

# CHAPTER II

## Plan Purpose and Development

### Plan Purpose

Early in the planning process, the Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Workgroup identified several purposes for the plan. These include the following:

- **Provide a Methodical Approach to Mitigation Planning**

The process used by the planning partners identifies vulnerabilities to future disasters and proposes the mitigation initiatives necessary to avoid or minimize those vulnerabilities. Each step in the planning process builds upon the previous, providing a high level of assurance that the mitigation initiatives proposed by the participants have a valid basis for both their justification and priority for implementation.

- **Enhance Public Awareness and Understanding of Natural Hazards**

This plan contains data and information that can be used in a variety of ways to enhance public awareness about natural hazards. Chapter IV of the plan identifies the four most prevalent natural hazards threatening the Thurston region and provides an assessment of where the region is vulnerable to those hazards. There is also data that estimates what the potential costs would be to property should there be a significant event. This information gives members of the community a better understanding of what the most prevalent hazards are historically and how those hazards impact or threaten the public health, safety, economic vitality of businesses and the operational capability of important institutions.

The mitigation initiatives identified in this chapter will also help the public become aware of some important steps that can be taken in their community to manage risk, protect lives and property and promote community sustainability.

The planning partners have provided opportunities for public involvement and information. This multi-jurisdictional effort has reached out to stakeholders from municipalities, academia, and special purpose districts as well as county and tribal government. The planning partners have also solicited ideas and input during informational sessions as the plan was being drafted.

- **Create a Decision-making Tool for Policy and Decision Makers**

This document is intended to provide basic information needed by managers and leaders of local government, business and industry, community associations and other key institutions and organizations to take actions to address vulnerabilities to future natural disasters. It also provides proposals for specific projects and programs that are needed to eliminate or minimize those vulnerabilities.

These proposals, called “mitigation initiatives” and identified in this chapter, are related to the needs of each jurisdiction. They have been evaluated as to their economic benefits, and have been prioritized for implementation. This approach is intended to provide a decision-making tool for the management of participating organizations and agencies regarding why the proposed mitigation initiatives should be implemented, which should be implemented first, and the economic and public welfare benefits of doing so.

- **Promote Compliance with State and Federal Program Requirements**

A number of state and federal grant programs, policies, and regulations encourage or mandate local government to develop and maintain a comprehensive natural hazards mitigation plan. The Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 established a requirement that for all disasters declared on or after November 1, 2004, applicants for grants for disaster mitigation funds must have an approved local mitigation plan. This plan is specifically intended to assist the participating local governments with complying with these requirements, and to enable them to more fully and quickly respond to state and federal funding opportunities for mitigation-related projects.

Because the plan defines, justifies and prioritizes mitigation initiatives that have been formulated through a technically valid hazard analysis and vulnerability assessment process, the participating organizations are better prepared to more quickly and easily develop the necessary grant application materials for seeking state and federal funding.

- **Assure Inter-Jurisdictional Coordination of Mitigation-Related Programming**

A key purpose of the planning process is to ensure that proposals for mitigation initiatives are reviewed and coordinated among the participating jurisdictions within the county. In this way, there is a high level of confidence that mitigation initiatives proposed by one jurisdiction or participating organization, when implemented, will be compatible with the interests of adjacent jurisdictions and unlikely to duplicate or interfere with mitigation initiatives proposed by others.

- **Create Jurisdiction Specific Hazard Mitigation Plans for Implementation**

A key purpose of the plan is to provide each participating local jurisdiction with a specific plan of action that can be adopted and implemented pursuant to its own authorities and responsibilities. Chapter V of the plan contains separate sections that identify the mitigation initiatives for each participating entity. The jurisdictions and organizations can then adopt and implement the plan and the corresponding mitigation initiatives for their organization according to their individual needs and schedule. In this way, the format of the plan and the operational concept of the planning process ensure that proposed mitigation initiatives are coordinated and prioritized effectively among jurisdictions and organizations, while nonetheless allowing each jurisdiction to adopt only the proposed mitigation initiatives that it actually has the authority or responsibility to implement when resources are available. Appendix A outlines the jurisdictions and organizations that have adopted the plan.

