

5.0: Local Mitigation Planning

A key element of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 is the strengthening of interactions between the state and local communities, particularly in coordination of implementation strategies. It is thought that most significant mitigation occurs at the local level. Thus, it is beneficial to all concerned to make sure that local plans are as effective in identifying hazards and developing action plans.

The Mitigation staff at Mississippi Emergency Management Agency works with counties and local jurisdictions to encourage and support local hazard mitigation planning. By developing the State Hazard Mitigation Plan, MEMA is assisting communities in updating local mitigation strategies by initiating a number of activities designed to integrate objectives consistent at both the State and local levels. These activities include funding and technical support, as well as educational opportunities.

Summary of Changes

Technical Support (Section 5.1) Planning Assistance for Local Governments were updated. Recipients, funding source and amounts were updated. Technical Assistance for Local Governments were updated. Recipients, funding source and amounts changed. CAV's and CAC numbers were updated along with applicant briefings conducted 2013-2018.

Removal of Methodology and Analysis of Local Plans (Section 5.2) Vulnerability Assessment Methodology by Planning and Development District (Table 5.2.1) Updates To Severe Repetitive Loss Property Analysis and Repetitive Loss Amounts

5.1: Local Mitigation Planning Coordination

**44 CFR 201.4(c)(4)(i) – To be effective, the plan must include the following elements:
A section of the Coordination of Local Mitigation Planning that includes the following:
A description of the State process to support, through funding and technical assistance, the development of local mitigation plans.**

Funding Support

The State has met its goal to have an approved hazard mitigation plan. The State has regional plans, county plans, single jurisdictional plans, and DRU plans. The majority of the local jurisdictions are covered by regional hazard mitigation plans. The State will continue the process to support the development of local mitigation plans through funding and technical assistance as follows:

Mississippi local communities continue to develop and implement a regional district hazard mitigation plan. Many of these communities have existing regional mitigation plans that are being updated to ensure that the effective implementations of mitigation initiatives are realized.

Also, these plans are being updated to identify potential utilization of funds for projects in these communities. MEMA assists with the planning application and meets with locals to determine scope of work. Once funding is awarded, the contract goes through the state bidding process. The State share of funding has been maintained at 90% and the Local share at 10% of the total cost.

Technical Support

Technical Support is provided to local jurisdictions, Planning and Development Districts (PDD), and contractors in developing hazard mitigation plans and identifying mitigation action strategies. Support is provided to local governments in applying for assistance through various funding sources. This support is provided primarily by the MEMA Mitigation Bureau and FEMA Region IV.

The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMA), Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC), and Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program (PDM) funding are currently being used to develop plans for the local jurisdictions. The State continues to use the FEMA Technical Assistance Program for funding the National Flood Insurance Program, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, and Hazard Mitigation Planning training workshops for local governments as needed and requested.

MEMA Mitigation Planning has conducted many Applicants' Briefings in support of federally declared disasters since 2013 plan update. MEMA is also a member of Mississippi Civil Defense/Emergency Management Association (MCDE- MA), Building Officials Association of Mississippi (BOAM), and an affiliate of the Mississippi Municipal League (MML) and the Mississippi Association of Supervisors (MAS). MEMA representatives attend the annual and semi-annual meetings of these organizations and provides updates on all mitigation activities taking place throughout the state. MEMA's Floodplain Management Specialist conducts an average of 60 Community assistance visits (CAV) and compliance inspections per year.

