

Thurston County Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan

Flood Planning Committee Guidelines

Prepared for Thurston County Resource Stewardship, Water Resources Program



Prepared by Thurston Regional Planning Council



Revised April 25, 2017



INTRODUCTION

A Flood Planning Committee will shape the development of the *Thurston County Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan* by providing stakeholder perspectives and critical feedback throughout the plan update process. The Flood Planning Committee Guidelines describe the project purpose and the composition of the committee, its responsibilities, meeting norms, facilitation, communication, and decision making and conflict resolution processes.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Flooding in Thurston County is common, and on an annual average basis, it is the costliest natural hazard. Between 1962 and 2016, Thurston County has received 18 federal disaster declarations related in some part to flooding. Total countywide flood damage estimates over this period exceeds \$206 million.¹ The February 1996 flood cost uninsured private property owners in Thurston County losses in excess of \$22 million. Statewide, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has provided over \$72 million in aid to flood victims, businesses, and local governments for the December 2007 floods and over \$12.8 million in assistance for the January 2009 floods.

Flood hazard management is complex process that must balance resource protection, environmental enhancement, and flood damage protection. Most importantly, flood hazard management must engage the public to reach consensus and build support for flood management strategies that protect both the built and natural environments.

In fall 2016, the Federal Emergency Management Agency rated Thurston County a Class 2 community for its participation in the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS). The county's ongoing planning, hazard damage reduction activities, and education efforts exceed the minimum requirements of the NFIP. A Class 2 rating affords flood insurance property holders, within special flood hazard areas, a 40% discount on their premiums. To maintain this distinctive rating and provide a savings to flood insurance holders, the county must update and adopt its *Thurston County Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan* (FHMP) every five-years. The current plan was adopted in December 2012 and will expire on December 31, 2017.

Purpose of the Project

Thurston County's flood plan identifies the policies, programs, projects, and activities that will mitigate the adverse impacts of flood hazards within the community. To maintain compliance with the requirements of the CRS, the county must complete and document the plan update by October 1, 2017.

This plan is one of many CRS prerequisites that is reviewed and scored on a point-based system. Building off the current FHMP, TRPC will identify opportunities throughout the update process to increase credit for planning activities.

¹ Hazards & Vulnerability Research Institute. 2016. The Spatial Hazard Events and Losses Database for the United States, Version 15.2 [SHELDUS Online Database]. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina.



Thurston County is contracting with Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) to lead the county through the standardized 10-step flood plain management planning process specified in Section 510 of the CRS Coordinator's Manual. To meet the minimum Class IV pre-requisites of the CRS program the completed FHMP must score at least 50% of available points and also score at least 50% of points available in the public participation planning requirements, the risk assessment, and in the county's flood mitigation strategy.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's CRS planning requirements emphasizes the public participation elements to build community support for the mitigation strategy. The Flood Planning Committee plays a key role in fulfilling many of these requirements.

FLOOD PLANNING COMMITTEE

Purpose

The Flood Planning Committee is a major component of the plan's public outreach strategy. The committee will function as a sounding board to Thurston County for all project milestones for the FHMP development process. The committee will advise, support, and assist staff from Thurston County, TRPC, and other project partners as appropriate.

Duration and Schedule

The committee is expected to convene regularly over a period of six months, from late April through September, 2017. Up to six meetings are anticipated and each meeting is expected to run two hours. Details of the meeting schedule will be discussed during the committee's first meeting. The members will provide feedback to the project managers for selecting the committee's monthly meeting dates. All committee meetings will be open to the public.

Composition and Alternates

The committee shall consist of 12 to 14 members. Federal CRS planning requirements specify that half of the committee must be composed community stakeholders who live, work, or conduct business within the planning area. TRPC and Thurston County will select committee members for their expertise and knowledge or experience with flood issues. Committee members from the 2012 FHMP will be invited to serve on the committee. The stakeholder members will constitute a cross-section of the community. The other half of the committee will be comprised of staff representing various Thurston County Departments. If a member can no longer participate in the project, they will recommend a replacement to TRPC. The departing member will fully brief their replacement prior to the replacement's first meeting, if possible.



