

***The County of Belmont has been and will continue to be committed to a long-term strategy for reducing the risks of hazards.***

The intention of this Plan update is to serve as a blueprint for coordinating and implementing hazard mitigation policies, programs, and projects. It provides a list of mitigation goals, objectives, and related actions that may assist Belmont County in reducing risk and preventing loss from future natural and technological hazard events. The impacts of hazards can be lessened and sometimes avoided altogether if appropriate actions are taken before hazardous events occur. By avoiding unnecessary exposure to known hazard risks, communities will save lives and property and minimize the social, economic, and environmental disruptions that commonly follow hazard events. Belmont County and its municipalities agree that hazard mitigation makes sense. Through the identification of vulnerable areas and the implementation of measures aimed at minimizing exposure, the negative impacts of both natural and technological hazards may be reduced for Belmont County.

Some portions of Belmont County were developed long before natural hazards were fully understood. Therefore, some sections of our community are vulnerable to flooding, tornadoes and high wind, severe storms and lightning, wildfire, and other hazards. Working through the cycle of hazard mitigation can help ensure that vulnerabilities will not increase. Encouraging acquisition, relocation, or retrofitting of existing vulnerable structures, along with the protection of valuable natural resources, can minimize damages and help make sure that our community is built back better and stronger than before.

Communities face significant challenges during post-disaster redevelopment in balancing the driving need for rapid recovery with implementing long-term hazard mitigation. The necessity to meet basic needs and resettle displaced populations immediately following a disaster often overshadows the more abstract, longer-term sustainability considerations. Once full-scale reconstruction is initiated, it is difficult to modify projects in progress to meet sustainability objectives. This trend highlights the need for pre-disaster mitigation planning that incorporates principles of sustainable development within the context of reconstruction, so that communities can more easily rebuild in a manner that will make them less vulnerable to future hazard events while improving the quality of life.

It is imperative that local decision makers become and stay involved in this planning process to provide new ideas and insight for future updates to the Hazard Mitigation Plan for Belmont County. Now that a mitigation strategy has been developed (2007) and updated (2013), it will remain a challenge and a goal for Belmont County to provide necessary updates as mitigation techniques are implemented. It will remain imperative that all local agencies, units of government, non-profit organizations, businesses and industries, and private citizens continue their involvement and dedication to hazard mitigation.

It is our long-term goal that the Hazard Mitigation Plan and the strategies identified will be fully integrated into daily decisions and routines of government and business. This will continue to require dedication and hard work, but to this end, this Plan update will continue to lay the building blocks in order to further strengthen the sustainability of Belmont County.

This section of the Plan describes the mitigation planning process undertaken by Belmont County and participating municipalities in the preparation of this Hazard Mitigation Plan update. This section consists of the following subsections:

- BACKGROUND
- PURPOSE
- SCOPE
- AUTHORITY
- OVERVIEW OF HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING
- LOCAL METHODOLOGY AND UPDATE PROCESS
- THE PLANNING TEAM
- PLANNING MEETINGS AND DOCUMENTATION
- PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION
- MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL PLANNING AND PARTICIPATION
- EXISTING PLANNING MECHANISMS
- COMMUNITY PROFILE
- JURISDICTIONAL PROFILES
- LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

## BACKGROUND

Emergency Management is the discipline of identifying, managing, and avoiding risks. It is a discipline that involves preparing for a disaster before it occurs, supporting those affected by the disaster, as well as rebuilding after the natural or man-made disaster event. Emergency Management is an ever changing process by which all individuals, groups, and communities attempt to manage hazards in an effort to avoid or reduce the impact of disasters. One method to attempt to prevent hazards from developing into disasters all together is Hazard Mitigation Planning. Hazard Mitigation Planning is a process to identify policies, capabilities, activities, and tools necessary to implement successful and sustainable mitigation actions.

**Why undertake mitigation planning?** Mitigation planning offers many benefits, including:

- Saving lives and property;
- Saving money;
- Quick and effective recovery following disasters;
- Reducing future vulnerability through wise development and post-disaster recovery and reconstruction;
- Enhancing coordination within and across participating jurisdictions;
- Expediting the receipt of pre-disaster and post-disaster grant funding; and demonstrating a firm commitment to improving community health and safety.

Typically, mitigation planning is described as having the potential to produce long-term and recurring benefits by breaking the repetitive cycle of disaster loss. A core assumption of hazard mitigation is that

pre-disaster investments will significantly reduce the demand for post-disaster assistance by lessening the need for emergency response, repair, recovery and reconstruction. Furthermore, mitigation practices will enable local residents, businesses and industries to re-establish themselves in the wake of a disaster, getting the community economy back on track sooner and with less interruption.

