



SECTION 7. PLAN MAINTENANCE

This section details the formal process that will ensure that the Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) remains an active and relevant document and that the Planning Partnership maintains its eligibility for applicable funding sources. The plan maintenance process includes a schedule for monitoring and evaluating the plan annually and producing an updated plan every five years. In addition, this section describes how public participation will be integrated throughout the plan maintenance and implementation process. It explains how the mitigation strategies outlined in this plan update will be incorporated into existing planning mechanisms and programs, such as comprehensive land use planning processes, capital improvement planning, and building code enforcement and implementation. The plan’s format allows sections to be reviewed and updated when new data becomes available, resulting in a plan that will remain current and relevant.

The plan maintenance matrix shown in Table 7-1 provides a synopsis of responsibilities for plan monitoring, evaluation, and update, which are discussed in further detail in the sections below.

Table 7-1. Plan Maintenance Matrix

| Task | Approach | Timeline | Lead Responsibility | Support Responsibility |
|-------------|--|--|---|---|
| Monitoring | Preparation of status updates and action implementation tracking as part of submission for Annual Progress Report. | Meet annually or upon major update to comprehensive plan or major disaster declaration | Jurisdictional points-of-contact identified in Section 8 (Planning Partnership) and Section 9 (Annexes) | Jurisdictional implementation lead identified in Section 8 (Planning Partnership) and Section 9 (Annexes) |
| Integration | For integration of mitigation principles action to become an organic part of the ongoing County and municipal activities, the County will incorporate the distribution of the safe growth worksheet for annual review and update by all participating jurisdictions. | September each year with interim email reminders to address integration in County and municipal activities | HMP Coordinator and jurisdictional points-of-contact identified in Section 8 (Planning Partnership) and Section 9 (Annexes) | HMP Coordinator |
| Evaluation | Review the status of previous actions as submitted by the monitoring task lead and support to assess the effectiveness of the plan; compile and finalize the Annual Progress Report. | Finalized progress report completed by October 14 of each year | Planning Partnership; Plan Maintenance element | Jurisdictional points-of-contact identified in Section 9 (Annexes) |
| Update | Reconvene the planning partners, at a minimum, every five years to guide a comprehensive update to review and revise the plan. | Every five years or upon major update to Master Plan or major disaster | HMP Coordinator | Jurisdictional points-of-contact identified in Section 9 (Annexes) |

7.1 Monitoring, Evaluating, and Updating the Plan

The procedures for monitoring, evaluating, and updating the plan are provided below.

The Fort Bend County HMP Coordinator is assigned to manage the maintenance and update of the plan during its performance period. The Fort Bend County HMP Coordinator will chair the Planning Partnership and be the prime point



of contact for questions regarding the plan and its implementation as well as to coordinate incorporation of additional information into the plan.

The Planning Partnership, which is composed of a representative from each participating jurisdiction, shall fulfill the monitoring, evaluation, and updating responsibilities identified in this section. Each jurisdiction is expected to maintain a representative on the Planning Partnership throughout the plan performance period (five years from the date of plan adoption). As of the date of this plan, primary and secondary mitigation planning representatives (points-of-contact) are identified in each jurisdictional annex in Section 9 (Annexes).

Regarding the composition of the committee, it is recognized that individual commitments change over time, and it shall be the responsibility of each jurisdiction and its representatives to inform the Fort Bend County HMP Coordinator of any changes in representation. The Fort Bend County HMP Coordinator will strive to keep the committee makeup as a uniform representation of planning partners and stakeholders within the planning area. Currently, the Fort Bend County HMP Coordinator is designated as:

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7.1.1 Monitoring

The Planning Partnership will be responsible for monitoring progress, evaluating the effectiveness of the plan, and documenting annual progress. Each year, beginning one year after plan development, Fort Bend County and local Planning Partnership representatives will collect and process information from the departments, agencies, and organizations involved in implementing mitigation projects or activities identified in their jurisdictional annexes (Section 9) of this plan, by contacting persons responsible for initiating and/or overseeing the mitigation projects.

