

1.0 THE PLANNING PROCESS

To develop a natural hazard mitigation plan that reflects Champaign County's unique hazards, risks and vulnerabilities, the Champaign County EMA utilized a comprehensive, whole community planning process that involved all jurisdictions, stakeholders, organizations and agencies from across the county. Input and feedback methods were designed to meet the needs of various stakeholders, providing options for both in-person and digital participation due to personal schedules and circumstances. This section describes the process utilized to develop the plan and explains how stakeholders and the community were involved and included throughout the plan development process.

1.1 PLAN DEVELOPMENT

From the outset of the project, the EMA understood that development of updating the mitigation plan would take approximately six to eight months. This timeframe was necessary to administer the grant that would cover contractor costs, update current hazards and risks and consider adding new ones, identify underserved and disadvantaged vulnerable populations and groups, develop mitigation strategies and actions, include jurisdictions and stakeholders in the planning process, conduct a series of meetings, receive input and feedback, and complete the state and federal plan review process prior to adoption. Each phase of plan development included specific activities and steps, as described below. They also realized that the update was going to occur in the context of new federal standards, and that Champaign County would experience plan review while requirement interpretations were being refined. They realized this could extend the time to approval as guidance was interpreted and administered in the first eighteen months of application. It remained the county's goal to submit a new plan prior to expiration of the current plan in September 2024.

1.1.1 Pre-Update Planning Process

Champaign County's most recent mitigation plan was adopted on September 4, 2019 and expires on September 4, 2024. Champaign County EMA was awarded a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program grant in 2023 to update this plan as part of the required five-year approval process. The application identified the jurisdictions in Champaign County that would participate in the planning process. Most officials were familiar with the mitigation plan process because they were involved in the development of the current plan, and expressed interest in participating in this plan.

Upon award of the grant, Champaign County EMA completed the approved procurement process to identify a contractor to manage the plan update process. The Champaign County EMA Director met with Ohio EMA Mitigation Branch mitigation planner to review the requirements for plan development. He proceeded to submit the required documentation to the State of Ohio EMA Mitigation Branch.

The Champaign County EMA Director met with Resource Solutions Associates LLC to discuss the potential contractor's specific work plan to update the current mitigation plan. On December 5, 2023 the county entered into a contract Resource Solutions Associates, LLC to coordinate the project, work with jurisdictions and stakeholders to collect information, and develop the new plan. Approval of the new plan was anticipated prior to current plan expiration, given new mitigation guidance is in place and may cause the process to take longer than in the past. While it was agreed to try to achieve plan approval prior to expiration, the exact time frame during the implementation of new guidance is totally outside local control, and all parties understood this factor. With changes in the local EMA director, this could also delay efforts to update the plan.

The EMA Director and the Contractor developed a project timeline and discussed specific methods and processes for the project. They discussed new mitigation guidance and how those requirements would add to the core planning committee participation and meeting discussions. They also discussed the retirement of the current director, and the schedule for hiring a new director as having a potential impact on planning timelines. Many additional organizations and individuals would be involved this time, and the topics covered would expand significantly to meet the new regulations.

The timeline began with a kick-off meeting to be held in conjunction with the Champaign County Trustees annual meeting on Wednesday, December 12th. This meeting captures attendance from almost all county and township officials, and would serve as an excellent kick-off for the project. Further meetings would be held between January and March to discuss the hazard identification, risk assessment, and mitigation strategies. Meetings would include all municipalities, many county government departments, and various agencies and organizations to cover all phases and sections of the plan requirements. Individual and follow-up meetings or calls were conducted as needed. A final plan review meeting would be held on June 12, 2024, starting with the Champaign County Mayor's Meeting in the morning, and continuing throughout the day for other agencies and jurisdictions. The public review period was held from June 28 through July 11, 2024. The process culminated with a completed plan submitted to Ohio EMA and FEMA for review on July 16, 2024.

1.1.2 Planning Team Meetings

Upon completion of all necessary grant agreements, contracts, and administrative requirements, the Contractor coordinated with the EMA Director to develop an initial list of planning team members. This list included representatives from all jurisdictions and a broad range of community organizations and agencies. The initial contact list included department, agency and organization leadership members who would identify participants within their organization, would invite them to meetings. They would act as the champion of the project, encouraging and facilitating widespread participation. While the invitation list began with these primary contacts, the list of participants grew as the project moved forward.

The complete list of invited and participating stakeholders is included as table 1-4 on Page 13 of this section.

The participants and stakeholders were charged with providing input for all jurisdictions in Champaign County as the basis for the new hazard mitigation plan. This included confirming and modifying the long-standing risk assessment and hazard descriptions, but added a full discussion of social vulnerabilities and community resilience before talking about mitigation actions and strategies. Additional community leaders were designated as key participants, including social services directors, behavioral health professionals, and community planning and development leadership. These meetings covered all phases of the mitigation planning process: project planning, risk assessment, mitigation strategy development, and plan maintenance, plan update, and adoption. The 2023 federal mitigation planning guidance provided the standards for the project; there are no additional State of Ohio requirements.

Project Initiation

The EMA Director kicked off the project through his and the contractor's attendance at the Champaign County Trustees Association Annual Meeting, which reached most of the county's elected officials and appointed department leaders. The EMA Director introduced the project, and the Contractor spoke about the purpose and process of updating the mitigation plan. She covered development of the updated hazard identification and risk assessment, review of current mitigation strategy status and development of new strategies, identification of residents who would need additional help after a disaster, resilience measures that may help, and the process of review and approval of the plan, culminating in local jurisdictional adoption of the plan.

Because Champaign County has just over 38,000 residents, many community leaders and officials wear multiple hats in the county. Many times, an individual spoke as an elected official for one jurisdiction, and as an employee of a jurisdiction. Elected officials also served their village in volunteer positions, such as being a volunteer fireman for the fire department. Many participants, therefore, represented more than one entity as they participated in mitigation meetings. Additionally, they were also local farmers or business owners themselves, representing agriculture or another industry in addition to holding an elected position as a township trustee or clerk.

The attendees were told that mayors and administrators of the municipalities, and fiscal clerks of the townships, were considered the key contacts in each jurisdiction, but they were asked to share the information with all other officials. While they were the person who would receive the project communication, and they were asked to select staff and volunteers from their jurisdiction to participate in the activities by attending work session. They were also asked to be champions of the project to encourage others' participation in the planning activities, and to reinforce the benefits of mitigation planning as a whole community. They were advised that communication would be channeled through them, and they should relay those pieces of information to council members, village officials, and others as part of the planning implementation.

Township trustees were invited to participate as representatives of the unincorporated portion of Champaign County. Their participation was not mandatory, as was the municipal participation, but it was highly encouraged because of the key role they play in county activities and governance. All townships would be described and included in the plan collectively as “Champaign County”, specifically including all unincorporated areas of the county. Township trustees in Champaign County often work for local employers or jurisdictions, or own businesses or farms themselves. Therefore, they had expert knowledge of how storms damage rural properties and affect business assets.

Attendees were given handouts to share with others in their jurisdiction or neighborhoods. Those attending were asked to become champions of the project, and to designate and facilitate active participation by their respective jurisdictions and departments. A question-and-answer period was provided, and there was time after the meeting for others to ask individual questions. Throughout the evening, many answers were provided to help local leaders encourage and facilitate participation in future work sessions.

Work Session Planning

In addition to elected and appointed officials mentioned previously, social agencies, adjacent county emergency managers, natural resources experts, agricultural representatives, advocacy professionals, and community development officials were invited to participate in work sessions. This group also included behavioral and physical health professionals and organizations, as well as private practitioners. The local hospital and the Economic Development Partnership and LUC Regional Planning directors were invited to share their overall perspective on development activities, regulation, social needs and groups of individuals in the county. Other key employees such as floodplain managers and GIS coordinators were invited directly. All invitees were told that all meetings were open to the public, and requested that they ask anyone with an interest to attend.

New 2023 plan requirements were discussed at length, and due to the addition of social vulnerability and community resilience narrative, combined with other interpretation and application changes taking place, Champaign County decided to create a new hazard mitigation plan at this time, even though it would include some of the previous information. This new plan would allow for broad consideration of a wide spectrum of issues, and provide for a logically flowing conversation during research, as well as facilitating a requirement-driven plan format that was logical, smooth, and consistent.

