West Hartford

West Hartford is a fully suburbanized community located in Hartford County that encompasses a land area of 22 square miles. It is a largely residential community with a population of approximately 63,300. The major transportation routes that travel through West Hartford include Interstate 84, State Routes 4, 44, 71, 173, 185, 189 and 218. The Town hosts the University of Hartford, University of St. Joseph, American School for the Deaf, and the Hartford Branch of the University of Connecticut. About 21% of the Town’s non-agricultural employment is in manufacturing. The Town has several large established commercial districts.

West Hartford is within the Park River Watershed, and contains several reservoirs that supply the Metropolitan District Commission’s system. Major watercourses in town include Meadow, Piper, Rockledge, Trout, and Tumbledown Brooks, and the North Branch of the Park River.

Existing Strategies

The Town has experienced significant flooding events in the past and has worked to mitigate the problem over the course of many years. The Town of West Hartford undertook significant structural mitigation projects in the early 1980s, including rechanneling the Trout Brook to remove 238 houses from the floodplain.

The National Flood Insurance Program has paid 318 property damage claims in West Hartford totaling $1,171,709.48 to-date. The NFIP has paid out has 91 Repetitive Loss Property claims on 34 properties in West Hartford to-date. These claims have totaled over $712,392. In 2001, the Town adopted a Repetitive Flood Loss Plan, and has consistently worked to implement the action plan contained within. The Town periodically ensures that repetitive flood loss property owners have adequate information for retro-fitting flood-prone structures. The Town also holds regular meetings with residents to provide technical advice on flood protection and flood preparedness. In 2008, in order to remain eligible for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program, the Town revised its floodplain ordinance using adopting language that meets or exceeds federal or state requirements. The revised ordinance improves the Town’s ability to restrict new development in flood prone areas.

Since 2008, the Town’s Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission has approved ten (10) separate regulated activities in areas either identified as floodplain or wetlands. Most of these approvals were for work in regulated inland wetlands areas outside of the floodplain. The Commission approved construction of a multi-family residential building and several commercial and accessory structures outside the floodplain in inland wetland regulated areas, as well as several minor structural renovations and site improvements in regulated areas in accordance with the flood hazard reduction and resource compensation standards outlined in the Zoning Ordinance and Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations. No new structures were approved in the special flood hazard area. Portions of a parking lot and access drives were approved in a 500 year floodplain. These permitted activities did not result in increased vulnerabilities to flooding and in some cases reduced the community’s flood risk. For example, permitted activities included structural stormwater drainage improvements, stream bank stabilization and removal of sediment and debris in floodplain and wetlands that help mitigate flood risks.
Some of the remaining flooding issues in West Hartford result from sanitary sewer service back-ups. The Metropolitan District Commission owns and operates the sewer system in West Hartford. The Clean Water Project should alleviate overflow problems in this area.

Challenges

Despite these efforts, flooding continues to be a major concern for the Town. A significant flood event could result in substantial damage in the community. CRCOG used FEMA’s Hazus-MH model to analyze the risks that the Town of West Hartford might face from a major flood. The model estimates that economic losses to the town including residential and commercial damage and business interruptions due to a flood having a 1% chance of occurring any given year (the 100-year flood) would be nearly $131 million. The impacts of such a flood are summarized below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Damages from 100-Year Flood</th>
<th>Households Displaced</th>
<th>893</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People Needing Shelter</td>
<td>2,004</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buildings at Least Moderately Damaged</td>
<td>140</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Damage to Essential Facilities</td>
<td>One school could sustain moderate damage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Estimated Economic Losses</td>
<td>$130,710,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Residential Building &amp; Content Losses</td>
<td>$49,140,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Commercial, Industrial &amp; Other Building &amp; Content Losses</td>
<td>$80,830,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Business Interruption Losses</td>
<td>$740,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to flooding, hurricanes and severe winter storms can also create significant impacts to the Town and its residents and businesses. CRCOG also used FEMA’s Hazus-MH model to analyze the risks that the Town of West Hartford might face from a hurricane as powerful as the 1938 hurricane. The model estimates that economic losses to the town including residential and commercial damage and business interruptions due to such a Category 3 hurricane would be over $355 million. The impacts of such a storm are summarized below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Damages from 1938 Strength Hurricane</th>
<th>Households Displaced</th>
<th>178</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People Needing Shelter</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buildings at Least Moderately Damaged</td>
<td>2,358</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buildings Completely Damaged</td>
<td>138</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Estimated Economic Losses</td>
<td>$355,325,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Residential Building Losses</td>
<td>$265,371,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Commercial, Industrial &amp; Other Building Losses</td>
<td>$53,553,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Business Interruption Losses</td>
<td>$36,402,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Debris Generated</td>
<td>56,362 tons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truckloads (at 25 tons/truck) of building debris</td>
<td>1271</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to information from the Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, the three federally declared natural disasters of 2011 resulted in total expenses to the municipality and local private nonprofit agencies of nearly $11 million. These expenses include
debris and snow removal, emergency protective measures and repairs to damaged infrastructure and buildings but do not include damages experienced by private citizens and businesses.