The benefits of mitigation planning go beyond reducing hazard vulnerability. Measures such as the acquisition or regulation of land in known hazard areas can help achieve multiple community goals, such as preserving open space, improving water quality, maintaining environmental health and enhancing recreational opportunities. Thus, it is vitally important that any local mitigation planning process be integrated with other concurrent local planning efforts, and any proposed mitigation strategies must take into account other existing community goals or initiatives that will help complement or hinder their future implementation. Belmont County and its municipalities have embraced this approach, identifying multiple opportunities to link the Plan with pre-existing programs, policies, plans and initiatives.

During the last two decades, the approach to the emergency management cycle has evolved considerably. A renewed emphasis has been placed on planning for disasters before they occur as a complement to effective response and recovery. As a result, hazard mitigation has gained increasing prominence as a critical part of emergency management. By mitigating hazards through sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from hazards, risks can be proactively combated in a systematic manner, rather than being reacted to once they occur.

This 2013 Plan update is the result of continuing work by the citizens of the County to update a pre-disaster multi-hazard mitigation plan that will not only continue to guide the County towards greater disaster resistance, but will also respect the character and needs of the community.

## PURPOSE

Belmont County developed its initial hazard mitigation plan in August 2006 (approved April 2007) which provided momentum for making homes, businesses, and communities as safe as possible against the impacts of floods, tornadoes, winter weather, and other natural hazards. The initial Plan assessed the effectiveness of prior and current programs and activities in the community and identified shortfalls; mitigation measures were further developed to help reduce Belmont County's exposure to these natural hazards.

Belmont County has remained dedicated in continuing the work started in 2007 by updating this Plan in 2013 in order to:

- Protect life and property by reducing the potential for future damages and economic losses that result from natural hazards;
- Qualify for additional grant funding, in both the pre-disaster and post-disaster environment;
- Provide quick recovery and redevelopment following future disasters;
- Integrate existing flood mitigation documents;
- Demonstrate a firm local commitment to hazard mitigation principles; and
- Comply with state and federal legislative requirements tied to local hazard mitigation planning

## SCOPE

This Plan update has been prepared to meet requirements set forth by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Ohio Emergency Management Agency (OEMA) in order for Belmont County to be eligible for funding and technical assistance from state and federal hazard mitigation programs. It will continue to be updated and maintained to continually address those natural hazards determined to be of high and moderate risk as defined by the updated results of the local hazard, risk, and vulnerability summary. Other natural hazards will continue to be evaluated during future updates to the Plan in order to determine if they warrant additional attention, including the development of specific mitigation measures intended to reduce their impact. This Plan will be updated and FEMA approved within its five-year expiration date.

## AUTHORITY

Belmont County plans to adopt the plan in accordance with the authority granted to counties by the State of Ohio.

This Plan was updated in accordance with current state and federal rules and regulations governing local hazard mitigation plans. The Plan shall be monitored and updated on a routine basis to maintain compliance with the following legislation and guidance:

- Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C., Section 322, Mitigation Planning, as enacted by Section 104 of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-390) and by FEMA's Interim Final Rule published in the Federal Register on February 26, 2002, at 44 CFR Part 201
- Chapter 5502, Ohio Revised Code (specifically Section 5502.26, 5502.27, and 5502.271 require the establishment of county emergency management agencies and plan development).
  - Authorized the Belmont County Emergency Management Agency

The following Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) guides and reference documents were used to prepare this document:

- FEMA. 386-1: Getting Started. September 2002.
- FEMA. 386-2: Understanding Your Risks: Identifying Hazards and Estimating Losses. August 2001.
- FEMA. 386-3: Developing the Mitigation Plan. April 2003.
- FEMA. 386-4: Bringing the Plan to Life. August 2003.
- FEMA. 386-5: Using Benefit-Cost Review in Mitigation Planning. May 2007.
- FEMA. 386-6: Integrating Historic Property and Cultural Resource Considerations into Hazard Mitigation Planning. May 2004.
- FEMA. 386-7: Integrating Manmade Hazards into Mitigation Planning. September 2003.
- FEMA. 386-8: Multi-Municipality Mitigation Planning. August 2006.
- FEMA. 386-9: Using the Hazard Mitigation Plan to Prepare Successful Mitigation Projects. August 2008.
- FEMA. Local Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning Guidance. July 1, 2008.

## OVERVIEW OF HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING

Local hazard mitigation planning is the process of organizing community resources, identifying and assessing hazard risks, and determining how to best minimize or manage those risks. This process results in a hazard mitigation plan that identifies specific mitigation actions, each designed to achieve both short term planning objectives and a long-term community vision. To ensure the functionality of each mitigation action, responsibility is assigned to a specific individual, department or agency along with a schedule for its implementation. Plan maintenance procedures are established to implement, as well as evaluate and enhance the Plan as necessary. Developing clear plan maintenance procedures ensures that Belmont County's Hazard Mitigation Plan remains a current, dynamic and effective planning document over time.

