

DC Flood Task Force Meeting Minutes



**DC Flood Task Force
Meeting Minutes
December 9, 2022
Virtual WebEx Meeting
10:30 am – 12:00 pm**

Meeting began at 10:34 am with the following members, agencies, and support staff in attendance.

Attending Voting Members and Support Staff

Deputy Mayor for Operations and Infrastructure (DMOI)

1. Alan Propp

District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (DC Water)

1. Apera Nwora
2. Salil Kharkar
3. John Lisle

District of Columbia Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE)

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Nick Bonard | 4. Meredith Upchurch | 7. Victor Ukpolo |
| 2. Lily Cheng | 5. Sarah Edwards | 8. Joshua Schnitzlein |
| 3. Jackie Zidar | 6. Andrea Limauro | |

District of Columbia Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA)

1. Vermechia Alsop
2. Melissa Deas

District of Columbia Office of Planning (OP)

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|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Stephen Gyor (VM) | 2. Elisa Vitale |
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District of Columbia Department of Insurance, Securities, and Banking (DISB)

1. Philip Edmonds
2. Angela King
3. Philip Barlow
4. Pratima Lele
5. Stephen Flick

District of Columbia Office of Risk Management (ORM)

1. Jed Ross

District of Columbia Department of Public Works (DPW)

1. Andrew Gerst
2. Melvyn Smith

District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT)

1. Ravindra Ganvir

Attending Consulting Members and Support Staff

Executive Office of the Mayor (EOM)

1. Jonathan Rogers

District of Columbia Office of the People's
Counsel (OPC)

1. Yohannes Mariam
2. Jason Cumberbatch
3. Stephen Dudek

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG)

1. Steve Bieber

District of Columbia Building Industry Association (DCBIA)

1. Cell Bernardino

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

1. Stacey Underwood

Arcadis

1. Tyler Carson
2. Katie Duskin

Facilitation Team - Monash Advisory Group

1. Rachel Kendrick
2. Michelle Pourciau
3. Nick Hall

Other Attendees

1. Thomas Glassic
2. Glenn Hugo

3. Sandra Knight
4. Gerald Robinson

10:35am | Welcome and Opening Remarks

- Summary of Task Force
- Flood Task Force Final Report – will be delivered February 2023
- 2 Action teams – Residential Resilience and Governance & Coordination
- Post Final Report, Flood Task Force will meet annually
 - Discuss progress on Action Plans
 - Discuss budgeting for Action Plan priorities
- **Meredith:** Thanks to everybody for your participation in this year-long effort. We have 28 Action Plans drafted, have achieved our goal of bringing multiple agencies together to work on critical issues. We are in the home stretch, finalizing action plan, working on putting report together. One or two more action team meetings and one more full team meeting. We want to make sure the work doesn't end and will work diligently to implement these plans. Continue working together outside of the task force meetings.
- **Apera:** I echo everything Meredith stated, we should use the momentum of the Task Force to address other pressing issues in DC.

10:42 pm | Agency Roles for Protecting Basement Residents from Flooding



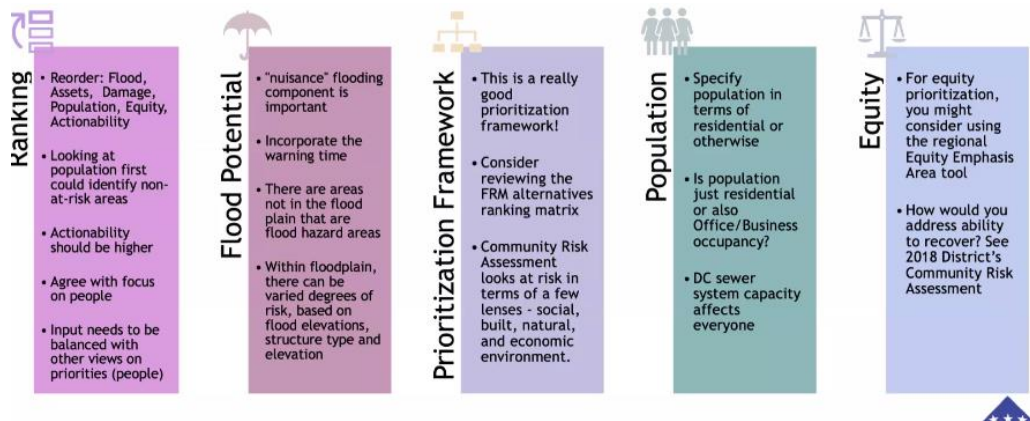
- Basement Flooding occurs when:
 - Storm is greater than what system is designed to capture and transport
 - Storm sewer outlet surcharged in a flooded water way
 - Stream overflows bank and flows into residential areas
- Occupants of basement apartments are unable to escape, during Hurrigan Ida there was a fatality in Montgomery County and 42 fatalities in NY and NJ.
- Occupants need to be protected and aware of storms coming so they can evacuate in time
- In NY & NJ, building codes were updated as a response
- Building code modifications are not recommended as a solution
 - Majority of basement apartments are pre-existing, thus new codes will not apply
 - Retrofits would be expensive if required, and would increase rental cost / decrease available units
 - Flood protection requirements could conflict with Fire Protection
- Education / Mandatory and Voluntary Risk Notification is recommended

