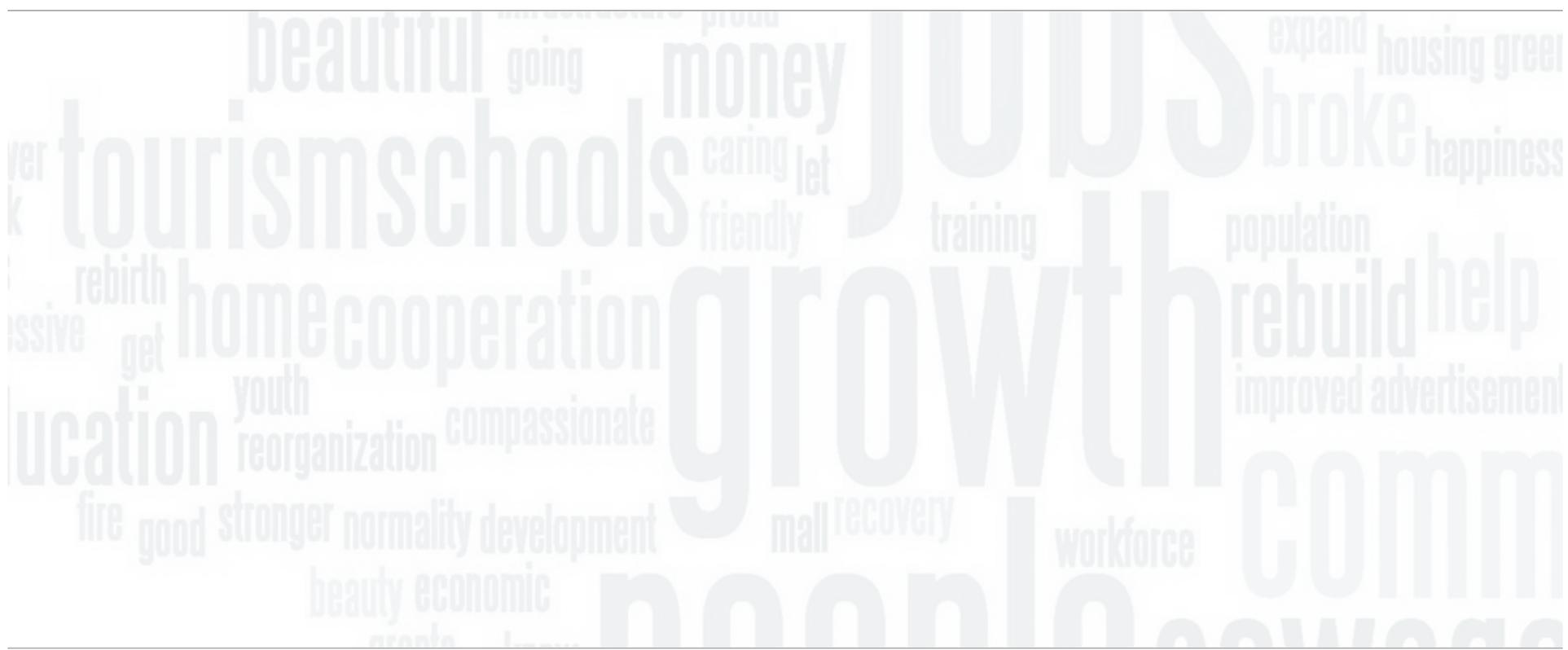




# **RAINSVILLE + DEKALB COUNTY, ALABAMA**

Long-Term Community Recovery Plan  
November 2011



Cover photo courtesy of Stephen V. Smith, WordSouth Public Relations, Inc.

# RAINSVILLE + DEKALB COUNTY, ALABAMA

Long-Term Community Recovery Plan  
November 2011

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# LETTERS OF SUPPORT

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ROBERT BENTLEY  
GOVERNOR



STATE CAPITOL  
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130

(334) 242-7100  
FAX: (334) 242-3282

STATE OF ALABAMA

November 4, 2011

The Honorable Donnie Chandler  
Mayor of Rainsville  
Post Office Box 309  
Rainsville, AL 35986

Dear Mayor Chandler:

RE: Long Term Community Recovery Strategic Action Report

Let me begin by saying how very proud I am of the people of Rainsville and DeKalb County for their incredible resilience in the face of the devastation left in the wake of the April 27<sup>th</sup> tornado. It is a great honor to be associated with the State of Alabama. Virtually every time I have been in the DeKalb County area since the storm, I have witnessed unbelievable acts of selflessness, kindness, determination and adaptability among those who have lost so much, and those who have come to provide aid and assistance.

It has been extremely gratifying to see city, county, state and federal officials working closely together and with the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) representatives. I appreciate everyone's efforts – action committee meetings, stakeholder meetings and individual interviews – to craft a recovery plan that supports the long term viability of the City of Rainsville and those who live in and around it.

In the weeks and months to come, I look forward to staying involved with the citizens of DeKalb County, the various agencies, both private and public aid organizations including FEMA, to ensure that this plan moves forward effectively and efficiently. We will need all our patience, cooperation, creativity and vision to rebuild the future together.

Sincerely,

*Robert Bentley*  
Robert Bentley

RB:RM:cf

Enclosure

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ROBERT BENTLEY  
GOVERNOR



STATE CAPITOL  
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130

(334) 242-7100  
FAX: (334) 242-3282

STATE OF ALABAMA

November 4, 2011

The Honorable Ricky Harcrow  
President of DeKalb County Commission  
111 Grand Avenue, SW  
Suite 200  
Fort Payne, AL 35967

Dear President Harcrow:

RE: Long Term Community Recovery Strategic Action Report - Rainsville, Alabama

The tornado of April 27, 2011, may have changed the landscape of your community, but it has also given the world an opportunity to see your spirit in working together to develop a strategy for your future.

With great destruction comes opportunity; you are seizing this opportunity to create a Rainsville, Alabama, that will shine in the future. This Recovery Plan will serve as a guide as the citizens carry their vision forward. The community will make this plan its own, selecting and further developing the projects that most closely fit your vision for Rainsville and DeKalb County. The partnerships fostered over the last six months, through the Long Term Community Recovery process, with state and federal agencies, local stakeholders and the private sector form the firm foundation for this new vision and a stronger, more resilient community in the future.

Extraordinary circumstances have demanded extraordinary resolve. Faced with the daunting tasks of rebuilding home and hearth, many of you have also devoted energy, thought and creativity to envisioning the new Rainsville. I am pleased that FEMA has been able to assist you by providing technical expertise and a staff devoted solely to the development of this plan over the last six months.

I commend you on the progress you have made thus far toward your recovery and your vision for the future of your community. It is with great pleasure that I pledge my support for this plan and look forward to a full recovery of Rainsville and DeKalb County.

Sincerely,

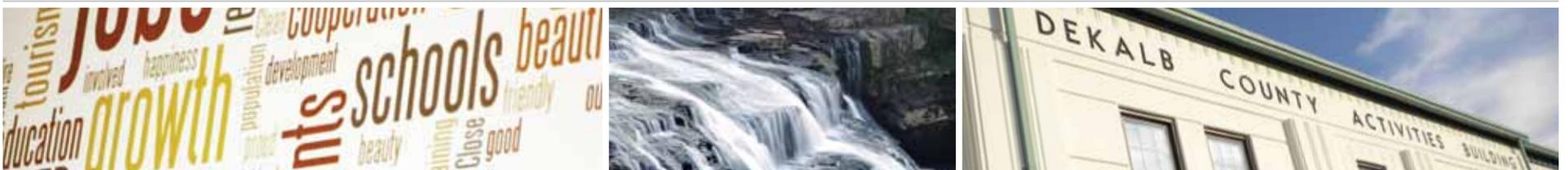
*Robert Bentley*  
Robert Bentley

RB:RM:cf

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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On April 27, 2011 three tornadoes cut a path of destruction through DeKalb County, Alabama. The county suffered 35 fatalities and an estimated 200 individuals were injured. Property loss and damage were substantial with over 300 homes destroyed and 1,000 homes damaged. Additionally, the tornadoes destroyed or damaged 109 businesses in the area.

In mid-July, the City of Rainsville, followed by the DeKalb County Commission, adopted resolutions entering into the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Long-Term Community Recovery program. As part of the recovery process, the community formed a LTCR Committee comprised of individuals from DeKalb County. This committee created a community recovery vision and developed projects designed to rebuild their community.

