



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) encourages multi-jurisdictional planning for local hazard mitigation. Such planning efforts can generate a unified local voice on hazard mitigation, with cross-jurisdictional support for a hazard mitigation plan's recommended mitigation actions. They also help to form working relationships among participants' emergency managers, floodplain administrations, and other development agencies (FEMA 2021). Eligible participants for multi-jurisdiction hazard mitigation plans are local governments defined as follows in Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 201 (Mitigation Planning):

"Any county, municipality, city, town, township, public authority, school district, special district, intrastate district, council of governments (regardless of whether the council of governments is incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under State law), regional or interstate government entity, or agency or instrumentality of a local government; any Indian tribe or authorized tribal organization, or Alaska Native village or organization; and any rural community, unincorporated town or village, or other public entity." (44 CFR Section 201.2)

In multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation planning, every participating jurisdiction must meet the federal requirements for local mitigation planning. This means that each jurisdiction must actively participate in the planning process and must officially adopt the plan (44 CFR Section 201.6a(4)).

For the Sussex County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP), a Planning Partnership was formed to leverage resources and to meet the federal local mitigation planning requirements for as many eligible governments in the County as possible. Members of the Planning Partnership consisted of representatives from each participating jurisdiction. Sussex County was the lead agency for this planning effort and directed the planning process with assistance from a contract planning consultant (Tetra Tech). A Steering Committee with broad representation across the county provided guidance and direction for the HMP planning process. Each participating planning partner has prepared a jurisdictional annex to this plan.

This chapter describes the Sussex County HMP Planning Partnership, its responsibilities throughout the planning process, and the jurisdictional annexes developed as a result of the plan update efforts. The remaining chapters in this volume of the HMP present the annexes for each participating jurisdiction.

1.2 PLANNING PARTNER INVOLVEMENT

1.2.1 Initial Solicitation and Letters of Intent

Sussex County solicited the participation of all eligible jurisdictions in the County at the commencement of this project. All jurisdictions interested signed a letter of intent and/or a resolution committing their participation and resources to the development of the Sussex County HMP (Appendix A). The following is a list of the jurisdictions that participated in the update process and have met the minimum requirements of participation as established by the County and the Steering Committee:



- County of Sussex County
- Borough of Andover
- Township of Andover
- Borough of Branchville
- Township of Byram
- Township of Frankford
- Borough of Franklin
- Township of Fredon
- Township of Green
- Borough of Hamburg
- Township of Hampton
- Township of Hardyston
- Borough of Hopatcong
- Township of Lafayette
- Township of Montague
- Town of Newton
- Borough of Ogdensburg
- Township of Sandyston
- Township of Sparta
- Borough of Stanhope
- Township of Stillwater
- Borough of Sussex
- Township of Vernon
- Township of Walpack
- Township of Wantage

1.2.2 Planning Partner Expectations

The following list of planning partner expectations was agreed to in each letter of intent to participate:

- Identify municipal representatives to serve as the planning points of contacts. These people were responsible for representing the community and assuring that these participation expectations are met by their community.
- Support the Steering Committee selected to oversee the development of this plan.
- Provide representation at municipal Planning Committee meetings
- Provide data and information about the community as requested by the Steering Committee or the contract consultant, including:
 - Structure and facility inventory data
 - New development and anticipated development
 - Natural hazard risk areas
 - Natural hazard events and losses that have impacted the community in the last five years
 - Plans, studies, reports, and ordinances addressing natural hazard risk
 - Mitigation activity in the community in the last five years, including progress on previously identified mitigation actions.
- Support public outreach efforts in the community, which may include:
 - Providing notices of the planning project on the municipal website with links to a County project website
 - Providing notice of the planning project, the availability of plan documents, and notice of public meetings via available local media (e.g. newsletters, flyers, email blasts, social media, etc.)
 - Advertising and supporting public meetings in the area
 - Supporting outreach to National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Repetitive Loss and Severe Repetitive Loss property owners in the community.

