

1.0 THE PLANNING PROCESS

To develop a natural hazard mitigation plan that reflects hazards, risks and vulnerabilities in Auglaize County, Auglaize County EMA along with its Advisory and Executive Board used a comprehensive planning process that involved all political subdivisions in the county. This section describes the process used to develop the plan and explains how jurisdictions along with the community were included throughout the plan development process.

1.1 PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Development process of the mitigation plan was anticipated to take 12 months from the beginning of the project to submission for approval. After review of the existing plan and preliminary research on existing projects from the old plan, the plan process was updated to a more aggressive approach and the time reduced to 6 months.

1.1.1 Pre-Updated Planning Process

Auglaize County's most recent natural hazard mitigation plan was adopted on November 25, 2008 and expired on December 15, 2013. Auglaize County began to update in 2015 but was not able to complete due to significant changes in the plan requirements, Auglaize County was unable to complete an attempted update in 2015. In late 2016 and early 2017 the county re-engaged in the process and had two meetings with Ohio Emergency Management Agency looking for better directions on gathering information and writing the plan locally.

On August 15, 2015 Auglaize County Emergency Management Director met with Ohio EMA Mitigation Branch staff to review the requirements for the plan development. Over the past year and half Auglaize County Director met with staff at Ohio Emergency Management Mitigation Branch and gathered guidance information on writing the plan. This information was brought back to the Auglaize County-wide Emergency Management Executive Board in order to begin and develop a timeline that would allow Auglaize County to have a plan in place by the summer of 2018.

1.1.2 Planning Team

The Auglaize County EMA Director reviewed the list from the original planning team representatives from 2005. On April 24, 2018 at the Auglaize County-wide Emergency Management Executive Board meeting, board members determined that since Auglaize County Emergency Management Agency was formed as a County-wide Cooperative that those members should be the planning team. This list included representatives from all jurisdictions public and private partners. The complete list of participating stakeholders is included as **Table 1-1**. The

whole planning team conducted working meetings that were done during regular EMA Board meetings or a one on one meeting with the Jurisdiction for further information **Table 1-2**

Project Kick-Off

An initial meeting of the planning team was held on **April 24, 2014** at the Auglaize County Administration Building. This meeting served as an introduction to some of the new board members and a refresher to others about the County's Mitigation plan. During this time it was noted and recognized that the current plan was expired and updates to projects would be needed. It was decided that if any new projects was asked to be entered the plan would then be updated but as for now the county would try to complete those goals that were listed in the existing plan.

On April 24, 2018 at the Auglaize County-wide Emergency Management Cooperative Board meeting it was mentioned that City of St. Marys and AmVets of Wapakoneta both had projects that they wanted to accomplish under mitigation. At that time the Board reviewed options such as hiring a contractor to write the plan or doing it in house. It was decided that the plan would be written in house for better use of taxpayers money. It was also noted that it could take up to a year, however the office would try to aggressively complete it in 6 months with the use of board meetings and that input would go into the new mitigation plan.

Hazard and Risk Assessment Identification

Another part of the plan development focused on identifying hazards and risks across all of Auglaize County. To identify this information Auglaize County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management sent out Hazard Vulnerability Analysis (HVA) spreadsheets asking the representatives to rank each of the hazards and resubmit the sheets with their responses to be tallied. The (HVA) sheets were also presented to area schools on 5/17/2017 and also Joint Township District Memorial Hospital on 6/14/2018, to be completed, and used for their emergency plans as well. The input that was gained during this meeting was not only limited to the schools and hospital but from the Auglaize County Sheriff's Office, Auglaize County Health Department and local police departments. All the information was then brought back to the planning committee and reviewed and compared to the rating from the 2008 plan and updated in this plan.

Mitigation Strategy Development

Majority of the preliminary work was done by Auglaize EMA and the information was shared with the team for review and input. This was found to be the most productive as it gave the team members a chance between their busy schedules to review and gather information. Since Auglaize EMA is the agency responsible for hazard event archive information in the county that

agency had majority of the information among others. During one of these planning session a set of documents went out to reevaluate the impact of the hazards and risks that were identified from the past plan that was identified in 2005 mitigation plan along with current risk that came out of the spreadsheets to see if they still agree on the ratings and which ones need to be adjusted.

