

SETRPC Hazard Mitigation Plan

Project Overview

BACKGROUND

The South East Texas Regional Planning Commission (SETRPC) and participating counties are developing a **Hazard Mitigation Action Plan Update (“Plan” or “HMAP”)** that will address natural and human-caused hazards that affect their area. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines *Mitigation as sustained actions taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from hazards and their effects*. Therefore, the goal of the Plan is to minimize or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from known hazards through effective mitigation.

In accordance with FEMA regulations for HMAP Updates, this Plan will be prepared as a new, stand-alone plan, reflecting conditions that have changed and/or have had an impact area-wide since the previous Plan was completed. When complete, the HMAP Update will comply with all applicable provisions of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) and FEMA’s criteria for approval of mitigation plans required in the Hazard Mitigation Assistance Unified Guidance (July, 2013).

A FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan is required for eligibility for grant funds through FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) programs, which include: Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM), and Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) programs. Funds from these federal grant programs may be awarded directly to all planning participants to implement mitigation projects identified in the Plan.

PROCESS OF PLAN DEVELOPMENT

SETRPC and participating counties have secured the services of a consultant team headed by H2O Partners, Inc. (H2O) to assist in the preparation of the Plan and the planning process, which involves the following steps:

1. Capability Assessment

As part of this effort, the H2O team will conduct a Capability Assessment by examining and evaluating the programmatic, technical, administrative and fiscal capabilities of the SETRPC and participating counties and jurisdictions to implement projects to mitigate the effects of natural hazards. This assessment includes the identification, review, and update of any new or relevant plans, policies and programs in place such as land use plans, flood mitigation plans, evacuation and response plans, ordinances and building codes, subdivision regulations, post-disaster public assistance grants, and capital improvements plans. The purpose is to detect any existing gaps, shortfalls or conflicts within existing or ongoing activities that could contribute to hazard vulnerability. The assessment will also highlight the positive measures in place that should continue to be supported and enhanced through future mitigation efforts.

2. Hazard Identification and Risk Analysis

During this step, the project team will identify and compile relevant data on all potential hazards that threaten the planning area. Information to be collected includes local historical data on past hazard events and how these events impact residents, property, and the overall community. The process also assesses critical facilities and their vulnerability to risk. Critical facilities may include key facilities and essential service facilities such as fire stations, police stations, emergency operation centers, wastewater plants, hospitals, schools, and nursing homes.

Based upon historical occurrences and best available data, the planning team will identify and describe hazards that threaten the area. Detailed hazard profiles will include information on the frequency, magnitude, location and impact for each hazard in addition to estimating the probabilities for future hazard events.

3. Mitigation Strategy Development

Based on the findings of the **Capability Assessment** and **Risk Analysis**, the project team will work with the Planning Team to draft an overall **Mitigation Strategy** for the planning area. The strategy will be comprised of a comprehensive range of mitigation actions, or projects from four categories: structural projects, natural resource protection strategies, upgrading local plans and regulations, and conducting public education activities. Once established, the actions will be prioritized and a method and schedule for implementing, evaluating and monitoring actions will be developed, and included in the Plan.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public and stakeholder participation is integral to mitigation planning; as such the public and stakeholders will be invited to attend meetings through the SETRPC website, social media, flyers, and newspapers to solicit input, participation and feedback. In addition, they may participate and provide feedback by completing a public survey that is available online. The website is https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SETRPC_HMAP

PLAN REVIEW, ADOPTION AND APPROVAL

In accordance with federal planning requirements, all planning team members must review and approve the Plan. Once approved by the project team it will be submitted for formal approval to the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM). H2O will complete any revisions requested by TDEM. After review and approval, TDEM will submit the Plan to FEMA for review. After FEMA approval, all planning team members must formally adopt the Plan by resolution.

Please direct any questions regarding the Plan to Heather Ferrara, Project Manager for H2O Partners, at heather@h2opartnersusa.com.