

Mercer County Hazard Mitigation Plan

2017

Mercer County Emergency Management Agency



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mercer County is dedicated to establishing and maintaining a safe and secure homeland for the residents and businesses in this rural west central Ohio county. Situated west of Lima and on the Indiana border, Mercer County is home to many farm families and small industries that employ local residents. The Mercer County Emergency Management Agency is dedicated to helping the county and its jurisdictions develop sustainable solutions to natural disaster threats through a progressive program of hazard mitigation and disaster preparedness.

The Mercer County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan was developed through community-wide participation in the assessment of risks and hazards, creation of mitigation strategies, and planning for implementation and sustainment of loss reduction efforts. Through a series of meetings and work sessions described in this plan, the county, city, villages, and other jurisdictions came together to assess the current risks in Mercer County and formulate sustainable solutions to lessen those vulnerabilities. As a part of this action plan, they considered various regional, county, and local plans and documents that provide guidance to developers, regulators, and residents as they implement community and personal growth initiatives. They considered conservation of the environment as well as economic development and growth of their communities.

This plan is intended to be a tool in comprehensive community development planning, construction of new facilities and growth of residential areas, as well as being a thought provoking essay in the general evolution of local governance. It documents the history of disaster incidents in Mercer County and the surrounding area and takes into account the unique characteristics of the county's footprint. The county's rural landscape holds a unique position where several watersheds join together and impact a large region. The plan documents past casualties and property losses and identifies mitigation strategies that will effectively protect and preserve the county's many natural and man-made assets.

The Mercer County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan process followed the guidance established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in March of 2013. The whole community was involved in the process as input and feedback was sought from all county residents, workers, and visitors according to that guidance. This is evidenced by documentation of meetings included later in this plan.

As one of many ways to make Mercer County safe, sound, and resilient after catastrophic incidents occur, this mitigation plan provides a comprehensive review of communities and mitigation needs, including its unique vulnerabilities to Mother Nature's fury. The mitigation strategies and planning process are intended to help community leaders implement projects and develop policies that make life in Mercer County resistant to long-term devastation and unnecessary rebuilding costs, as well as to facilitate rapid recovery when disasters occur.