

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*The mission of the Delaware County Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazards Mitigation Plan Update is to identify and reduce, through cost-effective and sustainable mitigation efforts, the vulnerability to natural and man-made hazards. In doing so, Delaware County seeks to create an informed and prepared community while protecting its health, safety, property, economy, quality of life, and environment.*

The Delaware County Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazards Mitigation Plan (AHMP) Update was prepared in response to the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000). DMA 2000 requires states and local governments to prepare AHMPs in order to be eligible for pre-disaster mitigation funds, and to formally update those plans every five years. The County, villages and towns of Delaware County adopted the AHMP in 2006; and began the update of the plan in 2010.

The **Federal Emergency Management Agency** (FEMA) estimates that for every dollar spent on damage prevention (mitigation), twice that amount is saved through avoided post-disaster damage repair.

The Delaware County AHMP Update provides a general overview of current and anticipated population and land use within the study area. This information provides a basis for making decisions regarding the type of mitigation approaches to consider and the locations in which these approaches should be applied. This information can also be used to support decisions regarding future development in vulnerable areas. For potential increases in vulnerability, the County and municipalities can plan ahead to mitigate those vulnerabilities early in the development process, or can direct development to areas of lower risk.

Delaware County and its towns and villages will revisit the AHMP regularly to ensure that the mitigation actions it describes remain relevant, cost-beneficial, and sustainable. Further updates will support the identification and implementation of specific mitigation actions to address changes in vulnerability, including the potential impacts of development over time.

It was imperative that Delaware County and its municipalities participate in this process- and adopt the resulting plan- to be eligible for future pre-disaster mitigation funds for eligible mitigation projects (e.g. structural acquisitions (flood buyouts), elevations, and retrofits of critical infrastructure). It is also important to remember that pre-disaster mitigation funds are separate and distinct from those federal and state funds used in direct post-disaster relief. The availability of those funds remains unchanged; if there is a federally-declared disaster in Delaware County, the affected municipalities will still receive immediate recovery assistance regardless of their participation in this plan.

### Delaware County Plan Update Process

Delaware County developed their original HMP in 2005/6. It was formally approved by FEMA in June 2006 and subsequently adopted by the County and all towns and villages within the County. This regulatory 5-year update of the 2006 plan began in 2010 when the County applied for federal funding to accomplish the update. Delaware County and all jurisdictions actively participated in the plan update process, and will work to implement the mitigation strategies identified in the plan update in an effort to reduce their vulnerability to natural hazards.

Participating Jurisdictions				
Delaware County	Town of Deposit	Town of Masonville	Town of Tompkins	Village of Hancock
Town of Andes	Town of Franklin	Town of Meredith	Town of Walton	Village of Hobart
Town of Bovina	Town of Hamden	Town of Middletown	Village of Delhi	Village of Margaretville
Town of Colchester	Town of Hancock	Town of Roxbury	Village of Deposit	Village of Sidney
Town of Davenport	Town of Harpersfield	Town of Sidney	Village of Fleischmanns	Village of Stamford
Town of Delhi	Town of Kortright	Town of Stamford	Village of Franklin	Village of Walton

To support the planning process for this plan update, the County and municipalities accomplished the following:

- Developed a municipal planning partnership including all municipalities in the County;
- Established and authorized a Steering Committee composed of representatives from County Departments; the County Board of Supervisors; and other local, state, regional and federal agencies to support the plan update process;
- Reviewed and updated the hazards of concern identified in the 2006 plan;
- Updated the hazard profiles, including documenting events and losses since the 2006 plan;
- Updated the estimate of public and private assets at risk and potential losses associated with each hazard of concern;
- Reviewed and updated the mitigation goals, objectives and actions that address the hazards that impact the area;
- Established municipality-specific workgroups that worked with Planning staff to create Jurisdictional Annexes (chapters) for each Town and Village within the County (the Jurisdictional Annexes are new as of this update, and represent a significant amount local hazard mitigation planning);
- Updated the mitigation plan maintenance procedures to be executed upon approval of the plan from the New York State Office of Emergency Management (NYSOEM) and FEMA.

The AHMP update process was focused on improving the County and local mitigation strategies, including objective consideration of their natural hazard risks and vulnerabilities, and the identification of appropriate projects or initiatives to mitigate those risks. Throughout the planning process, representatives of the Delaware County Planning Department (DCPD) worked directly with each jurisdiction to assist with the development and update of their mitigation strategies, helping towns and villages identify well-defined, implementable projects with a careful consideration of benefits (risk reduction, losses avoided), costs, and possible funding sources (including mitigation grant programs). Each participant identified appropriate local mitigation actions, along with the hazards mitigated, goals and objectives met, lead agency, estimated cost, potential funding sources and the proposed timeline.

As required by DMA 2000, the County has informed the public about these efforts and provided opportunities for public comment and input on the planning process. In addition, numerous agencies and stakeholders were contacted and some have participated as core or support members to provide input and expertise to the County's mitigation planning efforts.

The County and all participating jurisdictions intend to incorporate mitigation planning as an integral component of daily government operations through existing processes and programs. The Draft AHMP

Update is posted on the County website and all participating municipalities have made an effort to promote public review and input to the plan update. Updates to the AHMP will be similarly announced for annual reviews and 5-year updates.

### **Delaware County Planning Area Mitigation Strategy**

The outcomes of a risk assessment, supplemented by AHMP participant input, provide a basis to review past mitigation actions, future goals, and appropriate local mitigation actions. More information on the risk assessment conducted as part of the AHMP update process is included in this Executive Summary beginning on page 4.

