

3.0 MITIGATION STRATEGY

§ 201.6(c)(3)

A mitigation strategy that provides the jurisdiction's blueprint for reducing the potential losses identified in the risk assessment, based on existing authorities, policies, programs and resources, and its ability to expand on and improve these existing tools.

Mitigation is defined as any sustained actions taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to life and property from hazards. Mitigation strategies are the plan's primary purpose. All other sections contribute to, and inform, the following mitigation actions.

According to FEMA (2013), "the mitigation strategy is made up of three main required components: mitigation goals, mitigation actions, and action plan for implementation. These provide the framework to identify, prioritize, and implement actions to reduce risk to hazards." This section contains the aforementioned items; it describes the updated goals and objectives for this multi-jurisdictional mitigation plan, it outlines the action items (or projects) for each participating jurisdiction within Ashtabula County, and each project identifies the agency responsible for completing the project as well as a general timeline for completion.

3.0 MITIGATION STRATEGY

3.1 Mitigation Goals and Objectives

Hazard mitigation goals and objectives represent what the county wants to achieve by implementing risk reduction projects. These goals work together to lessen the loss of life, injury, and damage to property, the economy, and the environment from the hazards identified in Section 2.2 above.

During the first plan update meeting, the steering committee decided to keep the goals from the 2018 plan. The committee felt that the existing goals were still realistic and relevant. During the previous plan update these goals were made to be more comprehensive, rather than based on a single hazard, and were created to apply to all jurisdictions, rather than just one. The committee identified keywords that they thought expressed the overall sentiment of hazard mitigation. The overarching goals apply to the unincorporated areas as well as the municipalities; this way all communities within the county are working towards the same overall goals.

During the first meeting, the committee members approved the following as this plan's organizing goals.

Table 3.1.1

Mitigation Goals – Ashtabula County	
Goals	Description
GOAL 1	Reduce the occurrences and duration of utility failures , reduce potential failures of High-Hazard Potential Dams (HHPDs) .
GOAL 2	Protect Ashtabula County's vulnerable populations before, during, and after emergency events or incidents from all hazards.
GOAL 3	Increase the ability to coordinate and communicate before, during, and after a disaster.
GOAL 4	Proactively reduce the cost of recovery operations to jurisdictions by preventing destruction of property and infrastructure through mitigation efforts.
GOAL 5	Encourage partnerships and networking opportunities for jurisdictional officials and first responders within Ashtabula County and across the county and state borders.
GOAL 6	Promote awareness and education of all potential hazards to the public in Ashtabula County regarding hazard mitigation strategies.
GOAL 7	Reduce or avoid the displacement of people and animals due to hazard events in Ashtabula County.
GOAL 8	Become an increasingly self-sustainable county during emergencies from all potential hazards.

These goals are clear and collectively derived. Most importantly, though, these goals and objectives are written such that jurisdictions are able to measure their progress toward risk reduction.

3.0 MITIGATION STRATEGY

3.2 Mitigation Actions

This section serves as a mitigation action plan to reduce the losses and other impacts Ashtabula County may suffer from the hazards included in the risk assessment. “A mitigation action is a specific action, project, activity, or process taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from hazards and their impacts. Implementing mitigation actions helps achieve the plan’s goals and objectives. The actions to reduce vulnerability to threats and hazards form the core of the plan and are a key outcome of the planning process” (FEMA, 2013).

§ 201.6(c)(3)	A mitigation strategy that provides the jurisdiction's blueprint for reducing the potential losses identified in the risk assessment, based on existing authorities, policies, programs and resources, and its ability to expand on and improve these existing tools.
§ 201.6(c)(3)(ii)	A section that identifies and analyzes a comprehensive range of specific mitigation actions and projects being considered to reduce the effects of each hazard, with particular emphasis on new and existing buildings and infrastructure. All plans approved by FEMA after October 1, 2008, must also address the jurisdiction's participation in the NFIP, and continued compliance with NFIP requirements, as appropriate.
§ 201.6(c)(3)(iii)	An action plan describing how the actions identified in paragraph (c)(3)(ii) of this section will be prioritized, implemented, and administered by the local jurisdiction. Prioritization shall include a special emphasis on the extent to which benefits are maximized according to a cost-benefit review of the proposed projects and their associated costs.

The Ashtabula County Emergency Management Agency (ACEMA), the mitigation steering committee, and their consultant (JH Consulting, LLC), coordinated directly with the jurisdictions throughout the county to update the project list. Outreach included individual calls and technical assistance. Further, several in-person and virtual planning meetings were held with each county and municipal jurisdiction (see Section 1.1), these meetings allowed all jurisdictions to discuss existing project status (i.e., completed, deleted, deferred, ongoing), and new projects, etc. The narrative below is the result of that outreach.

Types of Mitigation Actions

There are four primary types of mitigation actions that can work to reduce long-term vulnerability: local plans and regulations, structure and infrastructure projects, natural systems protection, and education and outreach activities. (FEMA, 2025b, pp. 85-87).

- **Local Plans and Regulations:** Local land use or comprehensive plans embody the goals, values, and aspirations of the community, as expressed through a process of community engagement. Local ordinances and review processes influence land development and building construction. In some cases, plans and regulations can work at cross-purposes.

For example, a capital improvement plan may call for extending water and sewer lines to an area that is vulnerable to natural hazards. Examples include the following.

