



NEW YORK TOWN OF UNION

2019 CRS Progress Report

CID #: 360056

For many years, the Town of Union has participated in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Community Rating System (CRS) program. CRS is a voluntary program that encourages communities to undertake floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum National Flood Insurance Program requirements. Participation in the CRS program requires an annual recertification of the activities that, for the Town of Union, presently result in a 10% reduction in flood insurance policy premiums for properties within Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA) of the unincorporated (part-town) portion of the town. This Progress Report was prepared as part of the annual recertification requirements of the Community Rating System.

In late 2012 the Town of Union was awarded a direct appropriation of \$10,137,818 under the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program. As of December 2019, nearly 95% of that grant has been spent.

The Town of Union Planning Department prepared an Action Plan for Disaster Recovery detailing how funding would be allocated. A number of the proposed activities directly address CRS issues, including the proposed acquisition and demolition of up to 170 structures under the FEMA sponsored buyout program and an Acquisition for Redevelopment program under the CDBG-DR program. Another proposed activity is an update of the town's Floodplain Management Plan that will be expanded to include the villages of Endicott and Johnson City. The plan update will also include a review of existing floodplain development policies and ordinances and identify recommendations for modifications.

The Action Plan also identified a number of capital repair and improvement projects designed to address critical facilities such as roads, water treatment plants, sewage treatment plants, levee repairs and improvements, and storm water and sanitary sewer pumping stations damaged by the storms. The funds will also be used to harden these facilities against future flood events.

Activity 240 *Floodplain Management Plan*

Over the past several years the Floodplain Management Plan has been revised to include data on the flooding that occurred in 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007 and acquisition/demolition activities have been updated. A Request For Proposals for consulting services to update the plan has been moved back but is expected to be issued before the end of 2020. The town is now covered under the multi-jurisdictional Broome County All Hazard Mitigation Plan. An update of this plan had been completed and adopted by the Town of Union in September 2019. The Town of Union component of the plan is posted on the County's website at: <http://gobroomecounty.com/files/planning/pdf/Hazard%20Mitigation/Final%20Draft%20For%20Approval/9-21%20Town%20of%20Union%20Annex%20February%202013%20low%20res.pdf>

Activity 310 *Elevation Certificates*

The Town of Union Building Official continues to use the elevation certificate published by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The town has received the software to prepare electronic versions of Elevation Certificates and will work to make the certifications available online during the coming year.

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Activity 420 Open Space Preservation

During the period 1988 through 2007 the Town of Union purchased more than thirty acres of private property in the Argonne Avenue and River Road areas under several buyout programs. These areas are subject to frequent flooding from the Susquehanna River. The purpose of the buyout programs was to remove homes from the floodplain and return the area to its natural state. Over the past several years, the town has received funding through FEMA and the CDBG-DR program for the acquisition and demolition of structures destroyed during the floods of 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2011. These lots are now part of the town's open space inventory. The town is one of twenty-two municipalities that have approved a regional Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP) that may include passive recreational uses of some of the buyout properties. The work program includes recommendations for extending existing river trails through the buyout area. No structures are proposed on properties acquired through FEMA. As a result of the 2011 flood, the town has now acquired a substantial number of properties in the Fairmont Park, Westover, and West Corners neighborhoods. A total of 149 structures were demolished.

Activity 320 Map Determination

The town and villages of Endicott and Johnson City publicize a service whereby a bank, insurance company, or real estate agent can request floodplain information on a particular property. The service was publicized through an annual mailing to mortgage lenders and insurance agents in August of 2019 (see enclosed sample). The Town of Union Planning Department and Building Official will continue to respond to any verbal or written inquiries for map determinations for properties within the floodplain. The information available for individual properties includes the community number, panel number, FIRM zone, FIRM suffix, date of FIRM index, base flood elevation data used on the FIRM, flood history, and wetland data.

Activity 330 Outreach Project

The Town of Union Planning Department sent out a brochure to residents in flood prone areas containing information on flood hazards and flood safety (see enclosed sample). The brochure also lists some references on how to flood proof a building, flood insurance, etc. that residents can review at their local library.

Activity 330 Web Credit

The town continues to maintain a wide variety of flood related information on its website at www.townofunion.com. This site contains online versions of the town's Floodplain Management Plan, Multi-jurisdictional All Hazard Mitigation Plan, Community Rating System (CRS) activities, links to online flood resources, and other helpful flood related information.

Activity 340 Hazard Disclosure

The town continues to provide information to people looking to purchase flood prone property and advise those people of the flood hazard through our credited hazard disclosure measures. Informational fliers outlining hazard disclosure laws and means of obtaining hazard information are mailed to Real Estate agents, mortgage lenders, and insurance brokers within the Town of Union annually. The town Planning Department and Building & Code Office also provide hazard information to persons inquiring about the purchase of property.

