funds to the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H,GAC) for mitigation projects designed to increase the region's resilience to natural disasters.</p> <p>In February of this year, H,GAC's Water Resources Committee and the H,GAC Board approved a preliminary Method of Distribution (MOD) for these funds which allocated a meager 1.9 percent of those dollars to Houston - the largest population center in the region, and fourth largest city in the United States.</p> <p>The consensus of the H,GAC Board seemed to indicate that because Harris County is receiving \$750 million, cities within the county should be mostly excluded. I believe that this rationale is flawed because it does not consider</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/.</p>	None

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

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				<p>timing.</p> <p>Harris County's MOD has not been released and there is, so far, no indication that the City of Houston will be the recipient of any of the county's CDBG,MIT funds. Improving drainage infrastructure in the largest city in Texas is an issue too important to be left to this kind of assumption.</p> <p>I urge H,GAC to delay approval of their preliminary MOD until after the Harris County MOD is released. Afterwards, H,GAC will be able adjust the allocation for Houston to best account for what funding the city may have received from Harris County. This reconsideration will provide H,GAC with the opportunity to ensure that the communities which received the most devastation will benefit proportionally from these funds.</p> <p>I appreciate your consideration of this request and continue to be appreciative of your service to the residents of our region.</p> <p>Kind regards, Mary Nan Huffman</p>		
7/28/2022	Email	Sylvia Rivas	President, Brays Oaks Super Neighborhood #36	<p>See Correspondence 15 7-28-22-Rivas</p> <p>To the Houston-Galveston Area Council:</p> <p>The Brays Oaks Super Neighborhood Council #36 requests that the Houston-Galveston Area Council ("H-GAC") change the provisions in its preliminary Method of Distribution ("MOD") plan which currently exclude cities located in Harris County from funding consideration until the reallocation of declined funds. If there are no declined funds, Houston and the other cities in Harris County will receive zero dollars from the HGAC. Although the Texas General Land Office ("GLO") may have approved the</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant –</p>	None

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

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				<p>preliminary MOD, these provisions are inconsistent with the intent expressed in the GLO Staff Responses in the State Action Plan Amendment 1 ("Amendment 1 "). If the H-GAC disagrees, then, as an alternative the Super Neighborhood requests that the H-GAC wait to submit its MOD plan to the GLO until Harris County publishes its MOD and the two MOD plans can be coordinated to ensure funding for cities within Harris County.</p> <p>In Amendment 1, Section 5.4.5.4. the GLO states that "Funds from the Harris County MOD may be allocated to: i Harris County; ii cities or towns within Harris County; and iii special purpose districts " Amendment 1, page 251. The GLO wrote "may," not "shall" or "will" or "must." The decision regarding who receives a MOD allocation is discretionary with Harris County. The primary concern is that each proposed project must mitigate one of the identifiable risks under Section 5.4.5.1.</p> <p>Therefore, it is possible that none of the cities located within Harris County will receive an allocation from Harris County.</p> <p>As the GLO Staff commented in some of its Amendment 1 Responses: "Houston, as a city within Harris County, will benefit from projects the Harris County method of distribution identifies." Amendment 1, Page 365. However, the GLO Staff did not end their discussion of funds for the cities in Harris County there.</p> <p>The GLO Staff Responses to commenters regarding cities in Harris County, particularly Houston, made clear that the cities are eligible to receive funding from both the Harris County MOD and the H-GAC MOD. In response to a received comment in which the commenter stated that Houston will still receive zero dollars for its mitigation projects, the GLO Staff Response stated "The City of</p>	<p>Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/.</p>	

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

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				<p>Houston is an eligible entity in both the Harris County Mitigation Method of Distribution and the Regional Mitigation Program for the Houston-Galveston Area Council Method of Distribution. The commenter is encouraged to contact local public officials for more information regarding the distribution of MIT funding within each of these areas that may benefit the City of Houston." Amendment 1, Pages 354-355. As confirmed repeatedly by H-GAC, the GLO is g1v1ng H-GAC \$488,762,000 and Harris County \$750,000,000 for a total distribution amount of \$1,238,762,000 for our region. The GLO Staff Responses makes numerous references to the total of \$1.2 billion being available for distribution for City of Houston projects. For example, in response to a Houston City Council Member who discussed needed drainage projects in her District but does not have any funding for the projects, the GLO Staff Response stated "Action Plan Amendment 1 more than doubles the funds available for the Regional Mitigation Program which focuses on local control of limited mitigation funds available in the state. The GLO encourages the commenter to participate in the Public Planning Meeting and the second public hearing on the draft HoustonGalveston Area Council Method of Distribution and the Harris County Mitigation Method of Distribution where another \$1.2 billion of CDBG-MIT funding will be considered for allocation." Amendment 1, page 379. Similar comments about the \$1.2 billion funding and the dual eligibility are included in GLO Staff Responses to commenters discussing Northeast Houston (Amendment 1, pages 353 and 368), the Brays Bayou area in Houston (Amendment 1, page 379), the Westbury area in Houston (Amendment 1, page 400), the Pleasantville area in Houston (Amendment 1, page 355), and Houston in general (Amendment 1, pages 360,381. 381,382,384,397).</p> <p>What is important is that the \$1.2 billion be used to make</p>		

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

Date Received	Method	Name	Role/Title	Comment	Response	Associated changes to MOD
				<p>our region more resilient in the future which includes reducing or even eliminating future flooding. We hope that H-GAC will redesign its MOD to provide funding to cities located within Harris County and even work together with Harris County to benefit all of the at-risk residents and businesses in our region.</p> <p>Sincerely, Sylvia Rivas, President, Brays Oaks Super Neighborhood Council #36</p>		
7/28/2022	Email	Tiffany D. Thomas	Houston City Council Member	<p>See Correspondence 17 7-28-22-Thomas</p> <p>City Council Member Tiffany D. Thomas’ Response to H-GAC MOD Announcement</p> <p>In February the Houston Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) board voted to award the City of Houston \$9,232,700—only 1.9% of the preliminary method of distribution (MOD) of \$488 million in risk mitigation funds for projects related to flooding, hurricanes, and other natural disasters. Though many board members acquiesced to the notion that cities within Harris County should receive any funds due to the County being awarded \$750 million, I will concede. However, if it had not been for the damage within the City of Houston during Hurricane Harvey, funding would not be available.</p> <p>The proposed MOD is minimal at best and does not truly support the full picture in terms of damage to the families and communities of Houston who have still not fully recovered from the destruction of Hurricane Harvey.</p> <p>The board’s stance aligns with negligent and unequitable ideologies that are harmful to Houstonian’s where infrastructure investments remain a top priority. Moreover, this non-inclusive approach has handicapped the city from appropriately and effectively directing its efforts towards flood mitigation and infrastructural advancements in neighborhoods that need it the most. I</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board’s anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/.</p>	None

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

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				<p>represent several neighborhoods where residents are arrested with fear that their home might flood after a rain occurrence.</p> <p>The direction that both General Land Office (GLO) and H-GAC has taken against issuing the City of Houston the appropriate and equitable provision is devastatingly critical for our residents. To be frank, the allocation to Harris County instead of the City of Houston should not be viewed as a victory, but instead a complete flex of control over the city by outside entities.</p>		
7/28/2022	Email	Matt Barrett	Water Resources and Flood Management Division Manager, SJRA	<p>Good afternoon, please find below questions/comments on HGAC's preliminary CDBG-Mitigation MOD. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a river authority were to partner with an entity that received funds (i.e., a county) to complete one of the river authority's projects, would the river authority be beholden to the 50%/51% LMI requirement, or would that requirement only apply to the county and all the projects under its umbrella (as a whole)? i.e., would every subrecipient have to meet the LMI requirement, or just the recipient? • Can an eligible entity which receives funds (i.e., a county) provide funds to an entity ineligible to directly receive funds (i.e., a river authority)? If this is possible/under consideration, we would recommend allowing. • Can CDBG-MIT funds be used as local match funding for a federal or other grant program? If this is possible/under consideration, we would recommend allowing. • Can HGAC provide information on its plan to select projects for the regional funds it will be directly allocated? • Is there a minimum project cost requirement, or is that up to each entity that receives funds? • It appears in the draft MOD that covered projects are ineligible and/or not being considered. This is understandable given the relatively small amount of funds 	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). Entities receiving an allocation are subject to the applicable low-to-moderate income requirements of the MOD. Arrangements for meeting the LMI target between the entity receiving an allocation and any potential partners or vendors are up to those parties, subject to GLO approval and any applicable restrictions. Additional guidance on project development, proposal, and approvals will be provided by the GLO subsequent to the approval of the MOD. The MOD allows eligible activities included in the GLO's State Action Plan Amendment 1, which includes use of match for some specific federal projects. The eligibility of match beyond these stipulations will be specific to GLO approval and the requirements of each funding program. H-GAC will develop a program for identifying, prioritizing, and selecting regional priority projects subsequent to the approval of the MOD and the receipt of additional guidance from GLO. The MOD does not</p>	None

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

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				going to each entity (including HGAC), but we would recommend not limiting the possibility of covered projects being submitted. There could be an excellent regional project that covers and/or benefits multiple entities/counties, and those entities could potentially decide to team up to perform such a project. HGAC could also consider providing its directly-allocated funds to a regional-benefit project of this nature.	specify a minimum or maximum project cost, although they may be implemented by GLO. The MOD does not include covered projects but does include base allocations for counties and the regional priority projects allocation designed to encourage multi-jurisdictional efforts.	
7/28/2022	Email	Danielle Goshen	National Algae Association 501(c)6	<p>See Correspondence 19 - 7-28-22-Goshen-Martinez-McCloud-Piacentini-Stokes-Wheaton</p> <p>Dear Mr. Taebel,</p> <p>Please accept this document as the written comments of the undersigned groups regarding the Houston-Galveston Area Council's (H-GAC) Method of Distribution (MOD) for \$488,772,000 in Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Regional Mitigation Program funds. As always, our organizations appreciate the opportunity to provide public comment.</p> <p>Our comments and recommendations below focus on the allocations, factors to determine allocations, and set asides for nature-based projects.</p> <p>1. Do Not Remove Harris County and Municipalities Within its Jurisdiction from Eligibility</p> <p>Under H-GAC's proposed Method of Distribution, Harris County and municipalities within its jurisdiction are excluded from a distribution by the COG. H-GAC's explanation for this exclusion is that Harris County has been allocated \$750 million by GLO in its State Action Plan Amendment 1 and will develop its own Method of Distribution to serve its communities.¹</p> <p>According to H-GAC's data, Harris county and the City of</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/. Regarding the question of using Social Vulnerability Index data, H-GAC used the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) population data as an equity factor instead of the Social Vulnerability Index (SVI), because LMI data directly captures areas with low-income households and is available at the Census-Block group-level. Conversely, SVI is a complex factor derived from multiple variables and is unavailable for some of entities in the H-GAC region. A fundamental focus of our review of allocation formula and data factors was that they should be straightforward, universally available and applicable for all entities potentially receiving allocations. The MOD</p>	None

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				<p>Houston had the largest number of households impacted, the largest disaster damage score, the biggest low-to-moderate income population, and the highest population in the floodplain.² In order to achieve equitable distribution of funds, Harris County and the City of Houston should not be left out of an allocation under H-GAC's MOD.</p> <p>a. Harris County's \$750 Million Allocation Under the Harris County Mitigation Method Of Distribution Was to Remedy Previous Exclusion Under Round One of Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition</p> <p>Under the first Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition round, Harris County and City of Houston originally were set to receive zero CDBG-MIT funds from the GLO. After the GLO published press releases detailing the recipients list, Texas Housers and Northeast Action Collective filed a complaint with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), "alleging that GLO's design and operation of the Competition discriminated on the basis of race and national origin through the use of scoring criteria that substantially disadvantaged Black and Hispanic residents."</p> <p>Earlier this year, HUD agreed with the Complainants and found that the GLO's scoring criteria was in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its implementing regulations (Section 109).³ To remedy the violation, HUD required the GLO to enter into a Voluntary Compliance Agreement (VCA) to avoid further scrutiny by the United States Department of Justice (DOJ).</p> <p>While a VCA has not yet been reached, the GLO has amended its State Action Plan (Amendment 1) to include the Harris County Mitigation Method of Distribution – providing \$750 million to the county to distribute. The GLO</p>	<p>focuses on equity through its use of LMI data as an indicator of vulnerable populations in determining allocations and its LMI requirements for use of the funds. The MOD requires each entity receiving an allocation to affirm they will use at least 50% of their funds on projects whose area of benefit includes at least 51% low-to-moderate-income individuals. There are currently no opportunities for variances from this requirement. The Board of Directors elected to retain all eligible activities available under the GLO's State Action Plan Amendment 1, including natural and green infrastructure projects. The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects, and consider natural infrastructure options and ways to ensure equitable outcomes.</p>	

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				<p>was able to provide these funds to the new program, by removing the second round of the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition, and by taking funds away from other programs. In addition to creating the Harris County Mitigation MOD, Amendment 1 more than doubled the funding in the Regional Mitigation Program – the GLO’s second largest program – from \$500 million to nearly \$1.2 billion.</p> <p>The motivation for providing Harris County with its own MOD was therefore due to the significant backlash and subsequent HUD investigation which found that the scoring criteria under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition violated Title VI. Importantly, the programs that the GLO amended in order to provide funds to the Harris County Mitigation MOD were always separate from the Regional Mitigation Program – and nowhere under the State Action Plan was there any discussion about excluding Harris County or municipalities within its jurisdiction from the Regional Mitigation Program due to Amendment 1.</p> <p>b. No Other Entities That Received Funds Under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition Were Excluded From the H-GAC’s MOD</p> <p>The GLO awarded entities within H-GAC’s jurisdiction with over \$333 million in awards (see Table 1) under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition.⁴ We disagree with H-GAC’s reasoning, that since Harris County is receiving \$750 million under Amendment 1, Harris County and municipalities within its jurisdiction should be excluded from an allocation under the COG’s MOD.</p> <p>TABLE 1 - see attached Correspondence Table 1: GLO Awards by County under Round 1 – Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition</p> <p>If the COG wished to remove eligibility for entities that</p>		

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				<p>received funds under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition, it should not single out Harris County and municipalities within its jurisdiction from eligibility. Nowhere else in the COG’s MOD does H-GAC remove other entities, or reduce the amount of funding eligible to those entities, if they received funding under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition. Therefore, we believe that the COG unjustly singles out Harris County and municipalities within its jurisdiction for exclusion.</p> <p>c. Excluding Harris County and the Municipalities Within its Jurisdiction Could Arise to a Violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964</p> <p>The GLO, in administration of CDBG-MIT funds certified that it will conduct and administer the CDBG-MIT funds in accordance with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Further, H-GAC must also adhere to Title VI – and has assured that no COG activity or program shall discriminate against any of the protected classes.</p> <p>Removing Harris County and the municipalities within its jurisdiction from the H-GAC MOD may open the COG up to a Title VI complaint since it excludes the most diverse region within the COG from eligibility (see Table 2). In addition to having the most diverse population in terms of number of minorities, Harris County also has the: lowest percentage of white alone, not Hispanic or Latino population second lowest percentage white alone population second highest percentage Hispanic or Latino population; and third highest percentage Black or African American alone population.</p> <p>TABLE 2 - see attached Correspondence</p>		

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				<p>Table 2: Demographic Breakdown of Counties within H-GAC Not only would excluding Harris County and the municipalities within its jurisdiction result in removing the most diverse populations from receiving funding, but an investigation could open the COG up to timely delays – which would harm the region as a whole.</p> <p>Therefore, because the Regional Mitigation Program was separate from the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition, no other eligible entities in the Houston-Galveston region that received funds under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition were removed, and because removing Harris County and the municipalities within its jurisdiction could arise to a violation of Title VI, we strongly urge H-GAC to allow Harris County and the municipalities within its jurisdiction eligibility to receive funds. We support the City of Houston’s recommendation that 30%, or \$148 million, of the COG’s funds should go to the city.</p> <p>2. Distribution Factors Should Focus on Ensuring Equitable Distribution of H-GAC COG MOD Funds to the Greatest Number of People Most Vulnerable to Hazards</p> <p>The COG MOD should have the goal of allocating funds to mitigate disasters in the areas of highest vulnerability and the areas most at risk due to hazards. Distributing funds in this way will help facilitate equitable outcomes under H-GAC’s MOD. We believe that the CDC’s Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) should be added to the distribution factors. As noted in the State Action Plan, “[e]ffectively addressing social vulnerability decreases both human suffering and the economic loss related to providing social services and public assistance after a disaster.” Entities with high SVI scores should be prioritized for distribution of funds under the MOD.</p>		

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				<p>Further, using personal and real property damage as a distribution factor could disproportionately provide funds to high income areas and therefore less vulnerable areas. Using personal and real property damage could also eliminate the effect of using low-to-moderate income populations as a distribution factor – since they are provided equal weighting. Therefore, in order to equitably distribute CDBG-MIT funds within the COGs jurisdiction to the areas that are most vulnerable, we recommend either removing amount of personal and real property damage from consideration, or reducing the weighting compared to other factors that would distribute funds to the most vulnerable areas with the highest risk rating.</p> <p>3. Provide a Set Aside for Green and Natural Infrastructure Projects as a Regional Priority</p> <p>Natural or green infrastructure projects were heavily encouraged for the use of CDBG-MIT funds, not just in HUD guidance, but also in the GLO’s State Action Plan. However, out of the 81 projects that were chosen for funding by the GLO under the first round of Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition, only one project seemed to incorporate natural infrastructure features.</p> <p>While traditional infrastructure projects are necessary in many areas, it is also important to invest in innovative green and natural infrastructure projects, where appropriate. In addition to flood mitigation benefits, green and natural infrastructure projects benefit communities year-round, reducing risks from multiple hazards such as improving air and water quality and mitigating urban heat island effect, while also providing recreational spaces for communities.</p> <p>Due to the importance of green and natural infrastructure projects, we urge H-GAC to promote green and natural</p>		

