

# Citizen Advisory Committee Public Meeting

September 20, 2024

**Descriptive text for the title slide:** Logo for the North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency. CDBG-MIT Citizen Advisory Committee Public Meeting. September 20, 2024.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Yep. We're good. Hello. Good afternoon everyone. We're right at, twelve noon. I'd like to give folks just a few minutes, to join our call this afternoon, and we'll get started shortly.

>> Thank you. Good afternoon everyone. My name is Diane Sanchez, policy and planning analyst with the North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency. I'll be assisting with facilitation today. I'd like to thank you for joining us this afternoon for this public meeting of the Citizen Advisory Committee. I hope you're all safe and well.

>> NCORR, along with state and federal partners, continues to monitor impacts of storm damage and flooding

experienced in our coastal communities this week. As with all major storms, we are also keeping lines of communication open with our general contractors and ReBuildNC homeowners who may have experienced damage or have questions about storm impacts. Before we begin,

>> I'd like to go over a few housekeeping items. Your line was muted upon entry for committee members only. Please unmute your lines should you wish to participate during committee business. During the public comment period, attendees who wish to speak should raise their hand in WebEx. Each speaker will have three minutes to share their comments. You can also submit written comments through the WebEx chat and they will be read during the meeting. We kindly ask everyone to follow the guidelines to maintain a respectful and smooth discussion regarding mitigation efforts.

>> Helping us moderate the chat today is Jessica Southwell, Deputy Chief Recovery Officer. The slide deck, meeting minutes and agenda have been shared for your reference. This meeting is being recorded and will be made available. If you have any questions about your application with the Homeowner Recovery Program, please feel free to contact us at 1-888-ASK-RBNC or reach out to your case manager directly for assistance.

>> Now, I'd like to hand over the meeting to our Deputy Chair, Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas, who will begin the formal portion and guide us through today's agenda.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Thank you, Diane.

>> It is a pleasure to be here, pleasure to serve on this much needed committee. I want to first by, making some remarks or some context regarding our committee.

>> The Citizen Advisory Committee is a 14 member committee established by NCORR and the state Disaster Recovery Task Force to increase transparency in the use of CDBG-MIT funds, obtain public comment and input on proposed mitigation activities, and serve as an ongoing public forum for to inform CDBG-MIT projects and programs. Committee members include

representatives from areas of North Carolina defined by HUD as most impacted and distressed by Hurricane Matthew and/or Florence, as well as representatives with relevant technical and industrial industry experience.

>> I, I'm the Mayor Pro Tem of Lumberton, and I can tell you firsthand that we have experienced, the Hurricane Matthew and Florence.

>> So, as you see in your agenda, I'll just go over quickly what our plans for today are. Welcome and introductions. 15 minutes, Committee business, 15 minutes NCORR updates, 20 minutes. Follow up discussion 20 minutes. Public comment 15 minutes and adjournment for five minutes. Adjournment won't take five minutes, I promise you.

>> So, from here, we'll go into attendance and do a roll call of the committee. Dontario Hardie, chair. Thank you. I think he's on. I got myself. I'm here. Jimmy Tate. Is Jimmy Tate on from Pender County? Geraldine Merritt from Duplin county? She here? Keith Graham from Bladen County?

>> **Keith Graham:** Present.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Okay, that's one, two. We got, Charles Wright from Wayne County. He is joining momentarily. Okay. We got Kelly Shinn from Carteret County?

>> **Kelly Shinn:** Present.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** We got Mary Perkins Williams, Commissioner Edgecombe County? We got William Rowe, member from Brunswick County? Brad Lovin, Columbus County? I think I see him there.

>> **Brad Lovin:** Yeah. I'm here.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Thanks, sir.

>> Kitty Hardison from Craven County? Larissa Witt from Cumberland County?

>> **Larissa Witt:** Present.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Okay. And Alisa Williams from Bertie County? So, it doesn't sound like we have quorum.

>> **Lisa Williams:** I'm sorry. This is Lisa. I couldn't get my off mute.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Oh you're good. Lisa, so.

>> **Lisa Williams:** And I'm actually Beaufort County, not Bertie.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Beaufort? Yes. You're Beaufort?

>> **Lisa Williams:** Yes. Beaufort County.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Beaufort. Okay. We'll have to get that corrected. I'm sorry. Is that seven, or is that sounded like, more like like 5 or 6?

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Yep. I think we have six so far. If Charles Wright is able to join us in just a second, one of our team members was helping him to get connected to the WebEx. We should have quorum if he's able to join.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Okay. So we will, we'll come back to that. So we'll move on to confirmation of positions and expiring terms. Members whose terms expired in May 2024 have received a renewal letters extending their terms of 2026.

>> **Dontario Hardy, Owen Thomas, Charles Wright, Geraldine Merritt, Keith Graham, Kelly Shinn, Lisa Williams, Mary Perkins Williams.** Am I saying Shinn? Right? Is that correct?

>> **Kelley Shinn:** That's correct.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Okay. I just want to make sure. All right. Committee member LaTasha McNair has requested resignation from the committee as she is moving to a new role. This request, was made effective 9/11 2024, which was the date of her request.

>> We will now have 13 committee members moving forward. The governing rules require a minimum of 11 voting members. In May of 2025, excuse me, the terms of the remaining five members will expire. Please keep us informed as that date approaches about your interest in renewing your term.

>> As of May 2025, Brad Lovin, Jimmy Tate, Kitty Hardison, Larissa Witt, and William Rowe. Okay. So we have, proposed dates for our next meeting, which will be in the spring of 2025. We have May 2nd, 9th, 16th and 30th. Obviously, I'm sure a poll will go out to see what meeting better serves us all.

