



City of Portland Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

November 2009

Newsletter 2

This newsletter discusses the preparation of the City of Portland Hazard Mitigation Plan. It has been prepared to inform interested agencies, stakeholders, and the public about the project and to solicit comments. This newsletter can also be viewed on the Portland Office of Emergency Management Website at <http://www.portlandonline.com/OEM/>.

The City of Portland Office of Emergency Management (POEM) is updating the City's Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) and solicits public participation.

The Portland Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan will identify and update their natural hazards risks, such as flood, earthquake, weather related hazards, wildland fire, and landslides. The plan will also identify the people and facilities potentially at risk and ways to mitigate damage from hazards. The public participation and planning process will be documented as part of the project.

What is Hazard Mitigation?

Across the United States, natural and human-caused disasters have increasingly caused injury, death, property damage, and business and government services interruption. The toll on individuals, families, and businesses can be very high. The time, money, and resources required to respond to and recover from disasters take public funding and attention away from other important programs.

The people and property in the City of Portland are at risk from a variety of natural hazards that can potentially cause human injury, property damage, economic hardship or environmental harm.

Hazard mitigation projects eliminate the risk or reduce the severity of hazards on people and property. Projects may include short- or long-term activities to reduce exposure to or the effects of known hazards. Hazard mitigation activities include relocating or elevating buildings, developing, implementing or enforcing building codes, using technological tools to minimize the impact of the hazard, and public education.

Above all Hazard Mitigation is the title for actions taken by the public, both individual and organizational, business and industry and governmental agencies that protect our investment in the community, the businesses, the homes and the people that make Portland, Portland.

Why Do We Need A Hazard Mitigation Plan?

Communities must have a State, FEMA approved, and community adopted mitigation plan to receive a project grant from either the Hazard Mitigation Assistance or disaster mitigation assistance programs. The City of Portland needs to update their existing EEMA approved NHMP to continue eligibility and access to not only mitigation funds but all FEMA funding.

The rules have changed. The Local government and Flood Hazard Mitigation Plans' requirements and grant funding mechanisms were consolidated into one program, FEMA's

Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program. The new program consolidates the Hazard Mitigation (HMGP), Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA), Repetitive Flood Loss (RL), and Severe Repetitive Flood Loss (SRL) grant programs. Each of these programs must use the same application process and eligibility requirements for funding.

The Planning Process

There are very specific federal requirements that must be met when preparing and updating a Hazard Mitigation Plan. These requirements are commonly referred to as the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, or DMA2000 criteria. Information about the requirements may be found on the Internet at: <http://www.fema.gov/plan/mitplanning/guidance.shtm> under Laws, Regulations, and Guidance.

The DMA2000 requires the plan to document the following topics:

- Planning process
- Hazard identification
- Risk assessment
- Mitigation Strategy: Goals, actions, and projects
- A plan adoption resolution from the community
- State and FEMA approval

FEMA has prepared Planning Guidance which is available at: <http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=3336>; and "How to" Guides that explain in detail how each of the DMA2000 requirements is met. These guides are available at <http://www.fema.gov/plan/mitplanning/resources.shtm>. The Portland Hazard Mitigation Plan will follow those guidelines.

In October 2009 the planning process kicked-off by establishing a local planning committee and providing public input opportunities. During the meeting the planning committee examined the progress achieved during the prior HMP's planning cycle and surveyed hazard event data to determine if new threats exist for the City other than earthquake, flood, landslide, severe weather, and wildland fire.

After the first public meeting, City staff and URS began identifying critical facilities (facilities that are critical to the recovery of a community), refining each hazard's profile, reassessing capabilities, and updating the City's risk assessments and vulnerability analyses. After data collection, URS helped to determine which critical facilities and

estimated populations are vulnerable to the identified hazards in Portland.