Throughout the process, the committee sought input from residents and stakeholders. Assisted by the FEMA LTCR Team, the committee held two community meetings to gather public input. As a result, people from across DeKalb County came together to share their ideas about how to rebuild their community.

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Based on community input and meetings with area stakeholders, the Recovery Committee developed recovery projects in the following areas:

- Economic development
- Community planning
- Infrastructure
- Community interest projects
- Housing

The scope and timeline of the recovery projects vary depending on their feasibility. Success will depend on the dedication of the LTCR Committee and the residents who have come forward to assist them in this endeavor. DeKalb County residents came together after the tragic events of April 27, 2011; many lives were saved and recovery was expedited because neighbors united to help one another. This same spirit of caring and cooperation can make DeKalb County's LTCR Plan successful.



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*“Alone we can do so little;  
together we can do so much.”*

*–Helen Keller*



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## INTRODUCTION

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Photo courtesy of DeKalb County Economic Development Authority



Collection of Ann Houston



Library of Congress

Among the earliest inhabitants of DeKalb County were the Cherokee Indians. Sequoyia, one of the Cherokee Nation's most famous figures, resided in the area while developing the Cherokee's written language. His achievement in making reading and writing the Cherokee language possible, marks the only known instance of a single individual independently creating a new system of writing.



Photo Courtesy of Robin Conn, *The Huntsville Times*, April 17, 2011. All rights reserved, reprinted with permission

## INTRODUCTION

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### COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

DeKalb County, located in the northeast corner of Alabama, is home to some of the most beautiful scenery in the state. The 2010 U.S. Census data indicates that 71,109 people reside in the county. It covers 778 square-miles and is composed of 16 incorporated cities and towns. The Alabama Legislature created DeKalb County on January 9, 1836 and named it in honor of Major General Baron Johann Sebastian DeKalb, a hero of the American Revolution. The county's economy was driven first by the discovery of coal and iron deposits and then by the hosiery industry.

Fort Payne, the county seat and home to most of the region's hosiery mills, was proclaimed to be the "Sock Capital of the World." In the last 20 years, the hosiery industry disappeared from DeKalb County, saddling the residents with a declining economy. Agriculture, particularly poultry farming, remains one of the largest industries in the county.

## DISASTER BACKGROUND

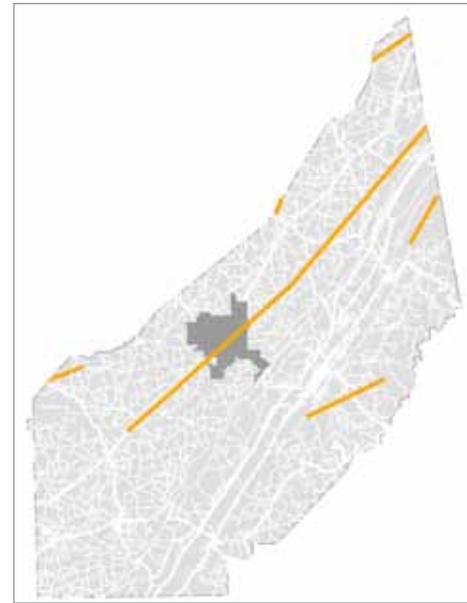
The three tornadoes that struck on April 27 impacted the communities of Geraldine, Fyffe, Rainsville, Sylvania, Henagar, Ider, and many unincorporated areas throughout the county. DeKalb County suffered 35 fatalities, the second-highest loss of life in the state. Additionally, an estimated 200 individuals were injured.

The tornadoes destroyed approximately 300 homes and damaged over 1,000 homes in the county. FEMA's report indicated that 109 businesses had been either destroyed or damaged. The EF-5 tornado, which struck Rainsville, inflicted severe damage to the Rainsville Civic Center and the adjacent Plainview School. The special education and vocational education building were completely destroyed and much of the school was rendered unusable.



## PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

This holistic plan is the result of a partnership between DeKalb County, the State of Alabama, and FEMA. Key partners in the process include the Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) and the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA). This LTCR Plan is a guide for the DeKalb County Recovery Committee, public officials, local stakeholders, and the community at-large to use in their long-term community recovery efforts. The Plan includes recovery projects defined by the LTCR Committee and local residents, and is the tangible result of community organization and community investment in the recovery process. Therefore, it serves as a critical tool to demonstrate to potential resource providers that the community is organized and working together to make recovery a reality, and that resources invested in the community will yield positive, long-term results.



The yellow lines represent the tornado paths.



## HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

The LTCR Plan is a guide and the contents represent a snapshot in time, post-disaster. The Plan should be treated as a living document that can be modified by the community as project and needs change. Evaluation and feedback are key components of the recovery planning process. Refer to the *Next Steps + Implementation* section for additional details.

Projects that can be completed quickly, have significant public support, or have available funding or other resources for implementation are crucial for early success. Completion of these types of projects makes recovery visible to the community and helps solidify both community and political support for full LTCR Plan implementation.

Additional discussion about capacity building and resource identification is included at the end of this document.



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## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

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## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



Jim Byard, of Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA), speaks to community members at a meeting held in Rainsville.

The Long-Term Community Recovery (LTCR) engagement with Rainsville began on July 18, 2011, with the passage of a resolution by the Rainsville City Council to participate in the LTCR program. DeKalb County also engaged, passing their resolution August 9, 2011. Weekly LTCR Committee meetings began on July 27, 2011 in Rainsville. The Recovery Committee is composed of 12 Rainsville residents, one DeKalb County Board of Education representative, and one DeKalb County Commissioner.

The LTCR Team guided the Recovery Committee to plan a community meeting to begin gathering community input. The Recovery Committee and LTCR Team members conducted outreach to Rainsville and county entities to invite the public to the meeting. The LTCR Team engaged local organizations to spread the word, including the Rainsville Civitan Club, Rainsville Chamber of Commerce, Northeast Alabama Community College Student General Assembly, Farmers Telephone Cooperative, Plainview School faculty, and area churches. Committee members also posted announcements to social media and the local newspaper.

About 65 community members attended the meeting held at the Tom Bevill Enrichment Center in Rainsville on August 22, 2011. The main activity was a community mapping exercise, during which facilitators led residents through a series of questions on community needs, assets, and opportunities. Participants responded to the questions with pictures or words and each table reported the three items



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At the final community meeting, the Recovery Committee hosted an open house for community residents, including a presentation of the proposed recovery projects. The committee presented the Recovery Vision Statement and answered questions about proposed projects. They asked the participants to prioritize the projects. Feedback from the approximately 60 attendees was positive and resulted in the following rankings for the presented projects:

1. Disaster Response Planning Project
2. Economic Development Strategic Plan
3. Rainsville WWTP Sewer System Assessment, Rehabilitation, and Expansion Study
4. DeKalb County Schools Bandwidth Expansion Project
5. Plainview High School Technology Enhancement Project
6. (Two-way tie) City of Rainsville Streetscape/Landscape Plan, and Tornado Memorial/Monument Project
7. Plainview High School Stadium Project

Following this meeting, the DeKalb County Schools Bandwidth Expansion Project was combined with the Plainview High School Technology Enhancement Project.

*Recovery Vision:  
Communities united in moving forward to meet the needs of affordable housing, job creation/retention, workforce development, education, infrastructure and quality of life in order to provide a safe, vibrant and family-friendly environment that fosters cooperative growth.*



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rebirth  
ve get home cooperation **growth** rebuild help

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## RECOVERY PROJECTS

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Photo courtesy of Robin Conn, *The Huntsville Times*, April 17, 2011. All rights reserved, reprinted with permission.



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

DeKalb County has great potential for economic growth. Its location along Interstate-59 gives businesses and industries easy access to major markets throughout the southeastern United States. Both the DeKalb County Technology Center and Northeast Alabama Community College offer excellent workforce development opportunities for students of all ages.

The Tennessee Valley Authority recently announced plans to reopen the nearby Bellefonte Nuclear Generating Station; re-commissioning is scheduled for 2013 and the facility should be fully operational by 2020. The county can capitalize on opportunities for construction jobs, employment at the plant, and meeting the anticipated increase in housing demands from the plant's employees.

