

Section 1 - Introduction

As stated by FEMA...."Mitigation is valuable to society in these ways:



- ✓ It creates safer communities by reducing loss of life and property damage. For example, the rigorous building standards adopted by 20,000 communities across the country are saving the nation more than \$1.1 billion a year in prevented flood damages.

- ✓ It allows individuals to minimize post-flood disaster disruptions and recover more rapidly. For example, homes built to National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) standards incur less damage from floods. When floods cause damage, flood insurance protects the homeowner's investment, as it did for the more than 200,000 Gulf Coast residents who received more than \$23 billion in payments following the 2005 hurricanes.

- ✓ It lessens the financial impact on individuals, communities and society as a whole. For example, a recent study by the Multi-hazard Mitigation Council shows that each dollar spent on mitigation saves society an average of four dollars."

Every community is exposed to some level of risk from hazards and hazards cannot be eliminated, but it is possible to determine what hazards will effect the county communities, where they are most severe, and identify projects that can be taken to reduce the severity of the hazard.

As previously noted, mitigation is any action taken to permanently reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and their property from the affects of hazards. Examples of mitigation projects for Franklin County might include:

- ✓ wind retrofit critical facilities that provide essential services;
- ✓ programs for retrofitting existing structures to meet new building codes and standards; and
- ✓ land use planning techniques that limit infrastructure in high hazard areas;
- ✓ the acquisition of structures that are in a high hazard area (i.e. an example might include a severe repetitive loss property).

Ideally, a community can minimize the effects of future hazards through a mix of code enforcement, planning, and responsible development.

Significant disaster events can cost the community and local government substantial loss for the businesses and residents in Franklin County. The businesses located in high hazard areas can suffer when damaged or isolated by storms, and residents who build in flood prone areas are subject to evacuation, damage to their homes, lower home values, and higher insurance premiums.

Hazards have real costs to businesses and residents, and businesses in high hazard areas can suffer when revenue loss by damaged or isolated by storms. The county residents who build in flood prone areas are subject to evacuation, damage to their homes, lower home values, and higher insurance premiums.

The County's critical facilities are those facilities necessary for a community's response and recovery from a hazard event. Categories of the critical facilities would include: emergency response, hospitals, medical centers, emergency shelters, schools, airports, fire stations, sheriff's office, emergency operations center, waste water and water treatment plants, radio communications towers, correctional institutions, utilities, storage of critical records, financial institutions, and major government buildings, etc. should not be placed in high hazard areas because the function these facilities provide are too valuable to be placed in jeopardy, especially during times of disaster, and are essential to the well-being of the community served by these systems.

The community infrastructure such as bridges, roads, drainage structures, sewer lines, electric lines, telephone lines that are built in high hazard areas are subject to frequent damage and extremely costly repair. And, if a local government belongs to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and allows development in the floodplain without proper elevation and construction techniques, the federal government can withdraw the community's access to federal flood insurance for both public and private structures. Furthermore, a local government is responsible for as much as 12.5% of their local public cost of a federally declared disaster and 100% of any damage from smaller events that are not declared disasters. These costs can put a significant strain on the local government budget.

The goal of having a Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) established as an ongoing process will make hazard mitigation part of the daily functioning life in Franklin County. It serves as a bridge between local governments' programs, plans, and policies including but not limited to the comprehensive growth management plan, comprehensive emergency management plan, land development regulations, and relevant codes and ordinances for effective floodplain management.

Over the last 20+ years, FEMA and the United States Congress have witnessed substantial increases in disaster response and recovery costs; as a result, they have provided funds to communities, counties, and states to reduce impacts from natural hazards through hazard mitigation.

This marked a fundamental shift in policy; rather than placing primary emphasis on response and recovery, FEMA's focus broadened to incorporate mitigation as the foundation of emergency management.

Changes in Federal laws have resulted in pre-disaster mitigation project funding and mitigation planning requirements. Consequently, on October 30, 2000 amending the Robert T. Stafford Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) was signed into law. It states that if States and local governments do not have approved multi-hazard mitigation plans in place and a disaster occurs, they will not be entitled to Public Assistance and other FEMA funding.

Details from DMA 2000 to local governments:

- The Act established a requirement for local governments to have a FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan in order to be eligible for funding from FEMA through Pre and Post-Disaster grant programs such as Pre-Disaster Mitigation Assistance (PDM) or the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP).
- All natural hazards that affect the county will need to be addressed in the risk and vulnerability assessment section of the Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- The Act establishes November 1, 2004 as the date by which local governments and tribal organizations were required to prepare and adopt their respective plans in order to be eligible for FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance. In addition, local jurisdictions must review and revise their county LMS plan to reflect changes in development, progress in local mitigation efforts, changes in mitigation project priorities, and resubmit it for approval within 5 years from date of FEMA approval to remain eligible for the mitigation project grant funding.

