

CITY OF KIVALINA HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN (HMP)

April 2015

Newsletter 2

This newsletter discusses the preparation of the City of Kivalina Hazard Mitigation Plan. It has been prepared to inform interested agencies, stakeholders, and the public about the project and to solicit comments. This newsletter can also be viewed on the State of Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management Website at: <http://www.ready.alaska.gov/plans/localhazmitplans.htm>.

HMP Development

The City of Kivalina was one of 21 communities selected by the State of Alaska, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) for a Hazard Mitigation Planning (HMP) development project. The plan identifies natural hazards that affect the community including earthquake, flood, ground failure, severe weather, and tundra/wildland fire. The HMP also identifies the people and facilities potentially at risk and potential actions to mitigate community hazards. The public participation and planning process is documented as part of the project.

What is Hazard Mitigation?

Across the United States, natural 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 take public resources and attention away from other important programs and problems.

People and property throughout Alaska are at risk from a variety of hazards that have the potential for causing human injury, property damage, or environmental harm.

The purpose of hazard mitigation is to implement projects that reduce the risk severity of hazards on people and property. Mitigation programs may include short-term and long-term activities to reduce hazard impacts or exposure to hazards. Mitigation could include education, construction or planning projects. Hazard mitigation activity examples include relocating buildings, developing or strengthening building codes, and educating residents and building owners.

Why Do We Need A Hazard Mitigation Plan?

A community is only eligible to receive grant money for mitigation programs by preparing and adopting a hazard mitigation plan. Communities must have an approved mitigation plan to receive grant funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for eligible mitigation projects.

The Planning Process

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

The DMA2000 requires the plan to document the following topics:

- Planning process
- Community Involvement and HMP review
- Hazard identification
- Risk assessment
- Mitigation Goals
- Mitigation programs, actions, and projects
- A resolution from the community adopting the plan

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 City’s Hazard Mitigation Plan will follow those guidelines.

The planning process kicked-off on December 2, 2014 by establishing a local planning committee and holding a public meeting. The planning committee examined the full spectrum of hazards listed in the State Hazard Mitigation Plan and identified five natural and three manmade/technological hazards the HMP would address.

After the first public meeting, City staff and DHS&EM’s contractor AECOM began identifying critical facilities, compiling the hazard profiles, assessing capabilities, and conducting the risk assessment for the identified hazards. Critical facilities are facilities that are critical to the recovery of a community in the event of a disaster. After collection of this information, AECOM helped to determine which critical facilities and estimated populations are vulnerable to the identified hazards in Kivalina.

A mitigation strategy was the next component of the plan to be developed. Understanding the community’s local

capabilities and using information gathered from the public and the local planning committee and the expertise of the consultants and agency staff, a mitigation strategy was developed. The mitigation strategy is based on an evaluation of the hazards, and the assets at risk from those hazards. Mitigation goals and a list of potential actions/projects were developed as the foundation of the mitigation strategy.

Mitigation goals are defined as general guidelines that explain what a community wants to achieve in terms of hazard and loss prevention. Goals are positively stated future situations that are typically long-range, policy-oriented statements representing community-wide visions. Mitigation actions and projects are undertaken in order to achieve your stated objectives. In April, 2015, the local planning committee identified projects and/or actions for each hazard that focus on six categories: prevention, property protection, public education and awareness, natural resource protection, emergency services, and structural projects. A representative sample of the mitigation actions identified as a priority by the planning team are listed below, and explained in more detail in the plan.

The selected projects and/or actions will potentially be implemented over the next five years as funding becomes available. A maintenance plan was also been developed for the hazard mitigation plan. It outlines how the community will monitor progress on achieving the projects and actions that will help meet the stated goals and objectives, as well as an outline for continued public involvement.

The draft plan is available in the City and Tribal offices for public review and comment. Comments should be made via email, fax, or phone to Scott Simmons (listed below) and be received no later than May 1, 2015. The plan will be provided to DHS&EM and FEMA for their preliminary approval and returned to Kivalina's City and Tribal Councils for formal adoption.

The Planning Committee

The plan was developed with the assistance from the community's planning committee consisting of a cross section from the community. Planning Team members who helped with developing the plan include City Administrator and Planning Team Leader, Janet Mitchell, with assistance from the City Council, and DHS&EM's contractor, AECOM.

Sample of the City of Kivalina's Newly Identified Mitigation Actions. Review the draft HMP for a complete list.		
Identify and pursue funding opportunities to implement mitigation Actions.	Disseminate FEMA pamphlets to educate and encourage homeowners concerning structural and nonstructural retrofit benefits.	Encourage utility companies to evaluate and harden vulnerable infrastructure elements for sustainability.
The City will strive to manage their existing plans to ensure they incorporate mitigation planning provisions into all community planning processes such as comprehensive, capital improvement, and land use plans, etc. to demonstrate multi-benefit considerations and facilitate using multiple funding source consideration.	Relocate community to Kiniktuuraq. The existing location has no space for growth, new homes construction. It experiences impacts from all natural hazards and is susceptible to rapid urban fire damages due to the entire community's buildings close proximity to each other.	Drill fresh water well. Current water source Wulik River location is eroding, located downriver from the Red Dog Mine (susceptible to mine discharge impacts), and experiences severe turbidity. Well is essential to community longevity, sustainability, and public health.
Prohibit new construction in identified mitigatable hazard impact areas (erosion, flood, ground failure (permafrost), etc.) or require building to applicable building codes for other hazard impacts (earthquake, volcanic ash, weather, etc.).	Replace water sump pumps damaged from silt damage. These pumps are vital for removing storm and floodwater collection in town center. Pumps will need filter screens to prevent future failure.	Develop and implement programs to coordinate maintenance and mitigation activities (such as utility line quick-disconnects) to reduce risk to public infrastructure from severe winter storms (snow load, ice, and wind).
Develop and implement disaster debris management plan.	Protect landfill (such as a raised berm with hardening) to prevent erosion, flooding damage, and flood water intrusion out flow.	Identify close proximity gravel source essential to current projects and future relocation site development.

We encourage you to learn more about the City of Kivalina's Hazard Mitigation Plan. The purpose of this newsletter is to keep you informed and to allow you every opportunity to voice your opinion regarding this important project. If you have any questions, comments, or requests for more information, please contact:

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