This news is favorable for DeKalb County, whose economy has suffered in recent years due to the decline of the area's hosiery industry. At their height, the county's hosiery mills employed nearly 6,000 residents and were the largest employers in the county. Their closings raised the county's unemployment rate from 3.6 percent in 2000 to 12.6 percent in 2009 — the year the last large hosiery mill closed. Today DeKalb County's unemployment rate is higher than both the national and state averages. The tornadoes on April 27, 2011 may have exacerbated the problem, as there was a corollary 0.8 percent increase in the unemployment rate the month after the storms.



Photo courtesy of DeKalb County Technology Center

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

### PROJECT CHAMPION

Jimmy Durham

### BACKGROUND

The tornadoes had a significant impact on DeKalb County's already declining economy, impacting businesses and affecting unemployment.



Poultry Farm

Agriculture is the second largest industry in DeKalb County and losses in this sector have a significant impact on the county's economy. Agricultural business impacts included 63 damaged or destroyed poultry farms. The president of the Alabama Contract Poultry Growers Association, Jonathan Buttram, reported that about 10–15 of these farms do not plan on reopening. These farms employed approximately 30 individuals.

The top industry is manufacturing. Two manufacturers were directly damaged in the storms: a heavy-duty electrical component manufacturer in Rainsville called Sola Hevi-Duty and the Rainsville Church Pew Company that manufactured furniture for churches and civic buildings. Both of these businesses reopened and did not lay off any employees.

This project seeks to identify strategic economic investments that the community can make as it recovers from the April 27 disaster.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

An Economic Development Strategic Plan is needed in DeKalb County as its residents seek ways to strengthen their community and recover economically from the devastating April storms. The Plan will take a comprehensive look at all facets of DeKalb County to assess the county's economic strengths and weaknesses. This



Huddle House

assessment will be used to identify the steps communities must take together to maximize future economic growth and improve the quality of life in DeKalb County.

### ACTION STEPS

- Form a steering committee to seek funding and provide oversight for the project.
- Engage local governments and civic organizations to support the project and provide funding.
- Work with Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments to compile and submit a grant application.
- Develop a request for proposal to conduct the study.
- Award the contract to conduct the study.
- Monitor consultants to ensure the study results in the best possible plan and implementation strategies.



DeKalb County Economic Development Authority

## FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

### PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE

\$ 500,000

### POTENTIAL FUNDING RESOURCES

- DeKalb County Commission
- DeKalb County Economic Development Authority
- DeKalb County Board of Education
- DeKalb County Technology Center
- Fort Payne Chamber of Commerce
- Fort Payne Industrial Development Board
- Rainsville Chamber of Commerce
- Rainsville Industrial Development Board
- Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs
- DeKalb County State Legislative Delegation
- Northeast Alabama Community College
- Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments



Photo courtesy of DeKalb County Economic Development Authority



Photo courtesy of DeKalb County Economic Development Authority



*“We pray that no disaster in our time or any time in the future will mirror the storms that tore across our state in April.”*

*–Governor Robert Bentley*

## COMMUNITY PLANNING

One of Rainsville's greatest strengths is the commitment the city has to providing a quality education for the community's children. The tornadoes caused significant damage to Plainview High School's structure, as well as to the contents of the buildings and classrooms. The school's athletic facilities also received major damage. The Rainsville community did not hesitate in identifying where their greatest focus was to be; repairing and rebuilding the school was an urgent priority.

Computers and other technology, among the most necessary elements in instruction today, were lost in the storm. The Rainsville residents recognize that their quality of life depends in part, on a well-educated workforce. A school that offers a strong academic program supported by the most current technology, which is accessible to all students and teachers, promotes the development of a qualified workforce.



### PLAINVIEW HIGH SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

#### PROJECT CHAMPIONS

Mary Lance  
Cindy Smith

#### BACKGROUND

The tornado caused a tremendous amount of damage to both the structure of Plainview High School and to its technology and equipment. The storm destroyed 38 classrooms, the lunchroom, the administrative offices, and the counselor's office. Plainview High School has a total enrollment of 1,400 students. Sixty-four students were displaced because their homes were either destroyed or damaged. All of the students at Plainview had to finish out the 2010–2011 school year at nearby Sylvania High School.



#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The vision for Plainview High School is, "To be a school that wholly promotes learning and consistently challenges all of its students to aim for their highest potential." The community identified the need for equipment not only to be replaced, but enhanced with technology such as a campus-wide wireless network, upgraded desktop computers, e-Readers, and tablet computers. The aim of these technology enhancements is to allow each student to reach their full potential.

Early in the process, committee members identified inadequate bandwidth at the county's 13 schools as being the number one problem to address. It would be of no benefit to the students to have new computers and other technology that could not function properly with the 50 megabits per second bandwidth (Mbps). Recently, the Alabama Supercomputer Authority notified the DeKalb County Board of Education that they will receive services from the state which will increase the system's bandwidth to 100 Mbps. This increase now makes feasible the use of new technology, such as the previously mentioned enhancements, that would be beneficial learning tools for the community's students.

#### ACTION STEPS

- Research best practices and case studies for optimal use of technology in rural high schools.
- Utilize research to determine most cost-effective investment strategies for technology enhancements.
- Develop price list for items recommended and prepare a project budget.
- Secure funding for purchasing and installing selected technology and for training teaching staff to use it.
- Provide training for the teaching staff.
- Execute the installment plan.



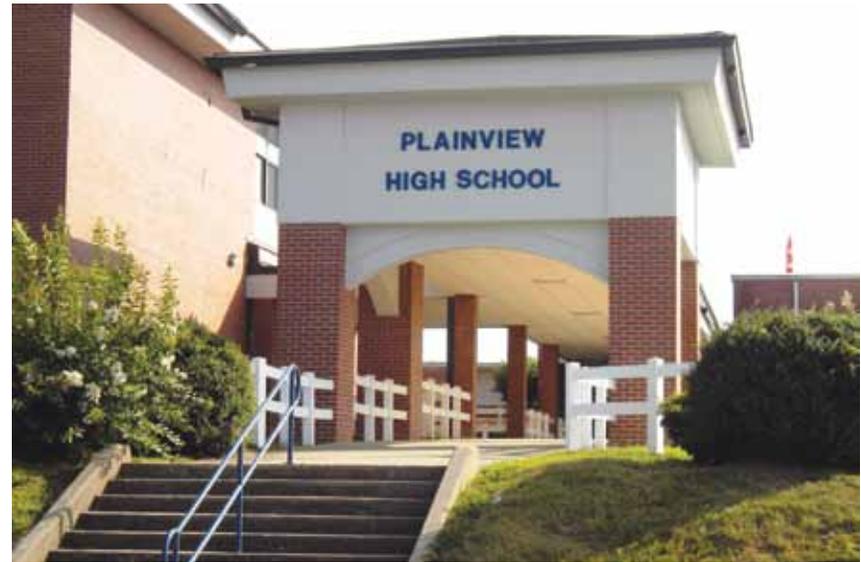
## FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

### PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE

Pending further development of scope.

### POTENTIAL FUNDING RESOURCES

- City of Rainsville
- DeKalb County Board of Education
- DeKalb County State Legislative Delegation
- Alabama Department of Education
- Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs
- Appalachian Regional Commission
- U.S. Department of Education/Office of Educational Technology/School Support and Technology Programs
- National Science Foundation-Discovery Research K-12





## INFRASTRUCTURE

The storm impacted greenery, streetscapes, and landscaping in the county. Referred to as “The Northeast Gateway to Alabama the Beautiful,” DeKalb County features natural beauty unparalleled to any other in the state. Community members identified the natural beauty as a community asset, thus protecting and enhancing it is a top priority. The communities have been challenged with finding the necessary funding and resources to replace significant areas of trees and greenery that were destroyed, including decorative tree-lined streetscapes, and landscaping that provided the impacted communities with a sense of character and place.

The county’s wastewater system infrastructure was impacted by the disaster event. Disruption of service to homes, businesses, medical providers, and agricultural commodity markets posed significant public health and safety risks to the community, as well as threatening the natural environment.



## CITY OF RAINSVILLE STREETScape AND LANDSCAPING PLAN

### PROJECT CHAMPIONS

Luanne Bowman  
Peggy Benefield  
Mayor Donnie Chandler  
Peggy Mitchell

DeKalb County Commissioner Dewitt Jackson  
Elizabeth Coots  
Gelane Nelson  
Linda Samples

### BACKGROUND

The City of Rainsville and neighboring highway-adjacent communities, such as the City of Fort Payne, have long recognized the value of their landscaping, especially the crepe myrtle and forest pansy redbud tree plantings. Tree-lined roadways and highways have played a part in defining the character of the area, welcoming residents and visitors to DeKalb County, and creating a sense of place. The tornado damaged or destroyed much of the city's cherished decorative landscaping along the State Highway AL 35 Corridor.



### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

During the post-disaster recovery, the Rainsville Community identified the need not only to replace the impacted area's damaged or destroyed trees, but also to develop and maintain a comprehensive approach to the care, maintenance, and enhancement of the city-wide roadway landscaping and vegetation. The City of Rainsville seeks to evaluate the condition of the trees, replace damaged or destroyed trees, and update the City's Streetscape Plan and related zoning ordinances. These efforts will also develop public education, outreach, and funding activities to encourage future planting initiatives.

The city will use certified professionals to ensure the proper health and maintenance of these valuable community assets.

A critical project component will be a public education campaign to show the public how they can individually contribute with landscaping decisions for their property. Particular focus

will be on the benefits of planting the trees and proper maintenance for them. Community events would be an excellent venue for providing outreach educating the public and promoting the tree and streetscape program. The continuation of the program will necessitate the formation of a tree and streetscape committee, support of city staff, and a well-established partner organization, such as Tree City USA at the Arbor Foundation.

### ACTION STEPS

The Recovery Committee will work with the City of Rainsville Beautification Committee and will complete the following action steps:

- Establish a subcommittee to guide the development of a comprehensive streetscape/landscaping plan.
- Identify and hire landscape professionals.
- Undertake an evaluation of trees and landscaping on public property and right-of-way to determine the condition the landscaping.
- Determine if there are areas that need additional landscaping.
- Educate and provide outreach to the community on streetscape landscaping.

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## FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

### PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE

Tree replanting     **\$3,500**

### POTENTIAL FUNDING RESOURCES

- City of Rainsville
- City of Rainsville Chamber of Commerce
- DeKalb County Extension Office – Auburn University
- Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments
- International Society of Arboriculture – Alabama Chapter
- Lowe’s Charitable and Educational Foundation, Inc.
- Boy Scouts of America
- Girl Scouts of America
- Civitan Club of Rainsville



## SEWER ASSESSMENT, REHABILITATION, AND EXPANSION STUDY

### PROJECT CHAMPIONS

Mayor Donnie Chandler  
Fred Bobo  
Jayson Carroll

James Payton  
Allen Stiefel  
Bejan Taheri

### BACKGROUND

The Rainsville Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) sewer system infrastructure includes over 20 miles of 6-inch, 8-inch, 10-inch, and 12-inch conventional gravity sewer lines and over 400 manholes. Most of the system’s infrastructure is over 30 years old and suffers from infiltration, inflow, and even system failures during major storm-related events.

The system service area also includes metered tie-ins to the communities of Sylvania, Fyffe,



and Powell collection systems. The U.S. Census Bureau and the Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of Alabama report that future population growth is expected to concentrate in the Fort Payne and Rainsville areas. Municipalities are also required to comply with state and federal regulations related to wastewater public health and safety. Based on these facts and trends, the City of Rainsville must develop wastewater regulations and update related wastewater zoning ordinances.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project is to prepare a study that assesses the Rainsville WWTP’s service area and collection system infrastructure. It will include a prioritized program of rehabilitation, repair, replacement, and/or expansion. Additional products will include the development of city wastewater regulations and a Geographic Information System (GIS) database/mapping system of the sewer system. This project will assist all communities within the service area to develop in a manner that will meet public health and safety standards, preserve the natural environment, improve quality of life, and promote continued economic growth.

### ACTION STEPS

- Continue coordination between the Recovery Committee and the City of Rainsville Sewer Board.
- Review, revise and finalize a scope of work/ services for the proposed study.
- Identify stakeholders and partners for the study and establish regular communication.
- Hold a stakeholder/partner discussion forum, the objective of the forum is to identify potential resources for the study.
- Hire consultant to conduct study; Implement study.
- Develop city wastewater regulations.
- Map the system in GIS.

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## FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

### PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE

\$600,000

### POTENTIAL FUNDING RESOURCES

- City of Rainsville
- Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grants – Small Cities Program
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics Substances – Pollution Prevention Grants Program
- EPA: Capitalization Grants for Clean Water State Revolving Funds
- EPA: Water Quality Cooperative Agreements
- U.S. Department of Agriculture: Office of Rural Development-Technical Assistance and Training Grants
- Economic Development Administration / Grants for Public Works and Economic Development Facilities



Photo courtesy of Stephen V. Smith, WordSouth Public Relations, Inc.

## COMMUNITY INTEREST PROJECTS

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Community Interest Projects, projects that were not directly related to recovery, are still an important part of the recovery process and therefore, have been included in this section. These projects either address long standing concerns of the community or reflect the community's values. Recovery projects that the committee could not complete at this time due to the need for additional data are also included in this section.

### DEKALB COUNTY COMMUNITY INTEREST PROJECTS

- Disaster Response Planning
- Plainview Stadium
- DeKalb County Tornado Memorial
- Chavies Bridge



### DISASTER RESPONSE PLANNING

#### BACKGROUND

The disaster event significantly impacted multiple communities throughout DeKalb County. The tornadoes had a cascading and devastating impact on emergency response services throughout the county, disrupting power and communication systems and impeding transportation routes. Emergency responders faced an additional challenge because of outdated equipment and an uncoordinated response plan. Communications suffered because of a lack of a countywide central command channel and an over-dependence on cell phones, which did not function once towers went down. The county Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) needs to be updated, and all communications equipment must be in compliance with Federal Communications Commission narrowband standards by 2013.



#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In the short-term (two to five years), this project will consist of improving emergency communications, which will include new radios and towers, and related bandwidth/frequency improvements. Emergency responder units and a countywide coalition will complete a needs assessment and asset inventory to determine what should be updated, replaced, or added to the system.

The project will further identify innovative partnerships between local, regional, and national weather services, private sector organizations, and state and local governments to promote public outreach and incentives. Such efforts will be related to providing preparedness items like weather radios in homes and businesses throughout the county. The project will also provide expanded outreach to increase utilization of the county's Code Red weather warning service.

Long-term (five to ten years), a countywide coalition will oversee the updating of the EOP and the Hazard Mitigation Plan. This will help the county successfully manage an event, particularly with countywide impact across multi-jurisdictional lines.

As part of the long-term activities, the coalition will prepare updates to the plans that reflect new information and identify cost effective mitigation projects, including focusing on those particular types of projects that may be eligible for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding.

A list of projects and a detailed scope of work and cost estimate will also be prepared for review and approval by the State Alabama Emergency Management Agency (EMA) and FEMA Regional Office. Updates will incorporate new community, hazard, and damage data, including data from the April 27, 2011 disaster impacted areas, FEMA Project Worksheet reviews, and updates of data used in the original plan. Part of the long-term planning will also include consideration of a centrally-located Emergency Operations Center (EOC) with radio substations established in four different directions. The facility will be a hardened facility with the capacity to house emergency communications and emergency responders during a disaster response effort, if needed. This could potentially be accomplished through a public-private partnership with a local utility company.

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## ACTION STEPS

- Complete an asset inventory and needs assessment.
- Continue to develop organizational agreements and partnerships to address needs and secure funding.
- Revise EOP to update policies, coordination, roles, and responsibilities based on lessons learned.
- Expand upon existing concepts of operations and emergency processes.
- Develop a countywide plan to establish a centrally-located EOC.
- Determine whether the existing DeKalb County Hazard Mitigation Plan will conduct an Interim Update or a Five-Year Update.
- Develop a list of projects and a detailed scope of work and cost estimate for projects and seek HMGP funding.



## COMMUNITY INTEREST PROJECTS

### PLAINVIEW HIGH SCHOOL STADIUM RESTORATION PROJECT

#### BACKGROUND

High school football is a central community activity for students and families in Rainsville. The EF-5 tornado that tore through the City of Rainsville and Plainview High School campus also destroyed the high school stadium's seating.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project promotes the creation of a community-wide funding campaign to assist the school in restoring the stadium to better than it was before, and potentially adding space for community use. A walking track is also under consideration.

#### NEXT STEPS

- Identify key community members such as parent/teacher associations, booster clubs, and local businesses that have a commitment to Plainview High School's tradition of excellence.
- Establish a joint funding committee and funding goal for the committee.
- Determine vision for stadium and surrounding area.
- Organize local fund raising activities and identify and pursue funding resources.