The **Planning Partnership** is responsible for developing and reviewing draft sections of the hazard mitigation plan, creating the mitigation strategy for their jurisdiction, and adopting the final plan. Members of the Planning Partnership have the expertise to develop the plan and have their jurisdiction's authority to implement the mitigation strategy developed during the planning process.



- Assist with the identification of stakeholders within the community who should be informed and potentially involved with the planning process.
- Complete data and information collection survey forms in a timely manner.
- Identify specific mitigation actions to address each of the natural hazards posing significant (or high or medium) risk to the community.
- Involve the local NFIP Floodplain Administrator in the planning process.
- Review draft plan sections when requested and provide comment and input as appropriate.
- Adopt the plan by resolution of the local governing body after FEMA conditional approval.
- Periodically provide the Steering Committee with reports of municipal staff and volunteer labor spent on the planning process.

Under the plan implementation and maintenance protocol established in Volume I of the HMP, it is intended that the Planning Partnership will remain active to support maintenance of the HMP after the plan has been adopted. By adopting this plan, each planning partner agrees to the plan implementation and maintenance protocol. Given that individual commitments change over time, it will be the responsibility of each jurisdiction and its points of contact to inform the County's coordinator for this HMP of any changes in representation.

1.3 JURISDICTIONAL ANNEX PREPARATION PROCESS

Jurisdictional annexes provide a unique, stand-alone guide to mitigation planning for each jurisdiction participating in a multi-jurisdiction HMP. The Sussex County HMP is organized so that there is an annex for Sussex County and for every jurisdiction within the County's borders. This volume of the HMP includes an annex for each jurisdiction in Sussex County, including those that did not fully participate.

Workshops and additional meetings (in person, by email, or by teleconference) to complete the jurisdictional annexes were held with the County, the contract consultant, and the Steering Committee throughout the planning process. Details regarding these meetings are described further in Volume I.

1.3.1 Incorporation of Information from Previous HMP

In order to facilitate the update of the jurisdictional annexes, data from the 2021 Sussex County HMP annexes was transferred to the most current annex format, which has evolved to meet changing federal and state criteria. Clear instructions were provided to the representatives of each planning partner. This transfer of information provided a basis to address the following:

- Changes in local capabilities and vulnerabilities
- The current status of the 2021 HMP mitigation strategy
- A new mitigation strategy to address identified issues and to increase community resiliency

1.3.2 Kickoff Meeting

The County invited all municipalities to participate in a planning partner kickoff meeting held on March 15, 2023, to provide an overview of the planning process, including meetings and worksheets that would be used to gather information for annex preparation. Key elements of the worksheets were discussed and subsequently completed by the appropriate jurisdictional personnel for each worksheet. The worksheets were collected, and the information



was incorporated into each jurisdictional annex. In the event additional information was needed, the jurisdictional point of contact was contacted to provide more input into their annex.

1.3.3 Hazard Ranking Exercise

At the risk assessment meetings on April 9 and April 11, 2024, the consultant summarized the findings of the risk assessment for the hazards of concern evaluated in this HMP, including an initial ranking of hazards using the risk-related ranking methodology described in Volume I. Each planning partner was asked to review the hazard ranking for its jurisdiction and revise as appropriate based on history of events, probability of occurrence, and the potential impact on people, property, and the economy. This exercise familiarized the planning partners with how to use the risk assessment as a tool to support other planning and hazard mitigation processes and to help prioritize types of mitigation actions that should be considered. Hazards that were ranked as “high” for each jurisdiction as a result of this exercise were considered to be priorities for identifying appropriate mitigation actions, although jurisdictions also identified actions to mitigate “medium” or “low” ranked hazards as appropriate.

