



CITY OF LYNN HAVEN COMMUNITY RATING SYSTEM PROGRESS REPORT 2023

On September 23, 2020, the City of Lynn Haven's City Commissioners adopted Resolution No. 2020-09-346, adopting the updated Bay County Local Mitigation Strategy Plan (LMS). By this action, the City committed to continue participation in the updating and expansion of the Bay County LMS. This report shall serve as part of the City's effort to continue to update and expand on the LMS plan and shall serve as the annual progress report required as part of the City's continued participation in the National Flood Insurance Programs (NFIP) and the Community Rating System (CRS). At the present time Bay County is in the process of updating the LMS.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the LMS plan is to identify strategies to help in the mitigation of future natural disasters, including flooding. The plan is intended as a guide or planning document to help the City achieve this. Communities that adopt a hazard mitigation plan must update their plan documents and processes to continue to remain eligible for various pre and post - disaster grant programs, funding opportunities, and other mitigation programs. In 2020, Lynn Haven, Bay County, and other municipalities undertook the process to update the LMS plan to avail our communities of these opportunities and programs. During this process, representatives from the County and local municipalities completed the update to the LMS plan through a coordinated effort. Once the Florida Division of Emergency Management and Federal Emergency Management Agency found the update to Bay County LMS plan compliant with federal standards, the City of Lynn Haven has continued to coordinate with other local government jurisdictions to keep the LMS updated and monitor the progress of the goals and objectives specified in the plan.

The City of Lynn Haven, as well as the whole Bay County, is susceptible to a variety of natural hazards which endanger the health and safety of its citizens, jeopardize its economic vitality, and imperil the quality of its environment. Historical experience has demonstrated that the County and its municipalities can be affected by flooding, winds associated with tropical storm/hurricanes, tornadoes, and wildfires.

Storm hazards have the potential to seriously impact the general population. All residences near water are subject to flooding during severe rainfall events. Bayous may overflow, wetlands reach their capacity, and lake levels rise up and can inundate surrounding property. Areas such as North Bay and West Bay are subject to flooding, as are properties surrounding smaller bodies of water. The City is relatively flat, water flows over land and tends to gather in depressed areas. Property that is only slightly lower than surrounding areas can become a holding pond for stormwater. It is the mission of the Bay County Local Mitigation Strategy team to continue to

evaluate the causes of vulnerabilities to natural disasters and hazards and implement mitigation programs that will alleviate the sources of those vulnerabilities in order to establish a disaster resistant community. The LMS is a comprehensive multi-jurisdictional plan addressing the relevant hazards of the seven incorporated jurisdictions and unincorporated Bay County. For each incorporated jurisdiction and unincorporated Bay County the risk assessment will map and quantify in detail the potential impacts from flood damage, which is the greatest hazard risk to the County, and in more generalized terms potential damage from storm winds and wildfires. Bay County and the municipalities have more information and data on flooding issues, and consequently, have provided more detail for that hazard. Winds have been categorized as a high risk to all regions of the County, and wildfires as a moderate risk. There is less historical data available on these hazards; therefore, less detail is provided on their potential impacts. Sinkholes have been included in the analysis; however they are considered to be a much lower risk.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVE OF THE LMS

Bay County's Local Mitigation Strategy identifies these natural hazards and assesses their potential impacts on each of Bay County's incorporated jurisdictions and unincorporated areas, focusing primarily on the asset inventory, existing land uses, and critical facilities. Based on these hazard identifications and risk assessments, the LMS proposes appropriate hazard mitigation projects to reduce damage or impairment to the homes, businesses, schools, and government offices.

Hazard mitigation is any sustained action taken to minimize long-term risk to people and property from natural hazards and their effects. This definition distinguishes actions that have a long-term impact from those that are more closely associated with immediate preparedness, response, and recovery activities. Hazard mitigation is the only phase of emergency management specifically intended to break the cycle of damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage.

IDENTIFYING AREAS VULNERABLE TO HAZARDS AND APPROPRIATE MITIGATIONS ACTIONS

The City of Lynn Haven is concerned about repetitive flooding and has an active program aimed at helping citizens protect themselves and their property from future flooding. While tidal surges associated with hurricanes and issue outside of the City's realm of control, we have enacted stricter development guidelines in the Special Flood Hazard Areas located throughout the community. Additionally, our street department and Stormwater Division are constantly making improvements to the drainage system.

REPETITIVE FLOOD LOSS PROPERTIES

As of April 2023, the City had ninety-five (95) properties listed on FEMA's repetitive loss (RL) list; only one (1) is a severe repetitive loss (SRL) property. This SRL is in the North Bay area-see below. Three (3) of these properties have been mitigated and should be taken off of the RL list (see below.) Other properties have been the recipients of flood risk reduction benefits from City stormwater projects, particularly in the area of 17th Street. These stormwater management efforts are described below.

