

DEVELOPING A COMMUNITY MITIGATION PROGRAM

RECIPES FOR SUCCESS FROM MECKLENBURG COUNTY, NC

ASFPM Presentation

May 23, 2019 - Concurrent Session J3 (4:00-5:30pm)

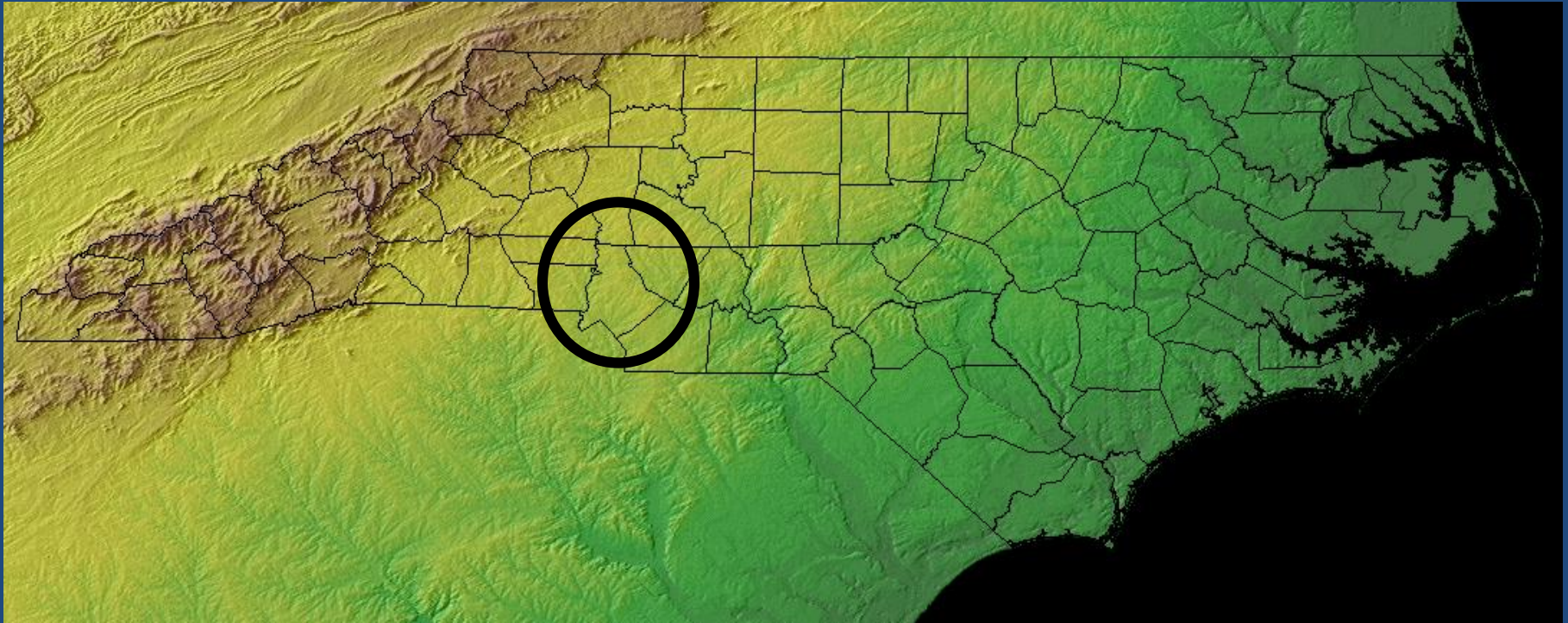
Katie Hermann, GISP, CFM, ESP Associates, Inc.

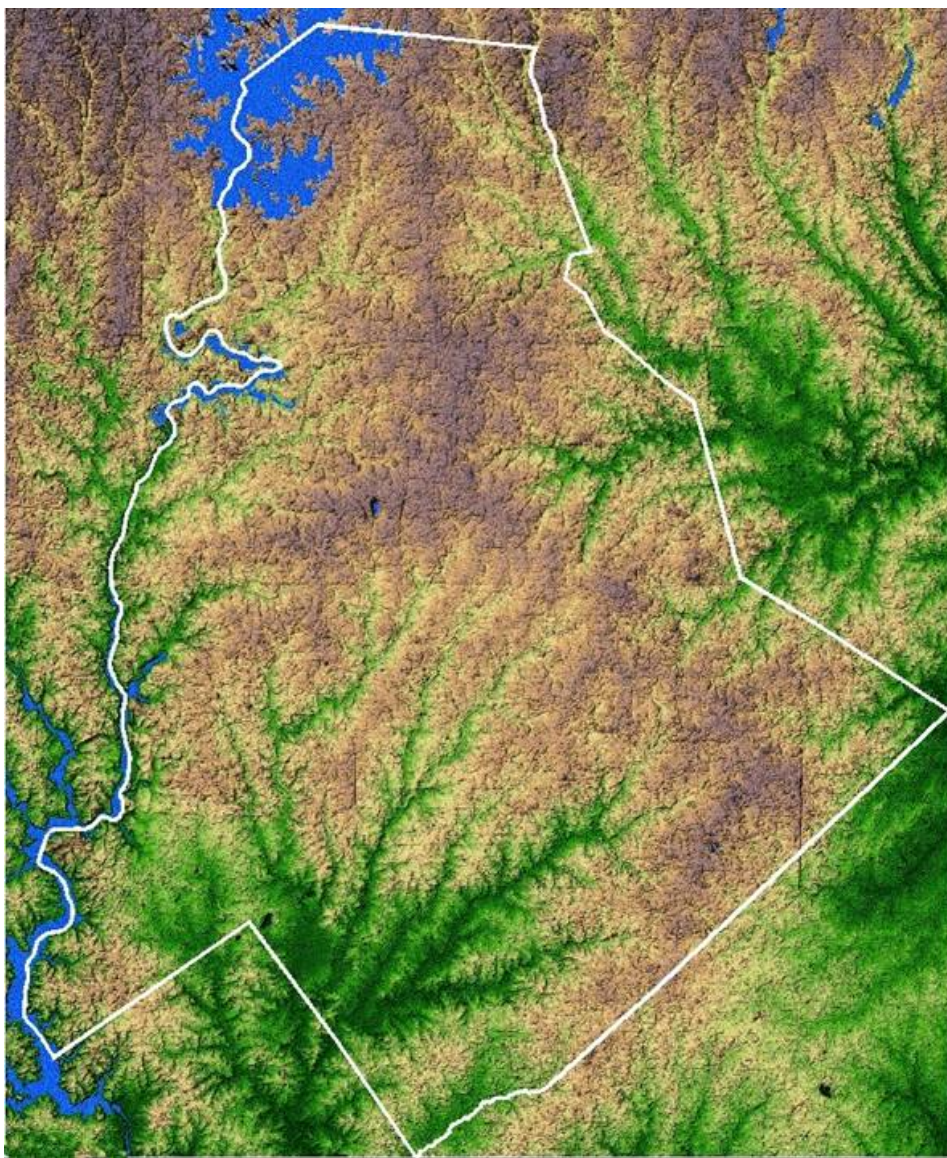
Neal Banerjee, PE, CFM, ESP Associates, Inc.

Ingredients for Success

- Cooperating Technical Partner (CTP)
- Future Conditions Mapping & Ordinance Regulation
- Real-time Flood Warning System (FINS)
- Buyout Program
- Risk Assessment/Risk Reduction (RARR) tool
- Flood Mitigation Grant Program (RetroFIT)

CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG STORMWATER SERVICES OVERVIEW





Significant Flood Risk

- Most populated county in NC
- 370+ miles of FEMA streams
- 4,000+ Buildings in Floodplain

Progressive/Proactive Program

- One of first designated stand alone CTPs
- CRS Class 4
- Sophisticated flood mitigation planning tools (RARR)
- 400+ buyouts and marquee community amenity projects
- Local flood mitigation grant program

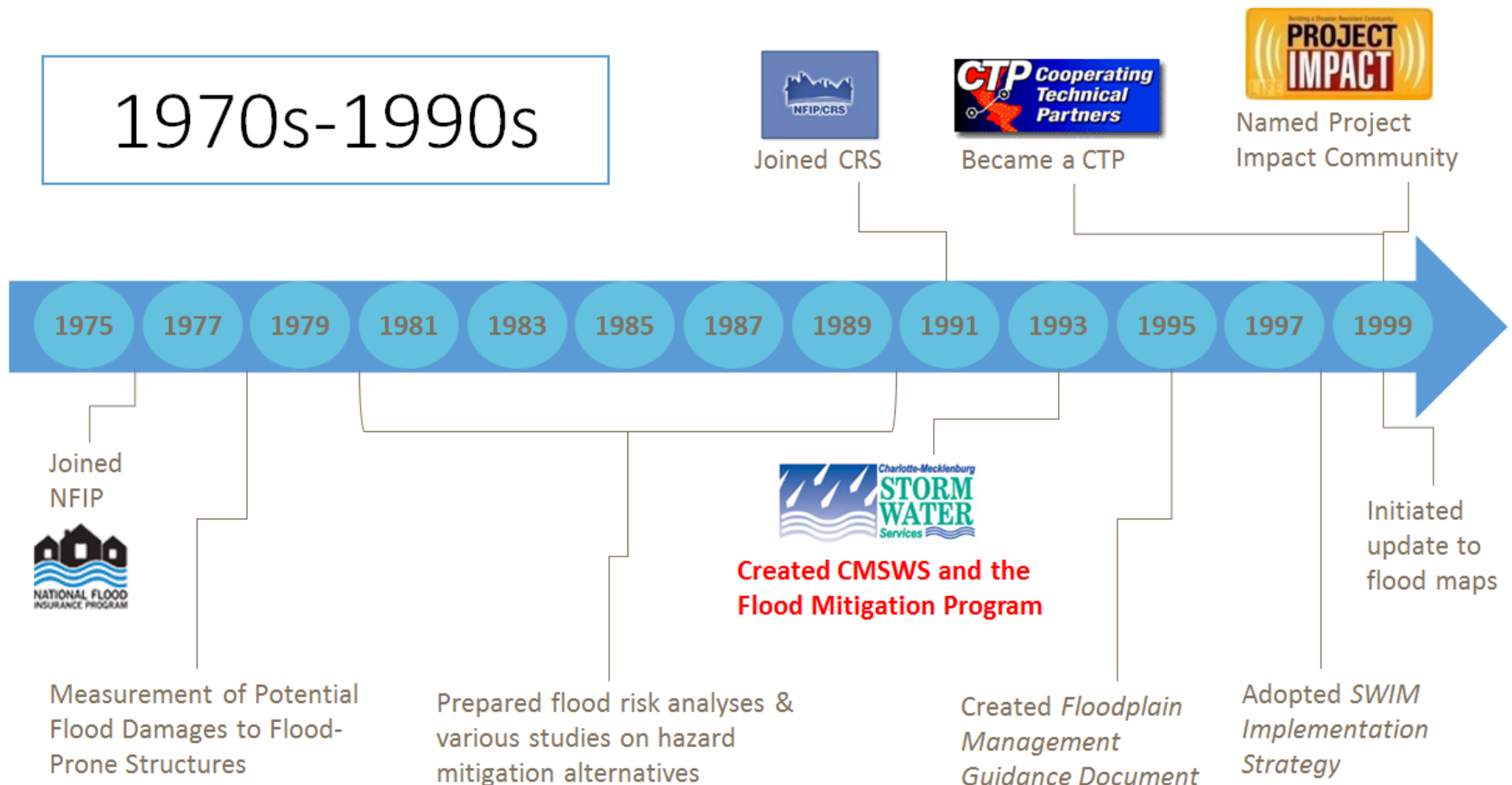
Higher Standards

- Regulates to future conditions
- Floodways on all streams based on lower allowable surcharges