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				<p>infrastructure by reconsidering a set aside for natural or green infrastructure projects. This can be done by making natural or green infrastructure a regional priority and limiting subrecipients in the region to projects that meet that priority.</p> <hr/> <p>The undersigned organizations are dedicated to an effective and equitable distribution of CDBG-MIT resources. Thank you again for the opportunity to provide these comments.</p> <p>Sincerely, Danielle Goshen Policy Specialist/Counsel National Wildlife Federation GoshenD@nwf.org</p> <p>Becky Martinez Conservation Director Bayou Land Conservancy bmartinez@bayouland.org</p> <p>Ayanna Jolivet McCloud Executive Director Bayou City Waterkeeper ayanna@bayoucitywaterkeeper.org</p> <p>Mary Anne Piacentini President and CEO Coastal Prairie Conservancy maryanne@coastalprairieconservancy.org</p>		
7/28/2022	Email	Madison Sloan and Ayanna McCloud	Texas Appleseed / Bayou City Waterkeeper	<p>See Correspondence 20-7-28-22-Sloan-McCloud</p> <p>Dear Mr. Taebl:</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the HGAC CDBG-MIT Preliminary Method of Distribution (MOD). For the reasons detailed in these comments, including</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to</p>	None

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				<p>potential violations of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 109 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, and the Fair Housing Act; H-GAC must revise its preliminary MOD before presenting it to GLO for final approval and submission to HUD as an Action Plan Amendment.</p> <p>Texas Appleseed1 is a non-profit public interest justice center that promotes social, economic, and racial justice for all Texans. We have worked on disaster recovery issues and to ensure equity in disaster recovery programs since Hurricane Rita in 2006.</p> <p>Bayou City Water Keeper was established in 2001. Our mission is to protect and restore the integrity of our bayous, rivers, streams, and the bays through advocacy, education, and action. Our work includes supporting resilient communities and advocating for equitable solutions to flooding.</p> <p>I. H-GAC’s Exclusion of Harris County from its MOD is Unjustified and Contravenes the Purpose of the CDBG-MIT Program and the State Action Plan</p> <p>H-GAC’s stated reason for not allocating funding to Harris County or any cities within Harris County in its MOD is that “Harris County has been allocated \$750 million by GLO in its State Action Plan Amendment 1 and will develop its own Method of Distribution to serve its communities.” However, CDBG-MIT Amendment 1 did not, and was not intended to, exclude Harris County from funding under the Regional Method of Distribution Program. The allocation of funds directly to Harris County in Amendment 1 was intended to partially correct for the state’s use of scoring criteria in its Round 1 Hurricane Harvey Statewide Competitive Grant Competition program that</p>	<p>submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/. Regarding the question of using Social Vulnerability Index data, H-GAC used the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) population data as an equity factor instead of the Social Vulnerability Index (SVI), because LMI data directly captures areas with low-income households and is available at the Census-Block group-level. Conversely, SVI is a complex factor derived from multiple variables and is unavailable for some of entities in the H-GAC region. A fundamental focus of our review of allocation formula and data factors was that they should be straightforward, universally available and applicable for all entities potentially receiving allocations. The MOD focuses on equity through its use of LMI data as an indicator of vulnerable populations in determining allocations and its LMI requirements for use of the funds. The MOD requires each entity receiving an allocation to affirm they will use at least 50% of their funds on projects whose area of benefit includes at least 51% low-to-moderate-income individuals. There are currently no opportunities for variances from this requirement. The MOD designates allocations for local governments but does not identify the specific projects they will propose to use the allocations for. The Board considered categories of eligible activities for the MOD and decided not to limit the flexibility of local governments receiving allocations to identify their own priorities for projects further than the existing limits of</p>	

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				<p>discriminated against Hurricane Harvey survivors on the basis of race, color, and national origin, depriving Harris County and the City of Houston, in particular, of mitigation funding.</p> <p>The 2018 Congressional appropriation of \$12 billion for mitigation activities, allocated in proportion to the amount of CDBG-DR funding grantees received for disasters occurring in 2015, 2016, and 2017, “represents a unique and significant opportunity for grantees to use this assistance in areas impacted by recent disasters to carry out strategic and high-impact activities to mitigate disaster risk and reduce future losses.”</p> <p>The Federal Register Notice allocating these CDBG-MIT funds is clear that “[t]he level of CDBG- MIT funding available to most grantees cannot address the entire spectrum of known mitigation and resilience needs.” Consistent with the structure of the Federal disaster recovery system, “HUD restates that disaster recovery is a partnership between Federal, state, and local government and CDBG–MIT grantees should invest in their own recovery . . . HUD expects grantees to contribute to their recovery through the use of reserve or “rainy day” funds, borrowing authority, or retargeting of existing resources.” There are also additional Federal funds to address mitigation needs, including FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.</p> <p>The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) emphasized that “[u]nlike other forms of Federal disaster-recovery assistance, CDBG-DR and CDBG-MIT grants have a statutory focus on benefitting vulnerable lower-income people and communities and targeting the most impacted and distressed areas.” “All grantees must prioritize the protection of LMI individuals and describe in the action plan how their proposed</p>	<p>the funding source. We encourage you to share your comments with your local government(s) as they identify and prioritize potential projects and ways to ensure equitable outcomes.</p>	

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				<p>programs and projects will reflect that priority.”</p> <p>The State of Texas Hurricane Harvey Action Plan for CDBG-MIT funding, approved by HUD on March 31, 2020, allocated \$2.1 billion to a Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition State Competition), split into two rounds. The awards for the first round of competitive mitigation grants were announced in May 2021. The hardest hit areas of the state, including Harris County, the City of Houston, Jefferson County, and Nueces County, were not awarded any funding. In response, instead of addressing the discriminatory flaws in its allocation and scoring criteria, the State of Texas proposed Action Plan Amendment 1 (Amendment 1), which eliminated the second round of the State Mitigation Competition, allocated \$750 million to Harris County, and reallocated remaining State Competition and other CDBG-MIT funds totaling \$666.9 million to the Regional Mitigation Program – Council of Governments Method of Distribution. H-GAC was allocated \$488.7 million under the Regional Mitigation Program.</p> <p>According to H-GAC’s own data, Harris County had the largest number of households impacted by Hurricane Harvey, the largest disaster damage score, the largest LMI population, and the highest population in the floodplain.</p> <p>Under Amendment 1: Appendix F,</p> <p>In order to determine the distribution funds for the COG MOD program for counties impacted by Hurricane Harvey, the GLO designed an allocation methodology that accounts for risks to natural hazards, social vulnerability, financial capacity, and population. These four factors form the basis for a weighted sum model that results in a final relative factor that determines the amount of funds to be allocated to each eligible county. Throughout this</p>		

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				<p>discussion it should be noted that HUD MID and State MID allocations are split, with 80 percent of funds going towards HUD MID areas, and 20 percent going to State MID areas; as a result, the calculations described below were performed separately for HUD MID and State MID areas. This section of the appendices explains the rationale for the use of each factor, the source of data for that factor, and the calculations performed to generate the MOD.</p> <p>GLO and H-GAC’s methodologies produced the following allocations: TABLE See Attached Correspondence</p> <p>Under the formula GLO used to allocate funding for the Regional MOD Program Harris County accounted for 30% of the funding HGAC received. If Harris County had been excluded from the regional allocation, H-GAC’s allocation would have been reduced by \$148 million.</p> <p>That GLO intended for Harris County to receive money from the regional allocation funding is also evident from its response to comments on Action Plan Amendment 1. More than 50 commenters stated that Houston or Harris County needed additional funding beyond the \$750 million.¹⁰ In response to at least 14 of these comments, GLO stated that Houston could “participate in the required Public Planning Meeting and second public hearing on the draft Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) Method of Distribution...” expressing the state’s clear expectation that Harris County and Houston would receive an allocation through the Regional MOD Program process. The GLO created a formula for H-GAC to receive money that included Harris County and repeatedly said that Harris County was eligible for funding through the Regional MOD Program process; excluding Harris County from the H-GAC MOD does not comply with the state’s HUD-approved Action Plan.</p>		

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				<p>Further, while H-GAC claims that it is excluding Harris County because it has been allocated other CDBG-MIT funding, H-GAC is not excluding other jurisdictions that have already received CDBG-MIT funding. Of the 14 counties that would receive funding through the preliminary MOD, 12 counties (including jurisdictions within that county) were awarded a total of over \$333.6 million in the State Grant Competition. The City of Dickinson, for example, received a \$50 million grant through the State Grant Competition, and the MOD allocates the city an additional \$15 million.</p> <p>TABLE 1 - See attached correspondence Table 1: Per capita funding by county from the State Grant Competition. *Assuming the inclusion of the \$750 million allocation to Harris County. Even including Harris County’s separate \$750 million allocation, Harris County’s per capita CDBG-MIT allocation only increases to \$194.71 per capita, the fourth lowest in the region. On March 4, 2022, HUD issued a Letter of Finding Noncompliance with Title VI and Section 109 (Case No. 06-21-1483). HUD found that the General Land Office’s (GLO) design and operation of the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition “discriminated on the basis of race and national origin through the use of scoring criteria that substantially disadvantaged Black and Hispanic residents.” In other words, the State Mitigation Competition awards were based on a set of criteria that discriminated against Texans on the basis of race, color, and national origin; H-GAC’s failure to account for previous discriminatory allocations in its MOD perpetuates that discrimination and is in itself discriminatory.</p> <p>H-GAC’s decision to exclude Harris County, where 72% of</p>		

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				<p>the region’s people of color live, from its MOD on the basis that Harris County was receiving other CDBG-MIT funding but allowing other jurisdictions who had received CDBG-MIT funding based on a discriminatory allocation process to receive MOD allocations is particularly egregious. However, the fact that the MOD does not account for previous discriminatory allocations resulting from the entire State Mitigation Competition program means that H-GAC’s MOD also discriminates against H-GAC residents who live outside of Harris County on the basis of race, color, and national origin.</p> <p>II. H-GAC’s MOD is Discriminatory on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin</p> <p>Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 mandates that “[n]o person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” Similarly, Section 109 prohibits discrimination the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, or sex in “any program or activity funded [under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.]” The Fair Housing Act not only prohibits discrimination but requires all entities administering housing and community development</p> <p>Table 1: Per capita funding by county from the State Grant Competition.</p> <p>*Assuming the inclusion of the \$750 million allocation to Harris County.</p> <p>Even including Harris County’s separate \$750 million allocation, Harris County’s per capita CDBG-MIT allocation only increases to \$194.71 per capita, the fourth lowest in the region.</p> <p>On March 4, 2022, HUD issued a Letter of Finding</p>		

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				<p>Noncompliance with Title VI and Section 109 (Case No. 06-21-1483). HUD found that the General Land Office’s (GLO) design and operation of the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition “discriminated on the basis of race and national origin through the use of scoring criteria that substantially disadvantaged Black and Hispanic residents.” In other words, the State Mitigation Competition awards were based on a set of criteria that discriminated against Texans on the basis of race, color, and national origin; H-GAC’s failure to account for previous discriminatory allocations in its MOD perpetuates that discrimination and is in itself discriminatory.</p> <p>H-GAC’s decision to exclude Harris County, where 72% of the region’s people of color live, from its MOD on the basis that Harris County was receiving other CDBG-MIT funding but allowing other jurisdictions who had received CDBG-MIT funding based on a discriminatory allocation process to receive MOD allocations is particularly egregious. However, the fact that the MOD does not account for previous discriminatory allocations resulting from the entire State Mitigation Competition program means that H-GAC’s MOD also discriminates against H-GAC residents who live outside of Harris County on the basis of race, color, and national origin.</p> <p>II. H-GAC’s MOD is Discriminatory on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin</p> <p>Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 mandates that “[n]o person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” Similarly, Section 109 prohibits discrimination the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, or sex in “any program or activity funded</p>		

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				<p>[under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.].” The Fair Housing Act not only prohibits discrimination but requires all entities administering housing and community development funds - including CDBG-DR and CDBG-MIT funds- to do so “in a manner to affirmatively further [fair housing].”</p> <p>Both the exclusion of Harris County from the MOD and the MOD itself subject H-GAC residents to discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin and violate the Fair Housing Act.</p> <p>On March 4, 2022, HUD issued a Letter of Finding Noncompliance with Title VI and Section 109 (Case No. 06-21-1483). HUD found that the General Land Office’s (GLO) design and operation of the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition “discriminated on the basis of race and national origin through the use of scoring criteria that substantially disadvantaged Black and Hispanic residents.”</p> <p>TABLE 2 - See attached correspondence</p> <p>Table 2: Demographic Breakdown of Counties within H-GAC</p> <p>As laid out in Section I of these comments, the exclusion of Harris County from the H-GAC MOD is unjustified and contravenes the purpose of the CDBG-MIT program to address the greatest mitigation needs, focusing benefits on LMI residents, as well as discriminating against residents of Harris County on the basis of race, color, and national origin.</p> <p>III. H-GAC Chose Allocation Distribution Factors and Weighting that Do Not Address the Greatest Mitigation Needs or Ensure Primary Benefit to LMI Residents</p> <p>In addition to H-GAC’s decisions about which jurisdictions would be eligible for a MOD allocation, the COG’s MOD</p>		

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				<p>allocation formula itself does not distribute funding consistent with the purposes of the CDBG-MIT program and the State Action Plan.</p> <p>H-GAC’s formula used four equally weighted distribution factors: households impacted; personal and real property damage; low- to moderate-income population; and, population within Floodplain (floodway, 100-year floodplain, and 500-year floodplain).</p> <p>A. Households Impacted</p> <p>H-GAC should be using the number of FEMA registrants rather than approved FEMA Individual Assistance applications. Overall, FEMA’s denial rates after Hurricane Harvey were extraordinarily high. Denial rates are particularly high for lower-income households. Applicant households earning more than \$70,000/year were rejected for individual assistance only 10% of the time while applicants earning less than \$15,000/year were denied 46% of the time. This statistic does not reflect varying degrees of damage but rather varying degrees of access to the program and resources to navigate the bureaucratic hurdles, as well as subjective assessments by FEMA inspectors, many of whom had minimal training. FEMA not also routinely denies assistance applications of nonwhite and low-income survivors at dramatically higher rates than those of well-off white applicants, it provides substantially fewer disaster recovery resources to lower-income survivors and survivors of color. Following Hurricane Harvey in 2017, white residents of higher income neighborhoods received, on average \$60,000 of assistance, while black residents in low-income neighborhoods received, on average \$84.</p> <p>B. Personal and Real Property Damage</p>		

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

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				<p>FEMA’s own National Advisory Council, chaired by Texas Department of Emergency Management Chief Nim Kidd, found that:</p> <p>[M]any FEMA programs do not consider the principle of equity in financial assistance relief. Damage assessments are based on property ownership, which immediately focuses on the wealthier parts of a community, and disadvantages renters and the homeless population. The Public Assistance Program most benefits communities that can afford to pay the required match and can navigate the complexities of the contracting agencies. The Individual Assistance Program is more accessible to those with time, income, and access.²⁰ (emphasis added)</p> <p>H-GAC should not use of distribution factor that is based on property value.</p> <p>The MOD allocation formula must account for the fact that FEMA damage amount data also undercounts damage to both lower-income renters and homeowners. If FEMA inspectors make a subjective assessment that a renter’s personal property was not worth \$2000 or that damages to a home were not worth at least \$8000 or attribute a building’s condition to “deferred maintenance” rather than storm damage - these disaster survivors are not included in FEMA data. Low FEMA damage assessments may not reflect less damage so much as the socioeconomic status of the neighborhood; wealthier communities will prima facie have higher property values and hence higher recorded damage. Lower-income people and communities have, by definition, lower value properties, a higher proportion of renters, and they receive fewer investments in public infrastructure. Nationally, in counties with major disasters (areas with at least \$10 billion in damages), white communities gained an average \$126,000 in wealth following the damage and</p>		

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

Date Received	Method	Name	Role/Title	Comment	Response	Associated changes to MOD
				<p>recovery efforts. Communities of color lost up to \$29,000 on average in personal wealth following events like hurricanes and wildfires.²¹ By relying on damage to property as a distribution metric, the HGAC MOD will shift CDBG-MIT resources towards higher-income areas, and potentially have a disparate impact on Black and Hispanic-Latino residents.</p> <p>C. Low-to-Moderate Income Population</p> <p>By providing equal weight to the LMI measure, which favors lower-income areas, and the FEMA Real and Personal Property Damage measures, which favors higher-income areas, HGAC may have set up an equation that is neutral on economic factors and does not prioritize the protection of LMI individuals as required by Federal law and the Federal Register Notice allocating these funds. Low-income families face additional barriers to disaster recovery, so HGAC must either provide a higher weight to the LMI distribution factor or add a supplementary factor that will ensure equitable distribution of CDBG-MIT funds, for example, the Social Vulnerability Index (SVI).²²</p> <p>Applying the Social Vulnerability Index to the HGAC region at the census tract level reveals that the majority of extremely vulnerable areas (defined here as having an SVI score of greater than 0.8) are located within Harris County (see Appendix Figure 1). Over one million people reside in the 207 extremely vulnerable census tracts in Harris County and approximately 200,000 people live in the 31 extremely vulnerable census tracts in HGAC outside of Harris County. Again, even excluding Harris County, CDBG-MIT funds may not be allocated to prioritize the most impacted and distressed areas where vulnerable populations live. The Social Vulnerability Index is the best metric available for assessing disaster vulnerability and should be included in the HGAC MOD.</p>		