>> Are we looking at virtual? Do we want to meet in person? It would be nice to meet in person, in my opinion. But there again, it kind of just depends. You know, obviously we could do a, we could do a, hybrid option with some virtual, some in-person. What does the committee think on that? Anyone have any thoughts?

>> **Brad Lovin:** Owen, this is Brad Lovin and I'm good either way.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** So I think the most, I think the, the most, realistic option for to be sure that we have our quorum is going to be the hybrid option. You know, so a lot of these committees coming out of COVID have so yet state committees have yet to meet in person. And it's kind of like you're sitting on these committee and you don't know who's on the committee with you hardly.

>> So it'd be nice to get in person. And, well, we'll follow up on that and get a poll out and maybe do the poll on on the option of how to move forward with virtual versus in-person versus

hybrid, and see what the committee thinks of the whole. So I don't want to make the decision for us. So we'll move on from that.

>> Do we have our quorum yet, Diane?

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Still waiting on Mr. Wright to join us.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Right. So from here, we'll move forward.

>> Introduction to the NCORR team and transition to the NCORR update.

>> So the agenda, the NCORR updates will be led by Doctor Jeff Royal. Is it Royal or Royale?

>> **Jeff Royal:** It is Royal only in France and when I'm at McDonald's, Would it be Royale.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Sounds good, doc, I appreciate it. He's the director of production and mitigation. Tracy Colores. Colores. Did I say that properly, Colores?

>> **Diane Sanchez:** That's right.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Is she on?

>> **Diane Sanchez:** She's on.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** I thumbs upped you. Yes, that's right. Thank you.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Good. Community development director and the, they'll cover the action plan review status reports on program activities and reflections from the previous CAC meeting held in May.

>> Diane, if you don't mind, keeping me updated if there's a good time to jump in and, do that approval of the minutes when we do have quorum. It may make sense just to, well, it's whenever. Whenever makes sense to you. Between between speakers.

>> So, from there, we'll go ahead and turn it over to the the team for updates. Thank you so much.

>> Unless anyone has any questions for me. Okay. All righty, team.

>> **Jeff Royal:** And do you want me to pop up the slideshow now?

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Yes, please.

>> **Jeff Royal:** Got it, co-presenter.

>> And this is WebEx, so forgive me if this goes sideways. Alright. Slideshow. All right. All visible, all good?

***Descriptive text for the title slide:*** Logo for the North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency. CDBG-MIT Citizen Advisory Committee Public Meeting. September 20, 2024.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Looks great.

>> **Jeff Royal:** Oh, fantastic. Fantastic. Thank you all for, your time today.

>> And I just wanted to, first of all, extend, a thank you from Matt Arlyn. He could not make it today. He desperately wanted to be here. He enjoys these very much. He enjoys connecting with everyone, and, and and, wanted me to, to convey that, to you and I will be standing in for him, for some of his normal portions that he would be presenting.

>> So we will have to bear with hearing me, quite a bit during this, during this presentation. One of the first things I am trying to figure out is how to advance the slides. Found it a little hidden WebEx button down here.

***Descriptive text for the slide 2:*** Action Plan Review title slide.

>> All right. We'll begin with the action plan review.

***Descriptive text for the slide 3:*** Information on the CDBG-MIT Review.

>> And as we are following up from our last meeting, you know that we were, engaged in a amendment, the strategic action plan for CDBG mitigation. As we, had related before, you know, it's a it's a, it's a large amount of money. It's over 200 just over \$202 million.

>> You can see in these two different grants. I thought one thing to help with this, would be to define exactly what mitigation is. According to HUD. And I'll read this because I have not memorized it. Activities that increase resilience to disasters and reduce or eliminate the long term risk of life, injury, damage to and loss of property and suffering and hardship by lessening the impact of future disasters.

>> There's also a focus on repetitive loss of property and critical infrastructure. So you can see from that mitigation is something that is defined loosely in some ways, and it gives a lot of room, for flexibility because the nature of the disasters are, are often, different and varied. I know from this week, one of the first things we think of is rising water. Naturally. And that's one of the ones that, not only has a more significant impact, or widespread impact, it's one of the more common impacts we have. But of course, there are others.

>> There's, you know, we have the fires. We've we've had, pandemics. There's even slight earthquake damage we've had in North Carolina. So there are other forms of disasters that we've certainly, will undergo. And this, this ability for these funds to mitigate those disasters, is in by design. It's part of the design element we have, through HUD.

***Descriptive text for the slide 4:*** Information on the CDBG-MIT activities.

>> Now looking at what we've or we've produced as far as, developing programs to address the mitigation for future impacts.

>> You can see there's a whole variety of different programs here. One of the things to think of is the programs are varied. And and they may not seem related in that sense, but they are, not

only we defined, as you can see, we define mitigation openly to a very, array of disasters, but also you have to look at it from a both a direct and indirect standpoint.

>> We all easily think of a direct mitigation activity as something is raising a home, expanding a culvert, getting your HVAC unit up. This is a very, very basic, very basic things that are straightforward. But you also have, when you're looking at, mitigating against future impacts, especially against the suffering is looking at the community as a whole. The planning for that disaster.

>> Being able to have the right codes, on, on the books, in order to allow local governments to act and to not only prevent what they can but to respond to what they cannot prevent. We also have different communities that are more vulnerable than others during and after disasters that also need to be serviced, and sometimes in an it may not seem a direct way, but providing things like permanent housing, ownership of housing, can greatly benefit and these communities.

>> One thing that is not flexible though, is who we serve. And you'll see here at least 50% of that funding must go to low moderate income, 50% to most impacted and distressed counties.

