



Grafton Acquisition Where the Rivers Meet

Full Mitigation Best Practice Story

Jersey County, Illinois



Grafton, IL - The City of Grafton, a small tourist-based community in west central Illinois, is located at the confluence of the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers and just north of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers' confluence. The location of the City makes it extremely flood-prone. Prior to the Great Flood of 1993, the City had experienced repetitive flooding but not to the same degree. The 1993 flood inundated almost the entire City for months. It caused substantial damage to over 100 homes.

The City opted to utilize the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) to acquire substantially damaged structures and end the cycle of flood-rebuild-flood. With matching funds provided by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA), the City implemented an acquisition project to acquire 100 properties, many of them located in the floodway of the rivers. The acquisition project moved relatively quickly, and within 2 years the City had acquired and demolished most of the properties. The properties are all dedicated to open space, which provides an unobstructed, scenic view of the rivers.

The success of the program was obvious in 1995 when the City experienced flooding at the 100-year level. In previous years, that degree of flooding would have caused extensive damage; but after the 1995 flood, the City continued to function as if the flood was non-existent. There was almost no damage to homes, and flood insurance claims were drastically reduced. The benefits of an open floodplain are clearly evident in a City that has flooding on an almost annual basis.

Since 1993, the City has experienced flooding in 1995, 1996, and 1998 with no significant damage in any of those events. The reuse of the acquired land is beneficial to the City. With its strong tourism base, the City is using some of the acquired property to connect a bicycle trail that begins at Pere Marquette State Park, just to the north of the City, and ends at the City of Alton, to the south.

Activity/Project Location

Geographical Area: **Single County in a State**

FEMA Region: **Region V**

State: **Illinois**

County: **Jersey County**

City/Community: **Grafton**

Key Activity/Project Information

Sector: **Public**
Hazard Type: **Flooding**
Activity/Project Type: **Acquisition/Buyouts**
Structure Type: **Wood Frame**
Activity/Project Start Date: **04/1994**
Activity/Project End Date: **04/1997**
Funding Source: **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP); State sources**
Funding Recipient: **Local Government**
Funding Recipient Name: **City of Grafton**

Activity/Project Economic Analysis

Cost: **\$4,735,832.00 (Actual)**

Activity/Project Disaster Information

Mitigation Resulted From Federal
Disaster? **Yes**

Federal Disaster #: **997 , 07/09/1993**

Value Tested By Disaster? **Yes**

Tested By Federal Disaster #: **No Federal Disaster specified**

Year First Tested: **1995**

Repetitive Loss Property? **Unknown**

Reference URLs

Reference URL 1: <http://www.floodsmart.gov/>

Reference URL 2: <http://www.state.il.us/iema/>

Main Points

- Using HMGP funds and matching funds provided by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA), the City implemented an acquisition project to acquire 100 properties, many of them located in the floodway of the rivers.
- The acquisition project moved relatively quickly, and within 2 years the City had acquired and demolished most of the properties. The properties are all dedicated to open space, which provides an unobstructed, scenic view of the rivers.
- After the 1995 flood, the City continued to function as if the flood was non-existent. There was almost no damage to homes, and flood insurance claims were drastically reduced.

