

Board of County Commissioners

Agenda Request

Date of Meeting: March 17, 2009

Date Submitted: March 10, 2009

To: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board

From: Benjamin H. Pingree, County Administrator
Timothy P. Barden, Assistant County Administrator

Subject: Request Board Approval to Apply for a Grant Through the Florida Department of Emergency Management Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)

Statement of Issue:

This agenda item requests Board approval to apply for a grant through the Florida Department of Emergency Management Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP).

Background:

The Florida Division of Emergency Management is pleased to announce the availability of Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funds as a result of the recent Presidential Disaster Declarations (**FEMA-1785-DR-FL**) in relation to Tropical Storm Fay, which made landfall in Wakulla County in August, 2008. The HMGP is authorized by Section 404 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief Act and is offered to assist communities in implementing mitigation measures designed to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from natural hazards and their effects. The amount of funding available to the state is based on 15% of the total federal disaster assistance for these events. The grant costs are shared with a 75% federally funded contribution and a 25% match funding requirement. A portion of the match funding might be able to be in-kind. The grant program guidelines and requirements as well as application are attached for your review (Attachment #1 & #2). **The application period must be posted marked prior to April 6, 2009.**

Analysis

The purpose of the funding for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) is to provide funding to communities to mitigate damage to persons and property as a result of natural hazards. Due to the fact that Wakulla County is a coastal community located on the Gulf of Mexico, the most common natural hazard would be flooding and other damages related to hurricanes and other storm events. This program is designed to provide projects that will provide protection for public and private property as a result of these storm events. In the case of Wakulla County any project that sought funding would have to be related to damage incurred due to Tropical Storm Fay.

The following sections will be highlights from the grant guidelines that speak to the eligibility of projects, minimum criteria to apply and projects that will not be considered for funding through this program.

Eligible projects (but are not limited to):

- a. Acquisition or relocation of hazard prone structures;
- b. Retrofitting of existing buildings and facilities that will result in increased protection from hazards;
- c. Elevation of flood prone structures;
- d. Infrastructure protection measures;
- e. Stormwater management improvements;
- f. Minor structure flood control projects; and
- g. Retrofitting of existing buildings and facilities for shelters.

Minimum criteria to be considered for funding:

- a. Conform to the Florida Hazard Mitigation Plan and the respective community's Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS);
- b. Conform to the funding priorities for the disaster as established in the respective community's LMS governing the project;
- c. Demonstrate cost-effectiveness;
- d. Is technically feasible;
- e. Provide a beneficial impact upon the designated disaster area;
- f. Conform to all applicable environmental laws and regulations and Executive Orders;
- g. Solve a problem independently or constitutes a functional part of a solution;
- h. Is in an National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) participating community that is not on probation or have been suspended from the NFIP; and
- i. Meet all applicable State and local codes and standards.

Project that will not be considered for funding are as follows:

- a. Generators-unless they are an integral part of a larger eligible project;
- b. Construction of new facilities – *however*, the cost associated with above code upgrades can be considered;
- c. Equipment such as emergency pumps, vehicles and communication;
- d. Tree removal;
- e. Projects already in progress.

Project Recommendation:

Staff met to discuss projects that would be eligible for this grant opportunity. Included in those meeting were Cleve Fleming and Brent Pell from Public Works, Dale Dransfield from Eutaw Utilities, the County's utility consultant, Eva Thorpe, the Grants Coordinator and Tim Barden, the Assistant County Administrator as well as correspondence with Scott Nelson, Wakulla County's Emergency Management Director.

From this meeting, it was determined that the project that would be the most eligible and attractive for this funding would be a multi-phase project that would include a storm water study, the purchase of flood prone lots, and a storm water solution implementation in the Wakulla Gardens Subdivision. During storm events, some roads in Wakulla Gardens are impassible. As was since during Tropical Storm Fay, not only were residents unable to reach their homes and property, but also fire, police and other emergency personnel were unable to navigate these flooded roads. This is a potential life threatening situation for the residents of this subdivision. The project that is recommended would help mitigate this severely dangerous storm water issue during these storm events and can be handled in three (3) phases. The project phases are outlined below:

Phase 1: Flood Mitigation storm water study plan development. In this phase, we will seek to have the area studied and come up with a solution plan to include engineering design. The estimated cost is anticipated to be around \$75,000.

Phase 2: Purchase of flood prone properties needed to implement the plan developed in Phase 1. Estimated cost of this process is \$50,000.

Phase 3: Construction of the storm water solution. Once the properties are purchased, the solution plan can be implemented. Estimated cost of this phase is \$150,000.

The total project cost is estimated to be \$275,000.

The County estimated match requirement for a project of \$275,000 would be 25% or \$68,750. There is potential for funding from the Northwest Florida Water Management District to be used toward the match as well as in-kind funding for this project. Match funding not realized by an outside source or in-kind could be taken from the County's Emergency Reserve. The current balance in this reserve is \$200,000.

The project is eligible since it is an Infrastructure Protection Measure. This project would alleviate the issue of emergency vehicles being unable to use the roads within Wakulla Gardens during storm events due to the severe flooding. The project is also listed in the County's Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) and solves an on-going problem that the County has been dealing with in this subdivision. The lots that would be purchased could be used as storm water retention areas to mitigate storm water flooding that occurs during storm events.

Options:

1. Authorize staff to pursue submission of an application to the Florida Department of Emergency Management Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and transfer any required match funding from the County Emergency Reserve.
2. Do not authorize staff to pursue submission of an application to the Florida Department of Emergency Management Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and do not transfer any

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required match funding from the County Emergency Reserve.

3. Board Direction

Recommendation:

Option #1

Attachment(s):

1. Florida Department of Emergency Management Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Summary

2. HMGP Application.