In the first year of the performance period, this will be accomplished by utilizing an online performance progress reporting system, the Baseline Assessment Tool (BAToolSM), which will enable municipal and County representatives to directly access mitigation initiatives to easily update the status of each project, document successes or obstacles to implementation, add or delete projects to maintain mitigation project implementation. It is anticipated that all participating partners will be prompted by the tool to update progress annually, providing an incentive for participants to refresh their mitigation strategies and to continue implementation of projects. It is expected that this reporting system will support the submittal of an increased number of project grant fund applications due to the functionality of the system which facilitates the sorting and prioritization of projects.



In addition to progress on the implementation of mitigation actions, including efforts to obtain outside funding and obstacles or impediments to implementation of actions, the information that Planning Partnership representatives shall be expected to document, as needed and appropriate, includes:





- Any grant applications filed on behalf of the participating jurisdictions
- Hazard events and losses occurring in their jurisdiction
- Additional mitigation actions believed to be appropriate and feasible
- Public and stakeholder input

Plan monitoring for years 2 through 4 of the plan performance period will be similarly addressed via the BAToolSM or manually.

7.1.2 Integration Process of the HMP into Municipal Planning Mechanisms

Hazard mitigation is sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from natural hazards. Integrating hazard mitigation into a community’s existing plans, policies, codes, and programs leads to development patterns that do not increase risk from known hazards or leads to redevelopment that reduces risk from known hazards. The Fort Bend County HMP Planning Partnership was tasked with identifying how hazard mitigation is integrated into existing planning mechanisms. Refer to Section 9 (Annexes) for how this is done for each participating municipality. During this process, many municipalities recognized the importance and benefits of incorporating hazard mitigation into future municipal planning and regulatory processes.

The Planning Partnership representatives will incorporate mitigation planning as an integral component of daily government operations. They will work with local government officials to integrate the newly adopted hazard mitigation goals and actions into the general operations of government and partner organizations. Further, the sample adoption resolution (Appendix A) includes a resolution item stating the intent of the local governing body to incorporate mitigation planning as an integral component of government and partner operations. By doing so, the Planning Partnership anticipates that:

- Hazard mitigation planning will be formally recognized as an integral part of overall planning and emergency management efforts.
- The HMP, Comprehensive Plans, Emergency Management/Operations Plans and other relevant planning mechanisms will become mutually supportive documents that work in concert to meet the goals and needs of County residents.

During the HMP annual review process, each participating municipality will be asked to document how they are utilizing and incorporating the Fort Bend County HMP 2023 update into their day-to-day operations and planning and regulatory processes. Additionally, the County will identify additional policies, programs, practices, and procedures that could be modified to accommodate hazard mitigation actions and include these findings and recommendations in the Annual HMP Progress Report. The following checklist presented in Table 7-2 was adapted from FEMA’s Local Mitigation Handbook (2013), Appendix A, Worksheet 4.2. This checklist will help a community analyze how hazard mitigation is integrated into local plans, ordinances, regulations, ordinances, and policies. Completing the checklist will help the County identify areas that integrate hazard mitigation currently and where to make improvements and reduce vulnerability to future development. In this manner, the integration of mitigation into jurisdictional activities will evolve into an ongoing culture within the County.

Table 7-2. Safe Growth Check List

| Planning Mechanisms | Do you do this? | | Notes: |
|---|-----------------|----|--|
| | Yes | No | How is it being done or how will this be utilized in the future? |
| Operating, Municipal, and Capital Improvement Program Budgets | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ When constructing upcoming budgets, hazard mitigation actions will be funded as budget allows. Construction | | | |