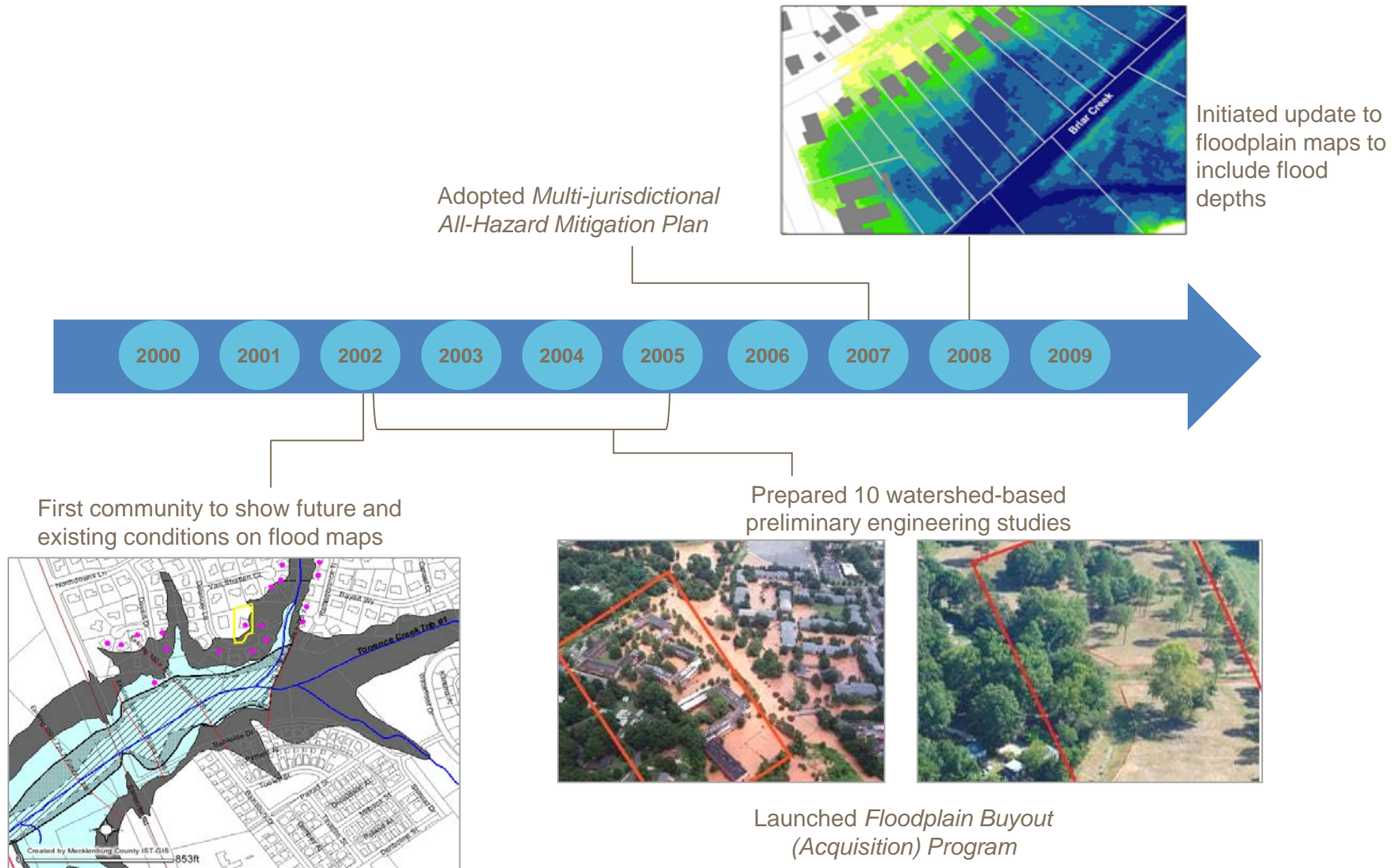
Current Status of Mitigation Program

- Current mitigation measure – financial spending
 - Largely dependent on availability of FEMA grants
 - Grouped “marquee” projects, post-storm (Quick Buy), etc.
- Much of “low-hanging” projects have been picked
 - May see diminishing return
 - Less availability for grant funds, more reliance on local funds
- Establish “risk-based” mitigation annual target/goal
 - Level of service focus
 - Needs based budget
 - Maintain focus/follow-through on reducing risk
 - RARR Plan is backbone of data-driven engine
 - Still continue opportunistic projects where available, but don’t rely on it

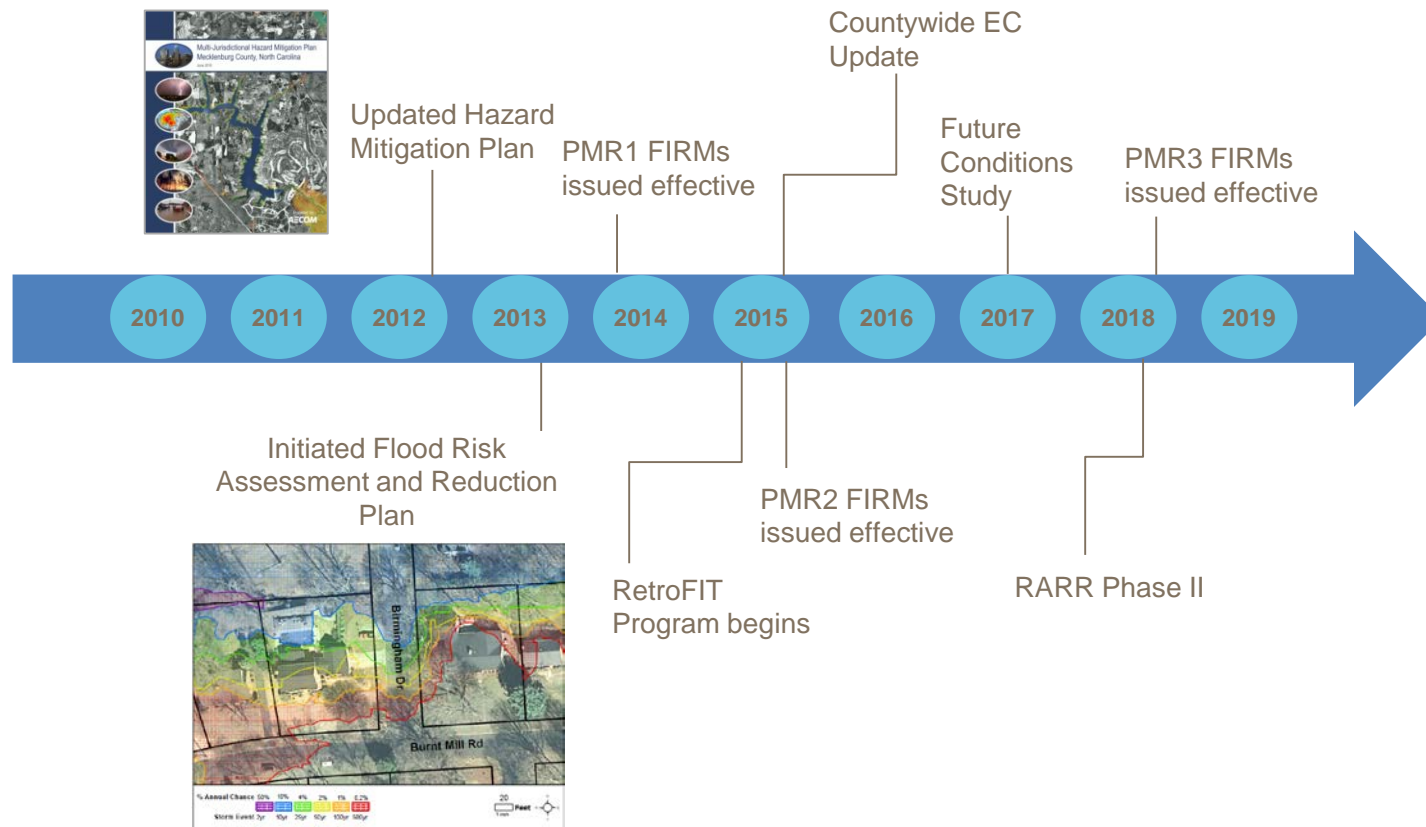
CMSWS's Floodplain Program: 1970 – 1999



CMSWS's Floodplain Program: 2000-2009



CMSWS's Floodplain Program: 2010-Present



Local Initiative Overview

Buyout Program

- Voluntary acquisition over 400 floodprone structures since 2000
- \$67M spent, but over 50% funding from grants/partnerships
- Combined with greenway/amenity which has created several marquee projects



RetroFIT Program

- “Community” grant to offer financial (75% - 95%) & technical assistance for property owners to reduce flood risk
- Target properties that have risk, but may not be served by other initiatives
- RARR Risk score used to initial identify qualifying properties



Local Initiative Overview (cont.)

