

**HOUSING STRATEGY WORK GROUP MEETING
NOVEMBER 9, 2011**

1:30 to 3:30 P.M.

AMERICAN RED CROSS CENTER 1115 EASTERWOOD DRIVE TALLAHASSEE

Attendees: Dorothy Inman Johnson (Capital Area CAA), Wanda Carter (Leon County Affordable Housing Advisory Committee), Larry Strickland (Capital City Builders), Susan Poplin (Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department), Katie Sherk (American Red Cross Tallahassee), Devan Leavins (Florida Division of Emergency Management), Joyce Olavez (City of Tallahassee Housing Division), Robby Powers (City of Tallahassee Emergency Management), and Denise Imbler (Apalachee Regional Planning Council)

Introduction and Presentation by Red Cross

Denise Imbler with the Apalachee Regional Planning Council and the primary consultant for the development of the Leon County Post Disaster Redevelopment Plan, opened the meeting by having brief participant introductions and by discussing the goals for the meeting [see attached agenda]. She then turned the meeting over to Katie Sherk to provide a brief presentation regarding the Red Cross' activities during a disaster. Ms. Sherk identified the Red Cross' role of providing immediate recovery and temporary housing. Client services are provided and in some cases require coordination across counties. The Red Cross district has Leon and surrounding counties as far as Taylor and Madison. The district does not include South Georgia but she has contacts with that Red Cross district and they can continue to coordinate as needed. Much of the housing assistance is in initial recovery and then includes referrals to other agencies. A case was discussed regarding cross-county provision of services that required coordination with Madison County; the American Red Cross is able to assist with this type of service and coordination but not on a large-scale, i.e. multiple families requiring assistance.

Some discussion followed regarding service capacity through existing Red Cross and Capital Area Community Action Agency with parties discussing past client service experiences in Hurricane Katrina.

The group also discussed potential areas and populations more vulnerable to natural disasters. A question was asked by Dot Inman-Johnson regarding whether the PDRP would identify vulnerable areas or other information. Ms. Imbler provided a brief overview of the vulnerability assessment and showed a pictorial overhead of surge zone areas showing that hurricane categories 3, 4 and 5 may result in storm surge into Leon County. The group was told that the Vulnerability Assessment Chapter of the Plan would be used to identify vulnerable areas for hurricane and flood, and would generally estimate property losses. A comment was made that services for the low income groups would be needed.

Timeline

Ms. Imbler presented a timeline proposing three more meetings between November and March to complete developing the housing strategy. The process would conclude with presenting the final housing strategy in late march, incorporating it into the PDRP, and presenting the final

PDRP in May of 2012. She discussed that the housing strategy would present basic information and structure. A more detailed strategy plan could be called for in the initial document but was not feasible as part of this effort due to the timing of completion. The group had no comments on the timeline.

Housing Plan Strategy Outline

Ms. Imbler requested the group go through a proposed outline for the plan and identify a mission, purpose and goals today. She indicated that sections for which she would need input include the “Overview of local, state and federal social support services” and the “Operations”. Generally, the goal today would be to “nail down” the “Introduction” section with the mission purposes and goals.

The group reviewed the mission stated as “leadership is dedicated to supporting a safe, sanitary, and functional living environment for all community members in the aftermath of a disaster. The intent of the Disaster Housing Strategy is to foster consensus and collaboration among stakeholders with aim of a common approach for carrying out the disaster housing mission and thereby expediting community recovery” The group discussed and accepted the mission.

The group reviewed the purpose stated as “Provide interim and permanent housing, and human services in an efficient and coordinated manner to the community impacted by disaster.” After discussion a sentence was added indicating “This includes assisting with the transition from emergency housing to more permanent housing.”

The group discussed the goals as listed in the guidebook and accepted the current goals. Additions were requested for recognizing the role of the anticipated “Housing Disaster Team” and to recognize the possible use of the “Client Assistance Network” that the Red Cross uses to track client services. The need for coordination was raised. Some discussion regarding COAD followed and representation from the housing group will be at the November 14th COAD meeting.

Housing Coordinator

The group reaffirmed a co-housing coordinator consisting of two representatives, one from City Housing and one from County Housing [Joyce Olavez and Lamarr Kemp].

Housing Disaster Team

The group determined it was appropriate to identify entities that could serve on the Disaster Housing Team which include: City Economic and Community Development Housing Division, Leon County Health and Human Services Housing Division, Tallahassee Housing Authority, Tallahassee Builders Association, American Red Cross Tallahassee, Big Bend Community Organizations Active In Disasters (COAD - coordinated by Volunteer Leon), Capital Area Community Action Agency, Leon and City of Tallahassee Affordable Housing Advisory Committees, City/County Local Building Officials, and Big Bend Homeless Coalition.

Groups that will be contacted for input and to support the housing plan, having “buy-in” include: The Realtor’s Association, Tallahassee Apartment Managers Association, Hotel/Motel

Associations, The Shelter, Landlord's Association and the local Emergency Management personnel.

As the plan was discussed, Devan Leavins indicated they were exploring housing plans that look at maintaining capacity with host counties [or not using excessive capacity in host counties]. It could be that they establish a pilot program which may allow Tallahassee/Leon to explore more in-depth housing strategy approaches. No specific initiatives to participating as a pilot were identified by the group at this time.

Next Meeting

The group is targeting the week after Thanksgiving to meet and discuss Operations. Participants were asked to come prepared with a brief overview of their respective programs and roles, and identified roles during disasters. A date for the next meeting will be confirmed via e-mail. The group adjourned at about 3:20 pm.

Leon County/City of Tallahassee Housing Strategy

**American Red Cross
1115 Easterwood Drive
Tallahassee, Florida 32399**

Wednesday, November 9, 2011 1:30p.m. – 3:30p.m.

Agenda

- I. Welcome
- II. Presentation by the Capital Area Chapter of the American Red Cross
- III. Review and Discussion of the Housing Strategy Outline
- IV. Review and Discussion
 - a. Mission
 - b. Purpose
 - c. Goals
- V. Question and Answer
- VI. Schedule Next Meeting

