

Citizen Advisory Committee Public Meeting

Jan. 10, 2023

Descriptive text for the title slide: Logo for the North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency. CDBG-MIT Citizen Advisory Committee Public Meeting. Jan. 10, 2023.

Descriptive text for the Slide 2: Introductory notes for the CDBG-MIT Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) Public Meeting on Jan. 10, 2023.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** All right, so, just kind of going through. Again, thank you, thank you for your patience, everybody. Again, extreme apologies for all the technical difficulties. So, I just want to just start here. The following are some housekeeping items to keep in mind as we get going with this presentation. The presentation will focus on the Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Action Plan Amendment only. To review and provide comments on the CDBG-Disaster Recovery Action Plans for hurricanes Matthew and Florence, please visit www.rebuild.nc.gov/about/plans-policies-reports/action-plans.

>> Additionally, if you're a survivor of previous disasters and have questions regarding your FEMA assistance or ReBuild application, please reach out to the appropriate program for additional help. You can reach out to www.DisasterAssistance.gov for FEMA assistance and you can reach out to Ask-RBNC@rebuild.nc.gov or call 833-275-7262 for ReBuild NC assistance. Additionally, you can access the CDBG-Mitigation Action Plan Substantial Action Plan Amendment on NCORR's website at www.rebuild.nc.gov/about/plans-policies-reports/action-plans.

Descriptive text for the Slide 3: Introductory notes (continued) for the CDBG-MIT CAC Public Meeting on Jan. 10, 2023.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** So, formal public comment and/or questions can be submitted via email at publiccomments@rebuild.nc.gov. And then for more information on how people with disabilities can access and comment, please call 984-833-5350. Hard copies of the CDBG-Mitigation Action Plan amendment may be requested by calling 984-272-7053.

Descriptive text for the Slide 4: Agenda for the CDBG-MIT CAC Public Meeting on Jan. 10, 2023.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** So, to begin, we can review today's Citizen Advisory Committee meeting agenda. We begin the meeting presentation by providing a quick introduction of NCORR and cover any accessibility needs. The CAC will run through its role call and establish quorum. The CAC may have other committee business that it needs to discuss and/or any outstanding business from previous meetings. And then we're going to jump into the Action Plan

Amendment presentation. And, as part of the presentation, we will review the roles and responsibilities of NCORR and the CAC. We will then provide an overview of the CDBG-Mitigation Substantial Action Plan Amendment, then we'll go through and discuss the CDBG-Mitigation program activities, allocations, mitigation needs identified and updates to the policies. Lastly, we'll share a timeline of the Action Plan Amendment process and will conclude the presentation with questions when this meeting adjourns.

Descriptive text for the Slide 5: Overview of CAC's leadership.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** So, we're going to just discuss quickly the meeting accessibility resources. And, as a reminder, here's a breakdown of the leadership structure for the Citizen Advisory Committee. We have, Chair Mayor Dontario "Don" Hardy. We have Vice Chair Council Member Owen Thomas and in Secretary position, we have Maggie Battaglin as part of NCORR staff.

Descriptive text for the Slide 6: Meeting accessibility resources for the CDBG-MIT CAC Public Meeting on Jan. 10, 2023.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** And then, additionally, to ensure accessibility for participants of this meeting, there'll be WebEx-generated closed captioning, that will make the transcript. We'll have WebEx-generated closed captioning, and we'll make the transcript and slides available for participants. Also, a translated script of the presentation along with the slides are going to be made available in Spanish, for the Spanish-speaking community members.

Descriptive text for the Slide 7: Introduction to the CDBG-MIT CAC Public Meeting on Jan. 10, 2023.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** OK. So, I'll start quickly before jumping into this, and just quickly establish quorum with the membership of the CAC. I'm just going to try and go into the meeting here. Let's see if I can get that going.

>> Apologies.

>> So, what I'm going to do in lieu of the fact that there's some tech issues here, I'm going to read down the list of members and try and see if folks are present. So, when, you know, when I call your name, definitely, I can take a look at the chat and see if folks are available. Just give me one moment.

>> So, I would ask if, let's see, Don Hardy, is Don Hardy on the line?

>> I don't see anybody on the list. I don't see Don on the list. I'd ask then to see if, Owen Thomas is on the line. If so, you can unmute yourself.

>> **Owen Thomas:** Yes, sir.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** Awesome. Thank you. Thank you for being here.

>> Jeralene Merritt? Is Jeralene Merritt...? Let's see...

>> No, I don't believe she is. Joshua Dick? Are you present? I believe you are. I have unmuted you.

>> Okay, also, I think instead of going down...yeah, if you guys can just give a thumbs up if you're present, that would actually be a lot easier. And then that way I don't have to run between unmuting. Let's see here...

>> Is Keith Graham on the call? If so, please give a thumbs up.

>> Kelley Shinn? Is Kelley Shinn on the call?