- Comprehensive plans
 - Land use ordinances
 - Subdivision regulations
 - Development review
 - Building codes and enforcement
 - NFIP Community Rating System (CRS)
 - Capital improvement programs
 - Open space preservation
 - Storm water management regulations and master plans
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- **Structure and Infrastructure Projects:** These actions involve modifying existing structures and infrastructure to protect them from a hazard or remove them from a hazard area. These projects could apply to public or private structures as well as critical facilities and infrastructure. This type of action also involves projects to construct human-made structures to reduce the impact of hazards. Examples include the following.
- Acquisitions and elevations of structures in flood-prone areas
 - Utility undergrounding
 - Structural retrofits
 - Floodwalls and retaining walls
 - Dams and detention and retention structures
 - Culverts
 - Safe rooms

- **Natural Systems Protection:** These are actions that minimize damage and losses while preserving or restoring the functions of natural systems. Examples include the following.
 - Sediment and erosion control
 - Stream corridor restoration
 - Forest management
 - Conservation easements
 - Wetland restoration and preservation
 - Greenways

- **Education and Outreach Activities:** These are actions to inform and educate citizens, elected officials, and property owners about hazards and potential ways to mitigate them. Although this type of mitigation reduces risk less directly than structural projects or regulations, it is an important foundation. A greater understanding and awareness of hazards and risk among local officials, stakeholders, and the public can lead to direct actions. Examples include the following.
 - Radio or television spots
 - Social media outreach
 - Websites with maps and information
 - Real estate disclosure
 - Presentations to school groups or neighborhood organizations
 - Mailings to residents in hazard-prone areas
 - StormReady
 - Firewise Communities

For some hazards such as tornadoes, including preparedness actions in the mitigation plan may be necessary and practical. The mitigation plan may be the best place for your community to capture and justify the need for these actions. However, these will not supplant or meet the federal requirements for identifying mitigation actions. It is important that the planning team understands the difference and can distinguish between mitigation and other emergency management activities.

To help committee members and participating jurisdictions better understand the types of mitigation techniques that work best for the hazards identified in the risk assessment, Table 3.2.1 below serves as a reference.

Table 3.2.1

HAZARD	MITIGATION TECHNIQUES			
	<i>Local Plans & Regulations</i>	<i>Structure & Infrastructure Projects</i>	<i>Natural Systems Protection</i>	<i>Education Programs</i>
Coastal Erosion	X	X	X	
Cyber Incident		X		X
Dam & Levee Failure	X	X		X
Drought	X	X	X	X
Earthquake	X			X
Flooding	X	X	X	X
HazMat Release	X	X		X
Health Related Emergency	X			X
Invasive Species	X		X	X
Severe Thunderstorm	X	X		X
Severe Winter Weather	X	X		X
Terrorism	X	X		X
Tornado		X		X
Utility Failure (Dry Day)	X	X		
Wildfire	X		X	X

Possible Funding Sources

The following is a list of relevant funding sources, including but not limited to grant programs that can potentially be utilized to implement the mitigation strategies identified below.

- Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG)
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- Clean Water Act (CWA); Watershed Program
- Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)
- Energy Infrastructure Reinvestment (EIR) Program
- Energy Improvement in Rural and Remote Areas (ERA) Program
- FEMA Public Assistance Grant Program
- Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Program
- Floodplain Management Services Program (FMSP)
- Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnership (GRIP) Program
- Hazardous Materials Emergency Program (HMEP)
- Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)
- High Hazard Potential Dams (HHPD) Grant
- Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP)
- Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP)

- Increased Cost of Compliance (ICC) under NFIP
- Repetitive Flood Claim (RFC) Program / Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL) Program
- Safeguarding Tomorrow Revolving Loan Fund Program (STRLF)
- Small Business Administration (SBA) Loans
- Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG)
- State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program (SLCGP)
- Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention (TVTP) Grant Program
- US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE)
- US Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- US Economic Development Administration (USEDA)
- US Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS)
- US Department of Transportation (USDOT)

Project Prioritization

Ashtabula County prioritized the action items (i.e., projects) included in this plan. The county used the following criteria (roughly corresponding to the STAPLEE method) as considerations when prioritizing projects.

- **Social Impacts:** Consider whether the public would support implementation of the project. If so, priority likely rises.
 - Will the action adversely affect one segment of the population?
 - Will the action disrupt established neighborhoods, break up voting districts, or cause the relocation of lower income people?
 - Is the action compatible with present and future community values?
- **Technical Feasibility:** Consider whether the project can be done and if it will yield the intended outcomes. If yes, priority would likely rise.
 - How effective is the action in avoiding or reducing future losses?
 - Will it create more problems than it solves?
 - Does it solve the problem or only a symptom?
- **Administrative Requirements:** Consider the staffing, funding, and maintenance requirements of the project. If current capabilities can successfully manage and sustain the project, priority would be strengthened.

- Does the jurisdiction have the capability (i.e., staff, technical expertise, and/or funding) to implement the action, or can it be readily obtained?
 - Can the community provide the necessary maintenance?
 - Can it be accomplished in a timely manner?
 - Is this action a project for jurisdictional staff, a contractor, or both?
- **Political Impacts:** Consider the acceptability of the project from the political frame. If it is likely to cause political upheaval, it would receive a lower priority. Proposed mitigation objectives sometimes fail because of a lack of political acceptability. This can be avoided by determining:
 - Is there political support to implement and maintain this action?
 - Have political leaders participated in the planning process so far?
 - Is there a local champion willing to help see the action to completion?
 - Who are the stakeholders in this proposed action?
 - Is there enough public support to ensure the success of the action?
 - Have all the stakeholders been offered an opportunity to participate in the planning process?
 - How can the mitigation objectives be accomplished at the lowest “cost” to the public?
- **Legal Ramifications:** Consider whether the project can be lawfully implemented. If not, the project cannot be listed. Determine whether the jurisdiction has the legal authority at the state, or local level to implement the action, or if the jurisdiction must pass new laws or regulations.
 - Does the state, county, or community have the authority to implement the proposed action?
 - Are the proper laws, ordinances, and resolutions in place to implement the action?
 - Are there any potential legal consequences?
 - Will the community be liable for the actions or support of actions, or lack of action?
 - Is the action likely to be challenged by stakeholders who may be negatively affected?
- **Environmental Impacts:** Consider whether there would be negative consequences to environmental assets should the project be implemented. If assets are impacted, priority would be likely to fall.
 - How will this action affect the environment (i.e., land, water, endangered species)?