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Activity 350 Flood Protection Library

Reference material on various topics relating to flood proofing and flood insurance is available at the Town of Union Planning Department and at the George F. Johnson Memorial Library in Endicott and Your Home Library in Johnson City. Digital versions of the information is also available on the Four County library system webpage at 4cls.org. The town contacts the libraries annually to update any references. This information is also available for review on the Town of Union web page at townofunion.com.

Activity 360 Flood Protection Assistance

The Town of Union Building & Code Official provides information on flood protection to persons who inquire. The town also maintains information on flood protection measures on the Town of Union webpage at townofunion.com and in the Town of Union Planning Department. The town also sends an annual mailing explaining the costs and benefits of building elevated structures.

Activity 440 Flood Data Maintenance

The Town of Union makes community floodplain data accessible, current, and accurate through the maintenance of paper copies of FIRMS and access to the Broome County Parcel Mapper with updated flood maps. Benchmarks are also documented by the town.

Activity 450 Storm Water Management

The town's subdivision regulations require that developers design storm drainage systems for a ten (10) year storm. The developer must show that storm water discharge does not exceed the discharge that emanated from the property when it was undeveloped. The town has initiated compliance requirements for the Storm Water Phase II requirements. The Town of Union provided a storm sewer outfall map and has submitted its annual report to New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The town has adopted a storm water ordinance to incorporate into its site plan review and subdivision approval process.

Activity 502 Repetitive Loss Category

The Town of Union conducts annual outreach to its repetitive loss areas. When updated repetitive loss data is provided by FEMA, the town maintains a map of the areas and sends annual letters and flood information to addresses located in those identified areas.

Activity 510 Repetitive Loss Plan

Repetitive loss properties were addressed in the town's Floodplain Management Plan. Some of the properties on Argonne Avenue and Verdun Avenue were flooded in 2000, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2011. The town has received new Repetitive Loss (RL) data and it is being reviewed. Some of the structures recently acquired and demolished after the 2011 flood were repetitive loss properties. Many new RL properties were identified as a result of the 2011 flood.

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Activity 510 Floodplain Management Plan Progress Report

The annual review of the Town of Union Floodplain Management Plan will be completed in 2019. There were no substantial revisions to the plan. As mentioned previously, the town will be expanding the scope of the Floodplain Management Plan to include the villages of Endicott and Johnson City. A Request For Proposals will be prepared to hire a consultant to carry out this project. All of the information related to the 2011 flood event will be incorporated into the new plan. The consultant will also be tasked with preparing amendments to the town's floodplain development ordinance.

Activity 520 Acquisition and Relocation

In the past, the Town of Union used federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to purchase flood prone properties, demolish the structures, and return the land to its natural state. The River Road/Argonne Avenue Buyout Program ended in 1993. The town was impacted by four major flood events over the past several years (2004, 2005, 2006, and 2011). The town received a grant from FEMA to purchase and demolish 19 structures that were destroyed during the 2005 flood and met the local funding share requirement through the use of CDBG funding. A second grant was received from FEMA to acquire and demolish an additional 22 properties that were destroyed during the 2006 flood. New York State provided the funds to meet the local funding share requirement. A third round of buyouts was completed in 2009 resulting in the acquisition and demolition of 21 structures.

The flood event of 2011 dramatically expanded the scope of the town's acquisition efforts. FEMA and/or HUD have approved funding for the acquisition and demolition of up to 170 structures that were substantially damaged during the 2011 flood. In 2017, the town completed the demolition of 149 structures. No further acquisitions are planned at this time.

Activity 540 Drainage System Maintenance

The Town of Union Highway Superintendent or other designated Highway Department employee conducts an inspection and debris removal program for catch basins, man-made channels, ditches, and natural drainage ways. The Town Planning Department is currently updating maps detailing the locations of these structures using GPS technology.

Activity 610 Flood Warning Program

The town's flood warning dissemination system is discussed in the Floodplain Management Plan at Section 5.4. During the period since the previous CRS recertification application the Town of Union did not have a flood that qualifies for evaluating the flood warning program. According to the CRS Coordinator's Manual a flood would have to damage more than 10 buildings, cause more than \$50,000 in property damage, or cause the death of one or more persons. There were no such incidents during the 2019 reporting period.

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Activity 630 Dam Safety

Broome County owns and maintains several dams along Nanticoke Creek, Patterson Creek, and Little Choconut Creek. New York State Department of Environmental Conservation inspects the dams annually. These dams meet safety standards developed by the Association of State Dam Safety Officials (ASDSO). There are also a number of flood control structures throughout Broome County. Studies are currently underway to determine the current storage capacity of many of these facilities.

NOTE: The Town of Union, along with the City of Binghamton, Village of Johnson City, Village of Endicott, and towns of Vestal and Conklin were cumulatively awarded up to \$18.6 million under the NY Rising Community Reconstruction Program. These funds are intended to address damages caused by the 2011 flood. The communities have created a regional disaster recovery plan that was approved by New York State. The town has completed bank stabilization projects along Brixius, Patterson, and West creeks. A new Town of Union refuse garage has been constructed outside of the floodplain.



Progress picture of the new Town of Union Refuse Garage