



CEDAR RAPIDS

City of Five Seasons

FLOOD RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT PLAN

MARCH 3, 2009

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Vision: *Cedar Rapids, a vibrant urban hometown – a beacon for people and businesses invested to build a greater community for the next generation.*

The Immediate Response to the Flood:

The City mobilized local, state and federal resources to rescue, protect and provide safety for citizens. Secondly the City and partners secured the flood impacted areas, and mitigated immediate hazards and dangers. In conjunction with these efforts, the City partnered with various local and federal agencies to provide interim shelter and housing for displaced residents. As a result no lives were lost of this disaster.

In the ensuing days, the City employees heroically restored utilities (water and wastewater treatment), cleared debris, re-opened roads, and reestablished critical infrastructure and operations.

Meanwhile the city leaders used a previously established public input system and process (used during the river corridor redevelopment planning process) to build a framework for a plan to recover from the flood and reinvest in our community. The following document outlines the comprehensive content of the Cedar Rapids Plan for flood recovery and reinvestment. Details of this plan are included in the accompanying project plan spreadsheet.

Goals:

On June 17, 2008 (four days after the flood waters crested), the Cedar Rapids City Council adopted the following six goals to rebuild and reinvest in the community:

1. Improve flood protection to better protect homes and businesses
2. Rebuild high-quality and affordable workforce neighborhoods
3. Restore full business vitality
4. preserve our arts and cultural assets
5. Maintain our historic heritage
6. Assure that we can retain and attract the next generation workforce

Four Plan Elements:

The City Council, City Staff and strategic partners gathered public input and feedback to begin to build a recovery and reinvestment plan around four primary tenants:

1. Economic recovery: housing and businesses investment
2. Flood management and protection strategies
3. Public facilities replacement
4. Health and human service needs

Timelines:

The Cedar Rapids flood recovery began on June 14, 2008 (the day the water receded) and will last an estimated 12-15 years before it is fully implemented.

Economic Recovery

- Neighborhood Plan to be complete by **June 2009**
- U.S. Army Corp. of Engineers Feasibility Study to be complete by the **fall of 2011**
- Acquisition Plan Adopted on **February 25, 2009**. This plan will be complete by **2012**
- Implementation of housing rehabilitation, new and replacement housing will be ongoing for 10 years to be **complete by 2020**

Flood Protection and Management

- Framework for Redevelopment and Revitalization was adopted by the City Council on **November 12, 2008**
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Feasibility Study to be **complete by the fall of 2011**
- FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grants for Flood Protection/Management **in place by fall 2011**
- Flood protection/management **may** begin as soon as **2012**

Public Facility Replacement or Rehab (310 buildings)

- A Public Facility Replacement Plan was adopted by the City Council on **February 4, 2009**
- Efforts will begin in the **spring of 2009**
- City Facility Replacement and Rehabilitation will be complete by **2016**

Health and Human Services

- These will be an **ongoing** services provided by the Linn Area Long-term Recovery Group. These needs include facilitating the financial and mental health and counseling, and helping displaced and qualified families identify and acquire critical human service needs as possible.

Estimated Funding Needs:

The flood impact to Cedar Rapids was over \$5,400,000,000 (not counting losses to Linn County). Below is an estimate of the funding needs facing the City in each of the Four Plan Element Areas.

Economic Recovery	Flood Protection	Public Facilities	Human Services
\$3,885,254,803	\$1,113,389,000	\$481,578,585	\$24,795,043

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Economic Recovery is focused on leading the City's reinvestment into housing, neighborhoods, and the core/central commercial district to meet current and future needs of this community and its valued workforce.

Housing: Approximately 5,390 residential properties were damaged and/or destroyed in the flood. The complexities of the housing portion of the Economic Recovery efforts can not be overstated. There are 11 elements currently identified in the housing portion of the recovery plan:

1.1.1 Interim Housing: More than 500 mobile homes were used to temporarily house qualified, displaced families. This was initiated by FEMA and fully funded. FEMA is cooperating with the City and the Linn Area Long-term Recovery Coalition to transition families and individuals from FEMA trailers into less "temporary" housing.

1.1.2 Rental Housing Assistance: Approximately 540 landlords have applied for affordable rental housing financial assistance for as many as 874 rental housing units. If 50 percent of these landlords qualify and go through the application process, the financial need could be approximately \$16,500,000. The city has partnered with the Landlords of Linn County and the Cedar Rapids Small Business Recovery Group. An administrator is being sought, and funding is expected to be available by June.

1.1.3. Jumpstart Housing: Over 1,600 Individuals applied for the Jumpstart Program

1.1.3.1 Interim Mortgage Assistance: estimated cost for this is \$2,500,000

1.1.3.2. Rehabilitation Assistance: Approximately 1,166 houses are projected for rehabilitation at potential cost of \$27,000,000.

