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**City of Friendswood Parks & Recreation**

March 11 at 5:45 PM · 🌐



It's official... the walking trails at Forest Bend Park are now open! 🥳 This is part of a partnership between the City of Friendswood and the Forest Bend HOA to improve drainage in the area.

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HOUSTON / PEARLAND - FRIENDSWOOD / GOVERNMENT

## Friendswood drainage projects making progress



By [Jake Magee](#) | 11:23 AM Jun 9, 2022 CDT

Updated 11:23 AM Jun 9, 2022 CDT



Several of Friendswood's drainage projects are still moving along. (Community Impact Newspaper staff)

Several of [Friendswood's drainage projects](#) are still moving along.

Deputy Director of Engineering Samantha Haritos shared an update on the city's flood mitigation projects during Friendswood City Council's June 6 meeting.

Five Frenchman's Creek townhomes that are prone to flooding along Clear Creek are set to be demolished to make way for a new green space. An offer on one of the homes has been made and accepted, and offers are in progress on another, Haritos said.

The three remaining buildings are the responsibility of Galveston County, and offers have been made on them as well. Finally, there is a sixth adjacent property in the area the city is working to close a sale on after City Council on June 6 approved the city purchasing it, she said.

"Everything looks good so far," Haritos said of the project.



Friendswood is also in the process of acquiring potentially eight properties in the Deepwood area to terrace the location. That project is in the engineering phase, and design is in progress, Haritos said.

Forest Bend will soon have a [53-acre detention basin](#) with concrete tails and solar lighting. City Council on June 6 unanimously approved a selected contractor for the project, meaning work is close, Haritos said.

The pond has been awarded a \$3.4 million grant. Total construction costs are estimated to be \$3.6 million, and the city has already spent \$455,000 on engineering, so the city will use ready funds to supplement the project to afford it, Haritos said.

The city and Galveston County will split the \$282,000 cost to acquire and terrace 212 E. Heritage Drive, which is 650 feet south of the FM 2351 bridge along Mary's Creek, she said. City Council approved this measure June 6 as well.

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"They are excited to work with us on this effort," Haritos said.

Finally, the FM 1959 detention basin will be a 1,700-acre-foot pond at the northern part of Clear Creek on the Harris County side, near Pearland. The city is still coordinating with Harris County, which has about \$14 million to contribute to the project, leaving the city about \$5 million short, Haritos said.

City Manager Morad Kabiri said city staff has met with local representatives—including state Rep. Greg Bonnen, R-Friendswood, and U.S. Rep. Troy Nehls, R-Richmond—to discuss possibly combining this project with another, larger-scale project to get help from state and federal sources. The city hopes to have more information on this effort by late summer or early fall, Kabiri said.

Haritos also shared an update on the [Lower Clear Creek and Dickinson Bayou Watershed Study](#), which officials from Friendswood, League City and others contributed to, to come up with regional solutions to flooding on both waterways.

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The study has made it into Texas' first statewide flood mitigation plan. The consultant who did the study, Freese & Nichols, has been working on modeling some flood mitigation projects from the study and will present them to Friendswood soon, Haritos said.

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By [Jake Magee](#) 

Editor, Bay Area & Pearland/Friendswood

Jake has been a print journalist for several years, covering numerous beats including city government, education, business and more. Starting off at a daily newspaper in southern Wisconsin, Magee covered two small cities before being promoted to covering city government in the heart of newspaper's coverage area. He moved to Houston in mid-2018 to be the editor for and launch the Bay Area edition of *Community Impact Newspaper*. Today, he covers everything from aerospace to transportation to flood mitigation.

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## Friendswood makes further progress on flood mitigation projects



By [Sierra Rozen](#) | 9:00 AM Feb 10, 2022 CST



The Forest Bend detention basin project had its engineering plans approved by the HCFCD on Jan. 21, according to agenda documents. (Sierra Rozen/Community Impact Newspaper)

The city of Friendswood is making progress on multiple flood control projects that have been in the works the past few years.