### DEKALB COUNTY TORNADO MEMORIAL PROJECT

#### BACKGROUND

The April 27, 2011 disaster in DeKalb County will be etched in the minds of City of Rainsville and DeKalb County residents for a long time. The outbreak of tornados in the area, including an EF-5 tornado, left a path of destruction in multiple areas of the county including: areas along State Highway 35; the Rainsville City Civic Center; Plainview School; and numerous area homes, farms and businesses.

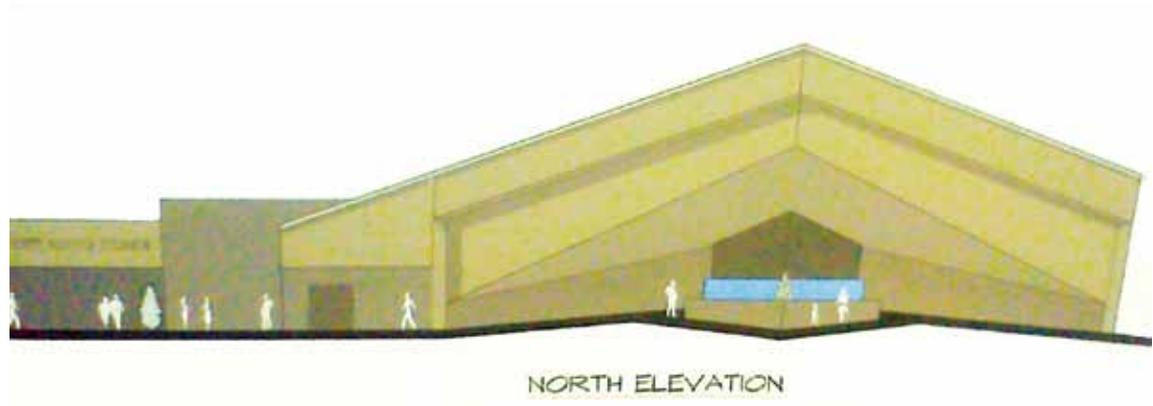
#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In memory of the lives and property lost, the City of Rainsville has plans to design and erect a memorial monument in front of the civic center. Plans for the memorial include black granite with etchings of a tornado and the names of those lives lost, as well as a water feature and art sculpture commemorating the event and symbolizing the community's recovery.



#### ACTION STEPS

- Establish regular City of Rainsville Beautification Committee meetings.
- Identify funding and nonprofit resources and opportunities.
- Identify public private partnership opportunities.
- Identify and obtain all necessary contractual or legal agreements and approvals.
- Select a site and design for the memorial monument.
- Develop a maintenance plan and conduct continuous community outreach.
- Construct and have the memorial monument ready to be unveiled (as feasible) on the first anniversary of the tornado.



### CHAVIES BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

#### BACKGROUND

At the August 22, 2011, Rainsville/DeKalb County LTCR Community Meeting, one of the projects identified during the community mapping process as a top infrastructure and community interest project was the rehabilitation and/or replacement of Chavies Bridge in the City of Rainsville. The bridge and its approach (County Road 812) are county-owned and provide the community with parallel route access to State Highway 35 in Rainsville. County Road 812 and the bridge provides access to area neighborhoods, Plainview School, area businesses, and the Bellefonte Nuclear Plant located in Hollywood, Alabama. Local emergency responders have also identified the road and bridge as a much needed emergency access route; however, it currently cannot be used due to its limited weight capacity,

width, and safety deficiency concerns. The City of Rainsville had requested DeKalb County and Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) assistance in funding the replacement of Chavies Bridge. To date, improvement and/or replacement plans for the bridge remain unfunded.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City of Rainsville will resubmit an updated project cost estimate to DeKalb County, ALDOT, state and federal legislators to identify funding opportunities.

#### ACTION STEPS

- Identify cost and schedule for the project.
- Identify resources to help with project.
- Update cost estimate for bridge replacement.



## HOUSING

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The April 27, 2011 tornadoes destroyed or damaged 1,156 homes in DeKalb County. Of this total, 309 homes were totally destroyed, 78 of which were manufactured homes. This represents four percent of the total occupied housing units in the county. According to the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau, there are 26,842 occupied housing units in the county. The median income of \$35,967 is a qualification threshold for assistance from a number of housing programs administered by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development. Prior to the disaster, 13.7 percent of the housing units were vacant; the disaster may have caused some vacant houses to be occupied by displaced residents. During the Long-Term Community Recovery (LTCR) planning process the community expressed a desire to replace homes destroyed by the tornadoes and identify opportunities for new residential development, including senior housing, that would enable residents to age in the community. This section of the plan identifies two programs that will help the community achieve those goals:

- Housing Resource Center
- Long-Term Housing Recovery Plan



## COMMUNITY INTEREST PROJECTS

### HOUSING RESOURCE CENTER

#### BACKGROUND

A large percentage of owner-occupied houses did not have a mortgage. Because of this, many homeowners did not carry insurance.

During the community mapping exercise conducted at the first community meeting, residents identified affordable and elderly housing as a community need. The Recovery Committee subsequently formed a housing subcommittee to identify ways to address the community's housing needs. In addition to concerns expressed by the community, the housing subcommittee identified a number of residents who have not been able to rebuild due to funding gaps. Funding gaps are primarily the result of homeowners having insufficient or no insurance. The subcommittee also plans to work toward establishing a Habitat for Humanity affiliate program in the county. The subcommittee would like to develop a program to provide lodging, food, and sanitary facilities for volunteer organizations that travel to the county and assist with housing repairs.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Housing Resource Center is to provide one-stop housing assistance to impacted residents. The goals of the center are

to provide coordinating programs to help owners rebuild, help renters become homeowners, and coordinate case management and supportive services. In order to create a Housing Resource Center, organizations that provide housing services must first be identified. Then, a process must be established to assess individual needs and connect residents to appropriate services. A website can also be created that describes available services and provides contact information for accessing those services.

#### ACTION STEPS

- Identify participating housing service programs and develop collaborative agreements, processes assessments and referrals, and determine resource requirements.
- Secure funding and a location from which to operate.
- Conduct housing fairs and other outreach activities to inform residents about available services.
- Create a website that identifies the various services available through the center, with program descriptions and contact information.

### LONG-TERM HOUSING RECOVERY PLAN

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The following guidance is provided to assist the housing subcommittee with the formulation of a Long-Term Housing Recovery Plan. Specifically, the intent of this guidance is to provide suggestions for identifying potential housing project opportunities and determining information sources and contacts in the local and regional housing sector. Several types of agencies and organizations are identified that can provide information regarding housing needs, community priorities, impediments to housing reconstruction, and potential housing recovery projects.

#### ACTION STEPS

- Expand role and membership of housing subcommittee.
- Determine community baseline for housing.
- Determine housing impact.
- Identify community housing priorities & community vision.
- Determine the housing pipeline. Identify specific housing programs, strategies and projects.
- Prepare strategic housing recovery timeline.

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## NEXT STEPS + IMPLEMENTATION

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Photo courtesy of Stephen V. Smith, WordSouth Public Relations, Inc.



## NEXT STEPS + IMPLEMENTATION

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### NEXT STEPS

The DeKalb County/Rainville Recovery Committee and the community have demonstrated from the beginning the drive and the dedication needed for the long-term community recovery process. Moving forward, the strength and wherewithal exhibited will be essential to see the funding and implementation of the recovery projects through. The following are recommended next steps:

#### Recovery Committee

- Continue to meet regularly to maintain momentum and develop new projects.
- Revisit committee structure and revise as needs evolve.
- Expand Recovery Committee to represent the entire county.
- Develop regional partnerships, in both the public and private sector.
- Identify training opportunities for project champions, committee members, and others.
- Seek countywide support for all projects.
- Host additional community meetings and report recovery progress to the public.
- Report progress to elected officials on a regular basis.
- Recruit additional volunteers, particularly for grant writing and capacity building roles.
- Celebrate success.

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### **Project Subcommittees**

- Establish meeting schedule according to project implementation stage.
- Develop regional partnerships, in both the public and private sector.
- Identify training opportunities for project champions and members relevant to project development and implementation.
- Recruit additional volunteers, particularly for grant writing and capacity building roles.
- Seek connections to other projects to strengthen grant proposals and project impact.
- Celebrate success.

### **Community Members**

- Get involved in any way possible.
- Attend meetings or offer input or insight via e-mail, phone, letter or social media.
- Keep a steadfast and positive attitude.
- Celebrate success.