## LOCAL METHODOLOGY AND UPDATE PROCESS

This updated Plan contains a narrative description of the process followed to prepare it. All municipalities were notified in October 2012 of the requirement concerning the MPC and process. Subsequent meetings were held to ensure that all information is correct, and that all agencies, organizations and the public's input were included as presented. In all, the plan update process was conducted over the course of three months, from October 2012 to December 2012. Throughout the planning update process, the Belmont County Mitigation Planning Committee reviewed and analyzed each section of the plan. In preparing the updated Plan, documentation indicates that the committee utilized a multi-jurisdictional planning process consistent with the one recommended by FEMA (Publication Series 386).

The first Belmont County Hazard Mitigation Plan was adopted on August 14, 2006. In 2006, the Belmont County Hazard Mitigation Committee started preparing the Plan to fulfill the requirements of DMA 2000. Development of the plan was a concerted effort on the part of Belmont County and its municipalities. The Belmont County EMA Director invited directors and staff from public agencies, private businesses and organizations, and community representatives to participate in this recent planning committee.

The 2007 Belmont County Hazard Mitigation Plan and the current State of Ohio Hazard Mitigation Plan were reviewed for incorporation into the 2013 Belmont County Hazard Mitigation Plan. Portions of the Belmont County Comprehensive Plan were used to develop the general land use patterns and development trends section of this 2013 Plan update.

The 2007 Plan addressed eighteen hazards. Each of those hazards were assessed by previous occurrences, vulnerability and exposure to County and municipal assets, and potential loss estimates (if applicable). In addition, the 2007 Plan defined those hazards that were considered to have the highest probability of occurrence. Michael Baker Jr., Inc. (Columbus, Ohio location) provided planning support and guidance to Belmont County throughout the update process.

The planning process used for the 2013 Plan update was based on Section 322 of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and supporting guidance developed by FEMA. The planning process followed these steps:

- Conduct kickoff meeting and reestablish the Mitigation Planning Committee/Team
- Conduct a 5-year Plan review
- Review and update the local hazard, risk, and vulnerability summary
- Determine capability for the county and each municipality
- Update the mitigation strategy
- Update the Plan maintenance procedures
- Complete a draft plan for review by Belmont County
- Advertise opportunity/hold public meeting for comment on final draft
- Provide final draft to OEMA for review
- Provide final draft to FEMA for review
- Present Plan to municipalities for adoption
- Present Plan to Belmont County for adoption

Each of the planning steps described above resulted in key products and outcomes that collectively make up the Hazard Mitigation Plan. These work elements are further discussed below for introductory purposes.

The *Community Profile*, located later in this chapter, describes the general makeup of Belmont County and its municipalities, including prevalent geographic, demographic, and economic characteristics. This baseline information provides a snapshot of the Countywide planning area and thereby assists participating officials in recognizing those social, environmental, and economic factors that ultimately play a role in determining community vulnerability to natural hazards.

The *Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA)*, found in Chapter 2, is presented as three different elements: *Hazard Identification/Profile*, *Hazard Analysis* and a *Vulnerability Assessment*. Together, these elements serve to identify, analyze, and assess Belmont County's overall risk to natural hazards. The HIRA builds on available historical data from previous occurrences, establishes hazard-by-hazard profiles, and culminates in a hazard risk priority or ranking based on conclusions about the frequency of occurrence, potential impact, spatial extent, warning time, and duration of each hazard. FEMA's HAZUS-MH loss estimation methodology was also used in evaluating known flood risks according to their relative long-term cost, measured in expected damages. The HIRA is designed to assist communities in seeking the most appropriate mitigation actions to pursue and implement by focusing their efforts on those hazards of greatest concern and those structures or planning areas facing the greatest risk(s).

The *Community Profile* and *HIRA* collectively serve as a basis for updating goals for this Plan update, each contributing to the development, adoption, and implementation of a meaningful *Mitigation Strategy* update that is based on accurate background information.

The *Mitigation Strategy*, located in Chapter 3, consists of broad goal statements as well as specific mitigation actions for each jurisdiction participating in the planning process. This updated strategy

provides the foundation for detailed *Mitigation Action Plans* that link jurisdictionally specific mitigation actions to locally assigned implementation mechanisms and target completion dates. Together, these sections are designed to make the Plan more strategic and functional through the identification of both long-term goals and near-term actions that will guide day-to-day decision-making and project implementation.

