

## **Galveston Recovery Project**

### **Project Title: Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Plan**

#### **RECOVERY VALUE:**

##### **Goal:**

- To protect the health and welfare of the residents by improving emergency preparedness of the City staff and their ability to safely manage the City's emergency operations.

#### **Project Champion (TBD)**

#### **Background:**

The EOC is conveniently located within the police complex in the Criminal Justice Center at 601 54<sup>th</sup> Street and has been in operation in this location for almost three years.. The EOC consists of a large room with computers and communications connections, a conference room, and an office. The main purpose of the EOC is to communicate (with each other and with outside agencies) and to dispatch staff as needed.

According to the City's Emergency Operations Coordinator, the EOC is not operational on a daily basis; however, it is brought into operation when the City deems necessary. Under normal circumstances, the EOC is activated two to three times per year when the City is hosting a special event that brings large crowds to the island. However, the EOC is also used during storm events (i.e., Hurricane Ike) as a central command center for the City's emergency response teams and staff.

While the EOC has functioned well in times of police emergency, there have been some issues when it is used during storm-related emergency activations. Since the EOC is located near the bay, the building is susceptible to flooding during large scale storm events such as Hurricanes Ike and Rita. When the EOC is displaced, they relocate to the San Luis Hotel. There is an agreement between the City and the hotel that allows the EOC (including dispatch operations) to move to the hotel and set up operations in an area that has been wired and reconfigured to accommodate the EOC. The San Luis Hotel is on one of the highest points on the island and is less susceptible to flooding than other areas of the island. The relationship between the hotel and the City worked well during Hurricane Ike and the EOC was activated and operational during the entire event. The problem encountered by EOC staff during Hurricane Ike was that they lost their communications ability for a long stretch of time during and after the event which hampered operations considerably.

Once the storm had passed and the floodwater had receded, the EOC relocated operations back to their own facility and continued the emergency response work.

#### **Project Description:**

The community believes a new EOC should be constructed, which City staff could use as a center for their operations and would not have to be relocated during storms.

The city should investigate co-locating the EOC at or near the Galveston County Emergency Operations Center. Co-location with the county will provide a more

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collaborative environment and assist in interagency coordination. It would also provide sustainable power and communications during an incident and not require relocation. It would also allow emergency personnel to access the EOC facility when the island may not be accessible.

The city should consider providing enough space and resources to accommodate the EOC team during an activation. Due to the risks of flooding on a barrier island the EOC should be located on the mainland where communications and electrical utilities are more secure and the threat to life safety is less. The city should consider a mobile EOC for initial operations after a storm, and for use as a field incident command.

Of concern to the EOC Coordinator was the loss of communication within the City during Hurricane Ike. The City has received a grant to upgrade their radio system and is looking into other potential solutions to this issue. The City is in the process of purchasing a mobile "command center" for emergency situations. They were very concerned during the hurricane that none of their communications systems (cell phones, satellite phone, radios) were functional during the storm.

### **Summary of Project items:**

- Study the need for a new EOC.
- Perform an all hazards risk analysis to determine a practical site for the Emergency Operations Center
- Look into possible solutions to the loss of communications capabilities during storm events.

### **Action Steps: (Phases if needed)**

- Determine the need for a new and relocated EOC
- Find potential linkages between this project and other recovery projects within the City.
- Final design and engineering documents and permitting.
- Acquire easements and/or land for improvements.
- Construct/lease space for the new EOC.
- Secure communications capability during and post-emergency event.

### **Sustainable Opportunities:**

The construction of a new EOC would create a permanent facility from where emergency operations could be run and would allow critical staff to operate before during and after a storm.

### **Financial Considerations:**

Cost Estimate/Preliminary Cost \$ 0

Total Cost \$0,000

Funding Gap (\$ 0,000)

### **Potential Funding Sources:**

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Federal Grants (see <http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/government.shtm#2>)

- CDBG – Entitlement Grants (CFDA Number: 14.218)
- HMGP Grants (CFDA Number 97.039)
- Emergency Management Performance Grant (CFDA Number 97.042)
- Flood Mitigation Assistance Program (CFDA Number 97.029)
- Repetitive Flood Claims Programs (CFDA Number 97.092)
- Severe Repetitive Loss Pilot Program (CFDA Number 97.110)
- Community Disaster Loan Program (CFDA Number 97.03)
- Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program (CFDA Number 97.047)
- Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act
- FEMA Public Assistance Program (CFDA Number 97.036)

State of Texas Grants (see <http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/pages/grants.htm>)

State of Texas Governor's Division of Emergency Management (GDEM)

Orca Funds

Local Businesses

Local Residents

Tax Revenue