



OXFORD HEIGHTS SUBDIVISION  
EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN

March 27, 2007

## **Oxford Heights Overview and Historical Conditions**

Oxford Heights is a medium sized community located on the southern side of Elizabeth City just off highway U. S 17 Bypass. This area was developed in the early to mid 60's. The only daily access to this community is by use of Providence Road directly off of US 17. This particular street has a bridge that is as old as the development and weight limitation has been downgraded to a maximum weight of 28 tons, hampering response of certain fire apparatus.

Oxford Heights is bound on three of its four sides by swamp/wetland area. The fourth side is bound by the Albemarle and Chesapeake Railroad. During large rain events or hurricane/rain storms, large portions of the community experience flooding from rising swamp runoff onto properties and even inside some structures. Although Oxford Heights is not totally a flood zone, it is the victim of extensive run off from surrounding developments that have been established over the years. Multiple and consecutive high volume rain events have substantially paralyzed this community and caused its only means of ingress/egress by personal vehicles to be shut down for extended amounts of time.

## **Oxford Heights Evacuation Routes**

As previously stated, Oxford Heights has only one entrance and exit way. Before the installation of Halstead Boulevard Extended Connector Road, there was an additional exit from the community by use of Lexington Drive, which intersected with Church Street Extended. Once the Halstead Connector Road was established as a limited access highway, the Lexington Drive exit was permanently closed with a retaining fence and a security swing gate. Should this avenue become a viable avenue of escape from this community, soil removal and suitable fill will be necessary to bring this area to an acceptable level to support exiting traffic and incoming emergency response vehicles.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

With limited access and egress to this community and its past history of potential flooding, it's recommended that the rear exit onto Halstead Extended be considered for activation during emergency situations as determined by the City Manager or his designee.

## **PREPARATION OF SITE**

Should this site be approved for use, consultations should occur with the North Carolina Department of Transportation to insure this area will be prepared to support light, medium duty and/or heavy truck use for an extended period of time. Responsibility of site upgrade will be determined by negotiations between NCDOT and the City of Elizabeth City.

## **PLAN ACTIVATION AND EVACUATION ROUTE PROCEDURES**

The following procedure shall be followed for evacuation of Oxford Heights residents, should conditions merit activation:

- A Continuous monitoring for extreme weather conditions or other situations that could cause flooding in the Oxford Heights area.
- B Any indications of rising water in the Oxford Heights area observed by either emergency services personnel or residents of the area should be forwarded to the local Emergency Management Office by calling 331-1500.
- C Emergency Management shall notify the City Manager (or the Mayor in his absence) of the possible flooding situation.
- D Water rise shall be monitored until the level of flooding at the Providence Road Bridge reaches a level of six (6) inches in depth.
- E NCDOT will be notified that the emergency entrance will be opened.
- F At that time, procedures will be initiated by a sign placed on the west side of the Providence Road bridge indicating the bridge is closed and the exact three-hour period the rear entrance will be open for vehicles to exit only, through face to face, reverse 911, Emergency Alert System or any other avenue to inform all residents affected that the gate on the Halstead Connector Road will be opened at a pre-determined time for a period of three (3) hours to allow vehicular traffic from the affected community to exit the area, until the water level at the Providence Road Bridge has recessed to a determined safe level for passage back into the area. This determination will be made by the authority having jurisdiction.
- G Procedures will be set in motion by the Police and Public Works Departments to set up an access route on the Halstead Connector Road,

in the east bound lane. An arrow board will be set in the east bound, outside lane west of the gate area with cones gradually merging traffic to the inside travel lane, allowing exiting traffic from the community to safely merge in traffic from the outside lane at the bridge area. Emergency response personnel will be on scene to monitor traffic flow and make adjustments necessary to insure the citizen's safety. (See attached diagram) After the three-hour evacuation period, the gate shall be locked and access into the subdivision shall be prohibited except for emergency vehicles.

- H Barricades and signage indicating that no access to the Oxford Heights community will be allowed are to be placed on the east side of the Providence Road Bridge and will remain until water level has receded to a safe level.
  
- I A resident that indicates a need to re-enter the community for any emergency purpose (i.e. access medications, removal of family member, etc.) will be assisted by emergency personnel as available for response. Utilization of the City's deuce-and-half vehicle as a possible access vehicle will be considered, if available. Citizens should contact Central Communications by calling 331-1500.

# Halstead Connector Road