***Descriptive text for the slide 5:*** Information on the timeline of CDBG-MIT SAPA 5.

>> Now, since our last meeting, we shared then the amendment with you. We had a rapidly went into a public comment period, 30 days that was wrapped up. We submitted it to HUD and as you can see by the timeline, HUD promptly got back to us and approved this on July 1st. Now we were on the back end of this where we're implementation and follow up on it, which is part of what this meeting is.

***Descriptive text for the slide 6:*** Table of current CDBG-MIT allocations.

>> Here's the specifics. I'm not going to go through specific dollar amounts and percentages. You'll have access to this chart if you have the presentation you can make that available of course, I know we have. A couple of key things to point out in reference to those that flexibility to that, idea that the disasters can be varied, the nature of multiple disasters can occur, and how we have to address those. You can see that the number of programs, through here and how that is distributed, and in the nature of those programs and how closely they are.

>> You can see nearly a third of the money is in the Strategic Buyout program. That is a very direct way. And we'll talk about that more later, of how we would go at mitigating for certain disasters. But it can be it can be costly.

>> We can have the Infrastructure Recovery Program. We've done some infrastructure on this. As we know, FEMA has a large hand in infrastructure, and that's one that serves, you know, wider aspects of the community.

***Descriptive text for the slide 7:*** Table of current CDBG-MIT allocations (continued).

>> But you'll also see, things like homeowner assistance. And Tracy is going to give us a lot of good detail on some of these other programs to get into, you know, that kind of idea of how ownership and homeownership will help and the progress we've made, in those areas.

>> But also note here, like code enforcement, compliance support program, maybe 2% of the budget, but \$5 million. And that goes a long way for local communities to help.

>> The other thing I like to point out in this is those percentages, again, LMI Mid counties, 50%. You can see we're running significantly over that and who we're serving as citizens in North Carolina.

***Descriptive text for the slide 8:*** Information on general action plan updates and philosophy.

>> Now the general idea moving forward. Well, we have a we're toward the tail end of our programs. You know, the current programs, that we have as far as the large ones of Homeowner Recovery, which we're trying to close out, as you can see, one of the grants, by the end of the year.

>> Buyout is in midstream, I would say. And some of the others have various aspects to them where they're getting either toward their end or we've, we've we've brought in a lot of those individuals or communities who were going to help already. And it's a set number.

>> Now, what will we do with future amendments?

>> Well, most of that will be, as you could easily understand, in a business or with your household, if you've got funds allocated to different areas, you may have to need flexibility to move these when needed to serve everybody. And that's the end goal with the multiple programs you saw. We've got individuals and communities in those programs, and we want to get them to the finish line.

>> So any adjustments we make moving forward will more be more be in the realm of, these idea of how we're using the expenditure of the funds we still have, and not so much program redesign. It's just not a time for for that at this point.

***Descriptive text for the slide 9:*** Information on CDBG-DR/MIT funds for future disasters

>> How are we move moving forward with these funds?

>> This week brings up, you know, brings that up to the forefront. You know, a future disaster. Well, we don't have the funds allocated for the future disaster before a disaster occurs that we all know. That's just the way this works.

>> And if a major disaster were to occur, of course, we would need to have that allocation in place to be able to have the expenditures associated with that disaster.

>> However, MIT funds are flexible, and we do anticipate that if there are, individuals who have subsequent impacts and we ongoing-ingly do this, that we're able to service them, we're able to, provide needed, funds permitting. And I would like to make that clear.

>> The ability to, to help them, they they may have subsequent damage. There may be an additional, issue that arises, etc., for how we need to, to address them. So we're hoping that those flexible funds in mitigation will allow us to do that.

**Descriptive text for the slide 10:** Information on new buyout zones.

>> And how that relates to one of the larger programs, the buyout. We've developed a set of zones initially for the, the two major incidents, particularly Matthew. And then we've been servicing that population, and we're coming into a very high risk potential, hurricane season.

>> Decision was made because of that uncertainty to put a pause on any new development of buyout zones while we assess how this season continues. And let's see what happens at the end. So we have that data so we can make an adjustment if needed. Excuse me.

**Descriptive text for the slide 10:** Title slide for NCORR Strategic Buyout Program.

>> And to that strategic buyout program, a very brief overview. You had some of this last time. For those of you who didn't see it, this will be good. But this is how some of the money for mitigating in one of the more direct ways in one of the larger programs, within NCORR.

**Descriptive text for the slide 11:** Strategic Buyout Program overview information.

>> And you can see this is a, it's a voluntary program, straightforward in a lot of ways. We have people. The picture is an extreme example, but this happens. You live in areas, and this is a problem that's been going on for 5,000 years, living near areas that flood and for 4,500 or 4,800 of those years, it made sense to. There were reasons that you would weigh that risk against living in areas that flood.

>> Now it becomes much more difficult to, to service from a private standpoint, both insurance, the local government abilities, etc., to protect against this, these dangers, because the properties are so expensive now becomes much more of a financial burden.

>> There's also obvious, risk to life and limb and in these, in these areas. So a very direct way is to have a purchase of the property. It's deed restricted, owned by the local government, back to green space, and we move the person out directly, remove them from flood danger.

**Descriptive text for the slide 12:** Offer overview information.

>> To do that, of course, we need to know how much on one end to pay them for the property. A third party appraisal. They are allowed to appeal this. We will settle on something that's extremely fair. One of the advantages we have is looking at the current value, which helps, reflect market conditions at the time.

**Descriptive text for the slide 13:** Information on incentive overview for primary resident property owners.

>> And then the other prong of this, you know, one of the barriers that, the population that we're serving is you can see nearly, nearly three quarters of our population, for low to moderate income, have obstacles, barriers in the private financial markets.