>> Awesome. Thank you. I see you. Kitti Hardison? Is Kitti Hardison on the call?

>> I see Keith Graham. Thank you, Kitti.

>> Laressa Witt? Is Laressa Witt on the call?

>> Awesome, Laressa. Thank you for being on the call.

>> LaTasha McNair? Is LaTasha McNair on the call?

>> All right. Let's try then...Lisa Williams? Is Lisa Williams on the call?

>> And then, is Mary Perkins-Williams on the call?

>> Is Bill with NC Justice on the call?

>> Or Brad?

>> Yup, Brad's on.

>> And then, also, is Charles Wright on the call?

>> OK. I did get confirmation. I see...Here he is. OK. Perfect. Thank you.

>> All right. Well, I'm going to jump back into the presentation here.

>> OK. So, as part of level setting for this presentation, the presentation will go over NCORR's latest CDBG-Mitigation Substantial Action Plan Amendment and the newly incorporated draft updates. The Citizen Advisory Committee is required to review the proposed changes and provide written comment in response to the proposed change. These responses are going to be recorded and included in the final adopted action plan as part of the submission to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, also known as HUD.

Descriptive text for the Slide 8: Description of NCORR's roles and responsibilities.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** To provide further content now on NCORR's roles and responsibilities. So, in compliance with 84 Federal Register 45853, NCORR established a Citizen Advisory Committee to solicit and respond to public comment and input regarding proposed mitigation activities, and to serve as an ongoing public forum to inform mitigation projects and programs. Meetings are held in open forums, no less than twice annually, to provide increased transparency in the implementation of CDBG-Mitigation funding.

>> NCORR continues to maintain the mitigation website (www.rebuild.nc.gov/mitigation), which includes important information about the most current CDBG-Mitigation Action Plan, and/or program updates. At the conclusion of the public comment period, all comments are reviewed and NCORR provides responses to all collected comments. Upon approval by HUD, the final version of the Action Plan Amendment will be posted on NCORR's website.

Descriptive text for the Slide 9: Description of the CAC's roles and responsibilities.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** So, further content on the Citizen Advisory Committee; the function of the CAC is to help provide increased transparency of the implementation of CDBG-Mitigation funds by providing input regarding NCORR's mitigation activities and serving as an ongoing public forum to continuously inform NCORR's CDBG-Mitigation projects and programs. The CAC also reviews Substantial Action Plan Amendments and offers comment, if desired. As a reminder, the CAC exists for the term of the CDBG-Mitigation grant, which would be through 2029 or until the requirement of the CAC is abolished or revised by HUD.

>> A note here is that NCORR hosts a webpage dedicated to the CAC, where meeting information is posted, including recordings and transcripts of public meetings, approved meeting minutes and contact information.

Descriptive text for the Slide 10: Overview of CDBG-MIT.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** So, as a way to re-ground us all, I'm going to provide here a brief overview on CDBG-Mitigation. The Community Development Block Grant —Mitigation program is the funding approach from HUD intended to relieve the repetitive cycle of disaster relief allocations to often-impacted areas of the country.

>> So, in Public Law 115-123, established Feb. 9, 2018, the state of North Carolina was allocated \$168 million dollars in Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation funds. Subsequently, in Public Law 116-20, established June 6, 2019, the state was allocated an additional \$34.6 million in CDBG-Mitigation funds.

Descriptive text for the Slide 11: Overview of CDBG-MIT.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** NCORR received a total of \$202.6 million dollars in CDBG-Mitigation funds. The funding was allocated to North Carolina for Hurricane Matthew and Hurricane Florence impacts and is intended to mitigate or reduce damages caused by future storms.

>> As a refresher, what is "mitigation"? Generally, mitigation is any activity that increases resilience to a disaster through the reduction or elimination of long-term risks. This looks different for every community and may look like buying out at-risk properties, investing in stormwater infrastructure, or supporting long-range regional and planning efforts.

Descriptive text for the Slide 12: Description of CDBG-MIT activities.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** As established earlier, the CDBG-Mitigation funding is required to be spent on mitigation activities. The CDBG-Mitigation activities identified in this Substantial Action Plan Amendment are the following: the Strategic Buyout Program, the Public Housing Restoration Fund, the Infrastructure Recovery Program and additional resilience planning. These programs were identified as addressing the risks in NCORR's Mitigation Needs Assessment. The CDBG-MIT activities must always consider and target at least 50% of funding to be spent in communities determined to be "most impacted and distressed" (also known as MID counties) and at least 50% funding to benefit communities who are low- to moderate-income (also known as LMI).

Descriptive text for the Slide 13: Definition of a CDBG-MIT Substantial Action Plan Amendment.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** So, to help with understanding this Substantial Action Plan Amendment, we would like to first define what criteria would trigger a substantial amendment. So, HUD established the following criteria that would require a substantial amendment to an action plan.

