



**Los Angeles County Public Works**  
**2020 Floodplain Management Plan Revision**  
1<sup>st</sup> Steering Committee (SC) Meeting  
Tuesday, June 25, 2019, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.



### Meeting Participants

Benavides, Marcela	PW Stormwater Planning
Blalock, John	Antelope Valley Resident
Chi, Iris	LA County Regional Planning
Duboff, Jessica	Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce
Ezell, Loni	PW Disaster Services Group
Ellis, Dr. Andre	California State University, Los Angeles
Ezieme, Okorie	Altadena Town Council
Garcia-Ruiz, Joselito	American Red Cross Los Angeles
Godoy, David	Los Angeles County Fire Department
Guerrero, Jolene	PW Community Government Relations Group
Hachiya, Patricia	LA County Regional Planning
Husted, Jack	PW Disaster Services Group
Moriasaku, Yoshiya	PW Building & Safety
Natoli, Gina	LA County Regional Planning
Scharf, Robert	PW Disaster Services Group
Sharpton, Debbie	Environmental Restoration Group
Shu, Susan	City of Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering
Walker, Neonika	PW Community Government Relations Group
Zargaryan, Araik	PW Stormwater Maintenance
Chen, Michael	Los Angeles County Public Works
Escobar, Eduardo	Los Angeles County Public Works
Tran, Larry	Los Angeles County Public Works
Win, Thu	Los Angeles County Public Works
Wood, Patricia	Los Angeles County Public Works
Artz, Ira	Tetra Tech, Inc.
Flaner, Rob	Tetra Tech, Inc.
Parker, Steve	Tetra Tech, Inc.

### Welcome and Introductions

Patricia Wood, Senior Civil Engineer, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, Stormwater Engineering Division, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Larry Tran is the Project Manager for this plan revision along with Tetra Tech, which is the consulting company performing the update. Patricia thanked everyone for taking the time to participate in this endeavor. She stated she is sure the citizens of Los Angeles County appreciate their participation very much. Larry Tran stated he is the Project Manager for the Floodplain Management Plan (FMP) update and will assist Patricia to oversee the County's participation in the National Flood Insurance Program. Larry facilitated introductions of the Steering



Committee (SC). Patricia ensured SC members that are on the conference call could hear the conversation. Larry Tran introduced Rob Flaner, Lead Project Planner, who will review the agenda.

## **Agenda**

Rob stated the SC will be going through the agenda today to give an explanation of what the SC will be doing.

## **Project Overview**

Rob Flaner stated this will be an update to the 2015 FMP. The plan was developed due to flooding issues in Los Angeles County. It is important to look at those issues to develop recommendations for addressing the issues, but the real driver for the plan is a federal program called the Community Rating System (CRS). The CRS is within the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), sponsored by the Federal Emergency Management System (FEMA). It is a voluntary program put out by FEMA and is a “carrot and stick” incentive-based program. Communities that participate agree to do minimum floodplain management standards in exchange for the federal government making floodplain management insurance available in the FEMA identified floodplains. Anyone who has a federally backed mortgage and lives in a floodplain or requires disaster assistance after an emergency, is required to have flood insurance as a condition of the mortgage or disaster assistance. This is all part of the NFIP. The CRS states if you go above and beyond the minimum standards, they will reward the property owner with a reduction in the cost of flood insurance in the participating communities.

Los Angeles County has been participating in the NFIP since 1990. It is a Class 7 Community, which means the County has accrued enough points on a positive point schedule. The more points the County accrues in the different levels of classification, there is a corresponding insurance premium reduction. Citizens in the unincorporated area of the county that are buying flood insurance are receiving a 15 percent discount on their insurance because of the CRS programs. The epicenter of the County’s CRS program is this plan. A lot of credit comes from this plan. This is driven by numerous other elements the County is getting credits for, and it’s a good thing!

