

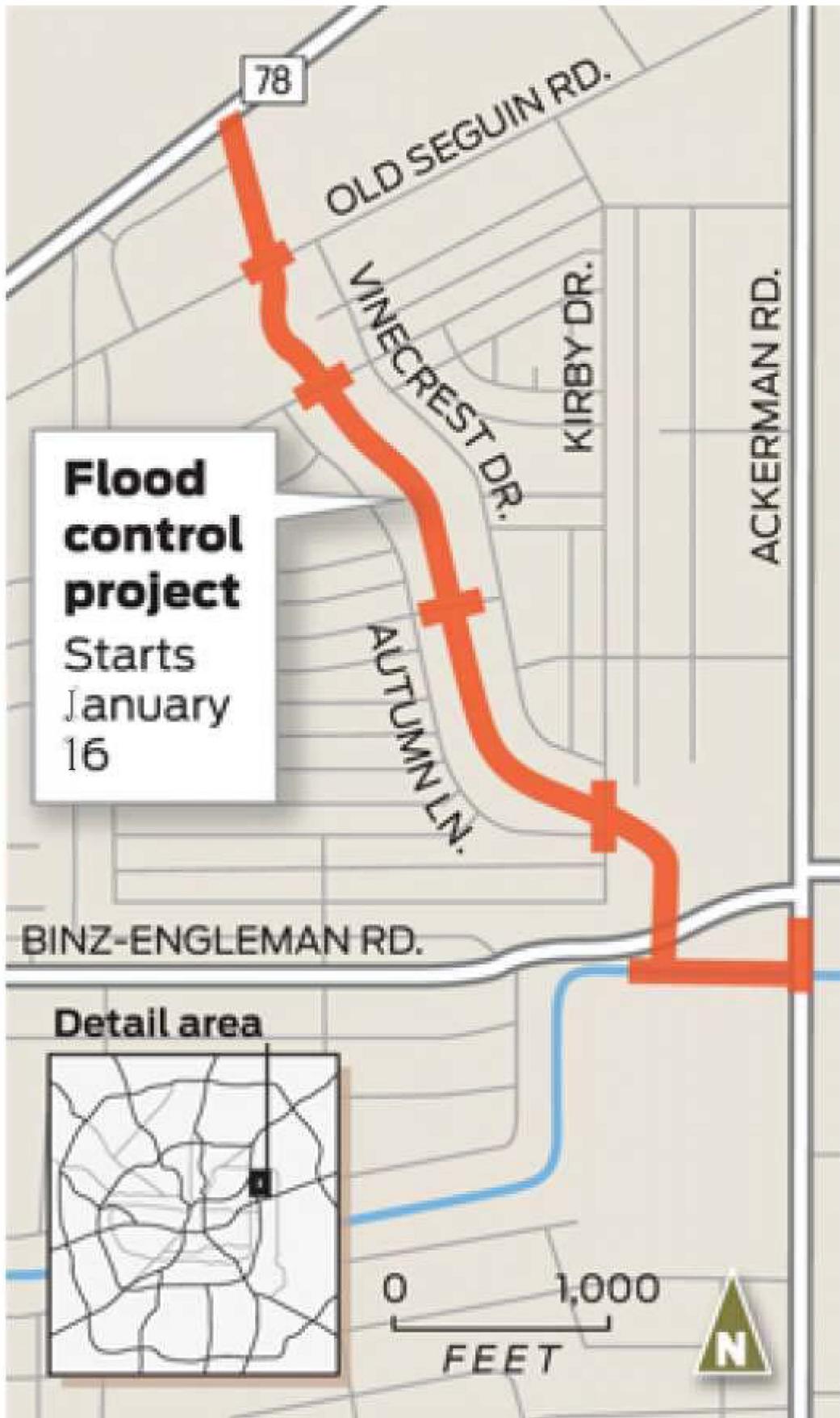
mysanantonio.com

Kirby set for \$7.6 million in flood control upgrades

By John W. Gonzalez

8-10 minutes

Updated 2:06 am, Thursday, January 3, 2013



San Antonio Express-News

Photo: San Antonio Express-News Graphic

Kirby flood control project

A flood-prone creek in Kirby will get some long-awaited upgrades starting Jan. 16.

During the next 27 months, new crossings and channel improvements on the west branch of Rosillo Creek will remove scores of homes from the flood plain and keep traffic flowing through the heart of Kirby during severe storms, officials said.

The Rosillo Creek Regional Storm Water Facility, costing \$7.6 million, is part of Bexar County's \$500 million flood control program.

A mile-long section of the creek between FM 78 and Binz-Engleman Road will be the focus of the construction. New bridges will be built at Old Seguin, Binz-Engleman and Ackerman roads. Bridge-class culvert crossings are planned at Starfire Lane and Redding and Kirby roads.

The goals are to allow unflooded access at the six crossings during a "1 percent," or 100-year, flood event, and to reduce the threat of flooding to adjacent homes.

The construction will remove 160 properties from the city's flood plain — 80 percent of the total, according to Bexar County officials.

While the improved crossings are eagerly awaited, there's less enthusiasm for the channel improvements, Kirby City Manager [Timothy Bolda](#) said.

The grassy creek banks will be planted with other vegetation to provide a more "natural" habitat, as required by the [U.S. Army](#)

[Corps of Engineers](#), he said.

“A lot of them (residents) are very excited something is being done. The only public concern is with the Army Corps of Engineers requirement for natural growth in the channel,” Bolda said. “Right now, we have a lot of nice, cut lawn,” Bolda said.

Residents are worried that “natural growth” will be “weedy (with) snakes, mosquitoes. They're very, very concerned it's going to look ratty,” he said. “To us, our grass was always fine before,” he added.

The construction work, with completion projected for March 2015, poses other issues as well. Construction will slow traffic on busy roads including Ackerman and Binz-Engleman.

No work is slated on the main branch of Rosillo Creek, which runs through the city's Friendship and Hugo Lenzt parks.

More Information

mySA.com: Find low-water crossings near you with our interactive map.

jgonzalez@express-news.net