>> I also noticed that; I'm just trying to see if folks can hear me a little better. I'm getting a message that you may not be able to hear me so clearly. So, I just want to see if that helps at all.

>> OK. Perfect. I think I've gotten confirmation here. So, HUD established the following criteria that would require a substantial amendment to an action plan. Those activities would be a change in program benefit or eligibility criteria, the deletion or addition of an activity, an allocation or reallocation of \$15 million or more, and the addition of a CDBG-Mitigation defined "covered project." And further context, that a "covered project" is an infrastructure project, having a total project cost of \$100 million or more, with at least \$50 million of CDBG funds regardless of the source. Other CDBG funds would be the CDBG-Disaster Recovery fund, the National Disaster Resilience fund and obviously the CDBG-Mitigation fund.

Descriptive text for the Slide 14: Overview of previous CDBG-MIT Substantial Action Plan Amendments.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** So here, on this next slide, we have a brief breakdown of the previous CDBG-Mitigation Substantial Action Plan Amendments (SAPA). SAPA 4 builds upon the progress made from the previous Substantial Action Plan Amendments. Also, we will be calling them SAPA, just because Substantial Action Plan Amendments is going to be a bit of a mouthful. Some of the updates are the following.

>> The program allocations aimed at diversifying mitigation activities, including the addition of the Public Housing Restoration Fund and the Infrastructure Recovery programs; additional resources to support resilience planning efforts; updated data in the Mitigation Needs Assessment. The next slide provides further context and important takeaways for consideration.

Descriptive text for the Slide 15: Overview of the key takeaways from the CDBG-MIT Substantial Action Plan Amendment 4.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** The key takeaways from SAPA 4, we would like to highlight the following: the updated unmet needs in the CDBG-MIT action plan that reflect the latest Mitigation Needs Assessment, data and programmatic changes; the strengthening of the CDBG-MIT Action Plan by including a comprehensive set of mitigation activities – again, which include Public Housing Restoration Fund, the Infrastructure Recovery Program, additional resilience planning; NCORR retained the Strategic Buyout Program as one of the largest investments in voluntary buyouts in North Carolina; and included programmatic and policy updates to reflect recent upgrades and changes to better serve mitigation goals.

Descriptive text for the Slide 16: Overview of the CDBG-MIT Mitigation Needs Assessment.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** Again, to help set a common understanding of the CDBG-Mitigation Mitigation Needs Assessment requirements, we will detail the following points that are included in the Mitigation Needs Assessment process. So, HUD specifies that CDBG-MIT funds are closely aligned with and seek to bolster the use of FEMA funding programs, such as the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program or HMGP.

>> The CDBG-MIT Mitigation Action Plan and Mitigation Needs Assessment seeks to address the gaps and weaknesses in the disaster recovery cycle using a comprehensive methodology.

>> In accordance with the CDBG-Mitigation Action Plan program guidelines for use of funds, NCORR must specify the connection to the following. And that would be the North Carolina State Enhanced Hazard Mitigation Plan; the Community Lifeline weaknesses addressed through the mitigation activities,; the CDBG-eligible activities set forth in Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act (or HCDA) or through specific waivers provided through HUD, which some examples are acquisition, public facilities and improvements, clearance and remediation of activities, and relocation's, etc.; also the HUD National Objective Criteria satisfied through the mitigation activities, which benefit low- and moderate-income (LMI) persons, vulnerable persons in HUD- or state-identified "most impacted and distressed" areas (or MID areas), and eliminating or preventing slum or blighting conditions.

Descriptive text for the Slide 17: Overview of the CDBG-MIT Mitigation Needs Assessment.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** So, here's some further detail on the updates to the CDBG-MIT Mitigation Needs Assessment as part of this SAPA 4. There were updated data available from sources like FEMA and SBA – Small Business Administration, the continuously evolving disaster recovery needs, the input derived from maintaining in direct communication with communities and stakeholders, updated regulatory requirements and a reanalysis of the programming policies and funding sources.

>> Given the given the on-the-ground reality, NCORR determined that a strategic revision and reallocation of CDBG-MIT funds, with the addition of the Public Housing Restoration Fund and the Infrastructure Recovery Program, were meaningful investments in long-term hazard mitigation. Connecting these mitigation activities along with additional resources for resilience planning, NCORR reaffirms its approach and commitment to reducing and working toward eliminating any risk associated with holistic, long-term recovery.

Descriptive text for the Slide 18: Overview of the updated CDBG-MIT allocations.

>> Edgar Gomez: So, here is an updated CDBG-Mitigation allocation chart. So, here's a closer look at the allocations breakdown, based on the needs assessed and identified by NCORR. We can clearly see the additional allocation differences from SAPA 3 to SAPA 4, and we see that

planning costs were increased by \$5 million to allow for additional activities that will support resilience planning across North Carolina.

