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Memorandum

To: Board of Supervisors
From: Tara Coggins, Associate Planner
Hazard Mitigation Planning Council
Subject: Status of Plan Implementation
Date: September 17, 2009

Ordinance Book 1 page 435, December 4, 2007, adopted the Lamar County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.

For credit under the Community Rating System, this memo must be distributed to the media and be made available to the public. It is being sent to the papers that cover Lamar County. Copies of this report are available for review at the Lamar County Planning Department, 144 Shelby Speights Dr. in Purvis, MS and on our website at www.lamarcounty.com.

1. Background

The original *Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan* was drafted by this Hazard Mitigation Planning Council during a series of meetings held November 2004 through December 2005. It includes a detailed list of Hazard Identifications which includes flooding from both Mixon and Turtle Creek also known as Westover as the worst of problems.

The *Plan* reviews a variety of measures that can reduce the problems and/or protect people and property when flooding occurs. Measures reviewed include ditch improvements, retention/detention basins, culvert and storm sewer improvements, flood proofing, flood insurance, emergency response planning, public information, erosion and sediment controls, and building regulations. The plan recommended 22 action items to reduce or prevent any manmade or natural disasters.

2. A review of the Plan's action items:

The 22 action items found in chapter 8 of the April 2006 *Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan* are reviewed here. They are organized by following the exact list from the *Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan*.

1. Renovate existing public buildings to meet modern standards.

Status: We have applied for grants to be able to harden the following buildings/facilities and they are now in the FEMA Review stage:

- The Chancery and Circuit Courthouses
- The Multi-Purpose Facility
- The Accounting Office
- The Tax Assessors Office
- 16 Community Centers
- 12 Fire Stations
- The District Attorney's Office

We have also applied for a grant and approved to be able to build a 10,000 sq ft Hurricane Evacuation Shelter and the architectural plans are currently being drawn up.

2. Provide for redundancy in public and infrastructure operations.

Status: Through grant funding we were able to purchase 10 trailer mounted mobile Generators, in the case of a manmade or natural disaster, which will allow the county facilities and shelters to operate during a power outage. These are the following locations where they have been placed:

- 1 at the Chancery Courthouse along with the Transfer Switch
- 1 at the Purvis Wastewater Treatment Facility along with the Transfer Switch
- 1 at the South Road Barn
- 7 are staged at the Central Maintenance Barn

During a storm/disaster there will be 5 generators designated for shelters, 1 for Sanitation, and 1 for the North Road Barn for fuel mounting. We also applied and were approved for a grant to be able to purchase a permanent mount generator for the Central Maintenance Barn which has been installed and Transfer Switches for the North Road, South Road, Central Maintenance, and Public Safety Maintenance Barns which have been installed and tested.

3. Develop strategies and plans to provide for minimization of damage and disturbance.

Status: The County has the following Ordinances and Regulations in place at this time:

- Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance (Revised on December 5, 2005)
- Stormwater Runoff, Illicit Discharges, and Illegal Connections (Revised December 2004)
- Subdivision Regulations (Amended on May 15, 2008)
- Site Plan Review Ordinance (Effective October 17, 2006)
- Comprehensive Plan (December 18, 2008)

We are in the process of putting a Zoning Ordinance together and hope to have it completed and adopted by the end of this year.

4. Purchase equipment that will lower response and recovery cost and accelerate response and recovery time.

Status: We applied and were approved for grants to build 12 new Fire Stations and 1 remodel and buy 10 new Fire Trucks in order to accelerate response time and recovery. We have also received 10 new generators that will keep all County Facilities and Approved Shelters with power to assist those in need.

Recently we were also approved for 25 tornado shelters that have been constructed and are located at the following locations within the County:

- Central Lamar VFD Stations 1, 2 and 3
- Hickory Grove VFD Stations 1 and 2
- Lumberton VFD Station 1
- Oak Grove VFD Station 2
- Oloh VFD Stations 1 and 2
- Pine Ridge VFD Stations 1 and 2
- Purvis VFD Station 1
- Beaver lake FPD Station 1
- Southeast VFD Stations 1, 2, and 3
- Southwest VFD Stations 1, 2, and 3
- Sumrall VFD Station 1 and Sumrall FGD Station 1
- North, South, and Central Maintenance Barns
- Emergency Operations Center

Following that, we applied for and were recently approved for a grant to purchase tornado sirens. We will open bids at the end of September 2009 and begin installation 60 days following approval of the bid. The sirens will be placed at 15 sites which are undetermined at this time.

5. Update information that is available from the Flood Insurance Maps.

Status: Lamar County is scheduled to adopt the revised Flood Insurance Rate Maps on March 2, 2010 per FEMA. This will also include a digital format that we plan to incorporate into our GIS mapping system. We will also make them available via our local libraries and county offices.

6. To provide easily accessible tax map information to the Municipalities in the county, insurance agencies, realtors, banking interests, and individuals.

Status: The county currently has a link on our website that directs people to the Delta Computer Systems, which has the tax information for Lamar County. We are also in the process of receiving our DFIRM Maps that we will then incorporate onto the website for public view. This will not only have tax information but all street names and Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA) will be identified.

7. Provide outreach to the community, including local offices about the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and requirements for the elevation and purchase programs.

Status: The Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan is posted on the website at www.lamarcounty.com, at all the public libraries, the Chancery Courthouse, the Planning Department, and the Emergency Management Operations Building.

8. Establish a Hazard Mitigation Library at the Public Libraries.

Status: All the public libraries have an index of a variety of Flood Hazard books and the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.