Thirty-Five (35) of the listed RL properties are primarily X zone properties that are scattered through the City,

and are subject to flooding from heavy rains. The City has been and plans to continue to work on drainage projects to alleviate flooding for these areas.

The types of structures (and their numbers) on the Lynn Haven FEMA RL list are as follows:

- Other residential 2
- Single Family 79
- Vacant Lots 14

REPETITIVE FLOOD LOSS AREAS



North Bay area

North Bay/Lynn Haven Bayou area: There are fifty- three (53) listed RL properties in the North Bay/ Lynn Haven Bayou area, including one SRL property. Many of these parcels are in the mapped flood hazard area, zones VE and AE; others are X zone parcels. Flooding in this part of the City is due primarily to coastal storm surge waters from the North Bay and Lynn Haven Bayou. The properties are older (in many case pre-FIRM), and would be mitigated primarily through elevation, acquisition/demolition or mitigation rebuild grant projects.

The City has assisted with the mitigation of five (5) of the homes in this area and would be happy if these could be removed from the FEMA list. These are:

- 316 Missouri Ave - Rebuilt AE8
- 407 Montana Ave – Demolition
- 801 Alabama Ave - Demolition
- 1601 Alabama Ave - Demolition
- 901 West 3rd Street - Demolition

This leaves a total of 29 RL owners in the North Shore area. As more willing owners are found, the City will assist other RL owners in applying for federal funding to mitigate.

North Harbor area: The properties in these neighborhoods were built around finger canals and a tributary that extends eastward from the Upper Goose Bayou. Four (4) RL properties are found here. Flooding in this area is from storm surge; again, the properties are older (in many cases pre-FIRM), and would be mitigated primarily through elevation, acquisition/demolition or mitigation rebuild grant projects. If willing owners are found, the City will assist the owners in applying for federal funding to mitigate.

The City of Lynn Haven has an aggressive program for maintaining and upgrading stormwater conveyances

throughout the City. Our ongoing maintenance includes digging existing open ditches from culvert inlet to culvert inlet or outfall and replacing culvert pipes that have begun to deteriorate with either galvanized steel or aluminum pipes. The last six years of maintenance has resulted in 10,665 lineal feet, or 2.019 miles of piped system being replaced or added to. There have also been 354,392 lineal feet, or 67.11 miles of open conveyances being maintained. The City invested in a new Vac Truck to clean out stormwater outlets and culverts, and a Remote Mower which can mow steep ditch banks and sides of stormwater ponds to assist in the maintenance.

YEAR	LINEAR FEET INTALLED / REPLACED	LINEAR FEET OF DITCHES DUG/ CLEANED
2021	2,350	58,798
2020	2,225	93,984
2019	1,860	139,920
2018	1,120	14,460
2017	1,630	22,820
2016	1,480	24,410
TOTALS	10,665	354,392

With the devastation of Hurricane Michael in late 2018, an aggressive program was put into place to clear the ditches, creeks, waterways and right of ways of debris to reduce flooding. From October 16, 2018, through December 31, 2019, approximately 112,813 cubic yards of debris were removed from the streams and primary waterways through the City. An additional 1,297, 858 cubic yards of debris were removed from the City right of ways that were blocking the drainage systems.

Current and Future Flood Mitigation Efforts

Vermont Avenue Drainage Improvements

Current construction of the Vermont Avenue drainage improvements have been completed. This project creates an additional outfall for the Northridge Development Area and should greatly reduce flooding under normal rain events.

The City has recently received HMGP Funding for engineering only on the following projects to reduce flooding:

- Pine Forest Estates
- Belaire Estates
- Bradley Circle
- 11th Street
- Acme Lane
- Wyoming Avenue

FLOOD SAFETY PROPERTY PROTECTION MEASURES APPROPRIATE FOR THE HAZARD

Lynn Haven has implemented specific measures that result in greater protection of properties. The Building Department strictly enforces elevation certificate requirements, surveyor's benchmark regulations and other flood safety measures recommended by the NFIP. To overcome the problem of drainage issues the Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) requires that for new development stormwater runoff cannot exceed predevelopment conditions. The ULDC also takes the local building code above NFIP development standards and requires that homes not located in the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) designated flood zones, are elevated to at least one foot above the crown of the road. Homes built in A and AE zones require one foot above base flood elevation (BFE). The City also adopted Ordinance # 1121, requiring new developments to be constructed according to the 100 Year Storm attenuation standards, while Resolution 2021- 08-364 was approved in August 2021, adopting new stormwater rates.

