

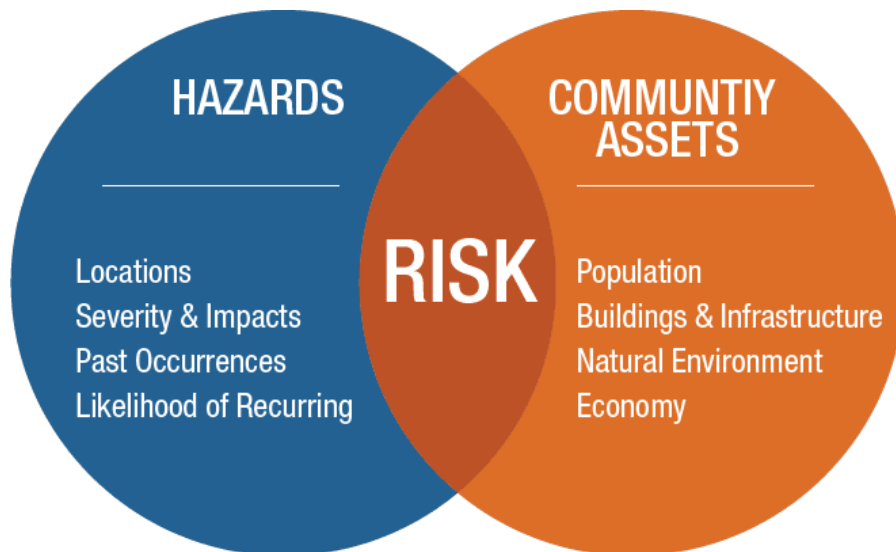


**County of Aransas**  
2840 Hwy 35 N.  
Rockport, Texas 78382

**August 25, 2020**

**Fact Sheet for Hazard Mitigation Grants  
Shell Ridge Road**

1. What is a FEMA 404 Hazard Mitigation grant?
  - Mitigation is any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from hazards.
    - What is the risk to an asset?
    - How will the project reduce the impact of a hazard to the asset?



- Purpose of this grant is to improve local conditions in an area at high risk to the impact of storm events. The project will prevent or reduce damage from recurring storm events. The project will harden the shoreline to prevent loss of shoreline, and prevent or reduce damages to roads and utilities.

- Part of grant process is to determine if mitigation action will save money over the project useful life of the project versus rebuilding after every storm event – i.e. is the project cost beneficial? (FEMA Benefit Cost Analysis Toolkit 6.0)

## 2. What is a BCA or Benefit Cost Analysis?

- **What?**
  - FEMA Software with pre-determined assumptions based on event type and mitigation action.
- **Purpose?**
  - Does the cost of the mitigation action over the expected lifetime of the action outweigh the potential for future damages based on past documented experience.
- **How?**
  - Documentation of damages during recorded events tell us the frequency and magnitude of damage. The action must demonstrate how it will prevent future damages and to what event level.
- For this project, the formula applies a value to loss of road, utilities, to businesses, tourism spending, jobs and loss of the ability of property owners to use the access road.

## 3. Does FEMA have strict conditions that has to be met in order to get the grant awarded?

- Yes - in our case the project must protect the shoreline against a 100 year storm.
- It must stabilize the shoreline in a technically acceptable way, utilizing industry standards.
- It must protect the road and utilities from possible flooding.
- It must be cost beneficial utilizing FEMA's BCA Toolkit 6.0
- It must meet all environmental and historical preservation regulations.

4. Why did the County choose the living shoreline approach and not an alternative approach?
  - This approach has been recommended by Federal agencies to protect sheltered shorelines that have structures (roads) like Fulton Beach Road, Lamar Beach Road and Shell Ridge Road.
  - The National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration or NOAA recommends this approach to address coastline erosion as an alternative to traditional hard shorelines stabilization techniques. See web-site: [http://www.habitatblueprint.noaa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/noaa\\_guidance\\_for\\_considering\\_the\\_use\\_of\\_living\\_shorelines\\_2015.pdf](http://www.habitatblueprint.noaa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/noaa_guidance_for_considering_the_use_of_living_shorelines_2015.pdf).
  - Texas General Land Office (GLO) has designated this project as a Tier 1 project in their Shoreline Resiliency Master Plan.
5. What if you wanted to use an alternate method?
  - **Other approaches are OK to use. However,** it would have to address protecting the shoreline against a 100-year storm to be cost beneficial.
  - It must be a suitable solution to stabilize the shoreline.
  - It must prevent the road from flooding.
  - It must protect existing utilities **from extensive damage or loss of use.**
  - It must be able to meet a BCA score over 1.01.
  - It must be an acceptable solution to FEMA and other Federal & State agencies.
6. What about property rights along the shoreline?
  - As the shoreline erodes away and the mean high tide line moves the shore/land boundary **automatically** change. Anything water side belongs to the **State of Texas- General Land Office (GLO)**, or Navigation District and the US government. Waters of the US.
  - If a property owner has littoral rights and land from the established mean high tide line is theirs.
  - If no littoral rights then its public property.
  - By stabilizing the shoreline and protecting **the coastal area** it will prevent loss of property.

7. Does a FEMA 404 Hazard Mitigation grant have a match requirement?
- Yes - this grant program is a 75% federal and 25% local match.
  - The State of Texas due to SB-7 will pay 75% of the local match requirements.
  - This leaves the local government with owing 25% of the **remaining** local match.
8. Has Aransas County attempted to find funding to meet these match requirements instead of having to borrow **funding**?
- Yes - Aransas County has applied for Restore Act funds, to Rebuild Texas Foundation, to Texas Nature Conservancy, to CCA and GOMESA\* funds.
  - Currently awaiting a ruling on the use of GOMESA funds.
  - Borrowing is the **absolute** last resort.
- \* Note: GOMESA Funds Are generated from off shore oil & gas leases that flow through the Federal Government then back to State of Texas and then back to local governments.
9. Is borrowing the local portion a good use of County resources?
- The **Shell Ridge** project cost is \$3,943,250 with the Federal portion being \$2,957,437. The State of Texas portion is \$739,359 which leaves the County with a match requirement of \$246,453.
  - The breakwaters have a life of 50 years and a new road which could go for years before the County spends money on maintenance.
  - The County gets a \$3.9 mil project, the shoreline is protected, stabilized with sea grasses that promote sea life, a new road raised one foot and the drainage behind the road corrected to remove surface water.
  - A \$3.9 mil project for a \$246,453 investment. **This represents a 16 to 1 return on the County investment.**

### **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Aransas County staff is always interested in hearing public comments. Our contact information for the Long-Term Recovery Team is:

[www.aransascounty.org](http://www.aransascounty.org) or Hotline # 361-790-9496