- Will this action comply with local, state, and federal environmental laws or regulations?
- Is the action consistent with community environmental goals?
- **Economic Impacts/Cost Benefit:** Consider the criteria in *FEMA Publication 386-5: Using Benefit Cost Review in Mitigation Planning* (2007) to determine the “pros” and “cons” of each project. Maximizing the use of available funds would positively affect a project’s priority. Every local and state government experiences budget constraints at one time or another. Cost-effective mitigation actions that can be funded in current or upcoming budget cycles are much more likely to be implemented. Economic considerations must include the present economic base and projected growth and should be based on answers to questions such as:
 - Are there currently sources of funds that can be used to implement the action?
 - What benefits will the action provide?
 - Does the cost seem reasonable for the size of the problem and likely benefits?
 - What burden will be placed on the tax base or local economy to implement this action?
 - Does the action contribute to other community economic goals, such as capital improvements or economic development?

Each mitigation project received an individual score from one to five for each of the seven categories listed above. Those seven individual scores were added together as a total score for each mitigation project. Each project also received a score regarding the hazard for which the project was associated. If the hazard ranked high, three points were added to the project, if medium two points were added, if low one point was added. The total scores for each mitigation project were utilized to prioritize each mitigation project as High Priority (total score of 36 to 32), Medium Priority (total score of 31 to 27), and Low Priority (total score of 26 to 22). See Appendix 2 for documentation of the calculations.

Jurisdictional Mitigation Actions

The following table lists the active hazard mitigation projects for Ashtabula County and the participating jurisdictions. In addition to the action itself, the tables identify, to the extent possible, the following information.

- **Project Number:** An identifier to enable quick referencing.
- **Mitigation Action:** Brief description of the action to reduce risk.
- **Strategy Detail:** Outlines the strategy necessary to implement the mitigation action.

- **Project Priority:** The prioritization calculation for the action, based on the methodology noted above. (i.e., High, Medium, Low)
 - **Project Status:** Identifies whether the project is ongoing from the previous version of the plan, or is a new project identified during this plan update.
 - **Project Type:** The associated mitigation technique category (i.e., local plans and regulations, structure and infrastructure projects, natural systems protection, education, and outreach projects)
 - **Potential Funding Source(s):** The program(s) or agencies/entities that could fund the action
 - **Estimated Cost:** An informal cost estimate or credible source from which to develop a cost estimate
 - **Project Lead:** The coordinating agency (along with, in some cases, support agencies)
- Start / End Dates:** An approximate timeframe for completion, if known

During the development of the 2025 Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) update, mitigation action items within the 2019 HMP were reviewed by the planning committee. Status updates were obtained and are provided in the table below, as well as in Appendix 3 – Inactive Projects. The following table lists the active (i.e., new, and ongoing) hazard mitigation actions for Ashtabula County and the participating jurisdictions. These actions have broad applicability and benefit multiple jurisdictions or unincorporated areas. See Appendix 3 for a list of inactive (i.e., completed, deleted, and deferred) projects.

Table 3.2.2 2025 MITIGATION ACTION PLAN – ASHTABULA COUNTY										
Project #	Mitigation Action	Strategy Detail	Project Priority	Project Status	Project Type	Funding Source	Estimated Cost	Project Lead	Start Date	End Date
County Mitigation Projects – All Participating Jurisdictions										
AC-AH.1	Promote awareness and education	Undertake periodic public awareness campaigns to educate the public on the benefits of mitigation and preparedness, as well as how to respond appropriately to myriad hazards.	High	Ongoing	Education Program	Local	\$5,000	ACEMA	1/01/26	12/31/30
Note:	The county continually provides information via social media, through StormReady, on the EMS website, and via the reverse 911 system. Applicable Jurisdictions: All participating cities, villages, and townships.									
AC-AH.2	Reduce / avoid displacement of people	Identify existing sites that could serve as emergency shelters throughout Ashtabula County.	Medium	Ongoing	Education Program	Local	\$10,000	ARC ACEMA	1/01/26	12/31/29
Note:	ACEMA continues to coordinate with the ARC annually to ensure MOUs and POCs are up to date. Also coordinate with Building Department to ensure structural safety, and Health Department to ensure shelters are safe and ready for use. Applicable Jurisdictions: All participating cities, villages, and townships.									
AC-AH.3	Wireless emergency alerts	Encourage residents, critical facilities, etc. throughout Ashtabula County to sign-up for wireless emergency alerts disseminated by the Ashtabula County EMA.	High	Ongoing	Local Plans & Regulations	EMPG HSGP	\$50,000	ACEMA	1/01/26	12/31/28
Note:	Several individuals throughout the county have signed up to receive wireless emergency alerts. This is a large-scale, priority project. This system is utilized for large events (i.e., county fair, D-Day Ohio, Grape Jamboree, etc.). Funding sources have been identified to increase broadband in southern portion of the county to bolster notification system, this project is currently underway. Applicable Jurisdictions: All participating cities, villages, and townships.									
AC-AH.4	Tree trimming	Develop a tree maintenance program for trimming and pruning trees to help prevent damage from falling limbs.	Low	Ongoing	Natural Systems Protection	ODNR Local	\$50,000	Admin. Of applicable Jurisdiction	1/01/26	12/31/27
Note:	Continue to coordinate with FirstEnergy following storms to do clean-up and remove of hazardous trees and large limbs. Jefferson Village has a program for tree removal and re-planting and has aggressively managed trees for the Emerald Ash Borer and other dead and dying trees in electric line rights-of-way. Applicable Jurisdictions: All participating cities, villages, and townships.									

