

Discussion Summary — Correspondence with Sussex County Regarding FEMA Grant Sponsorship and Funding Constraints (January–February 2025)

This summary reflects correspondence regarding potential FEMA mitigation grant applications and governmental sponsorship related to Mallard Lakes Community Association. It is provided for historical context only and should not be interpreted as an official commitment, funding determination, or policy position of Sussex County or any participating official.

Between January and February 2025, correspondence was exchanged with Sussex County representatives regarding possible FEMA grant opportunities that might support flood-mitigation planning and engineering studies for Mallard Lakes. The discussions focused on ongoing flooding concerns within the community, potential eligibility for FEMA Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA), BRIC, and related resilience programs, and the procedural challenges associated with securing governmental sponsorship for future applications.

A Mallard Lakes property owner explored whether homeowners could potentially fund portions of an initial feasibility study and engineering support in an effort to reduce the workload and administrative burden on Sussex County associated with preparing future FEMA grant applications. The correspondence also sought clarification regarding whether Sussex County would be willing to serve as the required sponsoring subapplicant for future grant submissions if the community funded portions of the preparatory work.

In response, Sussex County representatives explained that the County had previously participated in FEMA grant application efforts related to Mallard Lakes but had ultimately concluded that the applications required substantial staff time and County resources while producing uncertain outcomes. County officials also expressed concern regarding the broader uncertainty surrounding future federal funding availability and indicated that Sussex County was not prepared to commit additional County resources toward FEMA grant application efforts until the future direction of federal funding programs became clearer.

The correspondence reflected the broader challenges associated with pursuing large-scale mitigation funding for HOA-governed coastal communities, including reliance on governmental sponsors, administrative burdens associated with federal grant programs, uncertainty surrounding future federal appropriations, and the difficulty of advancing long-term resilience planning when local governments face competing fiscal and operational priorities.