Following these recommendations will enhance the chances for successful project development and implementation. However, community needs and priorities will evolve over time. This evolution may affect the projects in this plan and require revision or adjustment. Finally, recovery is a long process and obstacles will arise along the way. It is important that the committee and stakeholders remain optimistic through challenging circumstances. This outlook will help maintain energy and help to assure the public that recovery is occurring, despite any potential setbacks. In time, a full recovery can be realized as long as efforts remain visible in the community's mind and community residents remain vested in the long-term community recovery process.

### **IDENTIFY CATALYST PROJECTS**

Not all projects identified in the Recovery Plan can be implemented immediately. Initiation of any project and the length of time required for completion will be subject to multiple factors such as legal constraints, site control, and the availability of human and financial resources. Therefore, it is important that the community identify catalyst projects. Catalyst projects are defined as high-profile initiatives that attract investment and prompt redevelopment by demonstrating not only community priorities, but also technical feasibility, aesthetic appeal, and financial profitability. In general, catalyst projects should be achievable within the shorter term of one to five years. These projects pave the way for longer term projects that will take five to 15 years to complete.

It will be the responsibility of the Recovery Committee to identify these projects and establish their priority within the overall Recovery Plan implementation strategy.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

As with any endeavor, establishing clear roles and responsibilities is essential to achieving project objectives. Certain individuals and organizations will play lead roles while others will take supporting or advisory roles. These should be clearly delineated in an organizational structure. Within each role, responsibilities or tasks should be defined based on project requirements.

## COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

A formal communication policy should be adopted. This policy would identify the process by which information sharing takes place and would include activities such as:

- Setting regular meetings among stake holders and responsible parties.
- Tracking the status of projects including milestones achieved and identifying barriers to progress.
- Communicating project initiatives and progress regularly to the public.
- Implementing and maintaining communication tools such as regular newsletters, recovery websites and social media sites.

## RECOVERY MANAGER

The complex job of managing the Recovery Plan implementation can be greatly facilitated by hiring a LTCR Manager to assist the Recovery Committee in ensuring accountability as defined by the organizational structure. A communications strategy is an essential tool for coordinating and monitoring the recovery process. Maintaining a central point of contact for recovery project management and sharing project issues with internal stakeholders and outside resource providers is a role suitable to a LTCR Manager.



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## FUNDING + CAPACITY BUILDING

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## FUNDING + CAPACITY BUILDING



### GUIDE AND TOOLS

#### **Alabama Resource Guide and Resource Matrices — Federal, State and Regional Resources**

The matrix of resources, entitled *Alabama Project Categories—Potential Resources* that supports this document, identifies specific agencies and organizations that the community can approach about potential funding or technical assistance resources to implement community recovery and revitalization projects. The matrix references the *Alabama Resource Guide* (included as a companion disc) that provides an overview of hundreds of federal, state, and regional funding sources, both public and private. In addition, each Project Development Guide (included on a separate companion disc) is paired with a project-specific matrix of resources that are suggested starting points in researching potential funding sources. Unless otherwise noted, these project-specific matrices also refer to funding sources listed in the *Alabama Resource Guide*.

All grant programs have specific eligibility requirements for applicants. Some grant programs fund only 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofit organizations, while others fund only governmental units, such as towns or cities. Some grants are available to both types of applicants. Therefore, public-private partnerships are important to maximize funding, capacity building, and other opportunities.

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Some grant programs restrict their funding to communities that meet certain eligibility criteria, such as falling within a certain geographic area or possessing certain demographic characteristics like high poverty or unemployment rates. Meeting the specified program criteria could result in a special designation that allows the community to participate in programs and apply for grant funding unavailable to communities that do not meet the program criteria. Some designations specifically target more urban areas for assistance, while others specifically target rural areas. Examples of designations, often referred to as designated areas or zones, that provide funding opportunities include:

- Food deserts in metropolitan areas
- Distressed communities
- Housing or economic development hot zones
- Health professional shortage areas and/or medically underserved areas
- Brownfields

Many specific programs exist to support different types of designated zones or areas. Designations can be part of a successful strategy to secure funding to develop recovery strategies and implement projects that affect a community's economy and vitality.

The census tract matrix, *Census Tract Information for LTRC Communities* that supports this document, shows how the use of designations can help secure funding. This matrix identifies federal grant and financing opportunities, many of which are based on designations that can serve as a core part of the community's grant application, make the project competitive, and facilitate funding. It should be noted that even if a census tract is not designated as eligible for funding or presents a financial resource opportunity, the governing federal agencies do have waiver procedures, especially when it comes to such factors as loss and devastation from disasters.

For more specific information about designations and related funding, contact your regional council of governments or planning commission.

### **IMPORTANT PARTNERS**

Forming alliances and partnerships can increase grant-writing and project implementation success. Partnerships, especially public-private partnerships, can maximize funding, capacity building, and other opportunities. Alliances and partnerships can exist between two communities and/or communities and other organizations. For example, if two or more adjacent communities each submit an application to fund a medical center, they will compete against each other. Conversely, if they submit an application together for one shared facility, they will have a stronger application, less competition, and may even receive more funds. Programs that fund economic development activities often favor a regional approach to overcome challenges. A community and its recovery committee or nonprofit organization may partner with other local, regional, and statewide organizations to build capacity or develop, fund, and implement recovery strategies and projects.

### **Regional Councils or Planning Commissions**

Regional councils are quasi-governmental organizations and another important resource for communities. A regional council or planning commission is a public organization that encompasses a multi-jurisdictional regional community. The governing bodies of councils are primarily composed of local government elected officials and appointed representatives of local communities and state government. The Alabama Association of Regional Planning Councils includes 12 regional planning councils/commissions to support Alabama communities. Five of these councils/commissions serve Alabama's communities that are engaged in the long-term community recovery planning process.

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The Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments (TARCOG) serves DeKalb County and Rainsville. Through communication, planning, policymaking, coordination, advocacy, grant writing and technical assistance the commission/council serves the local governments and citizens in the region. These commissions/councils frequently deal with issues and needs that cross city, town, and county boundaries. Also, each region can provide special services as determined by its board of directors. The services and programs offered depend upon local needs and priorities within the region. These needs may exist currently or be based on projected growth, changing lifestyles and demographics, and technological innovations.

Regional councils and planning commissions are an important asset for long-term community recovery work and are well-versed on recovery challenges and needs. They have resources and information that help a community to make decisions about implementation strategies, especially as they pertain to designations, alliances, and grant applications. Additionally, each regional council or planning commission has a comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS), which offers a detailed view of the opportunities, needs, and challenges within the region to promote and sustain economic growth.

Community members may visit [www.tarcog.org](http://www.tarcog.org) for a full list of the programs and services offered by the regional council.

### **501(c)(3) Charitable Nonprofit Organizations**

A 501(c)(3) refers to a charitable nonprofit organization that is incorporated in a state and designated by the Internal Revenue Service as a charitable entity. Nonprofits do not pay federal taxes on programs and services related to their charitable mission. Nonprofit missions can include aid to vulnerable populations; construction, erection and/or maintenance of historic buildings, monuments, or works; reducing the burdens of government; community development; youth programs; and other charitable purposes.

Many grant programs offer funding only to 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofits. A community's recovery committee may decide to incorporate as a charitable nonprofit and partner with the local government to strengthen the recovery effort and opportunities. Depending on the recovery goals and future development plans, the community may choose to structure its charitable nonprofit as a certain type of community service or development organization. These types of organizations are described below.

### **Community Development Corporations**

Community Development Corporations (CDCs) are community-established organizations that anchor local capital through residential and commercial development, ranging from affordable housing to shopping centers and businesses.

### **Community Housing Development Organizations**

Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) earn designation through the federal HOME program and serve as a means to finance housing projects. A CHDO generally is defined as a nonprofit, community-based community service organization that develops affordable housing in the low-income community it serves.

### **Community Development Financial Institutions**

Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) earn designation from the U.S. Treasury Department. A CDFI is a private-sector financial institution that focuses on personal lending and business development efforts in local communities. They are primarily funding sources to support small business growth and development. CDFIs can be an important source for the use of New Market Tax Credits to finance economic development efforts.

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### **Economic Development Organizations**

Economic Development Organizations serve as the primary sources of grant funds from federal agencies involved in economic development.

