
Section IV

Planning Process

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The planning process began in 2005 when the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) awarded the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) a Pre-Disaster Mitigation Planning Grant to develop a regional natural hazard mitigation plan. The Plan was developed in collaboration with the Capitol Region Emergency Planning Commission (CREPC), the Region's 29 municipalities and the Department of Environmental Protection (CT DEP). A planning sub-committee of CREPC provided oversight to the initial stages of the project, while CRCOG staff led efforts to involve municipal officials from each town individually. Finally, members of the public were provided opportunities to provide input during the development of the Plan.

Hazards Identification

CRCOG staff proposed a list of the natural hazards to be addressed in this Plan based on the State Natural Hazard Plan; historical weather records from a variety of media sources, the United States Geological Survey, the National Weather Service and other agencies; and, from discussions with DEP staff. The hazards were discussed with the CREPC planning sub-committee in late 2006, the Regional Planning Commission in early 2007, and officials from member municipalities in early 2007. The following hazards were agreed upon for inclusion in the plan due to their likelihood to occur in, and/or their potential impacts, on the Region: dam failure, drought, floods, forest fires, severe winter storms, hurricanes and tornadoes/high winds. Several hazards were easily dismissed due to their low likelihood of occurrence or their minimal impacts on the Region, namely avalanches, expansive soils, land subsidence, landslide, tsunamis, and volcanoes.

Data Collection and Analysis

CRCOG staff collected and analyzed the hazards and loss data for participating municipalities to reduce duplication of efforts and to provide a common ground for evaluating mitigation strategies. The data came from a wide variety of sources including FEMA, DEP, the National Weather Service, regional newspapers, the United States Geological Survey, United States Census Bureau and internal geographic information system and other resources. The data was used to evaluate natural disasters in terms of frequency, magnitude, areas of impact and economic loss.

The collected data was analyzed using the CRCOG's geographic information system software, specifically ESRI ArcMap 9.1 and 9.2, and HAZUS-MH. HAZUS-MH is loss estimation software developed by FEMA under contract with the National Institute of Building Sciences. This software works in conjunction with ESRI ArcMap 9.1 to perform complex spatial analyses necessary to estimate losses from earthquake, hurricanes and floods. This Plan only incorporated the results from the hurricane model because of difficulties in running the flood model. In defining the drainage area of the Region, HAZUS-MH generated 62 stream reaches, but only 15 were considered valid. The riverine flooding study case contained reaches for which adequate national default data was not available, and therefore, the flood hazard model could not analyze. In addition to the technical difficulties encountered in running the flood model, CRCOG staff determined upon looking at the building value data contained in HAZUS-MH that the Census 2000 data was inadequate at this time. Therefore, CRCOG staff used information from the National Flood Insurance Program, recent federal disaster reports, local grand lists and local tax assessors to provide flood impact and loss data for this Plan.

Plan Review

Upon completion of a draft hazard vulnerability analysis, CRCOG staff conducted several public meetings throughout January and February of 2007 (listed below) to refine the analysis and to start identifying planning priorities within municipalities. CRCOG invited municipal officials from engineering, public works, planning, police, fire, emergency management, health and administrative departments, in addition to CREPC members and the public to the following sub-regional meetings. All meetings were publicly noticed in regional newspapers and the schedule was posted on the CRCOG website. The meetings were work sessions, with break-out groups of staff and/or residents from individual municipalities reviewing and refining their own hazard priority concerns, and formulating their municipality's goals. Over 65 people attended this series of meetings.

Sub-region:	Andover, Bolton, Hebron, Marlborough
Date:	January 9, 2007; 10am – noon
Location:	Hebron's Douglas Library
Sub-region:	Ellington, Manchester, Somers, Tolland, Vernon
Date:	January 11, 2007; 10am – noon
Location:	Vernon Senior Center
Sub-region:	East Windsor, Enfield, South Windsor, Suffield, Windsor, Windsor Locks
Date:	January 17, 2007; 10am – noon
Location:	Windsor Town Hall
Sub-region:	Avon, Canton, East Granby, Farmington, Granby, Simsbury
Date:	January 18, 2007; 10am – noon
Location:	Simsbury Town Hall
Sub-region:	Bloomfield, Newington, West Hartford
Date:	January 23, 2007; 10am – noon
Location:	West Hartford Town Hall
Sub-region:	East Hartford, Glastonbury, Hartford, Rocky Hill, Wethersfield
Date:	January 25, 2007; 10am – noon
Location:	Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority, Hartford
Sub-region:	West of the CT River
Date:	January 31, 2007, 6:30 – 8pm
Location:	West Hartford Town Hall
Sub-region:	East of the CT River
Date:	February 7, 2007, 6:30 – 8pm
Location:	Manchester Town Hall

Following these sub-regional meetings, CRCOG staff worked individually with the participating 29 municipalities to develop mitigation objectives and strategies. CRCOG staff conducted the following

meetings locally with the same targeted group of municipal officials to begin identifying strategies. Objectives and strategies were then refined and prioritized through group e-mail correspondence.

