

PLAN MAINTENANCE

It is required by FEMA (as per 44 CFR Part 201.6(c)(4)(i) that, “[The plan maintenance process shall include a section describing the] method and schedule of monitoring, evaluating, and updating the mitigation plan within a five-year cycle.” A formal plan maintenance process must take place to ensure that the Hazard Mitigation Plan remains an active and pertinent document. Regularly scheduled evaluations during the five-year cycle are important to assess the effectiveness of the program and to reflect changes that may affect mitigation priorities.

URS Corporation (URS), as the consulting company, was able to provide the Planning Committee with guidance on potential means to satisfy the requirement for plan maintenance procedures. However, it was the members of the Planning Group who were in the best position to define the process. URS submitted a Guidance Memorandum (Guidance Memorandum #3 – Plan Maintenance Procedures to summarize FEMA requirements for plan monitoring, evaluation, and updates. The memorandum was distributed at the Core Planning Group meeting on January 12, 2006. It was also distributed to the full Planning Group via email on January 30, 2006, and posted to the mitigation planning web site soon after for review by Planning Group members, the public, and other stakeholders.

At a meeting of the Planning Group on March 9, 2006, plan maintenance issues were discussed, feedback was obtained, and collective decisions were made regarding the plan maintenance strategy for this hazard mitigation plan. The information presented below represents these decisions, as provided to URS. These methods will ensure that regular review and updating of the Hazard Mitigation Plan will occur.

The Nassau County Office of Emergency Management will take the lead role in the coordinating the overall plan maintenance effort, with support and feedback from the Planning Group.

Monitoring the Plan

An important step in any mitigation planning process is to document the method by which the Planning Group will monitor the Hazard Mitigation Plan throughout the five-year period of record.

To accomplish this objective, the Planning Group has elected to prepare **Annual Work Progress Monitoring Reports**, prepared by entities responsible for implementing mitigation actions (as identified in the Mitigation Strategy). Progress Monitoring Reports shall be submitted on an annual basis to NCOEM, beginning one year from the date of FEMA’s approval of the Final plan. Work progress reports shall be the FEMA How-To #4 (FEMA 386-4), Worksheet #1, Progress Report. Using the FEMA Progress Reports will answer the following questions:

- the hazard mitigation action(s) that the agency is responsible for
- the supporting agencies/entities responsible for implementation;
- a delineation of the various stages of work along with timelines (milestones should be included);
- whether the resources needed for implementation, funding, staff time and technical assistance are available, or if other arrangements must be made to obtain them;
- the types of permits or approvals necessary to implement the action;
- details on the ways the actions will be accomplished within the organization;
- whether the duties will be assigned to agency staff or contracted out;
- the current status of the project; and
- identifying any issues that may hinder implementation.

Evaluating the Plan

Post adoption, a mitigation plan should be evaluated on a regular basis in order to assess the effectiveness of the plan's implementation and to reflect changes that may affect the mitigation priorities.

To accomplish this objective, the Planning Group will convene once per year for an **Annual Plan Evaluation Meeting**. Plan Evaluation Meetings will be conducted within three months after each annual batch of Progress Reports are due (see "Monitoring", above). At each Plan Evaluation Meeting, the Planning Group will review Progress Reports, and use the following criteria to evaluate the plan:

- do the goals and objectives address current and expected conditions?
- has the nature and magnitude of risks changed?
- are the current resources appropriate for implementing the plan?
- are there any implementation problems (such as technical, political and/or legal), or coordination issues with the other agencies and/or Committee members?
- have the outcomes occurred as expected?
- have the agencies and other Planning Group partners participated as proposed?; and
- where shortcomings are identified, what can be done to bring things back on track?

Following each Annual Plan Evaluation Meeting, the NCOEM will prepare meeting minutes summarizing the outcome of the evaluation meeting. NCOEM will distribute meeting minutes to all Planning Group Members via email, and will post meeting minutes on the web site.

Updating the Plan

As per 44 CFR Part 201.6(d)(2) and 201.6(d)(3), the plan must be reviewed and revised (if needed), and resubmitted to the State Hazard Mitigation Officer for initial review and coordination within five years of the plan's approval by FEMA (and during subsequent five-year cycles thereafter).

To accomplish this objective, the Planning Group elected to have the NCOEM take the lead on Plan updates, with support from the Planning Group members. NCOEM will conduct **Update Appraisals**. During the Update Appraisal, NCOEM will evaluate the current Plan, Annual Progress Reports, and Annual Plan Evaluation Meeting Minutes to determine if an update is needed. NCOEM will conduct the Update Appraisals at 3.5 years from the date of FEMA's approval of the Final plan, and at the same point in time during subsequent five-year windows (i.e., from the date of FEMA's approval of the final plan, Update Appraisals will occur at Year 3.5, Year 8.5, Year 13.5, etc.). The Planning Group has selected Year 3.5 as the point for the Update Appraisals to ensure that sufficient time (18 months) will be available to update the document within the five year cycle, should an update be necessary.

The following criteria shall be used to determine whether an update of the Plan is required:

- if changing situations have modified goals/objectives/actions,
- if additional information is available to perform more accurate vulnerability assessments,
- if it is determined that participating jurisdictions wish to be added to and/or removed from the Plan; or
- if it is determined that the Plan no longer addresses current and expected future conditions.