ENHANCED PUBLIC AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING

As a participant in the Community Rating System (CRS) program and working within the defined goals of the Local Mitigation Strategy Plan. The City of Lynn Haven regularly promotes public awareness of flood risk, as well as other natural disasters. Using our website, informative articles in local newspapers, relaying specific messages in monthly water bills, and annual direct mailings to the properties located in two repetitive loss areas, as well as properties city wide, the CRS/Flood Awareness Team constantly strives to keep residents aware of the potential for flooding, mitigation suggestions, and the importance of flood insurance. The City also sends annual mailings to local real estate agents, insurance agents, and mortgage companies to make them aware of these efforts and to encourage their participation to help keep residents aware of the threat of flooding, flood protection measures for property owners and the need for flood insurance.

The City has been a participant in updating the Bay County Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) Plan, adopting the Bay County LMS Plan by resolution. Since the Bay County LMS Plan has been adopted by the City, the City remains eligible for various pre- and post-disaster grant programs and other mitigation programs to help fund projects. More specific information on property protection and safety measures utilized by the City can be found on the City of Lynn Haven website and at the City of Lynn Haven Building Department.

The public is involved when plans and projects are being proposed, discussed, or approved, by their involvement in the planning process. The public is invited to attend public workshops. The City coordinates with Bay County, therefore, has fallen under the umbrella of Bay County's planning, public outreach, and public participation processes Planning Board meetings and City Commission meetings. In this way they have the opportunity to comment. In addition, board members are also members of the public.

FLOOD RELATED PUBLIC INFORMATION ACTIVITIES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

The City of Lynn Haven is located within Bay County. The Bay County Planning and Zoning Libraries currently contain several countywide FEMA booklets, brochures, and historic and current FIRMS in the reference section. Public information pages on the topic of flooding, hurricane safety, and other natural disasters are published each year in the Bay County Yellow Pages Phone Book. The Panama City News Herald issues a "Hurricane Guide" every year that shows flood-prone areas in the County and provides a wealth of other flood related information. At various times during the year, flood protection information is included in the newsletter sent out by individual municipalities, the Chamber of Commerce, and various local companies.

The Bay County Emergency Management / Emergency Operations Center (EOC) provides countywide presentations to increase flood awareness at local schools, nursing homes, and a variety of other public and private organizations. The Fire Chief (head of the Bay County EOC) is frequently hosted on radio and television programs where he explains the flood safety program and advises where to get additional assistance and information. The Emergency Management organization publishes evacuation maps which are also downloadable from the Bay County Emergency Management website. In addition, that organization publishes a booklet, "A Pocket Guide to Emergency Services in Bay County," which is distributed at a variety of public events throughout the year.

LMS MITIGATION INITIATIVES

Due to the fact that the Bay County LMS Plan has been adopted by the City, the City remains eligible for various pre- and post- disaster grant programs and other mitigation programs to help fund projects listed in the Mitigation Initiative Prioritization List.

PLANNING PROCESS

Planning with regard to how the City will deal with its flooding problem has necessarily involved the Department of Public Works, Planning Department, Building Department, and the Fire Department as well as the contracted City Engineer. Although planning identifies and mitigate for flooding requires a coordinated effort, as seen such things as the NPDES program, and the Technical Review Committee (TRC) meetings held to review and comment upon proposed development within the City, The City is in the process of forming a committee to meet and strategize specifically on floodplain management. The City has been participating in updating the Bay County LMS Plan, and adopting by resolution.

The planning process with regards to floodplain management is now being coordinated by the City Emergency Management Director and will be conducted through a committee composed of staff from those departments that will be implementing the majority of the plan's recommendations. The committee will have representation from the following departments:

- Building Department
- Public Works
- Code Enforcement

- Development & Planning
- Emergency Management
- Engineering
- Park & Recreation

The public is involved when plans and projects are being proposed, discussed or approved, by their involvement in the planning process. The public is invited to attend public workshops, Planning Board and Commission Meetings. These are meetings which they are able to comment on projects. In addition, board members are also comprised of citizens. It is proposed that the planning process will look for ways to reach out to the community members to actively engage them further into the planning process.

It is proposed that there will be at least one public meeting at the end of the planning process where proposals are explained, and the general public can ask questions and submit comments.

The City coordinates with Bay County, therefore, has fallen under the umbrella of Bay County's planning, public outreach, and public participation process.

The City has implemented "Stormwater" updates at the regular City Commission meetings, where the Public Works Director gives a presentation to the Commission and citizens on stormwater control projects being implemented and benefits to the City by reducing structural flooding. These presentations are very informative. The City has also added a stormwater layer onto our GIS maps which show the location of stormwater facilities to include headwalls, outfalls, junction boxes, culverts, ditches, spillways, surface drains, swales and retention ponds. The City has shared information with the Public at City Meetings, and on the City's Website, as well as placing flyers in the Utility Billing Customer Service areas on the new Flood Zone Maps, and outreach meetings being held locally to assist the public.

