

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: **PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION (PPI).** Annual Update relating to the city's Community Rating System (CRS) program.

REPORT: 1533-13

ADVICE: Approval

BACKGROUND

The Commission approved the resolution on the Program for Public Information (PPI) document on June 15, 2016. PPI is a required element of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)'s Community Rating System (CRS) program. The adoption of the PPI indicates the City's commitment to provide a coordinated approach on flood hazard outreach and education.

The City received a Class 7 rating within the CRS program thus becoming eligible for a 15 percent discount on all NFIP issued flood insurance policies in the city.

When the PPI document was adopted, the City Plan Commission members made a commitment to serve as the official PPI committee members to assess the overall needs of the community with respect to flooding and develop strategies for conveying this information to the community through a comprehensive outreach plan. The committee members agreed to assist in implementing the PPI plan by providing suggestions on areas of the City that should be targeted for outreach. Further, the committee members agreed to comprehensively discuss the PPI actions, outcomes, and the overall PPI document at least once per year and prepare an annual PPI evaluation report to be submitted to the Board of Alders for its consideration.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The goals of PPI are: to develop and sustain a long-term public outreach program that increases general awareness on flood hazards and preparedness and to reduce flood risk by providing the public with effective tools and information that can be used before, during, and after a flood. Based on the CRS Manual criteria, the City of New Haven has identified the City Plan Commission as the entity to serve as the PPI Committee, with representatives from the three departments (City Plan, Engineering, and Building) that share floodplain management responsibilities and one department (Emergency Management) that is concerned with safety of residents living in zones of flood risk.

The PPI document has been developed to target all residents within the City of New Haven. However, the document recommends more detailed information to be developed and distributed as noted below:

- All New Haven Residents – Basic information will be developed and distributed to all residents within the City of New Haven with respect to flooding, as flooding can occur anywhere.
- Repetitive Loss Areas and Residents within the Floodplain – Many of these areas are within FEMA designated flood zones and specific outreach material will be developed for these areas. There are 43 repetitive loss properties within the City of New Haven. These repeat claims demonstrate the serious nature of flood hazards and the need for greater flood protection measures.
- Builders, Contractors, Engineers and Architects – It is important to ensure that these entities have a strong understanding of the permitting requirements, flood protection measures, and applicable mitigation grants.

- Real Estate Agents and Mortgage and Insurance Companies – Information will be provided that will allow agents and companies to notify potential homebuyers within special flood hazard areas of the flood hazard risk and flood insurance requirements.

- Spanish speakers: 27% of New Haven's population is listed by the US Census as “Hispanic or Latino origin” and 17% are “foreign born.” Plus, 33% of the population indicates that a language other than English is spoken at home. Committee members reported that Spanish speakers appear to be less aware about flood insurance and flood preparedness because most of the existing explanatory materials are in English.

Sections 4 and 5 of the PPI document outline the various public information efforts that the City would undertake and the priority messages that would be delivered in these messages as part of flood hazard education and outreach.

Within this report, City staff would like to highlight the outreach activities conducted over the past year that align with the goals of the PPI document.

The public outreach projects and responsibilities chart shown on the following page (also included within the PPI document) provides an overview on the status of each outreach activity.

Topic and Message (Table 2)	Intended Outcomes (Table 2)	Target Audiences	Project	Responsible Entity	Implementation Schedule	Cross Reference to Tasks Listed in Section 4.1	New or Existing Project?	Status
<p>A - Know your flood hazard</p> <p><i>Understand FIRMs</i></p> <p><i>Understand SLOSH Maps</i></p> <p><i>Understand Sea Level Rise</i></p> <p><i>Basic understanding of the causes of flooding</i></p>	<p>Increased public awareness regarding flooding hazards</p> <p>Improved public knowledge of flood zones and sea level rise</p> <p>Increased inquiries to City staff</p>	<p>All New Haven Residents</p> <p>Repetitive Loss Areas and residents within the floodplain</p> <p>Real Estate Agents, Mortgage and Insurance Companies</p> <p>Builders, Contractors, Engineers and Architects</p>	<p>1. Develop and distribute brochures that explain the FIRM and SLOSH maps. Include basic information in the newspaper articles.</p> <p>2. Develop an annual flood preparedness brochure to send to all properties within the floodplain. Mention this in the newspaper articles and the Mayor's newsletter.</p> <p>3. Present a public workshop on Sea Level Rise and increasing coastal hazards. Include the LCI neighborhood specialists.</p>	<p>Floodplain management staff</p> <p>Floodplain management staff</p> <p>Floodplain management staff</p>	<p>Prepare brochures in summer 2016; distribute in fall 2016 and spring 2017 and then annually thereafter.</p> <p>Prepare brochures in summer 2016; distribute in fall 2016 and spring 2017 and then annually thereafter.</p> <p>Initial workshop in 2016 to coincide with HMP update; then annually thereafter.</p>	<p>a, c</p> <p>a, c, f, i, o</p> <p>b, d</p>	<p>New</p> <p>New</p> <p>New</p>	<p>Presented at Quininiac East CMT, Fair Haven CMT, and Downtown Wooster Square CMTs in June and July 2017.</p> <p>Draft brochures were prepared by consultants. They should be mailed in fall 2017.</p> <p>Flood preparedness and safety brochures were mailed via tax bills to nearly 13,500 residential property owners in June 2017.</p> <p>Presentations on flooding and sea level rise were made at the management teams of coastal areas of the city (Quininiac East, Fair Haven, and Mill River) where LCI</p>