The EMA Director and Contractor decided to take a comprehensive approach to the meetings. Most stakeholders had a good understanding of the mitigation plan development process due to prior participation, so efficient use of their time was going to be a significant consideration in obtaining good attendance. Instead of asking participants to attend multiple meetings to discuss individual topics, they would plan for longer meetings with a progressive approach to mitigation components and discussion topics, including the whole spectrum of mitigation concerns in one meeting. They would begin by addressing hazards, climate change and weather patterns, and damages. Using this input and other research, the Contractor would create a

draft plan for presentation early in June. They would be able to read the draft plan prior to the public review period and submit changes or modification for the plan that would be posted for community comment.

At the final meeting in June, they would discuss strategies and actions to reduce damages, minimize vulnerability, and lessen negative impacts. Again, they would review the plan approval process, local adoption, and ongoing maintenance of the plan. Meetings would be planned with ample time to cover the full spectrum of concerns.

Work Sessions

The first meeting of the mitigation team was held on Wednesday, December 13, 2023 at the Champaign County Administrative Building, Conference Room A. The EMA Director and Contractor spoke for 35 minutes, and answered many questions after the meeting. There were 83 local officials and residents in attendance.

The first round of work sessions was held on April 23 and 24, 2024, scheduled after the 2024 Eclipse Event to avoid conflicts and obtain good attendance. Meetings were scheduled in groups, including county officials, City of Urbana, the six villages, and townships. There were sessions designed for engineering officials and public works, public safety departments, community development and code enforcement officials, those who serve populations with special needs, and public health, healthcare and behavioral health. One makeup session was scheduled for general attendance. Evening options were offered for those who were unable to attend during the workday. All initial sessions were held at the Champaign County Administrative Building south of Urbana. Twenty-eight individuals representing at least twelve entities attended.

Some stakeholders had schedule conflicts and were not able to participate in the group work sessions. In those cases, individual meetings, phone calls, and digital meetings were held to obtain their input. All officials and others who were unable to attend the mid-April and June sessions met with planners at alternate times. Meeting software was used to conduct digital meetings with the Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Services Board of Logan and Champaign Counties on May 8; Village of St. Paris on May 13; and LUC Regional Planning on May 24, 2024. Telephone interviews were conducted with the Village of Mutual on May 30 and June 4, the Village of Woodstock on May 30 and June 12; and the Village of Christiansburg on May 30, June 10 and June 11. A call with the former fiscal clerk of Christiansburg was held on June 3, and a call with the director of CEP was held on June 24. On or about June 19th, the Urbana Planning Director and the Director of LUC-RP assisted with research and provided multiple references and local documents for discussion and inclusion.

On June 11, 2024 the owner of Stroman Lake Dam conducted a 2-hour tour of his facility and discussed the dam characteristics and showed the inundation zone to the EMA director. They were able to discuss emergency indicators, recognition and notification, and evacuation procedures.

The Contractor used the information gathered and the online research completed to create a draft plan which was completed on June 28, 2024. The plan was emailed to all participants as part of the public review period starting June 28.

HIRA and strategy review meetings were held on June 12, 2024. The first session was with all Champaign County mayors and other local officials. The Contractor explained the layout and contents of the draft plan, shared access procedures to find the draft plan, and explained the review and adoption process and potential funding sources. Eight people representing six jurisdictions attended this session.

Additional sessions were held at the Champaign County Administrative building on June 12, with each of three meetings focused on specific sections of the plan. Engineering and utilities, social agencies and advocacy groups, community development and code enforcement each had separate sessions to address specific mitigation actions. Participants were asked to provide feedback, discussion, and review of the content, with a focus on strategies, implementation of strategies, and plan maintenance. Nineteen participants representing ten jurisdictions and agencies attended these sessions.

Table 1-1 provides detail for the meeting dates, times, locations and participants.

Work Session Content

All sessions covered the comprehensive process of developing a mitigation plan and obtaining federal approval and local adoptions. The sessions began with identification of all potential hazards, including dam failure, drought and extreme heat, earthquake, flood, hazardous materials incident, invasive species, land subsidence, power outage, severe storms, water quality emergency and winter storms. The Contractor provided factual incident history and damage information as available, and the description of the hazard. Some hazards, such as dam failure, were determined to be not present or applicable to all areas of Champaign County.

Climate projections were shared by the Contractor, and participants added their observations regarding weather patterns and consequences in the past five years. They reviewed where damages occurred, the severity of the damages, and the duration in cascading threats and/or loss of use. Each group engaged in this kind of discussion about each hazard on the list, and determined if it was a relevant threat to the group or jurisdiction being represented. They discussed cascading events due to climate changes, and considered how that might change vulnerability.

A variety of resources was used to guide the discussion and provide factual information, projections, and estimations by experts in the field of climatology. Those references are listed in Table 1-5.

Once a list of hazards was identified, participants shared recent consequences of incidents involving those hazards, and talked about what those consequences meant to their residents. They talked about the cost of repairing damages, the extent and cost of disruptions, and the

kinds of cascading events that occurred due to the hazard impact. Extending the changes in climate that are projected for the mid and late-century periods, they discussed how today's damages would change in coming years, increase or decrease, and how the consequences for communities and individuals would change.

Groups all discussed how community development, such as the addition of new housing, retail, or industrial facilities, or changes to recreational use of rivers and streams, or inland lakes, might cause varied consequences in the coming years. They talked about how regulation, collaboration between various agencies and jurisdictions, and new scientific and technical information could help prevent ballooning consequences in coming decades.

Social vulnerability was addressed through discussion of what disadvantaged and underserved populations looked like in Champaign County, and how those groups might be negatively impacted after significant incidents. References listed in Table 1-11 helped guide the groups to consider what socially vulnerable sets of people were in metropolitan areas, and how that set might look different, but suffer similar consequences and damages, in Champaign County, Ohio. Discussion led to the identification of sets of people who are not listed in the reference documents, such as the isolated, very elderly rural residents who are common to Champaign County and other rural Ohio communities. How community development might affect these underserved and disadvantaged groups, as well as how it may worsen their plight, was addressed. They discussed demographic trends in Champaign County and assessed how that progression might change things, even as early as 2030.

Community resilience for all sets of people was discussed, and how a small, rural county would survive without outside assistance was considered. In general, participants discussed how they would help themselves in the worst of incidents, and they identified how they would help one another. They identified and discussed problems common to many Ohio counties at this time, such as the lack of volunteers, insecurity in sheltering resources, and transportation challenges. Again, they used research documents identified in Table 1-11 to guide this discussion, but added local considerations not included in those documents.

The last meeting discussion list included draft plan review, the public review period, state and federal plan review, approval, jurisdictional adoption, and implementation of an approved mitigation plan with dates attached to each phase. They also discussed the integration of mitigation actions and concepts into community development, and specifically the strategies that support such integration. Specific reference was given to the roles and responsibilities for municipalities to participate in community development, and the roles of development professionals to ensure that all communities were included in discussions and activities.

Because a totally new plan was being developed, there was no item-by-item assessment of mitigation actions listed in the 2019 plan. The inclusion of social vulnerability and community resilience changed the committee's scope of concerns for mitigation actions, and reached further toward community lifelines and core capabilities than ever before. Due to this new

2023 planning guidance, a significant amount of new information not covered in previous mitigation plans was included.

Final Plan Review

The updated Champaign County Hazard Mitigation Plan was released for public review on Friday, June 28, 2024. It was printed and available in hard copy at the EMA offices at 1512 South US Route 68, Suite C-103, Urbana. There were copies placed at the public library in Urbana for open review. It was posted on the Champaign County website at www.champaignema.org as well as the EMA's website. There was no access control for viewing the plan, and the plan was open to everyone. This request for review and comments was published in the Urbana Daily Citizen, the local newspaper, on Friday, June 21 and Tuesday June 25. The draft plan was sent by email to all officials and others who either participated in the planning efforts or were key individuals notified of plan activity. All communications asked for input and feedback on the draft plan by close of business on Friday, July 11.

The release of the plan included a description of how to find the plan and access it, and offered for the EMA Director and/or Contractor to meet with anyone who had questions or concerns about the content. Comments were requested by email or phone call to the Champaign County EMA Director.

The plan remained open for public review through Thursday, July 11, 2024. The review period was a total of two full weeks in duration. There were no comments received during the public review period.

A news release was sent to all local media, and was posted on the Champaign County EMA website and at the Champaign County Commissioners Office on June 12, 2024. This release which was printed on June 21 and June 25 defined the purpose of the plan, the need for public input and review, and the public review period dates. A hard copy of the plan was available at the Champaign County EMA and the Urbana library for this entire two-week period.

The EMA Director and the Contractor submitted to the Ohio EMA Mitigation Branch for review on July 15, 2024.