The purpose of the plan is to coordinate the programmatic components of the CRS program and take a deep look at the flood problem in Los Angeles County. The CRS requires these plans to be updated every five years. The last plan was written in 2015, so although the plan is still current, it will be updated for 2020. This effort is attempting to get ahead of the curve and have the plan ready for adoption prior to the expiration date (sometime in the middle of 2020). We have a very prescript work plan that follows the CRS program. The CRS program is very definitive – it basically states “you shall do this” to be eligible for credits. The existing plan is very comprehensive. It has a component that is called the Repetitive Loss Area Analysis (RLAA) which examines the repetitive flood loss problem in Los Angeles County. The RLAA is being updated at the same time as the FMP. A framework, established during the last planning process, is called a Program for Public Information (PPI), for public involvement. The County has been deploying the PPI, and we will be updating the framework. We will be working with community relations and public relations, which are a key element of what we are doing. The FMP is a very comprehensive plan.

## **Workplan**

The workplan is tied to the CRS requirements and has a seven-phase scope of work which determines the process for this project.

- Phase one is to organize resources. CRS wants an oversight committee and the SC will be providing oversight to the process. There is diversity in the makeup of the SC, and you have all been hand



selected and chosen for a reason. CRS wants these plans to be overseen by not just the government, but non-government representation. We have pre-determined a committee that has a 50/50 ratio of governmental to non-governmental members. A governmental member has an association with permit authority of Los Angeles County, and has the ability to regulate codes and ordinances that are in effect in the county. A non-governmental member will not have any association with permit authority, even if working for a government agency, i.e., Army Corp of Engineers. This plan will be looking at permit authority as a capability. The mix of 18 people – nine government and nine non-government was pre-determined. Today, we will go through the ground rules, which is merely organizational. We have to set the charter and the order of what we will be doing over the next six to nine months, as we are developing the plan update. This all falls under organizing resources. We need to identify who we want to coordinate with and keep those agencies apprised of the SC's involvement.

- Phase two is the risk assessment. The risk assessment the most important part of the plan. Risk cannot be reduced if we don't know what risk is. As far as this plan, there is risk from a single hazard. This shouldn't be confused with a hazard mitigation plan or the safety element. Many of you are very aware of the hazard mitigation planning in response to AB 2140 and SB 379, but this is different because it doesn't address all hazards. This plan is focused purely on the flood hazard, although what we develop will likely be a key component in forming future updates to the Los Angeles County Hazard Mitigation Plan. This plan is separate from that. The risk assessment will focus on flood risk and an enhanced look at the repetitive flood loss properties. Repetitive loss has a very distinct definition. FEMA has identified certain properties within the unincorporated area of Los Angeles county based upon their loss history. If a property owner has had two or more claims of more than \$1,000 paid by the NFIP within a rolling ten-year period, they have a repetitive loss property. This plan's risk assessment will look deeper at where those properties are and why they are getting repetitive claims. We did this last time and will be updating that element.
- Phase three is public information. CRS wants all phases of this plan to be open to the public. Today's meeting was not advertised as a public meeting because we are still organizing, but all subsequent SC meetings from here on out will be advertised and open to the public. It is pretty rare that we get public members attending the meetings, but it is possible, and we encourage it. We will have a public outreach strategy that you will help inform. The SC will determine how to engage the public as we are updating this plan. We are targeting two phases; the first early in the process to engage the public perceptions of the flood risk, and the second is later toward the end of the process when we present the draft plan.
- Phase four is goal setting. The plan has goals and objectives, a mission statement. We want to make sure they are still relevant. We will look at those and adjust them accordingly.
- Phase five is plan maintenance. CRS is very prescript in that it wants progress reporting. The County needs to review every year on how it's going to review the plan and make recommendations.
- Phase six is writing the document. The plan will be assembled and go through a series of reviews. The first review will be the SC. The SC will do an internal review as the oversight committee. You will be advising the County on changes, additions or deletions that you would like to see. The County will consider those. Once the County approves the internal review draft, that draft is made



available to the public for review. We have to have an extensive public engagement process with the draft plan. We have to have a minimum two-week public comment period.