1.1.3.3 Down-payment Assistance: It is believed that 285 residents will receive new housing/replacement housing down payment assistance. This will be funded by CDBG/Jumpstart dollars and is projected to cost \$8,500,000.

1.1.4 Voluntary Property Acquisitions Areas: **On February 25, 2009**, the Cedar Rapids City Council approved a residential property acquisition plan which should be complete in 3 to 4 years (end of 2012). The acquisition plan includes a thorough intake and qualification process for three areas:

1.1.4.1 The Greenway: approximately 192 properties that will be acquired using the FEMA Hazard Mitigation and Grant Program for approximately \$27,000,000. These are the properties in the most flood prone areas on the wet side of proposed flood protection and management efforts.

1.1.4.2 The Construction/Study Zone: 544 properties that will be acquired using a combination of funds including CDBG and State allocations. The projected to cost \$70,000,000. The Construction/Study Zone is the area where possible flood protection construction and infrastructure re-alignment may impact properties.

1.1.4.3 The Neighborhood Revitalization Area: (outside of the flood and construction/study area) has approximately 600 additional properties that need to be acquired. Because these properties are beyond repair, the approximate acquisition costs are \$80,000,000. These properties were substantially damaged (beyond 60% of pre-flood assessed value), and pose a potential health, environmental, structural risk to the surrounding properties and neighborhood.

1.1.5 Housing Relocation: Where possible, the City will try to relocate, or move structures located in the Greenway or Construction Area to vacant lots throughout Cedar Rapids. There are no projected cost estimates for housing relocation at this time, but the staff continues to work with property owners to identify and match qualified structures with potential locations.

1.1.6 Historic Preservation: The City is currently performing a federally-charted historic review of all flood-affected properties to determine which may qualify for historic preservation funding. The goal is to maintain and preserve as many historic properties as possible, to help retain the cultural heritage and historic elements of each neighborhood and the community. This will be ongoing as part of the Neighborhood Planning Process.

1.1.7 Housing Demolition: For the purposes of this document, demolition and salvation of materials will be limited to those properties deemed an immediate hazard or risk to people and/or neighboring properties. **In the fall of 2008**, the city identified and scheduled 72 properties for immediate demolition reimbursable by the FEMA for hazard mitigation purposes.

1.1.7.1 Recycling: The City will attempt to recycle as much salvageable material as possible from the structures.

1.1.8 Continued Debris Clean-up: Cedar Rapids has removed more than 80,000 tons of flood-related debris at a cost of \$9,000,000. To accommodate the volume of debris and minimize removal and transportation costs, the City worked with the DNR to re-open landfill Site #1 which is more proximate and accessible to the flood-affected areas. The City will continue monitor the disposal of demolition debris and related clean-up materials as the recovery and reinvestment process continues to evolve into the demolition, rehabilitation and revitalization phases.

1.1.9 New Housing Production: There are approximately 850 owner occupied properties needing to be replaced at an estimated cost of \$173 million dollars. The City has approved more than 400 new replacement units.

- 1.1.9.1** Skogman – Oak Hill Housing (Round 1): 11 units of owner-occupied housing.
- 1.1.9.2** Skogman – Oak Hill Housing (Round 2): 4 units of owner-occupied housing.
- 1.1.9.3** JJJ Enterprises: One unit under construction.
- 1.1.9.4** Drew Holdings: One unit under construction.
- 1.1.10** Affordable Rental Housing Replacement: Intake is still underway to determine how many rental properties were substantially damaged and will need replacement. If all Greenway, Construction and Red Placarded properties are acquired, Cedar Rapids will need to replace an estimated 519 rental units.
- 1.1.10.1** Hatch Housing: This is an affordable rental housing project that includes two 48-unit buildings. Estimated cost for this project is \$15,000,000. This is typically funded by a developer and Low Income Tax Credit program.
- 1.1.10.2** Metro-Plains Housing Project/Cedar View Sr. Apts.: This is a mixed income “senior” rental project for 45 units at an estimated cost of \$6,750,000. This is typically funded by a developer and low income tax credit program.
- 1.1.10.3** Evergreen Development LIHTC/Cedar Pond Townhouses: This is a 90 unit affordable rental project estimated to cost \$15,000,000.
- 1.1.10.4** Sherman & Associates: 96 unit affordable rental housing.
- 1.1.10.5** Sherman & Associates: Loan to pre-fund construction of rental units.
- 1.1.10.6** Brown Apartments: 15 unit renovation.
- 1.1.10.7** Neighborhood Planning Process: Cedar Rapids has hosted a series of focused public meetings to get community participation in the neighborhood planning process. Upon the completion of this planning process, a recommendation will be presented to the City Council for approval of 3 formalized area plans by no later than June 2009. These plans will be integrated into existing flood recovery and reinvestment plans which support the overall vision for Cedar Rapids.