>> It's not always easy to go just because you sold a home, a home that may either not have a lot of inherent value in it or due to a mortgage, you may not clear a lot and then go back back in to the home market.

>> So we've developed some incentives that will help these people transition. It's fine to sell a home, but you still have to live somewhere. So on the back end of this, you know, we have these in place, as you can see from both, full incentives, to, you know, to help with a purchase to down payments or if you have a rental option that you like to take, even though we encourage you know, purchasing a home, of course. You know, we do have an incentive there to to assist.

>> Also understanding how we we want to keep citizens in the counties, from which they already, reside. You can see we have an incentive there, that's weighted towards staying in the county. And I know that, that's, you know, that's a key aspect. And it's all something, something that they can take advantage of, to help them in that transition.

***Descriptive text for the slide 14:*** Information and a graph on active buyout applications from May and September 2024.

>> Where are we operating? Well, it's no surprise, Edgecombe, Robeson, Wayne. Columbus have a bulk of these right now. There's a great overlap between the buyout program and the other myriad of programs at NCORR. Where the impacts are, you tend to have, you look at the heat map for all of them. There is a quite, quite a bit of correlation there, of where people are impacted and where they are needing assistance.

***Descriptive text for the slide 15:*** Information and a graph on active buyout applications from May and September 2024, by step.

>> And where we are, within the program and in these different areas. I will warn you on this, the, the Buyout Program is not exactly designed in a formalistic step program that sometimes this kind of graph would, would indicate. There are certain items you have to do before you do others obviously. And a lot of them are being done simultaneously. And or have been completed. I can tell you, if you were to look at a lot of the items listed here, plus the ones that aren't, you know, we just so appraisals, and, you know, looking at title searches, all these other things, you know, we're hovering around 90% of those being completed.

>> The applications are just in different areas of where they happen to be for environmental or, trying to get an award or trying to get a meeting together, to set up, you know, set up the title transfer, etc...

***Descriptive text for the slide 16:*** Images and information on mitigation tactics.

>> And this mitigation, what does it look like? What does it look like on a practical level, when you do a buyout? Well, the obvious one, removing a home from a high risk or repetitive flooded property, that makes a lot of sense. We can see that. But on the flip side, you're returning that that piece of land and hopefully with other pieces of land and we keep, aggregating these

so that the floodplain goes back to its normal function of operating as a floodplain to protect other homes and other areas of cities and towns and communities who are along this is river basin.

>> So we coordinate municipalities in some cases if they need easement for the infrastructure, that would come in to also help with easing flooding conditions or other conditions. That can be addressed, through infrastructure. \

>> And of course, going back to green space. There is something positive in that, I everyone has had a chance to have greenways in their communities, that is a is a good thing. And not only does it, as we said in point two, to help the, the floodplain areas, go back to their normal function, but it also gives a new function for citizensto be able to enjoy some outdoors without having to venture too far.

***Descriptive text for the slide 17:*** Title slide for Community Development projects in mitigation, summary.

>> Now, I will turn this portion of the presentation over to my esteemed colleague, Tracy, who will give you some more of these great projects we have here. At NCORR. I'll be, flipping the slides for Tracy, so she'll have to give me a little queue every now and then.

>> **Tracy Colores:** Thanks, Jeff. We're going to pause one minute for Diane, to give us a quorum announcement. Right, Diane?

>> **Jeff Royal:** I don't have my drum roll machine.

>> **Tracy Colores:** Well, Diane said we now have a quorum, I believe.

>> **Jeff Royal:** There we go.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** As I was. I am so sorry. I was, on mute. Mayor Thomas, I believe that Mr. Wright has joined our call. Mr.Wright. Are you here?

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** [inaudible].

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Checking in for Charles Wright. I believe he may have joined us, via phone. Mr. Wright?

>> Okay. We can try again in a few minutes Mayor Thomas, I'm sorry about that. Checking back in, after the team has wrapped up the updates.

>> **Mayor Pro Team Owen Thomas:** Okay. Sounds perfect.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Thank you.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** And thank you. I appreciate the intro from Jeff. And it's a pleasure to be with you guys this afternoon for an update on how we are investing these mitigation grant dollars in programs to benefit the communities that were most affected by Hurricanes Matthew and Florence. I have provided slides that were distributed to the panel, ahead of time. I'm not going to spend a lot of time on any of the information on any of the slides. I am going to run through them rather quickly in the interest of time, but of course I'm open to any and all questions during the Q&A portion of this meeting, as well as any follow up questions that members of the committee might have. Next slide please.

**Descriptive text for the slide 18:** Community development project updates.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Last time we talked, I told you about the roughly 30 projects that we are providing funding for in the areas of vital infrastructure and new housing. And we are roughly a third of the way through expenditures on the infrastructure projects in this cohort. And most of the housing projects are a little behind that. Next slide, please.

**Descriptive text for the slide 19:** Summary of a project spotlight on the Robeson County Parkton Generator.

>> But I wanted to show you one example of how, you don't have to have a multi-million dollar investment to make a significant difference in a lot of the communities in eastern North Carolina that are using these dollars.

>> The generator on the right was the only way that the town of Parkton had to provide emergency wastewater treatment capacity in the event of a natural disaster. And, as you see, it's a 1957 generator. And, it had outlived its natural usefulness. And when, it's also very close to the ground and when the massive floodwaters came up, it took it out of commission almost immediately.

>> The generator on the right was purchased with these mitigation dollars, and for a little over \$100,000, we were able to not only give the town of Parkton a new emergency generator to cover their needs, we were able to elevate it so it's somewhat better protected against rising flood waters, and we were able to install an automatic switch so that, it no longer requires someone to travel into hazardous conditions to turn on the generator.

