

Planning to Achieve Resilience In Harris County

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The Houston metroplex is the largest population center within FEMA Region 6, affording vast opportunities to change the way communities grow in the face of increasing disaster potential. The challenges in this booming urban landscape include: little topographic relief, poor draining soils, and high water tables that are exacerbated by intense and extended rainfall events. This area remains one of the most volatile mapping areas within the country and a comprehension of the benefits of mitigation projects of all sizes. In Summer 2018, the City of Houston and Harris County Unincorporated Area passed the most restrictive floodplain management standards, requiring 2 feet of freeboard above the 0.2% annual chance event. Following that, on the one- year anniversary of Hurricane Harvey's land fall, August 25, 2018, voters approved \$2.5 billion in bonds to finance additional flood damage reduction projects throughout Harris County.

Building on the response of communities and residents in 2018, the integrated project team, made up of the Harris County Flood Control District, FEMA, and a cast of non-traditional partners are working closely to evolve risk awareness communications and data delivery throughout the 22 watershed project area. This presentation will provide listeners an opportunity to understand how the project planning effort supported an integrated and holistic approach, identifying and planning for these challenges up front.