

## MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

**DATE:** February 18, 2025  
**TO:** Mayor and City Council  
**FROM:** Roque Salinas, Director of Economic Development  
**THROUGH:** Crystal Caldera, Ph.D., City Manager

**SUBJECT:** Presentation, Discussion, and Possible Action to Authorize the City Manager to Expend Funds from the Economic Development Department and Stormwater Fund in the Amount of \$17,500.00 for Maintenance of Zarzamora Creek.

### **PURPOSE**

Staff has received complaints and noted several concerns and challenges posed by the overgrowth, trash, and homelessness situation in and near Zarzamora Creek along the Loop 410 access road and Bandera Road, including economic impacts, health concerns, and safety risks by business owners, their staff, and their customers. The creek has a legal owner, but it is a corporation that is no longer in business and all attempts over the years to contact and cite them have been fruitless.

The aesthetic condition of Zarzamora Creek is an economic development concern, as many of our larger businesses like HEB, LA Fitness, and Office Max are directly adjacent to the creek and they have expressed their displeasure in the amount of overgrown brush, downed trees, trash, homeless people, and debris located within the creek, which makes their business properties look unkempt. Staff recently received complaints from the general public about the disheveled look of what they think is the property of HEB.

The number of homeless people living in the creek is a public safety concern, as there are childcare facilities and schools in close proximity to the creek, including the SST Discovery School and Emmazing Play.

Finally, this creek presents a stormwater issue. Although the creek is not legally owned by the City of Leon Valley, the city strives to maintain it in accordance with Best Management Practices mandated by the TCEQ for the city's MS4 Stormwater Permit. Recently, TXDOT mowed the creek, and in February, the City will partner with the San Antonio River Authority to clean up the trash and mow the area again (Basura Bash).

These efforts will ensure the creek remains manageable until the growing season begins in March. Currently, the Public Works Department mows the creek twice annually, but staffing shortages limit the frequency of maintenance, which results in the creek frequently being overgrown, trashy, and an attractive nuisance.

The city has undertaken several proactive measures in the adjacent area over the past

twelve months, including the demolition of abandoned buildings that were frequently used as shelters by the homeless population and associated with other significant problems, such as trash, fires, and substance use. These properties include:

- The former Comfort Café at 5616 Bandera Road,
- The former Sonic restaurant at 5630 Wurzbach Road, and
- The former veterinary hospital at 5721 Bandera Road (corner of Loop 410 and Bandera).

While these efforts have helped mitigate the hazards, homeless persons have relocated from those properties to the drainage tunnels and overgrown areas within the creek behind the school and businesses, where tall grass, overgrown trees, and vegetation provide cover. To address the problem, the Economic Development Department proposes to enter into an agreement with a private contractor, not to exceed \$17,500.00, to mow the creek quarterly.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Funding Sources:

- Economic Development Project fund           \$10,000.00
- Stormwater Maintenance fund                 \$ 7,500.00

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends authorizing the City Manager to expend funds in the amount of \$17,500 for the cleanup and maintenance of Zarzamora Creek.

APPROVED : \_\_\_\_\_

DISAPPROVED : \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED WITH THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENTS :

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ATTEST :

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Saundra Passailaigue, TRMC  
City Secretary