Flood Planning Committee Members

Community Members

Scott Boetcher	The Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority
Tris Carlson	Community Member*
Glen Connelly	Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation*
Howard Glastetter	Community Member*
Robert Scott	West Thurston Regional Fire Authority
Alan Vanell	Community Member*
George Walter	Nisqually Indian Tribe

Thurston County Staff Members

Andrew Kinney	Thurston County Emergency Services, Emergency Management*
Allison Osterberg	Thurston County Resource Stewardship
Mark Maurer	Thurston County Water Resources Program
Meghan Porter	Thurston County Board of County Commissioners
Tim Rubert	Thurston County Resource Stewardship, Flood Plain Manager*
Trevin Taylor	Thurston County Public Works

*= 2012 Flood Planning Committee Member

Responsibilities

Committee members are asked to perform the following:

1. Attend committee meetings.
2. Discuss and respond to information and analysis prepared by TRPC and others such as the plan's goals and objectives, the flood hazard risk assessment, estimated losses, public participation efforts, and the county's flood programs, services, and mitigation activities.
3. Bring community perspective to all discussions.
4. Preview public meeting agendas and offer feedback.
5. Attend and participate in the project's public meeting, if possible.
6. Help engage other community members in the process.

Meeting Norms

The committee members are asked to follow these meeting norms:

- All members will review project materials on a timely basis and provide timely feedback.
- Members will come to meetings prepared to discuss items on the agenda.
- Members will honor one another by communicating honestly and respectfully; everyone will have an opportunity to speak.
- Members will resolve issues within their power to solve and re-direct those issues that cannot be solved in a timely manner. If issue resolution is necessary, team members will strive to follow the conflict resolution process identified in these Guidelines.



- Meetings will begin and end at the scheduled times. Participants that arrive late will catch up on what was missed during breaks or as other opportunities allow.
- Once project decisions are made the committee will work to honor those decisions and avoid reopening issues that have already been resolved or decided. Such decisions will be documented by the consultant team in technical memoranda and distributed to the group.

Facilitation

TRPC will facilitate the Flood Planning Committee meetings. The Thurston County project leader may present or co-facilitate meetings as necessary.

Facilitation Team Member	Affiliation	Contact Information
Paul Brewster	TRPC	brewstp@trpc.org ; (360) 741-2526
Pat Allen	Thurston County	allenp@co.thurston.wa.us ; (360) 867-2078

Communication

TRPC will coordinate committee activities and schedule meetings in consultation with Thurston County staff. Meeting announcements, agendas, and meeting materials will be distributed by email to committee members. Additional printed materials will be provided to committee members at meetings. Below are general communication guidelines for committee members:

- Email correspondence originating from or directed to Thurston County, TRPC, and the committee members relating to this project may be subject to public disclosure.
- General inquiries for information about the project outside of scheduled meetings should be directed to TRPC.
- Current project information such as public meeting schedules, copies of reports, and presentations will be maintained by TRPC on the project's website (www.trpc.org).
- Meeting notes will be prepared and maintained by TRPC.
- The Flood Planning Committee may select a representative, through consensus, to speak on issues they agree upon, to the Board of Thurston County Commissioners or other entities in relationship to the Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan update process.

Decision Making and Conflict Resolution

Throughout the project's duration there will be points at which decisions need to be made. TRPC will engage the Flood Planning Committee as appropriate to seek members' input to support such decisions.

TRPC and Thurston County will work to resolve conflicts respectfully. When making committee decisions, members are encouraged to strive for consensus. If a disagreement over a decision or course of action emerges, the conflicting points of view will be documented in the meeting notes. The Thurston



County Project Manager will select the solution most consistent with the project’s objectives. Where appropriate, conflicting points of view may be presented to the Board of County Commissioners for their consideration.

The Board of County Commissioners establish the county’s policies and objectives. They will make the final decision regarding the adoption or implementation of any of the activities that are the result of this planning process.