Belmond

City Manager/Clerk

Backflow Preventer & Pump Station Project

2015 All-Star Community Award Application

City: Belmond  Population: 2376

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Contact Title: City Manager/Clerk  Email:

In a few sentences, give a summary of the project and why it was needed.

For many years (maybe since the development of the city in 1856) the city has dealt with the flooding of the business districts along East Main Street and U.S. Highway 69 then beyond two blocks into the residential areas. The "old-timers" had never seen water as high as it was in 2008. Yet this particular flood event was rated by FEMA as one to occur every 50 years; in other words it did not reach the 1% event height. The total estimated damage/loss community wide was $2,850,000 (roughly $109,000 in public and $2,741,000 in private damages/losses). Without something to stop the flood waters, these damages were going to occur again and again. At some point the hazard would drive businesses away from Belmond along with residents. A preliminary engineering study, commissioned by the city, revealed that the primary cause of the flooding was the river coming back through the storm sewer system and up into the streets, then back down into the sanitary sewer system (through manholes) and into basements. The engineer's report included the solution of backflow preventers in the storm sewer outlets along the river and pump stations to get the rain water collecting in the storm sewers back into the river. The staff from Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (IHSEMD) suggested that the city apply to the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). At the same time the State of Iowa was promoting the I-Jobs Grant, which the city could use for the local match. Staff members from both programs were willing to work with each other and kept supporting the city through the application and construction phases.

Project Funding and Execution:

Total Cost/Projected Cost of Project: 1,881,765.87  or  no cost

List where funding came from (grants, donations, city funds, etc.)
$1,388,889.56 from HMGP; $185,186.63 from IHSEMD; I-Jobs of $276,487.85; and, $31,191.83 from other city funds

Total time project took/projected to take for completion:
(to qualify project must be operating or completed between January 1, 2013 and December 31, 2013)

08/18/2008  09/12/2014  or  Project is ongoing

Start date  End date

Resources
Please list Web sites judges may reference if they seek additional information. Do NOT include supplemental paper information. Only information on this form or the sites listed will be used in the judging process.
The city was ultimately the benefactor of the grant processes of HMGP and I-Jobs and the construction of the flood protection. After consulting with the IHSEMD staff, the city completed an application for the HMGP. At the same time the city applied for an I-Jobs grant, which would be city's local match or at least most of it. When both were approved the city sent out requests for proposals on the engineering, hired an engineer, secured easements to install the generators and build the pump stations and began learning about all of the requirements for this type of flood protection and for working with FEMA. Since FEMA requirements/regulations are more stringent than the I-Jobs program, the city was told by I-Jobs staff to follow FEMA requirements. The city had to secure easements for the location of some of the pumps, interact with the contractor once the construction started and is now responsible for the operation and maintenance of the tide flex check valves, pumps and generators.

In a few sentences, what future impact will this project have on your community?

While the system has not yet been tested to the extent of the 2008 nor the 2012 flooding (the later obviously occurring before we got the backflow preventers and pump stations in place) the city did experience some flooding in the spring of 2014. So the tide flex check valves closed as they should and the pumps went on a few times to pump the water out of the storm sewer system and back into the river. The generators have been load tested with no problems. The city council received a few thank you messages following the spring 2014 event from the residents who did not have to clean out their basements for the first time ever. More recognition of the success of the project will likely come as the years go by.