FINS Flood Alert System

- Consists of over 70 rain and 50 stream gages that report real-time in public website
- Allows user to query historic data
- Automated notifications with associated actions sent based on rainfall/stage “triggers
- Dense network helps respond to flashy nature of Charlotte flooding

3D Floodzone

- Public website that provides multitude of property-level information to identify, assess, and reduce risk
 - Flood hazard & Enhanced Risk Map products
 - Building/Property elevation
 - Regulatory compliance and restriction information
 - Provides risk classification and list of applicable mitigation techniques based on RARR
- Used during map updates to collect/respond to citizen comments

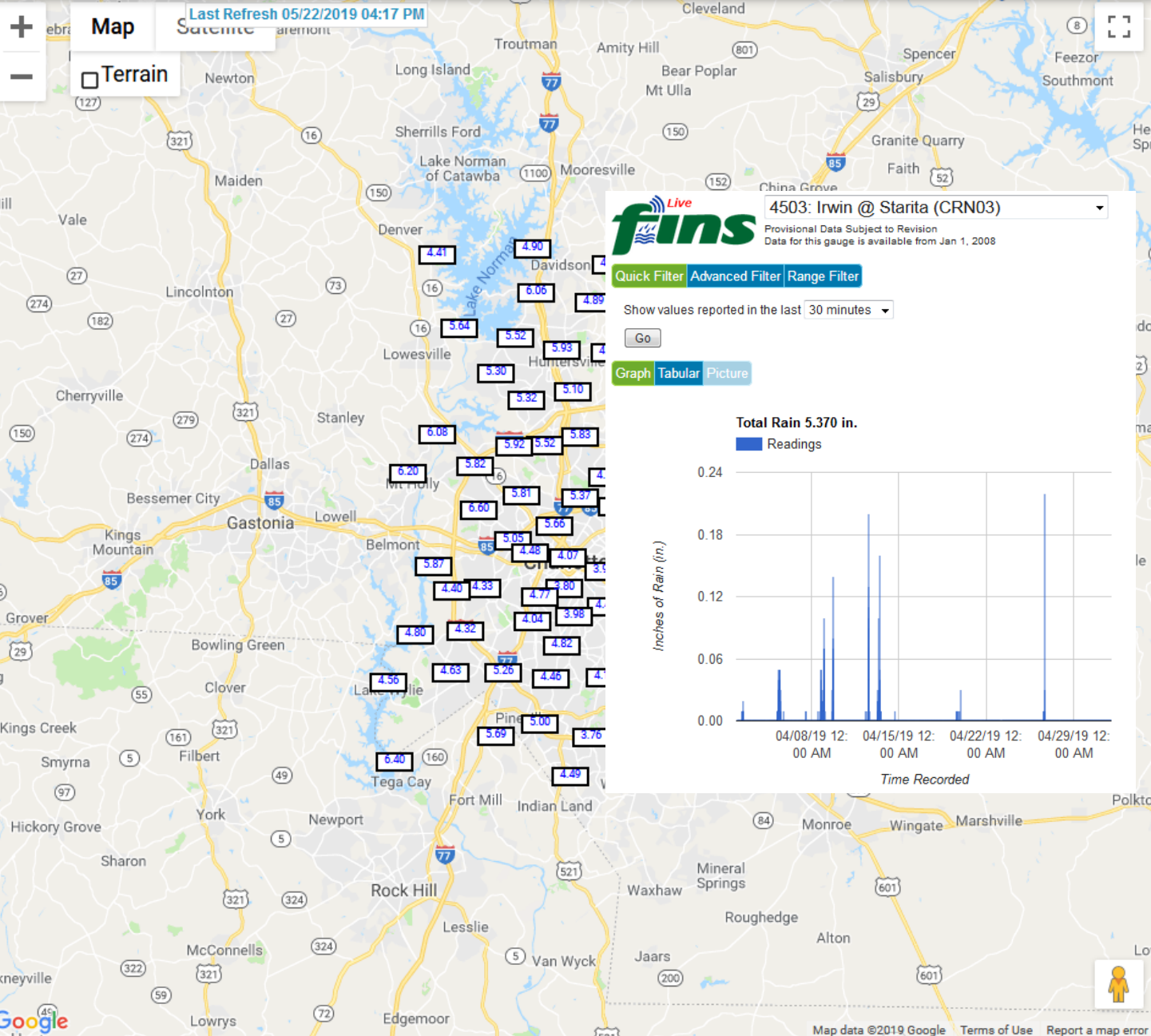
Refresh Map

Rain Gage

Stage Gage

Lake Gage

Creek Cam



Quick Filter

Show values reported in the last

24 hours

Go

Advanced Filter

Show values reported in the last

1 Month(s)

prior to

05/01/20:

Go

Range Filter

Show values reported between

Earlier Date Later Date

Go

Zoom To Gauge

Select Stage Gage

Map Controls

Legend

Location Search

Weather Warnings

Gage Warnings

Download Data

Reducing Risk for a Sustainable Future

Glossary

Reduce Risk

A photograph of a yellow two-story house with a dark roof, elevated on wooden stilts in a wooded area. The house has several windows and a door. A yellow sign with a black cross is visible on the side of the house. The ground is dirt and there are trees in the background.



Local Initiative Overview (cont.)

Enhanced Datasets

- ***Elevation certificates***: GIS database and application storing over 9,000 EC compiled from permits and county mitigation initiatives
- ***FEMA Model Support Layers***: Compiled datasets of attributed support layers attributed with inputs and model results (e.g. cross section, subbasins, stream surveys, land use projections, etc.)
- ***Stream Crossing Susceptibility***: Provides classification and overtopping susceptibility for all crossings along FEMA stream

Risk Assessment / Risk Reduction (RARR)*

- Framework and associated tools to dynamically perform building-level risk assessment, mitigation evaluation, and “project” ranking

Regulatory Future Floodplain Mapping**

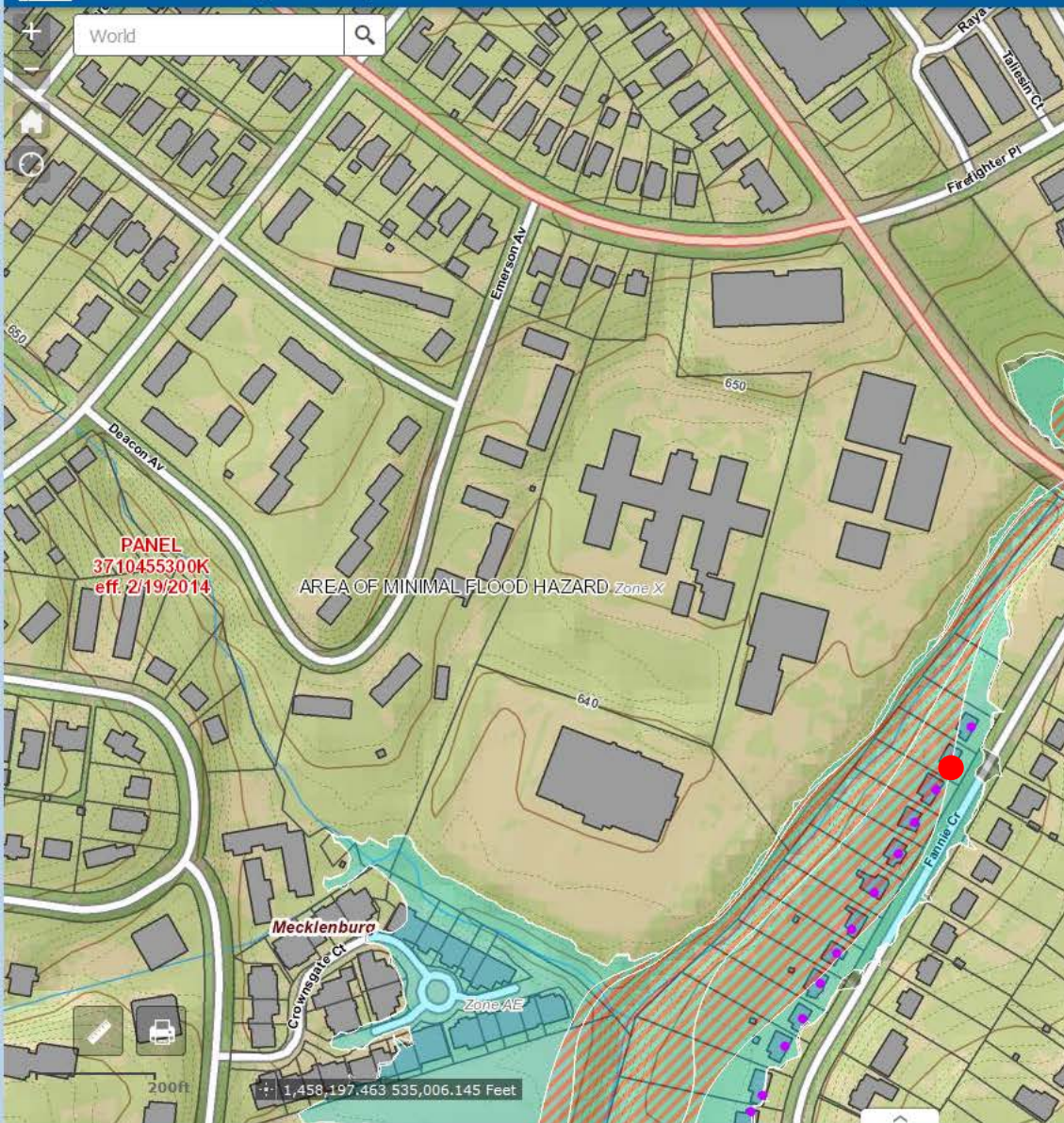
- Regulate and plan to future conditions

