



FEMA

Hopkinsville Acquisitions: Protecting Residents from Floods

Hopkinsville, KY – Nestled at the base of the Pennyriple Region in southwestern Kentucky, Hopkinsville community officials and residents know first-hand the importance of flood mitigation. Flooding from the Little River has caused 18 major flood events in Christian County in the last 100 years. In March 1997, after major flooding caused over \$75 million in damages and devastated 450 homes, officials in “Hop-Town” (as locals refer to their community) knew it was time to pursue ways to lessen the impact flooding was repeatedly having on their town.

Successful and effective mitigation begins at the local level. It requires the desire of local officials to implement mitigation measures for their communities in order to minimize damage from future hazard events.

Beginning in September 1997, the Town participated in a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) project to acquire properties in the Cherokee Park subdivision, a residential development located near the Little River and at great risk of repetitive flooding. The project acquired 38 properties at a cost of approximately \$1.11 million. Subsequent flood mitigation projects continued to concentrate efforts on Cherokee Park.

As of spring 2006, Hopkinsville has been awarded two additional HMGP grants and three Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) program grants through the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Additionally, the Town has used money from a Housing and Urban Development grant to acquire and demolish two flood-prone homes, as well as \$30,000 from its own budget to acquire a home in Cherokee Park. So far, Hopkinsville has acquired and demolished 66 homes in the subdivision. The Town’s ambitious plans to mitigate flooding do not stop with these home acquisitions.

As these flood-prone homes have been demolished and the property returned to green space in perpetuity, Hopkinsville has been turning the land into a recreational vehicle park to connect with the adjacent Trail of Tears Park.

The Hopkinsville acquisition projects are an excellent example of the goal of mitigation grant programs, whereby a local community, assisted by state and federal agencies, works to reduce or eliminate risk from future hazard events. According to outgoing City Manager Mark Withers, “To achieve success, we must work as hard when it’s dry as we do when it rains.”



Christian County,
Kentucky



Quick Facts

- Year: **1997**
- Sector: **Public**
- Cost: **\$2,035,431.00 (Actual)**
- Primary Activity/Project: **Acquisition/Buyouts**
- Primary Funding: **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)**