



## **Gustav/Ike Recovery & Revitalization Program**

### **EXHIBIT A - SPECIAL REVIEW PROCESS FOR DRAINAGE PROJECTS**

#### **Background and Purpose**

Louisiana is situated at the terminus of the Mississippi River Drainage Basin, which includes 41 percent of the land area in the United States. The Lower Mississippi River deeply incised its alluvial valley in the coastal plain during the last glacial advance of the Pleistocene Epoch when sea level was several hundred feet lower than present. During and subsequent to this period as the sea level progressively rose, the valley was gradually filled with alluvium deposited by the river. The river, therefore, brought into the state much of the material that is present today and has been a major influence in building and shaping Louisiana's physical environment.

Unlike the upper reaches of the river which have steep slopes and relatively narrow floodplains, the Lower Mississippi has a great, wide floodplain through Louisiana and is relatively unconfined by nature. It must be confined to protect crops and cities along its banks. Without flood control measures, 54 percent of the state would be subject to periodic flooding. Therefore, the current level of economic and social development would not have been possible without the flood control and drainage programs that have been part of man's activities in Louisiana since the earliest days of settlement.

Like the Indian tribes that originally inhabited the area, the first settlers built permanent structures on higher ground, above the flood line, and used flood prone areas for seasonal activities such as hunting and farming. As population increased and the competition for land intensified, more and more development took place in areas subject to periodic flooding. To protect these areas, residents gradually began to develop flood control measures. In the beginning, these measures were rudimentary efforts by individual riparian landholders to protect their own lands from the annual rises of the Mississippi and its tributaries. In time, this responsibility was shared by parish governments, levee districts, the state, and the Federal government.

The multiplicity of efforts was sometimes counterproductive to the extent that each jurisdiction devised a means to displace flooding, rather than to solve the flood problem. As a consequence, floodwaters were simply diverted from one place to another—solving a problem here, and causing one there.

The need for a unified flood control system is imperative to ensure safe human habitation in low-lying areas and to reduce flood damages, which escalate annually. The goal of the Louisiana Recovery Authority/Office of Community Development in this manner is to fund drainage projects that provide long-term solutions to flood problems and protect existing developments in flood prone areas without encouraging at-risk development in hazardous areas.



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### Special Review Process

Drainage project applications submitted for funding under the municipalities infrastructure program must have an Impact Analysis performed as part of the standard engineering and design services phase of the project that adequately and completely answers the following questions:

#### I. Technical Feasibility

- There was due consideration of alternatives (structural and non-structural)
- The project is compatible with other Federal, state, and local projects
- There is no adverse impact on flooding in areas upstream, downstream, and adjacent to the benefited area.

#### II. Environmental Effects and Impact on Development

- There are no letters of objection from public agencies
- There is no impact on special historical, archeological, geological features, or environmentally sensitive areas
- The project addresses flooding in developed areas and minimizes impact to wetlands
- Project does not encourage encroachment into flood prone areas (i.e.100-year floodplain)

Please note that the Impact Analysis does **not** need to be completed prior to obtaining approval to enter the design and engineering and design services phase of the project. However, the Impact Analysis must be completed by applicant and reviewed by OCD prior to proceeding to the construction phase of the project.