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

Date Received	Method	Name	Role/Title	Comment	Response	Associated changes to MOD
				<p>IV. Inadequate Public Process</p> <p>HGAC did not provide adequate time for public participation prior to the drafting of this MOD. HGAC only provided one week of notice about the Public Planning Meeting on February 3rd, 2022. Following the Public Planning Meeting, the public was only given 24 hours to provide written comment. Several attendees of the February 3rd meeting, including representatives from the City of Kendleton and nonprofits like Connective, noted that they had only heard about the meeting on the day of the meeting. HGAC failed to provide information on the distribution factors being considered prior to the meeting, so the public did not have sufficient information to draft comments prior to February 3rd. The CDBG-MIT MOD is a highly technical process and therefore the general public requires more than a single day to process and respond to proposed MOD factors. A public comment period of less than 24 hours is unreasonable and denies the public the opportunity to make informed and meaningful comment on the development of a MOD that will distribute almost half a billion dollars in federal mitigation funding.</p> <p>V. H-GAC Should Not Have Requested Waivers of Program Requirements</p> <p>The Regional MOD Program requirements set out in Action Plan Amendment 1 were designed to ensure that CDBG-MIT were used in accordance with the appropriating legislation and FR Notice and should not be waived. For the reasons set out below, H-GAC should not have requested waivers of program requirements. Further, these waivers should not have been requested without public notice and an opportunity for the public to review the justification for these waiver requests and provide comment.</p>		

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

Date Received	Method	Name	Role/Title	Comment	Response	Associated changes to MOD
				<p>A. Minimum Threshold Waiver</p> <p>HGAC should not have requested a waiver of the \$1 million minimum grant amount and GLO should not have approved that waiver. CDBG-MIT funding is not an additional pot of CDBG-DR funds, but a new source of funding intended to support, as the State’s Action Plan states, “regional investments with regional impacts in risk reduction”. Even if these funds are distributed to local grantees, CDBG-MIT grants should be prioritized for larger-scale projects that mitigate risks to as many households as possible. The \$1 million minimum grant amount is itself too low; the \$3 million threshold for the State Grant Competition is a more appropriate minimum grant amount and in accordance with our previous comments on the State Action Plan, we do not believe that threshold should have been reduced from \$5 million to \$3 million.</p> <p>Congress and HUD also emphasized that CDBG–MIT funds should be used “to carry out strategic and high-impact activities to mitigate disaster risks and reduce future losses.”²³ The MOD process generally, which is designed to suballocate funds to individual jurisdictions without consideration of the most effective and strategic use of those funds, contravenes the intent of the CDBG-MIT appropriation; providing individual jurisdictions with small grants that forces them to propose projects prioritized by price and compete against other jurisdictions rather making large-scale strategic regional investments frustrates the goal of effective large- scale mitigation.</p> <p>B. Low-to-Moderate-Income Threshold Waiver</p> <p>GLO’s decision not to grant H-GAC’s request for a waiver of the LMI threshold for CDBG-MIT was correct, and H-GAC should not have requested such a waiver in the first</p>		

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

Date Received	Method	Name	Role/Title	Comment	Response	Associated changes to MOD
				<p>place. HUD has already provided a waiver that reduces the LMI threshold from 70% to 50%. CDBG-MIT funds are not merely another source of potential funding for mitigation projects, “CDBG-MIT grants have a statutory focus on benefitting vulnerable lower-income people and communities and targeting the most impacted and distressed areas.”</p> <p>“Disasters are often depicted as great levelers, victimizing rich and poor alike. The effects of disasters on populations are anything but random... The disaster vulnerability of individuals and groups is associated with a number of socioeconomic factors that include income, poverty, and social class; race, ethnicity, and culture; physical ability and disability; language competency; social networks and social capital; gender; household composition; homeownership; and age... The same factors that disadvantage members of society on a daily basis also play out during disasters.”</p> <p>Pre-existing disparities in infrastructure, storm protection, and geographic and social vulnerability are exacerbated by disasters, and response and recovery programs, policies, and activities that do not affirmatively address these disproportionate impacts perpetuate inequity and increase the vulnerability of underserved groups and communities .26 Homes in formerly redlined neighborhoods, for example, are at higher risk of flooding than homes in historically greenlined neighborhoods seven decades after the HOLC redlining maps were created.27 To the extent LMI status is correlated with protected class status under Title VI, Section 109, and the Fair Housing Act, reducing the benefit to these communities may also violate civil rights law.</p> <p>Please don’t hesitate to contact us if you have questions or concerns about our comments.</p>		

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

Date Received	Method	Name	Role/Title	Comment	Response	Associated changes to MOD
				<p>Sincerely, Madison Sloan Director of Disaster Recovery and Fair Housing Meg Duffy Policy Analyst Texas Appleseed msloan@texasappleseed.org</p> <p>Ayanna Jolivet McCloud Executive Director Bayou City Water Keeper</p>		
7/28/2022	Email	William H. "Dusty" Thiele	Mayor	<p>See Correspondence 10 7-28-22 - Thiele</p> <p>To Whom It May Concern,</p> <p>Please allow this letter to serve as an official comment from the City of Katy ("City") regarding the Community Development Block Grant - Mitigation ("CD BG-MIT") Method of Distribution ("MOD") in the Houston-Galveston Area Council ("H-GAC").</p> <p>The City appreciates the opportunity to receive funding through the CDBG-MIT Regional Mitigation Program. We are seeking clarification on the use of funds as we prepare a list of potential projects that could benefit from this regional mitigation program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the City being split into multiple counties, how will the funds be split between Fort Bend County and Waller County? • Can the City use all of the allocated funds towards an urgent need project or will the City be required to meet the low-to-moderate income requirements? The City has urgent need projects that would be great to pursue with these funds. <p>The City is excited to take the next steps to mitigate the impact of future disasters on our community.</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). The MOD does not restrict the City from expending its allocation within its jurisdiction as it sees fit, excluding areas within Harris County, subject to approval and any applicable restrictions from the GLO. The MOD requires each entity receiving an allocation to affirm they will use at least 50% of their funds on projects whose area of benefit includes at least 51% low-to-moderate-income individuals. There are currently no opportunities for variances from this requirement.</p>	None

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

Date Received	Method	Name	Role/Title	Comment	Response	Associated changes to MOD
7/28/2022	Email	Lizzie Fletcher, Sylvia Garcia, All Green	Representatives Fletcher, Green, and Garcia	<p>Sincerely William H. "Dusty" Thiele Mayor</p> <p>See Correspondence 12 7-28-22-Fletcher-Garcia-Green</p> <p>Dear Members of the Houston-Galveston Area Council Board:</p> <p>We welcome the opportunity to submit comments on the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution (MOD). The funds in this MOD, which were appropriated by Congress, will reduce the risk of future flooding in the regions most impacted by significant rain events in 2015, 2016, and 2017, including Hurricane Harvey. It is an important step in addressing our disaster mitigation needs, and we thank you for your commitment to supporting Texas communities in our region.</p> <p>As you know, Hurricane Harvey devastated the Gulf Coast region in 2017, its nearly 60 inches of rain and related flooding claiming 68 lives and causing an estimated \$125 billion in damage. This destructive storm was the third in three years, following significant rain events in 2015 and 2016 in Houston and Harris County, the Memorial Day and Tax Day floods. Harris County, the most populous county in Texas, is the only county in Texas that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) identified as “most impacted and distressed” from the Memorial Day flood in 2015, the Tax Day flood in 2016, and Hurricane Harvey in 2017.</p> <p>The U.S. Congress passed the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (BBA) shortly after Hurricane Harvey and appropriated \$12 billion in CDBG-MIT funding for hazard mitigation activities in response to qualifying disasters in 2015, 2016, and 2017, including Hurricane Harvey. Congress intended these funds to be used to mitigate future risk in the areas most impacted by these disasters.</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board’s anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of \$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/.</p>	None

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

Date Received	Method	Name	Role/Title	Comment	Response	Associated changes to MOD
				<p>The BBA is clear that areas that received the most CDBG Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds should receive the most CDBG-MIT funds to mitigate damages and lessen the need for CDBG-DR funding in the future.</p> <p>After seeing the results of the H-GAC board’s vote in February, we are concerned that the decision to allocate only \$9.2 million to the City of Houston will fail the communities most impacted by Harvey and prior storms and leave those communities even more vulnerable to future disasters. This proposed allocation denies the intent of the Congress that appropriated the funds and leaves the City of Houston, which makes up 30% of the region’s population and almost 50% of the damages from Hurricane Harvey, with approximately 2% of H-GAC’s available funds. We are further concerned by the board’s discussions to deny H-GAC funding to any cities within Harris County if the Texas General Land Office’s (GLO) Action Plan Amendment 1, which awards \$750 million to Harris County, is approved.</p> <p>As you know, Action Plan Amendment 1 proposes an allocation of \$750 million in CDBG-MIT funds for Harris County to distribute to flood and drainage districts and municipalities within their jurisdiction, including the City of Houston. Because Harris County and Houston were not awarded any funds in GLO’s \$2.3 billion funding competition, this proposed allocation will be the sole direct funding source for our local governments to complete mitigation projects in Houston and Harris County.</p> <p>This proposed subgrant of less than \$750 million is not sufficient for the communities in Houston and the damage they faced during Hurricane Harvey and the floods in 2015 and 2016. Furthermore, because this plan has not yet been approved by HUD, there is no guarantee these funds</p>		

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

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				<p>will ever get to Harris County or the City of Houston. Without approval of this plan and a method of distribution with which Harris County will allocate those funds, it is not a responsible approach for H-GAC to consider reducing the current allocation to zero.</p> <p>On behalf of our constituents, and having consulted local leaders and experts, we ask H-GAC to award funds to the City of Houston based on Congressional intent, focusing on the regions most impacted by the flooding in 2015, 2016, and 2017. There is no reason the City of Houston should receive only 2% of available funds after suffering nearly 50% of damages.</p> <p>We urge H-GAC to take these considerations into account as the MOD is being developed. We also ask that H-GAC work with local leaders to make data-driven changes to this MOD so that it more accurately reflects the disproportionate damage Houston has faced in recent years. We look forward to working with you to ensure that Houston receives a fair and appropriate allocation of these funds.</p> <p>Sincerely, Lizzie Fletcher, Sylvia Garcia, Al Green, Members of Congress"</p>		
7/28/2022	Email	Rep. Al Green, Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, and Rep. Sylvia Garcia	Congress	<p>See Correspondence 16 7-28-22-Green-Jackson Lee-Garcia</p> <p>Dear Members of the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) Board,</p> <p>Thank you for holding a public hearing on the Method of Distribution of Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) funds for flood risk mitigation projects.</p> <p>We join Council Member Alcorn and Mayor Turner in opposition to the H-GAC's decision to award the City of</p>	<p>Thank you for providing public comment on the Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds in the Houston-Galveston region. (For ease of reference, your comment is copied at the end of this email.) We provided your comments to the H-GAC Board of Directors for their consideration prior to the Board's anticipated action on August 16, 2022 to submit a final Method of Distribution (MOD) to the Texas General Land Office (GLO). We also encourage you to share your comments and needs with Harris County as they seek public input during the development of their Method of Distribution for their direct allocation of</p>	

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

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				<p>Houston less than 2% of the total CDBG-MIT funds allocated for the Council. When Congress appropriated \$4.3 billion in CDBG-MIT funds for disaster relief in the wake of Hurricane Harvey, these funds were meant to be distributed in an equitable manner to the most impacted communities. While the General Land Office’s (GLO) funding allocation formula created an unjust and inequitable distribution, the H-GAC Board’s decision to allocate so few resources to the City of Houston only compounds this injustice.</p> <p>Some Board members cited the GLO’s allocation of \$750 million to Harris County as a reason not to provide further funds for the City of Houston, as it lies within the county. The notion that, because some funds are going to Harris County, the City of Houston should not receive further assistance is groundless. Harris County is the only county in Texas to have experienced three consecutive years of flooding disasters, in 2015, 2016, and 2017. When Hurricane Harvey struck, Harris County was inundated with 1 trillion gallons of water in just four days.</p> <p>The City of Houston desperately needs disaster relief funds to build infrastructure that can lessen the impact of flooding disasters. Unless additional CDBG-MIT funds are distributed to the City of Houston, we will neither be able to repair the damage inflicted by consecutive flooding disasters and Hurricane Harvey nor will we be able to prepare for future catastrophes. The City of Houston and Harris County require as much relief funding as they can receive.</p> <p>We urge you to reconsider this Method of Distribution. Thank you for your attention to this crucial matter. Should you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact Rep. Al Green’s Chief of Staff, Niha Razi, at 202-760-1809 or niha.razi@mail.house.gov.</p>	<p>\$750 million in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds for the county and cities therein. You can find more information on their program at https://harrisrecovery.org/cdbg-mitigation/.</p>	

Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution of Funds – Public Comments and Draft Responses

Date Received	Method	Name	Role/Title	Comment	Response	Associated changes to MOD
				/s/ Al Green, Member of Congress /s/ Sheila Jackson Lee, Member of Congress /s/ Sylvia Garcia, Member of Congress		

Draft



FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
LAURIE B. KINCANNON
Email: kincannonlaurie@gmail.com

P.O. Box 487
512 E. Brazos Avenue
West Columbia TX 77486

Phone (979) 345-3123
Fax (979) 345-3178
www.westcolumbiatx.org

June 30, 2022

Dear H-GAC:

Thank you for providing an opportunity for the City of West Columbia – “The First Capitol of the Republic of Texas” to comment on the method of distribution for regional mitigation funds.

The city spent considerable monies and staff time preparing our Round 1 application. Our five-million-dollar request scored 76.98 - 1.02 points below the last funded request. (78.00)

The city respectfully suggests that H-GAC review the applications previously submitted to the GLO that remain unfunded in Round 1. The time delay incurred by this new distribution is a huge waste of time and money. In addition, the rising cost of construction due to the freeze and COVID-19 could have been avoided. Our cities could have greatly benefitted from a faster response to our citizens' needs.

Respectfully submitted,



Laurie B. Kincannon



Kevin Cole, Mayor
City of Pearland
3519 Liberty Drive
Pearland, Texas 77581
Tel: 281.652.1780
pearlandtx.gov

July 15, 2022

Cheryl Mergo
Houston-Galveston Area Council
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 100
Houston, TX 77027

Dear Cheryl:

RE: CDBG-MIT "Round 2" Method of Distribution

Since 1997, major storms and hurricanes have caused millions in damages to residences, commercial buildings, public facilities and infrastructure, and private property in the City of Pearland. Hurricane Harvey, alone, impacted residences and public property to the tune of \$28.9 million, mostly due to flood-related causes.

As a result of the impacts of these disasters, flood mitigation maintains its status as a major priority in Pearland as we continue to plan for the implementation of strategies to improve our local drainage and stormwater management capacity. Our current 2019-updated Master Drainage Plan contains hundreds of millions in projects that City-led and/or Brazoria Drainage District (No . 4) efforts could be used to resolve local problems, but funding is not available.

Therefore, the City of Pearland supports HGAC's proposed Method of Distribution (MOD) of GLO-administered CDBG-MIT "Round 2" funding proposed by the Water Resources Committee, which proposes to provide the City of Pearland with \$14,008,900. Having said that, there are some key elements of concern that I feel must be clarified and/or instituted as the process moves forward:

- Appropriation by Jurisdiction: There are 11 cities within the HGAC region that are located in at least two (2) counties, three (3) of which are located in three (3) counties. Pearland being one of these (Brazoria - primary, Fort Bend, and Harris), there is a concern as to whether or not cities like ours will have to allocate funds to projects according to their location by county. There should be clarification included in the process that determines if allocated funds need to be spent according to their appropriation by county.
- Low-Moderate Income: Due to the preliminary allocation of GLO CDBG-Mitigation funds to certain projects prior to this Method of Distribution, clarification needs to be provided as to the LMI requirements, as that initial allocation may have the impact of adjusting the required LMI percentage on the basis of how those projects impact the overall LMI for the region.

- Period of Performance: How long will the period of performance be for using these funds?
- Redistribution of Unspent Funds - Balance of Region: All subrecipients/subawardees may not be able to spend these funds appropriately, if at all. Clarification needs to be provided as to how the MOD will accommodate redistribution of unspent funds to viable, eligible projects elsewhere in the region. This was a major issue in the aftermath of Hurricane Ike.
- Matching Funds: Clarification needs to be provided on how these funds can be used in concert with other federal and/or local matching funds (ARPA, FEMA, local bonds, etc...).
- Administration: Clarification needs to be provided on how the program will be administered. Will these funds be handled entirely by HGAC for its administrative oversight and management program-wide? OR, will the GLO be the administrative agency? Will subrecipient/subaward entities need to submit project applications to secure funds? When will those parameters be made available?
- Mitigation vs Disaster Recovery: Clarification needs to be provided on the types of projects that are eligible for use of these funds. There are characteristics of a mitigation project vs a disaster recovery project that can make the latter definitively ineligible for consideration.
- **HUD Exception Criteria**: Existing HUD Entitlement Jurisdictions that have fewer than one-quarter of their Census block groups with 51% or more low- and moderate-income persons, do not have to meet the area-benefit requirement that 51% or more low-moderate income persons reside in the "service area" of an applicable project. **Clarification needs to be made as to how these exception criteria values will be incorporated into the local requirements for these jurisdictions in meeting LMI requirements AND to the extent these have been included in the MOD.** The table below shows the HUD Exception Criteria Grantees located in the HGAC region. It may be of note that Sugar Land, prior to its decision to release itself from its Entitlement Jurisdiction status, was one of these entities and may still fall within the technical parameters called for when determining Exception Criteria status if included in this MOD.