The updates were presented at the Feb. 7 Friendswood City Council meeting by Deputy Director of Engineering Samantha Haritos.

The Clear Creek utility relocation has finished its engineering design and had its permits approved by the Harris County Flood Control District and the Army Corps of Engineers.

The project, located by the Polly Ranch subdivision's park, will relocate three utility lines by a public bridge that have been at risk for flooding damage, according to Arias. The bridge will also be demolished and in total will cost \$1.5 million, as previously reported by [Community Impact Newspaper](#).

Some of the next steps for the project include sending out sealed bids, presenting a selected contractor to Friendswood City Council and starting construction.

## Detention basin progress

Meanwhile, the city also gave updates on two of their detention basin projects. The Forest Bend detention basin project had its engineering plans approved by the HCFCD on Jan. 21, according to agenda documents.

Located along FM 528 in Forest Bend Park, the 53-acre-foot pond will act as flood plain storage for the area. The project will also construct concrete trails with solar lighting for the park. It is expected to go out to bid in February with the council awarding a contract in April or May. The construction on it is estimated to take 288 days.

“It’s going to be really nice compared to what’s out there now,” Haritos said.

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The FM 1959 detention basin is now being estimated to cost around \$38 million despite the original estimate being \$30 million to \$36 million, as previously reported by [Community Impact Newspaper](#).

The detention basin, located near the border of Friendswood and Pearland, would reduce the risk of flooding for Friendswood as well as providing recreational opportunities, according to documents presented by Arias at the Sept. 13 Friendswood City Council meeting.

The city is also reporting that the project will be on the list of potential partnership projects that the HCFCD is presenting to Harris County Commissioners Court. The city of Friendswood will also potentially be partnering with Galveston County, the Galveston County Consolidated Drainage District and the HCFCD on the project to help cover the costs.

“We’ve had really positive input from Harris County Flood Control District,” Haritos said.

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By [Sierra Rozen](#) ✉

### Multiplatform Journalist

Sierra joined *Community Impact Newspaper* as a reporter in September of 2021 after graduating with a degree in communication and a minor in journalism from St. Edward’s University in Austin, TX. Sierra covered all things in the South Houston area including Friendswood ISD, Friendswood City Council and Harris County METRO. In June of 2022, Sierra moved over to the digital team as the multiplatform journalist in Houston. Prior to CI, Sierra served as the viewpoints and life and arts editor for Hilltop Views, as well as interning for Austin Woman Magazine.

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**SUBURBS // BAY AREA**

# Friendswood to build \$3.6M flood-mitigation pond in Forest Bend subdivision

By **Carissa Lamkahouan**, *CORRESPONDENT*

Updated June 22, 2022 10:22 a.m.





The city of Friendswood is gearing up to construct a \$3.63 million, 53-acre-foot detention pond in the Forest Bend neighborhood near the intersection of FM 528 and Townes Road.

vector\_master - Fotolia

The city of Friendswood is gearing up to construct a \$3.63 million, 53-acre-foot detention pond in the Forest Bend neighborhood near the intersection of FM 528 and Townes Road.

“We are ready to move forward with construction,” Deputy Engineering Director Samantha Haritos recently told City Council.

The contract with Jerden Enterprises Construction stipulates that the work be completed within six months of the start date, said Glenda Faulkner, executive assistant to the city manager.

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“Extensions are allowed for bad weather and delays in obtaining materials and supplies,” she said.

City Manager Morad Kabiri explained the project’s cost will be mostly covered by a \$3.426 million grant from the Texas General Land Office via Harris County.

“This grant was a direct allocation. What they said was to find a project that was as close to the total (grant amount) as possible,” he said.

“We do have funds to supplement the GLO grant funds to make this a reality,” Kabiri said.



The pond, once completed, will be a valuable addition to the area's flood-mitigation capabilities, he said.

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“This is the only detention pond the Forest Bend subdivision will have because it didn't have one when it was built in the '80s,” Kabiri said.