Upon state and federal approval pending adoption, the formal local adoption process began. This process is explained in section 4.0 Plan Adoption.

Table 1-1 includes all meetings and work sessions conducted during the planning process.

Table 1-1: Planning Team Meetings

Date	Location	Purpose/Audience
12/13/2023	Champaign County Administration Bldg. Room A	Township Trustees Annual Meeting for Mitigation Plan Kick-Off
04/23/2023	Champaign County Administration Bldg.	Public meeting with emphasis upon Champaign County government officials and adjacent EMA

Date	Location	Purpose/Audience
	Conference Room C	offices
04/23/2024	Champaign County Administration Bldg. Conference Room C	Public meeting with emphasis upon the City of Urbana
04/23/2024	Champaign County Administration Bldg. Conference Room C	Public meeting with emphasis upon unincorporated areas, Mechanicsburg and North Lewisburg
04/23/2024	Champaign County Administration Bldg. Conference Room C	Public meeting with emphasis upon unincorporated areas
04/23/2024	Champaign County Administration Bldg. Conference Room C	Public Meeting with emphasis upon public safety services, the City of Urbana and the Village of Mechanicsburg
04/24/2024	Champaign County Administration Bldg. Conference Room C	Public meeting with emphasis upon the City of Urbana, Agriculture concerns, and Strohm Lake Dam (High-Hazard Dam)
04/24/2024	Champaign County Administration Bldg. Conference Room C	Public Meeting with emphasis upon community development, economic development, code enforcement and regulation, and future vulnerability
04/24/2024	Champaign County Administration Bldg. Conference Room C	Public meeting with emphasis upon social needs and vulnerabilities, community resilience, special populations, assistance needs, and service capacities
05/08/2024	Digital Meeting	Digital meeting with mental health board director to consider behavioral health circumstances and needs, and response to disasters for mental and emotional health capabilities
06/19/2024	Research Assistance	
05/13/2024 06/21/2024	Digital Meetings – St. Paris	Meeting with village administrator of St. Paris to discuss all phases of the plan, HIRA and strategy issues, changes in vulnerability and projections, and the review and adoption process. Also worked with village administrator to complete surveys and get them submitted during an extended power and internet outage.
05/24/2024	Digital Meeting	Digital meeting with LUC Regional Planning director to discuss community and economic development, future needs and vulnerabilities, special populations and demographic changes that would affect the county, and integration of mitigation into other plans and planning mechanisms.
5/30/2024 6/4/2024	Phone Calls - Mutual	Spoke with Mutual Mayor regarding all phases of the plan, including the planning, updating and approval/adoption process, hazards and risk assessment, mitigation strategies and adoption and implementation.
06/19/2024	Research Assistance	Work with City of Urbana official for research and development information
05/30/2-24	Phone Calls- Christiansburg	Worked with Christiansburg Mayor and a private

Date	Location	Purpose/Audience
06/3/2024 06/5/2024 06/11/2024		citizen to discuss hazards and risk assessment and local participation in the mitigation process.
06/10/2024	Phone Call - Christiansburg	Met with the Christiansburg Mayor to discuss all phases of the plan, including the planning, updating and approval/adoption process, hazards and risk assessment, strategies and plan implementation, and participation in Mayor's Meeting on June 12th.
06/12/2024	Urbana City Building	Meeting with county mayors and other elected officials to review the total process, ensure municipal participation and review, and to discuss the public review and comment on the draft plan, approval and adoption as well as integration into other planning and governance issues
06/12/2024	Champaign County Administration Building Conference Room C	Public meeting with emphasis upon draft review for issues related to community and/or economic development, future projections and vulnerability, changes due to demographic issues, and regulatory requirements, all relative to the draft plan strategies and future integration into community activities.
06/12/2024	Champaign County Administration Building Conference Room C	Public meeting with emphasis upon engineering and public works and utilities regarding hazards, vulnerabilities and strategies in the draft plan
06/12/2024	Champaign County Administration Building Conference Room C	Public meeting with emphasis upon vulnerable and underserved populations, service capabilities, vulnerability issues and resilience related to strategies in the draft plan.
05/30/2024 06/12/2024	Meetings/Phone Calls - Woodstock	Met with Woodstock Mayor to review the entire process of updating the mitigation plan, including hazard identification and risk assessment, strategies, planning process, adoption and implementation.
06/11/2024	Stroman Lake Dam	Meeting with owner and tour of Stroman Lake Dam and the neighboring area included in the dam inundation zone
06/24/2024	Phone Call	Conversation with economic development director to discuss mitigation plan, development, regulation, planning and development needs.
06/28/2024 through 07/11/2024	Public Review Period	Draft plan posted on Champaign County's website, and a printed copy available at the Champaign County EMA
07/15/2024	Mitigation Plan Portal	Submission to Ohio EMA for state/federal review

1.2 STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

With one city and six incorporated villages, a wide array of stakeholders was identified as having a role in the mitigation planning process. The Hazard Mitigation Planning Team included

broad participation from these groups. In some cases, due to the small population, individuals filled more than one role in the planning process. With limited numbers of individuals to assume leadership tasks, most of them filled multiple roles in their community.

From the beginning of the planning process, the EMA attempted to include the whole community in plan activities. The input and opinions of the general public were viewed as critical to the process, as were the opinions of elected and appointed officials and key community leaders. A broad, inclusive list of planning team members was developed with the intention of including any, every, and all agencies with an interest or role in emergency management, and thus in disaster mitigation. As the process unfolded and planning began, an inclusive planning approach was used, and even more people became part of the process.

The initial invitation to participate in the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team was extended to the following officials, leaders, and stakeholders from Champaign County and adjacent jurisdictions:

- Incorporated jurisdictions
- Township trustees
- Specialized disciplines, including fire service, law enforcement, engineering, utilities, public health, healthcare, hospitals, business and industry, nonprofits, social agencies, and stakeholders as part of the general public
- Specific appointed officials, including the county floodplain manager, GIS mapping specialist, conservation specialists, regional planning, building and zoning officials, community and economic development officials, fire chiefs, police chiefs, public health commissioner, agricultural extension agents
- Key elected officials such as the county auditor, treasurer, engineer, and commissioners
- Emergency management officials from the adjacent counties
- Non-profit agencies including American Red Cross and United Way as well as community action groups
- Special interest groups such as watershed coalitions, conservancy districts, federal partners, state agencies with facilities in the county, and others with a special interest in the well-being of Champaign County
- Residents, businesses, and stakeholders from the general public

1.2.1 Jurisdiction Participation

All incorporated jurisdictions in Champaign County chose to participate in the countywide hazard mitigation plan. Participating jurisdictions included the City of Urbana and the Villages of Christiansburg, Mechanicsburg, Mutual, North Lewisburg, St. Paris, and Woodstock. Champaign County elected and appointed officials participated on behalf of all other areas, but participation was solicited through both county officials and the township sub-structure of government to reach those community members who live in the rural areas. This methodology assured that both municipal and rural interests would be included in the mitigation plan.

In Ohio, every county is divided into sub-sections called “townships”. Townships are small sections of land, sometimes as small as six square miles. Incorporated jurisdictions (villages and cities) lie within the townships, and supersede the township authority as governance for those parcels is absorbed by the municipality. In general, the remaining land outside the municipalities is considered a “township”, and the elected officials’ duties are primarily road upkeep and cemetery maintenance. Census areas, neighborhoods, homeowner association districts, and postal zones may exist as part of the townships, but those have no governance structure. There are

Townships originally, in the 1800’s and before, provided a means to identify plats of land and to create the verbiage in documents like deeds. In Ohio, townships may choose to be zoned, but other land use planning is done by the county level of government. Townships can provide very basic services such as plowing snow from tertiary roads and maintaining cemeteries. Townships do not have the same full authorities as municipalities and counties. Townships cannot levy taxes, and must participate in most programs as an unincorporated area of the county, through the county government officials. There are twenty-two unincorporated communities and one census-designated place in Champaign County.

Champaign County has twelve townships, including Adams, Concord, Goshen, Harrison, Jackson, Johnson, Mad River, Rush, Salem, Union, Urbana, and Wayne. Each has three elected trustees and a fiscal officer. They do not generally have any employees, and often contract with Champaign County for essential services.

Consistent with other types of whole community planning, these townships do not adopt the mitigation plan individually, and for the purposes of hazard mitigation, work through the Champaign County Commissioners as unincorporated areas.

