

IV. Plan Review and Update

A. Introduction

Periodic monitoring and reporting of progress is required to ensure that Plan goals and objectives are kept current and that local mitigation efforts are being accomplished. The Pitt County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan shall be reviewed annually or more often as the local situation may require following a disaster declaration to ensure that progress is being made on achieving stated goals and objectives. The Plan will also undergo periodic evaluation and update as required by FEMA and the State. The plan strives to provide the most relevant data and accurate data available, but understands that with each update, that more detailed data will become available and will be used accordingly; specifically, Census data reflecting the 2010 update will significantly contribute to the plan's ability to use the most accurate data. Therefore, the best available data was used in preparing the update.

B. Annual Review/Progress Report

The Pitt County Manager shall direct the Planning Director to take responsibility for conducting the annual review. The annual review shall include the solicitation of comments and a report on implementation progress from the participating municipalities through re-initiation of the hazard mitigation planning team process utilized during development of the Plan. Other interested parties and the general public will be notified through a variety of media, including but not limited to, local newspapers, the Pitt County website (<http://www.pittcountync.gov/>) (municipal websites as available) and mailed or emailed notices, of the review process and the opportunity to comment on the Plan report.

The annual review shall ensure:

1. That the Planning Board receives an annual report and/or presentation on the progress of Plan implementation. Public announcements of the review process shall provide an address and phone number for persons who want to receive more information. All progress reports will also be available for public review at the Pitt County Planning Department.
2. That the County Board of Commissioners receives an annual report and/or presentation on the progress of Plan implementation along with a recommendation from the Planning Board regarding on-going implementation of the Plan.
3. The annual report will include an evaluation of the effectiveness and appropriateness of the mitigation actions included in the Plan. Specifically, the report will attend to the following questions:
 - a. Do Plan goals and objectives continue to address current and expected conditions?
 - b. Has the nature or magnitude of risks changed?
 - c. Are current resources sufficient and appropriate for Plan implementation?
 - d. Are there any implementation problems, i.e., technical, political, legal or coordination issues with other agencies?
 - e. Are implementation outcomes as expected?
 - f. Have other agencies and partners participated as proposed?
4. The annual progress report will recommend, as appropriate, any necessary revisions or amendments to the Plan.
5. The County and each participating municipality will provide the public with an opportunity to review and comment on the annual progress report at a regularly scheduled public meeting.

If the Pitt County Board of Commissioners determines that the recommendations warrant amendment of the Plan, the Board may initiate an amendment through the process described below. Additionally, the annual review shall fulfill the required implementation progress report as a component of the Community Rating System (CRS) annual re-certification process. As a CRS community, Pitt County would employ the Plan to meet the requirements of CRS Activity 510 Floodplain Management Planning.

C. Periodic Plan Review and Update

Periodic evaluation and revision of the Plan will help ensure that local mitigation efforts include the latest and most effective mitigation techniques. These periodic revisions may also be necessary to keep the Plan in compliance with Federal and State statutes and regulations. The Plan will need to be updated to reflect changes, such as new development in the area, implementation of mitigation efforts, revisions of the mitigation processes, and changes in Federal and State statutes and regulations.

In the context of a Federal disaster declaration, State and local governments are allowed to update or expand an existing plan to reflect circumstances arising out of the disaster. An updated plan in this circumstance might include a re-evaluation of the hazards and the jurisdiction's exposure to them, a re-assessment of existing mitigation capabilities, and new or additional mitigation recommendations.

If the HMP is used in the accreditation process of CRS, the Plan shall be reviewed at a minimum every three (3) years to determine if there have been any significant changes that would affect the Plan. Increased development, increased exposure to certain hazards, the development of new mitigation capabilities or techniques, and changes to Federal or State legislation may affect the appropriateness of the Plan. Currently, the Pitt County MJHMP is not used in the accreditation process for CRS and therefore will be reviewed, at a minimum, every five (5) years. Should the CRS status change, the review process would revert to every three (3) years.

