



MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN UPDATE PROJECT SUMMARY

Introduction

To ensure the Guilford County Emergency Management Program continues to work in a strategic manner to lessen the impact of hazards in the community and maintain eligibility for federal and state mitigation grant funding, the Guilford County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan has undergone a very detailed review and revision process. This update ensures that our plan is effective, efficient, and matches the hazards identified in Guilford County and the needs our community.

The purpose of this project summary is to provide a general overview of the Hazard Mitigation Plan update project and the associated processes necessary to bring the plan up-to-date.

To assist Guilford County in the Hazard Mitigation Plan update process, Guilford County Emergency Management was awarded a Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant from North Carolina Emergency Management in the amount of \$47,000.00, which allowed Guilford County to hire a specialized mitigation planning consultant.

Project Goals and Objectives

The goals of the Hazard Mitigation Plan update project were to provide a systematic review and revision of the existing Hazard Mitigation Plan to ensure the plan update was aligned with newly developed best practices and regulations, and to incorporate all hazard types in the mitigation planning process, as opposed to the existing plan that only addresses natural hazards.

The objectives of this project were to work closely with all Guilford County municipalities, as well as partner agencies and organizations that have hazard mitigation responsibilities, and collaborate, draft, and publish a realistic, all-hazards mitigation plan update.

Project Outline

The Hazard Mitigation Plan update project was broken down into four phases, each of which varies in terms of scope and complexity.

Phase 1: Request for Proposal and Award Process

Phase 2: Planning Process (kickoff meeting, planning meetings)

Phase 3: Plan draft creation and draft review process

Phase 4: Plan approval and dissemination



Phase One

Phase one was largely centered around: 1) researching best practices and policies as it pertains to hazard mitigation planning, and 2) creating a Request for Proposal (RFP) for mitigation planning consultants to bid on. This process involved the staff of Guilford County Emergency Management, Guilford County Planning Department, Guilford County Purchasing Department, and representatives from both the City of Greensboro and City of High Point. Once the RFP process closed, the RFP committee reviewed all bids and selected the lowest responsible bidder, Atkins North America, Inc.

Phase Two

Phase two of the project incorporated the participation of various county departments, all ten municipalities, and other agencies with hazard mitigation responsibilities in Guilford County. During this phase, Guilford County Emergency Management in conjunction with Atkins hosted various planning meetings with the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team. These meetings allowed the planning team to identify and evaluate the hazards present in Guilford County and develop proposed mitigation actions to mitigate the effects of the hazards identified.

Meetings	Participants	Date
Pre-Kickoff Meeting	Project Leads	November 24, 2014
Kickoff Meeting	Planning Team	January 13, 2015
Public Meeting	General Public	March 12, 2015
Public Meeting	Local Emergency Planning Committee	April 9, 2015
Planning Meeting	Planning Team	April 30, 2015
Mitigation Action Planning Meeting	Planning Team	May 11, 2015
Public Meeting	General Public	June 11, 2015
Public Meeting	GC Environmental Review Board	July 9, 2015

To involve the public in the planning process, a public survey was made available to all Guilford County citizens to gain their input on hazard concerns and hazard mitigation practices. In addition, several public meetings were held to present the mitigation planning process and to collect suggestions on mitigation actions. The information received from the public survey and public meetings were included in the planning process, as well as the plan itself.

Phase Three

Based on the information developed in phase two, Atkins developed the draft Hazard Mitigation Plan for review by the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team as well as the public at large. To engage the public, the draft Hazard Mitigation Plan was posted on the ReadyGuilford website for review. After a lengthy review period, Atkins updated the draft based on the feedback received from the planning team and the public, and packaged the draft for submission to North Carolina



Emergency Management (FEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for their review.

Phase Four

In Phase 4, Guilford County Emergency Management submitted the plan to NCEM for their review. On July 22nd, NCEM approved the plan and sent it to FEMA for their review. The Federal Emergency Management Agency approved the plan on September 29th, and the plan is now available for local adoption. Once the plan is adopted by the County Board of Commissioners and municipal city councils, the project will be complete. At that time the plan will be disseminated to all stakeholders, including the public.

Project Commitment

The Hazard Mitigation Plan revision project has taken over fifth teen months and has been a significant time commitment from county and municipal staff, as well as representatives from partner agencies. At the time of this report, Guilford County Emergency Management staff alone has worked over 190 hours on the project. This does not include the staff time of other county departments, municipalities, and representatives from partner agencies, which is estimated to be around 285 hours. This brings the total time spent by all participants on the Hazard Mitigation Plan update project to approximately 475 hours.



HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN SUMMARY

Introduction

Natural and man-made hazards, such as floods, hurricanes and hazardous materials incidents are a part of the world around us. In some cases, their occurrence is natural and inevitable, and there is little we can do to control their force and intensity. In others, we have more power to control the intensity and probability, but can never truly eliminate the threat entirely. In either case, we must consider these hazards to be legitimate and significant threats to human life, safety, and property.

Guilford County is vulnerable to a wide range of natural hazards such as hurricanes, floods, severe thunderstorms, and tornados. It is also vulnerable to human-caused hazards, including nuclear accidents and hazardous material spills. These hazards threaten the life and safety of residents in Guilford County and have the potential to damage or destroy both public and private property, disrupt the local economy, and impact the overall quality of life of individuals who live, work, and vacation in Guilford County.