Business: Approximately 700 area businesses were damaged, destroyed, or suffered substantial economic loss as a direct result of the flood. The flood-related economic impact/loss to the business community is estimated to be upwards of \$5,000,000,000. The ten elements to the business economic recovery plan include:

1.2.1 Debris Cleanup: Cedar Rapids provided free debris clean up and removal services for businesses to remove flood related debris after the FEMA funding expired. Estimated total cost for this project is \$7,000,000.

1.2.2 Financial Assistance: On **July 16, 2008** the Cedar Rapids City Council approved a \$3,000,000 dollar allocation to the Chamber of Commerce to help fund small business recovery grants.

1.2.3 Steam: In partnership with Alliant Energy, as well as state and federal resources, the City of Cedar Rapids continues to explore options for the loss of the 6th street high pressure steam heat plant to as many as 200 downtown businesses and organizations.

1.2.4 Signature/Catalyst Projects: These are significant projects and investments to enhance the long-term viability of the Cedar Rapids business community. Examples would be specific projects targeted for the Medical District and the Courthouse Square block area.

1.2.4.1 Medical District: In the early planning process the City identified a geographic area in the downtown district as being a Medical District between St. Luke's Hospital and Mercy Medical Center. This district has been folded into the neighborhood planning process to maximize attractiveness, usage, and accessibility.

1.2.4.2 Farmer's Market: In partnership with the Downtown Business District, the Neighborhood groups and the Chamber of Commerce, the Farmer's Market returned to downtown Cedar Rapids on **August 2, 2008**

1.2.5 Parking - Long-term: In partnership with the Downtown Business District and the Chamber of Commerce, the City Council approved a parking policy to accommodate construction needs and shopping accessibility. The Neighborhood Planning Process is incorporating long-term parking solutions into its plan for the downtown business district to accommodate shopping, residential and reconstruction parking needs.

1.2.9 4th Street Corridor (trains): This aspect of economic recovery will evaluate the rerouting of train services into the downtown business district. A grant is pending with the EDA to study the feasibilities for various re-routing needs and options.

Arts and Culture: Eight iconic cultural and arts facilities were devastated and/or seriously displaced as a direct result of the flood. This critical component of any community continues to work through a variety of channels and resources to rebuild its presence in Cedar Rapids. Part of these efforts include finding creative solutions for rehearsal and performance venues as well as identifying financial and community resources to support a new level of an arts and culture within the community. The City continues to offer support and endorsement of community arts and cultural interests.

1.3.1 Financial Assistance for organizations and facilities: FEMA, state and local resources are being sought to finance the rebuilding of lost facilities as well as some of the interim efforts until such time that more permanent solutions are found.

1.3.2 Long-term Facility Options: In addition to FEMA the City and cultural interest groups are working with State and Federal Historic Preservation organizations to secure the funding for rehabilitation of lost facilities. On February 27, Theater Cedar Rapids approved a plan to use FEMA money and money from an organized capital campaign to rebuild and improve their facility for a return in 2010.

Non profits: Countless nonprofit organizations were impacted by the flood. These include subsidized daycare, Options of Linn County, United Way and supported agencies, etc. The viability of the non-profit groups is critical to the economic function and well being of Cedar Rapids and provides a critical level of support for the Cedar Rapids workforce.

1.4.1 Financial Assistance for organizations and facilities: In July 2008, the City Council approved funding for Horizons - a Family Services Agency to provide financial and mental health counseling for flood-affected residents and business owners. Additional state funds are being sought for continued support and expansion of these services.

1.4.2 Long-Term Facility Options: The City along with the community schools, County facilities, and a few nonprofit organizations are looking into location options such as shared community facilities, co-locating certain services, and perhaps developing a human services campus. The city will continue to work with nonprofit groups to identify optimal location options for accessibility and ease of use.

2. FLOOD PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT

Flood Protection and Management is focused on developing and implementing strategies to minimize and/or eliminate the threat of future flood events in Cedar Rapids.

2.1 Interim Plan: On February 11, 2009 the Cedar Rapids City Council adopted an interim flood protection plan. The City of Cedar Rapids is cooperating with the United States Army Corps of Engineers to conduct an extensive feasibility study and cost-benefit analysis of long-term flood protection and management strategies and tools. The results of this study, once approved, will clearly establish where flood protection measures and infrastructure will be constructed and installed.

2.1.1 Flood Guages: Additionally, Cedar Rapids has partnered with the US Geological Survey (USGS) to install two new river gages near Palo and Vinton to better monitor and forecast river activity.