NCOEM will prepare an Update Appraisal Memorandum documenting its evaluation and determination (including rationale) and submit the Memorandum to Planning Group members via email for comment. Comments will be due back to NCOEM within 14 days; lack of response will be assumed to indicate concurrence with the NCOEM appraisal. Comments received which cannot be resolved remotely will

trigger an Update Resolution meeting of the Planning Group to resolve differences and develop a joint determination on whether an update is needed during the current five-year cycle.

If an update is found to be necessary, NCOEM will initiate the updates immediately upon completion of the Update Evaluation, with support as needed from the Planning Group. NCOEM shall be responsible for completing the updates 90 days prior to the end of the five-year cycle, and for submitting the updated plan to NYSEMO and FEMA.

If it is determined that no updates are necessary, NCOEM will submit a letter justifying this determination (along with a copy of the Update Evaluation Memorandum) to NYSEMO and FEMA 90 days prior to the end of the five-year cycle.

Public Participation in Plan Maintenance

As per 44 CFR Part 201.6 (c)(4)(iii) states, “[*The plan maintenance process shall include a) discussion on how the community will continue public participation in the plan maintenance process.*” To meet this requirement, the new Hazard Mitigation Plan should describe what opportunities the public will have during the plan’s periodic review to comment on the progress made to date and on any proposed plan revisions.

The following array of activities was selected by the Planning Group during the March 9, 2006 meeting.

- NCOEM will continue to maintain the mitigation planning website and document repositories.
- Each participating jurisdiction will add a link on their jurisdiction’s web page to the County mitigation planning website, if they have not already done so as part of the plan development process.
- NCOEM will lead efforts to prepare an annual fact sheet on the plan. This fact sheet will be submitted via email to Planning Group members for posting on community notice boards, at a minimum, and preferable supplemented with distribution at meetings as applicable. NCOEM will post the fact sheet on the county mitigation plan web site.
- NCOEM will lead efforts to prepare a survey for the public and other stake holders which will be posted on the County mitigation planning web site and in document repositories. Survey forms will be shared with participating jurisdictions for their use, as well. All feedback will be directed to NCOEM as a central location. Survey feedback will be a topic of discussion at Annual Plan Evaluation Meetings.
- Participating jurisdictions will conduct annual interviews and/or smaller meetings with civic groups, the public and other stakeholders. This will be accomplished through incorporating discussion of the mitigation plan into other regularly attended meetings.
- Participating jurisdictions will consider annual flyers, newsletters, newspaper advertisements, and Radio/TV announcements, and will implement some or all of the above at the discretion of the jurisdiction.

Plan Integration

As per 44 CFR Part 201.6(c)(4)(ii), “[*The plan shall include a) process by which local governments incorporate the requirements of the mitigation plan into other planning mechanisms such as comprehensive or capital improvement plans, when appropriate.*”

The Planning Group discussed plan integration at their meeting on March 9, 2006 and noted the following capabilities in relation to mitigation planning and opportunities to integrate the mitigation plan into daily activities. Progress with regard to Plan Integration will be on the agenda for each Annual Plan Evaluation Meetings.

Participating jurisdictions currently use comprehensive land use planning, capital improvements planning and building codes to guide and control development. After the Hazard Mitigation Plan is formally adopted, these existing mechanisms will have hazard mitigation strategies integrated into them, as follows:

- Within six months after adoption of the Hazard Mitigation Plan, Planning Group members for each participating jurisdiction will issue a letter to each of its community's department heads to solicit their support and explore opportunities for integrating hazard mitigation planning objectives into their daily activities. Specifically, letters can include:
 - Many participating jurisdictions have Master Plans, General or Comprehensive Plans. In participating jurisdictions where Master Plans, General or Comprehensive Plans exist, Planning Group members will work with their respective planning departments to educate them on the Hazard Mitigation Plan and encourage that on the next updates of such plans, hazard mitigation for natural hazards is addressed.
 - Many participating jurisdictions have local building departments responsible for building code enforcement and review of site plans. Local jurisdictions enforce the state-adopted IBC. In these communities, Planning Group Members can coordinate with their respective building departments to ensure that they have adopted and are enforcing the minimum standards established in the State-adopted IBC.
 - Many participating jurisdictions participate in FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program and as such have local floodplain management ordinances. In these communities, Planning Group Members can coordinate with their respective Floodplain Administrator to determine if enforcement beyond FEMA minimum requirements would be prudent for the community.
 - In participating jurisdictions with local zoning ordinances, Planning Group members can work with their zoning boards to educate them on the Hazard Mitigation Plan and encourage consideration of low occupancy, low-density zoning in hazard areas, when practicable.
 - In Nassau County, only Bayville currently (as of May 2006) has a state-approved Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP). For participating jurisdictions with currently approved LWRPs, hazard mitigation principles of this plan (particular with regard to erosion setbacks) will be incorporated into future revisions. For participating jurisdictions with in-process LWRPs, or participating jurisdictions who initiate the LWRP process after local adoption of this hazard mitigation plan, Planning Group members can coordinate with the local planning department to encourage that hazard mitigation principles will be incorporated as much as practicable into current working versions, and will be incorporated in full into future updates.
 - Nassau County participates in Brownfields redevelopment. NCOEM should coordinate with the County Economic Development Office to integrate mitigation planning into the process by aiming to achieve low risk uses in high-hazard areas.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you have any questions or comments on the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan for Nassau County, New York, additional information can be obtained by contacting:

Terry Winters, Hazard Mitigation Coordinator
Nassau County Office of Emergency Management
100 Carman Avenue
East Meadow, New York 11554
Phone: (516) 573-0636
Email: twinters@nassaucountyny.gov