### **Certified Development Corporations**

Certified Development Corporations earn their designation from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and offer any form of SBA loan assistance. Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) are partnerships primarily between the government and colleges to provide educational services for small business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs.

### **Housing Resource Centers**

Housing Resource Centers (HRCs) are central points for technical assistance and a resource for stimulating new housing construction as well as rehabilitation. HRCs help existing and potential homeowners to locate resources to repair, build, or purchase a home.

A community or committee should explore all options to determine the best vehicle to develop its recovery strategies and projects. It may choose to structure as, or partner with, one of the community development organization types. Alternatively, the community or committee may elect to incorporate as a charitable nonprofit corporation but not structure it specifically as one of these organizations, based on what best meets the needs and goals of the community for the both its recovery and future development.

### **Agencies, Universities + Associations**

State agencies, universities, and associations provide a broad range of financial and other support to communities and organizations of interest to them. They are an excellent resource for capacity building support, technical assistance, studies and projections, and sometimes even funding. The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) is the coordinating agency under the Governor's Office for long-term community

recovery efforts. There are numerous supporting state agencies that assist in long-term community recovery. A list of links to State agency websites is included in Section V of the *Alabama Resource Guide*.

### **Examples of Other Potential Partners**

- Alabama Association of Nonprofits  
<http://alabamanonprofits.org>
- Alabama Communities of Excellence  
[www.alabamacommunitiesofexcellence.org](http://www.alabamacommunitiesofexcellence.org)
- Your Town Alabama  
[www.yourtownalabama.org](http://www.yourtownalabama.org)
- Alabama Home Builders Association  
[www.hbaa.org](http://www.hbaa.org)
- Local university centers and programs
- Local chambers of commerce
- Local development authorities

This is by no means a comprehensive list, but it does illustrate that numerous agencies and organizations can partner with communities to gain needed support during the recovery process. The regional council or planning commission that serves the region is an excellent resource for cultivating and strengthening relationships with these key partners, both public and private. Typically, the regional council or planning commission has existing relationships with the organizations and agencies that are active in the region and can provide insight and resources to help identify and secure critical support for projects. Assembling a strong team of partners to provide support is essential to holistic recovery.

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
**ROBERT BENTLEY**  
GOVERNOR



STATE OF ALABAMA

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS  
**JIM BYARS, JR.**  
DIRECTOR

November 4, 2011

The Honorable Ricky Harcrow  
President of DeKalb County Commission  
111 Grand Avenue, SW  
Suite 200  
Fort Payne, AL 35967

Dear President Harcrow:

RE: Long Term Community Recovery Strategic Action Report - Rainsville, Alabama

It has been six months since a devastating tornado struck the community of Rainsville and DeKalb County, severely disrupting the lives of the people who live and work there. At that time the State of Alabama's emergency response agencies moved swiftly to assist in rescue, debris removal, security, and restoration of essential services. Now the emergency clean-up effort is complete, but there still remains the long process of rebuilding and repairing businesses, homes and public property. I want to assure you that the State's Long Term Community Recovery staff will continue to offer assistance as you work to recover and rebuild.

This rebuilding effort, while painful and difficult, does present some opportunities for the community of Rainsville and DeKalb County. Local officials are already considering the best way to approach a long term recovery plan. To succeed, that plan must involve all levels of government, as well as local businesses, private organizations and, most importantly, the citizens of Rainsville and DeKalb County. Together, you have a great opportunity to develop a vision of your community's future, and to create a comprehensive plan to make that vision a reality.

To help Rainsville and DeKalb County develop their Long Term Recovery Plan, an Alabama Long Term Community Recovery Team representing several agencies throughout the State of Alabama and elsewhere are working closely with the Federal Emergency Management Agency. I strongly endorse this effort. I have directed the participating agencies to identify potential sources of funding to implement and complete projects proposed in the plan. I commend you and the citizens of Rainsville and DeKalb County for the dedication and willingness you have demonstrated by working together through this difficult time, and I look forward to working with you as the long term recovery effort continues.

Sincerely,  
  
Jim Byars, Jr.  
Director

JB:RM:cf

401 ADAMS AVENUE • SUITE 500 • P.O. BOX 5690 • MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36103-5690 • (341) 242-5100

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
**ROBERT BENTLEY**  
GOVERNOR



STATE OF ALABAMA

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC  
AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS  
**JIM BYARS, JR.**  
DIRECTOR

November 4, 2011

The Honorable Donnie Chandler  
Mayor of Rainsville  
Post Office Box 309  
Rainsville, AL 35886

Dear Mayor Chandler:

RE: Long Term Community Recovery Strategic Action Report

It has been six months since a devastating tornado struck the community of Rainsville and DeKalb County, severely disrupting the lives of the people who live and work there. At that time the State of Alabama's emergency response agencies moved swiftly to assist in rescue, debris removal, security, and restoration of essential services. Now the emergency clean-up effort is complete, but there still remains the long process of rebuilding and repairing businesses, homes and public property. I want to assure you that the State's Long Term Community Recovery staff will continue to offer assistance as you work to recover and rebuild.

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Sincerely,  
  
Jim Byars, Jr.  
Director

JB:RM:cf

401 ADAMS AVENUE • SUITE 500 • P.O. BOX 5690 • MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36103-5690 • (341) 242-5100



**ALABAMA STATE SENATE**  
**ALABAMA STATE HOUSE**  
 11 SOUTH UNION STREET  
 MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130-4609  
 (334) 242-7858



**ALABAMA**

SENATOR SHADRACK MCGILL  
 STATE SENATOR, DISTRICT 8  
 P. O. Box 623  
 Scottdale, Alabama 37378  
 (270) 219-8999  
 Fax: (270) 219-3992

**Committees:**  
 CHAIRMAN, Small Business  
 Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry  
 Business and Labor  
 Commerce, Transportation and Utilities  
 Constitution, Campaign Finance, Ethics  
 And Elections  
 Local Legislation No. 4

September 23, 2011

To My Friends and Neighbors in DeKalb County,

Let me begin by saying how very proud I am of the people of DeKalb County, for their incredible resilience in the face of the devastation left in the wake of the April 27th tornado. It is an honor to represent you in the Alabama Senate. Virtually every time I have been to the DeKalb Co. area since the storm, I have witnessed unbelievable acts of selflessness, kindness, determination and adaptability among those who have lost so much, and those who have come to provide aid and assistance.

I'm particularly proud that so many individuals and businesses have resolved to stay in the county and rebuild Rainsville, and other areas that have been hit so hard. It has been extremely gratifying to see city, county, state and federal officials working closely together and with the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) representatives. I appreciate everyone's efforts-town hall meetings, in the weeks and months to come, stakeholder meetings and individual interviews-to craft a recovery plan that supports the long term viability of the town of Rainsville and those who live in and around it. In the weeks and months to come, I look forward to staying involved with the citizens of DeKalb County, the various levels of government and private and public aid organizations including FEMA, to ensure that this plan moves forward effectively and efficiently.

We will need all our patience, cooperation, creativity and vision to rebuild the future together.

God Bless,



Shadrack McGill  
 Senator, District 8

**COMMISSION MEMBERS**

JEROME TINSKER  
 DISTRICT I

ED NIX  
 DISTRICT II

**THE DeKALB COUNTY COMMISSION**  
**RICKY HARCROW, PRESIDENT**

MATT G. SHARP, ADMINISTRATOR  
 SUITE 200  
 111 GRAND AVE. S.W.  
 FORT PAYNE, AL 35967  
 256-845-8500 PHONE  
 256-845-8592 FAX

**COMMISSION MEMBERS**

CHRIS KUYKENDALL  
 DISTRICT III

DEWITT JACKSON  
 DISTRICT IV

October 12, 2011

Friends and Family  
 Long Term Community Recovery  
 FEMA, DR-1971-AI

Dear Friends and Family:

I am writing this letter in support of the Rainsville-DeKalb County Long-Term Community Recovery Committee. As a life long DeKalb County resident, I know the importance of the work of this Committee in restoring our County after the April 27<sup>th</sup> tornado. The projects that will assist our County will involve Community Planning, Economic Development, Infrastructure, Housing and Human Services, which are all vital to our rebuilding.

Your work with this committee is very much appreciated and if you need any further assistance or wish to call me, feel free to do so.