PROMOTE COMPLIANCE WITH STATE & FEDERAL PROGRAMS

There are several State and federal programs, policies, and regulations that encourage local governments to develop and adopt hazard mitigation strategy plans. Since adopting the original Bay County LMS Plan on July 28, 2015, by Resolution No. 2015-07-618, the City has promoted and continues to encourage consistency with these programs, policies, and regulations. In order to comply with these policies and regulations of the NFIP, the City amended portions of its floodplain management regulations and adopted the revised FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps in 2009. Since that time, the City has continued to enforce all applicable floodplain management regulations and requirements.

ENHANCED LOCAL POLICIES FOR HAZARD MITIGATION CAPABILITY

The Bay County office of Emergency Management warns the community of approaching hazards through the Emergency Alert System (WFSY 98.5 FM radio, WPAP 92.5 FM radio, WJHG TV (channel 7) and WMBB TV (channel 13). This service provides time for homeowners to take necessary steps to secure valuable property and to evacuate safely. This service is widely publicized through all media outlets (radio, print, and television), frequent Emergency Management, County, Red Cross, and extension office seminars, as well as the Telephone Book Yellow Pages.

While regulatory measures offer some degree of protection, the City outreach programs stress that it is up to the homeowner or renter to take additional measures to ensure that their homes and properties are protected. Through the City Community Rating System (CRS) outreach programs, homeowners and renters are made aware of the additional safety measures they can take, insurance protection that is available to them, as well as the availability of grant funds. For example, an existing, older structure may be permanently elevated, so that the lowest floor is at least one foot above base flood elevation. Homeowners are also counseled to locate heating, hot water system, electrical panels, and all components of the electrical system (including the wiring) and utilities are above the flood level. Repetitive Loss property owners are made aware of grant programs that can assist in elevating their home, buying the property outright, or demolishing and rebuilding the structure.

Hurricanes bring high winds that damage inland and coastal areas. If the area immediately surrounding a structure contains trees, outbuildings, trashcans, yard debris, or other materials that can be moved by the wind, it will likely cause damage to the structure. Citizens are advised to bring in outdoor possessions, such as lawn furniture, grills, and trashcans, or any other items that become flying debris or secure them in place during high winds. Fuel Tanks should be anchored.

Permanent hurricane shutters provide long term means of protecting a home. Temporary methods of securing windows, such as plywood, will protect glass from wind born debris damage, but are time consuming to install with every storm threat. Although the City and Bay County do not provide direct assistance with these types of measures, citizens can become better informed through additional public education activities. The builders Service inspectors are trained on flood proofing/ prevention measure.

More specific information on property protection and safety measures utilized by the City can be found at www.cityoflynnhaven.com and the City's Building Department, as well www.baycountyfl.gov, Bay County Emergency Services office, County Planning and Zoning, and the Bay County Libraries reference section. The libraries also provide computers and residents can access the FEMA website as well as the County GIS website at no charge. The Bay County website contains elevation certificates from 1990 through current time. FEMA flood maps, evacuation zone maps, insurance information, properties with LOMAs and other flood related resources.

Florida Building Code has recently been amended to comply with FEMA/NFIP standards. City staff is coordinating with State Officials to draft new standards based on the State's model ordinance that will align the City's floodplain management regulations with both State and Federal requirements. During the past several years, the City has adopted and implemented policies in its Comprehensive Growth Development Plan that are aimed at enhancing hazard mitigation. To ensure timely and safe evacuation from coastal areas, Lynn Haven has implemented land use and growth management policies to maintain a roadway clearance time for a hurricane evacuation of 16 hours for a category 3 storm at high tourist occupancy. Policies have been put in place to direct future growth away from coastal high hazard areas and buffer from environmentally sensitive areas, including low lying wetlands and tributaries. The City has adopted policies to limit increases in densities and restrict development and redevelopment in vulnerable coastal areas. Most recently, the City has adopted regulations to control erosion and sediment during development and construction activities. Erosion and sediments controls will ultimately reduce the frequency of repairs to the drainage and storm sewers and will have a long term benefit for drainage and stormwater runoff in the City.

YEAR END STATUS OF THE COMMUNITY RATING SYSTEM (CRS) PROGRAM

Since the last Community Rating System (CRS) Annual Recertification, City staff continues to coordinate with Bay County and other local municipalities concerning updates to LMS Plan and hazard mitigation efforts. The City has considered improvements to deficient stormwater infrastructure a top priority. The City has completed a number of drainage projects that will aid in controlling stormwater runoff and help relieve areas from flooding. To help further the City's efforts to mitigate flood hazards, staff is constantly drafting new floodplain management regulations that will align with the standards now incorporated in the Florida Building Code and FEMA/NFIP requirements.