>> Additionally, funds were reallocated in the amount of \$36.2 million to include the Public Housing Restoration Fund as a mitigation activity and an additional \$18 million reallocated, which added the infrastructure program as a mitigation activity. The addition of these programs strengthens the mitigation strategies being employed by NCORR and supplements the efforts of the Strategic Buyout Program.

>> The reallocation demonstrates a dedicated commitment to North Carolina's most vulnerable communities as the funding for the Public Housing Restoration program is aimed 100% towards LMI communities and also targets a minimum of 80% for the HUD-defined "most impacted and distressed" areas. The infrastructure program is aimed at a minimum of 70% with LMI communities and targets a minimum of 80% HUD-defined "most impacted and distressed" areas. And in both program cases, we have gone above and beyond those established minimums.

Descriptive text for the Slide 19: Overview of NCORR's updated approach to CDBG-MIT activities.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** So, moving on and discussing here an updated approach, NCORR in continued communication with communities and partners, determined that adding the Public Housing Restoration Fund, the Infrastructure Recovery Program and increased resilience planning programming work to bolster efforts to help vulnerable communities in North Carolina.

>> These adjustments would not only seek to bridge historic gaps for communities that were impacted by Hurricanes Matthew and Florence, but also help incorporate community development opportunities and build up long-term resilience of those communities and address future climate change impacts down the line.

Descriptive text for the Slide 20: Overview of the public housing restoration CDBG-MIT activity.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** So, I'm going to quickly just provide a space here for Tracey to kind of just give a breakdown of the quick summarization here of the Public Housing Restoration Fund. Let me just confirm and see that Tracey is unmuted.

>> **Tracey Colores:** I believe I am.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** Oh, fantastic. Thank you, Tracey.

>> **Tracey Colores:** Thank you so much, Edgar, and good morning to everyone. I'm Tracey Colores, the community development director for NCORR and one of the programs in our portfolio in community development is Public Housing Restoration Fund. The following mitigation activities were reallocated from Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery Matthew and Florence Action Plans to the Mitigation Action Plan.

>> First, the Public Housing Restoration Fund Program will rehabilitate and/or repair public housing authority – otherwise known as PHA – properties that were negatively impacted from Hurricanes Matthew and Florence. The priority targets for this program funding are PHAs located in HUD-defined “most impacted and distressed” or MID counties. And the current total allocation amount is \$36,246,916.

Descriptive text for the Slide 21: Overview of the infrastructure recovery CDBG-MIT activity.

>> **Tracey Colores:** Next, the Infrastructure Recovery Program will repair, replace, rebuild and make more resilient – basically, improve – public facilities that were damaged by Hurricanes Matthew and Florence. The Infrastructure Recovery Program identifies over 80% – actually, 91% – of program funds that will be set aside for services within the “most impacted and distressed” counties. Again, the primary focus of the outcomes are to demonstrate improvements to low- and moderate-income communities and “most impacted and distressed” areas community lifelines. And the current total allocation for this program is \$18 million.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** Thank you, Tracey. Let me see, and next we should have Maggie on, but I'm not sure if Maggie can unmute herself at the moment.

>> **Maggie Battaglin:** This is Maggie Battaglin, NCORR's director of mitigation. While Edgar pulls up the slides, I just have a brief update to provide for the Strategic Buyout Program. For those that have been on the CAC meetings before, we've spoken pretty extensively about the buyout program and there are some small changes to the program's policies that are included within the SAPA.

>> We are working to expand into additional areas that are at risk for future storm damage. We are also readjusting some of our eligible properties in the program. We have a phase 1 and a phase 2 for the program, and in the CDBG-MIT SAPA for the Substantial Action Plan Amendment for we are clarifying that in certain cases, both phase 1 and phase 2 can be administered simultaneously. In addition, vacant lots are now eligible under phase 1 of the program along with vacant properties, and phase 2 properties we've clarified are for properties that are purchased after the storm and include commercial properties as well.

Descriptive text for the Slide 22: Overview of updates to the Strategic Buyout Program.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** Is it up at the moment? Or still no?

>> **Maggie Battaglin:** Yup.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** Awesome. Thank you.

>> **Maggie Battaglin:** Absolutely, thank you guys.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** Yeah, so, Maggie provided the context. Thank you so much, Maggie, for running through that. Apologies for the delay there between her points and the slide.

Descriptive text for the Slide 23: Information about NCORR's CDBG-MIT program implementation efforts.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** So, moving forward, so with regards to the CDBG-MIT program implementation process, this continues to be a critical priority for NCORR, and once this plan has been approved, we will have a better understanding of how program activities evolve as they continue to be implemented.