In addition to the identification and prioritization of possible mitigation projects, emphasis is placed on the use of program and policy alternatives to help make Belmont County and participating municipalities less vulnerable to the damaging forces of nature while improving the economic, social, and environmental health of the community. The concept of multi-objective planning is emphasized throughout this Plan update, identifying ways to link hazard mitigation policies and programs with complimentary community goals that may be related to housing, economic development, community revitalization, recreational opportunities, transportation improvements, environmental quality, land development, and public health and safety. This Hazard Mitigation Plan update should be seen as a proactive document that represents a concerted effort to make Belmont County and participating jurisdictions more livable communities.

The *Plan Maintenance Procedures*, found in Chapter 4, includes the measures Belmont County and participating jurisdictions will take to ensure the Plan's continuous long-term implementation. The procedures also include the manner in which the Plan will be regularly monitored, reported upon, evaluated and updated to remain a current and meaningful planning document.

The Mitigation Planning Committee reviewed the current plan, identified new information that needed to be included in the Plan update and incorporated it as required by state and federal guidelines. The planning committee was also tasked with collecting all accurate data from plan participants and provided outreach to the public and business stakeholders to ensure that everyone's information is included in this Plan update.

## THE PLANNING TEAM

A well-rounded community-based planning team contributed heavily to the development of this Plan update. Belmont County engaged past Mitigation Planning Committee (MPC) members, local government officials, stakeholders, and the general public in local meetings and planning workshops to discuss and complete tasks associated with preparing the Plan update.

The participants listed in Table 1-1 represent the members of the MPC who were responsible for participating in the updating of this Plan.

NAME	AGENCY, JURISDICTION
Dave Ivan	Belmont County EMA
Becky Horne	Belmont County EMA
Ron Bischof	Mayor, Village of Barnesville
John Callarik	Mayor, Village of Bridgeport

Mark McVey	Mayor, Village of Powhatan Point
Bob Newhart	Mayor, Village of Shadyside
John Defilipo	Mayor, Village of Yorkville
Matt Coffland	Commissioner, Belmont County
Barbara Bashline	Mayor, Village of Flushing
Robert Thomas	Mayor, Village of Brookside
Susan Telkowski	Mayor, Village of Holloway
Paul Riethmiller	Mayor, City of Martins Ferry
Don Pickenpaugh	Belmont County GIS
Steve Schumacher	OSU Extension Office
Vince DiFabrizio	Mayor, Village of Bellaire
Mike Wallace	Belmont County Flood Plain Administrator
Richard Thompson	Mayor, Village of Belmont
Gordon Price	Mayor, Village of Morristown
Tom Murphy	City of St. Clairsville
Andrew Satak	Belmont County Auditor
Martin Lucas	Mayor, Village of Bethesda
Drew Whitehair	Michael Baker Jr., Inc.
Jason Farrell	Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

## PLANNING MEETINGS AND DOCUMENTATION

The preparation of the Plan update required a series of meetings and workshops intended to facilitate discussion and initiate data collection efforts with local community officials. More importantly, the meetings and workshops prompted continuous input and feedback from local officials throughout the update process.

Below is a summary of the key meetings and workshops conducted by the Belmont County Mitigation Planning Committee:

### KICKOFF MEETING / FIRST MITIGATION PLANNING UPDATE MEETING

The first meeting was held and advertised as an open/public forum on November 15, 2012 during which the mitigation planning update project was introduced to county officials, representatives of participating jurisdictions, stakeholders, and the general public. The intent of this meeting was to educate local officials, stakeholders, and the general public on the mitigation planning process, being sponsored by Belmont County, as well as to explain the DMA 2000 multi-jurisdictional planning requirements and the individual roles being required of selected planning committee members. The meeting also served to initiate data collection efforts for the HIRA summary associated with the Plan update.

The meeting began with introductions and a detailed presentation on the mitigation planning process led by Drew Whitehair, Michael Baker Jr., Inc. Specific data collection needs were thoroughly explained, including the need for accurate GIS data as well as any unique local hazard risk data available for specific areas of concern.

During the presentation, the project team from Michael Baker Jr., Inc. led discussion on a five year plan review exercise. The following table provides a recap of comments provided during the review.

<b>Table 1-2: 2005-2010 Five Year Plan Review Exercise Comments</b>	
<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>FEEDBACK</b>
Do the goals and actions address current and expected conditions?	This question was met with responses from the participants. Below are the comments that were highlighted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goals are unrealistic and do not flow well with the plan's identified hazards</li> <li>• Some of the objectives overlap with other planning mechanisms such as the county's EOP</li> </ul>
Has the nature of magnitude of hazard risk changed?	DFIRM's have changed the boundaries of the Special Flood Hazard Area's within the County and therefore affected the magnitude and hazard risk vulnerability to private and public property.
Are current resources adequate to implement the plan?	This question was met with responses from participants. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fiscal support is lacking at both the county and municipal level</li> <li>• Local GIS (county/city) has capability that could potentially benefit future mitigation planning endeavors</li> </ul>
Are there any issues that limited the current implementation schedule?	The majority of the participating members agreed that the biggest hurdles and limitations to the implementing the actions were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited funding</li> <li>• Knowledge of grant cycle and ability to manage grants are problematic for some communities</li> <li>• Need to focus on obtainable actions that are realistic in today's fiscal climate</li> </ul>

Next, the Mitigation Planning Committee reached consensus on those natural and technological hazards that should be addressed in the HIRA, and subsequently those that participating jurisdictions would possibly focus their mitigation efforts throughout the next five years of the Plan's cycle.

