



## City Uses HMGP to Restore Park

### Full Mitigation Best Practice Story

#### *Muskegon County, Michigan*

**Montague, MI** - Thanks to Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funds, the site of an old factory in a once neglected part of the small Michigan city of Montague was razed with intentions to create a park in its place. The structure, known as the Chimont building, was built in 1910 and later used for World War II related manufacturing activities. The city sold the land, which was formerly a park.



The property is located next to the Buttermilk Creek just before the creek enters a 48-inch, 800-foot-long culvert that runs beneath Montague's central business district and continues on to enter the White River. The land sits approximately 10 feet lower than the surrounding parcels and during extremely heavy rain, the creek overwhelms the culvert, flooding the site.

The secret to success in this story is not necessarily a single person or group, but the cooperation of numerous people, groups and agencies, along with the HMGP. Without every one of these players, the project would not have been as successful as it was. The City of Montague and FEMA Region V worked closely throughout the project and saw it to completion.

This old Chimont building had become undesirable for manufacturing use and in addition to becoming an eyesore in the city's central business district, it was also a safety concern. HMGP has allowed the City of Montague to raze the structure from the flood zone and restore the site to much desired open space, which the city will eventually restore to a public park.

While there had been various previous ideas to redevelop the structure/property, they were adversely affected by the potential for flooding. The program is a fund-sharing program in which the community applies for federal assistance to improve a potentially hazardous area if a disaster, such as a flood, were to occur. Working closely with FEMA Region V in Chicago, the city was able to propose an idea to finally remove the frequently flooded and damaged property from the middle of the city.

In the end, thanks to the HMGP, the land was cleared and the plan to turn the area into a park can be realized. Infrastructure improvements include a small parking area, walking trails, and playground equipment. The park will also be designed to accommodate a skating rink and sliding hill in the winter.

The City of Montague is a great example of the flexibility of the HMGP. The program was able to provide funding for a project that the city needed to complete, but had been struggling to fund. By simply working closely with FEMA Region V, Montague was able to take full advantage of the HMGP.

For other towns, cities, counties, groups, or individuals looking for similar mitigation assistance, this story shows that the best place to start is with your FEMA Regional office. They are the best source for every piece of information you will need when looking into similar projects.

FEMA and the City of Montague were able to show that restoring the property to a park would be the best use for the land and would eliminate future property loss due to flooding. Thanks to cooperation and the HMGP, the project was completed in a timely, cost-efficient manner that has greatly benefited the city and its residents.

### Activity/Project Location

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

FEMA Region: **Region V**

State: **Michigan**

County: **Muskegon County**

City/Community: **Montague**

### Key Activity/Project Information

Sector: **Public**

Hazard Type: **Severe Storm; Flooding**

Activity/Project Type: **Acquisition/Buyouts; Flood Control; Floodplain Management**

Structure Type: **Concrete, Reinforced; Metal Building**

Activity/Project Start Date: **07/2001**

Activity/Project End Date: **07/2007**

Funding Source: **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)**

Funding Recipient: **Local Government**

Funding Recipient Name: **Montague City**

### Activity/Project Economic Analysis

Cost: **\$335,109.00 (Actual)**

### Activity/Project Disaster Information

Mitigation Resulted From Federal  
Disaster? **Yes**

Federal Disaster #: **1346 , 10/17/2000**

Value Tested By Disaster? **Unknown**

Repetitive Loss Property? **Yes**

### Reference URLs

Reference URL 1: **<http://mylocalgov.com/MontagueMI/index.asp>**

Reference URL 2: **<http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/hmgp/index.shtm>**

## Main Points

- Thanks to HMGP funds, the site of an old factory in a once neglected part of Montague, MI was razed with intentions to create a park in its place.
- The property is located next to the Buttermilk Creek just before the creek enters a 48-inch, 800-foot-long culvert that runs beneath the City of Montague's central business district and continues on to enter the White River.
- While there had been various previous ideas to redevelop the structure/property, they were adversely affected by the potential for flooding.
- In the end the land was cleared and the plan to turn the area into a park can be realized.
- Infrastructure improvements include a small parking area, walking trails, and playground equipment. The park will also be designed to accommodate a skating rink and sliding hill in the winter.



Before the building was razed.



After building was removed.