

# The Bayou Beat

*Reduce the Risk. Rediscover the Beauty.*

Spring 2005

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## MEET THE *Project Team*

**Raouf Farid, P.E.**

**Program Manager, Project Brays**

A licensed professional engineer with nearly 40 years of experience in both the public and private sectors, HCFCD is pleased to have Raouf as the Program Manager for Project Brays. He has worked on a wide variety of projects in the areas of transportation, water and wastewater, coastal-navigation, ports and harbors and industrial development. With a strong background in project management, civil and structural design, project engineering and construction management, Raouf's expertise lends itself well to ensuring the successful management and implementation of Project Brays.

**Mike Perez, P.E.**

**Project Manager, Bridge Modifications**

Working in both the public and private sectors, Mike has more than 23 years of experience and is a licensed professional engineer. His engineering expertise is in transportation, with an emphasis on bridge design and construction. On Project Brays, Mike leads the design and implementation of the 32 bridge modifications.

**Gary Zika, P.E.**

**Project Manager, Channel Modifications and Stormwater Detention Basins**

As a licensed professional engineer, Gary has worked all over the world, including Australia, New Zealand and the Middle East. His project portfolio ranges from piping and duct work in power plants and large diameter storage tanks to cryogenic storage vessels and steel rail and highway bridges. With more than 25 years of civil and structural construction experience, Gary leads the engineering design and implementation of the channel modifications and regional stormwater detention basins for Project Brays.

## Looking Forward to Another Great Year

With Project Brays' construction well underway, the Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD) is looking forward to another successful year in 2005.

The Project Brays' projects that HCFCD will execute over the next five years are included in the overall 5-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The 5-year CIP outlines studies and projects HCFCD would like to implement in the coming years to best meet the community's flood damage reduction needs. As one of the largest projects HCFCD has ever managed, Project Brays construction projects account for approximately 40 percent of the dollars allotted within the currently funded CIP.



*The second phase of construction on the Willow Waterhole Stormwater Detention Basin is on the list of projects approved for funding in 2005.*

Each year, HCFCD prioritizes the projects in the 5-year CIP based on available funding, project readiness and priority to determine which projects are capable of being implemented with available funding. Funding for projects is determined on an as-needed basis and is reevaluated at various times throughout the year. The required budget for these specified projects is then presented to the Harris County Commissioners' Court for approval. For a list of Project Brays' projects authorized for funding in the next year, see the "Construction Snapshot for 2005" on Page 2.

## How a CIP Project Becomes a Reality

Once the need for a flood damage reduction project is identified in a specific area of Harris County, the proposed project is considered for inclusion in the 5-year Capital Improvement Program. If a project is selected for funding, a project team is assigned to take the project from an engineering study through construction. The box to the right outlines the steps that the project team must complete in order to move a CIP project from the initial planning stages to completion.

Based on the CIP project implementation process, it is easy to understand the significant amount of coordination, funding and time that is required to complete each one of the 75 projects that make up Project Brays.

For the most up-to-date information on activities along Brays Bayou, please visit [www.projectbrays.org](http://www.projectbrays.org).

### CIP Project Implementation Process:

Input from the community is considered throughout the process. Also, public outreach is conducted by HCFCD throughout the process to keep the community informed.

- Devise a flood damage reduction project
- Evaluate impacts and mitigation needs
- Consider community input (seek support, opinions, keep the community informed)
- Design the project
- Determine the land to build it upon (either on existing right-of-way, or through land acquisition)
- Secure permission to build (environmental; city/county development permits; interlocal agreements)
- Remove physical obstructions (such as utilities, bridges, etc.)
- Allocate funding
- Select a contractor (through a bid and award process) and build

The allocation of funding occurs throughout the process and is determined on an as-needed basis for all projects, based on available funding, project readiness and priority.