1.3.4 Mitigation Strategy Workshop

A mitigation strategy workshop was held on May 8, 2024, to provide an overview on how to develop a strong mitigation strategy. In preparation for this workshop, the consultant provided a list of problem areas and vulnerabilities identified during the planning process, along with feedback from the citizen survey, to support the development of relevant projects for the mitigation strategy. Workshop participants received the following FEMA publications to use as a resource as part of a comprehensive review of all possible activities and mitigation measures to address hazards of concern:

- FEMA 551 “Selecting Appropriate Mitigation Measures for Floodprone Structures” (March 2007)
- FEMA “Mitigation Ideas—A Resource for Reducing Risk to Natural Hazards” (January 2013).

This workshop included the development of focused problem statements based on the impacts of natural hazards in the County and its communities. These problem statements provide detailed descriptions of problem areas, including known impacts on the jurisdiction (past damage, loss of service, etc.). Where possible, the statements include the street address of the problem location, adjacent streets, water bodies, and well-known structures as well as a brief description of existing site conditions (topography, terrain, hydrology). The problem statements form a bridge between the risk assessment (which quantifies impacts on each community), the capability assessment (which identifies capabilities for reducing hazard risks and supporting hazard mitigation), and the development of actionable mitigation strategies.

The County and the mitigation consultant worked with each jurisdiction to identify clear, implementable mitigation actions and to further support the completion of the jurisdictional annexes.

1.4 JURISDICTIONAL ANNEX FORMAT

The jurisdictional annex format is designed to document local compliance with the 44 CFR local mitigation planning regulations. It also achieves the following:

- Providing a locally relevant synthesis of the overall mitigation plan that can be readily presented, distributed, and maintained
- Facilitating local understanding of the community’s risk from natural hazards



- Facilitating local understanding of the community's capabilities to manage natural hazard risk, including opportunities to improve those capabilities
- Facilitating local understanding of the efforts the community has taken, and plans to take, to reduce its natural hazard risk
- Facilitating the implementation of mitigation strategies, including the development of grant applications
- Providing a framework by which the community can continue to capture relevant data and information for future plan updates

The following are the elements of the jurisdictional annex.

- **Section X.1: Hazard Mitigation Planning Team:** Identifies the hazard mitigation planning primary and alternate contacts and floodplain administrator. Provides details on which departments were involved in the development of the jurisdictional annex. The widest range of departments, stakeholders, and persons familiar with the jurisdiction should be involved in the development of the jurisdictional annexes. Further detail on participants is provided in Volume I.
- **Section X.2: Community Profile:** Provides a profile of the jurisdiction, including population and socially vulnerably populations.
- **Section X.3: Jurisdictional Capability Assessment and Integration:** Provides an inventory and evaluation of the jurisdiction's tools, mechanisms, and resources available to support hazard mitigation and natural hazard risk reduction. Tables provide an inventory of the jurisdiction's planning, regulatory, administrative, technical, and fiscal capabilities, its level of participation in state and federal programs designed to promote and incentivize local risk reduction efforts, and its adaptive capacity to adjust to damage and respond to consequences.
- **Section X.4: National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Compliance:** Summarizes jurisdiction-specific information related to managing and regulating the regulatory floodplain, including current and future compliance with the NFIP.
- **Section X.5: Growth/Development Trends:** Summarizes recent and expected future development trends, including major residential/commercial development and major infrastructure development.
- **Section X.6: Jurisdictional Risk Assessment:** Provides information regarding each jurisdiction's vulnerability to the identified hazards. Full data and information on the hazards of concern, the methodology used to develop the vulnerability assessments, and the results of those assessments that serve as the basis of these local hazard rankings may be found in Volume I.
 - **Hazard Area:** Each annex includes a map (or series of maps) illustrating identified hazard zones and critical facilities. The maps also show areas of known or anticipated future development, as available.
 - **Hazard Event History:** Identifies hazard events that have caused significant impacts within the jurisdiction, including a summary characterization of those impacts identified by the jurisdiction.
 - **Hazard Ranking and Vulnerabilities:** Each jurisdiction has differing degrees of risk exposure and vulnerability. The local hazard ranking identifies each jurisdiction's local degree of risk to each hazard, supporting the selection and prioritization of actions to reduce the highest levels of risk for each community.
 - **Critical Facilities:** Identifies potential flood losses to critical facilities in the jurisdiction based on the flood vulnerability assessment process presented in Volume I.
 - **Identified Issues:** Presents other specific hazard vulnerabilities as identified by the jurisdiction.
- **Section X.7: Mitigation Strategy and Prioritization:** Discusses and provides the status of past mitigation actions and status and describes proposed hazard mitigation actions and prioritization.



