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DATE: July 28, 2009

TO: Regional Planning Committee

FROM: Jeanne Perkins, Earthquake Hazards Program Consultant
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SUBJECT: Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) update by the Association of Bay Area Governments and Local Governments

Recommended Action

Staff is requesting endorsement of the DRAFT Local Hazard Mitigation Plan regional mitigation priorities by the Regional Planning Committee. Given the scope of the LHMP and in the interest of conserving resources, the 357 LHMP strategies identified in the plan are posted online at <http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation/strategies.pdf>. The endorsement will be forwarded to the Executive Board on September 17, 2009.

Background

In 2005 ABAG took the lead in developing the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan for the Bay Area. 87 cities, counties and special districts participated in that plan. The plan consisted of 324 mitigation strategies focusing on actions geared to reducing damage from disasters across a broad spectrum of issues including those related to government services, health care systems, infrastructure, housing, the economy, education, and land use. Strategies were geared to reduce loss of life and property damage, as well as speed up recovery of those systems. This LHMP is related to, but not the same as, the regional disaster recovery planning initiative of ABAG. Approval of a LHMP by FEMA makes jurisdictions eligible for various mitigation grants through FEMA and results in the waiver of a 6.25% local match for Public Assistance dollars.

This year, ABAG is again taking the lead to update the plan as required by FEMA, along with at least 97 cities, counties and special districts. Several cities, counties, and special districts that did not participate in the original LHMP are participating in the 2009 update. However, some jurisdictions are no longer participating, including Contra Costa County and San Francisco.

For the update, the list of strategies has been increased to 357 to specifically deal with climate change and recovery planning issues as they relate to mitigation. In addition, the update includes regional priorities for mitigation which were developed by consensus at a series of sub-regional workshops attended by staff from cities, counties and special districts.

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The “draft final” list of 357 mitigation strategies, together with their regional priority, has been posted online at <http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation/strategies.pdf>.

Plan Structure

The goal of the LHMP is to maintain and enhance a disaster-resistant region by reducing the potential loss of life, property damage, and environmental degradation from natural disasters, while accelerating economic recovery from those disasters.

The LHMP identifies major hazards that affect the Bay Area. These include hazards related to **earthquakes (surface faulting, ground shaking, liquefaction, landslides and tsunamis) and weather (flooding, landslides, wildfires and drought)**. Several of these weather-related hazards are influenced by climate change. Other hazards relate to man-made conditions, including releases of hazardous materials, dam failures, energy shortages, and weapons of mass destruction. These other hazards are only addressed as they relate to earthquake and weather-related hazards. The only one of these additional hazards that is readily mapped and analyzed is dam failure.

The plan is organized into eight commitment areas, which are related to the services supplied either directly, or indirectly, by local governments, rather than by hazard. With this organization, each of the Bay Area’s cities and counties should find ways to address these major commitments by reducing identified risks. In addition, the Bay Area’s special districts can address many of these commitments, depending on the roles and responsibilities of a district. The commitment areas are **infrastructure, health, housing, economy (private business), government services, education, environment, and land use**.

Process

The update of the LHMP began in 2007. The update has been comprehensive in scope, with two key issue areas identified for expanded emphasis and improvement relative to past effort:

- ◆ disaster recovery and the need for speeding up the recovery process as one of the criteria used in designing mitigation strategies; and
- ◆ climate change as related to impacts on wildfires, drought, and flooding (including sea level rise).

The series of RPC workshops that have focused on long-term recovery helped inform a reevaluation of the mitigation strategies of the plan based on long-term recovery issues.

In addition, a major effort was undertaken to determine the overall regional priority for implementing these mitigation strategies. Consensus on the mitigation priorities was reached based upon input received at sub-regional workshops.

A total of 121 local governments have participated in the planning process and at least 97 will be writing annexes to the ABAG plan. Each agency’s annex will describe their individual agency, what process they went through to help develop the overall plan and to determine their local priorities, identification

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of any local hazards that differ from the region, how they intend to implement these mitigation strategies and what major mitigation activities have been accomplished since the 2005 plan. The agency's update effort has focused on building upon pre-existing efforts and identifying gaps that may lead to disaster vulnerabilities in order to work on ways to address risks through mitigation.

