

SECTION 8: PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

BACKGROUND

Section 201.6.a (4) of Chapter 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations (44CFR) states: “Multi-jurisdictional plans (e.g. watershed plans) may be accepted, as appropriate, as long as each jurisdiction has participated in the process and has officially adopted the plan.” The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM) both encourage multi-jurisdictional planning. Therefore, in the preparation of the Burlington County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP), a Planning Partnership was formed to pursue grant funding for the plan and to meet requirements of the federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA) for as many eligible local governments in Burlington County as possible.

The DMA defines a local government as follows: “Any county, municipality, city, town, township, public authority, school district, special district, intrastate district, council of governments (regardless of whether the council of governments is incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under State law), regional or interstate government entity, or agency or instrumentality of a local government; any Indian tribe or authorized tribal organization, or Alaska Native village or organization; and any rural community, unincorporated town or village, or other public entity.”

THE PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

Initial Solicitation and Letters of Intent

Burlington County solicited the participation of all townships and boroughs in the County at the commencement of this project. Townships and Boroughs interested signed a “Letter of Intent” and/or a resolution committing their participation and resources to the update of the Burlington County Multi-Jurisdictional Multi-Hazards Mitigation Plan. All jurisdictions in the County decided to participate in the plan update process in addition to one special purpose district, the Burlington Community College (Table 8-1).

Table 8-1. Participating Jurisdictions in Burlington County

Jurisdictions		
Bass River (T)	Fieldsboro (B)	Pemberton (B)
Beverly (C)	Florence (T)	Pemberton (T)
Bordentown (C)	Hainesport (T)	Riverside (T)
Bordentown (T)	Lumberton (T)	Riverton (B)
Burlington (C)	Mansfield (T)	Shamong (T)
Burlington (T)	Maple Shade (T)	Southampton (T)
Chesterfield (T)	Medford (T)	Springfield (T)
Cinnaminson (T)	Medford Lakes (B)	Tabernacle (T)
Delanco (T)	Moorestown (T)	Washington (T)
Delran (T)	Mt. Holly (T)	Westampton (T)
Eastampton (T)	Mt. Laurel (T)	Willingboro (T)
Edgewater Park (T)	New Hanover (T)	Woodland (T)
Evesham (T)	North Hanover (T)	Wrightstown (B)
	Palmyra (B)	Burlington Community College

(B) = Borough
 (C) = City
 (T) = Township

Planning Partner Expectations

The Planning Committee agreed to the following list of expectations:

- Review 2008 Plan goals and re-establish Plan Update goals and objectives;
- Establish a timeline for completion of the Plan;
- Ensure that the Plan meets the requirements of DMA 2000 and FEMA and NJOEM guidance;
- Solicit and encourage the participation of regional agencies, a range of stakeholders, and citizens in the Plan development process;
- Assist in gathering information for inclusion in the Plan, including the use of previously developed reports and data;
- Organize and oversee the public involvement process;
- Develop, revise, adopt, and maintain Volume I of the Plan in its entirety and the local jurisdictional annex in Volume II.

Jurisdictional Annex Templates

Jurisdictional annex templates were created to help the Planning Committee prepare their jurisdiction-specific annexes and ensure all criteria of Section 201.6 of 44CFR would be met, based on the partners’ capabilities and mode of operation. The template and detailed instructions were designed to lead each partner through a series of steps that would generate the DMA-required elements that are specific for each partner. The designated point-of-contact for each participating jurisdiction, as well as the County, was asked to complete the template using the detailed instructions, guidance from the consultant and technical assistance provided at the jurisdictional annex workshop (discussed below). The templates and their instructions can be found in Appendix F.

Workshop

A jurisdictional annex workshop was held on July 25, 2013 for the Mitigation Planning Committee. Attendance at this workshop was highly recommended for plan participants. This workshop was developed and presented by the consultant (Tetra Tech). At the workshop, a summary of the hazard mitigation planning process was provided as well as an in-depth review of how to update the existing mitigation strategy and how to build a strong mitigation strategy and actions. In addition, Tetra Tech provided an overview of each section in the annex with specific focus on correlating the municipal vulnerability assessments with the mitigation strategy. The workshop was designed to be instructional, but also allow for open discussion and questions. In addition, personalized technical assistance was available and provided to each jurisdiction, as needed. Topics discussed during this session included:

- DMA 2000 overview
- Jurisdictional Annex Template Tools
- Jurisdictional Annex Template
 - Overview
 - Risk ranking
 - Cost/benefit review
 - How to address vulnerable areas and facilities
 - Implementation into land use process
 - NFIP administrator summary report
 - 2008 mitigation strategy update
 - Establishment of strong mitigation projects

The results of the risk ranking for the County as a whole and each jurisdiction were provided to each participating jurisdiction on a CD for reference. This was a collaborative effort by all workshop attendees. The rank (high, medium, low) of each risk for each jurisdiction was based on probability of occurrence and estimates of potential dollar losses to structures vulnerable to the hazard. Maps illustrating hazard areas and tables estimating exposure and losses were provided to each jurisdiction as a tool, in addition to the risk assessment for review and comment.

Benefit/Cost Review

Each jurisdiction's annex includes an action plan of prioritized initiatives to mitigate natural hazards. Section 201.6.c.3iii of 44CFR requires the prioritization of the action plan to emphasize the extent to which benefits are maximized according to a cost/benefit review of the proposed projects and their associated costs. In addition, the County and each jurisdiction was requested to provide a project status for each of the projects included in the 2008 HMP as well as summarizing how the 2008 plan was integrated into their planning process.

As part of jurisdiction annex template completion, the Planning Committee was asked to weigh the estimated benefits of a project versus the estimated costs to establish a parameter to be used in the prioritization of a project. This benefit/cost review was qualitative; that is, it did not include the level of detail required by FEMA for project grant eligibility under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) grant program. This qualitative approach was used because projects may not be implemented for up to 10 years, and the associated costs and benefits could change dramatically in that time. Each project was assessed by assigning subjective ratings (high, medium, and low) to its costs and benefits, as follows:

Table 8-2. Benefit/Cost Review

Costs	
High	Existing funding levels are not adequate to cover the costs of the proposed project, and implementation would require an increase in revenue through an alternative source (e.g., bonds, grants, and fee increases).
Medium	The project could be implemented with existing funding but would require a re-apportionment of the budget or a budget amendment, or the cost of the project would have to be spread over multiple years.
Low	The project could be funded under the existing budget. The project is part of or can be part of an existing, ongoing program.
Benefits	
High	Project will have an immediate impact on the reduction of risk exposure to life and property.
Medium	Project will have a long-term impact on the reduction of risk exposure to life and property or will provide an immediate reduction in the risk exposure to property.
Low	Long-term benefits of the project are difficult to quantify in the short term.

Using this approach, projects with positive benefit versus cost ratios (such as high over high, high over medium, medium over low, etc.) are considered cost-beneficial and are prioritized accordingly. For many of the initiatives identified in the action plans, participating jurisdictions may seek financial assistance under FEMA’s HMGP or PDM programs. Both of these programs require detailed benefit/cost analysis as part of the application process. These analyses will be performed when funding applications are prepared, using the FEMA model process. The Planning Committee is committed to implementing mitigation strategies with benefits that exceed costs. For projects not seeking financial assistance from grant programs that require this sort of analysis, the Planning Committee reserves the right to define “benefits” according to parameters that meet its needs and the goals and objectives of this plan.

Completion of the Planning Process

All participating townships and boroughs in the County completed the planning and annex-preparation process. Completed jurisdictional annexes are presented in Section 9.