An assessment was then conducted for ranking the top hazards affecting Belmont County and discussions were held on the findings and details can be found in Chapter 2: HIRA of this Plan.

Following the presentation on the planning process and the five year plan review, the project team from Michael Baker Jr., Inc. addressed any questions and concerns raised by the committee.

The Mitigation Planning Committee then reviewed current goals and objectives and evaluated whether they had been completed or whether they should be deferred into the 2013 Plan, deleted, or changed. The results of these evaluations are summarized in Chapter 3 of this Plan.

### **SECOND MITIGATION PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING: "MITIGATION SOLUTIONS WORKSHOP"**

The third Mitigation Planning Committee meeting was held on November 29, 2012 in the form of a three hour "Mitigation Solutions Workshop." The workshop began with a detailed presentation by Michael Baker Jr., Inc. on the findings of the local hazard, risk, and vulnerability update summary and capabilities for the county and each participating municipality. This data provided County and municipal officials with a more thorough understanding of the hazard risks in their communities, along with the varied levels of local capabilities available to address them. This information was to be used by

participants in creating meaningful mitigation planning goals and specific, achievable mitigation actions that are designed to reduce the impacts of the identified hazards.

Following the presentation, an in-depth evaluation of the current mitigation actions was conducted by the Mitigation Planning Committee to review, whether since 2004, actions have been completed, were incomplete and needed to be deferred to the 2013 Plan, changed, or deleted from the Plan altogether. A summary of the evaluation can be found in Chapter 3 of this Plan.

Before the meeting concluded, Michael Baker Jr., Inc. distributed and explained several handouts for workshop participants to use in identifying specific mitigation actions for incorporation into their own respective Mitigation Action Plans. This included Mitigation Action Templates (forms for proposing specific actions), along with a variety of planning tools and reference documents for considering and evaluating possible mitigation action alternatives. Workshop participants were instructed to take these materials back to their individual jurisdiction's Mitigation Action Plan. The meeting also provided an opportunity for the County and participating municipalities to add new mitigation actions.

## **PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION**

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

An important component of Belmont County's community-based mitigation planning process involves public, stakeholder, and jurisdiction participation. Individual citizen involvement provides the Mitigation Planning Committee with a greater understanding of local concerns and ensures a higher degree of mitigation success by developing community "buy-in" from those directly affected by the planning decisions of public officials.

Public input was sought using by advertising open public meetings in the community newspaper both during the development and draft stage of the planning process. The updated Plan was also available for review and comment at the Belmont County Emergency Management Agency prior to adoption.

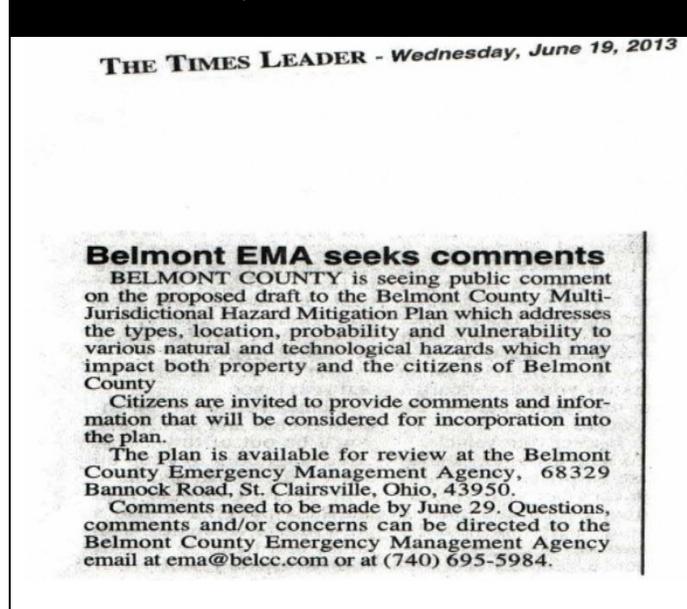
Further, the county-level public meetings were advertised throughout two stages of the planning process; during the kickoff presentation (development stage of the planning process) and following the completion of the draft Plan (draft stage of the planning process). The first meeting was advertised as a newspaper advertisement posted in the Times Leader prior to the meeting held on November 15, 2012. The intent of the meeting was to inform citizens about the importance of hazard mitigation, describe the mitigation planning process, and conduct a five year Plan review. The public was also invited to participate on the Mitigation Planning Team.

