

10 PLAN MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES

This section discusses how the *Mitigation Strategy* and Mitigation Action Plans will be implemented by participating jurisdictions and how the overall Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan will be evaluated and enhanced over time. This section also discusses how the public and participating stakeholders will continue to be involved in the hazard mitigation planning process. This section consists of the following four subsections:

- IMPLEMENTATION
- INTEGRATION INTO EXISTING PLANNING MECHANISMS
- MONITORING, EVALUATION AND ENHANCEMENT
- CONTINUED PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

IMPLEMENTATION

44 CFR Requirement

Part 201.6(c)(4)(i): The plan shall include a plan maintenance process that includes a section describing the method and schedule of monitoring, evaluating and updating the mitigation plan within a five-year cycle.

Each jurisdiction participating in this Plan is responsible for implementing specific mitigation actions as prescribed in their locally adopted *Mitigation Action Plan* (Section 9: *Mitigation Action Plans*). In each *Mitigation Action Plan*, every proposed action is assigned to a specific local department or agency in order to increase accountability and therefore the likelihood of implementation. This approach enables individual jurisdictions to update their mitigation strategy as needed without altering the broader focus of the countywide Plan. The separate adoption of locally specific actions also ensures that each jurisdiction is not held responsible for monitoring and implementing the actions of other jurisdictions involved in the planning process. If multi-jurisdictional actions are identified, it is up to the participating jurisdictions to develop the appropriate means to monitor their progress.

In addition to the assignment of a lead department or agency, an implementation time period or a specific implementation date has been established in order to assess whether actions are being implemented in a timely fashion. Mecklenburg County and participating municipalities will seek outside funding sources to implement mitigation projects in both the pre-disaster and post-disaster environments. When applicable, potential funding sources have been identified for proposed actions listed in each *Mitigation Action Plan*. It is important to note that while the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) grant program and the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) are important sources of assistance and a community's ability to apply for such funding is directly linked to the development of a hazard mitigation plan, other federal funding sources are identified as appropriate.

INTEGRATION INTO EXISTING PLANNING MECHANISMS

44 CFR Requirement

Part 201.6(c)(4)(ii): The plan maintenance process 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.

It is the responsibility of each participating jurisdiction to determine additional implementation procedures beyond those listed within their *Mitigation Action Plan*. This includes integrating the Hazard Mitigation Plan into other local planning documents such as comprehensive or capital improvement plans, when appropriate. Mecklenburg County, the City of Charlotte and the Town of Pineville have already incorporated this Plan into their local NFIP Community Rating System (CRS) programs under Activity 510: Floodplain Management Planning, and will continue to do so as part of their annual CRS recertification process with Insurance Services Office, Inc. The concept of further integrating this Plan into existing local comprehensive plans, subdivision regulations, zoning ordinances and capital improvements plans and infrastructure policies has been discussed among the members of the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team, and through the use of the “*Safe Growth Survey*” described in Section 7: *Capability Assessment* has already been raised with the land use planning and community development staff from each participating jurisdiction. As part of the 2015 plan update, the planning team specifically discussed integration with agency level comprehensive plans, jurisdiction-level comprehensive plans, land use plans, emergency operations plans and Tactical Interoperability Communications Plans (TIC-Ps). The two integration ideas that garnered the most support from planning team members were emergency operations plans and jurisdiction-level comprehensive plans. Integration with TIC-Ps may specifically support the geomagnetic storm hazard discussed earlier in this Plan. This concept will continue to be pursued throughout the monitoring, evaluation and enhancement process outlined within this section. Further, the members of the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team will remain charged with ensuring that the goals and strategies of new and updated local planning documents are consistent with the goals and actions of the Hazard Mitigation Plan, and will not contribute to an increased level of hazard vulnerability in Mecklenburg County. Additional opportunities to integrate the requirements of this Plan into other local planning mechanisms shall continue to be identified through future meetings of the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team and through the five-year review process described in this section.

