

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A mitigation plan addresses natural disasters that could affect a local community, whether it is flooding, tornadoes, high winds, winter storms, landslides or some other natural disaster. A mitigation plan is an administrative document that is issued to establish activities that should reduce or, when possible, eliminate long-term risk to human-life and property. The plan will also provide a community with a “comprehensive guide” for future mitigation efforts as they relate to the hazards that affect their county. By developing a mitigation plan, a community can identify their areas of risk, assess the magnitude of the risk and develop strategies and priorities to identify projects for reducing risk.

The Butler County Emergency Management Executive Board supported developing this Butler County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (referred to hereafter as “Mitigation Plan”) with funds received from Ohio Emergency Management Agency (OEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The hazards that Butler County is considered most susceptible to are as follows:

- Severe Storms (Summer and Winter)
- Flooding
- Tornadoes
- Droughts
- Earthquakes

As part of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA2K, 42 USC 5165), communities that desire to remain eligible for Federal and State mitigation funds must have an approved mitigation plan in place.

According to the DMA2K, incorporated jurisdictions within a county must participate, as well as, representatives from the unincorporated areas. Townships are not required to participate because the county commissioners can represent them on mitigation projects. However, if a township would like to take an active part by submitting a hazard mitigation project, then their participation in the planning effort is crucial. Local participation is imperative to the successful implementation of these mitigation plans.

If a community chooses not to participate in the mitigation planning effort, then the community will become ineligible for any future federal or state mitigation money. This mitigation money usually comes in the form of a grant such as the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) or the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant (PDM), which is to be used to implement mitigation strategies and activities. Examples of eligible activities that could be supported by mitigation dollars include: relocation, acquisitions, elevation, dry-flood proofing, wet-flood proofing, lightning prediction systems, interoperable siren systems, stream restorations or any other activity potentially funded with mitigation dollars.

The Mitigation Overhead and Development Committee was started to create, implement, and liaise with the Mitigation Core Group Committee.

Members of the Mitigation Overhead and Development Committee are as follows:

Butler County Emergency Management Agency
Butler County Geographical Information Services (GIS)

Butler County Engineer's Office

The primary mitigation planning process that was followed during the development of this plan is as follows:

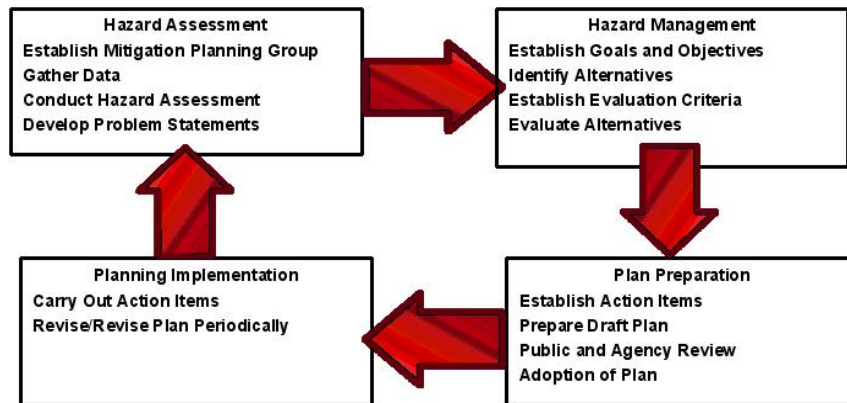


Figure 1.1

In addition to the aforementioned process, the Mitigation Overhead and Development Committee and the designated leaders of the group made sure that every community participating in this planning effort was aware of their responsibilities, as well as, how they could represent their community the best.

Some suggestions that were incorporated into the initial invitation to participate in the natural hazard mitigation planning effort included:

- Participate in the Mitigation Core Group Committee planning meetings representing your communities interests
- Supply any historic information (background) on natural disasters for your community to the Mitigation Planning Core Group Committee
- Review and comment on the Draft Mitigation Plan
- Review and select mitigation activities developed by the Mitigation Overhead and Development Committee for your community to implement
- Be an advocate for final adoption of the Mitigation Plan by your community

1.1 Planning Approach

In an effort to continue to meet the mission of protecting lives, property, economic viability and quality of life for the people of Butler County, the Emergency Management Executive Board desired to create the Mitigation Plan for their community and its residents.

The approach undertaken in the creation of the Mitigation Plan for the County can be described as both comprehensive and collaborative. The comprehensive approach includes following the interim final rule guidelines enacted under the DMA2K and the FEMA suggested guidelines for the creation of a mitigation plan. The collaborative portion of creating the Mitigation Plan included working with the different agencies within Butler County as well as coordination with all participating jurisdictions.

1.2 Participating Communities

Butler County has 25 jurisdictions, all of whom participated in this mitigation plan. The Butler County EMA developed a comprehensive survey for each of these jurisdictions to complete and return with

mitigation planning information specific to their community. Appendix D contains the list of participants from each community, as well as, who of those participants are continuing participants from the 2003 plan or new participants. Also, letters were sent to communities along with the initial concept of how the groups would interact. See Appendix D for an example of the letter that was sent.