



SECTION 3. PLANNING PROCESS

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3.1 PROCESS AND PARTICIPATION SUMMARY

A successful planning process builds partnerships and brings together members representing government agencies, the public and other stakeholders to reach a consensus on how the community will prepare for and respond to the hazards that are most likely to occur. Applying a comprehensive and transparent process adds validity to the HMP. Those involved gain a better understanding of the problem or issue and how solutions and actions were developed. The result is a revised set of common community values and widespread support for directing financial, technical and human resources to an agreed upon action. The planning process was an integral part of creating and revising the HMP. This section describes the planning process used to revise the Northumberland County HMP. The Planning Team sent capability assessment survey, a modified version of the survey used to create the original plan, to 36 municipalities and two independent sewer authorities (Sunbury Municipal Authority and Milton Regional Sewer Authority) located in the County. This modified survey still included a portion that measures participation in the National Flood Insurance Program. Of the 38 surveys sent, 21 entities responded by the advertised due date.

To create the original Northumberland County HMP, the County contracted with Delta Development Group, Inc., who in turn contracted Michael Baker, Jr., Inc. for specific data. During the revision, the County assembled a planning team that carried out the functions previously outsourced by contract.

In accordance with the DMA 2000 requirements, this plan documents the following topics:

- Planning process
- Hazard identification
- Risk assessment
- Mitigation strategy: goals, actions and projects
- Formal adoption by participating jurisdictions
- Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) and FEMA approval

The standard planning process used in Pennsylvania to create and update HMP's is described in the Pennsylvania's All-Hazard Mitigation Planning Standard Operating Guide and was referenced or used during the review of the existing Northumberland County HMP.

Public participation and planning meetings served as the main forums for gathering information to update the HMP. The Planning Team afforded access to the information in relevant and approved plans, policies and procedures for Northumberland County. Opportunities for public participation included attending public meetings, completing written surveys, and reviewing and commenting on the existing plan and other documents. Meeting, surveys and teleconferences were used to gather input from County, municipal and other stakeholders to update all sections of the HMP. Through this process, the County was able to establish a comprehensive approach to reducing the effects of hazards on the County and its municipalities.

3.2 THE PLANNING TEAM

The County's Planning Team consists of the following members:

- Eric Wendt, Northumberland County Department of Information Technology
- Keith Ayers, Northumberland County GIS
- Douglas Diehl, Borough of Milton
- Chuck Hopta, Northumberland County Engineer
- Stephen Jeffrey, Northumberland County Department of Public Safety
- Jason Zimmerman, Northumberland County Department of Public Safety
- Lori Smoogen, Northumberland County Department of Finance
- Jane Gaugler, Northumberland County Planning Department
- Tiffany Kaseman, Northumberland County Assessment Bureau

Mr. Wendt and Mr. Ayers served as the County's primary points of contact for the mitigation planning process.

The Planning Team acknowledged that identifying hazards that specifically affect Northumberland County and assessing their likelihood of occurrence, and the potential damage to the people, property and environment of the County, was one of the most important steps in updating the HMP. The Planning Team chose to focus on all-hazards as listed in the Pennsylvania State Hazard Mitigation Plan, as opposed to narrowing its focus on only hazards with moderate to high frequency within the County.

3.3 MEETINGS AND DOCUMENTATION

The Planning Team held the following meetings during the update process of the County HMP:

MEETING DATE	PUBLIC OUTREACH MEETING TYPE	DESCRIPTION
9/15/2016	YES - Public Kickoff	Kick-off Meeting: with the Planning Team, municipalities, school districts and other stake-holders
10/20/2016	YES - Public	2nd Meeting: Informational meeting to discuss the update process
12/14/2016	NO - Planning Committee	3rd Meeting: Informational meeting to discuss the update process, progress and document sharing
1/11/2017	NO - Planning Committee	4th Meeting: Informational meeting to discuss the capability assessment surveys recently mailed, update process and future tasks/meeting dates
2/8/2017	NO - Planning Committee	5th Meeting: Informational meeting for municipalities and stakeholders, with particular attention to questions about the capability assessment survey, and review of future meeting dates.
3/8/2017	YES - Planning Committee	6th Meeting: Informational meeting for municipalities and stakeholders, with particular attention to questions about the capability assessment survey, and review of future meeting dates.
3/23/2017	YES - Public Cap. & Risk	7th Meeting: Northern section public meeting to review risk assessment, the HMP update process, and address public concerns or questions
3/30/2017	YES - Public Cap. & Risk	8th Meeting:2017 - Southern section public meeting to review risk assessment, the HMP update process, and address public concerns or questions
4/12/2017	NO - Planning Comm. w/ FEMA	9th Meeting - Planning Review meeting with a FEMA representative to make sure that our process and direction is correct
5/10/2017	NO - Planning Committee	10th Meeting - Planning Staus\Review
6/7/2017	NO - Planning Committee	11th Meeting - Planning Staus\Review
6/21/2017	YES - Public Review Meeting	12th Meeting - This is the final public input and review session before submission
6/28/2017	NO - Planning Committee	13th Meeting - This is the final planning committee meeting to finalize any plan changes before submission

Table 3.3-1. Public and Planning Meetings

Each meeting was followed by detailed meeting minutes that documented all discussion, decisions and unmet needs identified during the meetings; these minutes were shared among the Planning Team and can be found in Appendix A, along with other documents and handouts from these meetings. County residents were informed of public meetings through various sources, including newspapers, press releases and announcements on the website. Comments received from the public were incorporated into the updated HMP.