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			<p>4. Consider providing notification to prospective buyers regarding flood-related hazards such as erosion by adding appropriate disclosures to the Assessors property cards. — additional line item on printable tax cards. Ask tax assessor</p>	<p>Assessor's Office</p>	<p>City Plan and Assessor to begin working in FY 2016-2017. Report to PPI Committee in June 2017.</p>	<p>None; see *</p>	<p>New</p>	<p>specialists were also present. Yet to be done in fall 2017.</p>

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B - Insure your property for your flood hazard <i>Obtain appropriate flood insurance</i> <i>Consider purchasing flood insurance even if you are not in a flood zone</i>	Increase in the number of flood insurance policies	Repetitive Loss Areas and Residents within the floodplain All New Haven Residents	1. Provide information on the NFIP program and the FloodSmart program to local real estate agents. 2. Host a public workshop designed to inform local real estate agents of the need for agents to notify those interested in purchasing properties located in the SFHA about the flood hazard and the flood insurance purchase requirement. Mention the workshops in the newspaper articles. 3. Send an annual letter to all repetitive loss (RL) properties. The letter should advise residents of the benefits of obtaining flood insurance.	Floodplain management staff Floodplain management staff	Fall 2016 and annually thereafter. Fall 2016 and annually thereafter.	c, l, m a, d, m	New New	Mailing to be done in fall 2017. Yet to be done in fall 2017.
C- Protect people from the hazard Do not drive through flooded areas Evacuate when advised	Reduced risk of loss of life and property damage	All New Haven Residents	1. Make the National Weather Service brochure "Don't Drown, Turn Around" available in public locations such as City Hall and the Public Library.	Floodplain management staff Emergency Management	January 2016 and annually thereafter. Summer 2016; check locations annually thereafter.	p, t c, i, n	Existing (RL letter mailed January 2016) New	City just received updates on RL properties from FEMA i.e., in June 2017. This letter will be mailed out in January 2017. Brochures on "Don't Drown, Turn Around" were already made available at the City Hall last fall. More copies of these brochures will be made available in fall 2017.

			<p>2. Update the emergency management services website to include evacuation routes.</p>	<p>Emergency Management</p>	<p>Fall 2016.</p>	<p>g, i</p>	<p>New</p>	<p>This task was completed in winter 2017 as seen in the weblink below: http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/CityPlan/pdfs/Evacuation%20Routes.jpg</p>
			<p>3. Place barricades and notify residents ahead of time with twitter and Everbridge methods.</p>	<p>Emergency Management</p>	<p>As needed during NWS Food Warnings.</p>	<p>h, i</p>	<p>Existing</p>	<p>Yet to be done.</p>

