

SECTION 8: PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

BACKGROUND

Section 201.6.a(4) of Chapter 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations (44CFR) states: “Multi-jurisdictional plans (e.g. watershed plans) may be accepted, as appropriate, as long as each jurisdiction has participated in the process and has officially adopted the plan.” The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and New York State Office of Emergency Management (NYSOEM) both encourage multi-jurisdictional planning. Therefore, in the preparation of the Delaware County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP), a Planning Partnership was formed to pursue grant funding for the plan and to meet requirements of the federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA) for as many eligible local governments in Delaware County as possible.

The DMA defines a local government as follows: “Any county, municipality, city, town, township, public authority, school district, special district, intrastate district, council of governments (regardless of whether the council of governments is incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under State law), regional or interstate government entity, or agency or instrumentality of a local government; any Indian tribe or authorized tribal organization, or Alaska Native village or organization; and any rural community, unincorporated town or village, or other public entity.”

THE PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

INITIAL SOLICITATION AND LETTERS OF INTENT

Delaware County solicited the participation of municipalities in the County at the commencement of this project. Interested municipalities signed a “Letter of Intent” and/or a resolution committing their participation and resources to the development of the Delaware County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update. Delaware County and all municipal jurisdictions are participating in the Plan (Table 8-1).

Table 8-1. Participating Jurisdictions in Delaware County

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

PLANNING PARTNER EXPECTATIONS

All participating jurisdictions (county and all municipalities) were charged with the following responsibilities:

- Represent their jurisdiction throughout the planning process;
- Solicit and encourage the participation of local departments and agencies, a range of stakeholders, and citizens in the plan development process;
- Assist in gathering information for inclusion in the plan, including the use of available plans, reports and data;
- Identify assets and vulnerabilities within their jurisdiction;
- Identify, develop and prioritize appropriate mitigation initiatives.
- Develop and author the jurisdictional annex for their jurisdiction;
- Review, amend and approve all sections of the plan update;
- Assist in the development, revision, adoption, and maintenance of the plan.

JURISDICTION ANNEX TEMPLATES

A major change in the format of this plan update was the incorporation of jurisdictional annexes. Each jurisdiction participating in this update (both counties and all municipalities) has assisted in the authoring of their own annex or chapter to this plan, included in Section 9.

As data, information and other input was compiled and received from the municipality, it was input directly into their draft annex. To help support the selection of an appropriate, risk-based mitigation strategy, each annex provided a summary of hazard vulnerabilities identified during the plan update process, either directly by municipal representatives, through review of available county and local plans and reports, and through the hazard profiling and vulnerability assessment process. One of the key elements of each annex is the updated jurisdictional mitigation strategy. Further details on the process implemented to update the local mitigation strategies may be found in Section 6.3.

From February 2012 to January 2013, representatives of the DCPD worked directly with each jurisdiction to assist with the development and update of their annex and include mitigation strategies, focusing on identifying well-defined, implementable projects with a careful consideration of benefits (risk reduction, losses avoided), costs, and possible funding sources (including mitigation grant programs). As part of this process, the DCPD worked with the municipalities to carefully review the “general” initiatives, and to delete, include and amend those as deemed appropriate to meet the specific needs and interests of the community.

BENEFIT/COST REVIEW

Each jurisdiction’s annex includes an action plan of prioritized initiatives to mitigate natural hazards. Section 201.6.c.3iii of 44CFR requires the prioritization of the action plan to emphasize the extent to which benefits are maximized according to a cost/benefit review of the proposed projects and their associated costs. As part of jurisdiction annex template completion, the participating jurisdictions with support from the DCPD and contract consultant, weighed the estimated benefits of a project versus the estimated costs to establish a parameter to be used in the prioritization of a project. This benefit/cost review was qualitative; that is, it did not include the level of detail required by FEMA for project grant eligibility under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) grant program. This qualitative approach was used because projects may not be implemented for up to 10 years,

and the associated costs and benefits could change dramatically in that time. Each project was assessed by assigning subjective ratings (high, medium, and low) to its costs and benefits, as follows:

Table 8-2. Benefit/Cost Review

Costs	
High	Existing funding levels are not adequate to cover the costs of the proposed project, and implementation would require an increase in revenue through an alternative source (e.g., bonds, grants, and fee increases).
Medium	The project could be implemented with existing funding but would require a re-apportionment of the budget or a budget amendment, or the cost of the project would have to be spread over multiple years.
Low	The project could be funded under the existing budget. The project is part of or can be part of an existing, ongoing program.
Benefits	
High	Project will have an immediate impact on the reduction of risk exposure to life and property.
Medium	Project will have a long-term impact on the reduction of risk exposure to life and property or will provide an immediate reduction in the risk exposure to property.
Low	Long-term benefits of the project are difficult to quantify in the short term.

Using this approach, projects with positive benefit versus cost ratios (such as high over high, high over medium, medium over low, etc.) are considered cost-beneficial and are prioritized accordingly. For many of the initiatives identified in the action plans, participating jurisdictions may seek financial assistance under FEMA’s HMGP or PDM programs. Both of these programs require detailed benefit/cost analysis as part of the application process. These analyses will be performed when funding applications are prepared, using the FEMA model process. The participating jurisdictions are committed to implementing mitigation strategies with benefits that exceed costs. For projects not seeking financial assistance from grant programs that require this sort of analysis, the jurisdictions reserve the right to define “benefits” according to parameters that meet its needs and the goals and objectives of this plan.

COMPLETION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

Delaware County and all participating towns and villages completed the planning and annex-preparation process. Completed jurisdictional annexes are presented in Section 9.