



STATE OF COLORADO

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FEMA Local Hazard Mitigation Plans

The Federal Emergency Management Agency defines mitigation as, “sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and their property from hazards.” Local hazard mitigation plans form a foundation for communities who seek to reduce risks from hazards to people, property and infrastructure. The intent is to avoid the cycle of damage caused by disasters, reconstruction and repeated damage. Hazard mitigation planning processes provide communities with the opportunity to comprehensively identify those hazards that could impact people, property and infrastructure. Using the hazard identification as a foundation, plans then include a vulnerability assessment that identifies how, specifically, those hazards may impact the community. Mitigation planning processes provide a forum to identify programs, policies and funding sources that could contribute to risk reduction. Communities can also identify potential gaps in their ability to reduce risk that they may need to or want to address. Finally, mitigation plans afford communities the opportunity to develop a comprehensive and coordinated strategy to reduce or eliminate risks.

Effective mitigation plans are the result of comprehensive and inclusive planning processes. Stakeholders from a broad cross section of a community should be engaged. This includes, but is not limited to: representatives from government departments such as emergency management, planning, public works, fire, and floodplain management; partners from the State including the Department of Local Affairs Divisions of Emergency Management and Local Government, the Colorado Water Conservation Board, The Colorado Geological Survey and the Colorado State Forest Service, and; Federal agencies, non-profits, academia and the public. Generally, the mitigation planning process will have a total of 6-7 meetings. 4-5 of those meetings will take place with the planning committee, including all participating jurisdictions. In addition, FEMA requires a minimum of 2 meetings designed to educate and engage the public. Below is an overview of planning committee meetings:

1. Kickoff Meeting

- a. Announce Project
- b. Identify and invite all relevant stakeholders and participating jurisdictions
- c. Provide project overview
- d. Explain participation requirements/tasks
- e. Educate stakeholders on the purpose and benefits of mitigation plans
- f. Identify data collection needs
- g. Conduct survey of planning committee’s perceptions of risks to the community

2. Risk Assessment Meeting

- a. Provide overview the of type, location, and extent of all natural hazards that can affect each jurisdiction
 - i. Include description of the unique and varied risks in each jurisdiction

- b. Provide summary of data collected and outstanding data/informational needs
 - c. If completed, provide summary of vulnerability to public and private property, infrastructure and people, including types and numbers of buildings in identified hazard areas
 - d. Provide committee with tasks needed in order to complete risk assessment
 - e. Develop problem statements identifying key issues that need to be addressed in light of risks and vulnerabilities
 - f. Identify and discuss risk reduction capabilities (policies, programs, funding mechanisms, etc.)
3. **Mitigation Strategies Meeting**
- a. Develop risk reduction goals and objectives for each jurisdiction (can be the same or different) based on identified risks, vulnerabilities and capabilities
 - b. Develop mitigation actions based on identified risks, vulnerabilities, capabilities, goals and objectives
 - i. Identify agency or individual responsible for implementation, timeline, and priority based on evaluation criteria (social, technical, administrative, political, legal, environmental and economic feasibility)
 - c. Develop implementation, monitoring and evaluation procedures
4. **Draft Plan Review and Comment Meeting**
- a. Before meeting, stakeholders should review drafts of each section relevant to them and provide comments to improve plan, as needed
 - b. Discuss plan draft, identify any outstanding issues or informational needs
 - c. Ensure plan draft meets needs of community and scope of work
 - d. Verify that all jurisdictions have met the threshold for participation
 - e. Identify corrective actions, if necessary
5. **Final Draft Review Meeting (If Necessary)**
- a. If previous meeting identified major outstanding informational or analytical needs, review updates and ensure plan is satisfactory for submission to FEMA
- ✓ **Public Meetings**
- FEMA requires that public meetings be held during the drafting stage, and once a draft of the plan is complete
 - Meetings specific to the plan, county commission or city/town council meetings, planning commission meetings, or other public forums
 - Provide the public with a forum to comment on the plan. Methods could include
 - Announce meetings and participation opportunities via e-mail, newspaper, bulletin boards, etc.
 - Conduct paper or electronic surveys
 - Develop interactive websites
 - Leave copies of the plan in public locations such as libraries or administrative buildings
 - Direct community engagement, such as county fairs, community centers, retirement communities, etc.
- ✓ **Plan Adoption**
- Once FEMA has reviewed the plan indicated the plan is approvable, all participating jurisdictions must have their executive body adopt the plan