- Flood Risk Education tied to Fire Prevention Education – FEMS responds to both emergencies
- Public Awareness Campaigns – PSAs, Radio, Houses of Worship, etc
- Mandate of notification of risk to basement apartments – Sales/Rental Agreements
- Voluntary opt-in by city residents for weather reporting
- AlertDC and custom-built options
- Task force should continue looking for ways to improve building codes, but the focus should be education right now
 - These options don't require the landlords or residents to spend extra money
- Technology areas in addition to early warning system: Monitoring, Modeling, and Early Warning
 - Advance anticipation of flood potential
 - Real time monitoring of start of flooding event
 - Communication of flood potential to impacted parties
- **Meredith:** What are specific next steps here? And who is responsible?
- **Salil:** Connect with folks who do rentals and public assistance in other agencies, bring them into this discussion to equip them with information to send to residents. DC Water will continue to be a champion, we need to figure out who from DC Government is best equipped to help.
- **Nick:** One option (only for legal units) – utilize the new Department of Licensing (formerly part of DCRA), landlords get basic business licenses through them. DC Water could scroll through master address list and see which have Apartment B in address, as a way to find people who live in basements. Licensing is only catching the legal basement units and there are several illegal units, we need to make sure we find these people too.
- **Melvyn:** DC Office of Tenant Advocates, DC Housing is responsible for people placed with a voucher.
- **Vermecia:** We can also do some public messaging; in Chicago they have an extensive write-up on basement concerns. We can utilize Ready DC initiative on behalf of the Mayor, also make it a part of flood week.
- **Salil:** Add as a public message from WTOP during a major storm. Houses of worship are also a good resource, good voice for the community

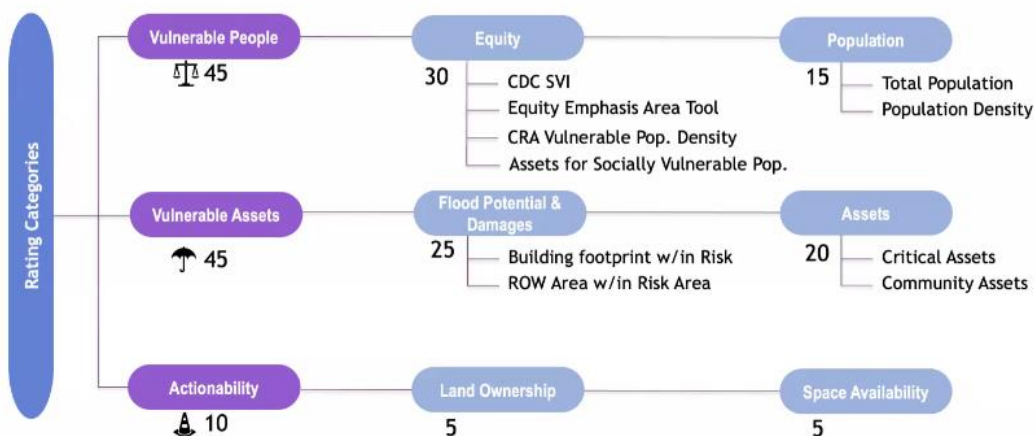
10:54 pm | Infrastructure Projects Prioritization Process

- **Context / Intro from Nick:** Once action plans are approved, the next steps will be to:
 - Prioritize these projects based on agreed-upon criteria
 - Determine funding sources to implement each project
 - FY24 projects already submitted **without** prioritization
 - We are thinking about FY25 and beyond
 - In a separate (but related) effort, DOEE is exploring prioritization methodology
- **Presentation from Arcadis:** Resilience Focus Areas
 - OP's Generalized Policy Map breaks the 500-year floodplains into 10 study areas called Resilience Focus Areas (RFAs)
 - Purpose: identifying areas where future planning efforts and investments should be targeted to building resilience to flooding
- Adjusting these RFAs based on more data
 - Updated to include 15 RFAs to incorporate additional areas and divide existing RFAs to smaller sections