>> It automatically will come on when the power goes out. Next slide please.

**Descriptive text for the slide 20:** Summary of a project spotlight on the Duplin County demolition of Magnolia Auditorium.

>> And we talked about the Magnolia Auditorium in Duplin County the last time I was here. This beautiful old building had, had was in disrepair before Matthew took its roof off. And, the resulting property was public hazard, public health hazard, as well as, you know, run the risk of injuring people with falling debris. So the town had had to close off access to its fields its ball fields that were right around it. And they didn't have the money to demolish and clear the area

because of the hazardous materials that had been used in the property's construction back in the World War Two era.

>> So for less than \$100,000, we were able to come in and demolish and completely clear the debris, as well as remediate the hazardous materials that were on site. And now the softball league is able to start up again.

>> Next slide please. Next slide please. Next slide please. Can y'all hear me? Oh there we are. Thank you.

>> The Fayetteville Metro Public Housing authority, when Matthew floodwaters and the subsequent mold made it impossible to use there. And, okay, if you.

>> Jeff, it looks like they've got a little bit ahead of me. If you could back up. One more.

>> **Jeff Royal:** I think there's a delay, Tracy. When I switched. So you kept saying. Next slide. So I ran ahead. Sorry. Okay.

>> **Tracy Colores:** No problem.

***Descriptive text for the slide 21:*** Summary of a project spotlight on the Fayetteville Metro Public Housing Authority.

>> In the case of the Fayetteville Metro Public Housing Authority, we used a little over \$600,000 of mitigation grant funding to repair their community center. And that means that over 642 residents, as well as those in the local surrounding community, once again, will have access to the after school programs, the computer center, the job training, and the other resources that this vital resource was bringing to the community. Next slide please.

***Descriptive text for the slide 22:*** Information on other project progress.

>> And I won't spend any time on any of these projects that we've updated you on, but I'm happy to go into more detail during the Q&A. Next slide please.

***Descriptive text for the slide 23:*** Information on the Homeownership Assistance Program (HAP).

>> This program, as some of you on the panel, I know we're very familiar with this program. The Homeownership Assistance Program provides downpayment funding and closing cost assistance for eligible first time home buyers that are investing in properties in any of the 16 counties that were most impacted by Hurricanes Matthew, Florence.

>> There are two types of assistance. If you are first time homebuyer, you can get up to \$20,000 towards your down payment. And if you're a first time homebuyer whose parents don't also already own a home you can get up to \$30,000 and then all eligible applicants can receive up to 5% of the sales price towards closing costs.

And there's a \$4.5 million budget for this program. Next slide please.

**Descriptive text for the slide 24:** Information on the relaunch of the Homeownership Assistance Program (HAP) on August 19<sup>th</sup>.

>> We relaunched this program August 19<sup>th</sup> and are happy to report that we have 71 closed transactions. We've spent half the money, and helped with almost \$2 million for downpayment and another \$400,000 for closing costs to help.

>> Of all the homeowners that we have helped, 51% identify as Black or African American, almost 70% are either female households or female headed households. And, over half are that first generation home buyer that I talked about, where not only is this a first time buyer, but their parents don't own homes also.

>> On your on our website, you'll find the story of Mr. Clifton. Excuse me, Mr. Owen Clifton II who we helped buy a house in Fayetteville in Cumberland County, and, he has moved his disabled mother in with him. And, and the quote that we have from him on our website is, quote "I'm just so grateful to have something that belongs to me." And we all understand, what that means.

>> And, and of course, we wanted to spotlight him because we are so happy that we would have we've been able to help him get into a home. Next slide please.

**Descriptive text for the slide 25:** Information on the program participant summary.

>> This is a summary of all the programs, beneficiaries to date. And I'll draw your attention to the averages on the right hand side where the average down payment is right in that middle zone of about \$25,000. And you'll see the total downpayment is only \$31,000.

>> So, on average, we are providing about 80% of or, or more of the total downpayment that people are able to put down on the house. Which means that we are lowering their borrowing costs, lowering their monthly payment, and helping them avoid expensive insurance.

>> And the average loan amount for this program is about \$161,000. Next slide please.

**Descriptive text for the slide 26:** Information including a map and a pie chart on geography and racial identification.

>> This map shows the geographic distribution of the homes that we have been able to fund purchases for so far in the program. The 12 counties listed are, 75% of the counties that we have targeted with these funds. And we will be trying very hard to deploy these dollars in all of the most affected counties before we are extended. But as you see, the money is going very fast.

>> And we all know that there's a great need for help in, becoming homeowners for those that are already, able to own a home. And, and we're glad that we're able to use this program to do that.

>> The pie chart on the right shows the, how folks have self-identified and, racial identity and mortgage process. And we wanted to see wanted you guys to be able to see that as well. Next slide please.

**Descriptive text for the slide 27:** Information including a table on the existing community development project by county.

>> The pages that follow this appendix page have been presented to you before. And that's why I stuck them in the appendix because they are, pages that you saw the last time we're together. And I just included them here for reference, because it's a list of all the projects we are funding in community development with these mitigation dollars.

>> Looking forward to questions. Thanks.

**Descriptive text for the slide 28:** Title slide for the Reflections from the Previous CAC Meeting 05/17/24.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Thank you, Tracy. Jeff, could we hold the presentation here for just a moment and send it back over one moment to Mayor Thomas, I believe, we have quorum now, Mayor Hardy is on the call, and I believe Charles Wright is as well.

>> Mayor Hardy?

>> **Mayor Don Hardy:** Yes.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Are you here? Thank you.