American Community Survey 5-Year 2011-2015 Low and Moderate Income Summary Data (HUD FY21)							
CDBGUOGID	CDBGNAME	STUSAB	CDBGTY	LOWMOD	LOWMODUNIV	LOWMODPCT	Top Quartile (FY21)
483084	League City	TX	Metro City	19,020	91,205	20.85%	37.73%
483612	Missouri City	TX	Metro City	16,130	70,260	22.96%	43.93%
484080	Pearland	TX	Metro City	23,905	101,265	23.61%	45.00%
489157	Fort Bend County	TX	Urban County	139,585	540,900	25.81%	45.93%
489339	Montgomery County	TX	Urban County	131,730	407,350	32.34%	50.06%

On behalf of Pearland, I believe these comments and questions are important enough to drive the need for clarification, so our community and others can proceed accordingly when deciding how best to use these funds. The Pearland community will continue to be involved and invested in regional planning efforts and I look forward to an outcome that can support substantive flood-mitigation projects in our city.

Sincerely,


Kevin Cole, Mayor
City of Pearland

July 12, 2022

HGAC MAILROOM

2022 JUL 15 PM 1:26

Houston-Galveston Area Council

h-gac.com

CDBGMitigation@h-gac.com

Attention Please: Ms. Cheryl Mergo

Post Office Box 22777

Houston, Texas 77227-2777

3555 Timmons Lane

Houston, Texas

77027

Re: \$488,762,000 {nearly .5 a billion dollars}

Final Method of Distribution Submitted to the Texas
General Land Commission

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

On Monday July 11, 2022 I, Mr. Haywood Mack Ross, visited the offices of the Houston-Galveston Area Council on Timmons Lane responding to a local Wharton papers "Solicitation for Public Comment."

Upon arriving at the (H-GAC) office on Timmons I was ignored for a significant amount of time. I noticed a Black Lady and a rather large man supposedly working. After awhile a White young man showed up with necktie on and we went to a separate room and actually talk about nothing. My interest was

would a portion of \$488,762,000 be used for housing which was never definitively addressed and this executive had no business cards; consequently I have no recall of who he is.

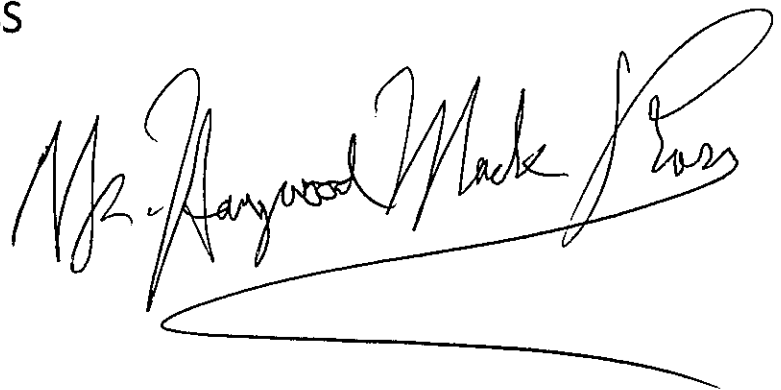
Frankly, since of course I am Black, I am rather sensitive to the fact we came to no significant conclusion whatsoever making my efforts and expense of no use, and no account.

I do hereby request, please, that I be kept informed of all initiatives proposed by the Houston-Galveston Area Council.

Your prompt and deliberate cooperation will be immensely and tremendously appreciated.

Thank you very much!

Mr. HAYWOOD MACK ROSS
517 BLACK STREET
POST OFFICE BOX #2
WHARTON, TEXAS
77488
[979]253-4893

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mr. Haywood Mack Ross". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. Below the signature is a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line that extends across the width of the signature.

Solicitation for Public Comment

Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) is seeking input on a conditionally approved Method of Distribution (MOD) for \$488,762,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Mitigation funds to provide funds to counties and local jurisdictions for risk mitigation projects related to flooding, hurricanes, and other natural disasters.

The conditionally approved Method of Distribution (MOD) is available online at www.h-gac.com/go/cdbg

H-GAC staff will accept public comment on the MOD during the public comment period as listed below and during a public hearing on Thursday, July 21, 2022, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. 07-21

You may submit oral and written comments on the conditionally approved MOD until Thursday, July 28, 2022, at 5 p.m. To submit a comment, you may: 07-28

- Email public comments to: CDBGMitigation@h-gac.com
- Make public comments by phone at 1-877-442-2777
- Mail public comments to Houston-Galveston Area Council, Attn: Cheryl Mergo, P.O. Box 22777, Houston, TX 77227-2777
- Deliver written public comments to the Houston-Galveston Area Council, 3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 100, Houston, Texas 77027
- Make public comments using a form available online at www.h-gac.com/go/cdbg
- Make public comments at a public hearing (details below)

H-GAC staff will host an information meeting to provide an overview of the conditionally approved MOD, including information about data used in its development. The meeting will be Thursday, July 14, 2022, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. 07-14

The informational meeting will be held on Zoom. The registration link for the informational meeting is available on H-GAC's calendar of events at www.h-gac.com/calendar. ZOOM!

In addition to the methods listed above, H-GAC will also accept oral and written comments related to the MOD during a public hearing on Thursday, July 21, 2022, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. 07-21

The hearing will be held in person at 3555 Timmons Lane, Houston, Texas, second floor conference room, and on Zoom. The registration link for the public hearing is available on H-GAC's calendar of events at h-gac.com/calendar. WHERE

After receiving input from the public, H-GAC will prepare and submit a Final MOD to the Texas General Land Office for approval. !

For more information on the conditionally approved MOD, please visit: www.h-gac.com/go/cdbg

The public hearing will be conducted in English, and an American Sign Language interpreter will be provided for the hearing impaired. Spanish, Mandarin, and Vietnamese interpreters will be available throughout the meeting. Persons needing to arrange ADA accommodations or language interpreters for the upcoming online public planning meetings may call 713-499-6658 or email Ashley.Seals@h-gac.com within 48 hours of the event with your accommodation requests.

cdbgmitigation@h-gac.com

July 12, 2022

Houston-Galveston Area Council

h-gac.com

CDBGMitigation@h-gac.com

Attention Please: Ms. Cheryl Mergo

Post Office Box 22777

Houston, Texas 77227-2777

3555 Timmons Lane

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Upon arriving at the (H-GAC) office on Timmons I was ignored for a significant amount of time. I noticed a Black Lady and a rather large man supposedly working. After awhile a White young man showed up with necktie on and we went to a separate room and actually talk about nothing. My interest was

would a portion of \$488,762,000 be used for housing which was never definitively addressed and this executive had no business cards; consequently I have no recall of who he is.

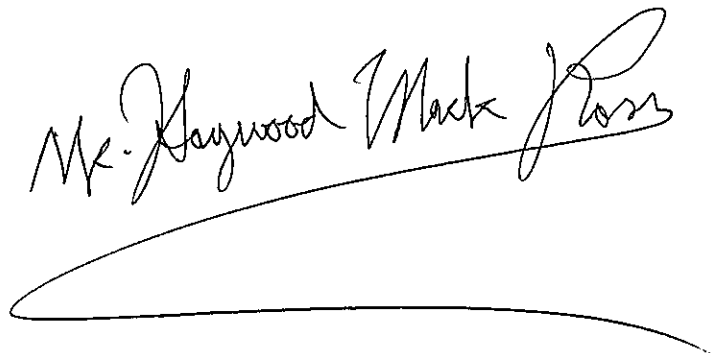
Frankly, since of course I am Black, I am rather sensitive to the fact we came to no significant conclusion whatsoever making my efforts and expense of no use, and no account.

I do hereby request, please, that I be kept informed of all initiatives proposed by the Houston-Galveston Area Council.

Your prompt and deliberate cooperation will be immensely and tremendously appreciated.

Thank you very much!

Mr. HAYWOOD MACK ROSS
517 BLACK STREET
POST OFFICE BOX #2
WHARTON, TEXAS
77488
[979]253-4893

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mr. Haywood Mack Ross". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a long, horizontal, slightly curved line that spans the width of the signature.



Texas Administrative Code

TITLE 40

SOCIAL SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE

Parts

<u>PART 1</u>	<u>DEPARTMENT OF AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES</u>
<u>PART 2</u>	<u>DEPARTMENT OF ASSISTIVE AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES</u>
<u>PART 5</u>	<u>TEXAS VETERANS LAND BOARD</u>
<u>PART 12</u>	<u>TEXAS BOARD OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY EXAMINERS</u>
<u>PART 15</u>	<u>TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION</u>
<u>PART 17</u>	<u>STATE PENSION REVIEW BOARD</u>
<u>PART 19</u>	<u>DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES</u>
<u>PART 20</u>	<u>TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION</u>
<u>PART 21</u>	<u>TEXAS COUNCIL FOR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES</u>
<u>PART 22</u>	<u>TEXAS WORKFORCE INVESTMENT COUNCIL</u>

[HOME](#)[TEXAS REGISTER](#)[TEXAS ADMINISTRATIVE CODE](#)[OPEN MEETINGS](#)

PART ONE - MR. HAYWOOD MACK ROSS IS 74 YEARS AND DISABLED
PART TWO - MR. ROSS DISABLED WITH DEPRESSION AND PHYSICAL DISABILITY
PART THREE - HAS IT DEFINITELY HELPED ANY VETERAN
PART TWELVE - NO HELP
PART FIFTEEN - NO HELP
PART NINETEEN - NO HELP
PART TWENTY - OF COURSE, NO HELP
PART TWENTY ONE - NO HELP
PART TWENTY TWO - INVESTMENT FOR THE COMMON NEGRO, PLEASE!



KARLA CISNEROS
Houston City Council Member, District H

July 21, 2022

Dear Board Members,

As the City Council Member for District H in the City of Houston, I am writing to urge reasonableness and to voice my deep concern and opposition to the current recommendation that severely underfunds low- and moderate-income residents of Houston.

The proposed MOD for the \$488 million in funds to address flooding is unfair and is a severe blow to the exact communities that these Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds were designed to help. Adoption of this recommendation compounds the very harmful impact of the decision in February of this year to only award 1.9% of the Texas GLO funding to the City of Houston, when almost **one third** of the H-GAC's population falls within the City of Houston. And despite the funding that was allocated to Harris County, it still remains to be seen what portion of that award to Harris County last February, will be invested in the City of Houston.

Please reconsider the formula and adopt a Method of Distribution that fairly, responsibly, and equitably serves all those who are desperately in need of assistance for flooding mitigation, even if they live in Houston.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karla Cisneros".

Karla Cisneros
Council Member, District H

SYLVIA R. GARCIA

29TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

1620 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-1688

11811 EAST FREEWAY
SUITE 430
HOUSTON, TX 77029
(832) 325-3150

FACEBOOK: @REPSYLVIA GARCIA

TWITTER: @REPSYLVIA GARCIA

WWW.SYLVIA GARCIA.HOUSE.GOV

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4329

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY
AND INCLUSION

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT
AND INVESTIGATIONS

TASK FORCE ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION,
CIVIL RIGHTS, AND CIVIL LIBERTIES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION
AND CITIZENSHIP

TASK FORCE ON POVERTY AND OPPORTUNITY

VICE CHAIR ON URBAN POVERTY

Houston-Galveston Area Council Board of Directors
3555 Timmons Lane #100
Houston, TX 77027

Dear H-GAC Board of Directors,

I am glad to have the opportunity to offer my comments on the flow of Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) funds in Houston. The need for flood relief is a difficult reality for too many Houstonians. I implore the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) to allocate a fair and equitable proportion of CDBG-MIT dollars to the City of Houston to offer much-needed assistance to its residents, some who live in my Congressional District.

For context, in 2018, Congress appropriated \$12 Billion in CDBG-MIT funds for qualifying disasters from 2015, 2016, and 2017. Hurricane Harvey is one of these qualifying disasters, and the State of Texas received a lump sum of these dollars to be distributed by the Texas General Land Office (GLO). In turn, the GLO allocated \$488,762,000 CDBG-MIT Regional Mitigation Program funds to the H-GAC region.

In February 2022, the H-GAC board voted to award just \$9,232,700, or 1.9% of the total dollars to the city of Houston. This allocation is meager compared to the need of the most damaged area.

The City of Houston makes up 30% of H-GAC's region's population. And, over 300,000 housing units flooded in Houston alone, with more homes impacted than after both Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Sandy. It is clear that such a large portion of the region with such widespread flood damage deserves more than a mere 1.9% of H-GAC's allotted funds. Further, Harris County's method of distribution is still incomplete, meaning the City of Houston is still left in the dark regarding how much money they may receive from the County.

As a Member of the United States House of Representatives, it is my duty to stand up for the needs of my constituents. In more ways than one, the City of Houston has been left behind in essential flood relief. I call upon H-GAC to reconsider their method of distribution and provide the City of Houston with a larger portion of its CDBG-MIT funds. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Sylvia Garcia
Member of Congress



CITY OF HOUSTON

Sylvester Turner

Mayor

P.O. Box 1562
Houston, Texas 77251-1562

Telephone – Dial 311
www.houstontx.gov

July 21, 2022

Dear Members of the H-GAC Board,

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on HGAC's proposed Method of Distribution. Before offering my own comments, I wish to thank Council Member Sallie Alcorn for her leadership not just as a member of the HGAC Board, but as an advocate for the people of Houston.

Both Council Member Alcorn and I believe that the decision by this board to continue with the current Method of Distribution that allocates to the City of Houston less than 2% of available CDBG-MIT monies will not address the needs of the people of Houston and this region.

Northeast Houston, Sunnyside, Acres Homes, the East End, and so many other communities were vulnerable during Harvey and without a sufficient allocation and investment of CDBG-MIT funds, these communities will suffer again and again with every future major flooding event.

While all of our communities were affected, those that were most severely impacted and will continue to be vulnerable are our historical communities of color. HUD has already found that GLO has discriminated against this minority population, but HGAC can stop that inequity by not following GLO's lead. We are a region, and by working together we can serve all people – no matter their color or creed.

Less than 2% of funding for a population that makes up over 30% of the HGAC region cannot stand. What meaningful infrastructure investments can we put in place with only \$9 million in a city that spans over 665 square miles and nearly 2.3 million people?

At the end of the day, let us not forget that we are talking about people, our people, not just dollars whenever we are choosing the Method of Distribution. Because yes, it is a choice. We can choose to work together to invest the funds equitably for the most impacted communities as was intended by Congress.

Sincerely,

Sylvester Turner
Mayor



COUNCIL MEMBER LETITIA PLUMMER DDS

Houston City Council At-Large Position 4

7/22/2022

Dear fellow H-GAC Board Members,

I urge you to reconsider the proposed Method of Distribution for the \$488 million Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation funds and work towards a method that is more equitable.

Over the last few years, I have spent a considerable amount of time with communities who have continuously suffered since Hurricane Harvey. Every episode of rain brings the risk of homes flooding in our underserved neighborhoods, where our communities of color reside. It is, therefore, extremely disappointing that the board wants to continue with the current Method of Distribution by allocating a mere 1.9% of the available CDBG-MIT funds to Houston when our city accounts for 30% of H-GAC's region.

The General Land Office has already failed these communities when it discriminated and denied them much deserved flood mitigation money. In addition, Harris County has not decided the Method of Distribution for the funding it received, which leaves the most impacted people, yet again, in a precarious situation.

I hope the board will consider the history of risks to the impacted communities and develop an equitable Method of Delivery for the CDBG-MIT funds.

Sincerely,

Council Member Letitia Plummer, DDS
At- Large 4



July 25, 2022



MATAGORDA COUNTY
NATE McDONALD
COUNTY JUDGE

Houston-Galveston Area Council
CDBG Mitigation Funds
RE: Preliminary MOD Public Comments

H-GAC Staff and Board Members,

Please accept this writing as my public comments with regard to the preliminary Method of Distribution (MOD) for U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Mitigation funds to be provided for our region.

In that the H-GAC Water Committee and staff worked for many months to promulgate a fair and equitable MOD for the 13 counties of the H-GAC, that was debated by and approved by the elected officials who comprise the Water Committee with multiple scenario input from H-GAC staff, then sent to the full H-GAC Board of Directors, which is comprised of elected leaders from each of our region's counties, as well as elected leaders from each of our region's largest cities; my belief is that this MOD has been transparently and publicly vetted, and was approved for submittal to the TX GLO by a public vote by the majority of the H-GAC Board of Directors present at the February 15, 2022, H-GAC Board Meeting.

This MOD is the culmination of, in many cases, years of planning, studies and modeling to bring forward shovel ready projects within this entirety of our region. Most are multi-jurisdictional projects that have much benefit for both upstream and downstream partners. There are no jurisdictions who will have 100% of their mitigation needs met, but by working together as a region, we will have prioritized the biggest needs and met many of those.

As we know that Harris County received a direct appropriation of 750 million dollars and that the other twelve counties have 469 million dollars to divide between them, my belief is that Harris County has plenty of mitigation funds to spend with the cities within Harris County and that some very good projects can be accomplished in the balance of the region with the other 469 million dollars, if this MOD is given final approval by the TX GLO and HUD.