>> SAPA 4 is a direct result of the implementation priority and is ensuring that the CDBG-Mitigation programming continues to be robust and meeting community needs. The Strategic Buyout Program updates ensure the flexibility of the buyout activities by broadening how the phases are implemented. The Infrastructure Recovery Program projects have already been identified as part of the CDBG-DR Matthew Action Plan, and there may be potential for future project identification down the line.

>> As the programs continue to move forward, we will discuss more detail on implementation in a future meeting later on this year.

Descriptive text for the Slide 24: Information about NCORR's CDBG-MIT planning activities.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** So, moving on to planning. The increased resilience planning efforts add funds for planning activities that allow for improved resilience and mitigation efforts, continue coordination with local and regional entities and allow for sufficient support to plan for the mitigation needs of impacted communities.

>> The planning efforts support continues for projects, identified by the State Disaster Recovery Task Force and their Recovery Support Function subcommittees and coordinating agencies. Some examples would be the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management and the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

>> NCORR works with North Carolina State University's Coastal Dynamics Design Lab as they help create innovative, sustainable, adaptable and resilient design solutions to address the environmental and human needs of impacted communities.

Descriptive text for the Slide 25: Overview of the CDBG-MIT policy updates.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** So, as part of SAPA 4, the policy updates aim to update policies that allow the CDGG-MIT programs to better meet the programmatic goals and align with the latest guidance provided by HUD.

Descriptive text for the Slide 26: Overview of specific CDBG-MIT policy updates.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** Some of those specific policies and updates include eliminating the direct proof of storm damage for the Strategic Buyout Program. Due to updated guidance from HUD, proof of storm damage is no longer an eligibility criterion for the buyout program.

>> Also, anti-displacement updates include one-for-one replacement waiver, which permits NCORR to support alternative reconstruction options for public housing developments that are not suitable for rehabilitation and/or are in a floodplain while remaining compliant with the Faircloth Act restrictions in the creation of new public housing.

>> Additional HUD waivers, would include, NCORR will have flexibility to target LMI communities even if they are under the national objective threshold, which helps NCORR reach more vulnerable populations.

Descriptive text for the Slide 27: Overview of the timeline for the CDBG-MIT Action Plan update.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** So, now that we've discussed the details of the CDBG-Mitigation SAPA 4, unmet needs, the allocations and programming updates, here's some info on what to expect next in this process.

>> Do, just as a review, as of November 18, 2022, the SAPA 4 was shared with the Citizen Advisory Committee. On December 9, 2022, the publication of the SAPA 4 and the public comment period started. January 10, today, was identified by the Citizen Advisory Committee members as the date for the CAC meeting to be held. Next, January 23 of this year, the public comment period, and the CAC feedback deadline. And then all CAC feedback and collected public comments will be incorporated into that, into the action plan. And then in February 2023, the completed Action Plan Amendment will be submitted to HUD. And then later on in quarter 2, and later on this year, there'll be an additional opportunity to have a follow-up meeting on program implementation.

Descriptive text for the Slide 28: Overview of how to submit a public comment on the CDBG-MIT Action Plan SAPA 4.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** So, again, just as a review here for submitting the public comments on the CDBG-Mitigation Action Plan, they can be submitted in the following ways.

>> You can submit them via written comments and those can be mailed to the North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency, PO Box 110465, Durham, North Carolina 27709, and you would put in Attention: Public Comments.

>> You could also email those public comments. Those could be emailed to publiccomments@rebuild.nc.gov. We additionally, make sure to include CDBG-MIT in the subject line.

>> Also, those could be by telephone. For those hearing impaired, you can call 984-833-5350 or the TDD line 1-800-735-2962. Or lastly, by fax transmission, 919-405-7392.

Descriptive text for the Slide 29: Overview of how CAC can submit a public comment on the CDBG-MIT Action Plan SAPA 4.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** Given all this information, we'd like to remind you of how you can comment on this mitigation action plan and give an opportunity to provide feedback. As a reminder, you

can review the draft document on the ReBuild website. Just go to rebuild.nc.gov/about/plans-policies-reports/action-plans.

>> The Committee's comments to the SAPA 4 must be provided to NCORR within the public comment period, which ends January 23, 2023. And the Committee's comments and suggestions on the action plan must be submitted to NCORR in the form of a Committee report or Committee meeting minutes.

>> NCORR will consider the Committee's comments in its review of all public comments received on the fourth Substantial Action Plan Amendment and will include a response in its action plan submission to HUD.

>> If the Committee does not choose to provide formal comments on the proposed amendment during the Substantial Action Plan public comment period, NCORR will note this in the amendment – that the Committee did not provide comment on the proposal amendment. So, you can provide those comments again by emailing publiccomments@rebuild.nc.gov. Again, those comments must be provided by January 23, 2023, by 5 p.m. Eastern.

Descriptive text for the Slide 30: Logo for the North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency. Questions?

