

# 2020 Local Government Forum: Building Local Community Resilience Against Climate-Related Flooding

## Problem Statement

As communities face the increasing challenge of climate-related flooding, there is a growing need for local decision makers to harness public support and resources necessary to effectively prepare for, manage, and ultimately reduce/mitigate local flooding impacts. Making the case to state and federal partners for funding actions tied to improving community resilience is paramount. Climate-related inequities need to be addressed as well as protection of social, economic, and natural infrastructure assets. Managing water quantity challenges caused by flooding must be prioritized along with meeting water quality requirements. There is a cost to no action compared to securing resources to prepare for and better respond to flooding impacts.

# Obstacles and Barriers

- Increasing challenges (due to climate change, sea level rise)
- Property ownership (public vs. private, local vs. state/federal)
- Funding constraints/competing issues in budgeting
- High cost projects
- Personnel limits or capacity constraints
- Need for more education/outreach (regulatory/cultural, etc.)

# Assumptions

- The amount of research and modeling related to climate impacts is significant and recognized.
- There are quite a few regional planning efforts in regards to climate change but translating that information at the local level and then collaborating regionally to implement comprehensive strategies that can more greatly benefit the overall area instead of patch-work designs is a challenge.
- Local government planning for these climate impacts will result in a more efficient, actionable, cost-effective and comprehensive strategies.
- Partnerships are critical in helping many local governments to effectively address flooding by improving funding and capacity.
- Promoting effective communication, collaboration and cooperation for climate planning and financing across the watershed will aid in this strategy.
- There is no one size fits all approach when it comes to flooding resilience as communities are all unique.

# Assumptions

- Focusing on flood mitigation efforts including green infrastructure/nature-based implementation need time and funding.
- Local economies and budgets are being challenged now and in the foreseeable future.
- Pursuing projects to mitigate flooding yield multiple benefits including water quality and natural resource benefits which are a wise use of limited resources. Tying these multiple co-benefits together can lead to local support and broader funding opportunities.
- There is a lack of incentivizing properties that can privately benefit or benefit the greater community from flooding events.
- State policies and assistance to address flooding vary across the watershed.
- Regional partnerships and collaboration do occur and can be effective.

# Innovative Case Studies

- *Community Capacity Building* – Hudson River, New York
- *Regional Collaboration* – Eastern Shore, Maryland
- *Financing and Planning* – Anne Arundel County, Maryland
- *Local Ordinances* – Norfolk, Virginia
- *Comprehensive Efforts* – South Wilmington, Delaware

# Break-Outs for Deeper Discussion

- Understanding the funding and financing gaps, opportunities, and resources
- Developing stronger local and regional collaboration and cooperation
- Conducting a needs assessment and developing ordinances
- Building capacity and technical assistance
- Promoting more innovative approaches
- Climate and environmental justice concerns

# Key Recommendations

1. *LGAC recommends encouraging and incentivizing more dedicated funding, financing, and revenue streams for flooding projects.*
1. *LGAC recommends supporting efforts that improve the incorporation of engineering, education, and documentation into local ordinances.*
1. *LGAC recommends promoting more innovative partnership opportunities that result in stronger collaboration and cooperation.*

# Key Recommendations

4. *LGAC recommends promoting more partnerships that result in adopting more innovative approaches.*
5. *LGAC recommends that local elected leaders make social justice a platform and that we prioritize equity on important issues like flooding.*
6. *LGAC recommends increasing funding, fairness, and efficiency of flood mitigation programs by expanding the cost benefit analysis to include consideration of social equity based on projected damaged and based on future conditions.*



# 2021 Local Government Forum

## Proposal

- During the June LGAC Meeting (June 3-4, 2021)
- Virtual
  - LGAC positive feedback from 2020 Virtual Forum
  - Greater Opportunity for Speakers and Subject Matter Experts

## Alternative

- In-Person at the September LGAC Meeting at NCTC (WV)

# 2021 Local Government Forum Ideas

- Environmental Justice and Land Use or Tree Canopy Decisions
- Environmental Justice and Flooding Impacts
- Local Revitalization Programs (ex Laurel Redevelopment Corp)
- COVID Impacts - Lessons Learned
- Local Ordinances Promoting Equity (focus on watershed-related)
- Other Ideas??