

Flood Control Committee

July 17, 2013

The **Flood Control Committee** met Wednesday, July 17, 2013, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Conference Room. Present were Committee Members John Hollowell, Jerry Partridge, Susanne Galbraith, and Dwayne Andrews. Also present were Floodplain Administrator Sam Malenovsky, Director of Public Works Scott Gray and Recorder HR/Payroll Officer Billie Burkhalter.

1. Recommend a Resolution of Intent to Establish a PPI and a PPI Committee (Program for Public Information)

*** Committee Member Galbraith moved to recommend a Resolution of Intent to Establish a Program for Public Information and a Program for Public Information Committee, seconded by Committee Member Andrews.*

Administrator Malenovsky informed the Committee that establishing a PPI (Program for Public Information) will increase Miles City's CRS (Community Rating System) points to help lower flood insurance premiums. The City can also obtain extra bonus points with the PPI by doing extra activities; for example, putting a flyer together notifying people about flood plain awareness. The PPI could be comprised of the Flood Plain Manager, Public Works Director, real-estate agents, lenders, a Public Information Officer and other key people from the community. Committee Member Galbraith stated she felt that someone from the Flood Control Committee should be involved in the PPI. Committee Member Andrews was in agreement. Administrator Malenovsky explained that the documentation for developing a PPI does specify that the participants should be flood plain residents, emergency disaster responders (Red Cross or Salvation Army), utility companies, Chamber of Commerce, builders, contractors, developers, real-estate agents, lenders, major employers and other government agencies outside the community. The committee needs to be comprised of at least five people, with half of the members being from outside local government.

Administrator Malenovsky stated that the PPI Committee would not be making decisions and would not be giving out information on floodplain projects. This committee would be getting floodplain information out to the general public.

Committee Member Andrews stated the most critical thing that has to be dealt with is the dike assessment and how it is handled. He believes the PPI could be part of this but the outreach that goes to the community is going to be integral to the success of the study. Public information is critical to get people involved and understand what the City is doing. It would make more sense to him to have this go hand in hand with the study and be used in a broader sense.

Administrator Malenovsky stated the problem is that, until a dike/levy gets built, over 80% of residences are in the floodplain, and they are going to start paying very high insurance premiums. The dike assessment is not going to give them any relief on flood insurance right now, but the PPI will. With the activities being completed by the PPI, it could potentially save on flood insurance premiums. Administrator Malenovsky stressed that the PPI needs to be about "flood awareness" to get the CRS points.

Administrator Malenovsky questioned if the Committee would want her to request letters of interest from people for the PPI Committee. The Committee was in agreement for her to do this, but also to keep the Flood Committee involved. Committee Member Andrews volunteered to be on the Committee, as he has worked as a Public Information Officer for ten years as a professional.

*** On original motion and on roll call vote motion passed unanimously, 4-0.*

2. Requests of Citizens

Dorothy Armstrong, 1018 S. Stacey, stated when Administrator Malenovsky spoke at a previous Council meeting, she had stated that October 1st there would be a change in premiums. Mrs. Armstrong questioned if this was information that was going to be sent out to the public, as this change in premiums could drastically affect someone financially who is purchasing a house in August. Administrator Malenovsky advised that she is currently working on a letter to be distributed to insurance agents and would recommend that anyone who is purchasing property should be instructed to speak with their insurance agent. Mrs. Armstrong requested Administrator Malenovsky distribute this letter as quickly as possible.

3. Adjournment

*** Committee Member Partridge moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Committee Member Andrews and passed unanimously, 4-0.*

There being no further business, the Committee adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Flood Control Committee Chairperson


Billie D. Burkhalter, Recorder


John Hollowell, Chairperson

FLOOD CONTROL MEETING AGENDA

DATE: July 17, 2013 - Wednesday

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

PLACE: City Hall Conference Room

1. Recommend a Resolution of Intent to Establish a PPI and a PPI Committee (Program for Public Information)
3. Adjournment

Public comment on any public matter that is not on the agenda of this meeting can be presented under "Request of Citizens" provided it is within the jurisdiction of the City to address. Public comment will be entered into the minutes of this meeting. The City Council cannot take any action on a matter unless notice of the matter has been made on an agenda and an opportunity for public comment has been allowed on the matter. Public matter does not include contested cases and other adjudicative proceedings.