>> **Edgar Gomez:** OK, that concludes the presentation. Again, I apologize for the fairly consistent tech issues, and I'll be taking now questions from Committee members. So, if the Committee members, I'm going to go back to the WebEx and just track and see if Committee members can raise their hands, and I can unmute those members. But I'm going to just be presenting for on moment and then go back to the presentation here.

>> OK, so, at the moment, I again wanted to open it up to the members of the Citizen Advisory Committee. Welcome them to raise their hands and then provide questions. I see you, Mr. Wright, one moment. Let me see if I can unmute you.

>> One moment, sir.

>> Mr. Wright, I enabled the ability for you to unmute yourself, but I'm not sure if you're able to do so. Hold on, one second.

>> **Charles Wright:** Can you hear me?

>> **Edgar Gomez:** Yes, sir.

>> **Charles Wright:** Yes, good morning. I just wanted to bring up a quick example. It doesn't have anything particularly to do with your presentation. And what I want to bring up, if Mayor Hardy or Chair or Mr. Owen Thomas, our co-chairs here, to share this with the CAC members, get a consensus for it, and present it as a formal request to NCORR, and that is to change, not necessarily change, but add an additional format to our meetings to include reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts. Not that mitigation is not important, but from the overwhelming majority of the folks I hear from in my community, which is Wayne County specifically Goldsboro, I hear a lot of displaced homeowners talking about their grant and policies and what's going on. And also, it's been taken up as a keen interest in our legislature and I just think we should at least consider adding an additional 30 minutes to have representatives from NCORR to speak to us

about those subject areas because that's the elephant in the room, at least in my particular county.

>> I can't speak for other counties, but if anyone follows our news or newsprint, we can see that's a key issue. And so, doing that, I also want to see if we can increase, once we add that element, if we can increase our meetings every three months. That would coincide, preferably with what our legislature is scheduling their meetings to look at the progress. And we, as Citizen Advisory Committee members, we should not be doing less than what our legislators. If they find reason to believe that's important, certainly we at ground level should feel reason that that's important enough for us to address every three months.

>> And the third thing I just wanted to mention is, as part of NCORR as being Citizen Advisory Committee members, if NCORR could put out a calendar of when NCORR officials are visiting our particular county, regardless of what department it is whether it's in mitigation or what have you. When any NCORR member is visiting our particular county or area location to give briefings on whatever subject matter, if we can be told about that and then have the option to attend. So, that way we can be, as community advisory, we can be abreast of what's going on and not hearing it secondhand or reading about it in the paper. If you're a member in your reading about mitigation or people visiting your area, and you're a member you don't even know about it until you read about it until days later. So, those three things, you know, I just want to put out there. I didn't mean to get you off track, off of your mitigation things. And that's all I have is that I want to put forward to our chair and/or our co-chair, Owen Thomas, and just get a quick vote and see if that's something the CAC members would be in favor of. And if the majority of us are in favor of it, let's move that to NCORR leadership as an adjustment to our present format and our present responsibilities.

>> Did everyone get that?

>> **Edgar Gomez:** We did get that.

>> **Charles Wright:** OK.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** Mr. Wright, I appreciate that. Yeah, I, I do take note. I think we are taking note of that as well. Just for the purposes of this meeting, it is specifically related to mitigation and the expenditure of mitigation funding, but certainly we can evaluate that and yeah, certainly we will be continuing the conversation. But we did want to just provide just clarity on the fact that the discussion topic for today is specifically the CDBG-Mitigation Substantial Action Plan Amendment.

>> And, Matt, if you want to jump in. Yeah.

>> **Matthew Arlyn:** Yeah, thank you, Edgar.

>> I would like to add a couple of things here. And thank you for your comment, Mr. Wright. I don't believe there's a need to vote on that, for the committee members to agree on that. We do hear that suggestion and we're going to take that under advisement. We do know also, and I want to personally say that your continued to advocacy has not gone unnoticed. It's something that we are grateful for at NCORR. It's one way that we learn quite a bit about our recovering

communities. Both the CDBG-DR and CDBG-Mitigation recovery cannot succeed without the continued advocacy and support of you and your community and the folks who are recovering in them, so I thank you sincerely for that. And I know it can be a frustrating answer to hear that we're here to focus on the mitigation action plan and the mitigation outcomes with our federal funds. And we are here to discuss CDBG-Mitigation, particularly and primarily. However, I do hear the concern that there may be a need for some greater dialogue about DR in this format or a similar one, and we'll take that under advisement. We'll respond to that and all other comments in the public comment period. We invite you to continue your advocacy. I know that you occasionally email me with request for information or updates and open a dialogue with me and my team about how the recovery is progressing for your folks and I appreciate that.

>> One element to consider with this format is that we'll not be able to get into granular detail about individual households because we compromise individual identities here. And so, we may have to look at a format that might be a little bit different if we do pursue that, and I think you'd have to understand why we wouldn't be able to discuss particulars in this format.