Table 3.2.2 2025 MITIGATION ACTION PLAN – ASHTABULA COUNTY										
Project #	Mitigation Action	Strategy Detail	Project Priority	Project Status	Project Type	Funding Source	Estimated Cost	Project Lead	Start Date	End Date
AC-CE.1	Structural placement to slow coastal erosion	Pursue funding sources/partnerships to strategically place groins, break walls, revetment structures, riparian buffers, and other appropriate structures to slow erosion.	Low	Ongoing	Structure & Infrastructure Project	ODNR NOAA	\$30M	Community Services & Planning Dept.	1/01/26	12/31/30
Note:	Large erosion projects and efforts have been undertaken in GOTL and N. Kingsville to rebuilt slope and add retaining walls. Communities participated in the Great Lakes Coastal Flood Study in March of 2013. Applicable Jurisdictions: Ashtabula City / Conneaut City / Geneva City / GOTL Village / North Kingsville Village / Ashtabula Twp / Geneva Twp/ Saybrook Twp									
AC-CI.1	Cyber hygiene education	Continue to educate county employees on cyber hygiene. Coordinate with Ohio Cyber Integration Center to disseminate information to improve cyber security.	High	New	Education Program	Local	\$2,000	Ashtabula IT Ohio Cyber Integration Center	1/01/26	12/31/30
Note:	This is a new mitigation project developed during the 2025 update. Cyber Incident was added as a new hazard. Applicable Jurisdictions: Ashtabula City / Conneaut City / Geneva City / Jefferson Village									
AC-CI.2	Cyber security gap analysis	Identify appropriate agencies to conduct a gap analysis to detect and prioritize cyber security needs across county owned critical assets.	Medium	New	Education Program	HSGP	\$30,000	Ashtabula IT	1/01/26	12/31/28
Note:	This is a new mitigation project developed during the 2025 update. Cyber Incident was added as a new hazard. Applicable Jurisdictions: Ashtabula City / Conneaut City / Geneva City / Jefferson Village									
AC-DF.1	Emergency Action Plans (EAPs)	Collect updated Emergency Action Plans (EAPs) for Class I/II structures and create a GIS layer of inundation areas that appear in EAPs. Include downstream structures in the layer to support calculation of loss estimates.	Medium	Ongoing	Local Plans & Regulations	Local Funding	\$30,000	ACEMA	1/01/26	12/31/29
Note:	Continue to make efforts to obtain EAPs from Class I dam owners and to develop hazard mapping. Applicable Jurisdictions: Ashtabula County									

Table 3.2.2 2025 MITIGATION ACTION PLAN – ASHTABULA COUNTY										
Project #	Mitigation Action	Strategy Detail	Project Priority	Project Status	Project Type	Funding Source	Estimated Cost	Project Lead	Start Date	End Date
AC-DF.2	HHPD Rehabilitation	Rehabilitate HHPDs when they pose unacceptable risks to the public. Rehabilitation activities can include rehabilitation or removal of the structure, engineering activities, land use solutions, etc.	Low	Ongoing	Structure & Infrastructure Project	HHPD	\$100,000 to \$1.0M	Dam Owners	1/01/26	12/31/30
Note:	The dam in Harpersfield has been completely rebuilt and reopened in 2024. Continue to collaborate with dam owners to identify dams or dam structures that need restoration. Applicable Jurisdictions: Roaming Shores Village / Rock Creek Village / Harpersfield Twp / Harts Grove Twp									
AC-FL1	Stream restoration	Undertake stream restoration projects; clean or dredge creeks and streams, clearing log jams, trees, shrubs, and sediment bars.	Low	Ongoing	Natural Systems Protection	FMSP NRCS CWA	\$250,000	ACSWCD	1/01/26	12/31/30
Note:	Have completed Harpersfield Bridge restoration project, redid concrete vault, still areas of certain streams that need addressed. Applicable Jurisdictions: Ashtabula City / Conneaut City / Saybrook Twp									
AC-FL.2	Increase capability of existing storm water system.	Consider install ling, re-routing, or increasing the capacity of existing storm drainage systems, which may involve detention and retention ponds. Consider sewer infiltrations and inflow projects.	Low	Ongoing	Structure & Infrastructure Project	CDBG CWA	\$5,000,000	ACSWCD	1/01/26	12/31/30
Note:	Sewer projects have been conducted at the municipal level. Project in Geneva along Route 20 is currently underway, issues with sinkholes will likely take another year to complete. There is a lack of funding for several of these projects. Applicable Jurisdictions: Ashtabula City / Conneaut City / Geneva City / Jefferson Village / Orwell Village / Roaming Shores Village									
AC-FL.3	Acquisition, relocation, elevation	Consider traditional flood mitigation projects such as acquisition and relocation, elevation, etc. of flood-prone properties.	Low	Ongoing	Structure & Infrastructure Project	FMA FMSP HMGP ICC RFC	\$500,000	Building Department	1/01/26	12/31/30
Note:	Continue as necessary and as funding is available. Applicable Jurisdictions: Conneaut City / Geneva City / Jefferson Village									