Although it is recognized that there are many possible benefits to integrating components of this Plan into other local plans, the development and maintenance of this stand-alone Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan is deemed by the Mecklenburg County Hazard Mitigation Planning Team to be the most effective and appropriate method to implement local hazard mitigation actions. The primary means for integrating mitigation strategies into other local planning documents will be accomplished through the revision, update and implementation of each jurisdiction’s *Mitigation Action Plan* that require specific planning and administrative tasks (i.e., plan amendments, ordinance revisions, capital improvement projects, etc.). In addition, Mecklenburg County and participating jurisdictions will incorporate existing planning processes and programs addressing flood hazard mitigation into this document by reference.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND ENHANCEMENT

The agency with the overall responsibility for monitoring this Plan is the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Emergency Management Office (CMEMO). This decision was reaffirmed during the 2015 plan update by polling Hazard Mitigation Planning Team members for their input. Periodic revisions and updates of the Plan are required to ensure that the goals of the Plan are kept current, taking into account potential changes in hazard vulnerability and mitigation priorities. In addition, revisions may be necessary to ensure that the Plan is in full compliance with applicable federal, state and local regulations. Periodic evaluation of the Plan will also ensure that specific mitigation actions are being reviewed and carried out according to each jurisdiction's individual *Mitigation Action Plan*. The Mecklenburg County Hazard Mitigation Planning Team will meet biannually and following any disaster events warranting a re-examination of the mitigation actions being implemented or proposed by the participating jurisdictions.¹ These meetings will either be in-person meetings or conference calls based on the discretion of CMEMO. This will ensure that the Plan is continuously updated to reflect changing conditions and needs within Mecklenburg County. If determined to be appropriate or as requested, an annual report on the Plan will be developed and presented to the local governing bodies of participating jurisdictions in order to report progress on the actions identified in the Plan and to provide information on the latest legislative requirements. The report may also highlight proposed additions or improvements to the Plan.

Following completion of the initial 2005 Plan, CMEMO and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Storm Water Services (CMSWS) coordinated with each of the participating jurisdictions on the evaluation and monitoring activities. This included e-mail correspondence and occasional meetings between Hazard Mitigation Planning Team members. This also included the submission, review and discussion of status updates on each jurisdiction's *Mitigation Action Plan* that addressed which actions were complete, those that were delayed or deferred, and those that should be deleted from the Plan along with explanations for why proposed actions have changed. The results of this process indicated that a majority of the jurisdictions were successful in implementing their *Mitigation Action Plan* (as further described in Section 9: *Mitigation Action Plans*). In preparation of the five-year plan review process, CMEMO staff also attended training sessions sponsored by the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management which helped to ensure that all new planning guidance and requirements were fully understood. In terms of public involvement, the public was not heavily involved in the plan maintenance process until the 2010 plan update process began in October 2009 (as further described in Section 2: *Planning Process*). The public was further involved as part of the 2015 plan update, especially in terms of an online public participation survey and other means of securing citizen involvement.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg staff will continue to attend training workshops sponsored by the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management or others in order to keep up to date with any changing guidance or planning requirements and to communicate that information to representatives of participating jurisdictions. As part of this monitoring, evaluation and enhancement process, each participating jurisdiction will be expected to provide a status update to the County for their respective Mitigation Action Plans in order to evaluate the Plan's implementation effectiveness.

¹ The Hazard Mitigation Planning Team will determine on a case-by-case basis which events necessitate convening a meeting to consider modifying existing Mitigation Action Plans. It is understood that the committee will meet following all state and federally declared disasters in which Mecklenburg County is included. Smaller disasters will also merit attention. For example, Tropical Storm Danny, which impacted a significant number of individuals and caused widespread public and private property damage, did not meet the federal disaster declaration threshold. It did, however, cause the County to evaluate the need to address a number of flood-prone properties. The County eventually acquired over 100 properties as part of their flood hazard mitigation strategy.

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTS

CMEMO will coordinate with CMSWS on behalf of the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team to produce an annual progress report to evaluate the Plan's overall effectiveness. This will be coordinated in tandem with those reports necessary for CRS cycle verification through Insurance Services Office, Inc. for Mecklenburg County's participating CRS communities.

FIVE-YEAR PLAN REVIEW

At a minimum, the Plan will be reviewed every five years (more exhaustively than by the annual progress reports) by the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team in order to determine whether there have been any significant changes in Mecklenburg County that may, in turn, necessitate changes in the types of mitigation actions proposed. New development in identified hazard areas, an increased exposure to hazards, the increase or decrease in capability to address hazards, and changes to federal or state legislation are examples of factors that may affect changes in the content of the Plan.

The plan review provides community officials with an opportunity to evaluate those actions that have been successful and to explore the possibility of documenting potential losses avoided due to the implementation of specific mitigation measures. The plan review also provides the opportunity to address mitigation actions that may not have been successfully implemented. CMEMO will be responsible for reconvening the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team and conducting the five-year review.