Review of the Plan

The procedure for reviewing and updating the Plan shall begin with a report summarizing the findings and recommendations of the hazard mitigation planning team. The report shall include a summary of progress on implementation of hazard mitigation strategies and a recommendation, as appropriate, from the hazard mitigation planning team for any changes or amendments to the Plan. Such report shall be prepared by the Pitt County Planning Director and submitted to the Pitt County Planning Board for consideration and recommendation. Each participating municipality shall also receive a copy of the report for review and comment.

The report shall include an evaluation of the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Plan. Specifically, the evaluation shall involve a review of the consistency of day-to-day land use decisions to determine if the hazard mitigation policies are being implemented. The review shall recommend if Plan amendments are warranted and if any revisions to local government regulatory tools (zoning, subdivision regulations, etc.) are necessary to assist in implementing the policies of the Plan.

If the Pitt County Board of Commissioners determines that such a report raises issues that warrant modification of the Plan, or if the Pitt County Planning Board or any of the participating municipalities recommends that issues have been raised which warrant modification of the Plan, the Board of Commissioners may initiate an amendment as delineated below, or may direct the Planning Director to undertake a complete update of the Plan with participation from all municipalities included in the Plan.

Procedure for Amending the Plan

An amendment to the Plan shall be initiated by the Pitt County Board of Commissioners either at its own initiative or upon the recommendation of the Planning Board, the Planning Director, the elected board of a participating municipality, or any other person or agency who demonstrates that an amendment should be considered.

Upon initiation of a text or map amendment, the Planning Director shall re-convene the hazard mitigation planning team which shall include representation from each of the participating municipalities.

Public Input

In addition to general public announcements of the planning process, other specific interested parties as required by FEMA or otherwise identified through participating local governments and through public announcements via newspapers and the County website (<http://www.pittcountync.gov/>) (and municipal websites as available) shall be invited to be a part of the review process.

The planning team, including any members of the public who express a desire to be included, will consider and reach consensus on any proposed amendment(s) which shall then be forwarded to all affected parties, including, but not limited to, County departments, municipalities, and other interested agencies such as the Natural Resource Conservation Service for a forty-five (45)-day review and comment period.

State and Federal Agency Review

The amended Plan shall be forwarded to NCEM and FEMA for review and approval prior to further action by the County or participating municipalities.

At the end of the comment period, the proposed amendment shall be forwarded along with all review comments to the Planning Board for consideration. If no comments are received from the reviewing department or agency within the specified review period, such shall be noted in the report to the Planning Board.

North Carolina Division of Emergency Management (NCEM) Review and Approval

The Planning Board approved Plan amendment shall be forwarded to NCEM for review and approval prior to further action by the County or participating municipalities.

Planning Board Review and Recommendation

The Planning Board shall consider NCEM review comments and make changes as appropriate. The Planning Board shall then submit a recommendation on the NCEM approved amendment to the Board of Commissioners within sixty (60) days. Failure of the Planning Board to submit a recommendation within this time period shall constitute a favorable recommendation.

In deciding whether to recommend approval or denial of an amendment request, the Planning Board shall consider whether or not the proposed amendment is necessary based upon one or more of the following factors:

- a) There are errors or omissions made in the identification of issues or needs during the preparation of the original Plan;
- b) New issues or needs have been identified which were not adequately addressed in the original Plan;
- c) There has been a change in projections or assumptions from those on which the original Plan was based.

Board of Commissioners Review and Approval

Upon receiving the recommendation of the Planning Board, the Pitt County Board of Commissioners shall hold a public hearing that shall be advertised in the local newspaper and announced through letters or email notice to identified interested parties. The Board shall review the Planning Board recommendation (including the factors delineated above), the report and recommendation from the Planning Director, any additional comments from the participating municipalities, and any oral or written comments received at the public hearing. Following that review, the Board of Commissioners shall take one of the following actions:

- a) Adopt the proposed amendment as presented or with modifications.
- b) Deny the proposed amendment.
- c) Refer the amendment request back to the Pitt County Planning Board for further consideration.
- d) Defer the amendment request for further consideration and/or hearing.

Participating Municipalities Review and Approval

Once the Pitt County Board of Commissioners has adopted the amendment, the elected board of each participating municipality shall hold a public hearing to receive public input on the amendment prior to local adoption.