There are many more mitigation needs in our region than just those that reside in Harris County, thus I urge the TXGLO and HUD to approve this preliminary MOD as written and allow our region to access these funds and build out the mitigation projects in each of our counties. Thank you for allowing me to make these comments and please have a good day.

Best regards,

Nate McDonald
County Judge
Matagorda County



EDWARD POLLARD
Houston City Council Member, District J

July 26, 2022

Dear Members of the H-GAC Board,

I am writing to express my opposition to the current Method of Distribution for the CDBG-MIT monies. Under the current MOD, the city of Houston is allocated less than 2% of the available CDBG-MIT funds. Given that Houston's population comprises over 30% of the HGAC region, 1.9% of H-GAC's funding does not sufficiently cover Houston and the surrounding region. Additionally, Harris County's MOD is unclear regarding how much funding the city will receive. This creates another obstacle towards helping the people of Houston.

During Hurricane Harvey, more than 300,000 housing units flooded across Houston. While the entire city was negatively impacted, District J communities were some of the most harmed. Minority communities are the most vulnerable to major flooding because they have been historically underfunded by the GLO and other entities. This type of discrimination against minority populations further perpetuates flood relief disparities.

Within District J, these underfunded communities include Sharpstown, Braeburn, Gulfton, Alief, Westwood, Richmond Plaza South, and St. George. These areas are still suffering from Harvey, and they require adequate investment to improve drainage and other flood reducing infrastructure. Without the necessary funding, these communities will continue to struggle following every major flooding event.

As the Council Member for District J, I must advocate for the needs of my constituents. I implore HGAC to allocate more funds to the people who need it the most. We must use the CDBG-MIT funds as they were intended and equitably invest in our communities. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to working together on better serving the people of Houston.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ed Pollard", is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Council Member Edward Pollard
District J

City of Katy
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



July 27, 2022

Water Resource Committee
Houston-Galveston Area Council

Re: H-GAC CDBG-MIT MOD Public Comments

To Whom It May Concern,

Please allow this letter to serve as an official comment from the City of Katy ("City") regarding the Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation ("CDBG-MIT") Method of Distribution ("MOD") in the Houston-Galveston Area Council ("H-GAC").

The City appreciates the opportunity to receive funding through the CDBG-MIT Regional Mitigation Program. We are seeking clarification on the use of funds as we prepare a list of potential projects that could benefit from this regional mitigation program.

- With the City being split into multiple counties, how will the funds be split between Fort Bend County and Waller County?
- Can the City use all of the allocated funds towards an urgent need project or will the City be required to meet the low-to-moderate income requirements? The City has urgent need projects that would be great to pursue with these funds.

The City is excited to take the next steps to mitigate the impact of future disasters on our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William H. Thiele". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "William" being the most prominent.

William H. "Dusty" Thiele
Mayor

WHD/kjs



July 28, 2022

Houston-Galveston Area Council
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 100
Houston, Texas 77027

ATTN: Cheryl Mergo

Re: Public Comment
H-GAC Method of Distribution for CDBG-MIT Funds

The purpose of this letter is to provide public comments on the Houston-Galveston Area Council's (H-GAC) draft Method of Distribution (MOD) for Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) funding.

In February of 2018, the United States Congress appropriated billions of dollars to mitigate the catastrophic damages of extreme weather related events for regions impacted between 2015 and 2017, including Hurricane Harvey, and Harris County is the only County in Texas to have been impacted by Presidentially declared flooding disasters in all three years.

The Texas General Land Office (GLO) received more than \$4 Billion to distribute in accordance with criteria established by Congress and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The GLO then appropriated \$488 million to H-GAC, of which Harris County is a part of. Inexplicably, the H-GAC's draft MOD specifically excludes all agencies within the geographical limits of Harris County from any of that funding – with the exception of declined funding that may be reallocated to cities (or portions thereof) located in Harris County.

While the MOD states that the reason for this exclusion is because the GLO has separately appropriated \$750 million to Harris County, it provides no statistical measure for this exclusion and does not consider the percent of H-GAC population within Harris County identified by HUD as most impacted and distressed. For example, 73 percent of the low to moderate income population across all of H-GAC's 13 counties resides within Harris County. Further, the GLO's amended Action Plan appropriating funds to Harris County has not yet been approved by HUD, and their original Action Plan was found to be discriminatory to Black and Hispanic residences.

For these reasons, the Harris County Flood Control District believes approval of the H-GAC MOD at this time would be pre-mature, and respectfully requests that the MOD be revised to include eligible agencies within Harris County.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Tina Petersen'.

2B86569B8F95484
Tina Petersen, PhD., P.E.
Executive Director

072822 HGAC COMMENTS TO MOD

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 28, 2022

Houston-Galveston Area Council
Attn: Cheryl Mergo
P.O. Box 22777
Houston, TX 77227-2777

Re: Houston-Galveston Area Council Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation Method of Distribution

Dear Members of the Houston-Galveston Area Council Board:

We welcome the opportunity to submit comments on the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Method of Distribution (MOD). The funds in this MOD, which were appropriated by Congress, will reduce the risk of future flooding in the regions most impacted by significant rain events in 2015, 2016, and 2017, including Hurricane Harvey. It is an important step in addressing our disaster mitigation needs, and we thank you for your commitment to supporting Texas communities in our region.

As you know, Hurricane Harvey devastated the Gulf Coast region in 2017, its nearly 60 inches of rain and related flooding claiming 68 lives and causing an estimated \$125 billion in damage. This destructive storm was the third in three years, following significant rain events in 2015 and 2016 in Houston and Harris County, the Memorial Day and Tax Day floods. Harris County, the most populous county in Texas, is the only county in Texas that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) identified as “most impacted and distressed” from the Memorial Day flood in 2015, the Tax Day flood in 2016, and Hurricane Harvey in 2017.

The U.S. Congress passed the *Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018* (BBA) shortly after Hurricane Harvey and appropriated \$12 billion in CDBG-MIT funding for hazard mitigation activities in response to qualifying disasters in 2015, 2016, and 2017, including Hurricane Harvey. Congress intended these funds to be used to mitigate future risk in the areas most impacted by these disasters. The BBA is clear that areas that received the most CDBG Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds should receive the most CDBG-MIT funds to mitigate damages and lessen the need for CDBG-DR funding in the future.

After seeing the results of the H-GAC board’s vote in February, we are concerned that the decision to allocate only \$9.2 million to the City of Houston will fail the communities most impacted by Harvey and prior storms and leave those communities even more vulnerable to future disasters. This proposed allocation denies the intent of the Congress that appropriated the funds and leaves the City of Houston, which makes up 30% of the region’s population and almost 50% of the damages from Hurricane Harvey, with approximately 2% of H-GAC’s available funds. We are further concerned by the board’s discussions to deny H-GAC funding to any cities within Harris County if the Texas General Land Office’s (GLO) Action Plan Amendment 1, which awards \$750 million to Harris County, is approved.

As you know, Action Plan Amendment 1 proposes an allocation of \$750 million in CDBG-MIT funds for Harris County to distribute to flood and drainage districts and municipalities within their jurisdiction, including the City of Houston. Because Harris County and Houston were not awarded any funds in GLO's \$2.3 billion funding competition, this proposed allocation will be the sole direct funding source for our local governments to complete mitigation projects in Houston and Harris County.

This proposed subgrant of less than \$750 million is not sufficient for the communities in Houston and the damage they faced during Hurricane Harvey and the floods in 2015 and 2016. Furthermore, because this plan has not yet been approved by HUD, there is no guarantee these funds will ever get to Harris County or the City of Houston. Without approval of this plan and a method of distribution with which Harris County will allocate those funds, it is not a responsible approach for H-GAC to consider reducing the current allocation to zero.

On behalf of our constituents, and having consulted local leaders and experts, we ask H-GAC to award funds to the City of Houston based on Congressional intent, focusing on the regions most impacted by the flooding in 2015, 2016, and 2017. There is no reason the City of Houston should receive only 2% of available funds after suffering nearly 50% of damages.

We urge H-GAC to take these considerations into account as the MOD is being developed. We also ask that H-GAC work with local leaders to make data-driven changes to this MOD so that it more accurately reflects the disproportionate damage Houston has faced in recent years. We look forward to working with you to ensure that Houston receives a fair and appropriate allocation of these funds.

Sincerely,



Lizzie Fletcher
Member of Congress



Sylvia Garcia
Member of Congress



Al Green
Member of Congress



Abbie Kamin

Houston City Council Member, District C

July 28, 2022

Board of Directors
Houston-Galveston Area Council
3555 Timmons Lane
Houston, TX 77027

Dear Members of the H-GAC Board of Directors,

As the Houston City Council Member for District C, I represent nearly 250,000 residents and some of the neighborhoods hardest hit by flooding in the city, including areas with the most repetitive instances of flooding in the entire region. I also serve as Chair of our city's Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee and have the privilege to serve as an alternate at TPC on behalf of the City of Houston.

I respectfully submit the following for the record, raising strong objections to the proposed method of distribution (MOD) of Community Development Block Grant- Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) funds as I did in previous testimony at the February 15, 2022 Board Meeting before this body. Flood prone communities in my district and across the city deserve protection. Additional funds must be allocated to the City of Houston under the Houston-Galveston Area Council's (H-GAC) proposed allocation scheme. Alternatively, this item should be tabled or delayed until a more appropriate time.

The proposed MOD unjustifiably allocates a mere 1.9% of H-GAC's \$488,762,000, to the City of Houston. This small of an allocation runs contrary to the Congressional intent for these funds and the demographic and hydrological realities of the region over which H-GAC has jurisdiction.

The overwhelming population Houston represents when compared to other areas should be considered to ensure funds are fairly and equitably allocated. Houston is home to over 2.3 million people, making up 31% of the entire population H-GAC serves. Its population size is also more than 15 times larger than the next largest member city. Despite representing millions of Texans, the current plan allocates fewer funds to Houston than some of the significantly less populous members, including, in one case, \$2.5 million less than a County with a population of less than 42,000.

Jurisdictions with significant flooding history should receive a larger portion of funds as intended by Congress. Houston is the only major city in the region to experience consecutive declared flood disasters in 2015, 2016, and 2017. The funds at issue were allocated by Congress as a response to the weather-related disasters from 2015 to Hurricane Harvey. Looking beyond Harvey, the challenges continue. The City of Houston has experienced at least seven federally declared disasters in six years.

H-GAC should not stray from proportional distribution models previously followed in doling out federal disaster dollars. Houston sustained approximately 50% of the statewide damage in Hurricane Harvey. Recovery from this disaster was the impetus for these dollars to be distributed by H-GAC. Previously, the City of Houston received 25% of total CDBG-DR17 dollars (with Harris County receiving an independent 25%), and about 40% of FEMA hazard mitigation dollars in the aftermath of the disaster. H-GAC should follow common-sense, proportional standards based on damage sustained to ensure lives and the greater regional economy is not at risk.

H-GAC should not rely on GLO's proposed award to Harris County in the determination of funding amounts for the City of Houston. The obvious and blatant issues with GLO's own funding scheme- that is the source of these funds- is currently being challenged and is not final. As such, H-GAC should, at the very least, delay or table this item until the matter is settled in the eyes of Federal Departments involved. Furthermore, the funding scheme by the GLO, and its de minimis allocation to Harris County should not be considered in the distribution model this body uses. Not only is Harris County a separate and independent jurisdiction from the City of Houston, \$750 million directed from GLO between two of the largest populations and the hardest hit by natural disasters, is wholly insufficient and should not be the basis of this body's proposal to allocate a mere 1.9% of funds to Houston. It is not known whether Houston will receive any of the funds GLO allocated to Harris County, and it should not be assumed that it will. Any allocation to Houston should be considered independent of Harris County.

The ability of the city to effectively protect our communities does not just depend on county bayous and rivers, but on the ability of our urban drainage systems to convey stormwater to larger channels. As a city we are doing all we can with what we have, but it is not enough. Without an adequate and proportional CDBG-MIT allocation, we will not have the drainage capacity to protect lives and livelihoods. Failing to provide that funding will have significant upstream and downstream outfall impacts, putting not only my district's neighborhoods at substantial risk, but many of the surrounding communities in the H-GAC region.

We are all in this together. Without the proper investment in Houston, H-GAC as a whole will not be able to thrive as it has for so many years.

I appreciate H-GAC leadership and staff for their work, and the Board's consideration of the sizeable objections presented by the public. I respectfully request reconsideration of the method of distribution. Alternatively, I ask that this item be tabled or suspended until such time that other funding distributions are finalized.

Respectfully,



Abbie Kamin
Houston City Council Member, District C
Chair, Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee



MARY NAN HUFFMAN
Houston City Council Member, District G

July 28, 2022

Dear Houston-Galveston Area Council Board of Directors,

Following Hurricane Harvey in 2017, Houston was left with \$16 billion in residential damage and nearly 100,000 flooded houses. Almost five years later, the effects of this storm are still being felt in the communities that I represent on Houston's west side.

In response to the devastation that was endured by our region, the Texas General Land Office (GLO) allocated \$488,762,000 in federal CDBG-MIT funds to the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) for mitigation projects designed to increase the region's resilience to natural disasters.

In February of this year, H-GAC's Water Resources Committee and the H-GAC Board approved a preliminary Method of Distribution (MOD) for these funds which allocated a meager 1.9 percent of those dollars to Houston — the largest population center in the region, and fourth-largest city in the United States.

The consensus of the H-GAC Board seemed to indicate that because Harris County is receiving \$750 million, cities within the county should be mostly excluded. I believe that this rationale is flawed because it does not consider timing.

Harris County's MOD has not been released and there is, so far, no indication that the City of Houston will be the recipient of any of the county's CDBG-MIT funds. Improving drainage infrastructure in the largest city in Texas is an issue too important to be left to this kind of assumption.

I urge H-GAC to delay approval of their preliminary MOD until after the Harris County MOD is released. Afterwards, H-GAC will be able adjust the allocation for Houston to best account for what funding the city may have received from Harris County. This reconsideration will provide H-GAC with the opportunity to ensure that the communities which received the most devastation will benefit proportionally from these funds.

I appreciate your consideration of this request and continue to be appreciative of your service to the residents of our region.

Kind regards,

Mary Nan Huffman

Brays Oaks Super Neighborhood #36
10611 Fondren Rd
Houston, Texas 77036

July 26, 2022

Via Email: CDBGMitigation@h-gac.com

Houston-Galveston Area Council
Attn: Cheryl Mergo

RE: H-GAC Preliminary Method of Distribution for CDBG-MIT Regional Mitigation Program Funds

To the Houston-Galveston Area Council:

The Brays Oaks Super Neighborhood Council #36 requests that the Houston-Galveston Area Council ("H-GAC") change the provisions in its preliminary Method of Distribution ("MOD") plan which currently exclude cities located in Harris County from funding consideration until the reallocation of declined funds. If there are no declined funds, Houston and the other cities in Harris County will receive zero dollars from the H-GAC. Although the Texas General Land Office ("GLO") may have approved the preliminary MOD, these provisions are inconsistent with the intent expressed in the GLO Staff Responses in the State Action Plan Amendment 1 ("Amendment 1"). If the H-GAC disagrees, then, as an alternative the Super Neighborhood requests that the H-GAC wait to submit its MOD plan to the GLO until Harris County publishes its MOD and the two MOD plans can be coordinated to ensure funding for cities within Harris County.

In Amendment 1, Section 5.4.5.4. the GLO states that "Funds from the Harris County MOD may be allocated to: i Harris County; ii cities or towns within Harris County; and iii special purpose districts...." Amendment 1, page 251. The GLO wrote "may," not "shall" or "will" or "must." The decision regarding

who receives a MOD allocation is discretionary with Harris County. The primary concern is that each proposed project must mitigate one of the identifiable risks under Section 5.4.5.1.

Therefore, it is possible that none of the cities located within Harris County will receive an allocation from Harris County.

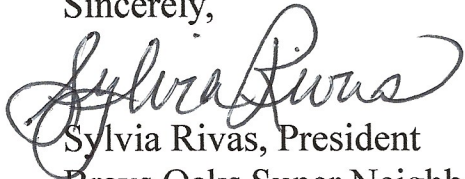
As the GLO Staff commented in some of its Amendment 1 Responses: "Houston, as a city within Harris County, will benefit from projects the Harris County method of distribution identifies." Amendment 1, Page 365. However, the GLO Staff did not end their discussion of funds for the cities in Harris County there.

The GLO Staff Responses to commenters regarding cities in Harris County, particularly Houston, made clear that the cities are eligible to receive funding from both the Harris County MOD and the H-GAC MOD. In response to a received comment in which the commenter stated that Houston will still receive zero dollars for its mitigation projects, the GLO Staff Response stated "The City of Houston is an eligible entity in both the Harris County Mitigation Method of Distribution and the Regional Mitigation Program for the Houston-Galveston Area Council Method of Distribution. The commenter is encouraged to contact local public officials for more information regarding the distribution of MIT funding within each of these areas that may benefit the City of Houston." Amendment 1, Pages 354 – 355. As confirmed repeatedly by H-GAC, the GLO is giving H-GAC \$488,762,000 and Harris County \$750,000,000 for a total distribution amount of \$1,238,762,000 for our region. The GLO Staff Responses makes numerous references to the total of \$1.2 billion being available for distribution for City of Houston projects. For example, in response to a Houston City Council Member who discussed needed drainage projects in her District but does not have any funding for the projects, the GLO Staff Response stated "Action Plan Amendment 1 more than doubles the funds available for the Regional Mitigation Program which focuses on local control of limited mitigation funds available in the state. The GLO encourages the commenter to participate in the Public Planning Meeting and the second public hearing on the draft Houston-Galveston Area Council Method of Distribution and the Harris County Mitigation Method of Distribution where another \$1.2 billion of CDBG-MIT funding will be considered for

allocation.” Amendment 1, page 379. Similar comments about the \$1.2 billion funding and the dual eligibility are included in GLO Staff Responses to commenters discussing Northeast Houston (Amendment 1, pages 353 and 368), the Brays Bayou area in Houston (Amendment 1, page 379), the Westbury area in Houston (Amendment 1, page 400), the Pleasantville area in Houston (Amendment 1, page 355), and Houston in general (Amendment 1, pages 360, 381, 382, 384, 397).