- **Past Mitigation Action Status:** Where applicable, a review of progress on the jurisdiction's prior mitigation strategy is presented, identifying the disposition of each prior action in the jurisdiction's updated mitigation strategy. Other completed or ongoing mitigation activities that were not specifically part of a prior local mitigation strategy may be included in this subsection as well.
- **Completed Mitigation Actions Not Identified in the Previous Mitigation Strategy:** Other completed or ongoing mitigation activities that were not specifically part of a prior local mitigation strategy may be included in this subsection as well.
- **Proposed Hazard Mitigation Actions for the Plan Update:** Tables and action worksheets at the end of each annex present the jurisdiction's updated mitigation strategy, a summary of the local mitigation strategy prioritization and a summary of the action categories and hazards addressed.

Each jurisdiction's annex is a living document that will continue to be improved as resources permit. Continued efforts to maintain the annex will ensure that it remains current and will improve its effectiveness as the key tool, reference, and guiding document by which the jurisdiction will implement hazard mitigation locally.

1.5 COVERAGE UNDER THE PLAN

Of the 25 original planning partners, 25 fully met the participation requirements specified by the Steering Committee and have annexes included in this volume. Those that did not meet the requirements will not be able to seek FEMA or state approval at the time of plan submittal, nor will they be eligible to obtain FEMA grant funding. Table 1-1 lists the status of each jurisdiction. Note that participation in scheduled Planning Partnership meetings provides only a partial indication of the level of participation of each jurisdiction. Appendices in Volume I provide details on further participation and meeting attendance.

Table 1-1. Jurisdictional Status

	Letter of Intent to Participate	Attended Workshops, Meetings, and Calls	Provided Update on Past Projects	Submitted Mitigation Actions for Current Plan	Seeking Approval for Adoption (meets all previous requirements)
County of Sussex	N/A	X	X	X	X
Borough of Andover	X	X	X	X	X
Township of Andover	X	X	X	X	X
Borough of Branchville	X	X	X	X	X
Township of Byram	X	X	X	X	X
Township of Frankford	X	X	X	X	X
Borough of Franklin	X	X	X	X	X
Township of Fredon	X	X	X	X	X
Township of Green	X	X	X	X	X
Borough of Hamburg	X	X	X	X	X
Township of Hampton	X	X	X	X	X
Township of Hardyston	X	X	X	X	X
Borough of Hopatcong		X	X	X	X
Township of Lafayette	X	X	X	X	X



	Letter of Intent to Participate	Attended Workshops, Meetings, and Calls	Provided Update on Past Projects	Submitted Mitigation Actions for Current Plan	Seeking Approval for Adoption (meets all previous requirements)
Township of Montague	X	X	X	X	X
Town of Newton	X	X	X	X	X
Borough of Ogdensburg	X	X	X	X	X
Township of Sandyston	X	X	X	X	X
Township of Sparta	X	X	X	X	X
Borough of Stanhope		X	X	X	X
Township of Stillwater	X	X	X	X	X
Borough of Sussex	X	X	X	X	X
Township of Vernon	X	X	X	X	X
Township of Walpack	X	X	X	X	X
Township of Wantage	X	X	X	X	X