>> **Mayor Don Hardy:** Absolutely. How's it going? Good to see you, Diane. And all those on the call. The entire team is NCORR. Good to see y'all. Thank you for the present.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Thank you. Back to you, Mayor Thomas.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** All righty. So we will move forward with our approval of the previous meeting minutes we'll look for a motion.

>> **Mayor Don Hardy:** I make a motion that we approve the minutes of the previous meeting.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** [inaudible] For a second on that.

>> **Keith Graham:** Chairman, and this is, Keith Graham and I second the motion.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** All right. Do we have any discussion?

>> [inaudible] on this zoom calls, you can assume yes. And ask for nos. Yes. And all our names. How exactly do you guys [inaudible] Sometimes I feel like different ways.

>> Can we assume yes. And hear for nos? You're good with that, Diane?

>> **Diane Sanchez:** I'm good with that. As long as you both are comfortable with that. We can move forward.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** All right.

>> **Mayor Don Hardy:** Yes.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** [inaudible]

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Having a little bit of a hard time. Hard time hearing.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Here. Not. [inaudible]

>> All righty. Let's go ahead and move forward. Our partners, Doctor Royal, Tracy, [inaudible] So, are we good to move forward? Doctor Royal, or are we. Are you guys done?

>> **Jeff Royal :**Oh, we got one. Just the last part of the presentation here.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Okay. Sounds good. We'll we'll go ahead and move forward whenever you're ready.

>> **Jeff Royal:** Alright. It. Is the PowerPoint still up? I'm just making sure.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Making it reflections from previous [inaudible].

>> **Jeff Royal:** Like a Barbara Streisand song.

>> This looks back at some of the things we spoke about at our last meeting and, and where we've come with this.

***Descriptive text for the slide 29:*** Notes on the considerations from the previous CAC Meeting.

>> and how we've internalized this and, and taking this in,as well as from other sources. And you can see how to improve access to recovery was a big thing, reaching individuals where they are coordinating with communities and fostering partnerships And we'll briefly go over some of that and a lot of this really hits home with us.

>> I know that, for myself, this was, illustrated, very poignantly when I was on a key turnover. A key turnover is where we, we go after someone's got a new home and we, we, you know, we it's a big event. And they come in to sign the documents, and it's first time they really get to enter after everything's been set up.

- >> And obviously this is an event with a lot of tears and a lot of hugging going on. It's a very emotional time. It's it's fantastic.
- >> But I was walking around with, with a couple that got that got their home, this was in Bladen County. And we wandered out eventually out on the front porch, and I was looking out and I mentioned, I pointed down, I said, you know, just down the road there, you know, I see there's another it was a mobile home that was was been abandoned basically, you could tell they've been flooded.
- >> And I said, you know, it's a shame you know, they didn't, you know, enter into the program and and then I looked across, you know, from where that porch was and I looked at another one is another brand new one over there. I said, well, have to walk over and see if your neighbor if that's one of ours.
- >> He goes, oh, it's not you know, they, they, they replaced that on their own. I said, that's you know, that's why, you know, you're here and we're here and we and we had you as an applicant yet we've got someone down the road that didn't, you know, and one right next door, they didn't, you know, come and apply the program.
- >> And that's one thing we've learned about this, is the difficulty and the challenge really, of reaching down to that individual level within the community to understand where people are and, and and just to hear about you, getting that message that you're getting that, that information there, that we're here and to apply.
- >> One of the great things about continuing as an organization is that we're that message will be echoing because we've put it out before, and people have seen these homes go up. But it's something we're desperately, keen to improve upon, particularly since our last discussions about directly going out in these disasters to the communities themselves and, and letting people know firsthand, face to face, that we're here to help service them.

***Descriptive text for the slide 30:*** Continued notes on the considerations from the previous CAC Meeting.

- >> You can see some of the efforts that we've looked at based on our last meeting. How can the local efforts improve our recovering efforts?
- >> All that. We went over a little bit of this on the budget part of it, augment local code enforcement officers, and and we got \$5 million to assist with that.
- >> Identify what each county does and does not need from the state. You know, we all you don't want to go in assuming.
- >> And then look at how we can help assist document the losses. One of the one of the, the issues is, you know, direct information. FEMA goes in, you know, early from most large disasters. They have a set of data, but they're looking at it from a different perspective. I've done some of those for FEMA. A lot of them are very macro. But sometimes we need the micro. We need to get in. I need to go see Mayor Hardy. I need to go [inaudible] to Kinston. We look at the streets and say, it's this street, this street and this street, but not these two. You know, they got most impacted. That's the kind of granular information that would one would serve us all better.



***Descriptive text for the slide 31:*** Continued notes on the considerations from the previous CAC Meeting.

- >> Engaging, engagement with the communities. As you move up in on the, on the scale of the government entity, you do by nature lose that ability to have that granular look. And that is exactly why we need to always work with the local governments. Strengthen that.
- >> I can tell you with something I've seen before and after we took our programs into the state. That we have made great strides in this. We I know some of you personally have been to the counties. We've we've met with individuals, and that is something that we've, we've we understood that we needed to do. But after meetings like this, we understand even more how more important it is, how critical it is to continue those efforts.

***Descriptive text for the slide 32:*** Continued notes on the considerations from the previous CAC Meeting.

- >> Looking at local operations. Once we do make those, those, those connections and, and some of the planning beforehand. Well, I'm happy to report that we have been having lots of blue sky planning meetings.
- >> We talk about, things we've discussed with you with the CAC meetings. We've had, partners come in for emergency management. We've had people come from FEMA. We've had individuals that have come in giving their, their views from other agencies on how we can work together. And then we bring in a lot of what we've discussed with our local partners into these meetings to retool and rethink every aspect, every policy, every program, every method that we're going to do, planning for that next disaster so we can we will not have some of the, the same issues, that we saw, obviously, in a startup, if you will, for these, these other two.
- >> Only after you go through these can you learn these lessons. And, you know, this was, you know, of course, first, going through a major disaster declarations like this. And I think we've learned a lot, learned a lot in these discussions that we're having. And these will be implemented.