Haritos told City Council that the pond will have wetland plantings, concrete trails and solar lighting.

In other city news, applications are being accepted through Friday, June 24 for those who want to take part in the city's 127th Fourth of July Celebration. The theme is “Freedom for One and All.”

Residents who'd like to get involved are welcome to ride a float or decorated vehicle, be part of a performance group or ride a horse or bike.

An application is available [here](#).

For more information contact the Parks and Recreation Department at 281-996-3220 or email at [rec@friendswood.com](mailto:rec@friendswood.com).

June 22, 2022 | Updated June 22, 2022 10:22 a.m.

By **Carissa Lamkahouan**

Carissa D. Lamkahouan is a correspondent for the Houston Chronicle.

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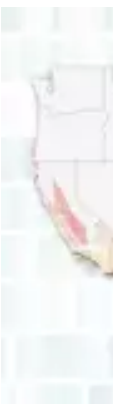
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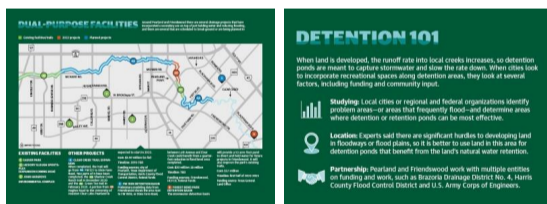


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## Pearland, Friendswood aim to mitigate flooding, incorporate recreational space

By [Andy Yanez](#) | 8:35 AM Jan 19, 2022 CST

The John Hargrove Environmental Complex is one of multiple spaces among the cities of Friendswood and Pearland that incorporates recreational spaces into detention and retention ponds. The Delores Fenwick Nature Center includes multiple features. (Andy Yanez/Community Impact Newspaper)



There were several drainage projects throughout Pearland and Friendswood that broke ground or finished up in 2021, and there will be more in 2022.

Both cities will take on projects this year that are designed to help mitigate flooding issues, but there is also a different aspect Pearland and Friendswood officials said they look to include: incorporating recreational and green spaces with these projects when possible.

Within Pearland, a majority of the city's drainage eventually flows through Clear Creek, Pearland Assistant City Manager Trent Epperson said. Clear Creek snakes around Pearland's northern portion, moving east into Friendswood and Clear Lake, and finally into Galveston Bay.

"It all ties together," Epperson said. "It's not jurisdictional, either. Clear Creek is our border between us and Harris County, and so it's multijurisdictional."

Pearland will work on several drainage projects throughout the year, including smaller ones such as improvements to the Brookland Acres neighborhood, Garden Road and O'Day Road. For drainage projects incorporating recreational spaces, the city is preparing to expand the Hickory Slough Sportsplex



Similarly, Friendswood has a few dual-purpose projects planned, including the Forest Bend Park detention basin the city expects to begin construction on in the first half of 2022 as well as the FM 1959 detention project, which does not yet have a definitive timeline, Friendswood Director of Engineering Jildardo Arias said.

"These types of projects will primarily be used for flood control," he said. "The addition of recreational amenities are done on a case-by-case basis and depend on the availability of funds."

### **Friendswood flood control**

Friendswood will work on one project in 2022 that incorporates improving recreation in the city.

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Friendswood's Forest Bend Park detention basin project along FM 528—or East Parkwood Drive—between Townes Road and Clear Creek will help with future flood-reduction projects within the city limits, Arias said. The project is still in its engineering phase, he added, but is expected to begin in the first six months of 2022 and take a year to complete.

Friendswood is working with a consultant to determine the viability of diverting water from other areas to Forest Bend, which once complete can help with other efforts such as a terracing project near the former public works facility on Deepwood Drive, where Clear Creek and Cowart Creek converge, Arias said.

"This mitigation must be in place before other types of flood-control projects may come online to mitigate any potential downstream impacts by those projects," Arias said.