Mecklenburg Elevation Certificates



Mecklenburg County 2015 Elevation Certificates - Compiled

World



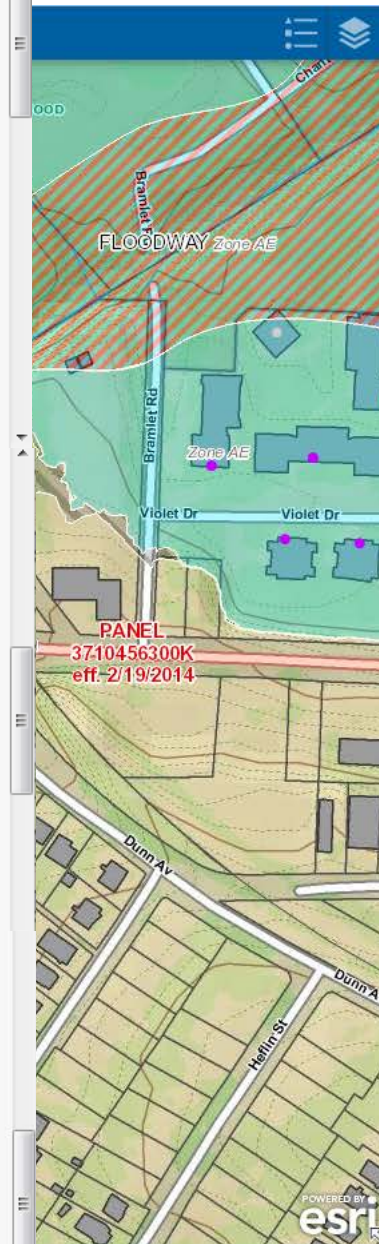
415 FANNIE CR

Elevation Certificate ID	368726
Finished Floor Elevation	636.39
Low Floor Elevation	633.87
Next Higher Floor Elevation	
LAG	633.9
HAG	634.5
Mechanical Elevation	634.00
Attached Garage Elevation	
Date of Survey	November 18, 2015
Building Diagram	8
Latitude	35.20323
Longitude	-80.80990
ESP Survey Type	Limited Elevation Certificate
Floodprone Building ID	4669
Street Address	415 FANNIE CR
Flooding Source	Briar Creek
WSE100yrEX	635.5
WSE100yrFU	635.6
FIRM Panel	4553
MCEC Database Action	Update Existing Record

Photo



[Zoom to](#)



POWERED BY
esri



Field	Value
RiverCode	MallardCreek
Station	41118
Q002yrEX	2595
Q005yrEX	4636
Q010yrEX	6233
Q025yrEX	8536
Q050yrEX	10255
Q100yrEX	12661
Q500yrEX	18855
Q100yrFU	14931
QThrdPMP	0
W002yrEX	602.5
W005yrEX	605.2
W010yrEX	606.6
W025yrEX	608.7
W050yrEX	610.1
W100yrEX	611.5
W500yrEX	614
W100yrFU	612.6
WThrdPMP	0
WSE_Notes	
MinBWEvnt	NA
IsFlwChng	N
Drwdn_Note	
ChnlWdth	48
MinChnlElv	589.5
DrngArSqMi	44.9
CumPctImpv	20
Watershed	Mallard
Phase	PMR3
Consultant	ESP
FWWdth	432
CEAWdth	501
SFHAWdth	645
PctFringe	22
StrmCLSta	396
FWStaL	174
FWStaR	605
CEASTaL	158
CEASTaR	659
FWOffsetL	222
FWOffsetR	209
CEAOffsetL	238
CEAOffsetR	263

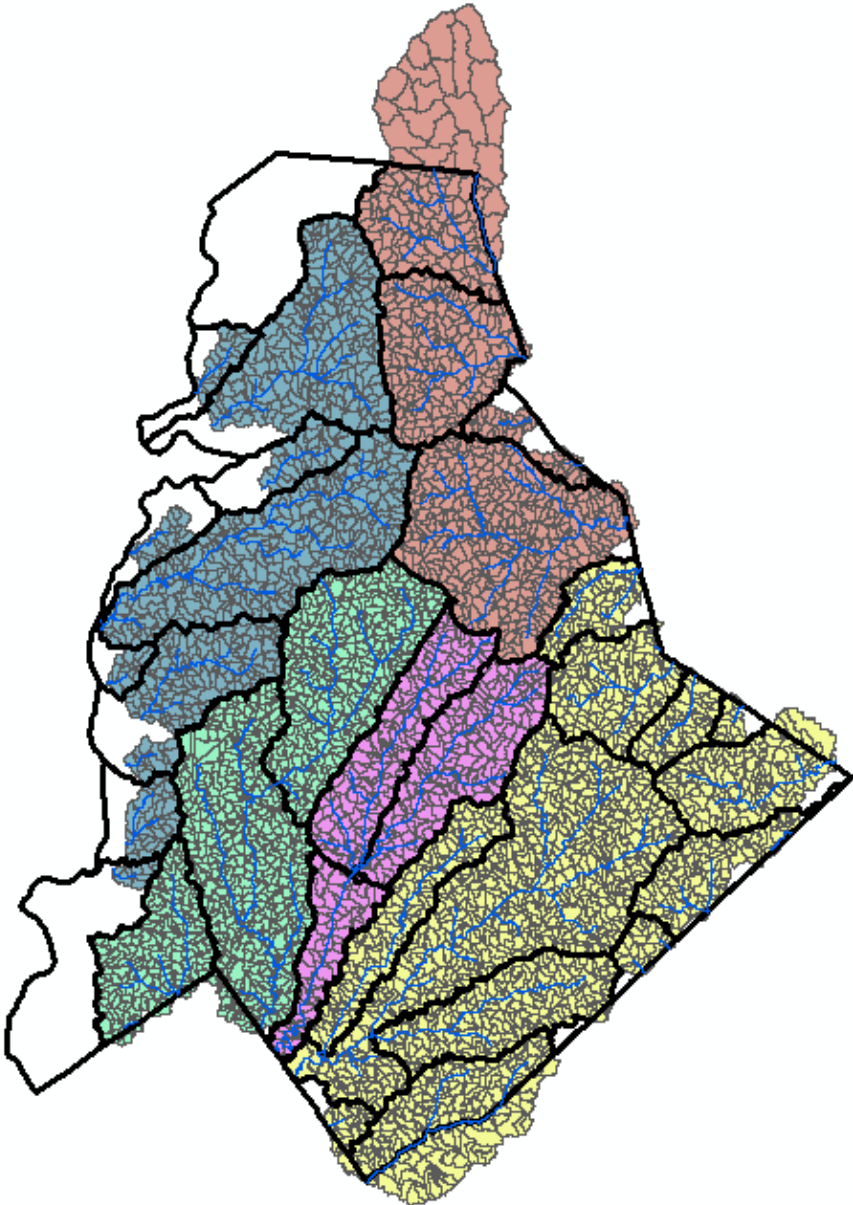
Flows

Elevations

Physical Channel

Watershed

Encroachment



Model Cross Sections

(> 6,600 across 115 FEMA streams)

Model Subbasins

(> 4,200 across 30 County watersheds)

Mecklenburg Enhanced Model Support Data Products

Minimum Overtopping Event

- < 10-yr
- 25-yr
- 50-yr
- > 100-yr

Crossing Type

- XingType
- Bridge
- Culvert
- Inline
- Multiple Opening

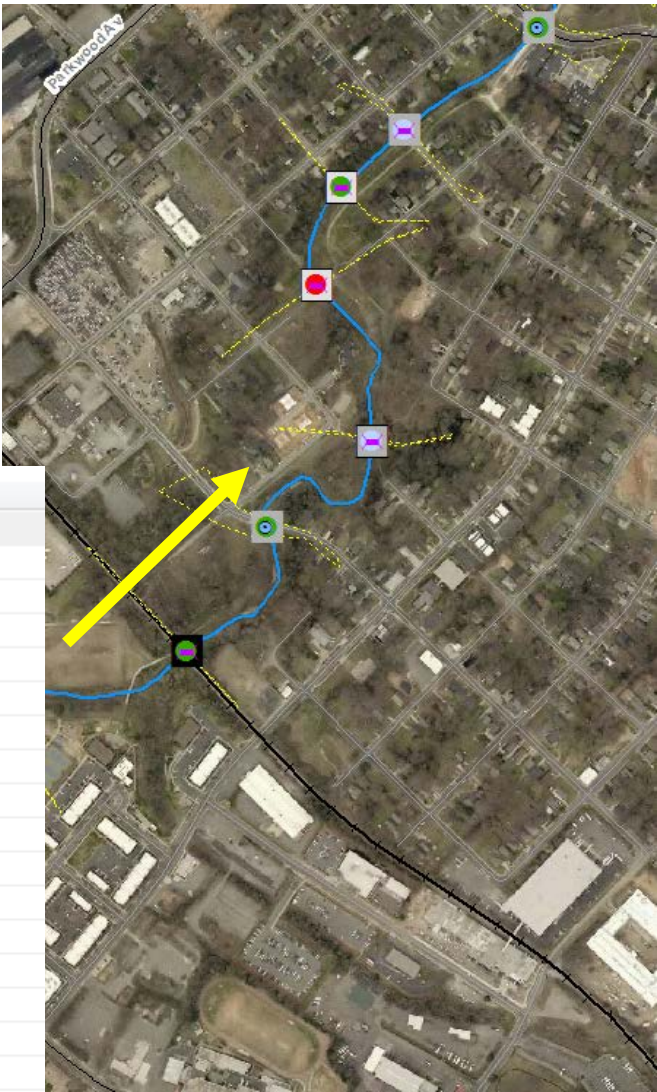
Minimum Overtopping Event

- < 10-yr
- 25-yr
- 50-yr
- > 100-yr

Crossing Category

- Main Road - Public
- Railroad

Field	Value
DFIRM RivNm	Little Sugar Creek
Station	80493
XingDesc	BELMONT AVE
StreetName	Belmont Av
StreetCls	Local
XingClass	Main Road - Public
XingOwn	Public
XingType	Culvert
XingWidth	70
NoCulverts	3
MinChnlElv	642.5
MinTopElv	661.7
BW002yrEX	652.2
BW005yrEX	653.7
BW010yrEX	654.6
BW025yrEX	655.6
BW050yrEX	656.6
BW100yrEX	657.8
BW500yrEX	662
BW100yrFU	658.4
ElvSrc	LOMR Case No: 15-04-3179P
ElvSrcDt	1/2/2017
MinOvrEvnt	500-yr
Watershed	UPPER LITTLE SUGAR