- Phase seven is submit the plan. Finally, we submit the plan. It doesn't go to FEMA, it goes to the program coordination contractor, called the ISO, the Insurance Services Office that administers the program for FEMA, and they conduct a technical review by a technical reviewer who reviews every plan in the country as it pertains to CRS. We have to fill out a crosswalk and provide the ten steps and the elements – it is a very arduous process. Hopefully we get a good score. CRS classification breaks are 500 points per class. The maximum points you can get for this plan is 500 points. The plan by itself could generate enough credit to improve the County by one class. The County's current points were over 400 last time. We hope to keep that and possibly increase that credit.

This is what we want to do to have a draft plan ready for the political process and adoption by late spring, 2020. The next nine to twelve months you will be actively involved in this process. When we set up the charter today and set up a standard meeting date and time, probably once a month where the SC will convene, and the Core Planning Team (CPT) will present you with factors that we need to address and milestones that we need to complete. You will be making decisions. This is why we have to have a charter.

### **Important Milestones**

Important milestones that we have are we have to get the risk assessment ready. We have already started with a data mine, looking at new data. We want to see if the flood risk has changed. I can tell you that it did, because flood risk always changes. When you look at risk, defined as probability times impact, the impacts are on people, property, the economy and the environment. We measure impacts in monetary value, i.e., if your monetary value increases your risk increases. Just by the nature of property values increasing in the last five years, our risk has increased. But, did our risk increase because we have new hazard data that showed new hazard data that shows new buildings at risk? Do we have new data that says the flood risk is deeper, more intense? What about the impact from climate change? We have new data sets now that look at the impacts from sea level rise. We have a lot of new data sets that we can say with this newer data, the flood risk has changed. And that is one of the required components. We have to quantify that change and explain why. Is it purely because valuation changed and that is it? Or did the extent and location of the hazard change? Did the depths or velocity change?

Did we have a fire, or not, or what else happened? We will be looking at other sources of flooding, i.e., coastal flooding, potential impacts of a tsunami, which is a flood. Flood is clearly defined as overland water from any source. When you look at floodplains we want to look at all the potential sources. That is where repetitive loss analysis is interesting. There are 54 or 55 repetitive loss properties in Los Angeles County. When you look at the majority of these properties the majority of them are not in a mapped floodplain. Why do we have properties outside the mapped area that have had multiple repetitive loss properties claims? We will try to identify this. Most of these are in fire impact areas. And, flooding happens outside of mapped floodplains because FEMA doesn't map everything. So, when we look at our milestones, the big important ones are: (1) the risk assessment, because that is going to trigger when we can do the first phase of the outreach; (2) the data we want to share with the public first. Once we do the public outreach we will get input from the public that the SC will take into account. There will be a survey where there will be survey results where the SC can see what the public thinks about these problems; (3) then we can look at our goals and objectives and see if they are appropriate based on that risk. This is an important milestone – the outreach is very important; (4) assembling the draft plan and getting the draft to point



where the SC feels it has all the proper components. This is where the make up and diversity of the SC is important. We want perspective from multiple angles; once approved and deemed ready by the County we will do a final public outreach on the plan. This is the final milestone where we are ready to get the plan scored and reviewed; and then once that happens, the plan will go for adoption by the County. Based on this, are there any questions on what we are trying to accomplish here? A question asked was is there an adaptive capacity requirement or will you look for any adaptation as a result of flood risk? Great question! I guess that is to be determined. If this was a hazard mitigation plan, we would have no choice because SB 379 requires a look at adaptive capacity. I think we will have to seek direction from this committee. Adaptive capacity means, what is the County's capacity to adapt to future conditions? Sea level rise data is a future projection and we know flood risk is going to increase because the hydrograph is changing. This plan will address possible impacts to the flood hazard from climate change because you get extra CRS credit for addressing climate change, and we want to get as much CRS credit as we can. It is the obvious next step if we are going to be looking at the potential increase in risk from future conditions to look at what the County's adaptive capacity is to deal with those impacts. That is an enhancement over the last plan. The last plan did not include this. Tetra Tech has a lot of experience doing hazard mitigation plans in the state of California in compliance with SB 379, which requires this. We have data tables and approaches for doing that capability assessment for adaptive capacity. At this point in time that is to be determined. The plan will be set up where this could easily be done, but we would seek input from the SC on expanding the core capability assessment to take a look at that. The question was asked to get the County to start thinking about this and how to leverage the information gathering that everyone is doing to the safety element. What is the deadline for that? The State wants something Board approved by January 1, 2022. We are just starting to talk about this now. A core capabilities assessment could be done by adding a series of questions and rank whether the County is high, medium or low on the capability. The crosswalk Tetra Tech created is about 27 questions. For a mitigation plan, the deadline was January 1, 2018. The State of California, who is implementing this has still not come up with the review requirements. This planning effort needs to coordinate with the general plan and safety element and these types of plans. The timing is appropriate. I will provide the adaptive capacity table to the County to take a look at.