The \$3.1 million Forest Bend detention project is funded primarily by a Community Development Block Grant the city received from the Texas General Land Office, Arias said. As a part of the project, Friendswood will also improve, expand and add lighting to existing trails in Forest Bend Park, Arias added.

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Meanwhile, early modeling for Friendswood's FM 1959, or Dixie Farm Road, detention basin project shows the area between Lott Avenue and Clear Creek, which includes a neighborhood, could see as much as a quarter of a foot decrease in flood level, Arias said.

Like with the Forest Bend project, a significant benefit to the project is that it is needed to set up future flood-control projects, he added.

Friendswood and Harris County Flood Control District bonds as well as American Rescue Plan funding are all sources that have been considered for the proposed project; however, Harris County Commissioners Court could also potentially commit funds for the project, Arias said. The project could cost up to \$38 million, he said.

### **Pearland projects**

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Slough Sportsplex on Hughes Ranch Road. The project is expected to finish design in 2023 and begin construction in 2024, Epperson said. It is solely funded by 2019 general obligation bonds and is expected to cost \$4.24 million, he added.

The Hickory Slough Sportsplex itself features a 153-acre detention pond that also serves as six soccer fields when they are not filled with stormwater, which is a dual purpose Pearland values, Epperson said.

"We're always looking for dual purposes," Epperson said.

The John Hargrove Environmental Complex located on Magnolia Parkway is an example of the dual-purpose use Pearland seeks with some of its projects. The 85-acre land includes the Delores Fenwick Nature Center, a recycling center, wastewater treatment plant and 2 miles of trails around two large detention ponds, said Cullen Ondracek, natural resources manager for Pearland's Parks and Recreation Department.

The city of Pearland, through the Pearland Economic Development Corp., has also collaborated on the Clear Creek Trail project with different organizations.

Pearland is mainly focusing on the recreational aspect along Clear Creek within its boundaries, mainly creating a 21-mile trail that will eventually stretch from FM 521—or Almeda Road—on the west side of town to Dixie Farm Road on the east.

On the drainage side, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers allocated \$295 million for drainage improvements in the Clear Creek Watershed in 2018, which includes HCFCD's Clear Creek Federal Project near Pearland.

The drainage work by HCFCD includes making improvements along 15.1 miles on Clear Creek from Hwy. 288 to Dixie Farm Road, adding 500 acre-feet of stormwater detention along Clear Creek and making 17 bridge replacements or improvements along Clear Creek.

A 2018 bond program provided an additional \$70 million to supplement the 2018 federal allocation toward the Clear Creek Federal Project, HCFCD External Communications Lead Sheldra Brigham said.

"Once completed, the Clear Creek trail will be a signature recreational amenity," PEDC President Matt Buchanan said in an email.

Pearland's vision for the complete trail along Clear Creek is for it to include tie-ins to some of the regional parks close to the city and even to those in Harris County, such as Tom Bass Regional Park, Adair Park, El Franco Lee Park and even further up north to Houston with Sims Bayou, Epperson said. There is no timeline for when the entire Clear Creek Trail project will be completed, Buchanan said.

However, 6 miles of the trail in Pearland have already been finished, and the city plans to start construction on another portion of the trail stretching from Hughes Road to the University of Houston-Clear Lake at Pearland campus in 2022, Epperson said. Construction will cost \$7.3 million, but the city is talking with the Texas Department of Transportation to split the project into two, which could reduce the total budget for construction to \$3.4 million, said Skipper Jones, Pearland assistant director of capital projects.

The two trails already complete are the \$1.7 million Shadow Creek Ranch trail that finished in December





examples of what using dual-purpose uses out of drainage projects looks like, the benefits for Pearland and Friendswood go beyond reducing flood risk in the community, Ondracek said.

"I'm definitely a big supporter of when you do these sites [of] being able to have multiple uses out of them," Ondracek said. "[Collecting] stormwater, you got the recreational aspect of it for people and then of course providing space for nature and wildlife still within the city."

By [Andy Yanez](#)



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