## CONSTRUCTION

### *Snapshot for 2005*

#### Channel Modifications

- Freshwater Tidal Marsh
- Old Westheimer Road to Highway 6
- Mouth to Lawndale
- Calhoun to Ardmore

#### Stormwater Detention Basins

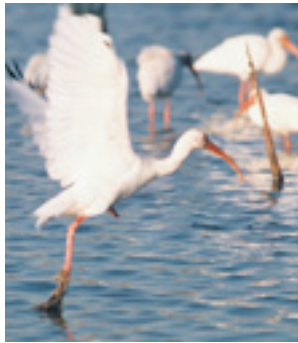
- Willow Waterhole Stormwater Detention Basin
- Eldridge Stormwater Detention Basin
- Arthur Storey Park Stormwater Detention Basin
- Old Westheimer Road Stormwater Detention Basin

#### Bridge Modifications

- Telephone Road Bridge
- Forest Hill Boulevard Bridge

## Project Brays Creates Habitat for Birds, Wildlife & Fish

HCFCF's Environmental Services Department has many programs in place to preserve, restore and, in some cases, create natural habitat where flood damage reduction projects are underway. As part of Project Brays, about 900 additional acres of green space is being created along Brays Bayou to provide a home for birds, wildlife and fish.



*A flock of White Ibis take part in an afternoon swim in the Arthur Storey Park Stormwater Detention Basin.*

The Freshwater Tidal Marsh Project at Mason Park in southeast Houston is an example of environmental enhancements that are part of Project Brays. This project re-creates a freshwater marsh that existed in that area nearly 50 years ago. Once completed, the project will provide a habitat for many types of birds and fish. Other species of marine life will use the freshwater marsh as a protected nursery in their earliest stages of life.

Another example of HCFCF's commitment to creating natural habitat is at Arthur Storey Park, located west of Sam Houston Tollway at Bellaire Boulevard, which has become one of Houston's newest hot spots for viewing coastal and migratory birds. There are many coastal species that are attracted to the fish in Arthur Storey Park's stormwater detention basins, including Osprey, White Pelicans, American Pipit, Kinglets, Warblers and Goldfinches.

## NEIGHBORHOOD

### *Events*

#### Willow Waterhole Fun Run

The first annual Willow Waterhole Fun Run is scheduled for Saturday, May 7 at the site of the Willow Waterhole Greenway Project in southwest Houston. Community members are invited to put on their running shoes and take a jog around newly created running and walking paths, while enjoying the natural beauty the green space has to offer. For more information, visit [www.wwgc.org](http://www.wwgc.org).

#### La Cuenca Cuenta: A Watershed Festival

The Texas Coastal Watershed Program is hosting an environmental education and awareness festival on Saturday, May 14, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Mason Park. The festival, named "La Cuenca Cuenta" or "The Watershed Tells a Story," will focus on watershed issues such as the impact of local water quality and the variety and importance of native habitats in the watershed. The event will also feature a Watershed Fiesta complete with a wetland exhibit, storytelling about the watershed and a mariachi band.

## NEIGHBORHOOD

### *News*

#### Information Fair

On February 22, Project Brays partnered with the City of Bellaire and the Greater Southwest Houston Chamber of Commerce to hold an Information Fair at the Bellaire Civic Center for southwest Houston residents and businesses. The information fair was a huge success, with approximately 140 community members attending.

#### Community Work Group Breakfast

The Project Brays Community Work Group Breakfast was held March 15. Thirty-four community work group members representing communities all along Brays Bayou gathered to learn about Project Brays' most recent news and progress. The information and handout provided to the community work group members can be found on the Project Brays website at [www.projectbrays.org](http://www.projectbrays.org).

## SPOTLIGHT

### *on our Partner*

This month's spotlight is shining brightly on the Eastwood/Lawndale/Wayside Super Neighborhood #64 and #88 for the effort they have put forth to beautify their community through Project Brays. The Super Neighborhood group is currently working with the project team to include aesthetic design features on seven bridges in the East End that will be replaced or extended as part of Project Brays. In addition, the group has been helping the project team to plan in advance for the addition of hike and bike trails after the channel modifications are complete in their area.

"HCFCF has really reached out to our Super Neighborhood group," said Gordon Goss, President of Super Neighborhood #64 and #88. "The project team has met with us regularly to keep us informed about construction and listen to our feedback. We are currently planning to create features that reflect the values of our community after construction is complete."

## Contact Us

We welcome your feedback! If you have questions, please e-mail us at [info@projectbrays.org](mailto:info@projectbrays.org) or call the Project Brays Hotline at 713-316-4820.

For up-to-date information, you can also visit the Project Brays website at [www.projectbrays.org](http://www.projectbrays.org).