The townships have a countywide association that meets regularly, and other county officials attend some of those meetings. Key leaders such as the LUC Regional Planning director and the Economic Partnership director also participate in those meetings. Townships do not have the structural sophistication of villages, so there are few committees or commissions associated with townships. The direct connection with leaders, as mentioned, enables a solid, working relationship and inclusion in strategic and development plans and activities in these townships. Some townships have adopted regulation, such as zoning, but others have not. Most townships are primarily agricultural in nature. In many cases, the Champaign County Commissioners act on behalf of the townships.

County government handles services including ditch maintenance, plowing and repair of main and secondary roadways, bridge and culvert maintenance, land use planning, community development, emergency management, and many other humanitarian and financial functions on behalf of the township. Many daily functions of government are handled by the county because townships must, by law, meet only annually.

The officials identified in table 1-2 served as the primary contacts for the jurisdictions and agencies. All communication throughout the planning process was shared with this group of officials and employees. They were asked for their own input at sessions, and also asked to notify others within their jurisdiction of meetings and work sessions and invite any other residents or officials to participate in the planning meetings. They were invited to the initial project meetings in December 2023, and then in April and June 2024. They all were asked to review the draft plan and participate in the final plan review prior to the plan's submission to state reviewers. These individuals coordinated with the EMA Director and Contractor to invite additional relevant stakeholders.

Table 1-2: Participating Jurisdiction Representatives

Jurisdiction	Position/Title	Representative
Champaign County	Commissioner	Nino Vitale
	Commissioner	Timothy Cassady
	Commissioner	Steven Hess
	County Administrator	Andrea Millice
	Sheriff	Matt Melvin
	Engineer	Stephen McCall
	Soil & Water	Ron Nieman
	Conservation District	Collin Perkins
		Dale Goddard
	Health Department	Gabe Jones
	LUC Regional Planning	Brad Bodenmiller
	Commission	Aaron Smith
	Economic Partnership	Richard Ebert
	(Community Improvement Corp.)	
	Job & Family Services	Stacy Cox
		Sara Wright
	Auditor	Karen Bailey
	Veterans Services	Buzzy Moore
	Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health	Dr. Adam Sorensen
	Services Board	
	Emergency Management Agency	Carl Kanzari/William Frey
	Historical Society	Dick Verts
	Board of Developmental Disabilities	Leigh Anne Wenning
	County Transit System	Brandy Koons
	Chief Building Official	Dana Booghier
	Tri-County Correctional Facility	Scott Springhetti
	North Central Solid Waste District	Jack DeWitt

Jurisdiction	Position/Title	Representative
City of Urbana	Mayor	Bill Bean
	Director of Administration	Kerry Brugger
	Stormwater Coordinator	Chad Hall
	Fire Chief	Dean Ortlieb
	Community Development Manager	Doug Crabill
	Airport Manager	Elton Cultice
	Water Superintendent	Joe Sampson
	Street Superintendent	Mark Muirhead
	Police Chief	Matthew Lingrell
	Zoning, Floodplain Manager	Preston Carter
	Engineer	Tyler Bumbalough
	Mayor	Delbert Davis
Village of Christiansburg	Fiscal Officer	Nikki Lee
	Fire Chief	Robert Hoey
	Mayor, Floodplain Manager	Gregory Kimball
	Administrator	April Huggins-Davis
Village of Mechanicsburg	WWT Superintendent	Cameron Brittenstine
	Village Administrator	Roger Brake
	Planning Commission	Charles Hickey
	Police Chief	David Patrick
	Zoning Inspector	Dusty Hurst
Village of Mutual	Fire/EMS Chief	Robert Keene
	Mayor, Floodplain Manager	William Brown
	Administrator, Zoning Inspector	Todd Fryhof
	Mayor	Ted Murphy
Village of North Lewisburg	Floodplain Manager	Robert Yoder
	Police Chief	Scott Bodey
	Street Superintendent	Bart Stokes
	Wastewater Operator	Kevin Cox
	Water Operator	Nathanael Reinhardt
	Village Administrator, Planning, Zoning, Floodplain Manager	Mitchell Spencer
Village of St. Paris	Police Chief	Eric Smith
	Mayor	Susan Prince
	Fiscal Officer	Marc McGuire
Village of Woodstock	Village Administrator	Bradley Herron
	Maintenance Supervisor	Ron Moore

Jurisdiction	Position/Title	Representative
Champaign County Township Association	Fiscal Officer	Tom Hallinan
	Fire District Chief	Derek Hess
	Fiscal Officer	Susan Helterbran
Adams Township	Zoning Inspector	Jon Marquis
Concord Township	Fiscal Officer	MaryJo Kies
	Zoning Inspector	Dave Mengel
	Fiscal Officer	Marc McGuire
Goshen Township	Trustee	Pat Wagner
	Zoning Inspector	Wayne Russell
	Fiscal Officer	Chris Foss
Harrison Township	Zoning Inspector	Jon Marquis
Jackson Township	Fiscal Officer	Pat Brehm
	Zoning Inspector	Bob Perk
	Fiscal Officer	Sally Jo Lacy
Johnson Township	Trustee	David Jenkins
	Zoning Inspector	Bob Perk
	Fiscal Officer	Nicolette Sarver
Mad River Township	JSP Fire Chief	Vance McCulla
	Zoning Inspector	Gregory McGlaun
	Fiscal Officer	Richard Ford
Rush Township	Zoning Inspector	Brad Herron
Salem Township	Fiscal Officer	Kathy Packman
	Zoning Inspector	Steven Neer
	Fiscal Officer	Jeanie Crabtree
Union Township	Zoning Inspector	Wayne Russell
	Fiscal Officer	Rhonda Wallace
Urbana Township	Zoning Inspector	Sean Tullis
	Fiscal Officer	Sandi Perry
	Zoning Inspector	Randy Moore
Wayne Township	Fiscal Officer	Susan Helterbran
	Farm Service Agency	Shari Deao
	Director	
State of Ohio	OSU Extension Office	Grant Davis
Adjacent County EMA Offices	Logan County	Helen Norris
	Shelby County	Kristy Fryman
	Miami County	Joel Smith
	Clark County	Michelle Clements-Pitstick
	Madison County	Deb Sims, Director
		Holly Langham, Deputy Director
	Union County	Brad Gilbert
	Urbana Local Schools	Charles Thiel
	Clark County ESC	Dan Bennett
	Madison Champaign ESC	MaryJo Mitchell

Jurisdiction	Position/Title	Representative
Education	Graham Local Schools	Chad Lensman
	Mechanicsburg	Danielle Prohaska
	Exempted Local Schools	
	Miami County ESC	David Larson
	Miami East Local School District	Eric Hughes
	Northeastern Local School District	John Kronour
	Northwestern Local School District	
	Triad Local Schools	Vickie Maruniak
	West Liberty Salem Local School District	Kraig Hissong
Healthcare	Mercy Health Urbana Hospital	Gina Burko-Burris
American Red Cross	Miami Valley Chapter Executive Director	Lynne Gump
Urbana Chamber of Commerce	Executive Director	Sara Neer

Most municipalities and county departments participated through attendance at the face-to-face meetings, but St. Paris, Mutual, Woodstock, and Christiansburg meetings took place through digital meetings and phone calls because of participant availability constraints. The meetings with behavioral health officials and LUC Regional Planning also took place digitally. All other meetings were held Most in-person meetings were held at the Champaign County Administration Building. The initial meeting to review strategies and examine the draft plan was conducted at the Urbana Municipal Building because that is where the Mayors Association was meeting. Times of all meetings were intended to be convenient, and some were held in evening hours to accommodate officials who fulfill their job duties as volunteers, thus unavailable during business hours.

Meetings with jurisdictions included all facets of the mitigation planning process. The sessions opened with a discussion of hazards and threats, the damages caused by each one, and the effects of changing weather patterns and climate modifications upon how those hazards impacted their community. They discussed the socially vulnerable, underserved and disadvantaged populations and other concerns about meeting the needs of people in their jurisdiction. Resources to meet disaster needs were reviewed and gaps were identified, as were any areas they felt were an extreme challenge. Mitigation actions and strategies, as well as their capability to apply for and manage grants, to execute large mitigation projects, and the ability to oversee a project were covered. They prioritized hazards, identified new or ongoing projects or ideas, and discussed how those actions would resolve damages or help serve residents. They discussed changes in demographics and characteristics, and how that might affect disaster damages and mitigation efforts positively or negatively. The meetings wrapped up with a discussion of the review, approval and adoption steps in the planning process.

Several entities were invited to meetings and encouraged to review and provide feedback for the draft plan; however, no comments were received and they did not attend meetings. This includes the following entities.