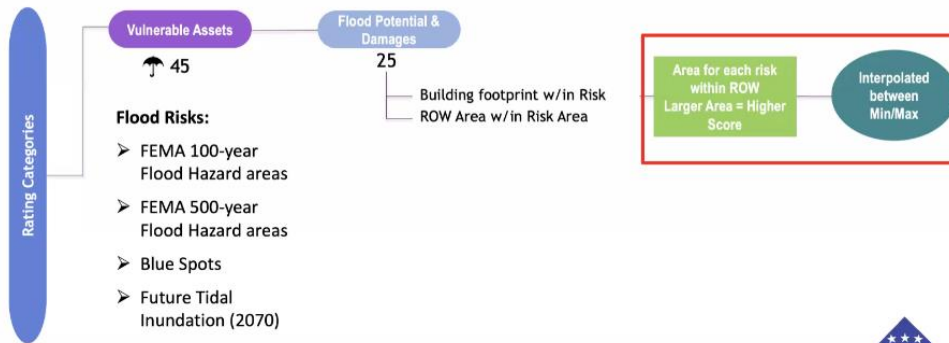
- Example: Southwest (a high risk area) split into more sections
- Incorporating feedback:



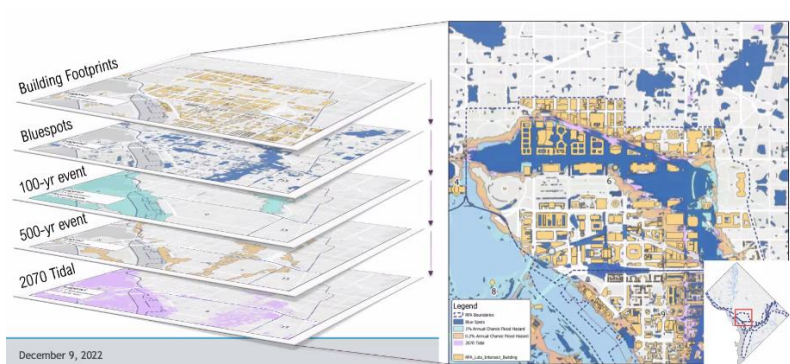
- Prioritization Framework Metrics



- Framework categories are weighted, scored out of 100
- Have done several iterations based on feedback
- Within the three main categories, subcategories that are also weighted
- **Cell:** Are critical transportation infrastructure including highway system, emergency escape routes covered?
- **Tyler:** They are covered indirectly, considered through right of way areas.
- **Cell:** Two critical aspects – transportation and power for escape routes. Need to consider what would need to be abandoned and what would need to be moved near sea level rise.
- **Tyler:** understood, we have also considered sea level rise under Flood Potential & Damages subcategory
- Example: Flood Potential & Damages



- Pull out data for each Flood Risk subcategory, evaluate the risk to then create the score
- Blue spots = natural depressions in the land where water can accumulate
- **Cell:** The greatest risk is from inadequate sewer capacity. Is this captured in any of these categories?
- **Tyler:** Yes, it is captured in the blue spot category, natural depressions are first to fill up due to sewer capacities
- Flood Potential & Damages – Just looking at area within right of way (ROW) in each zone
- Also figured out total area of building footprint and also area of commercial, residential, and industrial space as three categories. These each have separate weighting factors. More buildings, the higher score
- Used GIS spatial intersection to visualize