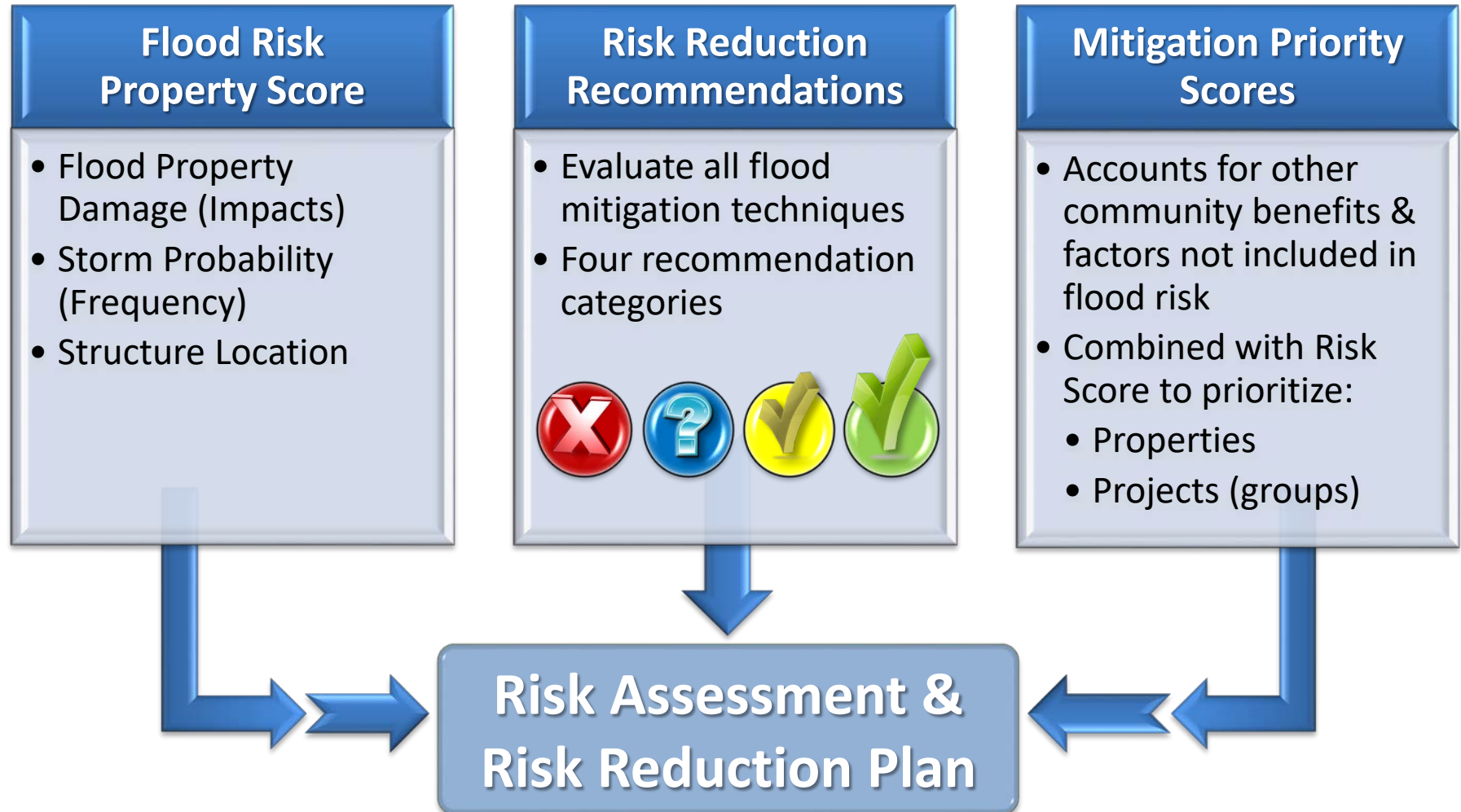
FEMA Stream Crossings
750± across 115 FEMA streams)

Risk Assessment/ Risk Reduction (RARR) – Moving into the Future

RARR Plan/Tool Overview

- Process with associated tools that evaluate risk and assess mitigation alternatives at building/property level across County
- Uses multi-tier scoring system to provide relative measure of risk and mitigation potential
- RARR simulations integrate input from:
 - Elevation Certificates - Finished Floor, LAG, HVAC elevations
 - FIS Modeling- Multi-Frequency (50% - 0.2% chance) Flood Elevations, velocities
 - Parcels – Occupancy/Use, Building characteristics and value
 - Others – public land, other projects, insurance claims, etc.
- Reduction in collective risk pool (i.e. total scores) can be used as the metric to drive Goals Driven initiative

RARR Workflow



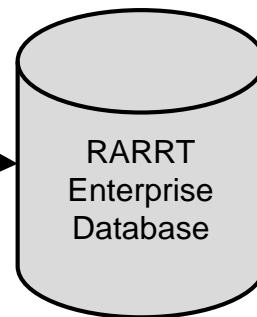
Envisioned Framework

Storm Water Services Maintained Inputs

- Latest Floodplain rasters
- Building Footprints
- Buildings Impacted by Overflows
- Community Encroachment Area
- Cross Sections With Q and Invert
- Elevation Certificates
- EC-WSEL Links
- Mitigation Projects
- NFIP Policies
- Streams
- High and Moderate danger rasters
- Historic Sites
- Historical 100-year effective floodplains
- Latest FEMA Floodway

Maintained by Other Agencies

- Master Address Table
- Neighborhoods
- Parcels
- Parks
- Project Areas
- Property Improvement points
- Public Lands
- Sewer CIP (5-year)
- Vehicle Parking points
- Water Quality Buffer
- Critical Care Facilities
- Environmental Focus Areas
- Greenway (5-year)



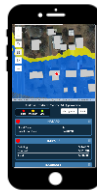
RESPONSIVE
DESIGN



Tablet



Desktop



Phone



Desktop (Power User)



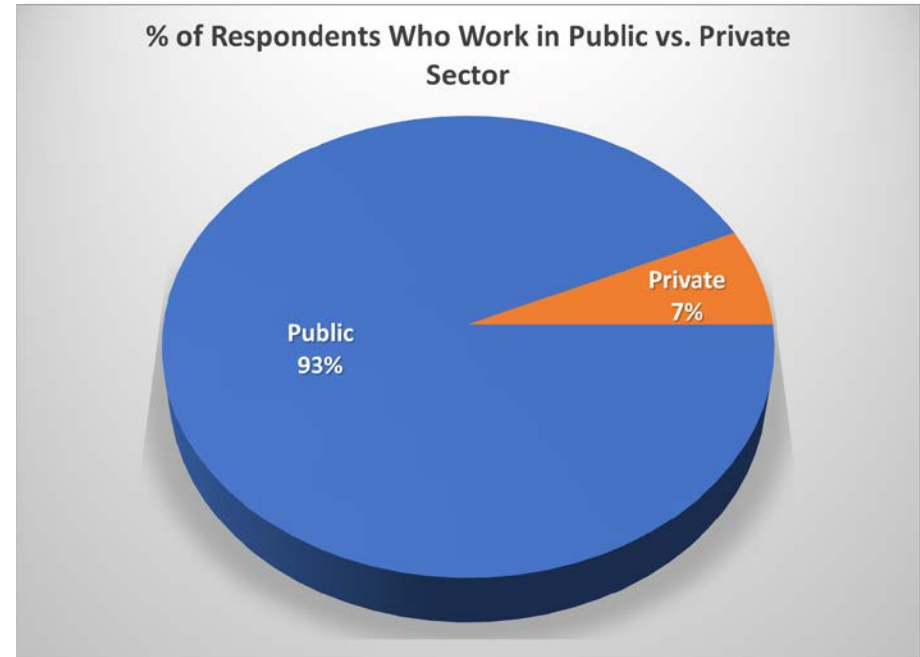
Outreach Overview

Purpose

Gather input from communities across the nation to inform development of Community Guidebook and Risk Assessment / Risk Reduction (RARR) tool enhancements

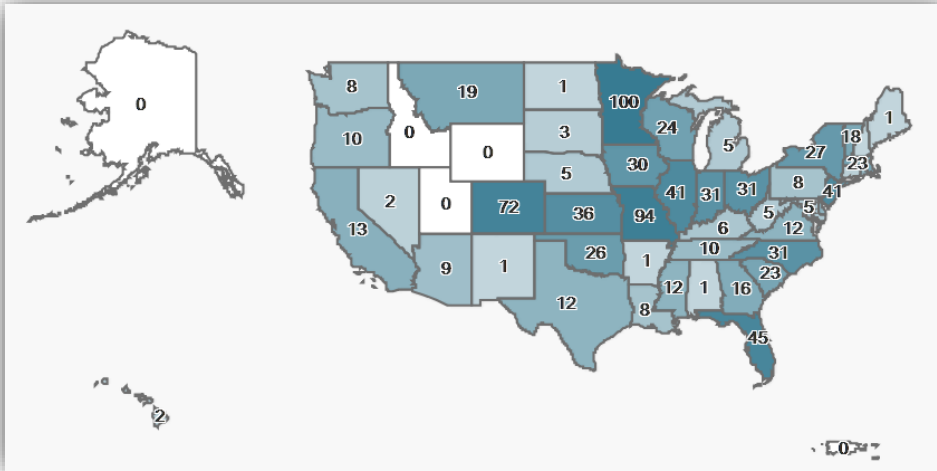
Implementation

Developed an online survey and associated project website to solicit feedback from stakeholders between June – September 2018

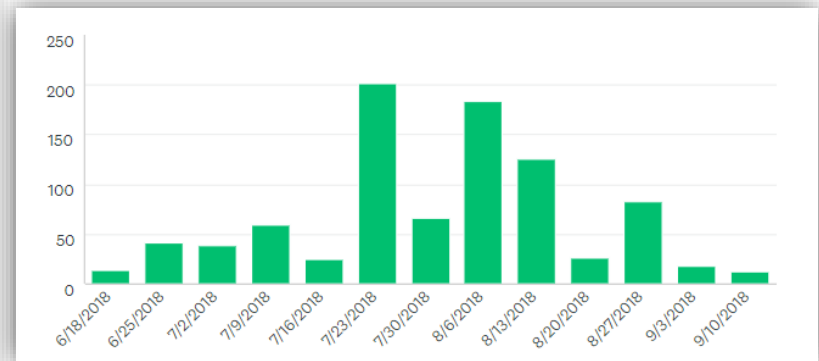


Data Needs

- Over 74% of respondents are missing 1-2 essential data sets to manage flood risk at the building level.
- About 33% of respondents lack Base Flood Elevations in at least half their community.
- Nearly 20% of respondents are 'not confident' or don't have adequate floodplain maps.
- Flood hazard mitigation plans are common, but rarely detailed to the building-level.