***Descriptive text for the slide 33:*** Continued notes on the considerations from the previous CAC Meeting.

- >> And then how can we look at the damage assessments. And what we've seen from this, if someone who is, had to go down to the granular level of ascertaining if someone's home was damaged or not trying to find a way, to get a talking back for them to looking at widespread damage and doing, and doing assessments over, over neighborhood areas.
- >> One of the things that's very helpful in this is that communication, both with the applicant and the, in the, in the local government entities who can communicate exactly where some of this damage was.
- >> One of the one of the things, you know, we will look at on one side are all the tools we can use. There's new things that are being developed by emergency management, Department of

Transportation where we can look at rain gauge history map flooding areas so we can say, okay, yeah, look at these areas were the ones that were, greatly impacted, etc.

>> But also where those gauges aren't and where people are and trying to get that information, and trying to ascertain that. It was very helpful in Bertie County, particularly, working with individuals there to help get us that kind of information on neighborhoods, which we didn't have from any other source, and they were able to go through because they had documented a lot of the neighborhoods and damages that took place. So we're able to rely on that, for our are used in order to address and service more citizens from that county.

>> So we are working on these. We are continue to review. We continue to take on board all information we, receive and only hope to improve NCORR as we move forward.

***Descriptive text for the slide 34:*** Title Thank you slide.

>> Thank you all.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Thank you, Jeff and Tracy, both for your presentations this afternoon. Back over to you, Mayor Thomas.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** [inaudible] With some thought [inaudible]

>> **Diane Sanchez:** So, so sorry to interrupt. I think we're having.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** [inaudible]

>> **Diane Sanchez:** I think we're having just a little bit of technical difficulty. We'll be back in just a second.

>> Are you back with us? Mayor Thomas, are you back with us?

>> Okay, folks, give us just a second. As we work through these technical challenges, I think if you turn off your camera, maybe you could join us, just on audio.

>> Standby, folks, for just a second. Thank you.

>> Okay. I think he has rejoined us. Are you back with us?

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** I am, can you hear me now?

>> **Diane Sanchez:** We hear you perfectly. Thank you.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** That was very weird. I'm not sure what happened there.

>> So as I was saying that we're going to move forward with follow up discussion with the committee, get feedback, reflections on mitigation efforts. This this discussion can be as long or short as you like. Anybody's free to chime in. And give any feedback that you'd like.

>> If there's not much of that, then we'll move forward to public comment.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Thank you so much. It looks like one of our committee members, Pastor Graham, has a comment he'd like to make.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Okay, good.

>> **Keith Graham:** Thank you, Chairman. First thing I'd like to say is so exciting to hear, Doctor Royal and, and, and them talk about the advancement they've made by going, to local communities, out of the feedback that was given at the last meeting.

>> It's just so refreshing, to see, as changes are made, impacts are being done.

>> And I also want to raise up, even from the last meeting, we talked about, how how important the government side is locally, but also how important it is for local organizations and local community leaders to be involved in the discussions, to help alleviate some of the things Doctor Royal talked about. Not totally alleviate, but to help where one person knows about it and gets service but the next door neighbors don't.

>> One of the things we kind of talked about is how, in, in where people in local communities who may have, may don't look at the government of getting a fair shake or have been rejected from different programs or, or hear bad information and don't feel that they will be successful, they won't step up and go and get the services because it's another government program.

>> To where if you, communicate with local organizations and local community leaders, that are in the communities working with the people, they can help better translate and help better get the movement done to get people to the services.

>> So, I didn't hear you mention that piece, but, I'm just so excited about the strides that you've made and being able to consider, those additional pieces, along the way.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** So thank you so much, Pastor Graham.

>> Mayor Thomas there's, an additional committee member, Lisa Williams. She'd like to also, share her feedback.

>> **Lisa Williams:** Yes, I am I cover five counties, Beaufort, Pitt, Martin, Bertie and Hartford. And in those municipalities, we have some very large, we have Greenville with the city of Greenville, which is a large our largest city of those five counties. But for the most part, we are very small municipalities.

>> I'll give you an example. We have, a small municipality in Beaufort County. The tax [inaudible] Haven. [inaudible] Belhaven today you will find that the main thoroughfare, street is closed. I live in Bell, close to Belhaven. Because it's flooded.

>> There are parts of Belhaven today that, even though houses have been raised, the residents have had to leave because there's a foot of water in their yards or more. The town of Belhaven is very on board with buyout. We've we had started, what was going to be a very large ReBuild project there, which is now on hold. But the problem is, while ReBuild offers some incredible, incentives to the property owners. And that's wonderful. But then these small municipalities are left with large swaths of land that they then have to mow and maintain.

>> Now, out in the county is different out in the county, scattered site. Buyout it can grow back up, return to its natural state and that's that's great. That's what's the purpose. But in municipalities, you can't have six lots between two houses that are just grown up. So you get pushback from the smaller municipalities that are completely on board with tearing these houses down and relocating these homeowners, except for, yes, you're taking some impact value away. It's not a lot. A lot of these houses don't have a lot, a lot of that.

>> They don't bring in a lot of revenue. They're not because of the flooding, the flooding situation their their value is pretty low. But nonetheless there is some some value there.

>> So you're taking that away and then they're incurring an additional expense of mowing these lots. For example, in the town of Belhaven, we were looking at possibly as many as 20 lots that the town's going to have to take home to mow. And they were willing to do that, trying to figure out how they were going to pay for that. But they were willing to try to take on the town because they wanted to help mostly an elderly demographic for the most part, low income. So they were willing to try to take on that challenge of how they would maintain these lots.