#3618



Developing a Program for Public Information

The Program for Public Information is an ongoing public information effort to design and transmit the messages determined to be most important to the community. To develop a PPI, the community establishes a committee that assesses the local public information needs, designs the program based on those needs, monitors implementation of outreach projects, and performs an annual evaluation of their effectiveness. There are seven parts to preparing a PPI.

1. The PPI Committee

The community's Program for Public Information must be developed by a committee. The PPI committee is responsible for:

- Assessing the community's public information needs,
- Determining the appropriate messages to meet those needs,
- Planning the ways in which the community and its stakeholders can implement outreach projects to convey the messages, and
- Evaluating progress and making revisions as needed.

This process resembles the floodplain management planning process that is described and credited under CRS Activity 510. The PPI Committee and the 510 planning team could be the same. The community should also review Activity 370 – Flood Insurance Promotion which credits a similar planning committee. If the community is interested in either 510 or 370 credit, then the committee should be designed so that it will qualify for the other activities as well.

Membership: The committee must have members from both inside and outside the local government. The number of participants and their identities are determined by the community, but should not be fewer than three people. At least half of the members must be from outside the local government, especially stakeholders and other organizations that conduct their own public information activities.

Example local government participants:

- Floodplain manager
- Emergency manager
- Public information officer
- Planning department representative
- Code enforcement or building department representative
- Public works, drainage maintenance, regional flood district representative.

Stakeholders: The more often a message is received from different sources, the more likely it is that the desired action or behavior will take place. For this reason, the CRS encourages the education and engagement of groups and people outside the local government (stakeholders) in planning and conducting outreach projects.

At least one-half of the members of the PPI committee must be representatives from outside the local government. These could be members of the public, representatives of key community organizations, and/or agencies and organizations that will likely implement recommended outreach projects.

Example stakeholder participants:

- Floodplain resident(s)
- Emergency/disaster responders, e.g., Red Cross, Salvation Army
- Utility companies
- Chamber of commerce/business organization
- Builders/developers/contractors trade association
- Environmental organizations, "Friends of the River," etc.
- Real estate agents
- Insurance agencies
- Major employer(s)

Bonus points are provided for outreach projects that are carried out in whole or in part by stakeholders, under element STK, described on page 8.

2. Needs Assessment

Before it can develop a local program for raising public awareness, the committee must identify the community's public information needs. That is, it identifies and catalogs what populations, neighborhoods, floodplain areas, etc., need information about the flood hazard and floodplain resources and functions. The committee also considers what information is already being conveyed to its residents and whether that information is effectively informing people and fostering appropriate action.

The needs assessment can be prepared by staff, but the committee as a whole needs to review it.

Target areas: The first step in the needs assessment is to complete the CRS self-assessment described in Section 240 of the *CRS Coordinator's Manual*. This is an on-line tool that can help identify target areas. Target areas are neighborhoods, districts, or other areas of the community with similar flooding, building, and population characteristics. It may be useful to assign names or labels to the areas, and some of them may be grouped together if they overlap or have the same characteristics. The CRS self-assessment can be skipped if the community's floodplain management or hazard mitigation plan identify target areas that meet these criteria.

Example target areas

- Developed parts of the Special Flood Hazard Area
- The downtown business district
- Repetitive loss areas
- An area subject to an unmapped special hazard, such as sinkholes or ice jams
- An area protected by a levee
- Beachfront hotels and rental units
- A floodprone trailer park

Target audiences: For each Target Area, the PPI committee should consider who lives, works, or visits there. This is the “target audience” for public information needs in that area (there may be more than one target audience in each area). The characteristics of those people will influence the type of public information they need and how it should be delivered. The list below gives some examples of demographic and other characteristics that may be pertinent.