What is important is that the \$1.2 billion be used to make our region more resilient in the future which includes reducing or even eliminating future flooding. We hope that H-GAC will redesign its MOD to provide funding to cities located within Harris County and even work together with Harris County to benefit all of the at-risk residents and businesses in our region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sylvia Rivas".

Sylvia Rivas, President

Brays Oaks Super Neighborhood Council #36

Braysoakssnc36@gmail.com

(832) 729-0212

<http://www.houstontx.gov/superneighborhoods/36.html>

Braysoakssnc36.org

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 28, 2022

Houston-Galveston Area Council
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 100
Houston, TX 77027

Re: Continued Injustice Against Houston, TX in the Distribution of Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation Funds

Dear Members of the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) Board,

Thank you for holding a public hearing on the Method of Distribution of Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) funds for flood risk mitigation projects.

We join Council Member Alcorn and Mayor Turner in opposition to the H-GAC's decision to award the City of Houston less than 2% of the total CDBG-MIT funds allocated for the Council. When Congress appropriated \$4.3 billion in CDBG-MIT funds for disaster relief in the wake of Hurricane Harvey, these funds were meant to be distributed in an equitable manner to the most impacted communities. **While the General Land Office's (GLO) funding allocation formula created an unjust and inequitable distribution, the H-GAC Board's decision to allocate so few resources to the City of Houston only compounds this injustice.**

Some Board members cited the GLO's allocation of \$750 million to Harris County as a reason not to provide further funds for the City of Houston, as it lies within the county. The notion that, because some funds are going to Harris County, the City of Houston should not receive further assistance is groundless. Harris County is the only county in Texas to have experienced three consecutive years of flooding disasters, in 2015, 2016, and 2017. When Hurricane Harvey struck, Harris County was inundated with 1 trillion gallons of water in just four days.

The City of Houston desperately needs disaster relief funds to build infrastructure that can lessen the impact of flooding disasters. Unless additional CDBG-MIT funds are distributed to the City of Houston, we will neither be able to repair the damage inflicted by consecutive flooding disasters and Hurricane Harvey nor will we be able to prepare for future catastrophes. The City of Houston and Harris County require as much relief funding as they can receive.

We urge you to reconsider this Method of Distribution. Thank you for your attention to this crucial matter. Should you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact Rep. Al Green's Chief of Staff, Niha Razi, at 202-760-1809 or niha.razi@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/
Al Green
Member of Congress

/s/
Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress

/s/
Sylvia Garcia
Member of Congress



Thursday, July 28, 2022

City Council Member Tiffany D. Thomas' Response to H-GAC MOD Announcement

In February the Houston Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) board voted to award the City of Houston \$9,232,700—only **1.9%** of the preliminary method of distribution (MOD) of \$488 million in risk mitigation funds for projects related to flooding, hurricanes, and other natural disasters. Though many board members acquiesced to the notion that cities within Harris County should receive any funds due to the County being awarded \$750 million, I will concede. However, if it had not been for the damage within the City of Houston during Hurricane Harvey, funding would not be available.

The proposed MOD is minimal at best and does not truly support the full picture in terms of damage to the families and communities of Houston who have still not fully recovered from the destruction of Hurricane Harvey.

The board's stance aligns with negligent and unequitable ideologies that are harmful to Houstonians where infrastructure investments remain a top priority. Moreover, this non-inclusive approach has handicapped the city from appropriately and effectively directing its efforts towards flood mitigation and infrastructural advancements in neighborhoods that need it the most. I represent several neighborhoods where residents are arrested with fear that their home might flood after a rain occurrence.

The direction that both General Land Office (GLO) and H-GAC has taken against issuing the City of Houston the appropriate and equitable provision is devastatingly critical for our residents. To be frank, the allocation to Harris County instead of the City of Houston should not be viewed as a victory, but instead a complete flex of control over the city by outside entities.

📍 City Hall Annex
900 Bagby, First Floor
Houston, TX 77002

📞 832.393.3002

✉️ districtf@houstontx.gov



www.houstontx.gov/council/f/



SIERRA CLUB

LONE STAR CHAPTER

July 28, 2022

Houston-Galveston Area Council
3555 Timmons Lane, Suite 120,
Houston, TX 77027
P.O. Box 22777
Houston, Texas 77227-2777
Phone: (713) 627-3200

Re: Public Comments to H-GAC on Preliminary COG MOD
Via email to: PublicComments@h-gac.com

To Whom It May Concern at H-GAC:

The Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club is the state chapter of the Sierra Club, and the Houston Regional Group represents the Sierra Club in counties in the larger H-GAC area. We have roughly 28,000 members in Texas, including approximately 5,000 in the H-GAC region. We participated in public meetings and the comment period with the GLO's initial MIT-CDBG plan and were supportive of including specific money for the Council of Governments for future distribution as part of that plan. We have had a chance to review the Houston-Galveston Area Council's (H-GAC) Method of Distribution (MOD) for \$488,772,000 in Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Regional Mitigation Program funds. We do appreciate the opportunity to offer brief comments, but are very disappointed that the draft plan appears to cut out opportunities for funding in the area that was most impacted by Hurricane Harvey, as well as the lack of detail to the importance of green infrastructure.

We have three main comments: 1. Don't remove Harris County from funding consideration: 2. Amend the Method of Distribution to better center equity; 3. Prioritize natural and green infrastructure and smart land use and development.

1. Do Not Remove Harris County and Municipalities Within Harris County from Eligibility

Under its proposal, H-GAC's MOD would specifically exclude Harris County and municipalities within its jurisdiction from a distribution by the COG. The rationale in excluding Harris County from the \$488 million is that Harris County has been pegged for a future allocation of \$750 million by the GLO in its State Action Plan through Amendment No 1, and will develop its own distribution method. However, that amendment was needed due to the GLO's initial lack of funding provided for Harris County, and was the result of the rejection of the GLO's plan by HUD, and is unrelated to this pot of money.

In fact, Harris county and the City of Houston had the largest number of households impacted, the largest disaster damage score, the biggest low-to-moderate income population, and the highest population in the floodplain. Indeed, Amendment No. 1 only occurred after Texas Housers and Northeast Action Collective filed a complaint with the United States Department of Housing and UrbanDevelopment (HUD), "alleging that GLO's design and operation of the Competitiondiscriminated on the basis of race and national origin through the use of scoring criteria that substantially disadvantaged Black and Hispanic residents."

Earlier this year, HUD required the GLO to enter into a Voluntary Compliance Agreement (VCA) to avoid further scrutiny by the United States Department of Justice (DOJ). In the meantime, as a result, the GLO has amended its State Action Plan (Amendment 1) to include the Harris County Mitigation Method of Distribution – providing \$750 million to the county to distribute. Amendment 1 more than doubled the funding in the Regional Mitigation Program – the GLO's second largest program – from \$500 million to nearly \$1.2 billion. Importantly, the programs that the GLO amended in order to provide funds to the Harris County Mitigation MOD were always separate from the Regional Mitigation Program – and nowhere under the State Action Plan was there any discussion about excluding Harris County or municipalities within its jurisdiction from the Regional Mitigation Program due to Amendment 1.

It makes no sense to cut Harris County and its cities out of the allocation simply because Harris County will be getting a separate portion of funding. Instead, we should consider equitable funding as a whole, including the H-GAC initial pot of \$488 million being discussed.

In fact, the GLO has already awarded money to many jurisdictions that are part of the H-GAC

under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition. If the COG wished to remove eligibility for entities that received funds under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition, it should not single out Harris County and municipalities within its jurisdiction from eligibility. Nowhere else in the COG's MOD does H-GAC remove other entities, or reduce the amount of funding eligible to those entities, if they received funding under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition. Therefore, we believe that the COG unjustly singles out Harris County and municipalities within its jurisdiction for exclusion.

In addition, removing Harris County from the H-GAC MOD opens the COG up to a Title VI complaint since it excludes the most diverse region within the COG from eligibility. If an investigation did occur, it could open the COG up to timely delays – harming the region as a whole.

We strongly urge H-GAC to allow Harris County and the municipalities within its jurisdiction eligibility to receive funds. While we do not have a specific number to suggest, we would note that the City of Houston has recommended that 30%, or \$148 million, of the COG's funds should go to the city. We believe that assuring that 30 to 40 percent of the funds go to the City of Houston and Harris County is appropriate.

Distribution Factors Should Focus on Ensuring Equitable Distribution of H-GAC COG MOD Funds

The COG MOD should allocate funds to mitigate disasters in the areas of highest vulnerability and the areas most at risk due to hazards. One way to achieve this would be for the CDC's Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) to be added to the distribution factors. Entities with high SVI scores should be prioritized for distribution of funds under the MOD. Providing equity in funding to areas and peoples that are most vulnerable is key.

Under the current proposed framework, H-GAC puts a high value on personal and real property damage as a distribution factor. This tends to disproportionately provide funds to high income areas. Thus, areas that are less vulnerable may under the MOD that is proposed may benefit more than more vulnerable areas. Instead, the MOD should prioritize equity and vulnerable areas.

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We recommend reducing the weighting of personal and real property compared to other factors that would distribute funds to the most vulnerable areas with the highest risk. We do not object to giving personal and real property damage some consideration but believe it is over-emphasized in the proposed MOD.

Prioritize natural or green infrastructure projects and also projects to make the coast more resilient through local land use and building codes.

Natural or green infrastructure projects were heavily encouraged for the use of CDBG-MIT funds in the GLO's State Action Plan. However, out of the 81 projects that were chosen for initial funding by the GLO, only one project incorporated natural infrastructure features.

Green and natural infrastructure projects benefit communities year- round, reducing risks from multiple hazards such as improving air and water quality and mitigating urban heat island effect, while also providing recreational spaces for communities. There are vast areas of native prairie and important woodland lands that can and should be protected and could be an important asset in protecting coastal communities.

Due to the importance of green and natural infrastructure projects, we urge H-GAC to promote green and natural infrastructure by reconsidering a set aside for natural or green infrastructure projects. This can be done by making natural or green infrastructure a regional priority and limiting subrecipients in the region to projects that meet that priority. Even in "traditional" infrastructure projects H-GAC can provide additional consideration if those projects include some attention to green design and infrastructure as part of the overall project.

In addition, prioritizing projects that involve comprehensive land use ordinances and adoption of modern building codes – such as the suite of 2021 International Code Council - can assure that new construction is built in appropriate non-flood-prone areas and built to standards meant to withstand hurricanes and reduce water and energy use. It is vital for cities and counties to invest in modernizing our land use ordinances and adopting and enforcing modern building codes.

The Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club and the Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club appreciate this opportunity to submit these brief comments,

Cyrus Reed, PhD
Conservation Director
Sierra Club, Lone Star Chapter
Cyrus.reed@sierraclub.org

Frank Blake
Conservation Committee
Houston Group, Sierra Club

frankblake@juno.com

July 28, 2022

Jeff Taebel
Director, Community and Environmental Planning
Houston-Galveston Area Council
P.O. Box 22777
Houston, Texas 77227-2777

Re: Public Comments to H-GAC on Preliminary COG MOD

Via email to: PublicComments@h-gac.com

Dear Mr. Taebel,

Please accept this document as the written comments of the undersigned groups regarding the Houston-Galveston Area Council's (H-GAC) Method of Distribution (MOD) for \$488,772,000 in Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Regional Mitigation Program funds. As always, our organizations appreciate the opportunity to provide public comment.

Our comments and recommendations below focus on the allocations, factors to determine allocations, and set asides for nature-based projects.

1. Do Not Remove Harris County and Municipalities Within its Jurisdiction from Eligibility

Under H-GAC's proposed Method of Distribution, Harris County and municipalities within its jurisdiction are excluded from a distribution by the COG. H-GAC's explanation for this exclusion is that Harris County has been allocated \$750 million by GLO in its State Action Plan Amendment 1 and will develop its own Method of Distribution to serve its communities.¹

According to H-GAC's data, Harris county and the City of Houston had the largest number of households impacted, the largest disaster damage score, the biggest low-to-moderate income population, and the highest population in the floodplain.² In order to achieve equitable distribution of funds, Harris County and the City of Houston should not be left out of an allocation under H-GAC's MOD.

- a. *Harris County's \$750 Million Allocation Under the Harris County Mitigation Method Of Distribution Was to Remedy Previous Exclusion Under Round One of Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition*

¹ H-GAC Preliminary CDBG-MIT MOD, at 2 ("The reasoning behind this decision was that Harris County has been allocated \$750 million by GLO in its State Action Plan Amendment 1 and will develop its own Method of Distribution to serve its communities.").

² H-GAC Preliminary CDBG-MIT MOD, Attachment 2a – H-GAC Allocation Summary Calculation Worksheets.

Under the first Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition round, Harris County and City of Houston originally were set to receive zero CDBG-MIT funds from the GLO. After the GLO published press releases detailing the recipients list, Texas Housers and Northeast Action Collective filed a complaint with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), “alleging that GLO’s design and operation of the Competition discriminated on the basis of race and national origin through the use of scoring criteria that substantially disadvantaged Black and Hispanic residents.”

Earlier this year, HUD agreed with the Complainants and found that the GLO’s scoring criteria was in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its implementing regulations (Section 109).³ To remedy the violation, HUD required the GLO to enter into a Voluntary Compliance Agreement (VCA) to avoid further scrutiny by the United States Department of Justice (DOJ).

While a VCA has not yet been reached, the GLO has amended its State Action Plan (Amendment 1) to include the Harris County Mitigation Method of Distribution – providing \$750 million to the county to distribute. The GLO was able to provide these funds to the new program, by removing the second round of the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition, and by taking funds away from other programs. In addition to creating the Harris County Mitigation MOD, Amendment 1 more than doubled the funding in the Regional Mitigation Program – the GLO’s second largest program – from \$500 million to nearly \$1.2 billion.

The motivation for providing Harris County with its own MOD was therefore due to the significant backlash and subsequent HUD investigation which found that the scoring criteria under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition violated Title VI. Importantly, the programs that the GLO amended in order to provide funds to the Harris County Mitigation MOD were always separate from the Regional Mitigation Program – and nowhere under the State Action Plan was there any discussion about excluding Harris County or municipalities within its jurisdiction from the Regional Mitigation Program due to Amendment 1.

b. No Other Entities That Received Funds Under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition Were Excluded From the H-GAC’s MOD

The GLO awarded entities within H-GAC’s jurisdiction with over \$333 million in awards (see **Table 1**) under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition.⁴ We disagree with H-GAC’s reasoning, that since Harris County is receiving \$750 million under Amendment 1, Harris County and municipalities within its jurisdiction should be excluded from an allocation under the COG’s MOD.

³ U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, Letter Finding Noncompliance with Title VI and Section 109, (March 4, 2022), available at: <https://texashousers.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/HUD-Letter-Finding-Noncompliance-with-Title-VI-and-Section-109-.pdf>.

⁴ GLO Press Releases (May 21, 2021), available at: <https://recovery.texas.gov/press-releases/index.html>.

County	Awards under Round 1 – Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition
Austin	\$45,800,000
Brazoria	\$15,600,000
Chambers	\$3,500,000
Colorado	\$0
Fort Bend	\$47,500,000
Galveston	\$179,000,000
Harris	\$0
Liberty	\$3,300,000
Matagorda	\$8,000,000
Montgomery	\$0
Walker	\$6,600,000
Waller	\$9,300,000
Wharton	\$14,800,000

Table 1: GLO Awards by County under Round 1 – Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition

If the COG wished to remove eligibility for entities that received funds under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition, it should not single out Harris County and municipalities within its jurisdiction from eligibility. Nowhere else in the COG’s MOD does H-GAC remove other entities, or reduce the amount of funding eligible to those entities, if they received funding under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition. Therefore, we believe that the COG unjustly singles out Harris County and municipalities within its jurisdiction for exclusion.

c. Excluding Harris County and the Municipalities Within its Jurisdiction Could Arise to a Violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

The GLO, in administration of CDBG-MIT funds certified that it will conduct and administer the CDBG-MIT funds in accordance with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Further, H-GAC must also adhere to Title VI – and has assured that no COG activity or program shall discriminate against any of the protected classes.⁵

Removing Harris County and the municipalities within its jurisdiction from the H-GAC MOD may open the COG up to a Title VI complaint since it excludes the most diverse region within the

⁵ “In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the **Houston-Galveston Area Council assures that no person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any agency sponsored program or activity** on the grounds of their race, color, or national origin, neither shall any individual be deprived of fair treatment as a result of their sex, age, or disability.” <https://www.h-gac.com/title-vi-program>.

COG from eligibility (see **Table 2**). In addition to having the most diverse population in terms of number of minorities, Harris County also has the:

- lowest percentage of white alone, not Hispanic or Latino population
- second lowest percentage white alone population
- second highest percentage Hispanic or Latino population; and
- third highest percentage Black or African American alone population.