Survey Response Totals by State



Weekly Survey Response Count

Considerations for the Guidebook and Tool Enhancements

- Identification of essential and supplemental data requirements, as well as, information on data collection/capture options for these datasets
- “Tiered” risk assessment and mitigation evaluation options (e.g. basic and enhanced) based on variable data availability
- Guidance on how to leverage and incorporate analyses and recommendations from existing local plans into a building-level approach community-wide



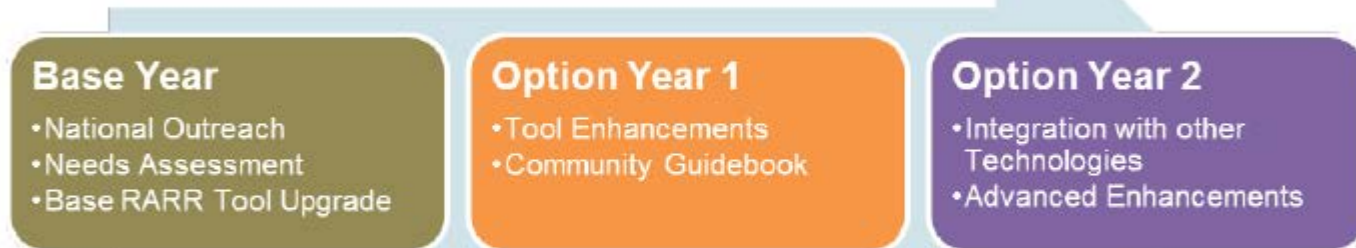
Considerations for the Guidebook and Tool Enhancements

- Flexibility to allow communities to customize risk/mitigation weighting factors based on their individual needs and priorities
- Incorporation of parallel ranking systems – one that directly incorporates monetized avoided damages (cost-weighted) and one that does not (cost-neutral)
- Guidance applicable for low - moderate flood risk communities, as well as, higher risk communities like Mecklenburg County

Tool Updates/Enhancements

- Tools updates being performed in phases defined by grant:
 - **Base Year:** Replicate existing logic, but build to be more flexible and efficient
 - **Option Year 1:** New functionality, more robust considerations
 - **Option Year 2:** Advanced enhancements and integration with other technologies
- Tool enhancements identified through internal need assessment and external outreach (survey)

RARR Enhancements Tasks by Grant Year



Tool Updates/Enhancements

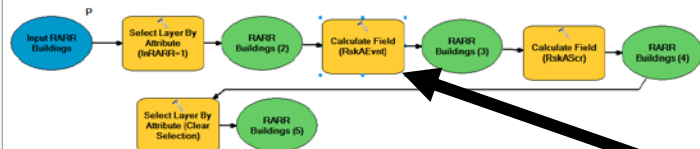
- Wrapping up Base Year updates now – testing and validating tools.
- Base Year tool update highlights:
 - Updating (and restructuring) input datasets and RARR databases
 - Rebuilding tools in combination ModelBuilder / Python
 - Developing updated SOPs to document changes
- Challenges:
 - Handling with multitude of input datasets that may be complex, may change, or may not be 100% complete/accurate
 - Evaluation logic structures that involve complex combination of spatial and attribute queries
 - Trying to make sure current changes can be expanded with future enhancements and longer-term web dashboard vision

Base Year - RARR Toolbox with Update Tools

ArcToolbox

RARRTools_Pilot

- BatchMode
- DataPreparation
- FloodRiskScore
- RiskPreRun
 - A_FFE
 - B_LME
 - C_LAG
 - D_Prpsrnd_1
 - D_Prpsrnd_2
 - E_Bldsrnd_1_pABC
 - E_Bldsrnd_2
 - F_CFSrnd
 - G_MFSrnd
 - H_MFUnits
 - I_StrctDmg_m
 - J_SigImprvmnts_1_d
 - J_SigImprvmnts_2_d
 - J_SigImprvmnts_3_d
 - K_ModImprvmnts_1_d
 - K_ModImprvmnts_2_d
 - K_ModImprvmnts_3_d
 - L_ResParking_1_d
 - L_ResParking_2_d
 - L_ResParking_3_d
 - M_Prpsintrst_1_d
 - M_Prpsintrst_2_d
 - N&O_Velcty
 - P_OverFlw
 - Q_CEA
 - Z1_LocMultplr
 - Z2_OvrallBldgFldRskScr
 - Z3_CommitScores
- GenUtilities
- MitigationScore
- MitTechEval



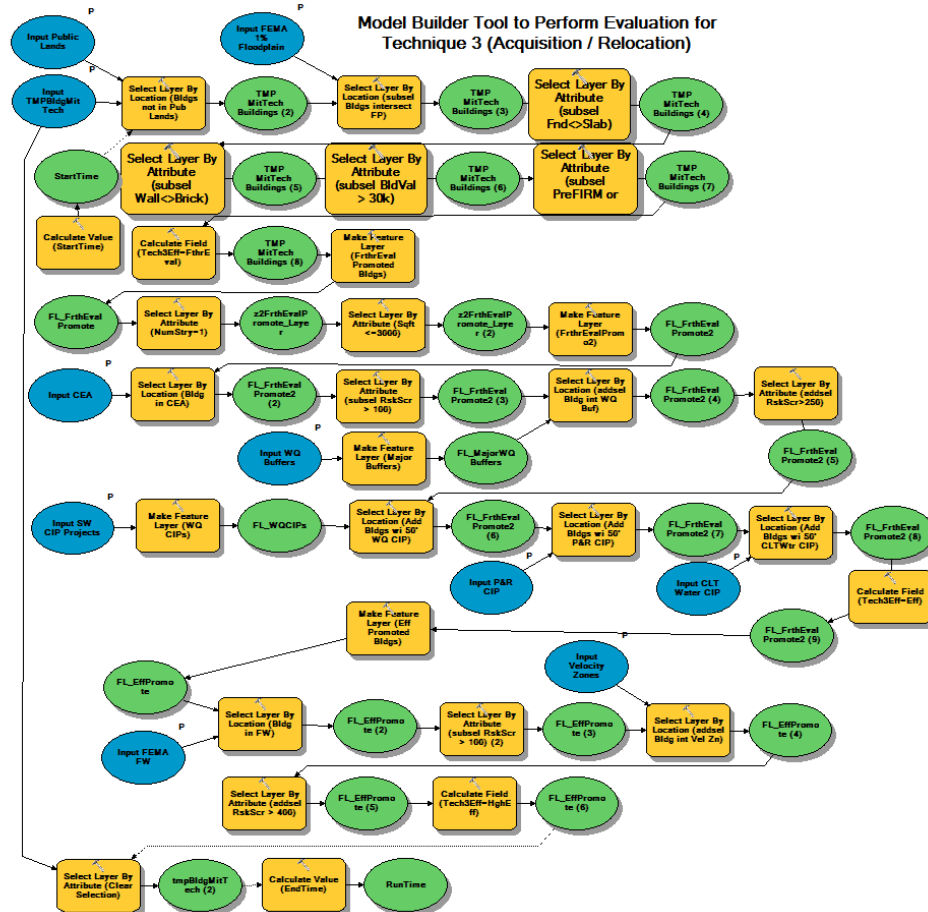
Input Table
RARR Buildings (2)

Field Name
RARRScr

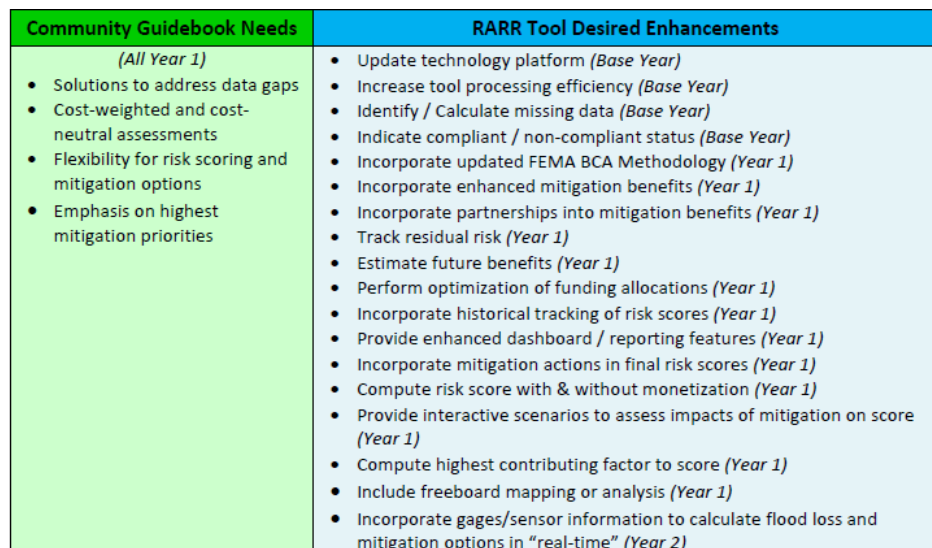
Expression
CalcMinEvt((FFE), 1WSE_002EX1, 1WSE_005EX1, 1WSE_010EX1, 1WSE_025EX1, 1WSE_050EX1, 1WSE_100EX1, 1WSE_200EX1, 1WSE_500EX1)

Expression Type (optional)
PYTHON

Code Block (optional)
def CalcMinEvt(FFE, w002, w005, w010, w025, w050, w100, w500):
 if FFE > w500:
 return -1
 elif w002 > FFE:
 return 2
 elif w005 > FFE:
 return 5
 elif w010 > FFE:
 return 10
 elif w025 > FFE:
 return 25
 return 25



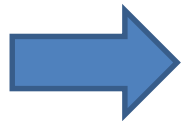
- Enhancements defined by internal needs assessment and feedback from external outreach (survey)
- Used modified Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) methodology to prioritize
 - Identified and prioritized 21 enhancements
 - Several enhancements broad ranging and will contain numerous sub enhancement
- Start work on Year 1 enhancements soon



Future Conditions –

A New Beginning Born From Disaster

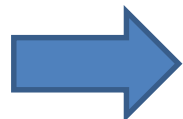
- Two big floods, 2 years apart
 - 1995 – Tropical Storm Jerry (\$16M losses)
 - 1997 – Hurricane Danny (\$60M losses, 3 deaths)
- Maps out of date and not reliable
- County experiencing explosive growth



Recognized need for updated floodplain maps

New Ideas

- Manage own maps
 - Become CTP (2nd in the country)
 - Develop customized FIRMs
 - More base map data for reference
 - Included BFE/FW info directly on FIRM
 - Customized layers
- Rethink floodplain regulations
 - Higher standards



Regulate to Future Conditions Mapping

Why Future Floodplains?

