

Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Atlantic County, New Jersey

Prepared for



Atlantic County
Office of Emergency Preparedness
5033 English Creek Avenue
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Prepared by

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PLAN UPDATE - 2022

PLAN ADOPTION RESOLUTIONS

In accordance with Part 201.6 of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000), as amended, Atlantic County, New Jersey, has developed this Update of its Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan to identify hazards that threaten the County and ways to reduce future damages associated with these hazards.

Following this page are the signed adoption resolutions of the County and all participating jurisdictions that have adopted this Plan Update, authorizing municipal government staff to carry out the actions detailed herein.

FEMA deemed this plan update to be Approvable Pending Adoption on January 26, 2022. Thereafter, the County and participating jurisdictions formally adopted the document. Copies of each jurisdiction's adoption resolution are included following Page i.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Across the United States and around the world, natural hazards occur each day, as they have for thousands of years. As the world's population and development have increased, so have natural disasters and their effects. The time and money required to recover from these events often strain or exhaust local resources. The purpose of hazard mitigation planning is to identify policies, actions, and tools for implementation that will, over time, work to reduce risk and the potential for future losses. Hazard mitigation is best realized when community leaders, businesses, citizens, and other stakeholders join together in an effort to undertake a process of learning about hazards that can affect their area and use this knowledge to prioritize needs and develop a strategy for reducing damages.

Section 322, Mitigation Planning, of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act ("the Stafford Act"), enacted by Section 104 of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 ("DMA 2000"), provides new and revitalized approaches to mitigation planning. Section 322 continues the requirement for a State mitigation plan as a condition of disaster assistance, and established a new requirement for local mitigation plans. In order to apply for Federal aid for technical assistance and post-disaster funding, local jurisdictions must comply with DMA 2000 and its implementing regulations (44 CFR Part 201.6).

While Atlantic County has always sought ways to reduce their vulnerability to hazards, the passage of DMA 2000 helped County officials to recognize the benefits of pursuing a long-term, coordinated approach to hazard mitigation through hazard mitigation planning. The County has received grant funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for both developing this very hazard mitigation plan, and its first required update. This **Atlantic County Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan** represents the collective efforts of Atlantic County and each of its 23 participating jurisdictions, the general public, and other stakeholders. Natural disasters cannot be prevented from occurring. However, over the long-term, the continued implementations of this Plan will gradually, but steadily, lessen the impacts associated with hazard events.

The Atlantic County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan has been developed by the Atlantic County Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee (the "Planning Committee"), with support from outside consultants. The efforts of the Planning Committee were headed by the Atlantic County Office of Emergency Preparedness's Hazard Mitigation Coordinator. The overall Planning Committee was divided into a Core Planning Group (CPG) and Jurisdictional Assessment Teams (JATs), with one JAT for each of the County's participating jurisdictions. The JATs consisted of a wide range of position titles for each community, from key individuals involved in emergency management, planning, engineering, floodplain management, and local administrators. In addition there was a County JAT which oversaw the process, headed by the Atlantic County Office of Emergency Preparedness (ACOEP).

Atlantic County's first hazard mitigation plan was approved pending adoption by FEMA on September 23, 2010; it was subsequently adopted by each participating jurisdiction¹. FEMA requires that the plan be monitored and evaluated regularly, and updated at least once every five years. The first plan update process was initiated in earnest in the summer of 2014 with a Project Initiation Meeting between the County and its consultant held on August 13, 2014. A Kickoff Meeting of the full CPG was conducted on September 10, 2014. Thereafter, CPG members met on January 13, 2015; March 24, 2015; April 29, 2015; and July 16, 2015. JATs in each jurisdiction met individually throughout the plan development process as they deemed necessary. The County received agency approval for the first plan update February 5, 2016 and adopted the first Plan Update via Resolution #62 on February 23, 2016.

This document represents the second Plan Update. The second plan update process was initiated with the County issuing its consultant a contract on April 19, 2021. A Project Initiation Meeting between the County and its consultant was held on April 21, 2021. A Kickoff Meeting of the full CPG was conducted on May 20, 2021. The consultant held a full week of full day, back-to-back Jurisdictional Assistance Sessions via Zoom during the week of June 14-18, 2021 (with makeup sessions held on June 22, June 23, and July 6) to provide direct, one-on-one support to the County and each participating community. During the months of August and September 2021 the consultant also participated in numerous telephone calls with individual JAT members to provide further guidance and support in completing the required deliverables. A Progress Meeting of the CPG was held on July 15, 2021, and a meeting to review the draft plan prior to submission for State review was held on November 9, 2021. Key countywide stakeholders were invited to each CPG meeting.