### **SC Charter**

The next item on our agenda is development of a SC charter. CRS wants all phases of the process to be open to the public. The SC is not a political body. The project needs to be organized and we need a protocol to run the meetings. Public meetings and opportunities to attend meetings and workshops will be advertised to the entire community. A handout was provided to the attendees of the previous charter from the 2015 planning process.

SC Role: First thing on the charter is the SC's role. The SC is an advisory body. The County is able to accept the direction of the SC or not. It is the County's choice.

SC Chair and Vice Chair: The SC needs to have a chair to assist in organizing the meetings, address the public, keeping the meetings moving forward, and the continuation of discussion topics. The chair has no other responsibilities for the project but to keep the meetings moving forward and provide direction. Tetra Tech will provide agendas and meeting summaries. The County would like the SC chair to be a member of the County Department of Public Works. We have not appointed one as of yet. The chair must be one of the 18 SC members. The County would like Patricia Wood to serve as the chair of the SC. Rob asked if there were any issues with Patricia being the chair and there were none. There is a need for a vice-chair, in case the chair is not available. Patricia will attend and serve as chair at the public meetings. The vice-chair can be any person from the SC (not under the County member requirement).



Rob asked if there was anyone in the room that would like to be designated as the vice-chair. Gina Natoli, from Los Angeles County Regional Planning, agreed to serve as the vice-chair. The charter will be finalized and posted on the FMP website, once developed.

Quorum: We need to establish a quorum for the decision-making process. There are 18 members on the SC, fifty percent non-governmental and fifty percent governmental. Typically, a quorum would be fifty percent plus one of the voting members. We have to be able to make sure we can get ten voting members at each meeting (no fewer than five and no more than eight meetings). We can choose a lower number if the SC agrees to. Does the SC think we can meet the requirement, or do we need to lower the quorum number? We can also use alternates as voting members. Alternates can either be completely interchangeable or acting as a proxy. If we designate alternates we need to know who they are, so we can send them the meeting summary and other meeting documents to keep abreast of what is going on throughout the process. The proxy approach requires regular communication between the primary and alternate. Interchangeable alternates vote how they feel, and it is accepted as valid. The question of whether the quorum can be met arose and the SC agreed that during the last process there was never an issue of meeting the quorum. The SC agreed to stick with fifty percent plus one as the quorum. There are eight government alternates and three non-government alternates already designated. Anything that needs to be voted requires minimum 10 votes (50%+1). There will be one vote per representation during voting. The SC was given a two-week period to assign an alternate and provide the name, agency and contact information to Larry. It was decided alternates have full voting rights when they are present, not voting by proxy.

Decision Making: Decision making will be made through consensus first, and if that cannot be reached, through a majority vote. Anytime a SC member wants a dissenting opinion during a meeting, we will record that in the summary. Rob asked if there were any issues with the voting procedures and there were none. All recommendations will be recorded in the meeting summaries and the summaries will be posted on the FMP website. We will try to create meeting summaries at least two weeks following the meeting. The summaries will go through an internal review by the CPT and once approved will be posted.

Public Involvement: The SC will need a spokesperson. In 2015 the County Public Information Officer (PIO) was the spokesperson. Rob asked if a PIO was present. The County PIO and a back up were present and will serve as such during the planning process.