### **Mitigation Planning Goals and Objectives**

The Steering Committee reviewed the mitigation goals and associated objectives identified in the 2006 AHMP, and elected to maintain these unchanged as they were found to cover the overarching needs and concerns of the planning partnership in addressing natural hazard risk reduction. The following are the four mitigation goals that summarize the hazard reduction outcomes the planning area seeks to achieve:

- Protect Life and Property
- Increase Public Awareness
- Encourage Partnerships
- Provide for Emergency Services

### **Capability Assessment**

A capability assessment is an inventory of a community's missions, programs and policies; and an analysis of its capacity to carry them out. This assessment is an integral part of the planning process. It identifies, reviews, and analyzes local and state programs, policies, regulations, funding and practices currently in place that may either facilitate or hinder mitigation.

A capability assessment was prepared by each planning participant. By completing this assessment, each participant learned how or whether they would be able to implement certain mitigation actions by determining the following:

- The range of local and/or state administrative, programmatic, regulatory, financial and technical resources available to assist in implementing their mitigation actions; and
- Limitations that may exist on undertaking actions.

### **AHMP Maintenance Procedures**

Hazard mitigation planning is an ongoing process. Section 7 of this plan presents procedures for plan maintenance and updates through which the DCPD and Steering Committee will continue to support the implementation and maintenance of the AHMP.

#### **The mitigation strategy portion of the plan includes:**

- A summary and status of past and current mitigation efforts;
- Local hazard mitigation goals and objectives;
- Identification and analysis of mitigation measures and projects being considered;
- Mitigation strategy (goals and objectives);
- Mitigation action plan (summary of specific actions).

To monitor implementation of the AHMP, the Steering Committee members will meet annually to discuss the status of implementation and will prepare a summary report of the plan status and any needed updates. The mitigation evaluation will address changes as new hazard events occur, as the area develops, and as more is learned about hazards and their impacts. The evaluation will include an assessment of whether the planning process and actions have been effective, whether development or other issues warrant changes to the plan or its priorities, if the communities' goals are being reached, and whether changes are warranted. In addition, the mitigation plan will be updated at a minimum within the 5-year cycle specified by DMA 2000.

### Municipal Adoption

This mitigation plan will be reviewed and adopted by the elected officials of all participating jurisdictions. A copy of the resolution regarding adoption of the plan is included as Appendix B.

### Risk Assessment

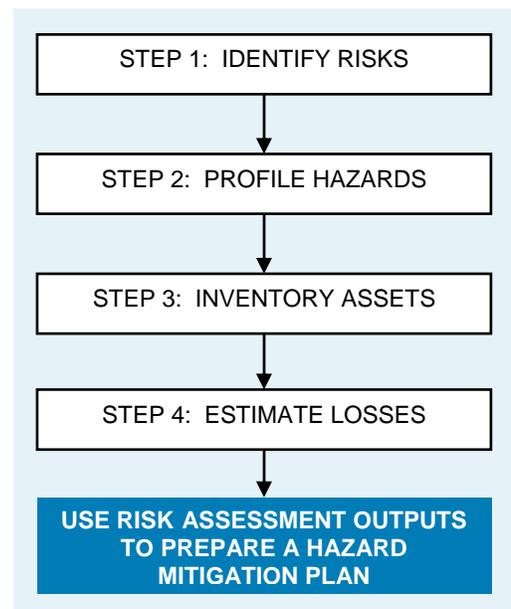
A key component of a mitigation plan is the accurate identification of risks posed by a hazard and the corresponding impacts to the community. The process of identifying hazards of concern, profiling hazard events, and conducting a vulnerability assessment is known as a risk assessment. The risk assessment portion of the mitigation planning process included the steps shown in Figure ES-1. Each of these steps is summarized below.

*Step 1:* The first step of the risk assessment process is to identify the hazards of concern. FEMA's current regulations only require an evaluation of natural hazards. Natural hazards are natural events that threaten lives, property, and many other assets. Often, natural hazards can be predicted, where they tend to occur repeatedly in the same geographical locations because they are related to weather patterns or physical characteristics of an area.

The 2006 AHMP focused on a full range of natural hazards that could impact the area, and then identified and ranked those hazards that presented the greatest concern. The Steering Committee reviewed these hazards of concern, and based on review of all available information the following natural hazards of concern were selected to be addressed within this plan update:

- Drought
- Earthquake
- Flooding (riverine, flash, ice jam, and dam)
- Infestation
- Landslide
- Severe Storm (windstorms, thunderstorms, hail, tornadoes and hurricanes/tropical storms)
- Severe Winter Storm (heavy snow, blizzards, ice storms, Nor'Easters)
- Wildfire

Figure ES-1. Risk Assessment Process



*Step 2:* The next step of the risk assessment is to prepare a profile for each hazard of concern. These profiles assist communities in evaluating and comparing the hazards that can impact their area. Each type of hazard has unique characteristics that vary from event to event. That is, the impacts associated with a specific hazard can vary depending on the magnitude and location of each event (a hazard event is a specific, uninterrupted occurrence of a particular type of hazard). Further, the probability of occurrence of a hazard in a given location impacts the priority assigned to that hazard. Finally, each hazard will impact different communities in different ways, based on geography, local development, population distribution, age of buildings, and mitigation measures already implemented. Hazard event and loss data and information, particularly for events that have occurred since the 2006 AHMP, were integrated into this update.

*Steps 3 and 4:* To understand risk, a community must evaluate what assets they possess and which are exposed or vulnerable to the identified hazards of concern. Hazard profile information combined with data regarding population, demographics, general building stock, and critical facilities at risk prepares the community to develop risk scenarios and estimate potential damages and losses for each hazard.

### **Point of Contact**

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