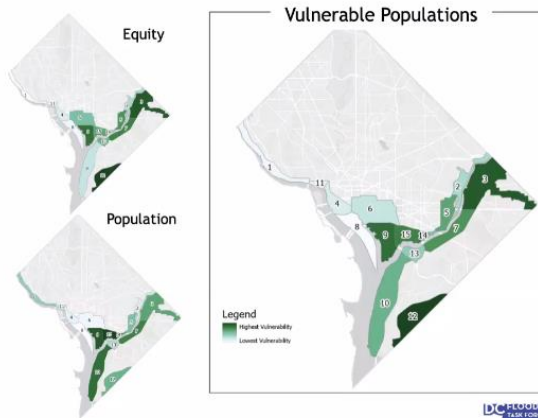


- **Results:**

RFA Ranking – Vulnerable Populations

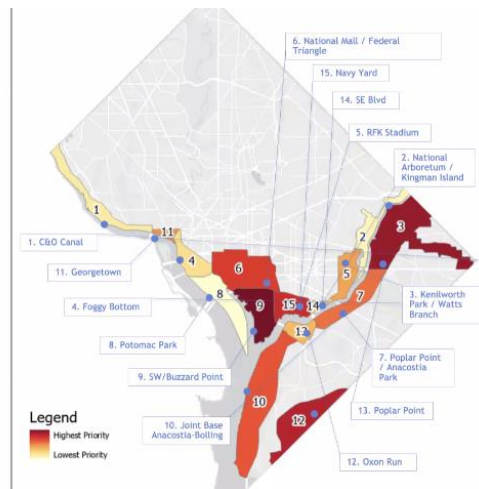
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Rank	RFA #	RFA Name	Overall Score (Max = 45)
1	12	Oxon Run	32.30
2	3	Kenilworth Park/Watts Branch	31.62
3	9	SW/Buzzard Point	29.52
4	15	Navy Yard	29.06
5	7	Poplar Point/Anacostia Park	26.78
6	5	RFK Stadium	20.74
7	10	Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling	18.64
8	14	SE Blvd	18.38
9	13	Poplar Point	15.26
10	2	National Arboretum/Kingman Island	14.56
11	6	National Mall/Federal Triangle	13.50
12	4	Foggy Bottom	10.81
13	11	Georgetown	9.32
14	1	C&O Canal	7.07
15	8	Potomac Park	4.49



RFA Ranking – Overall

Rank	RFAs			
	Overall	Vulnerable Populations	Vulnerable Assets	Actionability
#1	9	12	9	12
#2	3	3	6	13
#3	12	9	15	3
#4	15	15	10	9
#5	10	7	3	10
#6	6	5	12	5
#7	7	10	11	2
#8	5	14	8	7
#9	13	13	1	15
#10	14	2	4	14
#11	11	6	5	6
#12	4	4	13	1
#13	1	11	7	4
#14	2	1	14	11
#15	8	8	2	8



- Next steps:
 - o Final Adjustments – incorporate final feedback and planned mitigation projects into scoring
 - o Project Prioritization – prioritize projects and apply for FEMA grant funding
 - o Living Document – Iterative review and updates to framework as needed
- **Nick:** These next steps are specific to the DOEE project, not the task force. We want to discuss now if this would be useful to the task force, any adjustments we could make
- **Cell:** This is what has been missing, this framework is needed to prioritize and create an overall strategy for resilience in the District
- **Victor:** Was building type considered in the prioritization? We know building type can be a physical limitation that determines which buildings can be mitigated (ex. elevating a building or utilities). Some communities have more buildings with these physical limitations than others.
- **Katie:** We did incorporate building type for flood damages, but not age yet - we are looking into this. We did not incorporate physical limitations.
- **Victor:** there are significant considerations by building types, such as row homes, and it is worth adding that in as a factor
- **Vermecia:** There are different techniques to look at, NY looked at land use as well.

- **Meredith:** Biggest takeaway is that the highest priority matches up with the work we are already doing, focused in Oxon Run and Watts Branch. We tried to do something similar at the beginning of the task force but did not have the time or resources to put it all together, we can use this further
- **Apera:** Very useful information indeed. May be a good idea to have a working session with the TF just to solidify project prioritization specifically for this Task Force
- **Nick:** There is another layer to look at, which is prioritization of projects and how many houses it will impact. We will keep action team members posted about it
- **Melissa:** Agree that the integrated flood model is going to unlock a lot of potential

11:35 am | Relationship to Other District Initiatives

- How to keep momentum and priorities of task force at the top of mind
 - o DC Council Resiliency Forum/Roundtable
 - o Build Back Better Infrastructure Task Force
 - o Environmental Briefing with City Administrator
 - o Climate Task Force
 - o DC Draft Racial Equity Action Plan
- Keep underserved communities at the forefront. DC council has a focus on this. As a task force we have not reported updates to council, but have discussed how to formally let people know of the work we are doing. After report is completed, present to the council
- City Administrator and other stakeholders are interested in priority, funding needs. Once we submit report to them, there will be an opportunity to have ongoing discussions and put a plan in place
- They city just launched the racial equity plan.

11:46 am | Closing Remarks and Next Steps

- Batch 3 Action Plans – Closes for public comment on 12/29
 - o Vote for final acceptance – 1/18

Next Full Flood Task Force Meeting is **January 18, 2pm**

The meeting ENDED at 11:50 am.

Additional Materials

A copy of the staff presentation used during the meeting, the meeting recording, and a transcript of any in meeting chat comments can be accessed at dcfloodtaskforce.org.