



407 FAIRWAY AVENUE
LAKELAND, FLORIDA 33801
863.834.3300

To: All interested Agencies, Groups, and Individuals

**COMBINED PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT,
NOTICE OF INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS AND FINAL NOTICE, AND PUBLIC
EXPLANATION OF A PROPOSED ACTIVITY IN A FLOODPLAIN AND WETLAND**

This is to give notice that the City of Lakeland, as the Responsible Entity under 24 CFR Part 58, has conducted an evaluation as required by Executive Order (E.O.) 11988 and E.O. 11990, in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 in Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection. The activity is funded by the Rebuild Florida Mitigation General Infrastructure Program (Agreement # MT047). The proposed project encompasses approximately 814 acres, located at 400 Bonnet Springs Boulevard, Lakeland, Florida 33815, and is located within the floodplain (Zone AE) and wetlands. The extent of the floodplain was determined using FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Panel 12105C0311G, effective December 22, 2016, and the 0.2 percent annual chance flood approach.

The proposed project would fund a series of stormwater and flood mitigation improvements, including drainage upgrades, dredging, and wetland restoration, intended to reduce flooding at the May Manor and Sterling Mobile Home Parks. Key components include: constructing a pump station on Lake Bonnet with a gravity pipe to manage stormwater; dredging approximately 2,800 feet of Lake Bonnet Drain to remove sediment and maintain drainage capacity; replacing undersized culverts at Bridge Boulevard and Bird Avenue; enclosing a section of the Sterling Canal with a box culvert; installing a sump pump system to alleviate flooding in low-lying areas of May Manor Mobile Home Park; and conducting large-scale dredging and habitat restoration within Lake Bonnet using phased excavation and a temporary containment facility. Additional improvements include shoreline regrading, wetland replanting, embankment stabilization, replacement of sluice gates for improved water level control, and lowering Lake Bonnet's normal water level by one foot to increase stormwater storage capacity. A portion of the project site lies within the 100-year floodplain (Zone AE), including 32.3 acres of the Lake Bonnet Drain area from North Brunnell Parkway downstream to North Wabash Avenue, as well as 6.2 acres of regulatory floodway. The project area contains forested and herbaceous palustrine wetlands, riverine wetlands, and lacustrine wetlands which provide beneficial ecological functions such as floodwater storage, flow conveyance, and habitat for plant and animal species. These natural resources also support recreation, tourism, and environmental education. Potential temporary and direct impacts to wetlands are estimated at approximately 97.48 acres.

Through the evaluation of several project alternatives, the City of Lakeland determined that the proposed action must be located within the floodplain and wetland because it is specifically designed to

address existing flood hazards, restore wetland functions, and improve stormwater management within the Lake Bonnet Drainage Basin. Therefore, construction of the proposed improvements outside the floodplain and wetland would not meet the project purpose and need or provide the intended flood risk reduction benefits to the affected communities. The City of Lakeland has considered the following alternatives and mitigation measures to minimize adverse impacts and to restore and preserve natural and beneficial functions and intrinsic values of the existing floodplain/wetland:

1. No Action: The “No-Action” alternative is not practicable, nor does it address the project need, as no drainage or infrastructure improvements would be implemented and frequent flooding would continue.
2. Action Alternative 1 (Berms & Floodwalls): This strategy uses channel regrading, berms, and eight pumps to reduce flooding for smaller storms, but it fails to protect against 100-year storms. The extensive pump infrastructure requires high long-term maintenance and will increase downstream water levels, impacting local wetlands.
3. Action Alternative 2 (Continuous Floodwalls): By replacing berms with continuous floodwalls, this approach successfully stops flooding during smaller storms, though it still cannot protect against a 100-year event. While it improves water flow, it increases construction costs, visual impacts, and constructability challenges in residential areas.
4. Action Alternative 3 (Pond & Underground Storage): This alternative utilizes a large stormwater pond and three storage vaults, but it remains the most expensive and impractical option. Its extensive excavation and land acquisition requirements exceed available grant funding without achieving the targeted flood protection goals for any storm event.
5. Proposed Project Activities: The proposed alternative will provide the most balanced combination of performance effectiveness, cost, constructability, and environmental feasibility/ease of permitting. Mitigation and minimization measures include:
 - Site Design & Flow: Elevate equipment above BFE, maintain flood flow paths, size channels/pumps appropriately, and install backflow preventers.
 - Compensatory Storage & Habitat Protection: Dredge lakes and regrade channels to increase storage; use native plants to stabilize banks.
 - Construction Controls: Limit soil disruption using staged work, employ turbidity barriers, and designated staging zones.
 - Operations & Safety: Build flood emergency plans, deploy backup generators, and ban hazardous materials in flood zones.
 - FEMA Compliance: Submit a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) with updated hydraulic modeling 6-12 months post-construction.