Community support is vital to the success of any hazard mitigation plan. **The County and each participating community were responsible for conducting outreach within their respective jurisdictions. Since the second plan update process began in the spring of 2021, more than 100 outreach activities have been undertaken by the planning team members.** These efforts provided the general public and other stakeholders with opportunities to take part in the decisions that will affect their future.

County-Led Outreach Activities. The County-led outreach actions during the plan update were similar to those undertaken during the development of the initial plan. The County performed ongoing maintenance of its online hazard mitigation planning web presence at <https://www.atlantic-county.org/hazard-mitigation/> with information regarding the planning process and where to go for additional information or comments. Press releases were issued on May 20, 2021, July 23, 2021, and August 3, 2021. Press releases were posted to the county website, and shared via social media platforms including Facebook and Twitter. In addition, the press releases were also shared with County email subscribers which number about 1,500. Project fact sheets were widely distributed by ACOEP at various meetings throughout the process. They were also made available at the Atlantic County 4H Fair and National Night Out, both held in August 2021. The plan update was discussed at open public meetings of the County Board of Chosen Freeholders on March 3, 2020 (Resolution #96, approved); August 18, 2020 (Resolution #373, approved); March 2, 2021 (Resolution #128, approved). ACOEP also

¹ With the County's adoption on September 28, 2010.

conducted numerous activities to reach a broader audience, including meetings with local Community Emergency Response Team participants, and the general public through display booths at local fairs and festivals. ACOEP also contributed to public information videos on mitigation (YouTube video posted July 2021 online at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wBIVo6STwts&t=7s> and <https://www.atlantic-county.org/hazard-mitigation/>).

The County's JAT met throughout the plan update process to discuss progress and work on development of the County's mitigation strategy. The County JAT included direct membership and participation from the following individuals who attended various meetings throughout the process and provided input on action items being considered for the County's mitigation strategy:

Vincent Jones:	OEM Director/Emergency Manager
Karen Koptic:	Operations and Training Officer, Office of Emergency Preparedness
Bob Lindaw:	Asst. Planning Director, Department of Regional Planning and Development
Jay Steinmetz:	Chief Engineer/Public Works Director, Department of Public Works
Bonnie Lindaw:	Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer
Jerry DelRosso:	County Administrator
John Peterson:	Department Head, Department of Regional Planning and Development
Brian Walters:	Supervising Planner, Department of Regional Planning and Development
Gregory Brookins:	Department Head, Department of Public Works
Mark Shourds:	County Engineer

Municipal JAT Outreach Activities. Each of the 23 participating communities supplemented the above range of County-led efforts with outreach targeted toward members of the general public and other stakeholders within their respective municipalities to get the word out even further and to supplement the County's larger outreach activities. JATs employed a wide range of techniques for providing opportunities for feedback and participation from the public and other stakeholders. Many distributed copies of the project fact sheet, posted information on their websites, discussed the plan update at open public meetings in their communities, reached out to key stakeholder groups, and collectively undertook hundreds of activities throughout the plan update process to ensure that the public and other stakeholders were made aware of the process and their opportunity to participate and provide feedback and input.

The initial hazard mitigation planning process consisted of the following key steps:

- Researching a full range of natural hazards to identify which hazards could affect the County;
- Identifying the location and extent of hazard areas;
- Identifying assets located within these hazard areas;
- Characterizing existing and potential future assets at risk;
- Assessing vulnerabilities to the most prevalent hazards; and
- Formulation and prioritization of goals, objectives, and mitigation actions to reduce or avoid long-term vulnerabilities to the identified hazards.

For the 2015 and 2021 Plan updates, the CPG:

- Assessed current development patterns and development pressures
- Evaluated new hazard or risk information
- Described progress in local plan maintenance and plan integration efforts
- Assessed previous goals and actions
- Summarized progress in implementing actions
- Adjusted actions to address current realities
- Explained changes in priorities
- Addressed changes in Federal/State requirements

Natural hazards that can affect Atlantic County that are included in the Plan are as follows:

- **Atmospheric hazards**, including: extreme temperatures, extreme wind, hail, hurricanes and tropical storms, lightning, nor'easters, tornados, and severe winter weather;
- **Hydrologic hazards**, including: coastal erosion and sea level rise, dam failure, drought, floods, storm surge, tsunami, and wave action;
- **Geologic hazards**, including: earthquakes; and
- **Other hazards**, including: wildfires.

