



# CHAPTER 5

## Plan Implementation and Maintenance

### 5.0 Keeping the Plan Current

Comprehensive flood hazard management strategies require continuous coordination and cooperation. To achieve the plan's goals and objectives, Thurston County's mitigation activities must keep pace with other plans, policies, funding opportunities, and changing conditions or emerging threats.

Science, technology, and best practices for creating disaster resilient communities is expanding. Thurston County updated the Thurston County Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan twice since it was first adopted in 1999. The county will periodically review this plan to add or adjust flood mitigation strategy actions – to make the county stronger and safer. All partners to the plan will engage to evaluate accomplishments or shortcomings so the county can incorporate lessons learned into long-term mitigation strategies.

This chapter presents a plan maintenance process that includes: (Community Rating System Step 10):

- A section describing the method and schedule of monitoring, evaluating, and updating the mitigation plan over a 5-year cycle
- A process by which local governments incorporate the requirements of the mitigation plan into other planning mechanisms, when appropriate
- A discussion on how the community will continue public participation in the plan maintenance process.

The plan maintenance strategy outlines a formal process that will make the flood hazard mitigation plan an active and relevant document. This allows Thurston County to maintain its eligibility for applicable funding sources and achieves a Community Rating System (CRS) Class 4 or better rating. It includes a schedule for monitoring and evaluating the plan annually and producing an updated plan every five years. The strategy also describes how the county will integrate public participation throughout the plan maintenance and implementation process. It explains how the plan's mitigation strategies 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 for section-by-section review and update when new data become available, resulting in a useful plan for policy makers and staff, and one that is clearly understood by the public.

## 5.1 Plan Implementation

The effectiveness of the flood hazard mitigation plan depends on its implementation and incorporation of its action items into existing local plans, policies and programs. Together, the action items in this plan provide a framework for activities that Thurston County can implement over the next 5 years. The Plan Development Team (PDT) and the Flood Planning Committee (FPC) established goals and objectives and prioritized mitigation initiatives they will implement through existing plans, policies, and programs.

While the Thurston County Resource Stewardship Department will assume lead responsibility for overseeing the plan implementation and maintenance strategy, they will share the responsibility for plan implementation and evaluation among all departments identified as leads in Chapter 3's mitigation initiatives.

## 5.2 Flood Planning Committee (FPC)

The FPC acted as the primary advisory committee, overseeing plan development and making recommendations on key elements, including the risk assessment, mitigation strategy, and maintenance strategy. The FPC expressed the need for Thurston County to maintain some form of oversight committee with similar representation to continue serving an active role in the implementation and maintenance activities of this plan. They further recommended that such an advisory committee remain a viable body over the five-year life cycle of this plan. The following guidelines help to establish continuity of the FPC:

1. The committee should continue to meet the CRS planning requirements in terms of membership.
2. Membership is voluntary

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For more information about the FPC's role, see:

***CHAPTER 4 Plan Development Process***

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3. Existing members from this plan will remain on the FPC if it is mutually agreeable between the member and Thurston County.
4. Consideration should be given to balancing the membership with the major river basins subject to flooding.
5. Consideration should be given to a broad range of organizations includes tribal, business, flood authorities, environmental, and governmental organizations.

During the five-year period of the plan, any openings in the Flood Planning Committee shall be filled by a collaborative process between county staff and the remaining FPC membership. The objective is to maintain full membership of the committee until the next plan update.

In the plan maintenance strategy, the advisory committee will review the annual progress report and provide input to Thurston County on possible enhancements for consideration during the next update. Keeping the FPC intact will provide a head start on future updates.

## 5.3 Annual Progress Report

At its annual meeting, the FPC will, at a minimum, evaluate progress of its individual action plan during a 12-month performance period. This review should be performed in late spring or early summer, prior to Thurston County's annual CRS certification visit. This review should include:

1. Summary of any flood hazard events that occurred during the reporting period and the impact of these events on the planning area
2. Review of mitigation success stories
3. Review of continuing public involvement
4. Brief discussion about why targeted strategies were not completed
5. Re-evaluation of the action plan to determine if the timeline for identified projects needs to be amended (such as changing a long-term project to a short-term one because of new funding)
6. Recommendations for new projects or adjustments to existing mitigation initiatives
7. Review of grant opportunities and other funding options
8. Impact of any other planning programs or initiatives that involve hazard mitigation.

