

Fact Sheet
Nonstructural Measures
(Land Acquisition Measures)

Option: Exchange of Property

Description: Exchange of at-risk and/or environmentally sensitive undeveloped properties for comparable developable sites with reduced risk or sensitivity; the at-risk and/or sensitive properties become publicly-owned and restricted from any future development.

Example(s): In 2008, the City of Wichita Falls, TX approved a program that allows low-to-moderate income property owners that are within the 1% ACE (100-year) floodplain to swap their lots for a publicly-owned parcel not in the floodplain, without charge.

Benefits: Long-term protection of sensitive land as a natural resource and buffer area; limits development potential of at-risk properties, thus minimizing flood damage impacts, potentially more cost-effective than most other nonstructural alternatives; increases open space/public access; provides public benefit while maintaining private property ownership in non-flood prone areas.

Challenges: Most of the riverfront properties are developed, their increased real estate value makes exchange of comparable value difficult (may have to offer a tax reduction benefit to waterfront property owners); limited inventory of available parcels for exchange; loss of public land in non-flood prone areas; public education; may require rezoning of properties; could result in legal challenges/additional costs to government.