Planning Assistance for Local Governments

Recipients	Program Type	Amount (\$)	Recipients	Program Type	Amount (\$)
District 1	State	\$0 Updated by MEMA Mitigation Planning	DRU-Alcorn State	State	\$33,000.00
District 2	State	\$74,746.00	DRU-MS Valley	State	\$16,000.00
District 3	State	\$57,700.00	DRU-Ole Miss	State	\$55,000.00
District 4	State	\$74,824.00	DRU-MUW	State	\$33,000.00
District 5	State	\$46,000.00	DRU-MS State	State	\$15,000.00
District 6	State	\$67,888.00	DRU-MS Delta CC	State	\$33,000.00
District 7	State	\$73,406.00	DRU-East Central CC	State	\$30,000.00
District 8	State	\$64,784.00			
District 9	State	\$79,991.94			
MBCI Hazard Mitigation Plan	State	\$30,000.00			
DRU-Jackson State	State	\$10,000.00			

Mitigation Assistance for Local Governments

Class	Recipient of Training
FPM 101 Workshop	AFMM Conference
L273 Workshop	Pearl, MS
FPM 101 Workshop	Byram, MS
RSDE/EC Workshop	State Farm Insurance Agents
CEO Briefing	Louisville, Hattiesburg, Columbia
Planning Workshop	Hinds County, MS
Planning Workshop	Panola County, MS
Planning Workshop	Oktibbeha County, MS
Planning Workshop	Lafayette County, MS
Planning Workshop	Harrison County, MS

5.2: Local Plan Integration

44 CFR 201.4(c)(4)(i) – To be effective, the plan must include the following elements:
A section on the Coordination of Local Mitigation Planning that includes the following:
A description of the State process and timeframe by which the local plans will be reviewed, coordinated, and linked to the State Mitigation Plan.

Review and Approval of Local Plans

Federal mandate 44 CFR Sec. 201.4 requires that states and local jurisdictions must have an approved mitigation plan in order to receive grant funding. Once a local jurisdiction has applied for and received grant funding for a local hazard mitigation plan, they have one year in which to complete it. Applicants are not eligible to receive mitigation grant funds unless their plan has been approved. During plan development, technical assistance is provided by MEMA upon request, in addition to any plans training already provided.

The Mitigation Planning Bureau of MEMA reviews all local hazard mitigation plans based on the FEMA local plan review tool. MEMA and FEMA planners developed a plan review methodology to expedite the plan review process. As a result, the State now has over 336 jurisdictions with approved hazard mitigation plans. Once MEMA receives a plan from a local jurisdiction, MEMA planners will review the plan within 30-45 days of receipt and either return the local plan for required revisions or forward the plan to FEMA for final review.

Plans that pass the state review are forwarded to the FEMA Region IV Mitigation Division for conditional approval. Once the local jurisdiction(s) adopts the plan, the State forwards the adoption resolution(s) to FEMA for final approval. FEMA encourages the adoption of local hazard mitigation plans within 90-days of the federal approval.

For local plans that do not pass State review and require additional work, MEMA's Mitigation Planning Bureau provides a review tool with explanations of the actions and or changes that must occur in order to bring the plan into compliance with FEMA planning guidance and the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). Furthermore, each jurisdiction is provided technical assistance through the Mitigation Planning Bureau Director and the two mitigation planners assigned to the regions within the State. Eighteen months prior to plan expiration, local jurisdictions are notified to begin looking at the plan update process and made aware of any available funding sources. The local jurisdictions are again notified at twelve, six and three months before plan expiration.

There are some barriers to updating, adopting mitigation plans, and implementing approved local plans. At this time July 2023, two regional hazard mitigation plans have expired. Seven college hazard mitigation plans have expired, and one single jurisdiction hazard mitigation plan has expired. The Mitigation Planning Bureau will continue to send plan expiration notices in a timely manner. However, contract negotiation issues, timeliness of project completion, plans requiring extensive revisions, local share funding issues, leadership turnover are some barriers, and COVID-19 effects from 2020 to 2022. Plan and jurisdiction coverage data and trends across the state do not appear to apply. Barriers occur across the State. Some communities are slow to adopt their hazard mitigation plan. The Mitigation Planning Bureau will continue to contact communities that need to adopt through letters, calls, and emails. The Mitigation Planning Bureau has implemented more frequent contact with jurisdictions that have not adopted the plans. The Mitigation Planning Bureau will continue to use

this review and educational process to assist local jurisdiction leaders in developing and updating plans and implementing approved plans initiate plan update earlier. The Mitigation Planning Bureau will continue to educate mitigation council members of responsibilities upfront and the need to continue plan implementation regardless of changes in leadership.