Andover:	June 27, 2007; 9am; 1 attendee
Avon:	May 30, 2007; 9:30 am; 6 attendees
Bloomfield:	May 2, 2007; 10am; 7 attendees
Bolton:	August 28, 2007; 9am; 4 attendees
Canton:	May 24, 2007; 10am; 8 attendees
East Granby:	December 6, 2007; 7 attendees
East Hartford:	April 16, 2007; 10am; 8 attendees
East Windsor:	July 31, 2007; 9:30am; 4 attendees
Ellington:	May 17, 2007; 2pm; 8 attendees
Enfield:	October 9, 2007; 10:30am; 7 attendees
Farmington:	May 14, 2007; 9am; 6 attendees
Glastonbury:	April 12, 2007; 10:15am; 7 attendees
Granby:	August 6, 2007; 9am; 4 attendees
Hartford:	April 12, 2007; 1pm; 7 attendees, and May 25, 2007; 1pm; 8 attendees
Hebron:	August 9, 2007; 8am; 3 attendees
Manchester:	April 2, 2007; 10am; 9 attendees
Marlborough:	October 10, 2007; 9am; 5 attendees
Newington:	March 21, 2007; 10am; 7 attendees
Rocky Hill:	March 29, 2007; 10am; 8 attendees
Simsbury:	September 5, 2007; 9:30am; 4 attendees
Somers:	July 19, 2007; 10am; 6 attendees
South Windsor:	October 4, 2007; 10am; 8 attendees
Suffield:	June 12, 2007; 10am; 6 attendees
Tolland:	August 23, 2007; 10am; 4 attendees
Vernon:	June 20, 2007; 9am; 4 attendees
West Hartford:	October 31, 2007; 10am; 4 attendees
Wethersfield:	November 1, 2007; 11am; 4 attendees
Windsor:	March 13, 2007; 11am; 11 attendees
Windsor Locks:	April 5, 2007; 10am; 7 attendees

Staff completed a draft of this Plan in December 2007 and posted it to the CRCOG website, notifying all municipal working groups and the planning committee of its availability. Several comments and suggestions were received from the municipal working groups that had participated in the planning process. In addition, staff presented information from the draft plan at the January 23, 2008 CRCOG Policy Board meeting, and requested feedback from local chief elected officials. A revised draft was posted to the CRCOG website in mid-February 2008, and CRCOG staff notified all municipal planning groups of its availability.

Strategy Prioritization

CRCOG and municipal staff considered a broad array of mitigation strategies to achieve regional and municipal goals. Mitigation strategies were prioritized according to a variation of the STAPLEE evaluation process recommended in FEMA's *Developing the Mitigation Plan: Identifying Mitigation Actions and Implementation Strategies* (April 2003). Each strategy was scored according to the following criteria:

	Yes	No
1. Is the action socially acceptable (compatible with community values)?		
2. Is the strategy technically feasible?		
3. Does the community have the capacity to implement and maintain the action?		
4. Is there public support to implement and maintain the action?		
5. Does the community have the legal authority to implement the strategy?		
6. Is the action cost-effective?		
7. Is the strategy consistent with environmental policies and goals?		

1-2 yes = low priority

3-4 yes = medium priority

5-6 yes = high priority

Public Participation

All planning meetings were open to the public and were posted and noticed accordingly. CRCOG requested that each participating municipality post on its own website, newsletter and any other appropriate media that the draft plan was available for review and comment beginning in January 2008. CRCOG also notified potentially interested agencies including regional watershed groups, conservation districts and others. Finally, two public input sessions were advertised in the *Hartford Courant* and the *Hartford News* (a minority paper), and held in January 2008.

After several weeks of accepting comments, CRCOG staff incorporated suggestions and changes into the draft. The revised version was completed in February 2008 and submitted to the CT DEP and FEMA for review.