>> **Charles Wright:** Just policies.

>> **Matthew Arlyn:** Understood. And to your other comment about community engagement and when NCORR's staff are visiting our communities, I do intend, and I think many of our staff intend, to be visible in the communities, to be out there meeting with everybody, to meet with folks who have a stake in our recovery, and we'll take that under advisement as well about how we can increase the transparency of those visits and what we're there to do. So, again, greatly appreciate the comments, greatly appreciate your presence on the committee, and we look forward to continuing to work with you on improving it.

>> **Charles Wright:** Thank you.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** Thank you, Matt. I did want to see if there were any other comments from CAC members, if any of them want to raise their hands.

>> Just checking the notes here.

>> I see that Keith has raised hand. One moment. Let me just unmute you. So, I've unmuted you. You'd have to go in and be able to unmute yourself. Let me know if you can, if you receive the...

>> **Keith Graham:** Thank you. Thank you, Edgar.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** Yes, yes, sir.

>> **Keith Graham:** I just wanted to say that Charles summed it up very well with four excellent points. And thank you, Matthew, for responding.

>> Charles has requested, I think his sentiments definitely reflect me as a CAC member. And I know we said we will hold it for later, but the urgency of at least getting those topics on some agenda, and even as a CAC member, we're hearing it on the ground. So, we're finding a way to

at least have a form of format, even if it's not for today. But, finding a way to communicate that we are going to have a format for it. And that's one. And then, secondly, as we looked at the points of mitigation, when we talk about structure, I saw governmental structure, but I didn't see things that may not be public structures included in the mitigation portion.

>> For the resiliency portion, I could be wrong when I read it and I looked through it. But to make sure that it's clearly defined and addressed for an opportunity. It said the structures have already been selected. In looking for opportunity to deal with structures, that may be hit in these areas.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** Thank you, Keith. Mr. Graham, I appreciate that. Maybe, want to open that up to Tracey, so that she can provide maybe some additional context for you. Let me just try to see if she can if she has the ability.

>> **Tracey Colores:** I believe I can respond.

>> Thank you so much, and it's very nice to see you again, Mr. Graham. And yes, we have a number of projects that were selected earlier in the process of storm recovery for infrastructure, repair and improvement. For example, the community of Princeville has 53 acres that they are going to be using for relocating their public facilities and we are providing the basic water services, stormwater and water supply services and an infrastructure project for them. That's an example of one of the projects that's already been selected. And the reason why the mitigation grant is seen as an excellent new home for these is that, while those projects were selected following Matthew, the grant term is going to be much shorter than the amount of time that communities like Princeville need to get everything done and we don't want to have these dollars go back to the federal government and not have Princeville get the services they need. So, because the term of the mitigation grant, it has a longer time horizon, we're very grateful for the opportunity to give the folks in Princeville, and other communities that we're serving with these dollars, time enough to get to use the funds and get their projects finished. Does that help?

>> **Keith Graham:** Tracey, thank you for that clarification.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** Thank you, Tracey, for responding.

>> I think that, yeah, the easiest way is, if anybody has, if any of the members is able to raise their hands, CAC members to raise their hands. It's an easy way for me to catch and then interact and then unmute you if there are any comments from CAC members.

>> Hey, just as a follow up, just want to remind, non-committee members that they are able to submit their comments via the mechanisms that we mentioned that were described in the presentation – utilizing the public comment email, as well as mailing in any comments. So yeah, just want to provide that that clarification to folks who are not part of the Citizen Advisory Committee.

>> And then, additionally, I do see that, just to kind of provide additional clarification here for the next meeting. So, what we would intend, and again, that would be at some point in the next

quarter, and what we would do is kind of have the similar process of going through pulling the committee members and then confirming what specific dates would work best based on their availability and preference. But, obviously, for that next meeting, we would be discussing, and I'd mentioned that in the presentation, just the progress on implementation, as well as programming to, you know, basically have more of an in-depth discussion. Once the action plan is submitted and approved by HUD, then we're able to further discuss, like, what progress has been made on the programs and provide that information to the CAC again, you know, in a form like this. So, we will certainly be communicating with membership to let them know when that next meeting would be and allow them the opportunity to vote on that and provide that opportunity for us to schedule that, again, in the next quarter.

>> So, yeah, please stay tuned on that.

>> So, again, just want to provide, a reminder for non-committee members with any comments they may have, please do so using the mechanisms that were discussed previously, and I leave it open again one for a couple more moments for anybody in the CAC. So, the last call for questions from the CAC, and if there are no further questions from the CAC members, then we can close the meeting. And, certainly, want to appreciate, everybody who's been able to attend. And again, extreme apologies for the grueling and painful technical difficulties, but again, appreciate it for the folks that were able to stick through and folks who participated. Thank you for your patience.

>> **Charles Wright:** Hello. Am I still here?

