

CHAPTER 30: MITIGATION STRATEGIES DEVELOPMENT

The first iteration of the Eastern Shore Hazard Mitigation Plan was developed in November 2004. At that time, members of the Steering Committee determined the vision for the Eastern Shore during and after a natural hazard event. In May 2011, the Committee revisited the original vision, updated the status of past strategies, and developed new goals and projects. In June of 2016, the Eastern Shore Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee agreed to maintain the Vision Statement as written and included in the 2011 Plan. In the Spring of 2021, the Committee revisited the 2016 Plan and updated locality information and strategies and again developed new goals and projects.

VISION STATEMENT

As a result of planning and mitigation actions, damage and disruption will be minimized during natural hazard events. Federal and state agencies cooperate with the local government and guide necessary resources to the governments for recovery activities. To the extent possible, residents will be self-sufficient and will have taken responsibility for their own economic and physical protection. Infrastructure smoothly functions throughout the event and the recovery period following.

GOAL DEVELOPMENT

The Committee's goals were informed by several sources of information listed below.

- Eastern Shore Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (ESHIRA) findings
- Previous products from ESHIRA development
- Lessons of other natural hazard events
- Current initiatives such as the regional Eastern Shore Disaster Preparedness Coalition

IDENTIFIED ISSUES

Several issues confront the Eastern Shore in a time of disaster. Representatives from the localities identified several issues. These are included below.

The Eastern Shore Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment showed that not all residences at risk to flooding have a flood insurance policy on them. In addition, many of those residences that have a policy do not appear to have contents coverage. The most common type of residential flood damage on the Eastern Shore is contents damage.

The Eastern Shore Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment identified numerous areas where storm water flooding occurs. It is not clearly understood what the problem is at all of these sites, and the lack of information hinders drainage and stormwater management projects.

There is a shortage of shelter space during natural hazard events due to a lack of manpower and availability of safe structures to safely operate the shelters.

After the natural hazard event, the counties' limited staff are overwhelmed by administrative requirements for the disaster.

MITIGATION GOALS

The Eastern Shore Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee identified the following goals to work toward. Goal 1 was revised slightly for language. Goal 2 was amended to include language for post-hazard event response. Goal 3 was unchanged. Goal 4 was revised to model FEMA's Community Lifelines. Goal 5 was revised slightly to incorporate all populations.

Goal 1 – The Hazard Mitigation Plan will serve as a guide to local governments for comprehensive mitigation to include public education and ongoing hazard assessments.

Goal 2 – Improve resiliency through harnessing community partnerships (residents, businesses, local governments, and other community partners) working to minimize disruption during and following hazard events.

Goal 3 – Local governments encourage self-sufficiency and personal responsibility for managing risk.

Goal 4 – Local governments will work to improve infrastructure for resiliency and provide the appropriate redundancies for the operations of critical infrastructure during an event.

Goal 5 – Local governments will make efforts to reach all populations during preparation to, response of and mitigation of all risks.

MITIGATION PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

The Eastern Shore of Virginia Hazard Mitigation Plan Steering Committee collectively identified specific mitigation projects that would benefit the entire region. Accomack County, Northampton County, and the Town of Chincoteague developed specific mitigation strategies to address each of the five regional mitigation goals described above. In order to implement the identified strategies, each locality developed mitigation projects specific to their locality. Non-participating towns are currently not eligible for FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant award funds. Participating towns indicated that mitigation projects included in their respective county's mitigation strategies, when relevant, should also apply to the town.

PROJECT PRIORITIZATION

Prioritization ranking is directly based on the rank of the hazard(s) which it addresses. A ranking of 1 indicates a "highest" level of priority and indicates that the mitigation action would address at least one of the highest ranked hazards (high wind, coastal erosion, coastal flooding, stormwater flooding, and pandemic). A ranking of 2 indicates "higher" level of priority and indicates that the highest ranked hazard that the mitigation action would address would be one of the medium ranked hazards (well contamination, biological hazards, storm surge, non-coastal flooding, and road and highway). A ranking of 3 indicates "high" level of priority and indicates that the mitigation action only addresses one or more of the low prioritized hazards (substance use and overdose, communications failure, active threat, electrical energy failure, and tornado). Because the prioritization of the hazards took into account the potential number of affected structures, impacts, likelihood of success, and availability of implementable mitigation options, this way of ranking the mitigation actions incorporates and carries on these fundamental criteria. Rankings for all of the hazards are found in Table 1 of Chapter 3: Risk Assessment. Also, in Chapter 3 (pages 1 and 2), you'll find more information about the criteria for the ranking of the hazards.

ADOPTION

Adoption Resolutions of this plan are included at the end of the plan in **Appendix E**.