| Planning Mechanisms | Do you do this? | | Notes: How is it being done or how will this be utilized in the future? |
|--|-----------------|----|--|
| | Yes | No | |
| projects will be evaluated to see if they meet the hazard mitigation goals. | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually, during adoption process, the municipality will review mitigation actions when allocating funding. | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do budgets limit expenditures on projects that would encourage development in areas vulnerable to natural hazards? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do infrastructure policies limit extension of existing facilities and services that would encourage development in areas vulnerable to natural hazards? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do budgets provide funding for hazard mitigation projects identified in the County HMP? | | | |
| Human Resource Manual | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do any job descriptions specifically include identifying and/or implementing mitigation projects/actions or other efforts to reduce natural hazard risk? | | | |
| Building and Zoning Ordinances | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior to zoning changes or development permitting, does the municipality will review the HMP and other hazard analyses to ensure consistent and compatible land use? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the zoning ordinance discourage development or redevelopment within natural areas, including wetlands, floodways, and floodplains? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does it contain natural overlay zones that set conditions? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the ordinance require developers to take additional actions to mitigate natural hazard risk? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do rezoning procedures recognize natural hazard areas as limits on zoning changes that allow greater intensity or density of use? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do the ordinances prohibit development within or filling of wetlands, floodways, and floodplains? | | | |
| Subdivision Regulations | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do the subdivision regulations restrict the subdivision of land within or adjacent to natural hazard areas? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do the subdivision regulations restrict the subdivision of land within or adjacent to natural hazard areas? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do the regulations provide for conservation subdivisions or cluster subdivisions in order to conserve environmental resources? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do the regulations allow density transfers where hazard areas exist? | | | |
| Comprehensive Plan | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the goals and policies of the plan related to those of the County HMP? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the future land use map clearly identify natural hazard areas? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do the land use policies discourage development or redevelopment with natural hazard areas? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the plan provide adequate space for expected future growth in areas located outside natural hazard areas? | | | |
| Land Use | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the future land use map clearly identify natural hazard areas? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do the land use policies discourage development or redevelopment with natural hazard areas? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the plan provide adequate space for expected future growth in areas located outside natural hazard areas? | | | |
| Transportation Plan | | | |



| Planning Mechanisms | Do you do this? | | Notes: How is it being done or how will this be utilized in the future? |
|---|-----------------|----|--|
| | Yes | No | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the transportation plan limit access to hazard areas? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is transportation policy used to guide growth to safe locations? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are transportation systems designed to function under disaster conditions (e.g., evacuation)? | | | |
| Environmental Management | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are environmental systems that protect development from hazards identified and mapped? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do environmental policies maintain and restore protective ecosystems? | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do environmental policies provide incentives to development that is located outside protective ecosystems? | | | |
| Grant Applications | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data and maps will be used as supporting documentation in grant applications. | | | |
| Municipal Ordinances | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When updating municipal ordinances, hazard mitigation will be a priority. | | | |
| Economic Development | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local economic development group will take into account information regarding identified hazard areas when assisting new businesses in finding a location. | | | |
| Public Education and Outreach | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the municipality have any public outreach mechanisms/programs in place to inform citizens on natural hazards, risk, and ways to protect themselves during such events? | | | |

7.1.3 Evaluating

The evaluation of the mitigation plan is an assessment of whether the planning process and actions have been effective, if the HMP goals are being achieved, and whether changes are needed. The HMP will be evaluated on an annual basis to determine the effectiveness of the programs and to reflect changes that could affect mitigation priorities or available funding.

The status of the HMP will be discussed and documented at an annual plan review meeting of the Planning Partnership, to be held either in person or via teleconference approximately one year from the date of local adoption of this update and successively thereafter. At least two weeks before the annual plan review meeting, the Fort Bend County HMP Coordinator will advise Planning Partnership members of the meeting date, agenda, and expectations of the members.

The Fort Bend County HMP Coordinator will be responsible for calling and coordinating the annual plan review meeting and soliciting input regarding progress toward meeting plan goals and objectives. These evaluations will assess whether:

- Goals and objectives address current and expected conditions
- The nature or magnitude of the risks has changed
- Current resources are appropriate for implementing the HMP and whether different or additional resources are now available
- Actions were cost-effective
- Schedules and budgets are feasible
- Implementation problems, such as technical, political, legal, or coordination issues with other agencies, are present
- Outcomes have occurred as expected



- Changes in Planning Area resources impacted plan implementation (e.g., funding, personnel, and equipment)
- New agencies/departments/staff should be included, including other local governments, as defined under 44 CFR 201.6.