Table 1-3: Non-Participating Organizations

Person	Position	Organization
Joel Smith	Director	Miami County EMA
Kristy Fryman	Director	Mercer County EMA
Helen Norris	Director	Logan County EMA
Brad Gilbert	Director	Union County EMA
Michelle Clements-Pitstick	Director	Clark County EMA

Table 1-4: Jurisdiction Participation Dates and Methods Summary

Full Participation	Jurisdiction	A. Planning Process	B. HIRA Discussion	C. Strategy Development	D. Plan Maintenance	E. Plan Update Process & Req.	F. Plan Adoption
Yes	Champaign County	4-23-24 4-24-24 6-12-24	4-23-24 4-24-24 6-12-24	4-23-24 4-24-24 6-12-24	4-23-24 4-24-24 6-12-24	4-23-24 4-24-24 6-12-24	4-23-24 4-24-24 6-12-24
Yes	City of Urbana	4-23-24 4-24-24 6-12-24	4-23-24 4-24-24 6-12-24	4-23-24 4-24-24 6-12-24	4-23-24 4-24-24 6-12-24	4-23-24 4-24-24 6-12-24	4-23-24 4-24-24 6-12-24
Yes	Village of Christiansburg	6-10-24 6-12-24	6-10-24 6-12-24	6-10-24 6-12-24	6-10-24 6-12-24	6-10-24 6-12-24	6-10-24 6-12-24
Yes	Village of Mechanicsburg	4-23-24 4-24-24 6-12-24	4-23-24 4-24-24 6-12-24	4-23-24 4-24-24 6-12-24	4-23-24 4-24-24 6-12-24	4-23-24 4-24-24 6-12-24	4-23-24 4-24-24 6-12-24
Yes	Village of Mutual	6-4-24	6-4-24	6-4-24	6-4-24	6-4-24	6-4-24
Yes	Village of North Lewisburg	4-24-24 6-12-24	4-24-24 6-12-24	4-24-24 6-12-24	4-24-24 6-12-24	4-24-24 6-12-24	4-24-24 6-12-24
Yes	Village of St. Paris	5-13-24 6-12-24	5-13-24 6-12-24	5-13-24 6-12-24	5-13-24 6-12-24	5-13-24 6-12-24	5-13-24 6-12-24
Yes	Village of Woodstock	6-12-24	6-12-24	6-12-24	6-12-24	6-12-24	6-12-24

1.2.2 Hazard Mitigation Planning Team

Because Champaign County's intention was to encourage broad participation in the planning process, the key contacts listed previously in Table 1-2 were asked to bring as many parties to the table as they could. They were asked to include any and all key decision-makers or others, including any department supervisors, elected officials, committee chairman, and others. As a result, many additional individuals joined in the actual meetings. Table 1-4 identifies all of the individuals who were involved in meetings, discussions, or other planning activities. This list includes representation from business and industry, community services, economic and community development, education, government, infrastructure and engineering, natural resources and agriculture, and public safety. It also includes social agencies and organizations that provide assistance to underserved and disadvantaged populations in Champaign County. It is critical to remember that many individuals in Champaign County represent more than one entity because they wear multiple leadership positions within the county and its jurisdictions. They are also business owners and key employees of local companies.

Table 1-5: Participating Stakeholders

Agency/Jurisdiction	Position/Title	Representative
Champaign County	Commissioner	Tim Cassady
	Commissioner	Steve Hess
	Commissioner	Nino Vitale
	Auditor	Karen Bailey
	Engineer's Office – Deputy Engineer	Mark Mowrey
	Assistant Prosecutor	Jane Napier
	Municipal Court Judge	Gil Weithman
	Common Pleas Court Judge	Nick Selvaggio
	EMA Director	Carl Kanzari
	Dept. Job & Family Services	Stacy Cox
	Director	Sara Wright
	LUC Regional Planning	Brad Bodenmiller
	LUC Regional Planning	Heather Martin
	ADAMS Board (Mental Health)	Dr. Adam Sorensen
	Champaign Transportation	Brandy Koons
	Zoning Officer	Preston Carter
	Community Development Manager	Doug Crabill
City of Urbana	Engineer	Tyler Bumbalough
	Public Works Superintendent	Chad Hall
	Engineering Department	Clay Miller
	Matt Lingrell	Chief of Police
	City Council	Audra Bean
	Director of Administration	Kerry Brugger
Christiansburg	Fire Chief	Dean Ortlieb
	Mayor	Delbert Davis
	Fire Chief	Robert Hoey
	Citizen	Theresa Lewis

Agency/Jurisdiction	Position/Title	Representative
Mechanicsburg	Assistant Fire Chief	Steve Castle
	Police Chief	David Patrick II
	Administrator	Roger Brake
Mutual	Mayor	William Brown
North Lewisburg	Administrator	Todd Freyhof
	Fire Chief	Derek Hess
St. Paris	Administrator	Mitchell Spencer
	Police Chief	Eric Smith
	Mayor	Susan Prince
Woodstock	Mayor	Phil Garland
	Fire Chief	Derek Hess
	Fiscal Officer	Mary Jo Kies
	Trustee	Steve Cook
Adams Township	Trustee	Mitch Pence
	Trustee	Paul Pullins
	Fiscal Officer	Marc McGuire
	Trustee	Jeff Kizer
Concord Township	Trustee	Pat Wagner
	Trustee	Brent Crumley
	Zoning Inspector	David Mengel
	Trustee	Ted Black
Goshen Township	Trustee	Keith Rutan
	Trustee	Travis Cassady
	Zoning Inspector	Wayne Russell
	Fiscal Officer	Salli Jo Lacy
Jackson Township	Trustee	Herb Lutrell
	Trustee	David Jenkins
	Trustee	Steve Runkle
	Fiscal Officer	Nicolette Sarver
Johnson Township	Trustee	Jason Hoelscher
	Trustee	Jamie McGuffey
	Trustee 2023	Dennis Kauffman
	Trustee 2024	David Ervin
Mad River Township	Trustee	Aaron Brown
	Trustee	Brent Laughman
	Fiscal Officer	Kathy Packman
Rush Township	Trustee	Cinda Bailey
	Trustee	Ed Funderburgh
	Fiscal Officer	Jeanie Crabtree
Salem Township	Trustee	Levi Woodruff
	Trustee	Tom Smith
	Fiscal Officer	Rhonda Wallace
Union Township	Trustee	Jim Virts
	Trustee	Chuck Dooley

Agency/Jurisdiction	Position/Title	Representative
Urbana Township	Trustee	Ron Williams
	Zoning Inspector	Wayne Russell
	Fiscal Officer	Sandi Perry
	Trustee	Roger Koerner
	Trustee	Blair Stinson
	Trustee - 2024	Matt Harrigan
	Trustee - 2023	Paul Wright
	Zoning Inspector	Sean Tullis
	Road Crew Employee	Richard McCain
Wayne Township	Fiscal Officer	Susan Helterbran
	Trustee	Max Perry
	Trustee	Glenn Gregg
American Red Cross	Disaster Program Manager	Marc Cantrell
Education	Urbana City Schools	Charles Thiel
	Superintendent	
	Educational Service Center Supt.	Mary Mitchell
Champaign Chamber of Commerce	Executive Director	Sara Neer
Ohio State University Extension Service	Lead Coordinator	Grant Davis
Lake Stroman Dam	Owner	Jake Conley
Madison County EMA	Director	Deb Sims
	Deputy Director	Holly Langham
	Doug Kies	Alicia Cassady
	Kara Cook	Susan Rutan
	Beth Anderson	Julie Jenkins
	Cathy Pullins	Rande Bodey
	Wilma McGuire	Roger Packman
	Brandie Larsen	Terri Funderburgh
Champaign County Residents (individuals; not representing agencies)	Wilma Kilzer	Sam Crabtree
	Caren Wagner	Nancy Smith
	Chad Wallace	Nancy Virts
	Jane Stimmel	Beverly Dooley
	Sandy Williams	Christie Harrigan
	Marilyn Stinson	Nancy Koerner
	Deb Wright	Mike Helterbran
	Maribeth Gregg	Mikala McClung
	Kris Cassady	Marsha Hess
	Becca Mengel	Judy Russell

1.2.3 Planning Team Engagement

The plan development schedule included multiple local meetings and work sessions, and several periods of reviews, sharing of draft documents, and formal public review. Because achieving meaningful participation from a wide range of partners through these sessions was important to the EMA and Contractor, the meeting schedule was developed to provide as many opportunities as possible for stakeholders to participate. Many individuals wore multiple hats

in the process, and provided input in the context of multiple duties and orientations. Meetings were held at the Champaign County Administration Building in Conference Room C, where many county offices are located within an office complex in Urbana. This was very convenient for both county agencies and departments, as well as City of Urbana representatives.