## Plan Development

The above purposes have guided the plan development. As a State Hazard Mitigation Grant Program recipient, The Emergency Management Council of Thurston County served as lead entity to develop the plan. The Thurston Regional Planning Council provided staff on contract to support the work of the Council and the Hazards Mitigation Planning Workgroup. The members of the Thurston County Emergency Management Council served as the steering committee and the convening body for the plan. The Council met monthly from January to July, 2003 to guide development of the mitigation plan and the following outlines their activities:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Subject</b>
February 20, 2003	Meeting	Reviewed Plan Goals and Objectives
March 20, 2003	Meeting	Reviewed Hazard Vulnerability and Risk Assessment
April 17, 2003	Meeting	Reviewed Mitigation Initiatives Discussed Public Process
May 15, 2003	Meeting	Reviewed Draft Plan
May, 2003	Public Meetings	Sponsored and Attended Two Public Meetings In North and South Thurston County
June 19, 2003	Meeting	Reviewed Draft Final Plan
July 17, 2003	Meeting	Made Recommendation on Final Plan to Thurston County Board of Commissioners
July 17 forward	Plan Approval	Took Plan Through Approval Process in Individual Jurisdictions
August 15, 2003	Plan Delivery	Delivered Plan to State Emergency Management and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

The Emergency Management Council of Thurston County consists of representatives from the following jurisdictions:

- Thurston County
- City of Lacey
- City of Olympia
- City of Rainier
- City of Tenino
- City of Tumwater
- City of Yelm

The names of those serving on the Council are listed in Appendix B.

The Hazards Mitigation Planning Workgroup acted as the planning committee and consisted of representatives from the jurisdictions as well as from taxing entities in the region. The workgroup met monthly from January to June, 2003. Their role was to:

- Provide technical input and information specific to their jurisdiction/entity to be incorporated into the plan.
- Develop mitigation plan goals based on local hazards to provide a long-term vision reducing our region's vulnerability to natural hazard events.
- Identify, analyze, and prioritize the mitigation initiatives for the region as well as for their jurisdiction.
- Analyze the cost and benefit of the mitigation initiatives.
- Identify appropriate public involvement opportunities and participate in or host a public meeting.
- Review plan elements in draft and final form.

The workgroup carried out the following plan development tasks and activities:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Subject</b>
January 14, 2003	Initial Meeting	Reviewed scope of work. Background information
February 18, 2003	Meeting	Identified plan goals and objectives. Began work on risk assessment.
March 18, 2003	Meeting	Finalized Hazard Vulnerability and Risk Assessment. Received background information on Mitigation Strategies
April 15, 2003	Meeting	Finalized Mitigation Initiatives. Received background information on Cost/Benefit Analysis and Prioritization
April 28-May 2, 2003	Draft Plan Review	Reviewed Draft Plan in Preparation for Public Workshops
May 19-30, 2003	Public Meetings/ Comment	Attended Public Meetings and Took Comment from the Public Regarding Plan
June 9-20, 2003	Plan Revision	Plan Revised Based on Public Comment
June 24-July 1, 2003	Plan Review	Reviewed Final Plan and Forwarded to Emergency Management Council

Members of the Hazards Mitigation Planning Workgroup were from the following jurisdictions and taxing entities:

Thurston County  
 City of Lacey  
 City of Olympia  
 City of Tumwater  
 City of Tenino  
 City of Yelm  
 Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation

Intercity Transit  
Olympia School District  
Rainier School District  
The Evergreen State College  
Thurston County Fire Chiefs Association (on behalf of Fire Districts #4, 9, and 13)  
Tumwater School District

Representatives of the Hazards Mitigation Planning workgroup are named in Appendix B.

## Public Participation

A variety of methods were used to encourage public participation in the planning process as well as to educate the public about hazard mitigation efforts in their communities. Documentation of these efforts appears in Appendix C. Since formal natural hazards mitigation planning had not previously been undertaken in the Thurston Region, much of the public participation efforts were directed at education and awareness. On February 26, 2003, a press release went to all media announcing the beginning of the planning effort. This release outlined the requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and the community's response to this requirement. This press release resulted in two public education activities. First, a public service announcement aired on KGY Radio March 3-14, 2003. KGY is based in Olympia and has a listener base in both Thurston and Lewis Counties. Second, a feature story appeared in "The Chronicle" which is the major newspaper in Lewis County. With both of these efforts, information was disseminated that educated the public about natural hazards mitigation and what the intent of the plan would be.