Standard Meeting Date and Time: We need to determine a standard meeting date and time, so the meeting can be advertised to the public on the website. We may need to change the venue, depending on the dates and times. Rob asked which is best, morning or afternoon meetings. The SC stated no Mondays or Fridays for the meetings. Gina, Vice Chair, stated Wednesday morning were the best for her. Rob stated generally the meetings are two hours. The second Wednesday of every month from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. was suggested. A question asked was if this applies to the next meeting and Rob stated the next meeting will be in August since we are so close to the second week in July. It was agreed the meetings will be on the second Wednesday of every month from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. with the next meeting on August 14, 2019. A question was asked if the alternate members can be changed. Rob stated yes, if the change is made at least two weeks before the next meeting.

Meeting Attendance: Attendance will be addressed if a member or alternate misses two consecutive meetings. If an issue arises (sick, etc.) please let someone know. A question asked was how long will the meetings be taking place? Rob stated the meetings will last no longer than February 2020. The holiday season is always tough to get members at meetings, we may skip the December meeting.



Public Involvement: Rob stated the last item to cover is public involvement. We need to have the public comment protocol written in the charter, i.e., how much speaking time do they get, any compliance with the Brown Act, etc. Is there a standard public comment protocol the County uses with the Board of Commissioners meetings? Gina replied yes and recommended the protocol used at the Board of Supervisor meetings. The public comment period is at the beginning of the meetings after the general introduction and approval of minutes before the business portion of the meeting begins to avoid the public talking about the agenda items. During agenda items, you are not supposed to talk about agenda items afterward's during public comment. The public comment period is strictly for items not on the agenda for which the committee would have some oversight. It would be a limit of either two or three minutes each. It is up to the body to determine limits of time per person and overall length of time for public comment. You would not have five people show up and one person speak for 15 minutes. The time period may be adjusted by the chair and the reviewing body based on the complexity of the agenda and the number of speakers. Rob asked if there is latitude for the chair to determine there will be no public comments due to the agenda? Gina stated yes, but as a hearing officer, if public members take the time to come to the meeting to provide comment, it is better to give them time to speak. During public comment period, the public may speak about anything, whether on or not on the agenda. Public comments can also be made during the time an item is being discussed. That may be the better way to address this. The SC would discuss an item and then ask if there is any public comment on the item. Rob asked Gina if she would review the proposed language regarding public involvement at SC meetings in the charter and make edits so that is parallels what is done at County board meetings. She stated yes and said she would also run it by the County Counsel. Rob stated there will be a sign in sheet for public members and we will make sure this information is in the charter by putting whatever Gina recommends. SC members will see the final charter at the next meeting – it will be a handout. The last thing is courtesy.

Courtesy: Obviously, we should all give courtesy to each other.

Personal Contact Information: We will have a roster of the steering committee in the charter. Is there anyone, including non-governmental members, who has a problem with having their contact information on the roster on the charter? No one replied they have a problem with that. Changes can be made during the planning process if things change.

The charter doesn't take an action at this time. We will finalize the charter and it must be posted on the FMP website prior to the next meeting. You will hear the mention of the core planning team. The core planning team is Tetra Tech staff and Larry, Patricia, Eduardo – the back row of people from the County. A statement was made that the use of County of Los Angeles Public Works is not correct. Direction from the department prescribes: Los Angeles County Public Works.

### **Plan Review**

Rob stated the SC has homework. Each SC member will be sent a link to the 2015 FMP on the Los Angeles County Public Works website to review prior to the next meeting. Familiarize yourself with the plan, the layout, the core capabilities, etc. The layout of the plan follows the CRS script, but this is an update and we have the ability to change the format as needed. Review the handout with the mission statement and goals and objectives from the last plan. Do these support the general plan goals and objects? Rob asked Gina to please review this with that in mind. We will send other links for the Hazard Mitigation Plan with a flood section to review, as well as the Safety Element of the General Plan. Your homework is to look at the goals and objective for the hazard mitigation plan and are they consistent with the ones in the 2015 FMP. We have the opportunity to change these and create synergy across the County's plans. At the next meeting, the SC will be cross referencing the goals for the HMP and the FMP to determine any changes



that need to be made to the goals and objectives in the 2020 FMP. Please review the 2015 FMP and HMP prior to the next meeting. Ira asked SC members to please mute your phones during the meetings because the recording microphone will pick up that background noise.

