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Charlotte A. Randolph, *Parish President*

PRESS RELEASE

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Lafourche Parish to Receive Over \$2.7 Million for Mathews Office

The Louisiana Office of Community Development-Disaster Recovery Unit has awarded \$2,709,932 in disaster recovery funding to Lafourche Parish for renovations to the Mathews Government Complex, allowing parish officials to access the Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) funds needed to implement the project.

When Hurricane Gustav ripped off part of the roof of the Barrios Building in 2008, parish officials were forced to relocate governmental operations to the vacated Wal-Mart building in Mathews as an immediate emergency measure. The building was eventually purchased for Parish Government with FEMA funding. This makeshift facility, while large enough to house all services and offices, lacks the internal infrastructure to properly conduct business operations. This \$2.7 million will be combined with a parish dedication of \$262,213 for a grand total of \$2,972,145, to pay for renovations at the building.

“When we moved into this building following the storm, it was essentially an empty shell with four walls,” said Parish President Charlotte Randolph. “Our parish employees have done as best they can with our limited resources. This funding will allow us to put up the basic necessities for an office space such as walls and doors to provide a more professional and organized environment for serving the public.”

Renovations will include the construction of walls to establish individual offices; electrical and lighting service needed to facilitate staff operations; new Council Chambers will be constructed; and new public and employee restrooms will be built.

“The storm (Gustav) caused roof damage and rain that destroyed homes, business and public institutions, forcing the relocation of parish government and emergency operations to the Wal-Mart building in Mathews,” said Paul Rainwater, Commission of Administration. “These disaster recovery funds are vital to renovating the infrastructure at the Mathews Government Complex so it can continue to support critical governmental operations in Lafourche Parish.”

The funding is part of more than \$1 billion in disaster recovery CDBG money received by the state from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for damages inflicted by hurricanes Gustav and Ike. The bulk of the funds were allocated to the parishes based on their level of damage. As the fifth most damaged parish from Gustav-Ike, Lafourche received a total allocation of \$33,633,297.