During the five-year plan review process, the following questions will be considered as criteria for assessing the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Plan:

- Do the goals and actions address current and expected conditions?
- Has the nature or magnitude of hazard risk changed?
- Are current resources adequate to implement the Plan?
- Should additional local resources be committed to address identified hazard threats?
- Are there any issues that have limited the current implementation schedule?
- Have the implementation of identified mitigation actions resulted in expected outcomes?
- Has the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team measured the effectiveness of completed hazard mitigation projects in terms of specific dollar losses avoided?
- Did the jurisdictions, agencies and other partners participate in the plan implementation process as proposed?
- Should other agencies or partners be included in plan maintenance?

Following the five-year review, any revisions deemed necessary will be summarized and implemented according to the reporting procedures outlined in this section. Upon completion of the review and update/amendment process, the Mecklenburg County Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan will be submitted to the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management State Hazard Mitigation Officer for review and approval. The State Hazard Mitigation Officer will submit the Plan amendments to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for final review as required by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000.

DISASTER DECLARATION

Following a state or federal disaster declaration, the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team will reconvene and the Plan will be revised as necessary to reflect lessons learned or to address specific circumstances arising from the event. In some circumstances it may be necessary for the committee to convene following localized emergencies and disasters in order to determine if changes in the Plan are warranted. It will be the responsibility of CMEMO to reconvene the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team and ensure that the appropriate stakeholders are invited to participate in the plan revision and update process.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

The results of the five-year review will be summarized by the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team in the relevant sections of the updated plan. This includes: a comprehensive description of the plan update process including an evaluation of plan effectiveness (Section 2); any updates to the community profile (Section 3); any notable revisions or updates to the risk assessment (Sections 4-6) or capability assessment (Section 7); updated mitigation goals and consideration of mitigation action alternatives (Section 8); status updates on previously adopted mitigation action plans (including the identification of reasons for delays or obstacles to their implementation) as well as the identification of newly proposed mitigation actions (Section 9); and revisions or updates to plan maintenance procedures (Section 10).

Any necessary revisions to the countywide Plan must follow the monitoring, evaluation and enhancement procedures outlined herein. During the 2010 plan update process, it was determined that the previously adopted "Plan Amendment Process" was an extraneous process not necessary for the successful implementation of the Mecklenburg County Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. For changes and updates to the individual *Mitigation Action Plans*, appropriate local designees will assign responsibility for the completion of each task.²

CONTINUED PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

44 CFR Requirement

Part 201.6(c)(4)(iii): The plan maintenance process shall include a discussion on how the community will continue public participation in the plan maintenance process.

Public participation is an integral component of the mitigation planning process and will continue to be essential as this Plan evolves and is updated over time.

The most appropriate and meaningful opportunities for the general public to be involved in the maintenance and implementation of the Mecklenburg County Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan is during the five-year plan review process as described earlier in this section. As demonstrated in Section 2: *Planning Process*, Mecklenburg County and its participating jurisdictions have been extremely ambitious in gaining widespread public involvement during the five-year plan review process through multiple methods.

² Local jurisdictions do have the authority to approve/adopt changes to their own Mitigation Action Plans without approval from the County; however, the County should be advised of all changes as a courtesy and for consideration for changes or modifications to the countywide Plan. Changes to either the multi-jurisdictional plan or local Mitigation Action Plans will necessitate the adoption of these changes by the appropriate local governing body. Ultimately, the updated Plan or plan component(s) will be submitted to the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management.

While the five-year plan review process represents the greatest opportunity for such involvement, other efforts to involve the public in the maintenance, evaluation and revision process will continue to be made as necessary. These efforts may include:

- Advertising meetings of the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team in the local newspaper, public bulletin boards and/or City and County office buildings;
- Designating willing citizens and private sector representatives as official members of the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team;
- Utilizing local media to update the public of any maintenance and/or periodic review activities taking place;
- Utilizing City and County Web sites to advertise any maintenance and/or periodic review activities taking place; and
- Maintaining copies of the Plan in public libraries or other appropriate venues;
- Posting the Annual Progress Reports on the Plan to City, County and Town Web sites;
- Heavy publicity of the plan and potential ways for the public to be involved after each major event, tailored to the event that has just happened;
- Planned activities during Severe Weather Preparedness Week (or similar), such as sending brief press releases that tie recent hazard occurrences with information from the hazard mitigation plan;
- Keeping websites, social media outlets, etc. updated;
- Drafting articles for the Charlotte Observer and community newspapers/newsletters;
- Holding annual public meetings;
- Utilizing social media accounts (e.g., City of Charlotte Twitter).