

For Immediate Release

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Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Task Force Is Underway *Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission To Host Second Meeting*

Springfield, IL November 9, 2007 — A task force has been created and plans are in the works since the kick-off meeting of the Sangamon County Multi-jurisdictional Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan. Representatives from Auburn, Buffalo, Cantrall, Curran, Dawson, Divernon, Grandview, Illiopolis, Jerome, New Berlin, Pleasant Plains, Riverton, Rochester, Sherman, Southern View, Springfield, Thayer, Williamsville and Sangamon County all appointed representatives to lead their respective community in this effort. Community representatives and other task force members that include representatives from the Illinois Emergency Management Agency, Springfield Homebuilders Association, The American Red Cross, and the Sangamon County Highway Department, to name a few, all attended the first meeting held at the Sangamon County Complex.

The Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission was awarded a contract for a Hazard Mitigation Planning grant in the amount of \$46,167 from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. This grant will fund 75% of the cost of plan preparation. The Regional Planning Commission will facilitate development of the plan and Sangamon County will provide the remaining 25% through staff involvement.

The second meeting will be held November 14, 2007 at 5:30pm in the County Board Chamber located on the 2nd floor of the Sangamon County Complex, 200 S. Ninth Street. A citizen survey will be available in hopes to gain public input and involvement on the hazard mitigation plan website, <http://co.sangamon.il.us/NHMP> and in conjunction with community displays that will be in place by the end of November. Please contact your community representative for more information on specific display locations or contact the Regional Planning Commission with any questions by email at HazardPlan@co.sangamon.il.us or 535-3110. Public participation is strongly encouraged and the citizens of Sangamon County are welcome to attend every meeting of the task force.

"The development and maintenance of a Hazard Mitigation Plan is important to the welfare of all of us in Sangamon County," said Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission Executive Director Norm Sims. "Any one of us could be affected by a future natural disaster, and this plan will help the Commission to identify these hazards and find ways to mitigate their effects on our communities and families."

The advantages of having a hazard mitigation plan include protecting citizens and property from the effects of hazards such as tornadoes, flooding and winter storms. Any community that has a hazard mitigation plan that is compliant with the Disaster

Mitigation Act of 2000 is eligible for hazard mitigation grant money from FEMA. The purpose of this plan is to reduce the loss of life and property due to natural disasters by identifying mitigation measures that can be implemented prior to a disaster.

Specific opportunities for public input will be available. For further information on participation opportunities visit <http://co.sangamon.il.us/NHMP>

For more information call Linda Wheeland at *(217) 535-3110* or email HazardPlan@co.sangamon.il.us

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