

SECTION 2: PLANNING PROCESS

Meeting Title	Meeting Topic	Meeting Date	Meeting Location
HMPC Mtg. #4	1) Review the Draft Hazard Mitigation Plan 2) Solicit comments and feedback	May 20, 2020 2 p.m.	Zoom Video Conference Call

2.6 INVOLVING THE PUBLIC

An important component of any mitigation planning process is public participation. Individual citizen and community-based input provides the entire planning team with a greater understanding of local concerns and increases the likelihood of successfully implementing mitigation actions by developing community “buy-in” from those directly affected by the decisions of public officials. As citizens become more involved in decisions that affect their safety, they are more likely to gain a greater appreciation of the hazards present in their community and take the steps necessary to reduce their impact. Public awareness is a key component of any community’s overall mitigation strategy aimed at making a home, neighborhood, school, business, or entire planning area safer from the potential effects of hazards.

Public involvement in the development of the plan was sought using various methods including open public meetings, an interactive plan website, a public participation survey, and by making copies of draft plan documents available for public review online and at government offices. Additionally, all HMPC meetings were made open to the public.

All public meetings were advertised on the plan website and on local community websites, where possible. Copies of meeting announcements are provided in Appendix B. The public meetings held during the planning process are summarized in Table 2.7.

Table 2.7 – Summary of Public Meetings

Meeting Title	Meeting Topic	Meeting Date	Meeting Location
Public Meeting #1	1) Introduction to DMA, CRS, and FMA requirements and the planning process 2) Review of HMPC responsibilities and the project schedule.	July 11, 2019 5:30 p.m.	Whitted Human Services Building, Room 230, 300 West Tryon Street, Hillsborough
Public Meeting #2	1) Review “Draft” Hazard Mitigation Plan 2) Solicit comments and feedback	May 28, 2020 5 p.m.	Zoom Video Conference Call

2.7 OUTREACH EFFORTS

The HMPC agreed to employ a variety of public outreach methods including established public information mechanisms and resources within the community. The table below details public outreach efforts employed during the preparation of this plan.

Table 2.8 – Public Outreach Efforts

Location	Date	Event/Message
Plan website	Ongoing	Meeting announcements, meeting materials, and description of hazards; contact information provided to request additional information and/or provide comments
Local community websites	July 2019	Public Meeting #1 announcements posted with summary of the plan purpose and process
Facebook	July 2019	Public Meeting #1 streamed live on Durham City/County Emergency management’s Facebook page.
Local community websites	July 2019	Link to the plan website shared to expand reach

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Location	Date	Event/Message
Public survey	May 2019 – March 2020	Survey hosted online and made available via shareable link
Plan website - HIRA draft	11/26/2019	Draft HIRA made available for review and comment online
Plan website - Draft Plan	5/20/2020	Full draft plan made available for review and comment online
Local community websites	May 2020	Public Meeting #2 announcements posted with request for comments on the draft plan
Mitigation Flyer	Ongoing	An informational flyer was made available online

Public involvement activities for this plan update included press releases, creation of a website for the plan, a public survey, and the collection of public and stakeholder comments on the draft plan.

A public outreach survey was made available in July 2019 and remained open for response until March 2020. The public survey requested public input into the Hazard Mitigation Plan planning process and the identification of mitigation activities to lessen the risk and impact of future hazard events. The survey is shown in Appendix B. The survey was available in hard copy at the first public meeting and online on the plan website. In total, 348 responses were received via the online survey.

The following is a list of high-level summary results derived from survey responses:

- ▶ 92% of responses came from residents of Orange County.
- ▶ Over 93% of respondents own their home, which indicates ability of those engaged in the mitigation process to implement mitigation on their own properties.
- ▶ Over 86% of respondents feel somewhat prepared or very prepared for a hazard event.
- ▶ 77% of respondents do not know where evacuation centers or storm shelters are located; 95.4% say they are able to evacuate or take shelter if necessary.
- ▶ Over 44% of respondents do not know where to get more information on hazard risk and preparedness. More outreach may be needed and it may be beneficial to pursue new methods of outreach.
- ▶ Hurricane was rated the most significant hazard, followed by tornado, severe weather, and extreme heat. Landslide was rated the least significant hazard, followed by earthquake and dam failure.
- ▶ Approximately half of the respondents reported taking steps to mitigate risk at home. Many reported preparedness actions such as emergency kits and supplies and evacuation plans. Some residents reported backup generators. Few respondents noted property protection actions; therefore, these may be important ideas to promote in outreach.
- ▶ Respondents favored natural resource protection, emergency services, and structural projects for mitigation; least favored option was property protection for individual homes.
- ▶ Text message and email were the most preferred methods of communication for information on hazard events.

Detailed survey results are provided in Appendix B.

2.8 INVOLVING THE STAKEHOLDERS

In addition to representatives of each participating jurisdiction, the Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee included a variety of stakeholders. Stakeholders on the HMPC included representatives from the Duke University, Preservation Durham, University of North Carolina, American Red Cross, and local CERT and Citizens Stormwater Advisory Boards. Input from additional stakeholders, including neighboring communities, was solicited through invitations to the open public meetings and distribution of the public