**Public Meeting Notice as Published in the Times Leader on November 9, 2012**



Public input on the draft plan was sought by advertising another public notice in the Times Leader on June 19, 2013 as shown below in Figure 1-2.

**Public Meeting Notice as published in the Times Leader on June 19, 2013**



The Belmont County EMA notified the public and interested agencies to the availability of the draft copy by advertising in the local paper, with village postings, and a notice at the Courthouse. The Plan was made available for review at the Belmont County Emergency Management Agency. This provided citizens with several opportunities to review the content of each of the Plan's sections, to ask questions and suggest possible final revisions.

**STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION**

A range of stakeholders, including agencies, businesses, academia, nonprofits, and other interested parties were invited and encouraged to participate in the development of the Plan update. These stakeholders included local companies such as; The Belmont Community Hospital, The Commercial Vehicle Group, The East Ohio Regional Hospital, and Murray Energy/Ohio Valley Coal Company. Additionally, Belmont College was invited to participate and watershed groups including; Captina Creek, The Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District (MWCD) and the Tuscarawas River Buried Valley Watershed Council. Stakeholder involvement was encouraged through Belmont County’s invitations to agencies and individuals to participate in Mitigation Planning Committee meetings and the Mitigation Solutions Workshop. Adjacent county emergency management agencies were invited to be a part of the mitigation plan update process. These counties included Jefferson, Harrison, Guernsey, Noble and Monroe in Ohio, and Ohio and Marshall Counties in West Virginia. Invitations were also extended to state agencies located within the county. The attendance of these stakeholders is documented in Table 1-3.

**Table 1-3: Stakeholder Involvement in the Planning Process**

STAKEHOLDER NAME	ORGANIZATION	ATTENDED MEETING(S)
Rose Grear	South Central Power Co-Op	•
Mike Rizzo	Belmont County Correctional Institute	•
Jeff Gazdik	St. Clairsville Police Department	•
Robyn Marcham	Belmont County 911	•

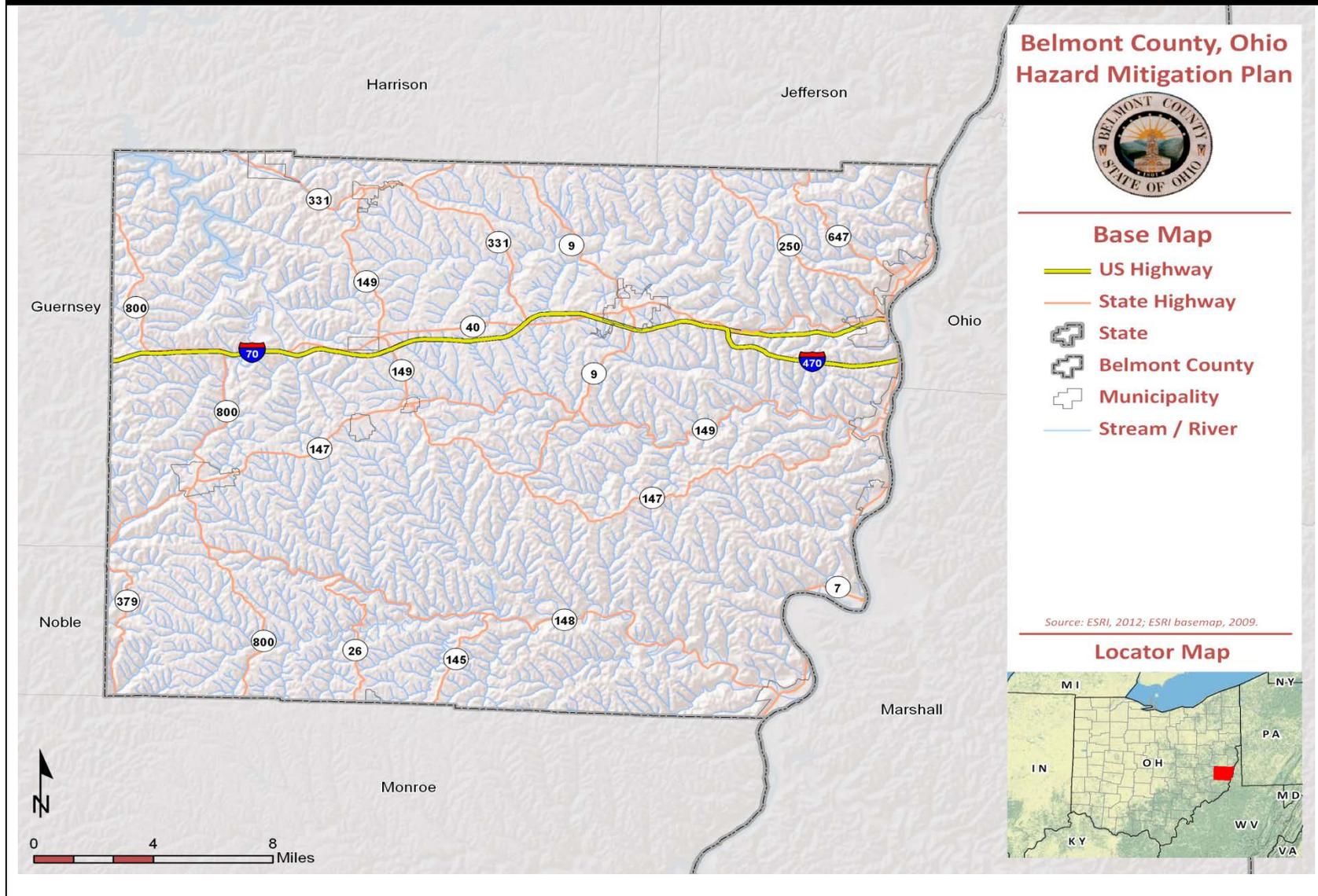
**MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL PLANNING AND PARTICIPATION**