One of the shortcomings of the 2005 plan was the lack of consistent priorities. This inconsistency detracted from the quality of the plan. To correct that deficiency, for the plan update ABAG staff created a multi-tiered process that focused on workshops and outreach to the public. These workshops in Spring 2009 also provided an opportunity for local governments to participate in the planning process for the multi-jurisdictional plan. Key aspects of the planning process are outlined below.

- ◆ To ensure broad representation from transit agencies, sewer agencies, and water districts, three separate forums were created for those staff. At these workshops, strategies that specifically affected these agencies were discussed and regional priorities were set.
- ◆ Five sub-regional meetings held from April 27, 2009 to May 12, 2009 were attended by a total of 110 staff from 83 cities, counties, and special districts. At these workshops strategies relating specifically to local governments were discussed and the preference of each region was documented separately.
- ◆ Three regional workshops were held to review these draft priorities and receive additional feedback from subject area experts, additional local government staff and the public, specifically focusing on areas where there wasn't clear consensus among the various regions and agencies.
 - A workshop on earthquake issues in conjunction with the ABAG Earthquake and Hazards Outreach Committee meeting was held on May 27, 2009, in which several retrofit contractors, private engineers, and members of the public commented on the housing and economy-related strategies and draft priorities.
 - A workshop on wildfire was held on July 2, 2009, in which 13 cities, counties, fire districts, school districts and members of the public attended.
 - A workshop on flooding was held on July 7, 2009, which 12 cities and 3 water districts and one member of the public were in attendance.
- ◆ The entire revised mitigation strategies and draft priorities will be posted online for public comment.
- ◆ The revised mitigation strategies and draft priorities are submitted to ABAG's Regional Planning Committee for recommended endorsement at the RPC's August meeting and during which the public has an opportunity to comment.
- ◆ The final mitigation strategies and regional priorities will be submitted to ABAG's Executive Board in a public meeting on September 17, 2009.

Regional Priorities and Local Implementation

LHMP priorities reflect the vision of the region as a whole. Individual jurisdictions may have different priorities depending on the nature of their district or local government. For example, mitigating soft-story problems (that is, strengthening buildings built prior to 1990 with parking or commercial space on all or part of the first floor) is an extremely high priority for the region as whole, but many individual cities do not have soft-story residential buildings within their city limits, and special districts do not have

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control over soft-story housing issues. In this case, these jurisdictions have the option to emphasize priorities that differ from the regional priority by explaining differences relative to jurisdictional context or agency authority. ABAG will also be identifying its local priorities as they reflect the function of ABAG.

Priorities

For each of mitigation strategies, the regional and local priorities were chosen from eight categories. The category *existing program, under funded* was added in this plan to reflect the current economic situation and to identify areas that need additional funding.

- ◆ *Exiting program* – no additional funding needed
- ◆ *Existing program, under funded* – additional funding needed to fully implement this program
- ◆ *Very high priority* – an existing unofficial program made official by adoption of this plan. No additional funding is needed.
- ◆ *High priority* – to be adopted by the local government when funding and resources allow, funding currently being sought
- ◆ *Moderate priority* – to be adopted by the local government when funding and resources allow, no funding being sought at the present time
- ◆ *Under study* – currently under study, not just to be studied in the future
- ◆ *Not applicable, not appropriate, or not cost effective*
- ◆ *Not yet considered*

Next Steps

The LHMP must be submitted to FEMA by October 22, 2009 at the latest in order to receive FEMA no later than April 22, 2010 when the 2005 plan expires. This summer, local jurisdictions are focusing on determining their local mitigation priorities and holding public meetings to solicit comment relative to proposed local priorities. In addition, each participating jurisdiction will write an annex to the main plan which documents the process that they went through in the update and highlights specific mitigation actions that were taken since the adoption of the 2005 plan.

Revisions will be made to the existing 2005 annex that encompasses the actions and priorities within the plan for ABAG. Staff will be preparing the written text of the plan and updating the list of critical facilities in the region exposed to hazards including facilities owned by cities, counties and special districts, as well as critical health care facilities, bridge and road structures and school campuses.

Upon FEMA approval of the entire LHMP, each jurisdiction will need to adopt the plan by council or board approval within 12 months.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff is seeking endorsement of the DRAFT Local Hazard Mitigation Plan regional mitigation priorities by the Regional Planning Committee. The “draft final” list of 357 mitigation strategies, together with their regional priority, has been posted online at <http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation/strategies.pdf>. The endorsement will be forwarded to the Executive Board on September 17, 2009.