Table 3.2.2 2025 MITIGATION ACTION PLAN – ASHTABULA COUNTY										
Project #	Mitigation Action	Strategy Detail	Project Priority	Project Status	Project Type	Funding Source	Estimated Cost	Project Lead	Start Date	End Date
AC-FI.4	Floodwater depth gauge.	Install floodwater depth gauges along roadways that often flood which display the depth of floodwaters. Make signs reflective to increase nighttime visibility.	High	New	Education Program	ODOT Local	\$8,000	County Engineer	1/01/26	12/31/29
Note:	This is a new mitigation project developed during the 2025 update. Applicable Jurisdictions: Ashtabula City / Conneaut City / GOTL Village / Harpersfield Twp / North Kingsville Village									
AC-HZ.1	Commodity Flow Study (CFS)	Conduct an update to the existing commodity flow study to identify what hazmat and the volumes being transported through the county.	Medium	Ongoing	Local Plans & Regulations	Local	\$25,000	HMEP PUCO USDOT	1/01/26	12/31/28
Note:	The county does receive Teir II reports annually from covered facilities which are sent to the state and local fire departments. There is a need to update the counties, Commodity Flow Study (CFS). Applicable Jurisdictions: Ashtabula County and all participating jurisdictions.									
AC.PH.1	Enhance recreational facilities	Enhance trails and recreation facilities and preserve parks and open space to promote health. Partner with local health district to leverage existing rails and recreational amenities for public health benefits.	Low	New	Natural Systems Protection	FMA HMGP STRLF	\$50,000	Parks District Public Health	1/01/26	12/31/29
Note:	This is a new mitigation project developed during the 2025 update. Applicable Jurisdictions: Ashtabula Twp / Conneaut Twp / Geneva City / GOTL Village / Andover Twp									
AC-IS.1	Greenhouse inspections	Continue to coordinate with greenhouse owners and conduct inspections of greenhouses to identify possible invasive species that could be sold and planted throughout the county.	Medium	New	Natural Systems Protection	SCGB USDA	\$20,000	Ashtabula Public Health OSU Extension	1/01/26	12/31/28
Note:	This is a new mitigation project developed during the 2025 update. Applicable Jurisdictions: Ashtabula County and all participating jurisdictions.									

Table 3.2.2 2025 MITIGATION ACTION PLAN – ASHTABULA COUNTY										
Project #	Mitigation Action	Strategy Detail	Project Priority	Project Status	Project Type	Funding Source	Estimated Cost	Project Lead	Start Date	End Date
AC-IS.2	Invasive species educational campaign	Implement an invasive species education program to include hazards, identification, behavior, and quarantine procedures.	Medium	New	Education Program	ODNR	\$5,000	OUS Extension	1/01/26	12/31/28
Note:	This is a new mitigation project developed during the 2025 update. Focus on spotted lantern fly and potential impact to (grapevines) the wine industry in the county. Applicable Jurisdictions: Ashtabula County and all participating jurisdictions									
AC-SS.1	Vulnerable population mapping	Develop mapping which illustrates areas of dense vulnerable populations most impacted by power outages.	Medium	New	Local Plans & Regulations	Local	\$5,000	ACEMA	1/01/26	12/31/28
Note:	This is a new mitigation project developed during the 2025 update. Applicable Jurisdictions: Ashtabula County and all participating jurisdictions.									
AC-SW.1	Roadway pretreatment	Obtain more equipment to pretreat more roadways quicker, ahead of heavy snow and ice events.	Medium	New	Natural Systems Protection	USDOT	\$400,000	Admin. applicable jurisdiction	1/01/26	12/31/30
Note:	This is a new mitigation project developed during the 2025 update. Applicable Jurisdictions: Andover Village / Conneaut Village / Geneva Village / GOTL Village / North Kingsville Village									
AC-TR.1	Active assailant preparedness	Provide guidance and drills for schools, churches, government agencies, health care facilities, and other critical facilities regarding active assailant threats.	Medium	New	Local Plans & Regulations	HSGP TVTP	\$50,000	Sheriff's Dept. ACEMA	1/01/26	12/31/28
Note:	This is a new mitigation project developed during the 2025 update. Applicable Jurisdictions: Ashtabula County and all participating jurisdictions									
AC-UF.1	COOP plans	Encourage critical facilities to develop Continuity of Operations Plans (COOPs).	Medium	New	Local Plans & Regulations	HSGP	\$25,000	Critical Facilities	1/01/26	12/31/28
Note:	This is a new mitigation project developed during the 2025 update. Applicable Jurisdictions: Ashtabula County and all participating jurisdictions.									

See Appendix 3 for a list of inactive (i.e., completed, deleted, and deferred) projects.

4.0 PLAN MAINTENANCE AND INTEGRATION

Monitoring, evaluating, and updating this plan is critical to maintaining its value and ensuring the success of Ashtabula County's hazard mitigation efforts. Effective implementation of mitigation activities creates momentum in the planning process and gives direction for future value. This section explains who will be responsible for maintenance activities and what those responsibilities entail. It also provides a methodology and schedule of maintenance activities, including a description of how the public will have the opportunity to participate on a continuous basis.

4.0 PLAN MAINTENANCE AND INTEGRATION

4.1 Monitoring, Evaluating, and Updating the Plan

§201.6(c)(4)(i) [The plan maintenance process shall include a] section describing the method and schedule of the monitoring, evaluating, and updating the mitigation plan within a five-year cycle.