Final Plan Review

After receiving all the input from the stakeholders through email / planning meeting and visiting them on a one on one meeting, Auglaize EMA was to then, bring back a final draft of the plan for a face to face team review. Each jurisdiction was asked that they review the written draft and give feedback to the plan. A printed copy of the draft plan was to be made available in the Auglaize County EMA office for anyone wishing to stop in and review and give input. A public review forum was posted on the Auglaize EMA website along with a copy of the plan. A notice was published in the *Wapakoneta Newspaper and the St. Marys Evening Leader on October 29, 2018.*

The City of St. Marys had submitted a project into the Ohio Emergency Management Agency. Following the planning teams review period, a two week public review was conducted. From September 25, 2018 to October 9, 2018, the plan was available to the community on the Auglaize County EMA's website and in print at the EMA office. Any member of the community was invited to comment on the plan. To accomplish this task, information was posted on the Auglaize EMA website, Auglaize County EMA social media pages. Along with the county notification the flyers were pushed out to the planning team and encouraging them to post it on their social media pages as well.

The draft of the Auglaize County Hazard mitigation plan was submitted to Ohio Emergency Management on October 4, 2018. At the same time the electronic draft version was posted on Auglaize County Emergency Management website along with information in the newspapers to continue public review and get comments to incorporate into a finished plan. It will be submitted to Ohio EMA Mitigation Branch for state review and the formal adoption process, as described in section 4.0 Plan Adoption to begin.

Table 1-1 EMA Advisory and Executive Board Participating and Representative

Jurisdiction	Name	Title
Auglaize EMA	Richard Lowery	Chairman
Noble Township	Brian Cook	Trustee

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City of St Marys	Doug Ayers	Fire Chief
Village of New Bremen	Jeff Pape	Mayor
Village of Minster	Dennis Kitzmiller	Mayor
Village of Buckland	Tim Detty	Mayor
Washington Township	Tim Becher	Township Trustee
Duchouquet Township	Rick Place	Township Trustee
Auglaize County	John Bergman	County Commissioner
Wayne Township	Eric Werling	Township Trustee
City of Wapakoneta	Tom Steinbaugh	Mayor
Logan Township	Dave Krites	Township Trustee
Village of New Knoxville	Keith Leffle	Mayor
Union Township	Mark Waitman	Township Trustee
Moulton Township	Dean Kentner	Township Trustee
German Township	Dave Albers	Township Trustee
Clay Township	Nicholas Shultz	Township Trustee
Village of Cridersville	Rick Walls	Mayor
Pusheta Township	Brian Schlosser	Township Trustee
Salem Township	Richard Seibert	Township Trustee
Jackson Township	Ken Sommers	Township Trustee
St. Marys Township	Chad Elshoff	Township Trustee
Village of Waynesfield	Nathan Motterr	Police Chief
Goshen Township	Tim Doty	Township Trustee
Auglaize County	Troy Anderson	EMA Director

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Table 1-2 Planning Team Meeting

Date	Location	Purpose / Audience
4/24/2014	Columbus, Spring Director Conference	Meeting with Dean Ervin
4/24/2014	Auglaize County Administration Building	EMA Board Kick off meeting to see if any interest in New Mitigation Plan for Projects
7/25/2014	Ohio EMA Mitigation Branch	Meeting with Dean Ervin
8/19/2014	Van Wert EMA	County Engineer met with Stantec for Floodplain boundaries
2/25/2015	Joint Township District Memorial Hospital	Hazard Vulnerability meeting with Public and Private partners
3/3/2015	Mercer County Soil and Water	ODNR Dam Safety and Inundation Meeting
6/17/2015	Auglaize County Administration Building	Conference call with Stantec on Floodplain data
3/27/2017	AmVet Wapakoneta	Possibly interested in relocating building
5/1/2017	Joint Township District Memorial Hospital	Updated Hazard Vulnerability Analysis meeting
5/25/2017	St. Marys City School	Updated Hazard Vulnerability Analysis meeting
2/22/2018	Auglaize County Administration Building	Discussed Mitigation Plan, Resource Solutions Quote to write plan
3/12/2018	AmVet Wapakoneta	Reviewed AMVets Project and discussed Pre App.
4/26/2018	Auglaize County Administration Building	EMA Board will have County EMA to write the plan
6/14/2018	Joint Township District Memorial Hospital	Hazard Vulnerability Analysis meeting
6/20/2018	City of Wapakoneta Administration Building	Met with Safety Service Director on Mitigation Project
6/22/2018	City of St. Marys Engineering Office	Discussed potential Project
6/28/2018	Auglaize County Administration Building	EMA Board discussed projects including river clean up as a project

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7/14/2018	Auglaize County Administration Building	Met with County Engineer to see if any project other than river debris removal
7/19/2018	City of St. Marys Engineering Office	To get a complete description of their project
8/3/2018	City of Wapakoneta City Office	Met with new administrator to go over projects.
8/23/2018	Auglaize County Administration Building	Discussed updates to the plan
10/9/2018	City of St. Marys Municipal Building	St. Marys Project Kickoff Meeting

