

June 6, 2023

Public Notice: Application of Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

Joint Federal, State, Local Public Notice

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and South Carolina Emergency Management Division (SCEMD) have received Horry County's application for Federal grant funding through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). Notice is hereby given of FEMA's consideration to provide funding in the form of a Hazard Mitigation Grant.

This application was created to provide funding for permanent generators to power critical public safety infrastructure within Horry County during storm, wind, and/or flood events when power outages are possible. In order to alleviate loss of function during natural disasters and allow key Horry County Public Safety to be self-sustaining in times of disaster, generators will be needed for six Horry County Fire Rescue (HCFR). Currently, during a power outage, these locations use smaller generators that can only provide power for limited portions of the station infrastructure.

The proposal is designed to provide permanent generators for the following locations: Horry County Fire Rescue (HCFR) Station 01, Battalion 2, located at 5083 LaFon Lane in Myrtle Beach, SC; HCFR Station 8, Battalion 3, located at 6700 Juniper Bay Road, Galivants Ferry, SC; HCFR Station 15, Battalion 4, located at 4368 South Green Sea Road, Aynor, SC; HCFR Station 20, Battalion 2, located at 9620 Scipio Lane, Myrtle Beach, SC; HCFR Station 40, Battalion 1, located at 3316 Old Reaves Ferry Road, Conway, SC; HCFR Station 46, Battalion 3, located at 1720 Pitch Landing Road, Conway, SC.

Horry County will be responsible for facilitating and monitoring the proposed project. Interested persons may direct any comments or questions to Elizabeth Tranter at 843.915.7036 or tranter.elizabeth@horrycountysc.gov. Comments must be received within 15 days of this notice.

Statement of activities

Introduction

Horry County Community Development (HCCD) is seeking funding in the amount of \$404,294.86 in FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant funding to provide for the Acquisition of Generators for Critical Public Safety Infrastructure. The primary source of funding for these programs in Horry County is the Capital Improvement Fund, which will provide \$134,764.95 in matching funds to the proposed project. The entire project budget, to include FEMA funding and the County match, will therefore total \$539,059.81.

Identify the problem:

Horry County is a coastal county located in the northeast corner of South Carolina. The county has a total area of 1,255 square miles, of which 1,134 square miles is land and 121 square miles (313.4 km²) (9.66%) is water. Since 2015, Horry County has sustained significant damage due to Hurricanes Joaquin, Matthew, and Florence. In 2018, Horry County Emergency Operations Center was activated from September 8-October 5 due to Hurricane Florence and the ensuing flooding. During that time, more than 200 roads were closed due to flooding, including major transportation arteries such as Highway 22, Highway 90, Highway 905, Highway 701, and Highway 9. During the height of the flooding, only one lane east bound and west bound of Hwy 501 water available at the Waccamaw River crossing, as the National Guard was required to build barricades to hold back the water. During the flooding, a large percentage of the roads on the western side of the county were impassible due to stream flooding, road wash outs, and sinkholes.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Florence, Horry County Police Department (HCPD) and Horry County Fire Rescue (HCFR), provided critical services for areas that were in close proximity to badly-flooded areas. None of the six (6) HCFR stations five (5) of which are also EMS stations, however, have a permanent generator. Horry County is in the process of addressing generator needs for these HCFR stations. Apart for these planned generator acquisitions, 15 HCFR stations will still be lacking a back-up generators. HCFR currently relies on small portable generators that will power a very small portion of the station for essential functions only. During an event, it is highly likely that standard electrical service to the listed, largely rural facilities, will be adversely affected or disrupted. Because these buildings function as hubs for public safety in strategic locations within the county, it is crucial to have an adequate alternate power supply for each building. A reliable, sustained source of emergency power is not only a best practice, but vital to community resiliency in these three areas.

As the County experiences repetitive and historic levels of flooding, the as well as areas that were cut off in Hurricane Florence, the need for generators supporting the HCFR stations #1, 8, 15, 20, 40 and 46 in the county has become apparent.

Project description:

The project will encompass purchasing and installing six permanent generators, at Station 1, Station 8, Station 15, Station 20, Station 40 and Station 46 of the HCFR.

Horry County Fire Rescue (HCFR):

HCFR responds out of 40 different stations covering 1,252 square miles. HCFR divides the response capabilities in the county into four (4) geographically-distributed battalions where an on-duty Battalion Chief is housed at the station designated as the Battalion Headquarters. The Battalion Chief is a critical component in the response management, logistics and hazard mitigation in that geographic area. The need for such full-functioning stations is critical during disasters. HCFR intends to install backup generators capable of powering the entire station in times of extended power outages caused by natural or manmade disasters. The generator will be hardwired to the station and would be an automatic system that starts when grid power is interrupted. It will also have the necessary safety devices to protect utility workers from feedback into the power grid.

Battalion 2, Station 1, located in Socastee is located right off of Dick Pond Road which runs parallel to Highway 544. This station is located less than a mile south of the Intracoastal Waterway. During Hurricane Florence, the Socastee area experienced heavy flooding, particularly in the Rosewood, Bridge Creek and Lawson's Landing neighborhoods, and access to the area was limited by impassible roads.

Battalion 3, Station 8, located in Galivants Ferry and is ideally suited for rapid emergency deployment of services to the central area of the County. Strategically located between Highway 501 and Pee Dee Highway. This location provides critical services and will reduce response times to isolated areas in the central region of the county.

Battalion 4, Station 15, located in the Bayboro area of Green Sea. The large rural land area and proximity to flood-prone areas such as Adrian and Allsbrook, and major transportation corridors such as Hwy 701 will allow rapid response to affected areas in the northwestern part of the county.

Battalion 2, Station 20, located off of Holmestown Road which intercepts Highway 707 and US 17. Strategically located in the southern area of the county only 3 miles northwest of the Atlantic Ocean, offers provision of critical services in times of major storms where coastal areas readily flood.

Battalion 1, Station 40, located in Hickory Grove is located along Highway 905 with nearby access to Highway 22. During Hurricane Florence, the area experienced heavy flooding, and access to the area was limited by impassible roads. Simpson Creek, fed by the Waccamaw River, lies on the perimeter of the area.

Battalion 3, Station 46, located in Pitch Landing which is in the lower east section of the western corridor of the county, between Highway 378 and Highway 701. This will provide access to isolated areas in this region of the county and reduce response times.

The project will be implemented by Horry County Maintenance Department and will be beneficial for all hazards including but not limited to winter storms, high winds, floods, hurricanes and terrorist or cyber-attacks.