For the 2025 update, the steering committee elected to streamline the process for plan maintenance as compared to the previous version of the plan. “Streamlining” includes not only simplifying discussion points for periodic reviews but also enabling the start of the next formal update earlier in the cycle. Fortunately, the latest version of FEMA’s *Local Mitigation Planning Handbook* (USDHS FEMA, 2025b) includes helpful resources, the most applicable of which appear herein (with modifications for local specificity).

For the 2025-2030 planning cycle, **the Ashtabula County Emergency Management Agency (ACEMA) will continue to be the custodial agency for the county’s mitigation plan.** In this role, ACEMA will be responsible for maintaining the document, including making it available to participating jurisdictions and the public as well as coordinating with the steering committee and convening periodic review meetings. The update process for the next cycle is consistent with FEMA’s “mitigation planning wheel” (see Figure 4.1.1). In Year 1, ACEMA will support the adoption process with all jurisdictions in Ashtabula County. **Years 2, 3, and 4 provide opportunities to track the progress/status of the mitigation actions identified in Section 3.0 and to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the plan.** In Years 2, 3¹, and 4, ACEMA will work with the steering committee to review the document. The questions posed in Worksheet #10 below (USDHS FEMA, 2025b, pp. 206-208) will

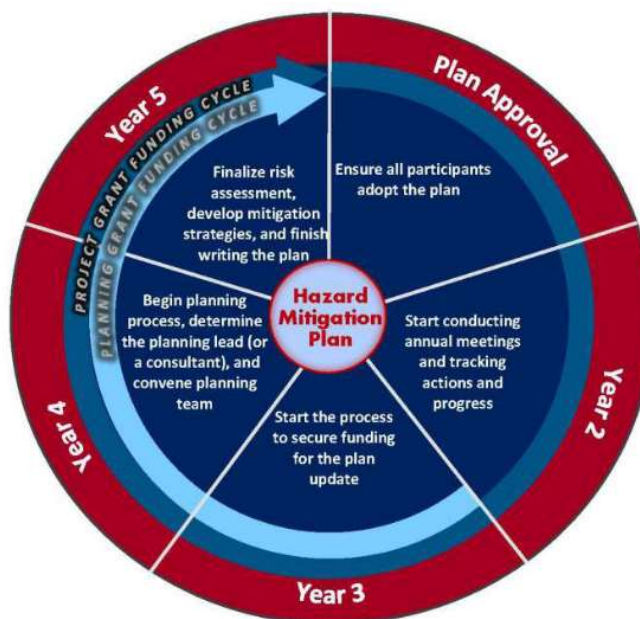


Figure 4.1.1

¹ In Year 3, ACEMA will begin working with the Ohio Emergency Management Agency (OEMA) to identify and secure funding for the next formal update.

serve as a framework for the mitigation discussion, ensuring that not only do players discuss topics like project status (see Table 4.1.1 below), but also evaluate the plan for its effectiveness.

Planning Process

- How have jurisdictions, communities, and agencies helped to carry out mitigation actions?
- Could anything from the initial planning process be more efficient?
- Have there been any changes in public support or priorities about hazard mitigation?
- Is there anything else, process-wise, we should consider?

Public Involvement

- Has the public been actively involved in the plan's implementation?
- How can public participation improve?

Risk Assessment

- Have there been any recent disaster events? If so, how did they impact the county (and the wider region)?
- Should the list of hazards addressed in the plan be updated? How so?
- Have there been any new issues with hazards in areas of the county?
- Are any new data sources available (e.g., studies, reports, maps, etc.)?
- Do any new critical facilities or infrastructure need to be added to the asset lists?
- Have any changes in development occurred that could create additional risks?
- Does any new development reduce risk?

Mitigation Strategy

- Have jurisdictions adopted new policies, plans, regulations, or reports that could support the plan?
- Are there different or new education and outreach programs and resources available for mitigation activities?
- Has NFIP participation changed in any participating jurisdictions?
- Is the mitigation strategy being implemented as expected? What types of issues have communities encountered?
- Are there new projects to consider?
- Should existing mitigation actions be revised or removed from the plan?

- Are there new funding sources to consider?
- Have parts of the plan been worked into other planning mechanisms?

Tracking the status of mitigation actions can be not only daunting (if a jurisdiction has a long project list) but also confusing, if jurisdictions are not aware of what information (about actions) is helpful. To that end, Worksheet #9 from the *Local Mitigation Planning Handbook* (USDHS FEMA, 2025b, pp. 204-205) can be useful for tracking the *progress* of mitigation actions, both those that a jurisdiction completes and those that have not yet begun. Table 4.1.1 reproduces the table from the handbook.

Table 4.1.1

Project Status/Evaluation Worksheet	
Category	Notes
Progress Report Period:	
Describe the action or project.	
Who is responsible for the action?	
Project status:	☐ Complete ☐ In progress, anticipated completion date: _____ ☐ Not started ☐ Cancelled
Has there been any progress with this project so far?	
Are there any obstacles or challenges with this action so far?	
What steps do you need to take to complete this project?	
Other comments:	

The goal of the annual planning committee meetings will be to generate content for the next plan update and educate new stakeholders as they enter the process. Representatives on the planning committee could change, and the maintenance meetings offer a prime opportunity to orient new members to what mitigation is, how the plan works, etc. The annual maintenance

meetings then support a more critical, in-depth formal update process. One to two weeks before the annual meeting, the ACEMA will provide committee members with an agenda and other preparatory information. Further, the ACEMA will compile minutes for all meetings.

