

3.2.2 OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

The public was offered numerous opportunities to comment and provide input throughout the planning process, on the draft Plan at all stages, before Plan approval, and/or at a public meeting. A public meeting was held May 24, 2004 at the University of Louisville's Shelby Campus to publicly kick-off the planning process and to introduce the HAZUS-MH capabilities. Mayor Jerry Abramson hosted the public meeting, which was attended by approximately 100 people, including print and news media. The focus of the meeting was to introduce the planning process, HAZUS-MH, request assistance from the public/private sector and citizens, collect hazard data, and to request partnerships. Todd Davison, Joe Rachael, and Sam Winningham from FEMA Region IV presented at the meeting, as well as Mike Lynch (State Hazard Mitigation Officer) and local officials: Doug Hamilton (EMA), Derek Guthrie (MSD), Curt Bynum (LOJIC), and Jim McKinney (EMA). Two local TV stations interviewed Todd Davison and the interviews were shown on the noon and evening news at both stations.

The public meeting notices as well as a press release for the HAZUS-MH pilot project were widely distributed via print media, e-mail, fax, mass mailings, and websites. Additionally, public information activities were implemented to explain the planning process and encourage input to the Planning Team or Project Staff. Furthermore, to reach the community at-large, including those who do not attend the public meetings, the draft Plan was distributed to public places, such as the library, agencies, and planning and zoning departments. See Appendix 8 for a Compendium of Maps shown at the public meeting and used for the risk assessment. These maps and others have been shown at every Committee meeting and showcases the existing GIS capabilities. See Appendix 9 for an overview of the HAZUS-MH pilot program.

To facilitate comments, all solicitations included a contact name and agency (Jim McKinney, Louisville Metro EMA), phone number, and postal and email addresses. In addition, all draft documents were stored on an ftp site dedicated to the Louisville Metro Hazards Plan (<ftp://ftp.lojic.org/outgoing/MetroHazardsPlan/>).

Opportunity for public comment was provided in the following ways:

- 1) Committee meetings were open to the public;
- 2) Open public meetings were held to inform the public of the planning process and to request participation;
- 3) One-on-one visits by Project Staff with numerous agencies/organizations;
- 4) Presentation to the Metro Council Public Health and Safety Committee;
- 5) Phone interviews with various officials from Metro offices and state agencies;
- 6) Open public meeting for review of the final Plan; and
- 7) Placement of draft Plan at executive offices as well as public libraries, government centers, and health department.

The Project Staff reviewed comments received to determine their impact on the Plan content. Relevant feedback was considered and incorporated as appropriate in all phases of Plan development.