



## **Terry County Hazard Mitigation Plan**

### **Project Overview**

#### **BACKGROUND**

Terry County is developing a **Hazard Mitigation Action Plan, or *Plan***, that will address natural hazards that affect unincorporated Terry County and participating jurisdictions. Plan participants are unincorporated Terry County, the Cities of Brownfield, Wellman, and the Town of Meadow. These communities will form a *planning team*, representing the core group of people responsible for developing and reviewing drafts of the Plan, creating the mitigation strategy, and submitting the final Plan for local adoption. Members of the planning team are those individuals or organizations with the expertise and authority to implement mitigation actions developed through the planning process, such as community planners, building officials, emergency managers, and elected officials.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines *Mitigation* as sustained actions taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from hazards and their effects. Therefore, the goal of the Plan is to minimize or eliminate long-term risk to human life and property from known hazards through effective mitigation.

The Plan will be prepared as a new, stand-alone Plan, reflecting conditions that have had an impact area-wide. When complete, the Plan will comply with all applicable provisions of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) and FEMA's criteria for approval of mitigation plans required in Section 322 of the DMA 2000.

A FEMA-approved Plan is required to be eligible for grant funds through FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) programs, which include the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM), and Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) programs. Funds from these federal grant programs may be awarded to planning participants to implement mitigation projects identified in the Plan.

#### **THE PLANNING PROCESS**

Terry County has secured the services of a project team headed by Lockwood, Andrews & Newnam, Inc. (LAN) to assist in the preparation of the Plan and the planning process, which involves the following steps:

## **Capability Assessment**

The LAN team will utilize a Capability Survey to identify the capabilities of each community to accomplish hazard mitigation. These include plans, policies, and programs such as long-term development, floodplain and zoning ordinances, staff, funding, and other resources for accomplishing mitigation. LAN will provide each planning team representative a worksheet to take back to key department personnel in their city or county to complete. The information collected will assist LAN and the planning team to gain a better understanding of relevant programs and policies in place that may be integrated into the overall mitigation strategy.

## **Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment**

Planning team members, stakeholders, and the public will be provided the opportunity to identify potential hazards that threaten the countywide area, and develop a hazard risk assessment that forms a factual basis for mitigation actions appropriate for their respective community. Information that will be collected includes historical data on past hazard events and how these events impact residents, property, and the overall community. Detailed hazard profiles will include information on the frequency, magnitude, location, and impact for each hazard in addition to estimating the probabilities for future hazard events.

## **Mitigation Goals and Actions**

Based on communities' capabilities, risk analysis, and identified hazards, the planning team will define long-term mitigation goals and develop a variety of corresponding mitigation actions that together constitute a mitigation strategy. Mitigation goals are general guidelines that explain what the community wants to achieve with the Plan. They are usually broad, policy-type statements that are long-term and represent visions for reducing or avoiding losses from the identified hazards. The strategy will be comprised of a comprehensive range of mitigation actions categorized by a) Local Plans and Regulations, b) Structural Projects, c) Natural Systems Protection and, d) Education and Awareness. Once established, the actions will be prioritized and a method and schedule for implementing, evaluating, and monitoring actions will be developed.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

It is important to distinguish between community officials who serve on the planning team and other stakeholders. While the core planning team is involved in all stages of the planning process, stakeholders provide input from various points of view in the community. Examples of stakeholders are business leaders, academia, and neighboring jurisdictions. Public participation is integral to mitigation planning as well; as such, outreach to the general public will be promoted and the public invited to attend a series of two public meetings during the planning process to provide input. They may participate and provide feedback as well by completing a Public

Survey. The Public Survey will be posted to the county's website and results included in the Draft Plan to the State and FEMA.

### **PLAN REVIEW, ADOPTION AND APPROVAL**

In accordance with federal planning requirements, the planning team must review the Draft Plan and provide comment. The Draft Plan may also be posted on the county's website for public comment prior to approval. Once approved by each community, it will be submitted for formal approval to the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) for review and edits. LAN will complete any revisions requested by TDEM. After review and approval, TDEM will submit the Plan to FEMA for review. After FEMA approval, all participating entities must formally adopt the Plan.

### **PLAN MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The planning team's responsibilities continue after Plan adoption - they continue through implementation. To ensure that the Plan remains current and relevant, the planning team will establish procedures and coordinate maintenance of the Plan. This includes developing a schedule for keeping the Plan current by monitoring, evaluating, and updating the Plan within a 5-year cycle. The Plan must also explain how each community will keep the public engaged in the process as mitigation actions are implemented.

The planning team should also establish tasks to complete following a disaster or hazard event, since mitigation priorities can change after a disaster and additional funding sources may become available for implementing critical projects to further reduce risk.

*Please direct any questions regarding the Plan to Cathy Meek, Project Manager for LAN at [CLMeek@lan-inc.com](mailto:CLMeek@lan-inc.com) or by cell at 512-420-6755.*