### 2011 Disasters Damage Amounts Eligible for 75% Reimbursement Under FEMA Public Assistance Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant: Town &amp; Other (Other = Fire Districts, Schools, Private Non-Profit Agencies)</th>
<th>100% of Amount Eligible for 75% Reimbursement</th>
<th>Total Damages Eligible for Public Assistance Due to 2011 Disasters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town of West Hartford</td>
<td>$224,752.76 $111,036.05 $10,423,313.83</td>
<td>$10,759,102.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Hartford Other</td>
<td>$11,074.33 $1,630.43 $86,759.95</td>
<td>$99,464.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Hartford Total</td>
<td>$235,827.09 $112,666.48 $10,510,073.78</td>
<td>$10,858,567.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Goals, Objectives and Strategies

In the 2008 Plan, West Hartford identified a single goal, objective and strategy with a focus on reducing flood losses:

**GOAL: MINIMIZE LOSS OF LIFE AND PROPERTY FROM NATURAL HAZARDS**

**Objective 1:**
Reduce risk to flood-prone structures.

**Strategic Action:**

1.1 Continue to implement Repetitive Flood Loss Plan.

- **Lead:** Various
- **Priority:** High
- **Status:** The Town has consistently worked to implement the Repetitive Flood Loss Plan’s action plan. The Town periodically ensures that repetitive flood loss property owners have adequate information for retro-fitting flood-prone structures and holds regular meetings with residents to provide technical advice on flood protection and flood preparedness. In addition, the Town has identified a storm water management program in its Capital Improvements Program. The storm water management program includes repair and replacement of storm sewers as part of street reconstruction or resurfacing projects. Storm sewers are also replaced or improved as a result of flooding complaints or roadway failures.

- **Funding Source:** Bonds are issued to fund the storm water management program
- **Timeframe:** 2014-2019: Recurring; annual evaluations of projects will be undertaken during budget process.
In reassessing and evaluating the 2008 Plan, West Hartford modified its goal statement and identified three additional objectives and twelve mitigation projects for the upcoming five years:

**GOAL: MINIMIZE LOSS TO CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND REDUCE LOSS OF LIFE, PROPERTY AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES AS A RESULT OF NATURAL DISASTERS.**

**Objective 2:**
Improve the ability of town to provide emergency sheltering for at least 6,000 residents.

**Strategic Actions:**

2.1 Install generators at all primary and tertiary shelters and designated alternate care sites.
   - Lead: Facilities Management
   - Priority: High
   - Status: This is a new initiative
   - Potential Funding Sources: grants, bonding

2.2 Increase sheltering supplies (cots, water, food, etc.).
   - Lead: Emergency Management
   - Priority: High
   - Status: This is a new initiative to be undertaken in partnership with the American Red Cross
   - Potential Funding Sources: operating budget, grants

2.3 Ensure and supply transportation access to emergency shelters.
   - Lead: Emergency Management, Board of Education
   - Priority: High
   - Status: This is a new initiative
   - Potential Funding Sources: operating budget, grants
   - Timeframe: 2014-2017

2.4 Ensure ability of the town to safely shelter in place, and when necessary, evacuate residents and visitors.
   - Lead: Emergency Management, Fire, Police, Community Services
   - Priority: High
   - Status: This is a new initiative
   - Potential Funding Sources: operating budget, grants
   - Timeframe: 2014-2017
2.5 Establish pet sheltering alternatives.
Priority: Low
Status: This is a new initiative
Potential Funding Sources: operating budget, grants
Timeframe: 2014-2017

Objective 3:
To reinforce, renovate and upgrade existing critical town facilities and support facilities.

Strategic Actions:

3.1 Implement needed improvements to the Emergency Operations Center to withstand high wind and other natural and manmade disasters.
Lead: Emergency Management, Facilities Management
Priority: High
Status: This is a new initiative, however work has been initiated. An architect is on retainer and has begun design.
Potential Funding Sources: operating budget, bonding
Timeframe: 2014-2016

3.2 Upgrade and enhance operational equipment in Emergency Operations Center including radio communications, satellite communications and visual display media.
Lead: Emergency Management, Police, Fire
Priority: Medium
Status: This is a new initiative
Potential Funding Sources: operating budget
Timeframe: 2014-2018

3.3 Identify and establish a secondary Emergency Operations Center.
Lead: Emergency Management, Facilities Management
Priority: Medium
Status: This is a new initiative
Potential Funding Sources: grants
Timeframe: To be completed by 2016

3.4 Work with local fuel stations to ensure adequate emergency generating equipment for emergency response vehicles.
Lead: Emergency Management, Community Services
Objective 4:
Increase training for hazard response to town employees, volunteers and emergency services personnel.

Strategic Actions:

4.1 Provide Incident Command training to all personnel for position and function.
Lead: Emergency Management, Police, Fire
Priority: Medium
Status: This is a new initiative
Potential Funding Sources: operating budget
Timeframe: Training to be undertaken annually 2014-2019

4.2 Provide shelter management training to all personnel for position and function.
Lead: Emergency Management, Police, Fire
Priority: Medium
Status: This is a new initiative
Potential Funding Sources: operating budget
Timeframe: Training to be undertaken annually 2014-2018

4.3 Provide specific incident action plan development training to positions and functions of EOC representatives.
Lead: Emergency Management, Police, Fire
Priority: Medium
Status: This is a new initiative
Potential Funding Sources: operating budget
Timeframe: Training to be undertaken annually 2014-2019
Map 63: West Hartford Flood Plains, Repetitive Loss Areas, Dams and Important Facilities

Capitol Region Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan Update

Town of West Hartford

Flood Plains, Dams & Important Facilities

Dams by Hazard
- C - High
- B - Significant
- A - Moderate
- AA - Negligible
- Unclassified
- 100 Year Flood Zone
- Repetitive Flood Loss Areas
- Water Bodies

Facilities
- Airport
- Commercial/Industrial
- Fire Station
- Hospital/Medical Care
- Municipal Facility
- Nursing Home-Rehab. Center
- Other
- Police Station
- Public Safety
- School
- Senior Housing, Assisted Living
- State Facility
- Transportation Facility
- Water/Sewer Facility
- Broadcast Tower

[Legend and map with various markers indicating flood plains, dams, and important facilities in West Hartford]