3.4 PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

To maximize the effectiveness of the HMP, the Planning Team sought continual public and stakeholder engagement. Public input was encouraged and collected through a variety of methods. A capability assessment survey, a modified version of the survey used to create the original plan, was sent to 36 municipalities and two independent sewer authorities (Sunbury Municipal Authority and Milton Regional Sewer Authority) located in the County. Twenty-One of the municipalities and the two sewer authorities returned updated or new information within the surveys they completed; their input was reviewed and incorporated into the updated HMP.

Local, state and federal agencies, neighboring jurisdictions, local businesses, community leaders, educators, and other relevant private and nonprofit groups that had a vested interest in the development of the HMP were not only given the opportunity to participate in the original planning process, but also the update being conducted by the Planning Team. Appendix A includes copies of public notifications that were distributed. In addition to the local municipalities, school districts and the planning team, representatives were in attendance from the following stakeholder groups:

2017 Update Participants

- Michaels Foods
- Aqua PA
- Merck-Cherokee Pharmaceuticals
- Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
- Sunbury Municipal Authority
- Weis Markets
- Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency
- American Red Cross
- North Shore Railroad

Through public notices, the above groups and the general public were invited to review the HMP on the project website:

<http://publicsafety.norrcopa.net/index.php/ema/hazard-mitigation>

INTRODUCTION

Anyone viewing the HMP, or information about the update process, was encouraged to send comments to the Northumberland County EMA. Public meetings were also advertised and held in two convenient locations (Sunbury and Milton) to afford the public a chance to meet team members and become further educated through handouts and agendas. Copies of the advertisements can be found in Appendix A, immediately following the copy of materials used at the respective meetings. Notices for all of the other scheduled Planning Team meetings were advertised on the website mentioned in this section; that site encouraged all stakeholders to attend.

Section 3.5 includes a table showing overall municipal participation in the planning process. As illustrated, the Planning Team felt that jurisdictional and stakeholder participation was critical to the process. The Planning Team met regularly to review the status of the HMP and strategies to involve the public. The Planning Team also individually contacted various municipalities to elicit feedback on various sections of the HMP.

3.5 MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL PLANNING

Northumberland County took a multi-jurisdictional approach to preparing its HMP, in that the HMP will apply to the County and to all participating municipalities. The County was able to provide resources (data, GIS, surveys, etc.) to which the municipalities may not have had access. However, the County was dependent on the municipal buy-in, since the municipalities have the legal authority to enforce compliance of land use planning and development issues. The County undertook an intensive effort to involve all 36 municipalities in the HMP update process. Each municipality was given the opportunity to participate: municipal officials and representatives were invited to attend meetings, they were asked to comment on the HMP posted on the website listed in section 3.4, and they were provided a capability assessment survey where they could create and prioritize mitigation actions. The Planning Team had an objective to make contact with all municipalities that had not returned the survey; team members contacted those municipalities via telephone in an effort to get a completed survey submitted. Aside from the initial letter inviting the municipalities to attend the kick-off meeting, a letter also accompanied the survey that gave the dates of upcoming meetings they could attend to gain information about the update process and possibly get help for completing the survey. A risk assessment review meeting and public draft review meeting were also advertised by the Planning Team to give all municipalities and stakeholders the chance to review vital data collected and to see the update version of the HMP that would be eligible for adoption.

Table 3.5-1 reflects the efforts put forth by the Planning Team and the efforts extended by any of the 36 municipalities. This table represents all efforts by which the team made contact but also doubles as showing which municipalities returned viable data which meets requirements the applied to the HMP development and update.

Municipal Compatibility Assessment Survey		Plan and Regulations Status	Capabilities Assessment	Hazard and Risk Evaluation	Mitigation Goals, Objectives, Actions	Kick-Off Meeting	Capability Risk Assessment Meeting	Draft Review Public Meeting	Telephone Meeting	Email Correspondence Participation	Plan Adopted	Adoption Year
Label Meanings												
(X) Yes												
COAL Township		X	X	X							X	2012
DELAWARE Township		X	X	X								
EAST CAMERON Township												
EAST CHILLISQUAQUE Township		X	X	X		X					X	2012
HERNDON Borough		X	X	X							X	2012
JACKSON Township											X	2012
JORDAN Township											X	2012
KULPMONT Borough		X	X	X							X	2012
LEWIS Township		X	X	X							X	2012
LITTLE MAHANOY Township		X										
LOWER AUGUSTA Township		X	X	X								
LOWER MAHANOY Township												
MARION HEIGHTS Borough												
MCEWENSVILLE Borough		X									X	2012
MILTON Borough		X	X	X		X	X				X	2012
MILTON REGIONAL SEWER AUTHORITY		X	X	X								
MOUNT CARMEL Borough												
MOUNT CARMEL Township		X	X									
NORTHUMBERLAND Borough		X	X	X							X	2012
POINT Township		X	X	X	X	X			X		X	2012
RALHO Township											X	2012
RIVERSIDE Borough		X									X	2012
ROCKEFELLER Township											X	2012
RUSH Township		X	X	X								
SHAMOKIN City											X	2012
SHAMOKIN Township		X	X	X							X	2012
SNYDERTOWN Borough												
SUNBURY City									X		X	2012
SUNBURY MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY		X	X	X							X	2012
TURBOT Township											X	2012
TURBOTVILLE Borough		X	X	X							X	2012
UPPER AUGUSTA Township		X	X	X							X	2012
UPPER MAHANOY Township												
WASHINGTON Township												
WATSONTOWN Borough		X	X	X								
WEST CAMERON Township												
WEST CHILLISQUAQUE Township		X									X	2012
ZERBE Township											X	2012

Table 3.5-1: Worksheets | Sureveys Completed Meeting Attendance | Plan Adoption