



Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments

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MR. STEPHEN MUELLER, CHAIRMAN
102 S. HICKORY STREET
SUMMERVILLE, SC 29483

Dear Boardmember:

BCDCOG staff seeks your input for an update to the Berkeley-Dorchester Hazard Mitigation Plan. This plan, first prepared in 2005, intends to reduce the loss of life and property to natural disasters in our region. Each local government in Berkeley and Dorchester counties adopted the bi-county Hazard Mitigation Plan with a local action plan in 2005. By doing so, each jurisdiction maintained its eligibility for grant funding that can make your community more resistant to natural disasters. Eligible projects include retrofitting structures, acquiring hazard-prone land, and managing floodplains.

Please find attached a survey that includes the goals of the 2005 Berkeley-Dorchester Hazard Mitigation Plan. We ask you, as an elected or appointed decision-maker for local government or public works, to prioritize these goals. With your help, BCDCOG staff and the planning committee we have convened can prepare a plan that better serves your jurisdiction. Key personnel – emergency preparedness directors, public administrators, planning directors, public works directors, public safety officers – as well as stakeholders from state agencies and non-profit groups constitute this planning committee.

Three basic components comprise the Berkeley-Dorchester Hazard Mitigation Plan: (1) a risk assessment, (2) goals and objectives, and (3) local action plans. BCDCOG staff is conducting the risk assessment. This is an update of hazards and disasters that have impacted our region, entered into GIS software, and coupled with a socioeconomic analysis to determine communities most susceptible to risk.

The planning committee will refine the plan's objectives based on your prioritization of goals. BCDCOG staff will work with planning committee members and other local government staff to create a local action plan for each jurisdiction.

This action plan addresses specific needs, resources, or communities at greatest risk to hazards. Identifying these is an important step to securing funding to better protect people and property through hazard mitigation grants and similar federal programs administered by FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency).

BCDCOG staff will submit the complete 2010 Berkeley-Dorchester Hazard Mitigation Plan to the State's Emergency Management Division, which will in turn forward it to FEMA for approval. Once federal

approval is received, we will bring the plan to your board or council for your review. We expect this step to occur mid-year 2010. Should your board or council choose to approve it thereafter, measures in your local action plan will be eligible for federal hazard mitigation funding.

We look forward to presenting the 2010 Berkeley-Dorchester Hazard Mitigation Plan to you next year! Meanwhile, please visit www.bcdkog.com for more information about the plan. A link on our home page takes you to resources including planning committee meeting minutes, hand-outs, and presentations, as well as the 2005 plan that we are now updating. Please do not hesitate to contact Ileana La Torre or me at BCDKOG for more information. We would be glad to assist you!

Regards,

Alec Brebner, AICP – Planning Director