After evaluating these hazards and identifying the assets within the County that are vulnerable to them, each participating jurisdiction developed an updated hazard mitigation strategy to increase the disaster resistance of the County, along with procedures for monitoring, evaluating and updating the Plan to ensure that it remains a "living document." Almost 300 mitigation actions are included in this plan update to reduce the impacts of natural hazards throughout the County, of which more than one third are new actions developed specifically for this plan update. In addition, more than 50 mitigation actions in the previous plan update were reported as completed by the individual jurisdictions. Almost 50 additional mitigation and related actions that were not in the previous version of the plan were also reported as completed by the individual jurisdictions. This includes actions funded by FEMA grants and also state- and locally-funded initiatives. Most jurisdictions intend to apply for various types of grant funding for at least some portion of their activities to offset the local cost burden. A more detailed breakdown of current and completed actions by jurisdiction is presented in Table ES1.

**Table ES1
Mitigation Actions by Jurisdiction**

Jurisdiction	Actions in Previous Plan	Initiated/Ongoing Plan Actions	Completed Actions (in Plan)	Completed Actions (Not in Plan)	Actions Carried Forward	New Actions	Total Actions in Updated Plan
Atlantic, County of	10	8	1	7	9	0	9
Absecon, City of	6	1	1	0	5	3	8
Atlantic City, City of	15	11	2	0	13	6	19
Brigantine, City of	7	4	3	3	4	20	24
Buena, Borough of	3	2	1	0	2	2	4
Buena Vista, Borough of	14	4	0	0	14	0	14
Corbin City, City of	1	1	0	0	1	0	1
Egg Harbor City, City of	14	13	1	0	13	0	13
Egg Harbor, Township of	7	3	2	1	5	1	6
Estell Manor, City of	9	8	0	0	8	0	8
Folsom, Borough of	7	5	2	3	5	0	5
Galloway, Township of	2	1	0	10	2	1	3
Hamilton, Township of	21	14	5	5	14	1	15
Hammonton, Town of	23	6	8	0	13	1	14
Linwood, City of	6	1	0	1	6	1	7
Longport, Borough of	23	8	9	3	13	6	19
Margate City, City of	7	2	5	5	2	37	39
Mullica, Township of	4	2	2	0	2	4	6
Northfield, City of	16	5	4	0	9	4	13
Pleasantville, City of	12	8	0	3	12	3	15
Port Republic, City of	12	5	5	0	7	0	7
Somers Point, City of*	12	9	2	0	6	6	12
Ventnor City, City of	12	8	3	0	9	6	15
Weymouth, Township of	12	9	0	6	12	0	12
Total	255	138	56	47	186	102	288

Not listed: actions from the 2016 plan that were dropped from the mitigation strategy by individual jurisdictions and were not carried forward for the 2022 plan update. Reasons for dropping actions include evolving priorities, changing circumstances, and duplication. Also for a small number of jurisdictions, actions from the 2016 plan were combined and revised to form a different number of "new" actions.

This Hazard Mitigation Plan is a living document; it is implemented on an ongoing basis and is formally updated every five years. If you have any questions or comments on the Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan for Atlantic County, New Jersey, please contact:

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For specific information regarding a particular community, please contact the Jurisdictional Representative and/or Alternate as identified in that community's Jurisdictional Annex.

FEMA deemed this plan Approvable Pending Adoption on January 26, 2022. Thereafter, the County and participating jurisdictions formally adopted the Final Plan Update. Copies of each jurisdiction's adopting resolution are included following Page i.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following jurisdictions (Atlantic County and each of its 23 municipalities) participated in the development of this plan:

County of Atlantic

Absecon, City of	Estell Manor, City of	Mullica, Township of
Atlantic City, City of	Folsom, Borough of	Northfield, City of
Brigantine, City of	Galloway, Township of	Pleasantville, City of
Buena Vista, Township of	Hamilton, Township of	Port Republic, City of
Buena, Borough of	Hammonton, Town of	Somers Point, City of
Corbin City, City of	Linwood, City of	Ventnor City, City of
Egg Harbor City, City of	Longport, Borough of	Weymouth, Township of
Egg Harbor, Township of	Margate City, City of	

The following stakeholders also participated by attending one or more Core Planning Group meetings:

American Red Cross
New Jersey Office of Emergency Management
Salvation Army

AECOM (Clifton, NJ) acted as the plan development consultant providing hazard mitigation plan update services.

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