Methodology and Analysis of Local Plans

The plan developers analyzed the risk assessments of FEMA-approved local hazard mitigation plans in Mississippi to assess their consistency with the state plan's risk assessment and to determine if the ranking of the state's hazards should be revisited and if any additional hazards should be profiled in the state plan. As of July 7, 2023, 336 (85.93%) jurisdictions have FEMA approved plans. The 9 regional plans were reviewed to determine which hazards each county was vulnerable to and to what degree (city-level plans were examined for consistency with the county-level determinations, but information presented is summarized to the county level).

Linking Local Plans to the State Plan

During the 2023 plan update process, the State gathered information from local plans to integrate this data into the State plan. The Hazard Mitigation Council reviewed and summarized information from the local plans on the following categories:

- Hazard identification and risk assessment
- Goals and objectives
- Local capabilities
- Mitigation actions

The process in 2023 involved reviewing all of the district-level plans and capturing the information related to the four categories above in spreadsheets for further review and comparison purposes. (For more details on this process, and how the information was collected and incorporated, see Section 3.0 Risk Assessment, Section 4.1 Hazard Mitigation Goals and Objectives, Section 4.3 Local Capability Assessment, and Section 4.4 Mitigation Actions.)

This information was used to inform the planning process and to reassess the plan for the following purposes:

- To improve the alignment of the state mitigation strategy with local goals, objectives, and actions;
- To update the statewide risk and vulnerability assessments;
- To identify and promote initiatives proven successful at the local level;
- To review state initiatives to determine if they meet the overall mitigation needs of the state and to change those that have not produced anticipated results; and
- To link local action with the state's mitigation strategy.

New and updated plans will be incorporated into the state plan during the five-year update cycle. Should state priorities change, these plans may be incorporated sooner.

The Mitigation Planning Bureau of MEMA makes a copy of the State plan, which includes the risk assessment and a summary of state prioritized strategies available to each local community. A copy of the plan is also available on the MEMA website. It was evident in the local plan review that some jurisdictions

did incorporate information from the State plan's risk assessment and goals and objectives into their local plan. Upon approval of the 2023 plan update, the State would like to further promote the use of the updated risk assessment and mitigation strategy in local government mitigation planning by sharing data on the MEMA website.

This 2023 update reflects the successful integration of the plans from all 82 counties in the state. MEMA has encouraged local governments to participate in regional district plans, county plans, single jurisdictional plans, and DRU plans to maximize the number of communities covered by mitigation plans and to help develop more coordinated, regional approaches to mitigation. MEMA's priority is getting all counties to a FEMA approved plan status and ensuring timely updates of the local jurisdictions' plans. As local plans are updated, the local governments will be encouraged to develop more tailored actions to their specific community. MEMA's priority will be facilitating the completion of remaining local plans, followed by technical assistance on plan implementation and updates.

5.3: Prioritizing Local Technical Assistance

44 CFR 201.4(c)(4)(i) – To be effective, the plan must include the following elements:

A section on the Coordination of Local Mitigation Planning that includes the following:

Criteria for prioritizing communities and local jurisdictions that would receive planning and project grants under available funding programs, which should include consideration for communities with the highest risks, repetitive loss properties, and most intense development pressures. Further, that for non-planning grants, a principal criterion for prioritizing grants shall be the extent to which benefits are maximized according to a cost benefit review of proposed projects and their associated costs.