The Planning Team moved forward to refine the exiting mitigation strategy. The mitigation strategy is based on the above processes. The City’s mitigation goals and actions/projects status updates were evaluated and are the foundation of the mitigation strategy. Mitigation goals are defined as general guidelines that explain what a community wants to achieve as hazard loss prevention. Goals are positively stated future situations that are typically long-range, policy-oriented statements representing community-wide visions. The Updated Goals for the City are:

1. Update the Risk Assessment and Vulnerability Analysis every five years.
2. Implement actions to prepare, protect, preserve and restore life, property, and natural systems.
3. Promote public outreach to diverse City populations.
4. Improve City of Portland’s economic resilience by identifying mitigation action successes.
5. Commit to continuously reducing the City’s natural hazards vulnerability.
6. Maximize mitigation effectiveness by taking a comprehensive approach to natural resource management via city plans, codes and programs that increase mitigation efforts.
7. Coordinate mitigation activities with regional communities and agencies.

Mitigation actions/projects are undertaken in order to achieve your stated objectives. The 2004 NHMP, focused on six categories: prevention, property protection, public education and awareness, natural resource protection, emergency services, and structural projects. The mitigation actions identified as a high priority by the Planning Team are listed below, and explained in more detail in the plan.

The selected projects/actions will be implemented over the next five years. A maintenance plan has also been developed for the hazard mitigation plan. It outlines how the community will monitor progress on achievement of the projects/actions that will help meet the stated goals and objectives, as well as an outline for continued public involvement.

The draft plan is available on the POEM website (<http://www.portlandonline.com/OEM/>) for public review and comment. Comments should be made via email, fax, or phone to the contact person below and be received no later than November 25, 2009. The plan will be provided to the Oregon Emergency Management Office and FEMA for their approval prior to formal adoption by the Portland City Council.

Sample of the City of Portland’ Mitigation Actions. Review the draft HMP for a complete list.		
Revise Portland’s Comprehensive Plan to address all natural hazards including, but not limited to, earthquakes, erosion, floods, invasive plants, landslides, volcano, severe weather, and wildfires.	Identify and pursue funding opportunities from outside agencies to fund and implement identified mitigation projects and activities.	Acquire (buy-out), demolish, or relocate structures from hazard prone area. Property deeds shall be restricted for open space uses in perpetuity to keep people from rebuilding in hazard areas.
Create a mitigation mapping committee to index and maintain GIS mapped inventory, and develop prioritized list of critical facilities, residential, and commercial buildings within known hazard areas such as earthquake, erosion, the 100-year and 500-year floodplains, invasive plant species, landslide, and wildfire areas.	Cross reference and incorporate mitigation planning provisions into all community planning processes such as comprehensive, capital improvement, and land use plans, etc to demonstrate multi-benefit considerations and strengthen eligibility from multiple funding sources.	Implement projects that <i>retain native vegetation</i> , increase vegetation diversity, and increase the complexity of the vegetation strata (having three vegetation strata: herbs, shrubs, trees).
Develop educational materials (television and print media) for residents that identify and define their risk to multi hazards: define and offer mitigation measures that residents can take home or share, determine method of distribution of the educational materials, and coordinate with the media to reduce conveyance of misinformation.	Review and amend City Code to require that all facilities that store or handle hazardous materials (including large tanks), and which are located in the 500-year floodplain, landslide, or other hazard areas, develop a hazardous materials inventory statement. This statement will be made available for Fire Bureau review. Require that these storage tanks are either adequately protected or relocated outside of the 500 year floodplain, landslide, or other hazard areas.	Develop and implement protocol for defining and mapping Wildland Urban Interface Zones and develop recommended policies, regulations, and landscape options for incorporation into City plans and programs.

We encourage you to take an active part in the Portland Hazard Mitigation Plan update effort. The purpose of this newsletter is to keep you informed and to allow you every opportunity to voice your opinion regarding this important project. Please contact these URS planning coordinators, if you have any questions, comments, or information requests:

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