The 2013 Belmont County Hazard Mitigation Plan is multi-jurisdictional and includes the participation of County officials and the following municipalities:

- City of Martins Ferry
- City of St. Clairsville
- Village of Barnesville
- Village of Bellaire
- Village of Belmont
- Village of Bethesda
- Village of Bridgeport
- Village of Brookside
- Village of Fairview
- Village of Flushing
- Village of Holloway
- Village of Morristown
- Village of Powhatan Point
- Village of Shadyside
- Village of Yorkville
- Township of Colerain

- Township of Flushing
- Township of Goshen
- Township of Kirkwood
- Township of Mead
- Township of Pease
- Township of Pultney
- Township of Richland
- Township of Smith
- Township of Somerset
- Township of Union
- Township of Warren
- Township of Washington
- Township of Wayne
- Township of Wheeling
- Township of York

Figure 2-1: Belmont County Basemap



To satisfy multi-jurisdictional participation requirements, each of the local jurisdictions was required to perform the following tasks:

- (1) Designate a representative to serve on the Belmont County Mitigation Planning Committee;
- (2) Participate in all Plan update meetings and workshops;
- (3) Provide best available data as required for the update to the local hazard, risk, and vulnerability summary section of the Plan;
- (4) Determine capability and provide copies of any mitigation or hazard-related documents for review and incorporation into the Plan;
- (5) Support the updating of the current Countywide mitigation strategy, including the update, evaluation, design and adoption of general goal statements for all jurisdictions to pursue;
- (6) Review and provide timely comments on all draft components of the Plan update;
- (7) Following federal approval, adopt the 2013 Belmont County Mitigation Plan, including the local mitigation action plan specific to their jurisdiction by passing a Resolution or Ordinance.

Through the completion of these tasks, all municipalities participated with Belmont County in updating this Plan. Further, through the preparation of their own local mitigation action plans, the municipalities were responsible for addressing their most significant hazard concerns. This component of the Plan provides the opportunity for the jurisdiction to monitor and update their own specific action plan implementation responsibilities without necessarily having to meet with the Countywide Mitigation Planning Committee. It also enables each jurisdiction to be solely responsible and accountable for those actions that apply to their jurisdiction.

**Table 1-4: 2007 and 2013 Multi-Jurisdictional Participation**

JURISDICTION	2007 PARTICIPATION	2013 PARTICIPATION	2013 ADOPTION DATE
City of Martins Ferry	•	•	11/6/2013
City of St. Clairsville	•	•	12/2/2013
Village of Barnesville	•	•	11/18/2013
Village of Bellaire	•	•	12/5/2013
Village of Belmont	•	•	11/5/2013
Village of Bethesda	•	•	11/14/2013
Village of Bridgeport	•	•	11/19/2013
Village of Brookside	•	•	1/13/2014
Village of Flushing	•	•	12/12/2013
Village of Holloway	•	•	11/14/2013
Village of Morristown	•	•	11/12/2013
Village of Powhatan Point	•	•	11/5/2013
Village of Shadyside	•	•	11/18/2013
Village of Yorkville	•	•	11/5/2013

All jurisdictions participated in the Plan update, as well as reviewed and provided timely comments on all draft components of the Plan.