This Plan encompasses the process of reviewing and revising the Franklin County LMS in accordance with the DMA 2000. The main goal of the local mitigation strategy is to identify and assess the risk and vulnerability to various natural disasters the County and its municipality face, and then develop local strategies to reduce the impact of future disasters. This plan is a continuation of the 2010 efforts and is the product of the 2nd 5-year revision and update process.

The Franklin County LMS Committee/Workgroup prepares the community, the businesses and institutions more resistant to the impacts of future disasters by evaluating the exposure of the community to all types of future natural hazards in order to identify ways to make the county more resistant to their impacts. This document reports the results of that planning process for the current planning period.

The Franklin County LMS is intended by the Committee/Workgroup to serve many purposes.

These include the following:

A step-wise application of structured planning concepts in a methodical process to identify vulnerabilities to future disasters and to propose the mitigation projects necessary to avoid or minimize exposure. Each step in the planning process builds upon the previous process so that there is a higher level of assurance that the mitigation projects proposed by the participants have a valid basis for both their justification and priority for implementation. It is then an important element for the LMS plan is to document that process and to present its results to the community.

The Committee/Workgroup continues to search for new ways to make the community as a whole more aware of the natural hazards that threaten the public health and safety, the economic vitality of businesses, and the operational capability of important institutions. The LMS plan identifies the natural hazards threatening Franklin County including the location, the probability, the extent and potential impact from the hazard.

It details the specific vulnerabilities of the neighborhoods of Franklin County and many of the facilities that re important to the community's daily life. This information will be very helpful to

individuals that wish to understand how the community could become safer from the impacts of future disasters.

Engage the entire community

An important goal for the Franklin County Emergency Management (EM) Department is to get the entire community involved.

Participating in expos, workshops, school and local civic group

presentations, etc., the EM Department reaches out to communicate the importance of planning and public safety. They have an active Facebook page to connect with the community residents and provide the most up-to-date information on weather events:



<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Franklin-County-Florida-Emergency-Management/480669948615497>

Also, the Emergency Management Department is very active in engaging the community residents in in the local mitigation planning process. The county is very fortunate to have many citizens and organizations that participate on the LMS committee/workgroup with over 100 active members from the local and state government, the community businesses and residents, and the neighboring communities.

The Franklin County LMS provides information needed by the managers and leaders of local government, business and industry, community associations, and other key institutions and organizations to take actions to address vulnerabilities to future disasters. In addition, it provides proposals for specific projects and programs that are needed to eliminate or minimize those vulnerabilities.

These mitigation projects have been justified on the basis of their economic benefits using a uniform technical analysis, as well as prioritization for implementation utilizing a selected criteria approach. This path is intended to provide a decision tool for the management of participating organizations and agencies regarding why the proposed mitigation should be implemented, which should be implemented first, and the economic and public welfare benefits of doing so.

A key purpose of the planning process utilized by the Franklin County Committee is to ensure that proposals for mitigation projects are reviewed and coordinated among the participating jurisdictions within the county.

Each mitigation project proposed by one jurisdiction or participating organization, when implemented, will be compatible with the interests of adjacent jurisdictions and unlikely to duplicate or interfere with mitigation projects proposed by others. The Franklin County LMS will provide each participating local jurisdiction with a specific plan of action that can be adopted and implemented pursuant to its own authorities and responsibilities.

Therefore, the plan addresses mitigation projects for each participating jurisdiction. These projects can be adopted and implemented for the jurisdiction's own purposes and on its own schedule. In

this way, the format of the plan and the operational concept of the planning process ensure that proposed mitigation projects are coordinated and prioritized effectively among jurisdictions, while nonetheless allowing each jurisdiction to adopt only the proposed projects that it actually has the authority or responsibility to implement when resources are available.

The planning process used by the LMS Committee/Workgroup meets the analysis and documentation needs of the planning process. The plan utilizes technical analysis and the formulation of proposed mitigation projects for incorporation into this plan.

The following sections of the Franklin County LMS present the detailed information to support these objectives. In addition, it documents the structural and non-structural mitigation projects proposed by the participating jurisdictions to address the identified exposure. The plan will also address the goals and objectives of the Committee for the next planning period, during which this plan will continue to be expanded and refined.