Example target audiences:

- Full-time residents
- Snowbirds and part-time residents
- Renters
- Businesses
- Tourists
- Non-English-speakers
- Low-income families
- Elderly or infirm

Current projects: For each target audience, the committee should identify any public information activities that are currently discussing the flood hazard or the value of the local natural floodplain functions. Who else is conveying similar messages to these people?

Examples of organizations and agencies to check:

- The community’s public information officer
- The public works or drainage maintenance office
- The parks and recreation office
- The county emergency manager
- The office responsible for the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit
- Regional planning agency or council of governments
- Regional or metropolitan sewer or flood control district
- State NFIP Coordinator
- Local businesses, especially insurance agencies and banks
- Utility companies
- Environmental and recreational organizations (e.g., Isaac Walton League, Audubon Society)
- Homeowner/Neighborhood associations
- Area newspapers
- Area radio and television stations

The committee needs to list the organizations or agencies that are sending the messages and what the messages are. This job can be easier if these kinds of organizations are invited to be on the PPI committee and if members share the workload.

3. Messages

For each target audience, the PPI committee should determine what public information message is needed, considering the hazards and/or floodplain functions/resources present in the target area, the characteristics of the audience, and other factors as appropriate.

Six broad messages are particularly important to the CRS (see Table 2 on page 3). At least one message must be on flood insurance. The PPI committee may develop others as appropriate for its target audiences. The additional messages designated by the PPI committee must be related to flooding, drainage, stormwater, natural floodplain functions, or flood-related hazards.

Or, the committee may decide to devote more attention to a particular aspect of one or more of the six listed CRS messages. For example, if the community's assessment indicates that there is habitat suitable for endangered species within a target area, then the committee may elect to send additional, more detailed messages about that issue, pursuant to CRS topic #6 (protect natural floodplain functions).

Examples of messages are shown in Table 4 on page 8. In designing each outreach project, the PPI committee will want to convert these broad messages into more specific language, as appropriate.

Outcomes: For each message, the committee needs to determine what outcome it would like to see. Some guidance on outcomes:

- Outcomes are what you'd like to see happen, such as a reduction in flood deaths or an increase in the number of people who know they live in a hazard area.
- Outcomes determine whether you are making progress, whether people are doing the right thing. They are the basis for the bonus credit ACT – Action results, and they should be used by the committee to determine which projects to continue and which ones to modify or stop because the messages are not producing the desired outcome.
- Outcomes need to be objective, observable and measurable.
- Outcomes are not “outputs,” like “distribute 10,000 flyers” or talk to “100 homeowners.”
- Examples of outcomes are in Table 4, page 8.

4. Projects

Once the needed messages and desired outcomes have been agreed upon, the PPI committee should consider what media, disseminated through what specific projects, would best convey the message(s) to the target audience(s). For each message, the PPI document lists the projects, who will do them and when. The projects are then implemented over the following year.


Examples of projects are listed in Table 5 on page 9.

5. Coordination

A Program for Public Information should not address only outreach projects. It should look at all the activities a community should pursue to inform people and motivate them to protect themselves, buy insurance, and protect natural floodplain functions. The CRS credits other public information work besides 330 – Outreach Projects. It has been proposed that the 2012 *CRS Coordinator's Manual* provide extra credit in some activities, if they are included in the PPI:

- Activity 320 – Map Information Service: The priority messages identified in the PPI should be conveyed when inquiries are made. The step 2 Needs Assessment may identify areas that should be mapped and included in the map information service.
- Activity 340 – Hazard Disclosure: If real estate agencies are represented on the PPI committee and their disclosure practice(s) and informational brochures are reviewed in the PPI, then extra credit is provided.
- Activity 350 – Flood Protection Information: As with outreach projects, credit for the website (WEB) is based on the number of topics covered. If there is a PPI, the community can receive additional credit for covering up to ten topics, instead of just six. The WEB credit for information on flood warning is also increased if it is coordinated with other warning messages in the PPI.
- Activity 360 – Flood Protection Assistance: The credits for the first three elements, property protection advice (PPA), advice after a site visit (PPV), and financial assistance advice (FAA) can all be increased if the services are included in the PPI.
- Activity 370 – Flood Insurance Promotion: It is recommended that the plan to improve insurance coverage be part of the PPI and be prepared by the same committee, provided that the committee includes the following, which are prerequisites for 370 credit:
 1. One or more elected officials from the community or the designated staff representative of an elected official (i.e., a person who works directly for the elected official, such as an administrative assistant to a council member);
 2. The community's floodplain management office;
 3. The community's public information office or someone else from the local government experienced and involved with public information or education (a representative of the local schools would qualify where there is no public information staff);
 4. Local insurance agencies; and
 5. Local lending institutions.
- Activity 510 – Floodplain Management Planning: Some communities have prepared public information program strategies (OPS) as part of their floodplain management or hazard mitigation plans. Both PPI and floodplain management planning (FMP) provide credit for having committees and the same committee can fulfill both activities' credit criteria.

Note that to receive the extra PPI credit, these activities would need to be based on appropriate messages, which have desired outcomes discussed in the PPI. The activities would also need to be evaluated by the committee and reviewed in the annual report (see section 7).

- Activity 540 – Drainage System Maintenance provides extra credit for publicizing dumping regulations. The PPI could include this message (CRS topic 4) and determine the best way to disseminate it.
- Activity 610 – Flood Warning and Response requires an outreach project for warning credit. The PPI could include this message (CRS topic 3) and determine the best way to disseminate it.
-  - Activity 620 – Levees provides extra credit for an outreach project to the residents protected by a levee. This is in addition to credit for a project under Activity 330. The projects would receive the PPI bonus credits if they were included in the PPI.
- Activity 630 – Dams: As with 610, there is a prerequisite for publicizing the threat of a dam failure. The PPI could include this message (CRS topic 3) and determine the best way to disseminate it.

6. The PPI Document

The committee's work needs to be recorded in a formal written document and adopted by the community's governing body. The PPI and the annual report can be stand-alone documents or they can be sections or chapters in a credited floodplain management plan and its annual report.

The PPI document need not be long and complicated. It could be fewer than 10 pages, as long as each of the items listed below is summarized. After the community completes the assessment of its public information needs, the PPI and its descriptive document could be completed in one or two meetings of the PPI committee.

The document must show that the community has incorporated the procedures and considerations described above in preparing its PPI. The PPI document that is submitted the first time the community requests PPI credit must include

1. A list of the members of the PPI committee and their affiliations. The committee must include stakeholders from outside the local government and the community.
2. A summary of the CRS self-assessment (Activity 240 or a similar summary from the community hazard mitigation plan) of the local flood hazard and the community's natural floodplain and coastal functions and resources. *[Note: This may be a report generated by the self-assessment – this is still under development.]*
3. A summary of the public information needs assessment, including the other public information activities currently being implemented within the community.
4. A list of the target audiences, the messages selected for each audience, and their desired outcomes.
5. A description of each outreach project intended to be carried out, who will do it, and when it will be done (see Table 5 on page 9).
6. If the community is applying for the PPI bonus credit for its flood response preparations credit, the FRP projects need to be listed, too.

7. If the community is requesting the PPI bonus credit for Activities 320, 340, 350, or 360, a discussion of how those activities are coordinated with the PPI and its projects. For example, if the committee identifies homeowners as a target audience and retrofitting their homes as a message, the PPI should describe how the library and website (Activity 350) will provide appropriate materials and information and what kind of advice staff should provide (Activity 360). *[We'll add some examples when we flesh out section 5.]*
8. If the community is using the PPI to qualify for credit under Activity 370, the 370 criteria need to be included. *[We'll develop a checklist for this when we flesh out section 5.]*
9. The process that will be followed to monitor and evaluate the public information projects, including a reporting procedure or other technique by which the PPI committee will make sure the projects are done (see section 7).