County	Population	White Alone (%)	Number of People	Black or African American Alone	Number of People	Hispanic or Latino (%)	Number of People	White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	Number of People
Austin	30,380	87	26431	9.4	2856	28.7	8719	60.3	18319
Brazoria	379,689	73.3	278312	16.3	61889	32.3	122640	43.2	164026
Chambers	48,865	87.4	42708	8.4	4105	26.3	12851	63	30785
Colorado	20,630	83.2	17164	12.4	2558	32.2	6643	54.2	11181
Fort Bend	858,527	53.4	458453	21.9	188017	25.5	218924	30.2	259275
Galveston	355,062	80.1	284405	13.2	46868	26.4	93736	55.6	197414
Harris	4,728,030	69	3262341	20.3	959790	44.4	2099245	27.7	1309664
Liberty	97,621	86.6	84540	9.3	9079	34.3	33484	54.9	53594
Matagorda	36,344	83.8	30456	10.9	3961	45.1	16391	41.8	15192
Montgomery	648,886	86.7	562584	6.6	42826	26.4	171306	62.2	403607
Walker	77,977	72.9	56845	23.4	18247	18.7	14582	55.8	43511
Waller	59,781	71.4	42684	23.3	13929	32.4	19369	41.9	25048
Wharton	41,721	83.9	35004	13.5	5632	43.7	18232	42.6	17773

Table 2: Demographic Breakdown of Counties within H-GAC⁶

Not only would excluding Harris County and the municipalities within its jurisdiction result in removing the most diverse populations from receiving funding, but an investigation could open the COG up to timely delays – which would harm the region as a whole.

⁶ 2021 American Community Survey data, available at: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/TX>.

Therefore, because the Regional Mitigation Program was separate from the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition, no other eligible entities in the Houston-Galveston region that received funds under the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition were removed, and because removing Harris County and the municipalities within its jurisdiction could arise to a violation of Title VI, we strongly urge H-GAC to allow Harris County and the municipalities within its jurisdiction eligibility to receive funds. We support the City of Houston's recommendation that 30%, or \$148 million, of the COG's funds should go to the city.

2. Distribution Factors Should Focus on Ensuring Equitable Distribution of H-GAC COG MOD Funds to the Greatest Number of People Most Vulnerable to Hazards

The COG MOD should have the goal of allocating funds to mitigate disasters in the areas of highest vulnerability and the areas most at risk due to hazards. Distributing funds in this way will help facilitate equitable outcomes under H-GAC's MOD. We believe that the CDC's Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) should be added to the distribution factors. As noted in the State Action Plan, "[e]ffectively addressing social vulnerability decreases both human suffering and the economic loss related to providing social services and public assistance after a disaster." Entities with high SVI scores should be prioritized for distribution of funds under the MOD.

Further, using personal and real property damage as a distribution factor could disproportionately provide funds to high income areas and therefore less vulnerable areas. Using personal and real property damage could also eliminate the effect of using low-to-moderate income populations as a distribution factor – since they are provided equal weighting. Therefore, in order to equitably distribute CDBG-MIT funds within the COGs jurisdiction to the areas that are most vulnerable, we recommend either removing amount of personal and real property damage from consideration, or reducing the weighting compared to other factors that would distribute funds to the most vulnerable areas with the highest risk rating.

3. Provide a Set Aside for Green and Natural Infrastructure Projects as a Regional Priority

Natural or green infrastructure projects were heavily encouraged for the use of CDBG-MIT funds, not just in HUD guidance, but also in the GLO's State Action Plan. However, out of the 81 projects that were chosen for funding by the GLO under the first round of Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition, only one project seemed to incorporate natural infrastructure features.

While traditional infrastructure projects are necessary in many areas, it is also important to invest in innovative green and natural infrastructure projects, where appropriate. In addition to flood mitigation benefits, green and natural infrastructure projects benefit communities year-round, reducing risks from multiple hazards such as improving air and water quality and mitigating urban heat island effect, while also providing recreational spaces for communities.

Due to the importance of green and natural infrastructure projects, we urge H-GAC to promote green and natural infrastructure by reconsidering a set aside for natural or green infrastructure projects. This can be done by making natural or green infrastructure a regional priority and limiting subrecipients in the region to projects that meet that priority.

The undersigned organizations are dedicated to an effective and equitable distribution of CDBG-MIT resources. Thank you again for the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,

Danielle Goshen

Policy Specialist/Counsel
National Wildlife Federation
GoshenD@nwf.org

Becky Martinez

Conservation Director
Bayou Land Conservancy
bmartinez@bayouland.org

Ayanna Jolivet Mccloud

Executive Director
Bayou City Waterkeeper
ayanna@bayoucitywaterkeeper.org

Mary Anne Piacentini

President and CEO
Coastal Prairie Conservancy
maryanne@coastalprairieconservancy.org

Bob Stokes

President
Galveston Bay Foundation
bstokes@galvbay.org

David Wheaton

Advocacy Director
Texas Housers
David@texashousing.org

July 28, 2022

Jeff Taebel
Director, Community and Environmental Planning
Houston-Galveston Area Council
P.O. Box 22777
Houston, Texas 77227-2777
via email to PublicComments@h-gac.com

Comments on the H-GAC Preliminary Method of Distribution for Community Development Block Grant - Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Regional Mitigation Funds

Dear Mr. Taebel:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the HGAC CDBG-MIT Preliminary Method of Distribution (MOD). For the reasons detailed in these comments, including potential violations of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 109 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, and the Fair Housing Act; H-GAC must revise its preliminary MOD before presenting it to GLO for final approval and submission to HUD as an Action Plan Amendment.

Texas Appleseed¹ is a non-profit public interest justice center that promotes social, economic, and racial justice for all Texans. We have worked on disaster recovery issues and to ensure equity in disaster recovery programs since Hurricane Rita in 2006.

Bayou City Water Keeper was established in 2001. Our mission is to protect and restore the integrity of our bayous, rivers, streams, and the bays through advocacy, education, and action. Our work includes supporting resilient communities and advocating for equitable solutions to flooding.

¹ Texas Appleseed's mission is to promote social and economic justice for all Texans by leveraging the skills and resources of volunteer lawyers and other professionals to identify practical solutions to difficult systemic problems. Texas Appleseed conducts data-driven research to uncover inequity in laws and policies and identify solutions for lasting, concrete change.

I. H-GAC's Exclusion of Harris County from its MOD is Unjustified and Contravenes the Purpose of the CDBG-MIT Program and the State Action Plan

H-GAC's stated reason for not allocating funding to Harris County or any cities within Harris County in its MOD is that "Harris County has been allocated \$750 million by GLO in its State Action Plan Amendment 1 and will develop its own Method of Distribution to serve its communities." However, CDBG-MIT Amendment 1 did not, and was not intended to, exclude Harris County from funding under the Regional Method of Distribution Program. The allocation of funds directly to Harris County in Amendment 1 was intended to partially correct for the state's use of scoring criteria in its Round 1 Hurricane Harvey Statewide Competitive Grant Competition program that discriminated against Hurricane Harvey survivors on the basis of race, color, and national origin, depriving Harris County and the City of Houston, in particular, of mitigation funding.²

The 2018 Congressional appropriation of \$12 billion for mitigation activities, allocated in proportion to the amount of CDBG-DR funding grantees received for disasters occurring in 2015, 2016, and 2017, "represents a unique and significant opportunity for grantees to use this assistance in areas impacted by recent disasters to carry out **strategic and high-impact activities** to mitigate disaster risk and reduce future losses."

The Federal Register Notice allocating these CDBG-MIT funds is clear that "[t]he level of CDBG-MIT funding available to most grantees cannot address the entire spectrum of known mitigation and resilience needs."³ Consistent with the structure of the Federal disaster recovery system, "HUD restates that disaster recovery is a partnership between Federal, state, and local government and CDBG-MIT grantees should invest in their own recovery . . . HUD expects grantees to contribute to their recovery through the use of reserve or "rainy day" funds, borrowing authority, or retargeting of existing resources."⁴ There are also additional Federal funds to address mitigation needs, including FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) emphasized that **"[u]nlike other forms of Federal disaster-recovery assistance, CDBG-DR and CDBG-MIT grants have a statutory focus on benefitting vulnerable lower-income people and communities and**

² Residents of Harris County made up 51% of the population eligible for CDBG-MIT awards but received only 9% of the Statewide Grant Competition Funds. Four smaller jurisdictions within Harris County received funding awards totaling \$90 million.

³ 84 FR 45840

⁴ 84 FR 45839 ("The ultimate value of this mitigation funding appropriation is not limited to the projects and activities implemented with the funds but will also encompass how state and local partners are motivated to improve many of their governmental functions to better position jurisdictions to be resilient in the face of future disasters.")

targeting the most impacted and distressed areas.”⁵ “All grantees must prioritize the protection of LMI individuals and describe in the action plan how their proposed programs and projects will reflect that priority.”⁶

The State of Texas Hurricane Harvey Action Plan for CDBG-MIT funding, approved by HUD on March 31, 2020, allocated \$2.1 billion to a Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition State Competition), split into two rounds.⁷ The awards for the first round of competitive mitigation grants were announced in May 2021. The hardest hit areas of the state, including Harris County, the City of Houston, Jefferson County, and Nueces County, were not awarded any funding. In response, instead of addressing the discriminatory flaws in its allocation and scoring criteria, the State of Texas proposed Action Plan Amendment 1 (Amendment 1), which eliminated the second round of the State Mitigation Competition, allocated \$750 million to Harris County, and reallocated remaining State Competition and other CDBG-MIT funds totaling \$666.9 million to the Regional Mitigation Program – Council of Governments Method of Distribution. H-GAC was allocated \$488.7 million under the Regional Mitigation Program.⁸

According to H-GAC’s own data, Harris County had the largest number of households impacted by Hurricane Harvey, the largest disaster damage score, the largest LMI population, and the highest population in the floodplain.⁹

Under Amendment 1: Appendix F,

In order to determine the distribution funds for the COG MOD program for counties impacted by Hurricane Harvey, the GLO designed an allocation methodology that accounts for risks to natural hazards, social vulnerability, financial capacity, and population. These four factors form the basis for a weighted sum model that results in a final relative factor that determines the amount of funds to be allocated to each eligible county. Throughout this discussion it should be noted that HUD MID and State MID allocations are split, with 80 percent of funds going towards HUD MID areas, and 20

⁵ 84 FR 45838 (Friday, August 30, 2019). Emphasis added.

⁶ 84 FR 45856.

⁷ State of Texas Action Plan for Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Funds. Available: <https://recovery.texas.gov/documents/action-plans/mitigation/mitigation-ap.pdf> See also: Texas General Land Office. (2020, March 27) “CMR. GEORGE P. BUSH APPLAUDS HUD APPROVAL OF THE STATE ACTION PLAN FOR \$4.3 BILLION IN DISASTER MITIGATION FUNDS” [Press Release]. [Link](#). The Action Plan also included an allocation of \$500 million for a Regional Mitigation Program distributed through the MOD process which did not take place before the State proposed Amendment 1 to the Action Plan.

⁸ State of Texas CDBG Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Action Plan Amendment 1. Available: <https://recovery.texas.gov/documents/action-plans/mitigation/mitigation-sap-amend-1.pdf>

⁹ H-GAC Preliminary CDBG-MIT MOD, Attachment 2a – H-GAC Allocation Summary Calculation Worksheets.

percent going to State MID areas; as a result, the calculations described below were performed separately for HUD MID and State MID areas. This section of the appendices explains the rationale for the use of each factor, the source of data for that factor, and the calculations performed to generate the MOD.^{Ac}

GLO and H-GAC's methodologies produced the following allocations:

H-GAC County	GLO Allocation per County	MOD Allocation per County
Austin	\$7,472,000	\$6,750,100
Brazoria	\$42,281,000	\$64,452,700
Chambers	\$31,138,000	\$17,610,100
Colorado	\$6,646,000	\$6,302,700
Fort Bend	\$48,369,000	\$74,736,600
Galveston	\$44,367,000	\$88,727,300
Harris	\$148,450,000	\$0
Liberty	\$48,397,000	\$26,910,400
Matagorda	\$8,107,000	\$12,622,500
Montgomery	\$47,707,000	\$61,634,100
Walker	\$9,221,000	\$2,256,200
Waller	\$11,112,000	\$10,084,400
Wharton	\$35,495,000	\$17,673,400
H-GAC COG	\$0	\$62,000,200
Total:	\$488,762,000	

Under the formula GLO used to allocate funding for the Regional MOD Program Harris County accounted for 30% of the funding HGAC received. If Harris County had been excluded from the regional allocation, H-GAC's allocation would have been reduced by \$148 million.

That GLO intended for Harris County to receive money from the regional allocation funding is also evident from its response to comments on Action Plan Amendment 1. More than 50 commenters stated that Houston or Harris County needed additional funding beyond the \$750 million.¹⁰ In response to at least 14 of these comments, GLO stated that Houston could "participate in the required Public Planning Meeting and second public hearing on the draft

^{Ac} Action Plan Amendment 1: Appendix F, at 319.

¹⁰ Texas General Land Office, (2022, March 18) State of Texas CDBG Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Action Plan Amendment 1. [Report]. pg347

Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) Method of Distribution...”¹¹ expressing the state’s clear expectation that Harris County and Houston would receive an allocation through the Regional MOD Program process. The GLO created a formula for H-GAC to receive money that included Harris County and repeatedly said that Harris County was eligible for funding through the Regional MOD Program process; excluding Harris County from the H-GAC MOD does not comply with the state’s HUD-approved Action Plan.

Further, while H-GAC claims that it is excluding Harris County because it has been allocated other CDBG-MIT funding, H-GAC is not excluding other jurisdictions that have already received CDBG-MIT funding. Of the 14 counties that would receive funding through the preliminary MOD, 12 counties (including jurisdictions within that county) were awarded a total of over \$333.6 million in the State Grant Competition. The City of Dickinson, for example, received a \$50 million grant through the State Grant Competition, and the MOD allocates the city an additional \$15 million.¹²

County	HUD or State MID	Population	Per Capita Funding (State Grant Competition)	Per Capita Funding (MOD)	Total Per Capita CDBG-MIT Funding
Austin	State	28,625	1,600.00	225.82	1,825.82
Brazoria	HUD	321,110	48.58	175.11	223.69
Chambers	HUD	36,965	94.68	413.66	508.34
Colorado	State/HUD zip	20,405	-	295.11	295.11
Fort Bend	HUD	652,615	72.78	94.50	166.83
Galveston	HUD	302,490	591.76	262.82	854.58
Harris	HUD	4,316,070	20.94	173.7*	194.71*
Liberty	HUD	71,365	46.24	312.28	358.52
Matagorda	State/HUD zip	36,180	221.12	343.09	786.21
Montgomery	HUD	499,290	-	104.43	104.43
Walker	State/HUD zip	48,970	134.78	31.21	165.99
Waller	State/HUD zip	41,025	226.69	205.05	431.74
Wharton	HUD	40,730	363.37	424.11	787.48

¹¹ *Ibid.* pgs 360, 361, 362, 368, 371, 384, 397, 399, 400, 403, 404, 407, 409, 410.

¹² The City of Dickinson has a population of 21,697 and a homeownership rate of 79.6%. The population is 50.9% Non-Hispanic white, 39.4% Hispanic or Latino, and 7.4% Black. U.S. Census, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/dickinsoncitytexas/DIS010220>

Table 1: Per capita funding by county from the State Grant Competition.¹³

*Assuming the inclusion of the \$750 million allocation to Harris County.

Even including Harris County's separate \$750 million allocation, Harris County's per capita CDBG-MIT allocation only increases to \$194.71 per capita, the fourth lowest in the region.¹⁴

On March 4, 2022, HUD issued a Letter of Finding Noncompliance with Title VI and Section 109 (Case No. 06-21-1483). HUD found that the General Land Office's (GLO) design and operation of the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition "discriminated on the basis of race and national origin through the use of scoring criteria that substantially disadvantaged Black and Hispanic residents." In other words, the State Mitigation Competition awards were based on a set of criteria that discriminated against Texans on the basis of race, color, and national origin; H-GAC's failure to account for previous discriminatory allocations in its MOD perpetuates that discrimination and is in itself discriminatory.

H-GAC's decision to exclude Harris County, where 72% of the region's people of color live, from its MOD on the basis that Harris County was receiving other CDBG-MIT funding but allowing other jurisdictions who had received CDBG-MIT funding based on a discriminatory allocation process to receive MOD allocations is particularly egregious. However, the fact that the MOD does not account for previous discriminatory allocations resulting from the entire State Mitigation Competition program means that H-GAC's MOD also discriminates against H-GAC residents who live outside of Harris County on the basis of race, color, and national origin.

II. H-GAC's MOD is Discriminatory on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 mandates that "[n]o person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."¹⁵ Similarly, Section 109 prohibits discrimination the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, or sex in "any program or activity funded [under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.]"¹⁶ The Fair Housing Act not only prohibits discrimination but requires all entities administering housing and community development

¹³ GLO, "Announcement: Mitigation Competition Awards by County". Available:

<https://recovery.texas.gov/mitigation/programs/mitigation-competitions/mitigation-competitions/index.html>

These funds were not all awarded to the County itself, the total funding represents awards to both a county and/or to jurisdictions within that county.

¹⁴ Of the four counties with the lowest per capita CDBG-MIT funding, three have Black populations of 20.3% to 23.4%.

¹⁵ 42 U.S.C. 2000d; 24 C.F.R. 1.4(a).

¹⁶ 42 U.S.C. 5309; 24 C.F.R. 6.4(a).

funds - including CDBG-DR and CDBG-MIT funds- to do so “in a manner to affirmatively further [fair housing].”¹⁷

Both the exclusion of Harris County from the MOD and the MOD itself subject H-GAC residents to discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin and violate the Fair Housing Act.