The planning committee also recognizes that the post-disaster period following incidents that generate a federal disaster declaration offers an opportunity to review this document while impacts are fresh in the minds of committee members. As such, the committee intends to meet within one month of the occurrence of a declared disaster to determine mitigation measures that could have directly impacted the losses stemming from the declared event. The committee also understands that post-disaster periods serve as a chance to review the predictive accuracy of the mitigation plan. The ACEMA will attempt to reconvene the committee within the one-month timeframe following declared incidents.

4.0 PLAN MAINTENANCE AND INTEGRATION

4.2 Implementation through Existing Programs

§201.6(c)(4)(ii)

[The plan shall include a] process by which local governments incorporate the requirements of the mitigation plan into other planning mechanisms such as comprehensive or capital improvement plans, when appropriate.

To date, local policies have not hindered hazard mitigation efforts. The county and several of the participating jurisdictions have utilized a variety of funding sources to complete mitigation projects, including the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) program, the Building Resilience Infrastructure in Communities (BRIC) program, and other related programs such as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG). Five primary existing mechanisms support mitigation in Ashtabula County: (a) floodplain management, (b) stormwater management, (c) transportation planning, (d) community and economic development, and (e) emergency operations planning. When comparing the 2019 version of the plan with this update, it is noteworthy that the inclusion of objectives (see Section 3.1) is an example of integrating the ideas of this section from that previous update into the mitigation plan. Table 4.2.1 below describes the potential integration of these elements with hazard mitigation in detail.

Perhaps the most directly relevant program is the local effort to comply with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The county, along with all but two participating jurisdictions participate (i.e., the villages of Andover and Orwell) in the NFIP, which helps to regular the development that occurs in flood hazard areas. As of September 2025, no Ashtabula County communities participate in FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS) (FEMA, 2024c). Though this has historically been the case (with the intersection of administrative requirements and in-house capabilities as a barrier), CRS participation remains an opportunity to enhance flood preparedness and mitigation.

Table 4.2.1

MITIGATION INTEGRATION		
Existing Program	Participating Agencies	Narrative (and Goal Alignment)
Floodplain Management	Ashtabula County Building Department Municipal Floodplain Administrators	According to FEMA's <i>Community Status Book</i> (current as of 08/21/2025), all jurisdictions in Ashtabula County (except for Andover and Orwell) participate in the National Flood Insurance Program and thus maintain floodplain regulations that at least mirror the state's regulations. Jurisdictional "designated floodplain administrators" (DFPAs) enforce ordinances locally. No communities in Ashtabula County currently participate in the Community Rating System (CRS) program. GOAL ALIGNMENT 4. Proactively reduce the cost of recovery operations by preventing the destruction of property and infrastructure. 6. Promote awareness and education of all potential hazards to the public in Ashtabula County regarding personal hazard mitigation strategies. 8. Become an increasingly self-sustainable county during emergencies from all potential hazards.
Stormwater Management	Ashtabula County Planning Commission	Stormwater management planning can aid in the identification of site-specific flooding concerns and other water quality issues in a variety of communities. These conversations typically include options for low-impact development to mitigation flood concerns. The Ashtabula County Planning Commission indicates that updates to the county's comprehensive plan and subdivision regulations are forthcoming. One of the intentions of those updates is to include additional restrictions on development near riparian corridors, which could help reduce flood risk. These changes would be enforceable in the unincorporated areas of the county. Significantly, Ashtabula City is the only MS4 community in Ashtabula County. The city's stormwater program includes public involvement and public education components. GOAL ALIGNMENT 4. Proactively reduce the cost of recovery operations by preventing the destruction of property and infrastructure.

Existing Program	Participating Agencies	Narrative (and Goal Alignment)
Coastal Management	Ashtabula County Planning Commission Coastal Management Plan Steering Committee Eastgate Council of Governments Ohio Coastal Management Program (OCMP) Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR)	Ashtabula County's Coastal Management Plan examines a variety of issues surrounding the development and preservation of the coastal areas in the county. These include natural areas management, brownfields redevelopment, tree and woodland protection, steep slope protection, agricultural land protection, and scenic protection. The coastal management plan is a multi-jurisdictional effort, and its steering committee includes representation from Ashtabula County, Ashtabula City, Conneaut City, Geneva-on-the-Lake, Conneaut Township, and Geneva Township. It further references the Saybrook Township Comprehensive Plan. The existing plan identifies several compatible planning efforts. This plan is not on the current list and adding it to the next version of the coastal management plan would be beneficial to mitigation. GOAL ALIGNMENT 2. Protect Ashtabula County's vulnerable populations before, during, and after emergency events or incidents from all hazards. 4. Proactively reduce the cost of recovery operations by preventing the destruction of property and infrastructure.
Transportation Planning	Ashtabula County Planning Commission Municipal Partners Ashtabula County Transit ODOT	Two plans guide transportation developments in Ashtabula County: the <i>Ashtabula County Coordinated Transportation Plan</i> and the <i>ATB 534 Corridor Study</i>. These documents identify transportation infrastructure enhancements, and they ensure an adequate transportation system is available to residents and visitors. Both plans include considerations for numerous upgrades, ranging from capacity expansions to public transit opportunities to tourism considerations. All upgrades could include stormwater runoff measures, which could reduce flood risk in some areas. Further, these documents ensure an emergency egress capability that is as efficient as possible. GOAL ALIGNMENT 7. Reduce or avoid the displacement of people and animals due to hazardous events in Ashtabula County.
Emergency Operations Planning	Ashtabula County EMA Municipal Partners Response Agency Partners	The EMA incorporates mitigation principals into the county's emergency operations plan to predetermine the hazards to which responders may respond. This plan works primarily to address the negative effects of natural, technological, and human-caused hazards (as an all-hazards framework). GOAL ALIGNMENT 3. Increase the ability to coordinate and communicate before, during, and after a disaster. 5. Encourage partnerships and networking opportunities for jurisdictional officials and first responders within Ashtabula County and across the county and state borders.