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D- Protect your property from the hazard <i>Elevate your residential structure higher than required</i> <i>Floodproof your nonresidential structure</i>	Reduction in flood insurance rates Reduce risk of damage due to flooding	Repetitive Loss Areas and residents within the floodplain Real Estate Agents, Mortgage and Insurance Companies	1. Send an annual letter to all repetitive loss properties. The letter should advise residents of the benefits of elevating structures above the base flood elevation. 2. Distribute brochures to local real estate agents that advise potential buyers to investigate the flood hazard for a property. 3. Develop and publicize an annual mailer which will be directed to all properties within the SFHA and notifies them that the City is available to provide advice and assistance regarding flood protection. Mention this in the newspaper articles and in the Mayor's newsletter.	Floodplain management staff	January 2016 and annually thereafter (to be staggered with project D3 below which will cause some residents to receive two letters per year). Fall 2016 and annually thereafter.	p, t	Existing (RL letter mailed January 2016)	To be done in January 2017.
E - Build responsibly <i>Follow all applicable regulations</i> <i>Obtain all necessary permits</i>	Reduced number of enforcement violations Reduce risks as noted above	Builders, Contractors and Engineers and Architects	1. Hold local a local workshop designed to inform builders, contractors, engineers, and architects of local regulations and permitting requirements. Include the LCI neighborhood specialists. Mention in the Mayor's newsletter.	Floodplain management staff	Summer 2016 and annually thereafter (to be staggered with project D1 above which will cause some residents to receive two letters per year).	a, f, j, o, t	New	Draft version of the brochure is ready. This will be distributed in fall 2017. To be done in summer 2017.
F - Protect natural floodplain functions <i>Don't place fill in floodplains</i>	Improve flood storage capacity	All New Haven Residents Repetitive Loss Areas	1. Develop and distribute a public information brochure regarding the placement of fill in floodplains.	Floodplain management staff	January 2017 and then annually thereafter. Fall 2016 and annually thereafter.	b, d, e, f, j, k c, e, j, q	New	To be done in January 2017. Draft brochure is ready. This will be mailed out in fall 2017.

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<p>G – Flood Warning and Preparedness</p> <p><i>Be prepared for flooding ahead of time by knowing which steps to take to protect life and property</i></p> <p><i>Be aware of emergencies and the need for evacuation immediately</i></p>	<p>Improved warning and response time</p> <p>Fewer occasions of water rescues</p>	<p>Repetitive Loss Property residents</p> <p>Residents within all floodplains</p> <p>Residents and businesses within dam failure inundation areas</p>	<p>1. Continue the workshops that Emergency Management personnel conduct with the Community Management Teams and other community groups (in 2015 these included seven organizations as noted above). Include the LCI neighborhood specialists.</p> <p>2. Develop and provide a direct mailer encouraging residents and businesses to sign up for the City's Everbridge Emergency Notification System and to follow City notifications on Twitter. Mention this in the newspaper articles and in the Mayor's newsletter.</p> <p>3. Consider becoming a National Weather Service Storm Ready Community. If the City does not currently meet the requirements to apply, a plan should be developed to determine the appropriate measures needed to become eligible.</p> <p>4. Update the Emergency Management website to include a link to real-time gage information and National Hurricane Center (NHC) storm surge flooding maps so users can see current water levels and, where available, flood height predictions.</p>	<p>Emergency Management</p>	<p>Held throughout the year. Ensure that each team has one workshop per year.</p>	<p>b, d, i,</p>	<p>Existing (several conducted in 2015)</p>	<p>Yet to be done.</p>
				<p>Emergency Management</p>	<p>Fall 2016 and annually thereafter.</p>	<p>a, f, i, o, v</p>	<p>New</p>	<p>Yet to be done in fall 2017.</p>
				<p>Emergency Management</p>	<p>City Plan and Emergency Management to begin working in FY 2016-2017. Report to PPI Committee in June 2017.</p>	<p>u</p>	<p>New</p>	<p>No decision has been made yet. City Plan Department could not work on this yet due to staff and budget constraints</p>
				<p>Emergency Management</p>	<p>Fall 2016.</p>	<p>r, s</p>	<p>New</p>	<p>Yet to be done.</p>

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			5. Invite key neighborhood liaisons and the LCI neighborhood specialists to participate in dam failure drills with Regional Water Authority.		Initial drill with Regional Water Authority tentatively scheduled for FY 2016-2017.	w	New	Yet to be done.

*Regarding the project "Consider providing notification to prospective buyers regarding flood-related hazards such as erosion by adding appropriate disclosures to the Assessors property cards," the City Plan Department will identify steps to take with the Assessor Department to pursue this action.

ADVICE

The Commission finds this annual update on the PPI document satisfactory and in the best interest of the City and refers it to the Board of Alders for consideration.

ADOPTED: July 19, 2017
Edward Mattison
Chair

ATTEST: 
Karyn M. Gilvarg, AIA
Executive Director