The City of Lakeland will comply with all state and local floodplain and wetland protection procedures.

The City of Lakeland has reevaluated alternatives to building in the floodplain and wetland and has determined that it has no practicable alternative to floodplain/wetland development. Environmental files documenting compliance with Executive Order 11988, Executive Order 11990, and 24 CFR 55 are available for public inspection, review, and copying upon request at the times and location delineated in the last paragraph of this notice for receipt of comments.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in the floodplain and wetland and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information and request for public comments about the floodplain and wetland can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks and impacts associated with the occupancy

and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in the floodplain and wetland, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

Written comments must be received by the City of Lakeland at the following address on or before Tuesday, August 11, 2026: Attention: Ms. Laurie Smith, Project Manager, 228 S Massachusetts Avenue, Lakeland, FL 33801. A full description of the project may also be reviewed from Monday to Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the same address as above and at any time online at <https://www.lakelandgov.net/departments/public-works/lakes-stormwater/lake-bonnet-drainage-project/>. Comments may also be submitted via email at to Laurie.Smith@lakelandgov.net.

REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS

After the comment period closes, on or about Wednesday, August 12, 2026, the City of Lakeland will submit a request to the Florida Department of Commerce (FloridaCommerce) for the release of Rebuild Florida Mitigation General Infrastructure Program funds, authorized under Title I of the Housing and Community Development (HCD) Act of 1974 (HDCA) (42 U.S.C. 5301 *et seq.*) and the applicable implementing regulations (24 CFR Part 570). The City of Lakeland would receive \$42,986,390 in grant funding to implement the proposed Lake Bonnet Drainage Basin Flood and Debris Mitigation Project (the Project; Agreement number MT047). The Project is intended to reduce flood risks for disproportionately disadvantaged communities which have been impacted by flooding near Lake Bonnet and to provide long-term benefits to residents, businesses, and the broader community. The Project focuses on drainage improvements to two surface waters, Lake Bonnet and Lake Bonnet Drain, to reduce localized flood risks to the area. Key components include pump stations, channel and lake dredging, and culvert upgrades, as well as water level management improvements. Additional measures include upgrades to the stormwater conveyance system, increased storage capacity, and wetland enhancements within Lake Bonnet. The Project area is located in City of Lakeland, Polk County, Florida and is generally bounded by Bonnet Springs Boulevard and Bonnet Springs Park to the west, North Wabash Avenue to the east, West Memorial Boulevard to the north, and George Jenkins Boulevard to the south. The City will not submit the Request for Release of Funds until the 15-day comment period has closed, and any environmental objections have been resolved.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The City of Lakeland has determined that based on the magnitude, duration, and mitigated nature of impacts, the Project will have no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) is not required. Additional project information is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR) on file at Lakeland City Hall, 228 S Massachusetts Avenue, Lakeland, FL 33801 and may be examined or copied on weekdays from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any individual, group, or agency may submit written comments to the City of Lakeland, Public Works Department, Lakes & Stormwater Division, 228 S Massachusetts Avenue, Lakeland, FL 33801. All comments received by Tuesday, August 18, 2026, will be considered by the City of Lakeland prior to authorizing submission of a request for release of funds. Comments should specify which Notice they are addressing.

ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATION

The City of Lakeland certifies to FloridaCommerce that Ms. Laurie Smith in her capacity as Project Manager consents to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to the environmental review process and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. FloridaCommerce's approval of the certification satisfies its responsibilities under NEPA and related laws and authorities and allows the City of Lakeland to use Program funds.

OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS

FloridaCommerce will accept objections to its release of funds and the City of Lakeland's certification for a period of fifteen days following the anticipated submission date or its actual receipt of the request (whichever is later) only if they are on one of the following bases: (a) the certification was not executed by the Certifying Officer of the City of Lakeland; (b) the City of Lakeland has omitted a step or failed to make a decision or finding required by HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58; (c) the grant recipient or other participants in the development process have committed funds, incurred costs or undertaken activities not authorized by 24 CFR Part 58 before approval of a release of funds by FloridaCommerce; or (d) another Federal agency acting pursuant to 40 CFR Part 1504 has submitted a written finding that the project is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality. Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedures (24 CFR Part 58, Sec. 58.76) and shall be addressed to FloridaCommerce at 107 East Madison Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-4120. Potential objectors should contact FloridaCommerce to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

Name and Title of RE Certifying Officer:

Ms. Laurie Smith, Project Manager
City of Lakeland

Public Works Lakes & Stormwater

Date: August 3, 2026