During this beginning stage, it was also important that various elected officials and decision-makers in the community that were not directly involved in the planning effort receive information on natural hazards mitigation planning. On January 29, 2003, a meeting was held to invite taxing jurisdictions from the region to join the planning effort. This meeting provided information about the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and the importance of joining a multi-jurisdictional effort to address natural hazards in order to mitigate their effects. There were seven attendees. On January 14, 2003, a letter was sent to all of the mayors of the jurisdictions in Thurston County outlining the new planning effort, and their jurisdiction's involvement in it. On March 7, 2003 the Thurston Regional Planning Council which is a multi-jurisdictional board made up of elected officials was briefed on the subject and received information about the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. There were 23 attendees.

The Internet proved to be a valuable tool to disseminate information regarding the plan to the public in a quick and efficient manner. Information was posted at [www.trpc.org](http://www.trpc.org) which is Thurston Regional Planning Council's agency site. The draft plan received 86 visits during the month of May 13 through June 13. The average visit was five minutes. On February 16, 2003 introductory natural hazards mitigation planning information was posted. This information was up-dated and the draft plan was posted on May 19, 2003. The site gave contact information in order for the public to give input to the plan by e-mail or by calling the Thurston Regional Planning Council office.

The Disaster Assistance Council (DAC), acted as a community stakeholder group who provided input into the plan as it was being written. The DAC is made up of representatives from community-based groups who have emergency management planning/assistance functions. This body represents a diverse range of organizations such as the Thurston County Food Bank, the Crisis Clinic and the Volunteer Center. (See Appendix C for a list of DAC member organizations.) There were two joint meetings held with the DAC and the Emergency Management Council where plan sections were reviewed and both councils gave input to the plan.

Mid-way in the planning process, the Disaster Assistance Council sponsored a meeting with neighborhood groups on disaster planning. Materials were available on hazard mitigation. Staff contact information was also provided should attendees have questions or want to follow up on the information received. There were 40 attendees.

When the plan reached the draft stage, a second press release went out that announced that there would be two public meetings held on consecutive evenings in different communities to elicit comments and suggestions on the plan. The press release was followed with an article in "The Olympian" on May 17, 2003 as well as public service announcements that ran on KGY Radio hourly on May 19 and 20.

The public meetings were structured to provide information about mitigation planning, provide attendees an opportunity to read the plan, and also ask questions of staff and members of the Emergency Management Council who were present. The first meeting was held on May 19, 2003 at the County Courthouse with eight attendees. The second meeting was held on May 20, 2003 at the Tenino City Hall with 12 attendees. Input on the plan was solicited during a three week period following these meetings. The public was given the option of commenting on the plan by mail, over the e-mail or by calling the project manager. Two comments were received.

Following the public meetings, a third press release was done on May 23, 2003 to all media that solicited public comment on the draft plan. An article ran in "The Olympian" on May 27. Three members of the public called to request plans for review following this article. Two comments were received.

The following provides a synopsis of the public participation and education efforts and location of the associated documentation in Appendix C:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Appendix Page</b>
January 14, 2003	Letter to mayors of all jurisdictions regarding beginning of hazard mitigation planning.	C-1
January 29, 2003	Meeting with taxing jurisdictions to provide information on mitigation planning and inviting them to join multi-jurisdictional planning effort.	C-2
February 26, 2003	Established web site at <a href="http://www.trpc.org">www.trpc.org</a> that gave information regarding mitigation planning as well as draft plan.	
February 26, 2003	Press release to all media announcing beginning of planning effort.	C-3
March 3-14, 2003	Public service announcement aired on KGY Radio.	
March 7, 2003	Thurston Regional Planning Council was briefed on planning effort.	C-5
March 14, 2003	Feature story appeared in "The Chronicle".	C-11
March 22, 2003	Neighborhood Emergency Preparedness Workshop (provided information to attendees.)	C-12
April 17 and May 15, 2003	Joint meetings with Emergency Management Council and Disaster Assistance Council	C-12
May 12, 2003	Press release to all media announcing draft plan and public meetings.	C-14
May 17, 2003	Article in "The Olympian" announcing public meetings on May 19 and 20, 2003.	C-15
Week of May 19, 2003	Public service announcement ran on KGY Radio hourly during news.	
May 19 and 20, 2003	Public meetings. (Invitation to learn more about hazards mitigation planning and give input to draft plan.)	
May 19, 2003	E-mailed draft plan to various stakeholder groups that serve on Thurston County Disaster Assistance Council with request for comment and input.	
May 19, 2003	Draft plan posted on web site.	C-16
May 23, 2003	Press release to all media announcing draft plan availability and soliciting public comment.	C-18
May 27, 2003	Article in "The Olympian" to seek public comment on draft plan.	C-20

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