Planning Committee Signatures

Richard Lowery, Auglaize County EMA Chairman

Tim Doty, Goshen Township

Chief Doug Ayers, City of St. Marys

Ken Sommer, Jackson Township

Tom Stinebaugh, City of Wapakoneta

Dave Krites, Logan Township

Tim Detty, Village of Buckland

Dean Kentner, Moulton Township

Rick Walls, Village of Criddersville

Brian Cook, Noble Township

Dennis Kitzmiller, Village of Minster

Brian Schlosser, Pusheta Township

Jeff Pape, Village of New Bremen

Chad Elshoff, St. Marys Township

Keith Leffle, Village of New Knoxville

Richard Seibert, Salem Township

Chief Nathon Motte, Village of Waynesfield

Mark Waitman, Union Township

John Bergman, Auglaize County Commissioners

Tim Becher, Washington Township

Nicholas Shultz, Clay Township

Eric Werling, Wayne Township

Rick Place, Duchouquet Township

Troy Anderson, Auglaize County EMA

Dave Albers, German Township

1.2 STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

Auglaize County has a population of 45,949 and eight incorporated municipalities, and 14 townships. Many stakeholders with an important role in the mitigation planning process were identified.

1.2.1 Jurisdiction Participation

Every jurisdiction in Auglaize County was presented with numerous opportunities to provide input during the planning process. The EMA sent out questionnaires by email so that these partners could provide input related to disaster hazards, risks and mitigation needs in their specific jurisdiction. By using Google Docs and email, it was found that this was the best way to get input as trying to meet everyone's busy schedule. A completed table of jurisdictions and their participation to this plan is listed in Section 5 page 5-29.

1.2.2 Hazard Mitigation Planning Team

Auglaize County encouraged a countywide participation in the planning process, the EMA office utilized information from the County's existing plan. This list included the name, position, agency or jurisdiction, email address, postal address and phone numbers. Throughout the planning process several officials either changed representatives or included an alternate to help out with their jurisdiction.

Communications with all stakeholders took place by email or Google Docs because that was the most efficient and cost effective means available. Sometimes additional methods were used such as regular mail and telephone calls regarding questions meeting announcements.

1.2.3 Planning Team Engagement

The planning team meetings was primarily done at the Auglaize County-wide Emergency Management Cooperative Board meetings. Once enough information was gathered then additional agendas were sent out and face to face meetings were held. Doing this type of format allowed jurisdiction numerous opportunities for stakeholders to participate.

In all notices it was highly encouraged for stakeholders to reach out to the public to get feedback and input for the plan. Auglaize EMA shared on their website www.auglaizecounty.org/ema/ a draft of the plan along with other social media outlets to direct residence to the draft plan and encourage comments. Utilizing this open format was decided to be best of live review on the status of the plans accessibility to the public and stakeholder. Participants were encouraged to share links to the project website on agency and jurisdiction websites and social media accounts to further reach our public partners.

1.3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Gathering widespread community participation in the mitigation planning process was an important part of the EMA's goal. Using the Whole Community Planning Concept by FEMA as a guide Auglaize EMA reached out both public and private partners to accomplish this. Both partners were used in the initial invite and this list was used to help complete the planning team stakeholders. A large amount of time was used to compile and edit this list as new agencies were proposed as a possibility of having a part of the plan.

Discussion about how to better reach the public to make notification about the plan, status of the plan and any project ideas became an issue as Auglaize EMA had attended other county's kickoff town hall meetings only to find that the public was not showing up to the meetings. At that time it was determined to use the social media push to direct the public to the website link and gather their input from that direction. This gives the public a chance to read and respond to the question around their schedules.

Also on the site, the current 2008 Auglaize County Mitigation Plan was made available for review and identify what strategies were recognized then and what needs updated now.

A complete draft plan was posted on the website for stakeholders and community review from September 26 to October 31, 2018. Comments and questions could be submitted electronically directly from the review website or by phone or email. Every jurisdiction that participated in Auglaize County was notified of the review period pending approval from Ohio EMA. A paid legal notice was placed in the St. Marys Evening Leader and the Wapakoneta Daily Newspaper for the week of October 29, 2018. A printed copy of the plan was available at the Auglaize County EMA office during regular business hours to anyone who preferred to view a printed copy of the plan.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

In developing this plan, a significant amount of research was performed. Auglaize County's current plan was approved in 2008. Information was collected since the expiration of the plan to

ensure that the new plan included current and accurate information. Since the existing plan was a natural hazard plan and this new plan is an all-hazards plan that now includes technological and human-caused disasters were added. The HIRA was developed through research of actual recorded events from the National Climatic Data Center Storm Events Database. In this plan all recorded incidents are documented by type along with a narrative description for the incident and significant impact. These narratives are from the National Climatic Data Center reports, media reports and local reports. Supporting data was also obtained from Ohio EMA and FEMA websites.