Items 4 and 5 can be done graphically. An example is Table 9. The pilot test PPI committees found this kind of approach helpful in determining which messages were appropriate for which audiences and which projects were best for which message.

Adoption: The document must achieve formal (official) status within the community, so that local government departments and offices will be aware of the public information efforts and cooperate. Ways to achieve official status could include

- Formal adoption by the community's governing board;
- Written acceptance as policy by the community's CEO;
- A letter from the community's counsel stating that the document is community policy; or
- Having the PPI Committee and process formally recognized in the community's floodplain management or hazard mitigation plan.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

As with all planning efforts, completion of the document is just the beginning. The projects need to be implemented, monitored, evaluated, and revised as needed. The PPI document needs to describe how the monitoring, evaluation and revision will be conducted (item 9 in the previous section).

The monitoring and evaluation must be conducted by the PPI committee. Staff can collect data and make recommendations, but for CRS credit, the committee must review progress and agree on any changes. The committee also needs to review and approve the annual evaluation report that is submitted to the governing body and to FEMA via the annual CRS recertification.

This work will be more effective if the committee meets several times during the year and monitors the implementation of each outreach project.

Evaluation report: There is no required report format, but the annual report must include the following items:

1. The target audiences and the messages and desired outcomes for each.
2. The projects in the PPI that were to convey the messages

3. Which projects were implemented
4. Why some projects were not implemented (if any)
5. Which desired outcomes were met
6. What should be changed (including what messages, outcomes, and projects should be dropped, and what new ones should be initiated)

Note that the community may use any 12-month period for its “public information year.” If there is a defined hurricane or flood season, for example, the public information schedule may be tied to that. At the end of that year, the committee would conduct its annual evaluation of the PPI, produce the annual report of that evaluation, and then submit the report along with its next annual CRS recertification package.

If this annual evaluation shows that a project has brought about desirable results or actions, then the CRS credit for the project is increased under element ACT.

The annual report could use the spreadsheet in Table 9, with added columns after each message, outcome, and project to note the status and recommendations for change.

Table 9. Program for Public Information Project Planning Spreadsheet

PPI Worksheet							
Target Audience	Message	Outcome	Project(s)	Assignment	Schedule	Stakeholder	
Floodplain residents	Msg 1. Is your house in the floodplain?	Increase in the number of map information inquiries	OP 3. Presentations to five neighborhood associations	Floodplain manager	Set up the five presentations by January 31	Neighborhood associations	
			OP 4. Presentation on cable TV	Floodplain manager and public information officer	Tape the first two presentations and use the best scenes	Cable TV company	
			OP 5. Mailing sent each year to residents of the SFHA	Floodplain manager and public information officer	Disseminate in May, before hurricane season		
	Msg 2. All residents in floodprone areas should have flood insurance	The total number of SFHA policies increases	OP 1. Brochure on flood insurance	Floodplain manager	Printed and displayed by Feb. 28		
			OP 2. Local insurance agents advise their clients	Insurance agency representative on the PPI committee	Explain at the March insurance association meeting	Insurance agencies	
			OP 3. Presentations to five neighborhood associations	See OP 3 above	See OP 3 above	See OP 3 above	
			OP 4. Presentation on cable TV	See OP 4 above	See OP 4 above	See OP 4 above	
			OP 5. Mailing sent each year to residents of the SFHA	See OP 5 above	See OP 5 above	See OP 5 above	
	Msg 3. Turn around, don't drown	Fewer reports of water rescues and police ticketing drivers who ignore barricades	OP 5. Mailing sent each year to residents of the SFHA	See OP 5 above	See OP 5 above		
	Msg 4.a. Don't dump in our streams and ditches	Drainage inspectors report a decrease in the amount of trash removed	OP 3. Presentations to five neighborhood associations OP 4. Presentation on cable TV	See OP 3 above See OP 4 above	See OP 3 above See OP 4 above	See OP 3 above See OP 4 above	