Section 1.3: Capabilities also provides valuable insight into the integration of mitigation activities through existing programs. Zoning codes can be controversial, but in the most basic sense, they simply separate land use into various zones that describe what to build and where (Planetizen, n.d.). Rather than *restrict* all construction on certain parcels, communities may use fundamental zoning concepts to identify *the types of development* that may be suitable for certain tracts of land. Such an approach may not eliminate a risk, but it could lessen the number of properties exposed to a risk. The designation of specific areas as “industrial parks” is an example. Co-locating industrial facilities yields efficiency benefits for infrastructure access and contains common industrial-centric risks to a relatively small area.

Similarly, additional consideration of the building codes of several participating jurisdictions may offer opportunities to strengthen the actual deployment of mitigation ideas. Simply having a building code in place does not automatically ensure that a community will fare better when a high-probability hazard occurs. Thus, by integrating the data from this plan into the building code conversation, communities may have an opportunity to reduce risk by strengthening elements of a code that would harden structures to the type(s) of damage caused by the county’s most probable hazards.

4.0 PLAN MAINTENANCE AND INTEGRATION

4.3 Continued Public Involvement

§201.6(c)(4)(iii)	[The plan maintenance process shall include a] discussion on how the community will continue public participation in the plan maintenance process.
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All adopting jurisdictions maintain copies of this plan. Citizens can review the plan and provide comments at any city or village hall. Citizens may also access the plan through the Ashtabula County Emergency Management Agency (ACEMA). The ACEMA will maintain a copy of the document on its website (see the “Ashtabula County Hazard Mitigation Plan” link at <https://www.ashtabulacounty.us/129/Emergency-Management-911>). Though the plan is available at these locations, citizens may not be aware of that availability or understand the nature and purpose of a hazard mitigation plan. As such, additional means of public education and involvement are important.

Steering committee meetings are advertised and open to the public; thus, the public can participate in mitigation planning during those meetings. The ACEMA periodically sponsors education efforts and often collaborates with partner agencies in the county to release public information. Much of this information educates the public about actions to take before an emergency occurs. The ACEMA can modify its content to include basic information about risk reduction.

Additionally, in Year 3 of the cycle, the ACEMA will re-engage the public by distributing an online public survey via websites and social media. During that third year, ACEMA will also offer to deliver presentations to community groups to garner greater public involvement in future updates. The following box includes the base material for that survey (which mimics the “condensed survey” used to gather additional public comment during the 2025 update).

ASHTABULA COUNTY HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN
ANNUAL PUBLIC SURVEY

Please indicate how concerned you are about the following hazards where you live.

<u>Hazard</u>	<u>Not At All Concerned</u>	<u>Somewhat Concerned</u>	<u>Concerned</u>	<u>Very Concerned</u>
Coastal Erosion	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cyber Incident	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dam & Levee Failure	☐	☐	☐	☐
Drought	☐	☐	☐	☐
Earthquake	☐	☐	☐	☐
Flooding	☐	☐	☐	☐
HazMat Release	☐	☐	☐	☐
Health Related Emergency	☐	☐	☐	☐
Invasive Species	☐	☐	☐	☐
Severe Thunderstorms	☐	☐	☐	☐
Severe Winter Storm	☐	☐	☐	☐
Terrorism/Civil Disturbance	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tornado	☐	☐	☐	☐
Non-Storm Utility Failure	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wildfire	☐	☐	☐	☐

Of these hazards, which one concerns you the most? _____

Why does this hazard concern you the most? _____

Should we consider any hazards not on the above list? Why? _____

The following call-out box contains sample press release language the ACEMA may use to draw attention to the Year 3 public survey.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ashtabula County Looking for Input on Reducing Hazard Risks throughout the County

The Ashtabula County Emergency Management Agency, which is compiling annual updates to the county's hazard mitigation plan, wants residents to know that their voice matters when it comes to risk reduction. That is why the agency is conducting a survey to find out what hazards concern the public the most.

The hazard mitigation plan outlines projects that the cities, villages, and townships in Ashtabula County can undertake to reduce or eliminate the losses their communities could face should a hazard occur. Losses could be structural, like damage to homes or businesses, or they could include severe injuries. But before local officials can identify projects, they must know what hazards could be most damaging.

The county's existing plan contains a risk assessment that lays out potential impacts from 15 distinct hazards (most of which are naturally occurring). Even though this assessment outlines how frequently these hazards occur and how much damage they have caused in the past, knowing which ones *also significantly concern the public* helps to prioritize the selection and implementation of projects, particularly when funding is limited.

USE THIS SPACE TO ADD ANYTHING RELEVANT TO THE PROCESS AND SPECIFIC TO THE YEAR THIS IS RELEASED.

Residents may take the survey online at **ADD LINK**. For those residents who do not have reliable internet access or would like to request additional accommodation, please call 440-576-9148 or visit the EMA office at 25 West Jefferson Street, Jefferson, OH 44047. Residents may also view the existing hazard mitigation plan on the emergency management agency's website at <https://www.ashtabulacounty.us/129/Emergency-Management-911>.