

RESOLUTION

NO. R-09-147

CITY HALL: April 2, 2009

BY: COUNCILMEMBER CLARKSON

SECONDED BY:

WHEREAS, The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is charged with the task of redeveloping New Orleans' outfall canals to carry rainwater runoff and block storm surge; and

WHEREAS, The Corps is moving forward with plans to implement what is known as Option 1, a plan that would retain existing deficient canal walls at the Orleans Avenue, London Avenue, and 17th Street canals; build new pumping stations at the mouth of each canal to handle a storm surge from rising water; and rely on Sewerage and Water Board pumping stations at the opposite end of each canal to handle routine drainage – a plan the Corps estimates will cost \$800 million; and

WHEREAS, The Corps has rejected as too costly an alternative plan known as Option 2 that would involve the deepening and repaving of canal walls at the Orleans Avenue, London Avenue, and 17th Street canals and the construction of new all-purpose pumping stations at each of these canals to handle both rising and falling water – a plan the Corps estimates will cost \$3.4 billion; and

WHEREAS, The Corps has itself claimed that Option 2, although more costly, offers more complete protection from the storm surge and heavy rainfall that accompanies major tropical storms and hurricanes; and

WHEREAS, Although the Corps has said Congress has authorized it to implement only Option 1, Louisiana's congressional leaders, including Senator Vitter, have said this argument is "circular and vacuous" in that Congress authorized this option "specifically because of the advice and numbers given it by the Corps itself under the Bush administration," according to Senator Vitter; and

WHEREAS, The New Orleans Sewerage and Water Board, the Jefferson Parish Council, and the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority have each authored resolutions

calling upon the Corps to submit their plans and cost estimates to independent, third-party review; and

WHEREAS, Senator David Vitter has called for the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works to hold a congressional field hearing in New Orleans for the purpose of reconsidering these options; and

WHEREAS, There is legitimate reason to be concerned that Option 1 will provide insufficient protection in the event of a major rainfall accompanied by significant rise in water levels within the Canals, as is common during major storms, now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS that we call upon the Army Corps of Engineers to reconsider Option 1, which we think is ill-advised and exposes the City to potential catastrophic loss of life and property, and to instead commit to implementing Option 2 and/or 2a.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS that we call upon the Army Corps of Engineers to submit its plans and cost estimates to independent, third-party review.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS that we fully support a congressional field hearing in New Orleans by the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works to investigate each option and determine which offers lasting, sustainable protection for New Orleans.

THE FOREGOING RESOLUTION WAS READ IN FULL, THE ROLL WAS CALLED ON THE ADOPTION THEREOF AND RESULTED AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Clarkson, Fielkow, Carter, Head, Hedge-Morrell, Midura, Willard-Lewis – 7

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: 0

AND THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.