- Minimize future flood risk to new/rebuilt structures
- Compliant buildings will still be in compliance for future map updates
- Account for future hydrologic changes
- Focus on the cumulative impacts on the watershed
- Preserve natural state of floodplains. Allow flood storage

Key Decision Points

- Concept Acceptance

- Convince decision makers (city council, politicians, public)
- Stakeholders involvement (developers, realtor, builders)
 - More people will be in the floodplain
 - Higher flood elevations
- FEMA approval

- Concept Development

- Two Pilot Studies, Workshops
- Technical considerations – what metrics will decide the future?
- Methodology

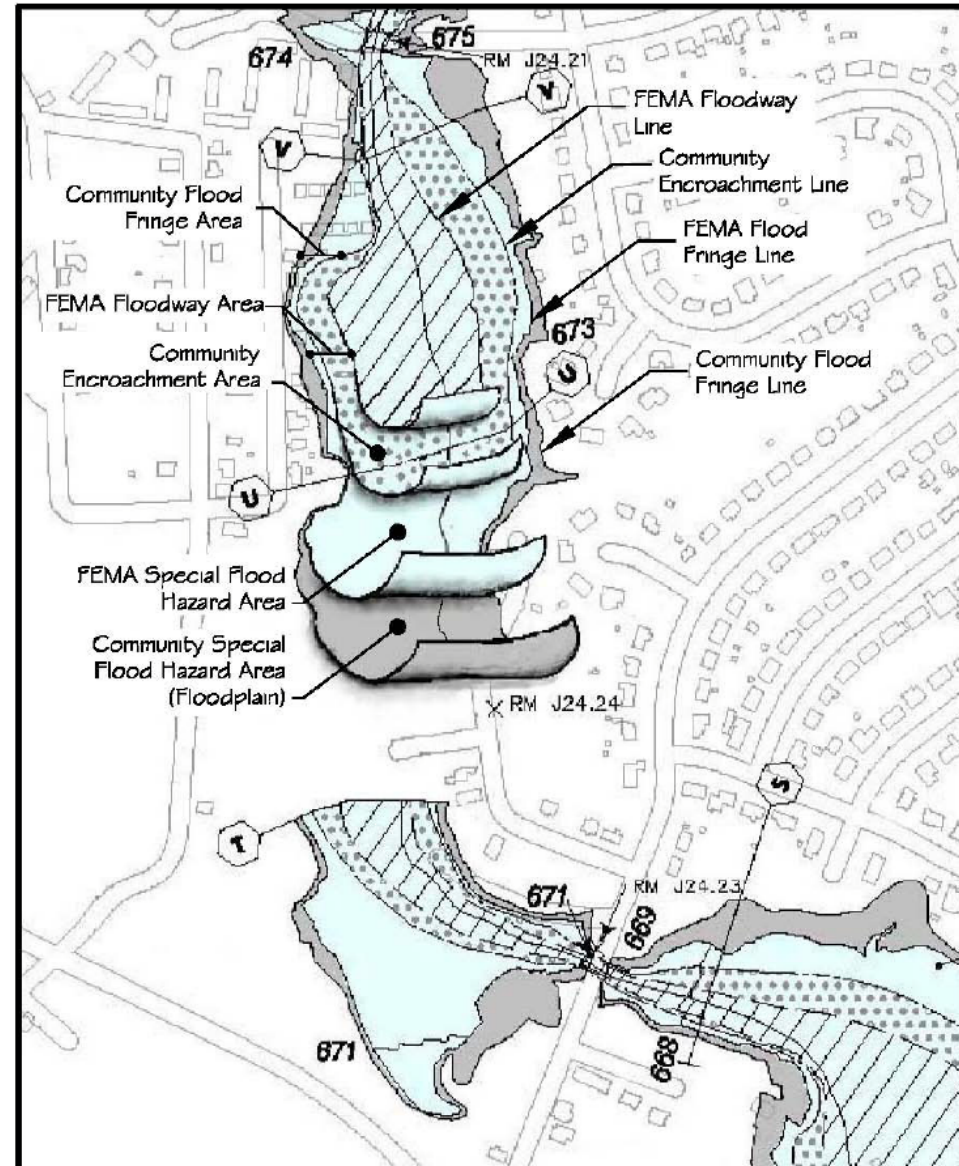
- Concept Implementation

- Enforcement for existing development
- Permitting issues for existing structures
- Disclosure during real estate transactions

Timeline

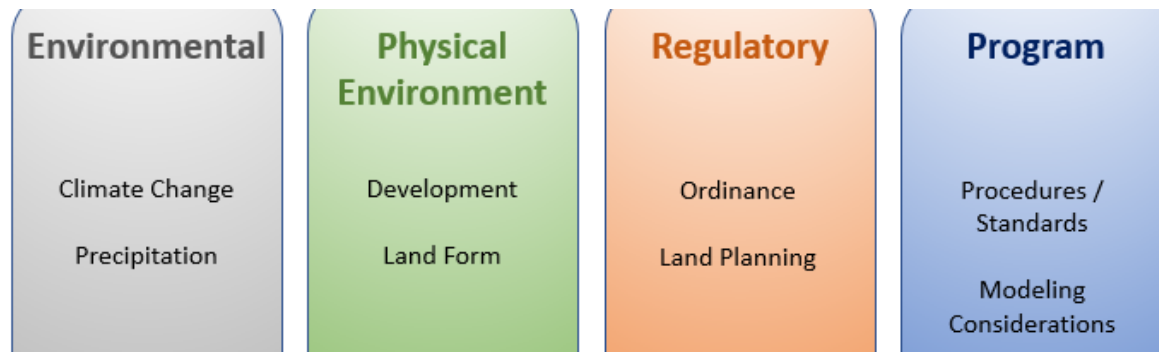
- 2000
 - New studies with future condition floodplains adopted locally
 - Two (2) sets of maps – Existing and Future
- 2004
 - FEMA published updated Mecklenburg County maps
 - One map with Existing, Future, and 2 floodways

Mecklenburg FIRM Layers

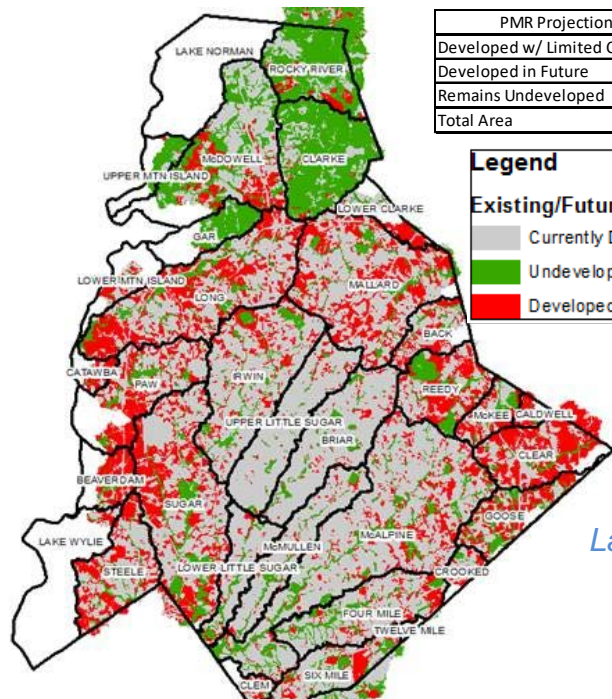


2017/2018 Future Methodology Revisit

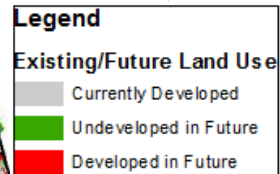
- Initiated study to investigate more comprehensive consideration of future conditions
 - Recent map updates showed more change in future BFE than desired
 - Current methodology only accounts for increase in impervious
- Identified and evaluated range of other factors
 - Ran numerous model simulations to evaluate
 - Concluded that existing methodology may be underestimating future BFEs by over 1'
- Study recommended several adjustments
 - Vetted through public stakeholder process



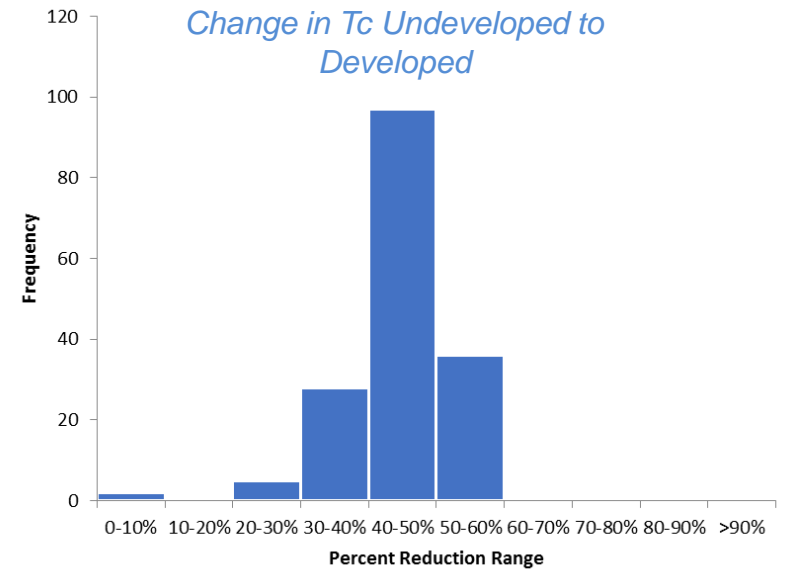
Factors and Considerations Affecting Future Conditions Modeling



PMR Projection	Area (Sqmi)	% Area	Area (Ac)
Developed w/ Limited Change	293.3	57%	187,731
Developed in Future	116.3	23%	74,460
Remains Undeveloped	103.0	20%	65,910
Total Area	512.7	100%	328,101