Funding Priority

The state has established the following types of projects for funding priority:

- Hazard Mitigation Planning.
- Retrofit of critical facilities and critical infrastructure.
- Repetitive flood properties and severe repetitive flood loss areas.
- Projects that would result in a general improvement of regional or local mitigation capability.
- State Identified Mitigation Initiatives such as saferooms and storm shelters, severe weather warning systems for universities and colleges, and severe weather notification systems for local communities, some emergency generators, and public outreach campaigns.
- Post-disaster identified mitigation needs.
- Other projects initiatives identified in the state and local mitigation plan.

Prioritizing Alternatives

STAPLE/E (Social, Technical, Administrative, Political, Legal, Economic, and Environmental) criteria to select and prioritize the most appropriate mitigation alternatives for the plan. This methodology requires that social, technical, administrative, political, legal, economic, and environmental considerations be taken into account when reviewing potential actions to undertake. This process was used to help ensure that the most equitable and feasible actions would be undertaken based on the state's capabilities. Appendix 7.3.1 provides additional information regarding the review and selection criteria for alternatives

For non-planning grants, a principal criterion for prioritizing grants shall be the extent to which benefits are maximized according to a cost benefit review of proposed projects and their associated costs.

Prioritization of Communities / Jurisdictions for Planning Grants

This section provides a description of the criteria by which the State will prioritize communities and local jurisdictions that would receive planning grants under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA), Building Resilient Infrastructure (BRIC), Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM), and other available funding programs.

Federal and State funding for mitigation planning will be limited, and in some instances, may not be available. There will always be more requests for mitigation planning funds than there will be available funds. Approval of funds for mitigation planning will be based on the availability of funds and the determination as to whether the requesting jurisdiction has demonstrated the desire and ability to complete the plan and follow through on the strategies identified in the plan. This desire to comply with the initiatives in the local mitigation plan should not be dependent on the availability of state or federal funds. Local jurisdictions should develop mitigation plans based on their unique capabilities and needs.

In an effort to allow some flexibility in the distribution of mitigation planning funds, the following general guidelines have been developed. These guidelines are not all inclusive and compliance with all of the issues listed below may not be required for approval of a planning grant.

- The community must meet the criteria for the specific source of funds referenced in Section 5.1 (Funding Support).
- MEMA will consider its past experience in dealing with the community on other grants (such as disaster grants, mitigation projects, etc.).
- MEMA may contact the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, other State agencies/departments, and/or Planning Organizations to check on their past experiences with the requesting community.
- The State and local risk assessment will be reviewed to determine the susceptibility of the community to natural and human caused disasters.
- MEMA will review previous presidential disaster declarations to determine the number of times the requesting community has been impacted by declared disasters and the magnitude of damages resulting from those disasters. This review would consider impact on community infrastructure, as well as families and businesses.

- MEMA will also consider the number of non-declared disasters that have impacted the community. This review would consider impact on community infrastructure, as well as families and businesses.
- MEMA will consider whether or not the community participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
- MEMA will consider the number of insured, repetitive loss structures in the community.
- MEMA will also consider the community's status as a small-impooverished community and communities with special developmental pressures, if applicable.
- The community has identified natural disaster hazards in areas under its jurisdiction

Prioritization of Non-Planning Grants

This section provides a description of the criteria by which the State will prioritize communities and local jurisdictions that would receive non-planning grants under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA), Building Resilient Infrastructure (BRIC), Pre-Disaster Mitigation, and other available funding programs.

- The extent and nature of the hazards to be mitigated;
- The degree of commitment of the local government to reduce damages from future natural disasters;
- The degree of commitment of the local government to support the hazard mitigation measures to be carried out using the technical and financial assistance;
- The extent to which the hazard mitigation measures to be carried out using the technical and financial assistance contribute to established State/Local mitigation goals and priorities;
- The extent to which prioritized, cost-effective mitigation activities that produce meaningful and definable outcomes are clearly identified;
- If the local government has submitted a mitigation plan, the extent to which the activities identified under paragraph (5) above are consistent with the mitigation plan;
- The opportunity to fund activities that maximize net benefits to society;
- The extent to which assistance will fund activities in small-impooverished communities;
- The extent of development pressure particularly in those areas experiencing unexpected growth as a result of the post-Katrina evacuation and relocations;
- Communities with the highest risk; and
- Small and Impoverished Community Provisions