Invitations to meetings and work sessions were initially sent to stakeholders by e-mail because that is the typical form of most communication among government offices and organizations in Champaign County. Once meetings occurred and additional or alternate individuals attended, they were added to the notification list if they were not already on the list. If anyone notified the EMA or Contractor that they did not have e-mail access, postal mail was the alternative notification method. If an email was returned as undelivered, follow-up was initiated for corrective action by the EMA office. Any continuing communication issues were addressed individually. The EMA director and the Contractor monitored email receipts and returns for the duration of the project to assure notifications were delivered effectively. Individual meetings were conducted when schedules did not allow participants to attend group sessions, and phone calls or online meetings were used to fill in gaps due to conflicts. Contractor phone numbers and email addresses were shared with all participants.

Planning team members were reminded to share the information they were given in meetings with additional colleagues and community members who may wish to participate. Additional handouts were available at all meetings, or by request.

Dates and times of meetings, with their location, was openly shared with jurisdictions. When invitations were sent, they encouraged sending invitations to guests and additional parties, as well as welcoming substitutes when the primary representative was unavailable to attend. Those who attended meetings were encouraged to tell others about future meetings and invite them to attend. All meetings were open to the public.

1.3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Garnering broad community participation in the mitigation planning process was a priority of both the EMA and the Contractor. The EMA reached out to a broad scope of community partners, jurisdiction officials, community partners, and stakeholders to not only attend meetings, but to bring others in their community with them. These representatives and their potential guests were invited to participate and provide input throughout the planning process. The Champaign County Trustees Association took advantage of this at their open annual meeting in December 2023, and there were numerous guests at that meeting who live in Champaign County but were not there representing an agency or department.

This project began with the development of a broad and inclusive planning team invitation that clearly stated the meetings were open to the public. The core planning committee from 2018's plan gave a starting base, and all of those role players and officials were updated to current ones, and others were added as needed. There were significant numbers of participants added from segments of healthcare, social agencies, and local schools to meet the social vulnerability requirements of the new standards. Extensive effort was dedicated to identifying contacts

across all areas and segments of the county and creating an accurate contact list of those individuals. Invitations and reminders were sent to the planning team multiple times.

Input from the all participants, including the general public representatives, was used to develop the plan. Planners took notes at all the meetings that were held, and also from the phone calls and digital meetings that were conducted. This included updated information relevant to the Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment, the nature and characteristics of storms, the damages that were a result of these hazards, and the potential consequences that could have occurred but did not. They described, for example, that snow storm closures are minimally damaging, but because the roads are flat and straight, drifting is often more of a problem than the actual amount of snowfall. They also described how power outages, especially long-term, make every disaster worse and more difficult, and many other topics. This information was summarized and used to develop the content of the new mitigation plan.

Discussions about social vulnerability related the data identified in online sources for communities in Champaign County, and the social issues and circumstances experienced by the planning participants who were frequently service providers for people in need. While they talked about isolated and very elderly residents not being able to clean up after severe storms by themselves, they identified local sources of assistance that were commonly available and willing to help them. Sometimes these individuals need transportation assistance. The transportation issue is not always that they do not own a car or cannot afford one, it is instead that they are unable or unwilling to drive due to their advanced age, especially at night or in inclement weather. Other times, participants talked about residential instability, as opposed to homelessness that might be experienced in large cities or metropolitan counties. Residential instability occurs when a household has a home, but when it is damaged by storms, they lack the financial means to relocate or to repair the home. Those who live in rental properties, which are not readily available, in spite of being plentiful, in Champaign County, have difficulty finding alternate housing should a landlord be unable or unwilling to repair a storm-damaged home for them. These examples were all very personalized, localized applications of underserved and disadvantaged populations as it applies in Champaign County, and are representative of the kind of information and interpretations that were collected.

These examples of personalization and application are present throughout the plan. Data was researched, shared with participants, and personalized to illustrate the effect on Champaign County and its communities.

To provide easy, convenient access to planning information for the committee and general public, the draft plan was posted on the Champaign County website which is found at <https://Champaigncountyohio.gov>. This was used to post draft sections of the plan for public review, and to inform reviewers of how to submit questions, concerns or suggested changes. There was open access to this site, and no accounts or passwords were necessary for access. Documents were posted in PDF format, but were downloadable for reader convenience, or available to read without download. The entire plan was posted on Wednesday, June 26, 2024 and left for open review through Sunday, July 11, 2024.

The availability of the drafted plan was announced at four meetings on Wednesday, June 12th in Urbana. A printed copy of the plan was kept at the Champaign County EMA Office at 1512 South US Route 68, Suite C-103 in Urbana. The plan was also posted on the Champaign County EMA/LEPC social media page. Copies were available at the library in Urbana. A notice was published in the local newspaper. All persons who attended or were invited to mitigation meetings were notified by email that the plan was available for review and comment.

Stakeholders were encouraged to actively engage in the review process and to submit any thoughts or comments to the EMA Director by email or phone call. The Contractor and EMA Director were available to answer questions, address comments, and explain segments of the plan.

All agency and jurisdiction representatives who participated on the planning team were notified of the review period by email on Wednesday, June 26, 2024. To notify the public, the EMA placed a news release in The Urbana Daily Citizen newspaper, which was printed on June 21 and June 25, 2024. All notifications included a link to the website where the plan was posted, the timeline for public review, and instructions for submitting comments. A printed copy of the plan was available at the Champaign County EMA during regular business hours for anyone wishing to view and comment on the plan but with limited computer access, special needs, or other accessibility challenges.

There was no feedback during the public review period.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

A significant amount of research was performed to develop the hazard mitigation plan, which is based on multiple sources of information. Research was conducted through reviews of existing data, plans, and reports and through interviews and conversations with county stakeholders and subject-matter experts. This information was used both in work sessions for discussion, as well as included in the written documents.

Since Champaign County's most recent plan was approved in 2019, the Contractor obtained hazard information and data from 2019 through 2023 to ensure that the new plan included current, relevant, and accurate hazard and risk information. Information contained in the previous plan that continued to be accurate and relevant was maintained as part of this plan.

Additional information was identified through research of recorded events from the National Climatic Data Center Storm Events Database. Incidents that were researched included past ones included in former plans simply for verification, and new incidents after 2018 so that the most recent storms were included. Data was presented to the stakeholders represented on the planning team. Their knowledge of the impact, consequences, and recovery efforts of any past disaster incident was documented. These anecdotal points were included as appropriate in the revised plan.

The county profile includes information discovered through the study of various county documents. Information about community development, business and industry, land use regulations, and community life were researched and findings that were relevant to mitigation planning were included as parts of narratives and explanations. Online sources like US Census Bureau data and the Ohio Champaign County Profile were accessed for statistical data. Federal, state, and local government agency websites and reports were utilized for statistical and historic information.

The hazard identification was developed through research of actual recorded events based on records from the Storm Events Database of the National Climatic Data Center. Supporting data was obtained from the Ohio EMA, FEMA, Tornado History Project, Stanford University Dam Program, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and other sources. Planning team members provided additional detail, context, and descriptions of the community impact for many historical incidents. The most significant events for each hazard are described in narrative form in the HIRA. Appendix A includes a complete list of all recorded occurrences of each hazard, organized by type of hazard between 2018 (when the last plan was approved) and 12-31-2023.

The vulnerability assessment and risk analysis were developed through the use of multiple data sources. The National Risk Index was used to examine and consider natural hazards and the loss estimates associated with each hazard. Current critical facility and key resource locations were identified through use of the RAPT online tool, confirmed by local residents and officials. The 2019 Champaign County Hazard Mitigation Plan contained information that was still reflective of risks, vulnerabilities, and conditions, which were retained in this plan where applicable. FEMA documents were referenced to identify how many losses were reported, when, and because of what impact in the past. Included in this estimation were possibility, probability, magnitude, and frequency of each category of hazard and its potential impact upon Champaign County.

Although not recently updated, Watershed Discovery Reports for the Scioto and Miami Rivers were used to facilitate discussion about waterway and watershed management issues. There were many issues of agricultural interest as the reports were applied to Champaign County and specific points were discussed. The reports were referenced, and meeting participants were informed of those findings. Copies of the plan and online locations were offered to participants, and some natural resources stakeholders were already familiar with the Discovery Reports. Discussions took place regarding the mitigation actions and management practices that were recommended in the Discovery Reports. In some cases, local stakeholders agreed with the reports, and mitigation actions were crafted to support and facilitate the Discovery Report recommendations. The mitigation strategies in this plan are reflective of the plan participant input.

