

Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Atlantic County, New Jersey

Prepared for



Atlantic County Office of Emergency Preparedness
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Prepared by

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PLAN ADOPTION RESOLUTIONS

In accordance with Part 201.6 of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000), Atlantic County, New Jersey, has developed this Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan to identify natural hazards that threaten the County and ways to reduce future damages associated with these hazards.

Following this page are the signed adoption resolutions of the County and all participating jurisdictions that have adopted this plan, authorizing municipal government staff to carry out the actions detailed herein.

Signed resolutions of adoption by all participating jurisdictions shall be inserted following this page after FEMA has reviewed and determined that the Draft plan is approvable.

DRAFT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Across the United States and around the world, natural disasters occur each day, as they have for thousands of years. As the world's population and development have increased, so have the effects of these natural disasters. The time and money required to recover from these events often strain or exhaust local resources. The purpose of hazard mitigation planning is to identify policies, actions, and tools for implementation that will, over time, work to reduce risk and the potential for future losses. Hazard mitigation is best realized when community leaders, businesses, citizens, and other stakeholders join together in an effort to undertake a process of learning about hazards that can affect their area and use this knowledge to prioritize needs and develop a strategy for reducing damages.

Section 322, Mitigation Planning, of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act ("the Stafford Act"), enacted by Section 104 of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 ("DMA 2000"), provides new and revitalized approaches to mitigation planning. Section 322 continues the requirement for a State mitigation plan as a condition of disaster assistance, and establishes a new requirement for local mitigation plans. In order to apply for Federal aid for technical assistance and post-disaster funding, local jurisdictions must comply with DMA 2000 and its implementing regulations (44 CFR Part 201.6).

While Atlantic County has always sought ways to reduce their vulnerability to hazards, the passage of DMA 2000 helped County officials to recognize the benefits of pursuing a long-term, coordinated approach to hazard mitigation through hazard mitigation planning. The County has received grant funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the purpose of developing this very hazard mitigation plan. Funding was received under the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program for development of a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan for the County and as many of its 53 municipalities that chose to participate. This **Atlantic County Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan** represents the collective efforts of 24 participating jurisdictions, the general public, and other stakeholders. Natural disasters cannot be prevented from occurring. However, over the long-term, the continued implementations of this Plan will gradually, but steadily, lessen the impacts associated with hazard events.

The Atlantic County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan has been developed by the Atlantic County Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee (the "Planning Committee"), with support from outside consultants. The efforts of the Planning Committee were headed by the Atlantic County Office of Emergency Management's Hazard Mitigation Coordinator. The overall Planning Committee was divided into a Core Planning Group (CPG) and Jurisdictional Assessment Teams (JATs), with one JAT for each of the County's participating jurisdictions. In addition there was a County Steering Committee which oversaw the process, headed by the Atlantic County Office of Emergency Preparedness (ACOEP).

The plan development process was initiated in earnest in the Fall of 2008 with the Atlantic County Steering Committee's Meeting held on June 20, 2007. The Steering Committee met on a monthly basis throughout the plan development process to oversee the work of the consultant and to guide participating municipalities throughout the process requirements. A Kickoff Meeting of the full Core Planning Group was conducted on August 18, 2008. Thereafter, the Core Planning Group met on January 22, 2009; April 21, 2009; May 11, 2009; and TBC. Jurisdictional Assessment Teams met individually throughout the plan development process as they deemed necessary.

Community support is vital to the success of any hazard mitigation plan. The Planning Committee provided opportunities for participation and input of the public and other stakeholders throughout the plan development process, both prior to this Draft and before approval of the Final plan, providing citizens and other stakeholders with opportunities to take part in the decisions that will affect their future. On a

mitigation planning section of the Atlantic County web site, the ACOEP posted information on the plan development process and where to go for additional information or comments beginning in November 2008; this web site has been and continues to be maintained and updated regularly. The County also conducted several other outreach actions including a press release issued in February 2009, and a survey that was posted on the ACOEP mitigation planning web site. They also spoke about the Mitigation Plan at a meeting of Local Emergency Planning Coordinators and CPG members on January 31, 2008. Jurisdictional Assessment Team members supplemented County efforts by reaching out to the public and other stakeholders within their respective jurisdictions to get the word out through various means and provide opportunities for feedback and participation.

The hazard mitigation planning process consisted of the following key steps:

- Researching a full range of natural hazards to identify which hazards could affect the County;
- Identifying the location and extent of hazard areas;
- Identifying assets located within these hazard areas;
- Characterizing existing and potential future assets at risk;
- Assessing vulnerabilities to the most prevalent hazards; and
- Formulation and prioritization of goals, objectives, and mitigation actions to reduce or avoid long-term vulnerabilities to the identified hazards.

Natural hazards that can affect Atlantic County that were studied in detail in the Plan are as follows:

- **Atmospheric hazards**, including: extreme temperatures, extreme wind, hurricanes and tropical storms, lightning, nor'easters, tornadoes, and winter storms;
- **Hydrologic hazards**, including: coastal erosion, dam failure, drought, flooding, storm surge, and wave action;
- **Geologic hazards**, including: earthquakes; and
- **Other hazards**, including: wildfires.

After evaluating these hazards and assets within the County to which they are vulnerable, the Planning Committee developed a mitigation strategy to increase the disaster resistance of the County, along with procedures for monitoring, evaluating and updating the Plan to ensure that it remains a “living document.”

This Draft Plan is currently under review by the Planning Committee, NJOEM, FEMA, and the public and other stakeholders. Later, comments will be incorporated, and the County and all participating jurisdictions will each formally adopt the Final Plan. The Final Plan will include copies of adoption resolutions following Page i.

If you have any questions or comments on the Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan for Atlantic County, New Jersey, additional information can be obtained by contacting:

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Throughout the plan development process, the Atlantic County Office of Emergency Preparedness (ACOEP) worked tirelessly to involve all of its 23 municipalities. These local jurisdictions were not only invited to participate but were truly guided through the process by ACOEP at every stage.

The following jurisdictions (Atlantic County and 19 of its municipalities) participated successfully in the development of this plan:

County of Atlantic

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Absecon, City of</i> | <i>Folsom, Borough of</i> | <i>Margate City, City of</i> |
| <i>Atlantic City, City of</i> | <i>Galloway, Township of</i> | <i>Mullica, Township of</i> |
| <i>Brigantine, City of</i> | <i>Hamilton, Township of</i> | <i>Northfield, City of</i> |
| <i>Buena, Borough of</i> | <i>Hammonton, Town of</i> | <i>Pleasantville, City of</i> |
| <i>Corbin City, City of</i> | <i>Linwood, City of</i> | <i>Ventnor City, City of</i> |
| <i>Egg Harbor, Township of</i> | <i>Longport, Borough of</i> | <i>Weymouth, Township of</i> |
| <i>Estell Manor, City of</i> | | |

The following three municipal jurisdictions participated in some capacity, but did not meet the final FEMA requirements related to evaluation and prioritization of mitigation projects, or development of a strategy to outline how such projects will be implemented.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>Buena Vista, Township of</i> | <i>Port Republic, City of</i> | <i>Weymouth, Township of</i> |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|

The City of Egg Harbor City did not participate in the planning process.

In addition, the records show that the following stakeholder entity participated through attending at least one planning group meeting or responding to at least one questionnaire.

The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey

URS Corporation (Wayne, NJ) acted as the plan development consultant providing hazard mitigation planning services.

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