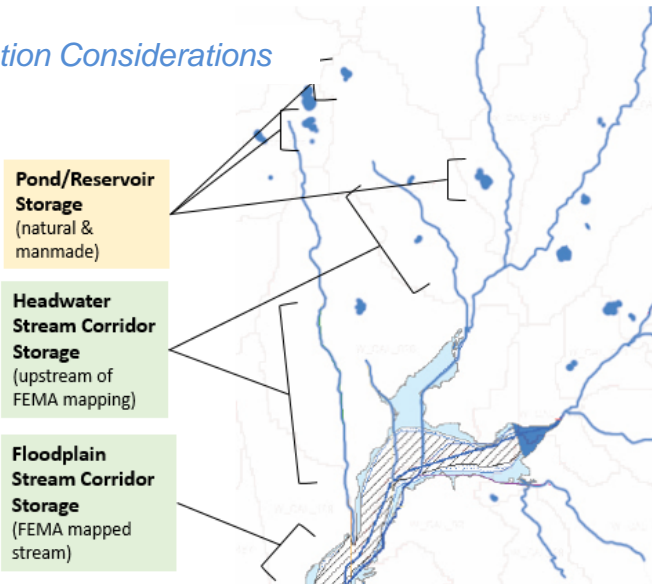
Land Use Change Evaluation



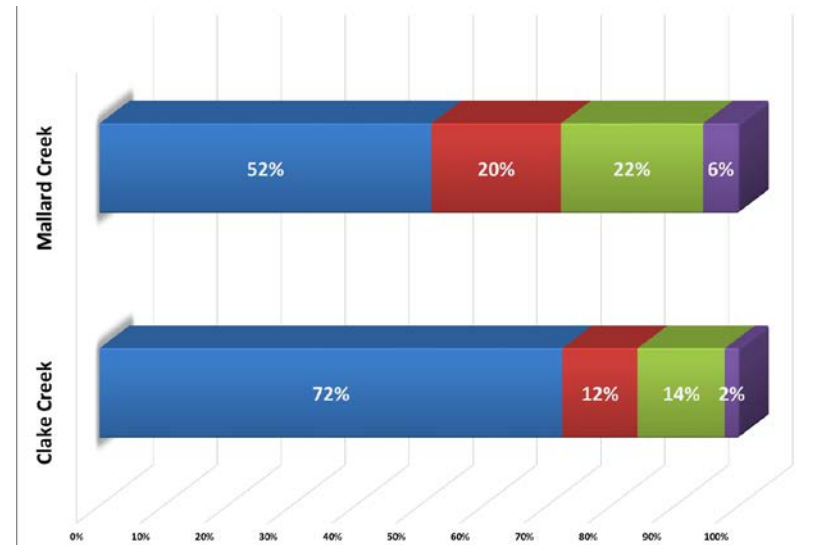
Storage and Attenuation Considerations

Hydrologic Storage
Areas that hold-back flood waters

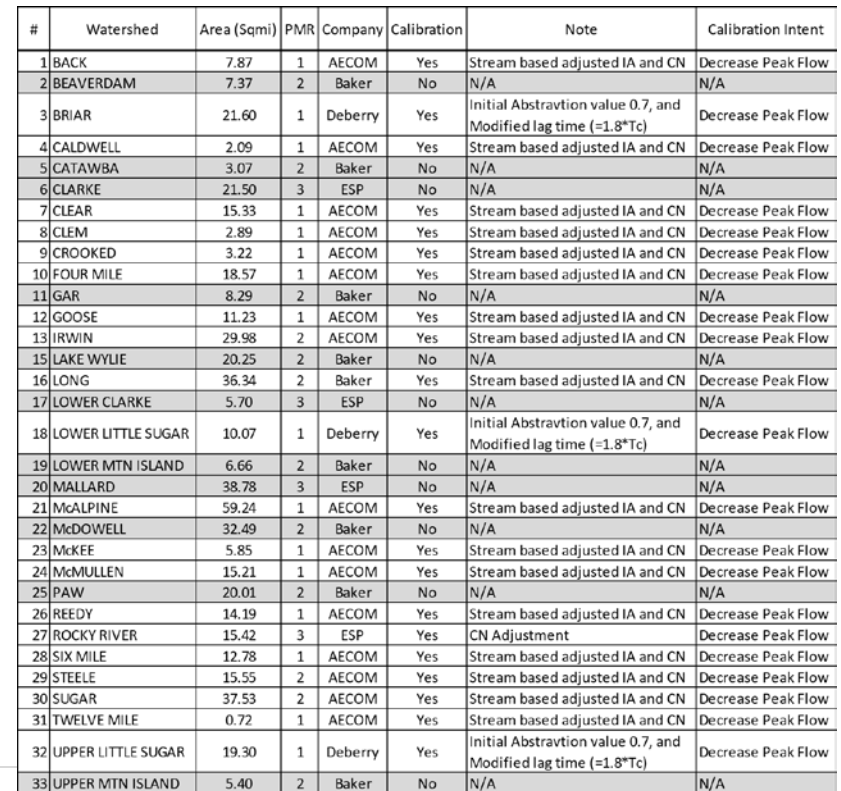
Attenuation
Retard and reduce peak flow due to hydrologic storage



Percent Total Travel Time by Flow Regime



Model Calibration Impact Summary



32	UPPER LITTLE SUGAR	19.30	1	Dexterity	Yes	Modified lag time (=1.8*Tc)	Decreases
33	UPPER MTN ISLAND	5.40	2	Baker	No	N/A	N/A

Figure 1 is a combined bar and line chart showing the annual number of extreme, heavy, and moderate events from 1975 to 2016. The left y-axis represents the percentage of events (0% to 60%), and the right y-axis represents the number of events (0 to 60). The x-axis shows years from 1975 to 2016. A red line represents the annual number of extreme events (>4), a green line represents heavy events (2<=P<=4), and a blue line represents moderate events (1<=P<=2). A horizontal red line is drawn at the 40% mark. A table at the top right provides summary statistics for the three event types.

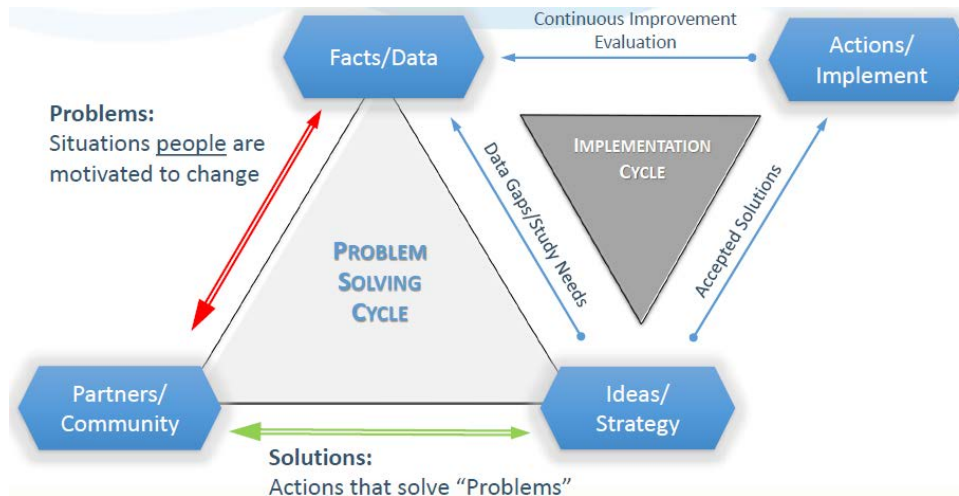


Model Element	PROBLEM SUMMARY	SOLUTION RECOMMENDATIONS	Notes
Floodplain Storage & Impoundments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Floodplain storage occurring outside the Community Floodway could be removed by filling in the future. Consider assumptions for the loss of some portion of that hydraulic storage. Ponds in headwaters could be removed on case by case basis in the future. Consider criteria for removing individual ponds based on likelihood they will be removed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove storage between floodplain and Community Encroachment Area Create process to identify ponds likely required to remain. Remove all others from hydrologic model. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Headwater storage areas (hydrologic routing reaches) are relatively well protected from being removed/alterd in the future (by buffers, stream impact permitting, etc.). Pond storage information comes from NC Dam Safety and supplemented by field survey if needed. Storage in input into the hydrologic model.
Peak Flow Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peak flow timing will change in future conditions modeling after land use changes. Develop methods to include effects of those changes to future conditions flood elevations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In sub basins where more than 50% of the area is changing to a developed land use, adjust the peak flow timing. Where available, reduce sheet flow length to 100'. Where not available reduce TC by 40%. 	
Model Calibration	None identified	No changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elements of calibration are included in other areas reviewed
Future Land Use Projections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some golf courses may be re-developed in the future and currently shown as "No Change" areas. Current future land use methods don't accurately account for potential growth in areas not explicitly show as "No Change". Biggest issues are with land use descriptions for Rural & Rural Subdivision in northern towns that have broad and vague future development definitions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change golf courses in GC03 (private owned only) and GC04 to match zoning designation. Create a new future land use category (13th) for "undefined future development". Use for all undeveloped and unprotected areas that are not explicitly identified as "no change" areas. Assume 20% impervious for future development. 	
Rainfall Uncertainty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is uncertainty, and spatial & temporal variability in the 1% rainfall, as shown by local & regional rain gage data trends and the NOAA Atlas 14 study. This could impact future floodplain changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use 7.85" as the 100-year 24-hr rainfall (8% uncertainty band of NOAA Atlas 14) to account for rainfall uncertainty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed opinions on whether uncertainty in rainfall probabilities and variability in trends will present a problem in the future. All wanted a "justifiable" number for any change made to account for unknowns.
Overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cumulative impacts of problems identified in current future conditions mapping could increase BFE's by averages of 1.1'-1.6' (Rural watersheds) and 0.4'-1.3' (Urban watersheds). Floodplain mapping can take years to develop, review and adopt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add 1' freeboard of to the Flood Protection Elevation for a maximum of 2' total. Clearly identify the added freeboard as a temporary standard until the future floodplain is updated, at which time the added freeboard will be eliminated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders want Storm Water to update the future floodplain in the near future.



Future Methodology Update Implementation

- Plan to fully implement changes in future conditions update only PMR or next FIS update
 - Investigating funding and logistics
- As temporary stop-gap, plan to increase freeboard by 1'



Conclusions & Lessons Learned

Ingredients for Success

- Importance of Collaboration
- Data Investment
- Planning for the Future Loss
- Ownership of Programs

QUESTIONS??