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## **PRESS RELEASE**

To: Members of the Public  
From: Mayor David Barrow  
Date: August 13, 2019  
Re: Flood Control Funding in Central

**Central, LA** – After important meetings with Governor John Bel Edwards, EBR Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome, Congressman Garret Graves, members of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and Central Mayor David Barrow, the necessary funding for the \$255 million East Baton Rouge Flood Control Project has been achieved. A press conference was held on August 7, 2019 with the above mentioned persons to announce that funding for the local match portion, approximately \$65 million, has been achieved thanks to the state of Louisiana contributing nearly \$53 million, the parish of East Baton Rouge contributing \$8 million, and the city of Central contributing nearly \$4 million. The project was in jeopardy as of a month ago due to the uncertainty of the local match. However, after discussions and negotiations on August 5 with all parties, the funding was committed to keep this project alive and moving forward.

The project consists of improvements to 66 miles along five channels in EBR Parish: Jones Creek, Wards Creek, Bayou Fountain, Beaver Bayou, and Blackwater Bayou. The project has been in the works since the 1990's, but there was never enough funding until last year when Congress authorized funding for the project on a 75% federal/25% local match. The Beaver Bayou and Blackwater Bayou projects are located within Central and represent nearly \$75 million of the project cost. The city of Central was looking at having to come up with nearly \$20 million for it's share, and EBR Parish was going to have to provide nearly \$45 million, and neither jurisdiction had the funds to commit until Governor Edwards stepped in and agreed to provide state assistance. Work on the five projects is scheduled to start in January 2020 and hopefully be completed by the end of 2024.

The work on 8 miles of Beaver Bayou consists of widening and channel improvements starting at the Hubbs Rd bridge and traveling south to the Comite River. The work on over 14 miles of Blackwater Bayou also includes widening and channel improvements along 9.9 miles of the main channel of Blackwater Bayou as well as 4.8 miles along Blackwater Bayou Tributary.

The main channel of Blackwater Bayou starts at Hwy 64 next to Galilee Baptist Church, travels south near Old Settlement subdivision, passes under McCullough Rd, Blackwater Rd, Dyer Rd, and continues traveling south passing under Talmadge Crumholt Rd, then back under Blackwater Rd again until it meets up with the Blackwater Bayou Tributary on the north side of Carmel Acres subdivision, and continues south passing under Hooper Rd at the four-lane bridge near Winchester subdivision until it

empties into the Comite River. The majority of this project passes through open, rural land. Old Settlement Place and Carmel Acres will see benefits.

The Blackwater Bayou Tributary starts in Plantation Way subdivision at Solitude Lane, then travels south passing under McCullough Rd, then under Country Estates Ave, making its way under Core Lane, then traveling south next to Central Private and Centerra Ct, passing under Gurney Rd, continuing behind Morgan Place West and Willowood Acres, and eventually meeting up with the main Blackwater Bayou channel. Subdivisions that will see improvements with this project include Plantation Way, Beau Bois, Country Estates, Centerra Ct., Morgan Place West, Willowood Acres, Bogavilla, and Carmel Acres.

The Beaver Bayou project starts at Hubbs Rd, then travels under Pinewood Drive and Denham Rd at the newly replaced bridge, and then continues south along the western side of Crystal Place, crossing under Hooper Rd next to Custom Metal Works, and continues past Cimmarron subdivision, then under Wax Rd at the bridge near Central High, and makes its way south until it passes under Greenwell Springs Rd just east of Central Thruway, and meanders under the Central Thruway and Frenchtown Rd crossings before emptying into the Comite River. Subdivisions affected by these improvements include Pinewood Acres, Crystal Place, Bridlewood, Cimmarron, Biltmore, Wisteria Lakes, Brandon Place, and Geo-Je's.

Soil boring tests along the two channels in Central began recently through the USACE after permission was received from nearly 30 property owners. The USACE is currently working on completion of the Hydrologic & Hydraulic Analysis models. Right-of-way acquisitions will begin after design plans are complete, and the project will eventually be let for bids. The Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) between the USACE and the Parish of East Baton Rouge will go before the EBR Metro Council for approval, and a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the Parish of East Baton Rouge and the City of Central will also go before both councils for approval once the final drafts are complete. As part of the agreements, both the Parish of East Baton Rouge and the City of Central will have to commit funds annually to maintain these channels once the projects are complete.

This is truly exciting news for our city. Nearly \$75 million worth of drainage improvements are coming over the next few years in Central due the cooperation of federal, state, parish, and local officials.