>> **Edgar Gomez:** Yes, Mr. Wright. You are here. Did you have any final comments, sir?

>> **Charles Wright:** Yeah, I just wanted to thank Matt for his comments. And I just want to share with our CAC members, and anyone else that is listening and Matt as well, that it can be presented...I've been fortunate enough to hear your meetings before and Zoom. Very informative, very to-the-point. Not argumentative or what have you. But present this information in the same format as you present it to MIT information as far as amendments.

>> Now, as far as, if I'm not mistaken, I think there's been 10 substantial amendments just for Hurricane Matthew alone and 11 versions. And it's been some that's current that's happening as we speak. So, even if the format stays similar or the same, it's just that you'd be focusing on homeowners and those amendments that's potentially affecting the progress of their application. You know whether they go to get a stick-built house, or a modular house, or just a repair now, or whatever that particular amendment addressed. Those are very key important things, and it would show that NCORR is truly looking at the core problem that's out there, and especially in some of our counties. And when I do mention mitigation and things of that, as far as what lakes and rivers, and this in our particular county, and what we can do for it and buyouts, the language I use sometimes they're clueless as to what I'm talking about. But then they immediately switch to subject to talking about their house, or their neighbor's house and what's going on with repairs or what's going on with it. So, I think it's very easy, possible to approach this subject matter without being confrontational and definitely without giving anybody's personal data or bringing up personal situations. Just by bringing up the amendments, those

amendments are going to affect thousands of people that's in the process right now of application. So, it could be brought up where it's factual information presented, the amendment is presented, how the amendment is going to apply to different homeowners without us hearing different stories from each county or each CAC member no, I'm not suggesting anything like that. The meeting couldn't be long enough to handle all of that to begin with, but we could address this just like we did here, with particular amendments and how those amendments are affecting homeowners. So, I'm not asking you to, actually just change what amendments you're talking about and applicability towards the homeowners and those people that we see in our community, and we see their homes and we see them in the grocery store. And we see them all over, some of us see them in church, so these are things that I really, and I'm willing to help if you need any particular help in setting something up or having a format that can be informative and then you may see a lot more questions and feedback from our membership. But I just want to thank you for the opportunity to let me speak and to put forth some suggestions on how to make these presentations in the future a lot more meaningful, and help a lot more people that we personally know and see in our community. I really emphasize, no one has come up and asked me anything about mitigation or buyout anymore, but not to say that's not important. But thank you. And I know you got through this with a few challenges, Mr. Gomez, and I hope it's easier for you moving forward.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** Appreciate you, sir. Thank you. And I think Matt jumps in here.

>> **Matthew Arlyn:** Right. Thank you again, Mr. Wright for the clarification. I think that does help me a little bit better understand the kind of direction that you'd like to see some of the content presented to you. So, that that does help clarify.

>> You know, and certainly the purpose of an amendment, all the time, whether it's for CDBG-Disaster Recovery or for Mitigation, is to streamline or improve or surface a suggestion to the community to make the recovery a little bit better. And so, we'll continue to amend action plans as we need to to get the recovery moving in a better direction. So, it's a valuable tool. It's one that we work in coordination with HUD on and when we amend the action plans, particularly a substantial action plan amendment, we do need to get that cleared through HUD, approved by HUD, before we implement those changes. And so, we work behind the scenes on these action plans, continuously, always looking for what we can do to improve. And that's why you do see, you know, a number of amendments, especially for disaster recovery and occasionally for mitigation, as we learn lessons and seek to improve. And we move as quickly as possible in the amendment so that we can get those changes down into the communities where they're needed. So, thank you for their clarification again. And we've got plenty to respond to here. And I just also want to reiterate to folks, committee members and others, that the public comment period remains open for disaster recovery and mitigation. We do read and respond to every public comment. They're very important to our planning process. Truly. And we appreciate all the comment that we get. And I want to thank you all for attending here today as well.

>> So, I'll turn it back over to Edgar. Thank you.

>> **Edgar Gomez:** Well, again, yeah, thank you, Matt. Thank you to everybody who has been able to attend. I guess yeah, we haven't had any additional comments from CAC members so I'm going to close the meeting. Again, I want to thank everybody for their participation. As Matt mentioned, the public comment period is still open and the opportunity for non-CAC members to provide public comment is available and you can do so up until January 23 by close of business, by 5 p.m. that day. So, again, wanted to thank everybody, all the CAC membership that was present, non-CAC members present from the community. You know, we definitely welcome continued conversations regarding these ongoing processes and appreciate again, your patience and your willingness to participate and look forward to collaborating working with you and ensuring that these processes continue to be impactful in your lives in the most positive way. So, again wanted to thank you. And I will be closing the meeting, and hope that everybody has a great day. Thank you so much and have a good one. Take care all.
[Adjourned at 11:36 a.m.]