

CHAPTER 27: MITIGATION STRATEGIES DEVELOPMENT

The Eastern Shore Hazard Mitigation Committee met in November, 2004 to discuss the mitigation plan. At that time, members determined the Committee's vision of 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. The Committee made minor edits to Goals 2, 3, and 4, such that they would be more inclusive.

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 such as Hurricane Floyd, 1999; Hurricane Isabel, 2003; the Twin Northeasters, 1998; winter storms, 2004-2005; Tropical Depression Ernesto, 2006; November Northeaster, 2009; and Hurricane Sandy, 2012.
- 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.

Mitigation Strategies Development

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

MITIGATION GOALS

The Eastern Shore Hazard Mitigation Committee identified the following goals to work toward. The 2011 Goals 2, 3, and 4 were modified slightly. Goal 2 was expanded to include 'other community partners' and 'planning' and also eliminated the 'commercial' limitation from the 2011 goal. Goal 3 removed the reference to 'residents,' so that businesses, visitors, etc. are also included. Goal 4 removed the word 'natural,' so that anthropogenic hazard events would also be included.

Goal 1 - Local Governments Guide a Comprehensive Mitigation Program Including Public Education and Ongoing Hazard Assessments.

Goal 2 - Residents, Businesses, Local Governments, and Other Community Partners Will Work Together to Minimize Community Disruption Through Planning and Residential and Commercial Mitigation Activities.

Goal 3 - Local Governments Encourage Self-sufficiency and Personal Responsibility for Managing Risk.

Goal 4 - Local Governments Will Work to Ensure That Infrastructure Will Continuously Function During and After a Hazard Event.

Goal 5 - Local Governments Will Make Efforts to Reach Special Needs Populations.

MITIGATION PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

The Eastern Shore of Virginia Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee collectively identified specific mitigation projects that would benefit the entire region and these projects are included in the table at the end of this chapter. 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, and stormwater flooding). 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, ice/snow, drought, sewage spills). 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 (wildfire, HazMat, heat wave, fish kills, BioHazards, invasive environmental disease, earthquake). 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, including the fact that cost-effectiveness was the condition for the 'mitigation options' ranking criteria.

ADOPTION

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