Specifically, the Planning Partnership will review the mitigation goals, objectives, and activities using performance-based indicators, including:

- New agencies/departments
- Project completion
- Underspending/overspending
- Achievement of the goals and objectives
- Resource allocation
- Timeframes
- Budgets
- Lead/support agency commitment
- Resources
- Feasibility

Finally, the Planning Partnership will evaluate how other programs and policies have conflicted or augmented planned or implemented measures and shall identify policies, programs, practices, and procedures that could be modified to accommodate hazard mitigation actions (“Implementation of Mitigation Plan through Existing Programs” subsection later in this section discusses this process). Other programs and policies can include those that address:

- Economic development
- Environmental preservation
- Historic preservation
- Redevelopment
- Health and/or safety
- Recreation
- Land use/zoning
- Public education and outreach
- Transportation

The Planning Partnership should refer to the evaluation forms, Worksheets #2 and #4, in the FEMA 386-4 guidance document, to assist in the evaluation process (see Appendix F – Maintenance). Further, the Planning Partnership should refer to any process and plan review deliverables developed by the County as a part of the plan review processes established for prior or existing local HMPs within the County.

The Fort Bend County HMP Coordinator shall be responsible for preparing an Annual HMP Progress Report for each year of the performance period, based on the information provided by the local Planning Partnership members, information presented at the annual Planning Partnership meeting, and other information as appropriate and relevant. These annual reports will provide data for the five-year update of this HMP and will assist in pinpointing any implementation challenges. By monitoring the implementation of the HMP on an annual basis, the Planning Partnership will be able to assess which projects are completed, which are no longer feasible, and what projects should require additional funding.



The Annual HMP Progress Report shall be posted on Fort Bend County's website to keep the public apprised of the plan's implementation (located at <https://www.fortbendcountytXHMP.com/>). Additionally, the website provides details on the HMP update planning process.

The HMP will also be evaluated and revised following any major disasters to determine if the recommended actions remain relevant and appropriate. The risk assessment will also be revisited to see if any changes are necessary based on the pattern of disaster damages or if data listed in Section 4.3 (Hazard Profiles) of this plan has been collected to facilitate the risk assessment. This is an opportunity to increase the community's disaster resistance and build a better and stronger community.

7.1.4 Updating

To facilitate the update process, the Fort Bend County HMP Coordinator, with support of the Planning Partnership, shall use the second annual meeting to develop and commence the implementation of a detailed plan update program. The Fort Bend County HMP Coordinator shall invite representatives from the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) to this meeting to provide guidance on plan update procedures. This program shall, at a minimum, establish who shall be responsible for managing and completing the plan update effort, what needs to be included in the updated plan, and a detailed timeline with milestones to ensure that the update is completed according to regulatory requirements.

At this meeting, the Planning Partnership shall determine what resources will be needed to complete the update. The Fort Bend County HMP Coordinator shall be responsible for assuring that needed resources are secured.

Following each five-year update of the mitigation plan, the updated plan will be distributed for public comment. After all comments are addressed, the HMP will be revised and distributed to all planning group members and the State of Texas State Hazard Mitigation Officer.

7.1.5 Grant Monitoring and Coordination

Fort Bend County recognizes the importance of having an annual coordination period that helps each planning partner become aware of upcoming mitigation grant opportunities and identifies multi-jurisdiction projects to pursue. Grant monitoring will be the responsibility of each municipal partner as part of their annual progress reporting. The Fort Bend County HMP Coordinator will keep the planning partners apprised of FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant openings and assist in developing letters of intent for grant opportunities when practicable.

Fort Bend County intends to be a resource to the Planning Partnership in the support of project grant writing and development. The degree of this support will depend on the level of assistance requested by the partnership during open windows for grant applications. As part of grant monitoring and coordination, Fort Bend County intends to provide the following:

- Notification to planning partners about impending grant opportunities
- A current list of eligible, jurisdiction-specific projects for funding pursuit consideration
- Notification about mitigation priorities for the fiscal year to assist the planning partners in the selection of appropriate projects

Grant monitoring and coordination will be integrated into the annual progress report or as needed based on the availability of non-HMA or post-disaster funding opportunities.



7.2 Implementation of Mitigation Plan Through Existing Programs

Effective mitigation is achieved when hazard awareness and risk management approaches and strategies become an integral part of public activities and decision-making. Within the County, there are many existing plans and programs that support hazard risk management, and thus, it is critical that this HMP integrate and coordinate with and complement those existing plans and programs.