2.1.2 United States Army Corps of Engineers Feasibility Study: This is the extensive benefit-cost analysis of the proposed flood protection and management plan. The results of this study will be coordinated with FEMA for reimbursement and then used to establish future construction and infrastructure needs. This study will be complete by Fall 2011.

2.2 Construction Authorization: This is the final Congressional approval and authorization of the long-term construction of the flood protection and management system and installation in Cedar Rapids. This funding will come from the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA).

2.3 Flood mitigation measures: This plan includes the authorization to purchase materials and equipment necessary to install nearly three miles of barriers between 3 feet and 8 feet tall, which will protect the city up to a 20-foot flood stage. Estimated cost for temporary flood protection is \$38 million dollars. Construction is to begin immediately.

2.4 Community Rating System: This is a coordinated effort with the National Flood Insurance Program (part of FEMA) to qualify elements of the flood management plan and properties with existing city ordinances for flood insurance discounts. An example of a potentially qualifying element might include having a qualified notification system in place for flood prediction and warning purposes.

2.5 Legacy Watershed Management and Watershed Study: This is the coordinated and ongoing efforts with the United States Army Corps of Engineers to study the historic upstream and downstream watershed practices and management. Based on

these findings, recommendations will drive the long-term watershed management practices and efforts along the Cedar River. Funding has been sought for this effort.

2.6 Storm Water Management Plan: The City of Cedar Rapids has a Storm Water Management Plan. With pending interim and long-term flood protection and management construction and infrastructure needs, the plan will be updated and adjusted on a regular basis.

3.0 PUBLIC FACILITIES REPLACEMENT

Public Facilities Replacement is focused on short-term solutions and options to deliver city services as well as the long-term rehabilitation and/or replacement of public facilities for sustainable, efficient and cost effective ongoing operations of City Government.

3.1 Emergency Stabilization and Cleanout of Existing Facilities: 310 City facilities were damaged and/or destroyed in the Flood of 2008. The buildings have all been thoroughly inspected and categorized. Those facilities deemed salvageable are being stabilized and cleaned out for future occupancy or use by the city or other organizations. The estimated projected cost for stabilization and cleanout of existing facilities is \$120 million.

3.2 Interim Operating Plan: All City functions and deliverable services are operational at this point. Those City services that were unable to relocate back into their original facilities have found interim solutions that enable work to continue until such time that permanent solutions are found. Examples include all City Hall departments have been relocated to temporary facilities in the River Ridge office park, and the Central Fire Department has redesigned a warehouse for their needs.

3.3 Facility Replacement: A feasibility study is being undertaken to evaluate current and future public facility needs. Some of this study includes the investigation of potential shared facilities and co-location of services to provide cost-effective and sustainable solutions for the community. Estimated cost for facility replacement is \$351 million dollars.

3.4 Joint Communications Network: This is a fiber optic network between the City, County and schools. A grant application has been submitted to the Economic Development Agency to pay for a feasibility study for this project. The cost of this feasibility study is \$11.2 million.

4.0 HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

The City of Cedar Rapids has partnered with the Linn Area Long-Term Recovery Coalition and United Way to ensure the on-going delivery and long-term viability of area health and human service agency services and support.

COMMUNICATIONS

The City of Cedar Rapids continues to place a high value on communications as part of its flood recovery efforts. Prior to the flood the City added a communications liaison to the City Manager Staff. In response to the flood, the City Manager added a temporary (contract) communications person to help with all of the additional flood-related communications needs. Worksheets for this contract employee have been filed with FEMA for reimbursement.

Communications from the City are ongoing and include: Weekly Flood Recovery Newsletter, Monthly City Newsletter, Weekly RRCT Notes/Issue Tracker, Brown Bag Sessions, News Conferences, Regular Media Briefings, Corridorrecovery.org website; Formation of the Community Communications Coalition; and regular community meetings with City Council members.

The City has sent out a Request for Proposals (RFP) to have a flood recovery communications plan developed, prioritized and integrated into the overall customer service provided by the City and to mark the one year anniversary of the flood.

LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS

The City has partnered with the Cedar Rapids Chamber of Commerce and the Linn County Supervisors to boost its legislative efforts and more aggressively seek State and Federal funding and service support for its on-going flood recovery needs. These efforts include more than six separate trips to Washington D.C. to speak with federal agencies and legislators and ongoing work with IDED, IFA, USACOE, HUD, EPA, EDA, FEMA, DNR and Homeland Security.

The City continues to work with the Governor-appointed Rebuild Iowa Office on state and local legislative efforts.

The Council has called for a community vote to approve a one percent local option sales tax on March 3, 2009.

Political dignitaries who have visited and toured Cedar Rapids include: Former President Bush; Presidential candidates McCain and Obama; Speaker of the House Pelosi; and Secretary Napolitano from the Department of Homeland Security.