Sincerely,



Ricky Harcrow  
 President

## City of Rainsville

P.O. Box 309  
Rainsville, AL 35986

Telephone  
(256) 638-6331

October 12, 2011

Fellow Citizens of the City of Rainsville:

It has been nearly six months since a devastating tornado struck the City of Rainsville, severely disrupting the lives of the people who live and work here. At that time, emergency response agencies moved to assist in rescue, debris removal, security and restoration of essential services. Now the emergency clean-up effort is complete, but there still remains the long process of rebuilding and repairing businesses, homes, and public property. I want to assure you that the City of Rainsville will continue to offer assistance as you work to recover and rebuild.

This rebuilding effort, while painful and difficult, does present some opportunities for the City of Rainsville. Local officials are already considering the best way to approach a long-term recovery plan. To succeed, that plan must involve all levels of government, as well as local businesses, private organizations, and most importantly the citizens of the City of Rainsville. Together we have a great opportunity to develop a vision of our community's future and to create a comprehensive plan to make that vision a reality.

To help the City of Rainsville with the recovery plan, the Rainsville Long Term Recovery Team has been established and is working closely with the Federal Emergency Management Agency. I strongly endorse this effort and pledge my support for the Rainsville Long Term Recovery Plan. I commend you on the progress you have made thus far and your vision for the future of our community.

Sincerely,



Donnie Chandler, Mayor  
City of Rainsville



## DeKALB COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

111 Grand Avenue, SW, Suite 21  
Fort Payne, AL 35967  
Office (256) 845-8569 X Fax (256) 845-8790  
J. Anthony Clifton, Director



October 14, 2011

Dear Friends of DeKalb County,

The efforts of the Long Term Community Recovery Committee are going to produce a long lasting positive impact on both the citizens of Rainsville as well as the citizens of the entire DeKalb County area.

The DeKalb County Emergency Management Agency endorses the efforts of the committee and fully supports the plans which have been developed as a result of the committees meetings and evaluation of the needs of the citizens of DeKalb County.

DeKalb County EMA, is in support of what the community is trying to do, as well as supports the commitment the community has shown to see this effort through to completion.

Please feel free to call on this office to support any future actions of the LTRC committee if we can be of service to you in any way.

Thank all of you for your efforts.

Sincerely,

  
J. Anthony Clifton  
DeKalb County EMA Director



DeKalb County Board of Education  
Charles A. Warren  
Superintendent of Education

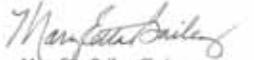
BOARD MEMBERS  
Mary Elta Bailey, Chrm.  
Harold Bobo, V. Chrm.  
Claude Calahan  
Tarry Woolhan  
Mark Richards

October 5, 2011

To My Friends and Neighbors in Rainsville and DeKalb County,

I am writing to thank you for all your work on the Long-Term Community Recovery Plan for DeKalb County and Rainsville. You have produced a plan for the recovery of the community that will be a great help to guide us as we rebuild our community. The plan gives us direction for the vast number of vital community projects. Not only are the projects described, but also the plan includes suggestions for making them happen, with estimated costs and possible funding sources. I feel this plan is realistic and can be accomplished. Yes, I realize there will be many challenges and difficulties, but as we implement this recovery plan and with your continued involvement, we should see the goals of this plan achieved. I am proud to support this plan and look forward to working with you as we do everything in our power to rebuild Rainsville and DeKalb County.

Sincerely,

  
Mary Elta Bailey, Chairman  
DeKalb County Board of Education

P. O. Box 1000 • 306 Main Street W • Rainsville, Alabama 35906-1666 • Phone: (256) 638-6921 • Fax: (256) 638-6972

October 10, 2011

Dear DeKalb and Rainsville Friends,

April 27<sup>th</sup> will forever be remembered as a day of great loss to our community. Many of you lost loved ones as a result of the tornado that ripped its way through homes, businesses and even our school. In the midst of so much loss, I was so proud of our community, as everyone rallied together to take care of each other's needs.

The first responders worked so tirelessly to bring relief to so many. The out pouring of generosity and compassion was, and still is, a reflection of the strong spirit this community has. It is these qualities that have made our community so resilient in working together in the Recovery effort that in on going.

I have no doubt, with the Recovery Plan we have developed, that we will continue to work in a united way, to see Rainsville and the county recover and build back stronger and better. Some of the goals we have developed will be completed in a short length of time, while others will be completed over the course of a few years. Just within the last few months, I have seen great improvements, as homes and businesses are building back and cleanup efforts have taken place.

I am committed, as your elected city servant, to work as hard as I can to support the community's efforts in the Long-Term Community Recovery. I am so thankful to be a citizen of such a compassionate and caring community that doesn't give up until the job is done.

With Deepest Regards,

  
Fred L. Bobo  
Rainsville City Councilman

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*Valley View Tube, Inc.*

October 14, 2011

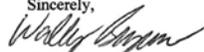
Dear Sir or Madame:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the work of the Rainsville, AL Long-Term Recovery Committee.

I have been heavily involved since the program's inception. Every part of this group is committed to achieving the best for the area, and it has been a joy to see the long term plans coming together through the committee's work.

In conclusion, the Rainsville Chamber of Commerce fully supports the efforts of the Rainsville Long-Term Recovery Committee as they seek funding to achieve the best for this area as we recover from the events of April 27, 2011. Any programs that can help with the recovery will benefit our community at large for years to come.

Sincerely,



Wally Bryson  
President

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Mayor of Rainsville  
DeKalb County Commission  
DeKalb County EMA  
DeKalb County Economic Development Authority  
Rainsville City Council  
Rainsville Chamber of Commerce  
Rainsville Civitan Club  
Rainsville Fire Department  
Ider Rescue Squad  
Rainsville Police Department  
Fort Payne Rotary Club  
Tom Bevill Enrichment Center  
Fort Payne Salvation Army  
DeKalb County Technology Center  
Bird and Kamback Architects, LLC  
Fort Payne Depot Museum  
Alabama Contract Poultry Growers Association  
Rainsville/DeKalb County Recovery Committee:  
    Beautification Subcommittee  
    Disaster Response Planning Subcommittee  
    Economic Development Subcommittee  
    Education Subcommittee  
    Housing Subcommittee  
    Sewer System Subcommittee  
Top of Alabama Regional Council of Governments  
WordSouth Public Relations, Inc.

**TOWN OF RAINSVILLE, ALABAMA**

Adopted and approved this 18th day of July, 2011

WHEREAS, the City of Rainsville, Alabama and the surrounding communities in DeKalb County received major devastation as a result of the tornado that struck our area on April 27, 2011.

WHEREAS, the impact of the tornado included loss of life in Rainsville, as well as the loss of a major portion of the downtown business area and other housing, business, educational, government, church and community facilities.

AND WHEREAS, the City of Rainsville has lost a large portion of its traditional tax base and revenue, including revenue necessary to cover operations resulting from the tornado.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the City of Rainsville request that FEMA's Long-Term Community Recovery group and its partner agencies, otherwise known as Emergency Support Function Fourteen (ESF-14), be deployed as soon as possible to fully support the City of Rainsville in our long-term recovery.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the City Council of Rainsville encourages all citizens and staff to participate in the recovery activities coordinated through our process in partnership with the County Officials of DeKalb County, the State of Alabama, FEMA's Long-Term Community Recovery group, and other recovery partners.

Donnie Chandler, Mayor

Attested by: Judy Lewis, City Clerk

**DEKALB COUNTY, ALABAMA**

Adopted and approved this 9th day of August, 2011

WHEREAS, the County of DeKalb, Alabama and the surrounding communities within and around DeKalb County received major devastation as a result of the tornado that struck out area on April 27, 2011.

WHEREAS, the impact of the tornado included loss of life in DeKalb County, as well as the loss of a major portion of the downtown business area and other housing, business, educational, governmental, church, and community facilities.

AND WHEREAS the County of DeKalb has lost a large portion of its traditional tax base revenue, including revenue necessary to cover operations resulting from the tornado.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the County of DeKalb request that FEMA's Long-Term Community Recovery group and its partner agencies, otherwise known as Emergency Support Function Fourteen (ESF-14), be deployed as soon as possible to fully support the County of DeKalb in our long-term recovery.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County of DeKalb encourages all citizens and staff to participate in the recovery activities coordinated through our process in partnership with the County Officials of DeKalb County, the State of Alabama, FEMA's Long-Term Community Recovery group, and other recovery partners.

Ricky Harcrow, President  
DeKalb County Commission

Attested by: Matt Sharp, CPA, CCA, County Administrator

