

Putnam County Hazard Mitigation Plan 2020 Update

The Putnam County Bureau of Emergency Services (BES) is leading a project to update its 2015 Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). This plan is required by state and federal agencies in order for communities in Putnam County to be eligible for certain types of non-emergency disaster assistance, including funding for mitigation projects. The ultimate goal of hazard mitigation is to reduce loss of life and property, lessening the impact of disasters.

This webpage will be used throughout the planning process to post information, collect comments, announce meetings, and to post draft and final documents.

What is hazard mitigation?

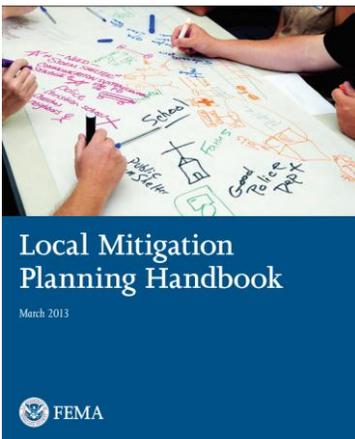
Disasters can cause loss of life, damage buildings and infrastructure, and have devastating consequences for a community's economic, environmental, and social well-being. Hazard mitigation is any action taken to reduce disaster damages. It is defined as an effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters (natural, technological, and man-made) and is often considered the first of the four phases of emergency management – mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. Mitigation is an important step in creating a more resilient community.



Outreach programs that increase risk awareness and protect critical facilities are examples of mitigation actions. Local mitigation actions can also be incorporated into land use plans and building codes. When combined, it leads to developmental patterns that do not increase risks from known hazards or leads to redevelopment that reduces risk from known hazards.

Local governments have the responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of their residents. Proactive mitigation policies and actions help reduce risk and create safer, more disaster-resilient communities. When a community is more resilient, it has the ability to adapt to changing conditions and prepare, withstand, and rapidly recovery from a disaster.

What is mitigation planning?



Mitigation is most effective when it is based on a comprehensive, long-term plan that is developed before a disaster occurs. The purpose of mitigation planning is to identify local policies and actions that can be implemented over the long term to reduce risk and future losses from disasters. Section 322 of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) specifically addresses mitigation planning and requires state and local governments to prepare multi-jurisdictional mitigation plans as a precondition for receiving FEMA mitigation project funding. Benefits of mitigation planning include:

- Identifying actions for risk reduction
- Focusing on the greatest risks and vulnerabilities within a community
- Building partnerships by involving residents, organizations, and businesses
- Increasing public education and awareness of threats and

hazards

- Communicating priorities to state and federal officials; and
- Aligning risk reduction with other community objectives

Hazard Mitigation in Putnam County



Through a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), BES is leading the effort to update the current 2015 County HMP. The current plan identifies natural hazards of concern in our region, assesses our specific vulnerabilities to those hazards, and seeks to identify projects and measures that may reduce damages from future hazards. This update will look at the existing hazards of concern and identify any additional hazards of concern for Putnam County based on the past years' hazard impacts such as the COVID-19 outbreak.

The plan update will serve as the plan for Putnam County government, as well as over nine towns and villages in the county who have opted to participate in this

cooperative planning effort. Each participating jurisdiction will have its own chapter (or annex) of the overall plan.

Click [here](#) to view the 2015 Putnam County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

How does the Plan benefit Putnam County?

A hazard mitigation plan will assist Putnam County and its jurisdictions with the following:

- Eligibility for federal funds for pre-disaster mitigation planning before disaster strikes.
- An increased understanding of the natural hazards the County faces.
- Development of more sustainable and resilient communities.
- Potential financial savings to residents, including flood insurance premium reductions.
- Reduced long-term impacts and damages to human health and structures, and reduced repair costs.



What are the different types of mitigation actions?

There are four primary types of mitigation actions to reduce long-term vulnerability and include:

- Local Plans and Regulations – plans, policies, or codes that influence the way land and buildings are developed and built
- Structure and Infrastructure Projects – upgrading existing structures and infrastructure to protect them from a hazard or remove from hazard area; constructing manmade structures to reduce the impact of hazards
- Natural Systems Protection – minimize damage and losses and preserve/restore the functions of the environment
- Education and Outreach Programs – inform and education citizens about hazards and ways to mitigate them



Common mitigation actions may include the following:

- Enforcement of building codes, floodplain management codes and environmental regulations
- Public safety measures such as upgrades of roadways, culverts and dams
- Acquisition or relocation of structures, such as purchasing buildings located in a floodplain
- Acquisition of hazard prone lands in their undeveloped state to ensure they remain so
- Retrofitting structures and design of new construction such as elevating a home or building
- Protecting critical facilities and infrastructure from future hazard events
- Mitigation, disaster recovery and Continuity of Operations (COOP) planning
- Development and distribution of outreach materials related to hazard mitigation
- Deployment of warning systems
- Drainage system upgrades

How can I participate?

During initial plan development, a series of formal public meetings will be held to solicit public comment and present the draft plan to residents and local officials. Please check back for the dates of upcoming meetings.

Putnam County residents are encouraged to take on our online questionnaire. This is a great way for you to provide feedback on what hazards you are most concerned about and what we can do to help make the county a safer place. The questionnaire can be found online here: [LINK COMING SOON](#)

If you represent any of the following stakeholder groups, please complete an online questionnaire targeted your area by clicking one of the links below:

- [LINK COMING SOON](#)

The Hazard Mitigation Plan will be reviewed and updated regularly, and we welcome your continued input into this living document. Have a concern about a local hazard, a project idea for the next Plan update, or want to know more about the process? Please feel free to contact BES or your local municipality for more information.

More Resources

Want to learn more? Check out the following sources below.

- Putnam County Bureau of Emergency Services - <http://www.putnamcountyny.com/pcbcs/>
- Putnam County COVID 19 Page - <https://www.putnamcountyny.com/covid19/>
- New York State 2019 Hazard Mitigation Plan - <https://mitigateny.availabs.org/>
- NYS DHSES 2017 Local Hazard Mitigation Planning Standards Guide - <http://www.dhSES.ny.gov/recovery/mitigation/documents/2017-NYS-Mitigation-Planning-Standards-Guide.pdf>
- FEMA Hazard Mitigation Planning – Information and resources on hazard mitigation planning - <http://www.fema.gov/plan/mitplanning/>
- FEMA Map Service Center – View and print FEMA flood plain maps. (Note: Hard copy FEMA FIRM maps are also generally available for viewing at municipal offices, and at County offices.) - <https://msc.fema.gov>
- FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grants – Funding announcements and application materials for municipal hazard mitigation activities - <https://www.fema.gov/hazard-mitigation-assistance>