



# Erie County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update **PLAN FACTS**

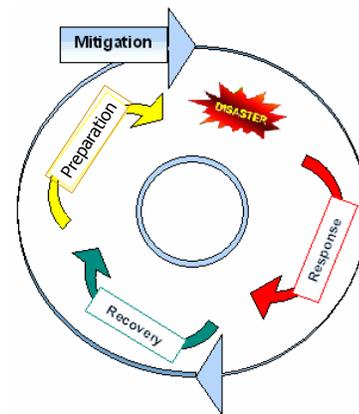
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## **WHAT IS HAZARD MITIGATION?**

Natural hazards have the potential to cause property damage, loss of life, economic hardship, and threats to public health and safety.

Hazard mitigation measures are the things you do today to be more protected in the future. They are measures taken before a disaster happens to reduce the impact that future disasters will have on people and property in the community. Mitigation reduces the risk of loss and creates a more disaster-resistant and sustainable community. Hazard mitigation measures are essential to breaking the typical disaster cycle of damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage.



## **PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PLAN**

Hazard mitigation plans are developed BEFORE a disaster strikes. The plans identify community policies, actions, and tools for long-term implementation to reduce risk and potential for future losses. Adopted, implemented and maintained on an ongoing basis, these plans will gradually, but steadily, lessen the impacts associated with hazard events.

As of November 1, 2004 communities without a FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan are not eligible for FEMA mitigation project grant monies under programs such as the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), Flood Mitigation Assistance Program (FMA) and Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program (PDM).

**Erie County recognized early on the benefits of having a plan in place, and took the initiative early on to prepare its initial Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2004. This plan was later approved by FEMA in 2005. To maintain their eligibility to apply for FEMA mitigation project grants, the plan must be updated and re-approved by FEMA on a five-year cycle.**

While the primary advantage of having a mitigation plan in place is the jurisdiction's eligibility to apply for FEMA hazard mitigation project grant monies, participation has other advantages as well:

- Because a consulting team has been hired to conduct the analyses and author the plan, participation involves relatively little effort on the part of jurisdictions.
- Because Federal grant monies have been received to develop the plan, participation involves little cost to local jurisdictions - only allocation of staff time to participate in the process, and a contribution toward the grant's 25% matching funds.
- Multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plans are practical for addressing issues that do not recognize political boundaries.
- Over time, implementation of the plan will reduce economic damages resulting from future natural disasters.

## **PARTICIPATION**

Jurisdictions who wish to be recognized by FEMA as being compliant with DMA 2000 must either: (a) participate in the multi-jurisdictional plan development process and formally adopt the final plan, or (b) prepare their own hazard mitigation plan. All jurisdictions in Erie County are being invited to participate in the multi-jurisdictional plan update process.

To be recognized in FEMA's eyes as successfully participating in the multi-jurisdictional plan, jurisdictions must: participate actively in the planning process; develop unique jurisdictional mitigation actions; and formally adopt the final plan. Active participation involves attending meetings, providing feedback, and reaching out to the public and other key stakeholders in the community.

## **STRUCTURE**

Elected and appointed government officials, business leaders, volunteers of non-profit organizations, citizens, and other stakeholders who choose to participate will become part of our overall Erie County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee. To keep meeting sizes to workable numbers, the Planning Committee will be broken up

into a Core Planning Group (CPG) and Jurisdictional Assessment Teams (JATs).

The CPG will include representatives of Erie County and any of the county's jurisdictions who elect to participate in the update process. The CPG will manage the overall plan formulation activities and contribute to the decision making process. Representatives on the CPG will coordinate the plan efforts by organizing outreach by means of a team concept through the JATs.

The JATs will include representatives from the individual participating jurisdictions. They will be responsible for local community involvement in the multi-jurisdictional mitigation plan update.

Regardless of team, all participating jurisdictions must:

- Coordinate and facilitate local efforts.
- Attend meetings.
- Provide information and feedback.
- Involve the public and community stakeholders in the planning process.
- Assess mitigation alternatives.
- Select a course of action to be followed for their communities.
- Participate in plan implementation, monitoring and updates.

## **PROCESS**

The mitigation plan update process will begin during June 2011. A Draft Plan is targeted for completion in December of 2011.

## **OUR WEBSITE**

A Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Planning Page is currently under development on the Erie County Emergency Service's web site. We encourage you to check back for additional information and updates at: [www.erie.gov/disaster](http://www.erie.gov/disaster)

Thank you for your interest! For questions or other feedback, please contact:

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