As used in pre-disaster mitigation, a small-impooverished community means a community of 3,000 or fewer

individuals that is economically disadvantaged, as determined by the State. Additional criteria may be determined by FEMA. The President may increase the federal cost share to 90% of the total cost of mitigation activities carried out by small-impoverished communities; however, all other requirements will be the same as any other community participating in pre-disaster mitigation activities.

In order for a project to be considered for funding, it has to have a benefit cost ratio of a minimum of 1.0 that is technically feasible and cost-effective in accordance with FEMA requirements. Only projects that meet this criterion along with the other bulleted elements listed above are considered eligible, this ensures that the benefits are maximized from the projects. In accordance with the Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Administrative Plan, the Hazard Mitigation Council approves projects that meet the goals and objectives of the state plan and based also on the recommendations of the State Hazard Mitigation Officer. Mississippi Gulf Coast communities have received more grant funding than the other areas of the state because of the higher risks associated with the coastal area.

Mississippi is classified as a mostly rural state. Seventy-nine percent of the state is classified as rural and twenty-one percent urban. At the time of this plan update, the Hazard Mitigation Council is unaware of any significant development pressures within the state's communities. None of the communities have identified any development pressures in their local plans and was not addressed in the state plan. Should the state's communities identify any development pressures in the future, they will be addressed at the appropriate time.

The State of Mississippi amended its plan to participate in FEMA's Severe Repetitive Loss Program to take advantage of the 90/10 cost share to help mitigate RL properties. The state is committed to mitigating these properties.

Evaluation of Prioritizing Planning and Non-Planning Grants

The Hazard Mitigation Bureau's Administrative Plan for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program provides an evaluation process for approval of grant applications as stated in Section VI – Program Administration. In addition, this plan presents a process to ensure benefits are maximized according to a cost benefit review of proposed projects.

Repetitive and Severe Repetitive Loss

Section 3 provides details about hazard assessments in Mississippi and appropriate mitigation actions to increase safety and reduce losses. One of the most revealing facts is the repetitive and severe repetitive losses that occur to structures and infrastructures. Mitigation Actions have been identified to address these repetitive and severe repetitive losses. These actions were developed from an historical, as well as a vulnerability, perspective.

The National Flood Insurance Program shows 63,994 policies with a total coverage of 15,671,951,500. Total claims since 1978 is 61,136 and a total paid since 1978 is 3,039,248,331 and over \$332 million repetitive losses paid with 1,423 repetitive loss properties mitigated. The State of Mississippi has shown to a high priority on assisting local communities in reducing future losses through defined mitigation actions. Our goal is to continue to increase the mitigation of repetitive and severe repetitive loss properties. The State of Mississippi is committed to mitigate its repetitive and severe repetitive loss properties; to that end we have previously amended the state plan to take advantage of the SRL Program with the 90/10 share cost. With that being said, the State of Mississippi does not adopt or enforce a statewide building code for all structures, nor does it mandate a code for residential construction. It is up to local jurisdictions to adopt and enforce building codes.

- We do encourage communities to restrict development in flood prone areas by implementing stricter building codes, zoning and ordinances.
- Placed and continue to place higher priority for applications inclusive of, but not limited to, developing a floodplain management program, restricting development in flood prone areas, acquiring flood prone properties, elevate structures that have been deemed repetitive loss and severe repetitive loss structures, and flood proofing businesses that meet the criteria of repetitive loss and severe repetitive loss structures.

Hurricane Katrina mitigated a large number of repetitive loss properties, the exact number is unknown at this time and the state is continuing to make mitigating RL properties a priority.