## EXISTING PLANNING MECHANISMS

There are numerous existing regulatory and planning mechanisms in place at the state, County, and municipal levels of government which support hazard mitigation planning efforts. These tools include the State of Ohio Hazard Mitigation Plan, local floodplain management ordinances, the Belmont County Emergency Operation Plans, and local ordinances. These mechanisms were discussed at planning meetings and the Belmont County Mitigation Planning Committee reviewed all available technical information provided within these planning mechanisms and have incorporated them into this Plan update. This plan will also serve as a source document and be incorporated into local plans (some referenced above) as they are updated or developed. These planning mechanisms enhance the County's mitigation strategy and are therefore incorporated into several of the mitigation actions identified in this Plan. For example, floodplain ordinances serve to guide development away from hazardous areas while stormwater management plans, as required in the planning and zoning codes for many communities, reduce the effects of erosion due to increased runoff.

Belmont County has countywide subdivision regulations as well as Special Purpose Flood Damage Prevention Regulations. The following communities have adopted zoning and/or permitting regulations:

- Village of Barnesville
- Village of Bellaire
- Village of Bridgeport
- Village of Brookside
- City of Martins Ferry
- Village of Morristown
- Village of Powhatan Point
- City of St. Clairsville
- Village of Shadyside

## COMMUNITY PROFILE AND LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Belmont County was formed on September 1, 1801 with a population of only 11,097 and had a peak population of 95,614 in the 1940's.. Belmont County was one of Ohio's earliest counties. It originally was a county in the Northwest Territory. Residents named the county Belmont after the French term for "beautiful mountain." Thousands of settlers migrated westward through Belmont County along Zane's Trace. The National Road also passed through the county. Quakers were among the county's first residents and many of these people became outspoken critics of slavery. Among them was the famous abolitionist Benjamin Lundy.

The county consists of 541.27 square miles, out of which 9.14 square miles are water, and has a population of 70,400 as of 2010. This is a population increase of 0.2% over the 2000 census. Placed along the Ohio River and with mountainous terrain several communities are at risk from flash flooding. The county is heavily rural. St. Clairsville, the county seat, was named for Arthur St. Clair. This city is the

second largest urban place in Belmont County with just over five thousand residents in 2000. Martins Ferry is the largest community with approximately 7,200 residents. Typical of other predominantly rural areas in Ohio, Belmont County experienced a declining population between 1990 and 2000. The county averages 131 people per square mile and had a population of 70,226 people in 2000.

Despite its rural nature, most residents do not earn their livings through farming. Approximately twenty-five percent of the people are involved in sales, with another fifteen percent employed in service industries. Historically, many Belmont County residents found employment in the coal, iron, and steel industries. These businesses remain important employers today. In 1999, the per capita income was just over 20,500 dollars. More than sixteen percent of the county's residents were living in poverty.

The county seat is St. Clairsville and the largest city is Martins Ferry (population 6,915) which is the oldest settlement in the state of Ohio. Morristown resides within Belmont and is the host of Jamboree in the Hills, which is an annual country music festival during the month of July. This event is a popular attraction that draws large crowds and famous musicians.

Land use patterns described in general terms within Belmont County are consistent with typical rural counties in the Midwestern part of the U.S. The manufacturing industry provides the largest percentage of the County's employment. Most of the new industrial development throughout Belmont County over the next 25 years will more than likely take place within industrial park areas along with other individual sites that are already designated for industrial development throughout the County.

It is expected that commercial development will continue to saturate more urban areas like the City of Martins Ferry and the villages throughout the next 25 years. One reason is that the retail and service market is far from being saturated in the City of Martins Ferry and in the villages. Another reason is that high transportation costs which are expected to continue to rise are keeping more travelers closer to home and in their search for goods and services

**Table 1-5: Belmont County and Jurisdictional Authorities, Policies, Programs and Resources**

Community	Planning Commission	Comprehensive Plans	Floodplain Regulations	Building Codes	Zoning Ordinances	Capital Budget	Public Works Budget
Belmont County	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	\$17.2 mil	\$235,199.00
Martins Ferry	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	\$10.2 mil	\$3.3 mil
St. Clairsville	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	\$500,000.00	\$7.7 mil
Village of Barnesville	YES	NO	NO	NO - Use State	NO - except in Historical	\$5,996,525.00	\$2,753,449.00

				Codes	Area Downtown		
Village of Bellaire	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	None	\$2.05 mil
Village of Belmont	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	None	\$165,827.00
Village of Bethesda	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	None	\$495,023.00
Village of Bridgeport	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	\$922,500.00	\$800,000.00
Village of Brookside	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	Did not state	Did not state
Village of Flushing	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	\$1.78 mil	\$1.25 mil
Village of Holloway	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	None	\$73,151.00
Village of Morristown	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	Did not state	\$54,000.00
Village of Powhatan Point	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	\$1.8 mil	\$200,000.00
Village of Shadyside	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	\$4.6 mil	\$2.9 mil
Village of Yorkville	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	\$403,700.00	\$378,000.00