Section 5 (Capability Assessment) provides a summary and description of the existing plans, programs, and regulatory mechanisms at all levels of government (federal, state, county, and local) that support hazard mitigation within the County. Within each jurisdictional annex in Section 9 (Annexes), the County and each participating jurisdiction identified how each capability reduces risk and how they are integrating hazard risk management into their existing planning, regulatory, and operational/administrative framework. If they are currently not showing this, they indicate how they intend to promote this integration.

It is the intention of Planning Partnership representatives to continue to incorporate mitigation planning as an integral component of daily government operations. The Planning Partnership representatives will work with local government officials to integrate the newly adopted hazard mitigation goals and actions into the general operations of government and partner organizations. Further, the sample adoption resolution (Appendix A [Adoption Resolutions]) includes a resolution item stating the intent of the local governing body to incorporate mitigation planning as an integral component of government and partner operations. By doing so, the Steering Committee anticipates that:

- Hazard mitigation planning will be formally recognized as an integral part of overall emergency management efforts.
- The HMP, Master Plans, Emergency Operations Plans, and other relevant planning mechanisms will become mutually supportive documents that work in concert to meet the goals and needs of County residents.

Other planning processes and programs to be coordinated with the recommendations of the HMP include the following:

- Emergency operations and response plans
- Training and exercise of emergency response plans
- Debris management plans
- Recovery plans
- Capital improvement programs
- Municipal codes
- Community design guidelines
- Water-efficient landscape design guidelines
- Stormwater management programs
- Water system vulnerability assessments
- Community wildfire protection plans
- Comprehensive flood hazard management plans
- Resiliency plans
- Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery action plans
- Public information/education plans.

Some action items do not need to be implemented through regulation. Instead, these items can be implemented through the creation of new educational programs, continued interagency coordination, or improved public participation.



During the annual plan evaluation process, the Planning Partnership representatives will identify additional policies, programs, practices, and procedures that could be modified to accommodate hazard mitigation actions and include these findings and recommendations in the Annual HMP Progress Report.

7.3 Continued Public Involvement

Fort Bend County and participating jurisdictions are committed to the continued involvement of the public in the hazard mitigation process. This HMP update will continue to be posted online: <https://www.fortbendcountytXHMP.com/>.

In addition, public outreach and dissemination of the HMP will include:

- Links to the plan on municipal websites of each jurisdiction with capability.
- Continued utilization of existing social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter) to inform the public of natural hazard events, such as floods and severe storms. Educate the public via the jurisdictional websites on how these applications can be used in an emergency.
- Development of annual articles or workshops on flood hazards to educate the public and keep them aware of the dangers of flooding.

The Steering Committee representatives and the Fort Bend County HMP Coordinator will be responsible for receiving, tracking, and filing public comments regarding this HMP. The public will have an opportunity to comment on the plan via the hazard mitigation website at any time. The HMP Coordinator will maintain this website, posting new information and maintaining an active link to collect public comments.

The public can also provide input at the annual review meeting for the HMP and during the next five-year plan update. The Fort Bend County HMP Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the plan evaluation portion of the meeting, soliciting feedback, collecting, and reviewing the comments, and ensuring their incorporation in the five-year plan update as appropriate. Additional meetings might also be held as deemed necessary by the planning group. The purpose of these meeting would be to provide the public an opportunity to express concerns, opinions, and ideas about the mitigation plan.

The Steering Committee representatives shall be responsible to ensure that:

- Public comment and input on the plan, and hazard mitigation in general, are recorded and addressed, as appropriate.
- Copies of the latest approved plan (or draft in the case that the five-year update effort is underway) are available for review, along with instructions to facilitate public input and comment on the HMP.
- Appropriate links to the Fort Bend County HMP webpage are included on municipal websites.
- Public notices are made as appropriate to inform the public of the availability of the plan, particularly during HMP update cycles.

The Fort Bend County HMP Coordinator shall be responsible to ensure that:

- Public and stakeholder comment and input on the plan, and hazard mitigation in general, are recorded and addressed, as appropriate.
- Copies of the latest approved plan are available for review at appropriate County facilities along with instructions to facilitate public input and comment on the plan.
- Public notices, including media releases, are made as appropriate to inform the public of the availability of the plan, particularly during plan update cycles.