



CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL TO LA PORTE INDUSTRY

CAC Learns about Flood Protection Planning

The Citizen's Advisory Council (CAC) to La Porte Industry began the year learning about agencies that are focused on flood protection from both storm surges and river flooding. Michel Bechtel, President of the Board of Directors for the Gulf Coast Protection District (GCPD), provided an overview of the district and its work. GCPD was formed in 2021 by the Texas Legislature to be the non-federal sponsor of the Sabine Pass to Galveston Bay Coastal Storm Risk Management (S2G) and Coastal Texas Protection and Restoration Feasibility (Coastal Texas) studies, known together as the Coastal Barrier programs within Chambers, Galveston, Harris, Jefferson, and Orange Counties. The non-federal sponsor of a federally funded project has responsibilities for providing a percentage of the funding. Additionally, the GCPD will operate and maintain the portions of the Coastal Texas and S2G projects, once created, within the five counties, in conjunction with local jurisdictions. Bechtel also shared information relating to the legislation that formed GCPD, the timeline for funding of projects, and possible sources of funding for these projects. <https://www.gcpdtexas.com/>

Timothy Buscha, Chair of the San Jacinto Regional Flood Planning Group (SJRFPG), shared that his group is one of the 15 Regional Flood Planning Groups formed by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) in 2019 in response to historic flooding in the state. These groups were tasked to develop plans that identify flood risks, establish flood mitigation and floodplain management goals, and recommend evaluations, strategies, and projects to reduce flood risks. Buscha stated that the flood planning process is not a one-time effort but is a cyclical process that will recur every five years allowing for the opportunity to continue to improve the plan to address the ever-changing needs of the state. The San Jacinto River basin is the second-smallest flood planning region in the state by area, but the second-most in population. Eleven counties, or portions of them, fall within the boundary of this region along with an additional 1,077 political subdivisions with flood-related authority. To learn more about the regional plan that was submitted to TWDB in January, see the story map on the SJRFPG website. <https://sanjacintofloodplanning.org/>.

The CAC is a forum for candid and constructive dialogue between those who live or work in La Porte, Morgan's Point, and Shoreacres and the managers of 43 chemical plants in La Porte. Visitors are invited to attend the March 7, 2023 CAC meeting for the Annual Report on Worker Safety in CAC Plants. Contact the CAC facilitator at info@laportecac.org or 713-851-1116 by Sun. Mar. 5 to sign up and obtain details about the 6:00 p.m. meeting, 5:30 dinner, and location. The CAC shares information about its meetings and presentations at www.laportecac.org.