On March 4, 2022, HUD issued a Letter of Finding Noncompliance with Title VI and Section 109 (Case No. 06-21-1483). HUD found that the General Land Office’s (GLO) design and operation of the Hurricane Harvey State Mitigation Competition “discriminated on the basis of race and national origin through the use of scoring criteria that substantially disadvantaged Black and Hispanic residents.”

County	Population	White Alone (%)	Number of People	Black or African American Alone (%)	Number of People	Hispanic or Latino (%)	Number of People	White alone, not Hispanic or Latino (%)	Number of People
Austin	30,380	87	26431	9.4	2856	28.7	8719	60.3	18319
Brazoria	379,689	73.3	278312	16.3	61889	32.3	122640	43.2	164026
Chambers	48,865	87.4	42708	8.4	4105	26.3	12851	63.0	30785
Colorado	20,630	83.2	17164	12.4	2558	32.2	6643	54.2	11181
Fort Bend	858,527	53.4	458453	21.9	188017	25.5	218924	30.2	259275
Galveston	355,062	80.1	284405	13.2	46868	26.4	93736	55.6	197414
Harris	4,728,030	69	3262341	20.3	959790	44.4	2099245	27.7	1309664
Liberty	97,621	86.6	84540	9.3	9079	34.3	33484	54.9	53594
Matagorda	36,344	83.8	30456	10.9	3961	45.1	16391	41.8	15192
Montgomery	648,886	86.7	562584	6.6	42826	26.4	171306	62.2	403607
Walker	77,977	72.9	56845	23.4	18247	18.7	14582	55.8	43511
Waller	59,781	71.4	42684	23.3	13929	32.4	19369	41.9	25048
Wharton	41,721	83.9	35004	13.5	5632	43.7	18232	42.6	17773

Table 2: Demographic Breakdown of Counties within H-GAC¹⁸

¹⁷ 42 U.S.C. 3601 et. seq.; 42 U.S.C. 3608. H-GAC acknowledges its obligation to sign an AFFH certification on page 11 of the MOD Summary form.

¹⁸ 2021 American Community Survey data, available at: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/TX>.

As laid out in Section I of these comments, the exclusion of Harris County from the H-GAC MOD is unjustified and contravenes the purpose of the CDBG-MIT program to address the greatest mitigation needs, focusing benefits on LMI residents, as well as discriminating against residents of Harris County on the basis of race, color, and national origin.

III. H-GAC Chose Allocation Distribution Factors and Weighting that Do Not Address the Greatest Mitigation Needs or Ensure Primary Benefit to LMI Residents

In addition to H-GAC's decisions about which jurisdictions would be eligible for a MOD allocation, the COG's MOD allocation formula itself does not distribute funding consistent with the purposes of the CDBG-MIT program and the State Action Plan.

H-GAC's formula used four equally weighted distribution factors: households impacted; personal and real property damage; low- to moderate-income population; and, population within Floodplain (floodway, 100-year floodplain, and 500-year floodplain).

A. Households Impacted

H-GAC should be using the number of FEMA registrants rather than approved FEMA Individual Assistance applications. Overall, FEMA's denial rates after Hurricane Harvey were extraordinarily high. Denial rates are particularly high for lower-income households. Applicant households earning more than \$70,000/year were rejected for individual assistance only 10% of the time while applicants earning less than \$15,000/year were denied 46% of the time. This statistic does not reflect varying degrees of damage but rather varying degrees of access to the program and resources to navigate the bureaucratic hurdles, as well as subjective assessments by FEMA inspectors, many of whom had minimal training. FEMA not also routinely denies assistance applications of nonwhite and low-income survivors at dramatically higher rates than those of well-off white applicants, it provides substantially fewer disaster recovery resources to lower-income survivors and survivors of color. Following Hurricane Harvey in 2017, white residents of higher income neighborhoods received, on average \$60,000 of assistance, while black residents in low-income neighborhoods received, on average \$84.¹⁹

¹⁹ Cited by Diane Yentel in testimony before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management on July 28, 2020. At: <https://bit.ly/3hzpalq>

B. Personal and Real Property Damage

FEMA's own National Advisory Council, chaired by Texas Department of Emergency Management Chief Nim Kidd, found that:

*[M]any FEMA programs do not consider the principle of equity in financial assistance relief. **Damage assessments are based on property ownership, which immediately focuses on the wealthier parts of a community, and disadvantages renters and the homeless population.** The Public Assistance Program most benefits communities that can afford to pay the required match and can navigate the complexities of the contracting agencies. **The Individual Assistance Program is more accessible to those with time, income, and access.***²⁰ (emphasis added)

H-GAC should not use of distribution factor that is based on property value.

The MOD allocation formula must account for the fact that FEMA damage amount data also undercounts damage to both lower-income renters and homeowners. If FEMA inspectors make a subjective assessment that a renter's personal property was not worth \$2000 or that damages to a home were not worth at least \$8000 or attribute a building's condition to "deferred maintenance" rather than storm damage - these disaster survivors are not included in FEMA data. Low FEMA damage assessments may not reflect less damage so much as the socioeconomic status of the neighborhood; wealthier communities will *prima facie* have higher property values and hence higher recorded damage. Lower-income people and communities have, by definition, lower value properties, a higher proportion of renters, and they receive fewer investments in public infrastructure. Nationally, in counties with major disasters (areas with at least \$10 billion in damages), white communities gained an average \$126,000 in wealth following the damage and recovery efforts. Communities of color lost up to \$29,000 on average in personal wealth following events like hurricanes and wildfires.²¹ By relying on damage to property as a distribution metric, the HGAC MOD will shift CDBG-MIT resources towards higher-income areas, and potentially have a disparate impact on Black and Hispanic-Latino residents.

²⁰ NAC Report at 12.

²¹ Junia Howell and James R. Elliott, "Damages Done: The Longitudinal Impact of Natural Hazards on Wealth Inequality in the United States". *Social Problems*, Oxford University Press (August 14, 2018). Available: <https://academic.oup.com/socpro/advance-article/doi/10.1093/socpro/spy016/5074453> and Rebecca Hersher, "How Disaster Recovery Favors the Rich", *All Things Considered*, National Public Radio (March 5, 2019). Available: <https://www.npr.org/2019/03/05/688786177/how-federal-disaster-money-favors-the-rich>

C. Low-to-Moderate Income Population

By providing equal weight to the LMI measure, which favors lower-income areas, and the FEMA Real and Personal Property Damage measures, which favors higher-income areas, HGAC may have set up an equation that is neutral on economic factors and does not prioritize the protection of LMI individuals as required by Federal law and the Federal Register Notice allocating these funds. Low-income families face additional barriers to disaster recovery, so HGAC must either provide a higher weight to the LMI distribution factor or add a supplementary factor that will ensure equitable distribution of CDBG-MIT funds, for example, the Social Vulnerability Index (SVI).²²

Applying the Social Vulnerability Index to the HGAC region at the census tract level reveals that the majority of extremely vulnerable areas (defined here as having an SVI score of greater than 0.8) are located within Harris County (see Appendix Figure 1). Over one million people reside in the 207 extremely vulnerable census tracts in Harris County and approximately 200,000 people live in the 31 extremely vulnerable census tracts in HGAC outside of Harris County. Again, even excluding Harris County, CDBG-MIT funds may not be allocated to prioritize the most impacted and distressed areas where vulnerable populations live. The Social Vulnerability Index is the best metric available for assessing disaster vulnerability and should be included in the HGAC MOD.

IV. Inadequate Public Process

HGAC did not provide adequate time for public participation prior to the drafting of this MOD. HGAC only provided one week of notice about the Public Planning Meeting on February 3rd, 2022. Following the Public Planning Meeting, the public was only given 24 hours to provide written comment. Several attendees of the February 3rd meeting, including representatives from the City of Kendleton and nonprofits like Connective, noted that they had only heard about the meeting on the day of the meeting. HGAC failed to provide information on the distribution factors being considered prior to the meeting, so the public did not have sufficient information to draft comments prior to February 3rd. The CDBG-MIT MOD is a highly technical process and therefore the general public requires more than a single day to process and respond to proposed MOD factors. A public comment period of less than 24 hours is unreasonable and denies the public the opportunity to make informed and meaningful comment on the development of a MOD that will distribute almost half a billion dollars in federal mitigation funding.

²² Like H-GAC's other distribution factors, SVI is a widely used measure that draws from public databases.

V. H-GAC Should Not Have Requested Waivers of Program Requirements

The Regional MOD Program requirements set out in Action Plan Amendment 1 were designed to ensure that CDBG-MIT were used in accordance with the appropriating legislation and FR Notice and should not be waived. For the reasons set out below, H-GAC should not have requested waivers of program requirements. Further, these waivers should not have been requested without public notice and an opportunity for the public to review the justification for these waiver requests and provide comment.

A. Minimum Threshold Waiver

HGAC should not have requested a waiver of the \$1 million minimum grant amount and GLO should not have approved that waiver. CDBG-MIT funding is not an additional pot of CDBG-DR funds, but a new source of funding intended to support, as the State’s Action Plan states, “**regional investments with regional impacts in risk reduction**”. Even if these funds are distributed to local grantees, CDBG-MIT grants should be prioritized for larger-scale projects that mitigate risks to as many households as possible. The \$1 million minimum grant amount is itself too low; the \$3 million threshold for the State Grant Competition is a more appropriate minimum grant amount and in accordance with our previous comments on the State Action Plan, we do not believe that threshold should have been reduced from \$5 million to \$3 million.

Congress and HUD also emphasized that CDBG–MIT funds should be used “to carry out **strategic and high-impact activities** to mitigate disaster risks and reduce future losses.”²³ The MOD process generally, which is designed to suballocate funds to individual jurisdictions without consideration of the most effective and strategic use of those funds, contravenes the intent of the CDBG-MIT appropriation; providing individual jurisdictions with small grants that forces them to propose projects prioritized by price and compete against other jurisdictions rather making large-scale strategic regional investments frustrates the goal of effective large-scale mitigation.

B. Low-to-Moderate-Income Threshold Waiver

GLO’s decision not to grant H-GAC’s request for a waiver of the LMI threshold for CDBG-MIT was correct, and H-GAC should not have requested such a waiver in the first place. HUD has

²³ 84 FR 45383

already provided a waiver that reduces the LMI threshold from 70% to 50%. CDBG-MIT funds are not merely another source of potential funding for mitigation projects, **“CDBG-MIT grants have a statutory focus on benefitting vulnerable lower-income people and communities and targeting the most impacted and distressed areas.”**²⁴

“Disasters are often depicted as great levelers, victimizing rich and poor alike. The effects of disasters on populations are anything but random... The disaster vulnerability of individuals and groups is associated with a number of socioeconomic factors that include income, poverty, and social class; race, ethnicity, and culture; physical ability and disability; language competency; social networks and social capital; gender; household composition; homeownership; and age... The same factors that disadvantage members of society on a daily basis also play out during disasters.”²⁵

Pre-existing disparities in infrastructure, storm protection, and geographic and social vulnerability are exacerbated by disasters, and response and recovery programs, policies, and activities that do not affirmatively address these disproportionate impacts perpetuate inequity and increase the vulnerability of underserved groups and communities.²⁶ Homes in formerly redlined neighborhoods, for example, are at higher risk of flooding than homes in historically greenlined neighborhoods seven decades after the HOLC redlining maps were created.²⁷ To the extent LMI status is correlated with protected class status under Title VI, Section 109, and the Fair Housing Act, reducing the benefit to these communities may also violate civil rights law.

²⁴ 84 FR 45838 (Friday, August 30, 2019). Emphasis added.

²⁵ Kathleen J. Tierney, *The social roots of risk: Producing disasters, promoting resilience*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford Business Books, 2014), 141.

²⁶ See, e.g., Thomas Gabe, Gene Falk, Maggie McCarty, and Virginia Mason, Hurricane Katrina: Social-Demographic Characteristics of Impacted Areas, Congressional Research Service Report to Congress (November 5, 2005); Alice Fothergill and Lori Peek, Poverty and Disasters in the United States: A Review of Recent Sociological Findings, *Natural Hazards* 32: 89–110, 2004; and, Shannon Van Zandt, Walter Gillis Peacock, Wesley E. Highland, and Samuel D. Brody, “Mapping social vulnerability to enhance housing and neighborhood resilience”, *Housing Policy Debate* 22(1):29-55 (January 2012).

²⁷ Kriston Capps and Christopher Cannon, “Redlined, Now Flooding: Maps of historic housing discrimination show how neighborhoods who suffered redlining in the 1930s face a far higher risk of flooding today.” Bloomberg City Lab, March 15, 2021. Available at: <https://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/2021-flood-risk-redlining/> (“Put another way, 8.4% of homes in historically redlined neighborhoods face high flood risks nationwide, compared to 6.9% of homes in historically greenlined neighborhoods. These patterns represent disparities in development compounded by decades of disinvestment.”)

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have questions or concerns about our comments.

Sincerely,

Madison Sloan

Director of Disaster Recovery and Fair Housing

Meg Duffy

Policy Analyst

Texas Appleseed

msloan@texasappleseed.org

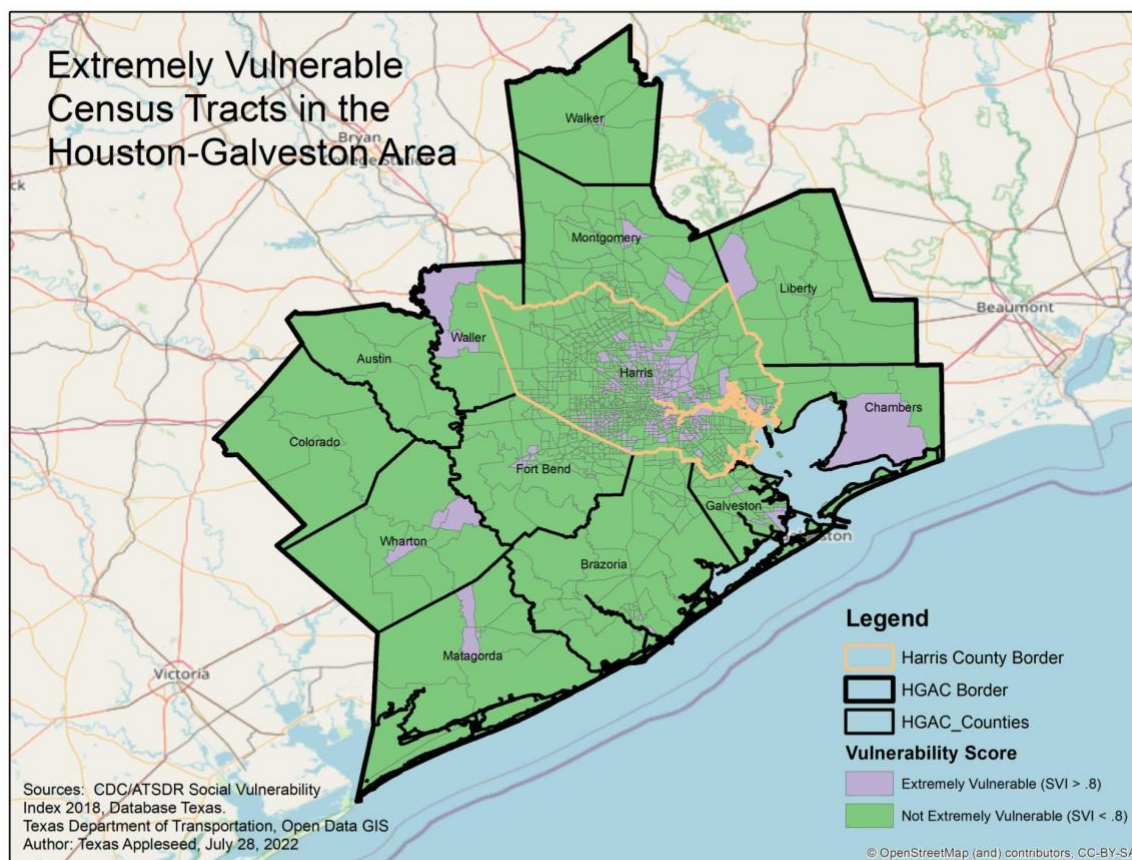
Ayanna Jolivet McCloud

Executive Director

Bayou City Water Keeper

Appendix

Figure 1.



County	Total	Percentage				
		People of Color	POC	Hispanic	NH-White	Black
HGAC	7,151,728	4,586,638	64%	2,664,429	2,565,090	1,200,668
Austin	29,892	11,471	38%	8,139	18,421	2,543
Brazoria	368,062	198,375	54%	114,094	169,687	51,837
Chambers	42,571	14,436	34%	9,870	28,135	3,277
Colorado	21,357	9,492	44%	6,455	11,865	2,665
Fort Bend	790,892	536,187	68%	194,349	254,705	156,577
Galveston	337,600	146,039	43%	84,243	191,561	41,643
Harris	4,680,609	3,323,857	71%	2,016,625	1,356,752	865,997
Liberty	86,173	33,181	39%	23,051	52,992	8,145
Matagorda	36,791	20,944	57%	15,850	15,847	3,788
Montgomery	590,188	207,033	35%	144,951	383,155	29,373
Walker	72,295	31,665	44%	13,066	40,630	16,575
Waller	53,626	30,670	57%	16,312	22,956	12,989
Wharton	41,672	23,288	56%	17,424	18,384	5,259
Harris %	65%	72%		76%	53%	72%

US Census Bureau. (2022). American Community Survey, 2016-2020. *Table DP05*.