New mitigation standards require research and identification of social vulnerabilities for communities. Information was obtained from a variety of new online resources, as listed in Table 1-5 that follows. Discussions with local stakeholders also identified and verified this information during the work sessions that were held. Discussions included identification of

underserved and disadvantaged populations, the needs and circumstances that would require assistance, and the possible sources of those assistance efforts. There was considerable discussion in many work sessions about where and for what groups additional assistance has been provided, and where the recovery from past disasters has been difficult or incomplete. Where gaps in capabilities were identified, or shortages based upon escalated after-storm needs, potential additional resources and alternate providers were discussed.

There was significant discussion about changing weather patterns and the potential for climate change to affect Champaign County in all work sessions. Changes in how and when storms strike, the amount of precipitation or the force of winds was covered in detail. Discussion included considerations of urban sprawl into Champaign County, as well as metropolitan industrial influence on the community. These discussions, when compared to online climate projections, were in sync.

Significant discussion ensued regarding resources needed during and after catastrophic level events. Because of the rather low population, all stakeholders expressed doubts that Champaign County would receive outside resources in an event that involved other counties. As a rural county, the pervasive opinion was that Champaign County will automatically and successfully fend for themselves. While the county residents perceive themselves as highly resilient and willing to take care of themselves, there are challenges that come with this commitment. For example, across Ohio and the Midwest, volunteerism is declining. The average age of volunteers is rising, and the younger generations to someday take their places are not as interested in volunteering as previous generations. Therefore, in-depth conversations took place about diminishing volunteerism, especially in the public safety organizations. An emphasis upon mutual aid agreements, department planning for equipment purchases in collaboration with adjoining departments, and other forms of collaboration were believed to be best practices for local entities. The exodus of adequate sheltering and family assistance by social organizations that used to help after residents were displaced from homes is a huge concern for Champaign County. They now receive assistance from adjacent counties or nearby metropolitan areas. There is concern whether this regional help will continue in the coming decades. Champaign County is concerned for the same response resource reasons as most rural counties in Ohio.

Table 1-7 provides a list of the sources utilized in the research phase of this project.

Table 1-7: Studies, Reports, and References

Document	Author/Agency	Date
Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQUP)	United States Department of Agriculture	2019
Federal Disaster Declaration Statistics	FEMA	2024
The Climate Explorer	Online resource	2024
Floodplain Management Community Contact List	Ohio Department of Natural Resources	2023

Document	Author/Agency	Date
Champaign County Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan	Champaign County Health Dept.	2022 - 2023
Champaign County Hazard Mitigation Plan 2019	Champaign County EMA	2019
LUC Regional Planning 2020 and 2010 US Census Comparison Date	LUC Regional Planning Commission	
State of Ohio Enhanced Hazard Mitigation Plan	Ohio EMA	2019 and 2023
Storm Events Database	NOAA	2024
LUC Regional Planning “Planning Work Program” Report	LUC Regional Planning	2024
United States Census	US Census Bureau Champaign County Profile	2020
Champaign County Comprehensive Plan	Champaign Economic Partnership	2020
Headwaters Economics – Economic Profile System for Champaign County OH	Socioeconomic and Neighborhoods at Risk Reports	2024
National Risk Index	FEMA	2024
Resilience Analysis Planning Tool (RAPT)	FEMA	2024
Climate Risk and Resilience Portal (ClimRR)	FEMA	2024
National Inventory of Dams	FEMA	2024
National Levee Database	FEMA	2023
Ohio Department of Natural Resources GIS Maps	ODNR	2024
National Agricultural Statistics Service Bulletin – Ohio Annual Bulletin	USDA	2023
Ohio County Profile	Ohio Office of Research	2021
Ohio Economic Profile Champaign County	OH DJFS	2021
Big Darby Watershed TDML Report	ODNR	2006
Mad River Watershed TDML Report	ODNR	2010
Climate Risk and Resilience Portal		2024

1.5 PLAN MAINTENANCE

Plan maintenance is a critical element of the hazard mitigation plan. Diligent plan maintenance establishes a schedule to re-engage stakeholders in the mitigation plan at regular intervals during the plan’s validity period, and lays a solid groundwork for the required five-year update. Continual attention to mitigation allows for and facilitates purposeful actions and planning efforts. By reviewing disaster occurrences on an annual basis and frequently assessing the county’s progress on mitigation activities, a five-year update can be a quick and efficient process. Upon approval of this plan, Champaign County is determined to follow a regular plan maintenance schedule. The EMA Director will lead this effort and involve countywide stakeholders, jurisdictions, and the community, maintaining and strengthening the solid foundation in place for the plan update in 2029.

1.5.1 Plan Maintenance Methodology

A significant challenge in conducting annual plan review is the difficulty in holding meetings that are well attended. Many stakeholders perceive these meetings as unnecessary or not critical and do not attend, yet others struggle to combine demanding jobs and volunteer leadership roles and struggle to be available. Government officials, community leaders, and other key stakeholders have busy schedules and competing demands on their time and must and prioritize their attendance at different events. In Champaign County, most jurisdictions and organizations have only a few employees. In the villages and townships, many elected and appointed officials serve in a part-time or volunteer capacity. Yet the city and the larger villages have an array of employees to share the work and attend planning meetings. These staffing realities often make conducting community-wide meetings a challenge. Champaign County's plan maintenance strategy attempts to address these barriers by incorporating other communication and data-collection methods throughout the five-year life of the plan.

Traditional face-to-face meetings have been the most common method to discuss disaster responses, catastrophic incidents, and storms. The 2019 Pandemic made face-to-face meetings impossible, and people became accustomed to online meetings, written or digital surveys, and email communication. Even in the rural communities in Champaign County, officials and workers have gotten used to ZOOM or Google Meet, and avoiding the travel required to meet in a face-to-face manner. This familiarity has led to acceptance of alternatives to meeting in person, and those digital and remote options will be seriously considered in the coming five years. The EMA will also work closely with the villages, asking each to consider reviewing their plan sections and submitting comments each year as an individual community rather than a whole county. The EMA Director can then compile these reports and share across the entire county. Records of participation, copies of results, and other communication surrounding these events will be maintained just as it would be for a meeting.

1.5.2 Annual Plan Review

The Hazard Mitigation Planning Team will be called upon to review, evaluate, and discuss the plan annually, on or about the anniversary of the plan approval date. Annual plan maintenance discussions may be conducted through traditional in-person meetings or remote meetings, electronic surveys, questionnaires, or other forms of communication. The choice of methodology will be at the discretion of the EMA Director based on what best meets the needs of stakeholders and ensures that mitigation strategies are considered on a regular basis. All information-gathering efforts will include evaluation of the past year's disaster incidents and a summary of the resulting damages, costs, and recovery efforts. Status reports on any mitigation projects in process and an update on progress towards achieving the mitigation strategies and actions developed by each jurisdiction will also be included. The EMA will maintain records of these annual discussions.

As part of the annual review process, jurisdictions will be asked to conduct an internal analysis of the mitigation strategies developed by their jurisdiction and submit a short report to the EMA with their findings. The report will include an assessment of any disaster incidents that occurred during the year, a summary of damages and recovery efforts, and a status report on

the status of adopted mitigation strategies as a result of those incidents. If a strategy has been completed, the jurisdiction will evaluate its effectiveness at reducing losses. This information will be shared with the countywide planning team during the annual countywide review process. The EMA will maintain a summary of these reports and findings.

The EMA Director may choose to convene a planning team meeting after any significant disaster or large-scale emergency to review and document any changes, needs, additions, or deletions that should be considered at the five-year update. The EMA may also convene a committee if a significant development project, change in land use, or addition of a major industry occurs to review the effect of that incident on mitigation intentions. Any time a disaster is declared in Champaign County, the planning team will assemble after the incident is closed to review the plan with emphasis on the strategies and the status of each. Given the direction of new mitigation guidance, the records of incidents will include social vulnerability concerns as well as physical damage information. Who served special needs, what organizations helped the underserved, and what gaps existed will be documented. Best practices and opportunities for improvement will be recorded and addressed. They will consider the integration of mitigation goals into the emergency operations plan, and make any changes that improve the manner and extent to which Champaign County can serve disadvantaged and underserved populations. The EMA will maintain records of these meetings and findings.