While the threat from hazardous events may never be fully eliminated, there is much we can do to lessen their potential impact upon our community and our citizens. By minimizing the impact of hazards upon our built environment, we can prevent such events from resulting in disasters. The concept and practice of reducing risks to people and property from known hazards is generally referred to as hazard mitigation.

Hazard mitigation techniques include both structural measures (such as strengthening or protecting buildings and infrastructure from the destructive forces of potential hazards) and non-structural measures (such as the adoption of sound land use policies and the creation of public awareness programs). It is widely accepted that the most effective mitigation measures are implemented at the local government level, where decisions on the regulation and control of development are ultimately made. A comprehensive mitigation approach addresses hazard vulnerabilities that exist today and in the foreseeable future. Therefore, it is essential that projected patterns of future development are evaluated and considered in terms of how that growth will increase or decrease a community's overall hazard vulnerability.

A key component in the formulation of a comprehensive approach to hazard mitigation is to develop, adopt, and update a local hazard mitigation plan. A hazard mitigation plan establishes the broad community vision and guiding principles for reducing hazard risk, and further proposes specific mitigation actions to eliminate or reduce identified vulnerabilities.

Plan Organization

The contents of this Plan are designed and organized to be as reader-friendly and functional as possible. While significant background information is included on the processes used and studies completed, this information is separated from the more meaningful planning outcomes or actions.



Section 2, Planning Process, provides a complete narrative description of the process used to prepare the Plan. This includes the identification of participants on the planning team and describes how the public and other stakeholders were involved. It also includes a detailed summary for each of the key meetings held, along with any associated outcomes.

The Community Profile, located in Section 3, provides a general overview of Guilford County, including prevalent geographic, demographic, and economic characteristics. In addition, building characteristics and land use patterns are discussed. This baseline information provides a snapshot of the planning area and helps local officials recognize those social, environmental, and economic factors that ultimately play a role in determining the region's vulnerability to hazards.

The Risk Assessment is presented in three sections: Section 4, Hazard Identification; Section 5, Hazard Profiles; and Section 6, Vulnerability Assessment. Together, these sections serve to identify, analyze, and assess hazards that pose a threat to Guilford County. The risk assessment also attempts to define any hazard risks that may uniquely or exclusively affect specific areas of Guilford County.

The Capability Assessment, found in Section 7, provides a comprehensive examination of Guilford County's capacity to implement meaningful mitigation strategies and identifies opportunities to increase and enhance that capacity. Specific capabilities addressed in this section include planning and regulatory capability, staff and organizational (administrative) capability, technical capability, fiscal capability, and political capability. The purpose of this assessment is to identify any existing gaps, weaknesses, or conflicts in programs or activities that may hinder mitigation efforts and to identify those activities that should be built upon in establishing a successful and sustainable local hazard mitigation program.

The Risk Assessment, and Capability Assessment collectively serve as a basis for determining the goals for the Guilford County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, each contributing to the development, adoption, and implementation of a meaningful and manageable mitigation strategy that is based on accurate background information.

The Mitigation Strategy, found in Section 8, consists of broad goal statements as well as an analysis of hazard mitigation techniques for the jurisdictions participating in the Guilford County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan to consider in reducing hazard vulnerabilities. The strategy provides the foundation for a detailed Mitigation Action Plan, found in Section 9, which links specific mitigation actions for each jurisdiction to locally-assigned implementation mechanisms and target completion dates. Together, these sections are designed to make the Plan both strategic, through the identification of long-term goals, and functional, through the identification of immediate and short-term actions that will guide day-to-day decision-making and project implementation.

Plan Maintenance, found in Section 10, includes the measures that the jurisdictions participating in the plan will take to ensure the Plan's continuous long-term implementation. The procedures also include the manner in which the Plan will be regularly evaluated and updated to remain a current and meaningful planning document.



HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING TEAM PARTNERS

The following agencies and organizations make up the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team:

- ❖ City of Greensboro Administration
- ❖ City of Greensboro Engineering and Inspections
- ❖ City of Greensboro Field Operations Department
- ❖ City of Greensboro Fire Department
- ❖ City of Greensboro Information Technology Department
- ❖ City of Greensboro Planning Department
- ❖ City of Greensboro Police Department
- ❖ City of Greensboro Water Resources Department
- ❖ City of High Point Electric Utilities Department
- ❖ City of High Point Engineering Department
- ❖ City of High Point Fire Department
- ❖ City of High Point Planning and Development
- ❖ City of High Point Public Services Department
- ❖ Guilford County Emergency Management Division
- ❖ Guilford County Emergency Services
- ❖ Guilford County Fire Division
- ❖ Guilford County Planning Department
- ❖ Guilford County Public Health Division
- ❖ Guilford County Sheriff's Office
- ❖ Guilford Technical Community College
- ❖ North Carolina Agriculture and Technical University
- ❖ Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation
- ❖ Piedmont Together
- ❖ Town of Gibsonville
- ❖ Town of Jamestown
- ❖ Town of Oak Ridge
- ❖ Town of Pleasant Garden
- ❖ Town of Sedalia
- ❖ Town of Stokesdale
- ❖ Town of Summerfield
- ❖ Town of Whitsett
- ❖ University of North Carolina Greensboro