>> But I wish moving forward that there would be some consideration, especially for the small municipalities, of the cost of maintaining these properties. Because without their support, if you can't get buy in from your town manager and your council, it's it's almost impossible. You have to have buy in from them.

>> And it's not that they don't want to have buy in, it's just that they're looking at an extremely tight budget already. And when you add in 20 more lots they've got to mow, it can it can become it's quite an expense.

>> So I wish there would be some thought into some kind of incentive, not only for the property owners but for the municipalities themselves. Thank you.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Thank you so much.

>> Mayor Thomas, I'm not seeing any, other participants who have raised their hands and, no comments in chat so far from committee members.

>> There is a comment in chat. I'm happy to read it for you if that's helpful. And we can also read that during the public comment period.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Yeah. If it's not a committee member, then we'll go ahead and move. And the committee doesn't have anything further than we would move forward into public comment. And then we can go from there on that.

>> Is any do we have any more feedback or reflection from the committee? Alrighty. We'll go ahead and move forward to the public comment regarding mitigation efforts.

>> We'll take comments three minutes each and then we'll review the, written comments in the summarized chat.

>> So, Diane, do you want to help me kind of direct, guiding. Direct who if people have raised their hand, and want to speak during the public comment period.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Absolutely.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Thank you so much.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** First, let me pop over into chat to see the comments.  
>> And then we also have one raised hand, from Brad Lovin.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** We'll go we'll go to the raised hands first and then we'll go to the written. Thank you. Brad, please go ahead.

>> **Brad Lovin:** Yeah. Thank you. I was trying to get the hand raised there.

>> The question I was just curious about from maybe Jeff or Tracy is about interaction with local government when you have a, a victim that is in the system in their home is being replaced, is has there been zoning issues that or difficult barriers to over, when it comes to replacing that home?

>> For example, a manufactured or modular home this existing that's been totally flooded or damaged and has to be replaced. I just hear from a lot of a lot of, victims that say my town will not allow me to replace that home because it's a manufactured or a modular home.

>> And I was just curious, and in some of my work. I hear that a lot. And so you have a participant in the program that can't comply because of the local zoning issues. And I didn't know if that was, systematic issue or just one offs here and there, or if it was something that, you know, I'm not even sure if this is the right forum, for that, but but I would raise that as a concern that, could be a problematic to victims of storms, trying to deal with replacing their home. Thank you.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Thank you, Brad.

>> Mayor Thomas, and not seeing any additional raised hands at the moment.

>> There are several comments in chat that I'm happy to read.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Yes, please. That'd be great.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Wonderful. Thank you.

>> The first comment is in response to Lisa Williams, feedback. And it comes to us from Christopher Dreps and the comment reads: Lisa, agree. There are ongoing stewardship monitoring needs. Make sure the deed restrictions are followed. No one is in encroaching upon the land maintenance things such as mowing, getting problem trees, or even making improvements.

>> When NC lands and water fund gives grants for projects they include 25 years of funding in contracts.

>> There is an additional comment from Giovanni Simpson and it reads you stated that determining buyout zones is on hold. How long will that be? Hurricane season spring 2025 seeding of new officials next year after elections. Is that expansion in jeopardy?

>> So far, those are the comments that have been shared in chat and going back to the participant panel, I did see a raised hand. Christopher, go ahead, please.

>> **Christopher Dreps:** Yes. I just wanted to clarify my comment that, what I was referring to in terms of long term maintenance provided through land at the North Carolina Land and Water Fund when they fund land protection projects or restoration stream restoration kinds of projects. That comes from an endowment that has been set up. And it allows for long term, like 25 year contracts that pay the recipient each year to go out and make sure the properties are in decent shape, report any issues that have arisen. It doesn't provide for doesn't provide for actual operation and maintenance, which is some of the stuff Lisa was bringing up. But I just wonder if that's a model that could be considered for those kinds of things in lower income communities.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Thank you, Christopher.

>> Mayor Thomas, not seeing any additional raised hands or comments in chat.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** All righty. Well, at this time, do let me see here.

>> Now, do we want final call on and we're not responding to any of the written yet, is that correct?

>> **Diane Sanchez:** That's correct. We are accepting feedback and reflections. But not a response at this time.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** That's what I thought. All righty then.

>> If there's nothing else from the committee, and if there's nothing else from the committee and/or the public, and we will move forward to Diane for some closing remarks.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Thank you so much to our deputy chair and Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas, for guiding us through the agenda today. We appreciate everyone's participation this afternoon. The recording and transcript of this meeting, along with the meeting materials, will be posted to our site [www.rebuild.nc.gov/cac-meetings](http://www.rebuild.nc.gov/cac-meetings).

>> I hope everyone has a wonderful afternoon and we look forward to seeing you at our next meeting in the spring. Back over to you, Mayor Thomas to adjourn our meeting.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** I appreciate everybody taking time out of their day to get on. I appreciate the committee for taking time out of your day to come on and, and reflect and listen and and be here. We will hopefully have a hybrid option and be able to get in person in May. And if there's nothing else for the good of the order, we'll stand adjourned. Thank you so much.

>> **Laressa Witt:** Thank you.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Great job, Diane, by the way. And Doctor Royal and Theresa. Thank you so much.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Thanks, team. Bye bye. Bye bye. Bye.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Tracy. I'm sorry. It's Tracy. I said Theresa.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** No worries.

>> **Mayor Pro Tem Owen Thomas:** Bye bye.

>> **Diane Sanchez:** Bye bye.