At each review point, the EMA will review the Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment for completeness and accuracy, as well as changes that occur due to changing weather patterns or history. Loss estimates will be evaluated for ongoing accuracy and any significant developments will be added to the list and mitigation strategies will be reviewed for progress and effectiveness. All findings will be recorded and saved for the 2029 update process.

1.5.3 Community Participation

While the EMA is responsible for leading the plan maintenance effort, that process only works if stakeholders are engaged. Ongoing consideration of hazard mitigation strategies is critical to creating a resilient and sustainable community. It is the EMA's intention that the stakeholders representing the municipalities, jurisdictions, agencies, and organizations involved in plan development will continue to participate in its ongoing review and maintenance. Without their participation, ongoing input will not be comprehensive or accurate. Therefore, all parties involved in developing this plan must perceive the annual review process as critical to the pre- and post-disaster welfare of the county. The new mitigation partners who address issues of social vulnerability and community resilience will be critical parties moving forward, and will continue to be critical companions in mitigation planning and implementation.

Public involvement is an important component of ongoing mitigation planning efforts. To encourage public involvement in plan maintenance, notices of annual plan review activities will be published through local media and appropriate websites and social media accounts of participating jurisdictions and agencies. The general public will be invited to participate in these activities and provide input. Meeting announcements will include the date, time, and

location of the session and adequate notice so that people have reasonable time to plan their attendance. As with all meetings conducted during plan development, annual update meetings will be open to the public and community input will be encouraged. If surveys and other electronic tools are utilized to collect feedback from stakeholders, these documents will also be made available to the community.

1.5.4 Integration with Community Planning Mechanisms

Local government participation in plan maintenance activities is a major factor in the implementation and achievement of mitigation strategies as well as assessment for new and additional mitigation actions. This participation occurs during intentional mitigation plan review and, more importantly, during daily operations within each jurisdiction that guide the growth and development of specific communities.

Some Champaign County villages do not have planning commissions or a committee within the jurisdiction's elected council that addresses growth and development issues for the municipality. Only Urbana and North Lewisburg have comprehensive planning and written comprehensive development plans. Community development in all others, and sometimes in those two communities as well, is a joint effort between the LUC Regional Planning Commission, the Economic Development Partnership, and the Urbana/Champaign County Chamber of Commerce. These organizations are responsible to their own boards of directors and operate through a representative leadership of the membership structure. The city, all villages and all townships participate in LUC Regional Planning. However, Champaign County, the City of Urbana, and the Villages of Mechanicsburg, North Lewisburg and St. Paris were the only jurisdictions that participated in developing the county's comprehensive plan under the Economic Partnership. All townships participated except for Rush and Union Townships.

It is extremely difficult to obtain regular and ongoing planning input from the Villages of Christiansburg, Mutual and Woodstock because they are so extremely small in population. At the time of this planning effort, Christiansburg was experiencing vacancies on village counsel and the Board of Public Affairs was empty. Mutual had three vacant counsel seats, and three of six serving officials were appointed rather than elected. Woodstock had four vacant counsel seats, and three of four serving officials were appointed rather than elected. The three villages have a combined population of 919 residents, likely the most significant contributor to this leadership and participation challenge.

There is a very collaborative and communicative relationship between Champaign County officials, the municipalities, and the economic and regional planning professionals. The LUC Regional Planning director and staff communicate with individuals and municipal officials on a regular basis to remain updated on plans, issues and concerns of those communities, and to share development goals and activities that are in planning and implementation stages. There is ongoing communication and collaboration between LUC Regional Planning and the Economic Development Partnership. While this communication is not all formally done through meetings and activities, it is effective for Champaign County.

The LUC Regional Planning Board includes multiple Champaign County representatives. A Champaign County Commissioner serves as the First Vice President, and a village representative is the Treasurer. Other representatives serving as part of the Executive Committee include the county engineer, the Urbana city engineer, North Lewisburg, Urbana, and St. Paris representatives, and a local electric cooperative representative. Other representatives serve on the Zoning and Subdivision Committee, Budget and Finance Committee, Building Committee, Records Commission, Visioning Committee and the RTPO Technical Advisory Committee.

The Champaign Economic Partnership Board of Directors includes two representatives of the City of Urbana, one from the Village of North Lewisburg, a Champaign County Commissioner, and a representative of the Champaign County townships.

Table 2-15 in Section 02 HIRA of this plan identifies the capabilities of each jurisdiction and should be used as reference for this integration discussion.

These officials all bring new development and growth concepts back to their communities to implement Champaign County initiatives. They provide leadership for recruiting, promoting, and securing new industries, businesses, and residential facilities. These groups work together to guide the construction of new buildings and homes, and oversee and inspect new structures.

The County Engineer serves as the floodplain manager, and all other municipalities have a designated floodplain manager except Woodstock. The GIS/tax map officer is part of the Auditor's office. Mortgage lenders work with the floodplain managers to comply with flood prevention regulations as part of the lending process, and they use external commercial providers to validate floodplain status for mortgage purposes. The lending institutions work with the floodplain manager and county auditor to determine floodplain locations, and the zoning officers enforce land use regulations to manage construction of homes, farm facilities, and businesses. Champaign County floodplain managers work with updating and improving floodplain regulations, and keeping in step with county and state requirements. The EMA Director works with the various county officials in a non-official capacity to advise and assist in disaster mitigation efforts regarding potential development projects.

Because Champaign County is a small community, there is an informal structure to the inclusion of mitigation efforts in other economic and community development activities. With some development organizations and other agencies taking on a multi-county scope of services, Champaign County works to achieve benefits of these regulation and planning entities. It is up to the representatives to make sure Champaign County's voice is heard. The county has determined that they should consider hazard mitigation with all community planning efforts, especially in the comprehensive planning efforts, and intends to include information about hazards, risks, and vulnerabilities in all planning areas in future endeavors. The EMA will share responsibility to integrate mitigation planning into economic development, land use planning, land use regulation, conservation, response plans, and other plans that are important to the daily operation of the county with other county officials. Disaster mitigation will be promoted as part of community development, making its way into a comprehensive array of disciplines

and interests. Key stakeholders, including the County Commissioners, Champaign Economic Partnership, LUC Regional Planning Commission, floodplain administrators, engineer's offices, zoning officials, and public safety officers from across the county will be important partners in this effort. The elected and appointed officials from all jurisdictions are considered partners in mitigation efforts, and will work with and beside one another to include the efforts described in this plan into the guiding documents for their jurisdiction. Whether the person charged with this responsibility is the elected mayor, the appointed administrator, or a volunteer committee chairman or council member, they will be expected to work with other jurisdictions to exchange ideas, implement efforts, develop regulations, and create guidance for future efforts and endeavors. These individuals will work through their respective agencies to promote mitigation planning and its inclusion in the plans, procedures, guidelines, and priorities of each agency, thus making mitigation a true community-wide effort.

The Hazard Mitigation Plan has previously been integrated into the Champaign County Emergency Operations Plan and the Hazardous Materials Response Plan. The EMA Director is responsible for developing and maintaining the Champaign County Emergency Operations Plan, and he uses the Hazard Mitigation Plan as the hazard identification and risk analysis for that plan. The emergency response actions are based upon the conditions and vulnerabilities established by the mitigation plan. The EMA Director also carries the hazard mitigation plan information into the creation of a Hazardous Materials Response Plan as the vulnerability to natural hazards intersects with a hazardous materials spill or release, either due to related or unrelated factors of natural hazard incidents.

1.5.5 Documentation of Plan Maintenance

Champaign County will consider communication with stakeholders and the public regarding hazard mitigation to be an annual necessity. The EMA will schedule, complete, and record these communications and the results of all meetings to facilitate an expeditious plan update in 2029. It will be the EMA's responsibility to maintain documentation of all ongoing plan maintenance activities. These records should include the date, time, and attendance at review meetings, findings of each review, and recommendations from stakeholders for changes, additions, or deletions at the next update. Results from any surveys and questionnaires used to collect information should be maintained, as well as reports submitted by jurisdictions. Electronic mail and written communication from stakeholders and the public should be saved for consideration during annual review activities. All reports, documents, and files can be saved electronically so that they are easier to find and less cumbersome to maintain.

1.5.6 Plan Update Cycle

Champaign County's Hazard Mitigation Plan will expire in 2029. With generous documentation of ongoing plan maintenance, the county should be positioned to submit an updated plan well before the current plan's expiration date. To ensure the appropriate timeline is met, formal efforts to update the plan will begin in mid-2027. The EMA Director will ensure that the appropriate and necessary steps are taken to complete this process.