9. Develop a brochure "Hazards in Lamar County" that will detail natural hazards within the county.

Status: We are in the process of establishing a Storm Ready Program which we plan to include in the "Hazards in Lamar County" brochure. Once this program is established we will complete a final print copy and start handing out the brochures.

10. Establish a Speakers Forum.

Status: The following persons are part of the Forum for Civic Organizations

- James Smith – Lamar County Emergency Management Director
- Paul Sheffield – Area Coordinator (MEMA)
- Joseph Zaydel – Hazard Mitigation Specialist (MEMA)
- Jerry Trash/Harrell Neal – Trainer/Planner (MEMA)
- Stephen Wilkinson – Meteorologist, National Weather Service (Jackson)

11. Establish a Hazard Mitigation and Disaster Preparedness Booth at festivals.

Status: Ongoing. This is a reoccurrence item each year, but we have stationed a booth once this year in March at the Annual Home Show in Hattiesburg, MS. In addition to this, we held a day of remembrance in the City of Purvis for the tornado that destroyed much of the city in August of 1908, where we handed out brochures and information to the community.

12. Encourage the Chambers and Emergency Management to develop a program on Business Continuity Planning for Business.

Status: Lamar County has a Council of Government in which all elected officials are invited to meet monthly to discuss business, legislation, hurricane preparedness, pre-planning for natural disasters, and much more. In addition, Lamar County has joined forces with the Area Development Partnership (ADP) to develop a working relationship between all Municipalities and many businesses in the area.

13. Host a luncheon for school principals to showcase educational materials that are available to teachers.

Status: Programs such as Masters of Disaster and others have been handed out to all schools in the Lamar County School District but no luncheon has taken place at this time. Due to the tight curriculum that the schools have it has been very difficult for us to plan a formal luncheon and give a presentation. We will continue to try and meet with the faculty and staff at all schools.

14. Establish quarterly meetings between the Board of Supervisors and the three City Governments.

Status: There has been a good working relationship at the staff level, so there has been no need to conduct quarterly meetings between the Board of Supervisors and the City Governments. However, Lamar County officials, including the Board of Supervisors, do meet with the 3 City Governing bodies prior to a severe storm such as a hurricane to review strategies on evacuation, pre and post hurricane procedures, reimbursements, etc.

15. The Emergency Management Director, the Volunteer Fire Departments, and the Municipal Fire Departments will develop a Hazardous Materials Response Team through an inter-local agreement.

Status: Through grant funding, it has allowed us to develop the team and purchase new equipment without having to enter into an inter-local agreement. The team is centrally housed and can be used on an as needed basis by any of the Fire Departments or Municipalities.

16. A written plan and standard operating procedures will be developed and incorporated into the County's CEMP (Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan).

Status: The Standard Operating Procedures; Hazardous Materials Response Guidelines and the Radiological Response Guidelines; have been added as part of the CEMP and was adopted on February 2007.

17. The Hazardous Materials Team will receive regular training to maintain certification.

Status: The team is trained quarterly to maintain their certification.

18. Establish a formal policy to invite county/city staff to attend site plan review for projects that are immediately adjacent to the jurisdiction or will impact the jurisdiction.

Status: Ongoing. We are in the process of developing a policy for the Board of Supervisors' approval.

19. Cooperate with Mississippi Department of Transportation to establish pre-disaster policies on maintenance of the right of way.

Status: The County has a standing policy with the Mississippi Department of Transportation that gives us the ability to maintain all state aid road right of ways and clear any potentially dangerous/harmful trees and shrubs/brush from within the right of way.

20. Adopt building codes and minimum standards applied to the construction or reconstruction of buildings to insure public health, welfare, and safety. A community can adopt minimum standards that determine how a building should be constructed.

Status: The County has adopted building codes only for the public (county) buildings. The county has held public meetings and one public hearing to adopt Building Codes county wide no vote was taken by the Lamar County Board of Supervisors due to a lack of interest by the community. This item is expected to be removed once we update our *Plan*.

21. Adopt similar enforcement procedures between the county and the cities, and consider shared staff to reduce costs and insure consistent enforcement.

Status: There is still a very strong lack of interest in the county adopting building codes, therefore; this item is expected to be removed once we update our *Plan*.

22. Adopt and implement a regulation requiring building owners to retrofit their structures for flood damage, if the structure's insured loss exceeds 50% or more of the structure's value.

Status: This requirement is part of our Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance which was revised and approved on December 5 2005.

3. Why action items have not been completed:

Of the 22 action items, 10 are ongoing or underway (1 – 6, 9, 14, 17-18). Items 7-8, 10, 12, 15-16, 19, and 22 have been completed. Item 11 is different each year, but we have completed last year's project. Here is why the remaining action items have not been completed.

13. Luncheon for School: We have been unable to plan a luncheon for the principals and staff of the Lamar County School District due to such a tight curriculum, but we are going to keep trying to set a day where we can go and interact with the staff and make them aware of some of the things we can offer.
20. Adopting Building Codes: In 2006, Lamar County attempted to adopt building codes but was unsuccessful in doing so. When the *Plan* is updated in the next year (2010) our intent is to remove this item from the *Plan* entirely.

21. Similar Enforcement Procedures: As a reflection of action item 20, this item will also be removed during the update of the Plan.

In short, we have completed or are implementing 86% of the *Plan's* recommendations.

5. Recommendations

1. The County staff should continue their job of implementing the *Plan's* ongoing Recommendations.
2. The County should continue its participation with the Area development Partnership, Municipalities, and businesses in discussing matters such as business, legislation, and hurricane preparedness.
3. The County should keep the website updated to include all new information including the *Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan* and this progress report.