The county auditor provided property valuations for residential, commercial agricultural, and exempt properties and regional planning provided projected storm pathways and maps. Current critical facility and key resource inventories were used to project loss estimates for those facilities. Auglaize County EMA used the 2008 Auglaize County Hazard Mitigation Plan as a reference for information that reflected current risks, vulnerabilities and conditions.

When projecting loss, previous losses provided insight into the potential for future losses. FEMA historical documents identified how many losses were reported when and because of what impacted in the past. This estimation took into account the possibility, probability, magnitude, and frequency of each type of hazard and its potential impact on Auglaize County.

1.4.1 Studies, Reports and References

Various reports, plans and existing documents are referenced throughout the planning process. A list of these sources is provided in Table 1-2. The information that was gathered was incorporated throughout the plan.

Information from the U.S. Census Bureau, Ohio Department of Development, Auglaize County Emergency Operations Plan, Political subdivisions and agency websites were critical in the development of the county and jurisdiction profiles. FEMA and the weather service disaster records and statistics contributed to the hazard and risk identification. A Hazard Vulnerability Analysis spreadsheet was distributed to multiple agencies in the county. The scoring from those spreadsheets contributed to the development of this plan by providing information on threats in Auglaize County.

Table 1-4: Studies, Reports and References

Document	Author / Agency	Publication Date
Auglaize County Hazard Mitigation Plan	Auglaize County EMA	2008
FEMA Disaster Statistics	FEMA	2010-2015

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	NOAA	2015
Auglaize County Profile	Ohio Department of Development	2016
State of Ohio Enhanced Hazard Mitigation Plan	Ohio EMergency Management Agency	2014
HAZUS Earthquake	Ohio EMA	2015
City Data	Website	2018

1.5 PLAN MAINTENANCE

A plan maintenance program will facilitate the implementation of the mitigation actions in Auglaize County and the required five year update in 2023. Auglaize County EMA will bring the committee and community back together to review disaster occurrences on an annual basis and regularly assess the county's progress in the identified mitigations strategies. The required update can be a simple and efficient process following the approval of this plan, Auglaize County EMA intends to follow the plan maintenance process to ensure that the mitigation strategies are addressed over the next five years.

1.5.1 Plan Maintenance Methodology

Auglaize EMA finds that scheduling meetings for large groups of stakeholders is a challenge in itself for the plan development. Many of the stakeholders perceive large group meetings as unproductive or non-critical and do not attend. Many have busy schedules and competing for their time falls to the bottom of their priority list. Because of these challenges Auglaize County EMA incorporated a method using Google Docs to collect mitigation data and information throughout the five year life of the plan.

The EMA may choose to schedule an annual community-wide mitigation meeting if circumstances warrant that this is the best method to communicate with stakeholders. As a primary method Auglaize EMA will choose to utilize electronic surveys, questionnaires, conference calls, or direct email correspondence to the key officials to collect this information to be placed into the plan.

1.5.2 Annual Plan Review

Auglaize County EMA will call upon the Auglaize County-wide Cooperative Emergency Management Board to review, evaluate and discuss the plan on an annual basis. As identified, in 1.5.1 Plan Maintenance, these discussions may take place during a traditional in person meeting or through alternative communication methods. The specific method used will be determined by

the EMA director and based on what best meets the needs of the stakeholders. The EMA will maintain documentation of the annual discussion and evaluate the progress of the strategies.

At the end of each significant event or at years end Auglaize EMA will send out an HVA to the team to see if anything has changed in the risk assessment of the county. Documentation will be reviewed and maintained and utilized by the EMA for the five year plan update.

1.5.3 Community Participation

As with the plan development, community participation is critical to the plan maintenance process. Auglaize EMA intends to continue to include all jurisdictions, agency and organizations involved in developing the plan in the review process. Auglaize EMA recognizes that without the input from they key stakeholders this plan will not be complete.

Public involvement will continue to be encouraged. Notifications will be sought through public notifications, surveys and questionnaires. The surveys and questionnaires will be made available to the entire community on the EMA's official website.

1.5.4 Documentation of Plan Maintenance

Auglaize County EMA will ensure the completion and maintain appropriate documentation for the plan maintenance. Records will include dates, times and attendance at the review meeting along with notes of discussions during the meetings and log any recommendations from stakeholders on the mitigation goals or strategies. If any survey or questionnaires have been updated and used, the EMA will maintain those records of the results submitted by the public or jurisdiction.

1.5.5 Plan review Update Cycle

The Auglaize County All Hazard Mitigation Plan will expire in 2023. With the approach mentioned above the plan maintenance and documentation filing will ensure that Auglaize County is in a good position to submit an updated plan in advanced of the 2023 expiration date. To ensure that this timeline is met, the EMA director should begin the the plan update by mid 2020.