### **Public Outreach**

Beginning at the next meeting, everything we do will be part of the public outreach (separate from the PPI section). We have to conduct public outreach and develop a public strategy as it pertains to this planning effort. What are our current public outreach methods because we want people to come to these meetings. The outreach can be put on the website, and social media. A recommendation was made to check if we can put the information out on the Board of Supervisors (BOS) newsletters. A comment was that the BOS doesn't send out newsletters regularly, but when a specific item of interest is present, i.e. wildland fires. First thing we need to do is a press release that the FMP update has begun. Include that there is an oversight committee, the dates and times of the meetings, etc. Then when the meeting date is closer, a social media press blast about the meeting itself. A suggestion was to put an announcement on the NFIP website about the project for people that opt into receiving information from the website. Information could be sent via email lists for people affected by certain hazards in the county, i.e., the Woolsey Fire. We have a lot of representation here that have their own media access points that can post information about the update and meetings. We have to do our initial outreach for the Repetitive Loss Area Analysis (RLAA). We can add the FMP update information to the letter that must be sent out. An actual separate page for the 2020 FMP update on the website can be set up. The County will find out the best way to utilize the website for the FMP update. We have to be compliant with all of our outreach for the update. Google has an automatic translation page that we can use. For the surveys we need real translations – it is a general policy we do this for the demographic of the different neighborhoods. We use Survey Monkey for surveys and they do not have any translation services. It was mentioned that the County is in the process of translating the Homeowner's Guide for Flood and Debris Control into Spanish, Armenian, and Korean, aside from English. These are the primary languages in the County. Multi-languages are still in progress. In the previous process, did we know what the demographics were? No, we didn't, and we also didn't get much response from the surveys. We could use Census Block data to find the primary languages. Outreach strategy will be a bullet item on the agendas for the meetings about what is our outreach strategy. Short term a press release announcing the 2020 FMP update process needs to be released. Another suggestion is to reach out to the Town Councils to spread information on their website. Once we come up with a press release we will share it with everyone. We need to make sure the website is up and running because it will be the one-stop-shop for the update process. A suggestion was to set up a project page within Facebook and create an event for the update of the plan, that will also announce the FMP update webpage. We need to get more coverage on the this. The Waterworks Districts have a Nextdoor account that goes to Malibu, Palos Verde, etc., and we could possibly use it to advertise. Next Door is really good because it goes to homeowners' associations, which is incredible access. Sounds like a game-plan for the outreach process. We have a gap between now and August to get information out. Action items are your homework. Review three plans – the Safety Element, the 2015 FMP and the HMP, goals and objectives, of each of those. Find consistencies in them and be prepared to compare them. On the outreach side we will coordinate with the SC for public outreach and get the website set up. Any questions? There were no questions.

### **Action Items**

- SC Meeting Agendas will be sent out two weeks prior to each meeting.





- SC Meetings will take place on the second Wednesday of each month from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The meeting location is to be determined. The next SC meeting will be August 14, 2019.
- SC Members to review the following plans prior to the next meeting. SC members should focus on the mission statement, goals and objectives of each plan to see if they align, and if not, how are they different. Links are as follows:
  - 2015 Floodplain Management Plan  
<https://dpw.lacounty.gov/wmd/nfip/FMP/draftFMP.aspx>
  - 2014 All-Hazards Mitigation Plan  
<https://ceo.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/OEM/hazmitgplan.pdf>
  - 2014 Los Angeles County General Plan Chapter 12: Safety Element  
[http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp\\_2035\\_Chapter12\\_2014.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/project/gp_2035_Chapter12_2014.pdf)
- SC members have two weeks to designate alternates.
- The SC Charter will be finalized and provided as a hand-out at the next SC meeting.

**Next Meeting Date**

- The next SC meeting date will be August 14, 2019 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The meeting location is to be determined.

**Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 12:29 p.m.