

VILLAGE OF CHITINA HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

Newsletter #1

January 2015

This newsletter describes the Village of Chitina Hazard Mitigation Planning project development processes to interested agencies, stakeholders, and the public. This newsletter also serves to solicit comments.

The State of Alaska, Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) was awarded a Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to prepare Hazard Mitigation Plans (HMP) for fifteen Alaskan Communities. The Village of Chitina was selected for participation in this effort.

AECOM was contracted to assist the community with preparing a FEMA approvable hazard mitigation plan and subsequent hazard mitigation grant program application during 2012 and 2013.

The Chitina Hazard Mitigation Plan will identify all natural hazards, such as earthquake, erosion, flood, severe weather, and wildland fire hazards, etc. The plan will also identify the people and facilities potentially at risk and ways to mitigate damage from future hazard impacts. The public participation and planning process is documented as part of these projects.

What is Hazard Mitigation?

Across the United States, natural and human-caused disasters have increasingly caused injury, death, property damage, and business and government service interruptions. The toll on individuals, families, and businesses can be very high. The time, money, and emotional effort required to respond to and recover from these disasters takes public resources and attention away from other important programs and problems.

The people and property in the State of Alaska are at risk from a variety of natural hazards that can potentially cause human injury, property damage, or environmental harm.

Hazard mitigation projects eliminate the risk or reduce the hazard impact severity to people and property. Projects may include short- or long-term activities to reduce exposure to or the effects of known hazards. Hazard mitigation activities include relocating or elevating buildings, replacing insufficiently sized culverts, using alternative construction techniques, or developing, implementing, or enforcing building codes, and education.

Why Do We Need A Hazard Mitigation Plan?

Communities must have a State, FEMA approved, and community adopted mitigation plan to receive a project grant from FEMA's pre- and post- disaster grants identified in their Hazard Mitigation Assistance and other agency's mitigation grant programs. The Village of Chitina plans to apply for mitigation funds after our plan is complete.

A FEMA approved and community adopted HMP enables the Local government to apply for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), a disaster related assistance program. Applicants typically compete on a statewide basis.

The Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) and the National Insurance Program's Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA), grant programs are nationally competitive funding programs. These grants use the same application process and eligibility requirements.

The Planning Process

There are very specific federal requirements that must be met when preparing a hazard mitigation plan. These requirements are commonly referred to as the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, or DMA2000 criteria. Information about the criteria and other applicable laws and regulations may be found at: <http://www.fema.gov/mitigation-planning-laws-regulations-guidance>.

The DMA2000 requires the plan to include and document the following topics:

- ❑ Plan development process
- ❑ Identify hazards specific to the community
- ❑ Identify the population's and structures' risks
- ❑ Define the jurisdiction's mitigation goals
- ❑ List the community's mitigation strategy, selected actions, and implemented projects
- ❑ Provide a copy of the community's HMP Adoption Resolution

FEMA has prepared a Local Planning Review Guide) and (available at:

<http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?fromSearch=fromsearch&id=4859>). It explains how the HMP meets each of the DMA2000 requirements.

FEMA has prepared and “Mitigation Planning Guidance) and “How to” Guides (available at: <http://www.fema.gov/hazard-mitigation-planning-resources>). The Village of Chitina’s Hazard Mitigation Plan will follow those guidelines.

We are currently in the very beginning stages of preparing the plan. We will be conducting a public meeting to introduce the project and planning team, and to gather comments from our community residents. Specifically we will complete the hazard identification task, and collect data to conduct the risk assessment.

DHS&EM has previously identified natural hazards that occur in the Copper River Regional Educational Attendance Area (REAA) that may also occur specifically in Chitina.

We Need Your Help

Please use the following table to identify any hazards you have observed in your area that DHS&EM is not aware of AND any additional natural hazards that may not be on the list.

Chitina Hazard Worksheet		
Hazard	Copper River REAA*	Village of Chitina
Earthquake	Yes	Yes
Erosion	No	Yes
Flood	Yes	Yes
Ground Failure (Avalanche, Landslide, Permafrost)	No	Yes
Severe Weather	Yes	Yes
Tsunami & Seiche	No	No
Volcano	No	No
Wildland Fire	No	Yes

*Hazard Matrix from the 2013 State of Alaska Hazard Mitigation Plan for the Copper River REAA. (Parentheses indicate threat level and number of historical events)

The Planning Team

The planning team is being led by Scott Simmons (AECOM), with assistance from Elizabeth Appleby (AECOM) and Chitina’s Planning Team. AECOM has been contracted by DHS&EM to provide assistance and guidance to the Planning Team throughout the planning process.

Public Participation

Public involvement will continue throughout the project. The goal is to receive comments, identify key issues or concerns, and improve ideas for mitigation. When the Draft C Hazard Mitigation Plan is complete, the results will be presented to the community before DHS&EM and FEMA approval and community adoption.

DHS&EM identified critical facilities within the Village of Chitina as part of the Alaska Critical Facilities Inventory, but the list of critical facilities needs to be updated and the estimated value and location (latitude/longitude) determined.

In addition, the number and value of structures, and the number of people living in each structure will need to be documented. Once this information is collected we will determine which critical facilities, residences, and populations are vulnerable to specific hazards in Chitina. Please add additional facilities if needed.

Chitina Critical Facilities*	
Facility Type	Facility Name/Details
Power Generation	Chitina Electric Facility
Airport	Chitina Landing Strip
Community Garden	Garden and Toolshed
Community Hall	Chitina Village Hall
Telephone	Copper Valley Line/Satellite
Reservoir/Water Supply	CRBHA Chitina HUD Housing
Reservoir/Water Supply	Chitina Fire Well #2 (CIAC)
Generator	Bar/hotel Generator
Generator	Communications Building/Store Generator
Generator	Electric Co.
Generator	Garage
Generator	Store/café
Service/Maintenance Shop	Garage
Hospital/Clinic/ER	Clinic
Bridge	unnamed
Community Freezer	unnamed
Radio Transmitter	unnamed
Washeteria	Laundromat
Service/Maintenance Shop	Maintenance Garage
Cemetery	Native Cemetery
Post Office	Post Office
Store	Store
Store	Store/café
Fire Station	Volunteer Fire Dept.

* Alaska Critical Facilities Inventory

Please email or fax updated hazard and critical facility information directly to AECOM or provide it to your community planning and project team leader.

We encourage you to take an active part in Chitina’s Hazard Mitigation Plan development effort. The purpose of this newsletter is to keep you informed and to allow you every opportunity to voice your opinion regarding these important projects. Please contact your community HMP Team Leader or Elizabeth Appleby, AECOM directly if you have any questions, comments, or requests for more information:

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