Appendix D contains a template for preparing a progress report. The FPC will provide feedback to Thurston County staff on items included in the template. County staff will then prepare a formal annual report on the progress of the plan. This report should be:

- Posted on the Thurston County’s website on the homepage dedicated to the Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Provided to the local media through a press release
- Presented to the Thurston County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) to discuss the progress of mitigation initiatives implemented during the reporting period
- Provided as part of the CRS annual re-certification package

The CRS requires an annual recertification to be submitted by October 15 of every calendar year for which the community has not had a verification site visit. To meet this recertification timeline, county staff will strive to complete progress reports between June and September each year. (Annual progress reporting credited under CRS Step 10).

## 5.4 Plan Revisions

Thurston County staff may need to revise or amend this plan in the intervening years between the five-year plan update cycle to maintain CRS credit and meet the necessary prerequisites to maintain a Class 4 or better community rating. Other plan revisions may be necessary to better position the county for state or federal flood mitigation grant programs. Such updates may be the result of a review of this plan by FEMA, the Insurance Services Office, or the Washington State Department of Ecology, or the recommendations of the FPC or the Board of County Commissioners.

## 5.5 Plan Update

Thurston County will update the flood hazard mitigation plan on a 5-year cycle from the date of initial plan adoption (CRS Step 10). Certain triggers may accelerate the cycle to less than 5 years:

- A Presidential Disaster Declaration that impacts the planning area
- A hazard event that causes loss of life
- A comprehensive update of Thurston County Comprehensive Plan

- CRS re-certification requirements may dictate that the plan update in the 5<sup>th</sup> year be completed as part of the re-certification process and timeline, typically October 15<sup>th</sup> of each year.

Future updates will not develop a complete new flood hazard mitigation plan, but will, at a minimum, include specific elements:

- The FPC will convene the update process
- The hazard risk assessment will be reviewed and, if necessary, updated using best available information and technologies.

The action plan will be reviewed and revised to account for any initiatives completed, removed, or changed and to account for changes in the risk assessment or new policies identified under other planning mechanisms (such as the comprehensive plan).

- Regulatory agencies and planning partners will be invited to comment on the draft update.
- The public will have an opportunity to comment on the update prior to adoption
- The Thurston County Board of Commissioners will adopt the updated plan

The 2017 Thurston County Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan and the 2017 All Hazards Mitigation Plan for the Thurston Region, are on the same five-year cycle. Recognizing the challenges of the county being the lone CRS community participating in a multi-jurisdictional all hazards mitigation plan, they will evaluate options for ensuring the two plans are consistent and integrating the information from the two plans into each other.



### 5.5.1 Update Schedule

Flood Hazard mitigation planning – a multi-step process – may take between one to two years to complete. County staff should take into account the time required to secure professional services and obtain Board authorization in their planning for future plan updates. If contract professional services are required, the consultant should be retained and the FPC re-activated at least 1-year prior to the target adoption date of October 15. This may require initiating RFP/RFQ processes and obtaining BOCC authorization at least 18 months before the target plan adoption date.

Flood plans are costly to produce. Local funding is scarce. Federal funding to update plans is highly competitive and often insufficient. Securing funding may take a year or more. The county needs to establish work programs and adopt budgets prior to starting work on a plan.



To attempt to overcome these challenges, the PDT and the FPC will use this schedule to guide a future update, target dates for the 2022 update are also provided:

1. Two years after the Thurston County Board of County Commissioners adopts the plan, the PDT will coordinate the FPC and other plan partners to apply for planning grants and seek other funding sources. (October 2019 to Early 2020)
2. Incorporate the plan update costs into the appropriate county bi-annual budget. (Spring/Summer 2020 for the 2021/2022 biannual budget.
3. Assuming secured fund by the third year, the PDT will establish work programs, refine a scope of work, secure consultant services and seek spending approval. (Spring/Summer 2021)

4. During the fourth year, the PDT, FPC, and the plan partners will initiate the planning process. (Summer/Fall 2021).
5. Midway through the fifth year, partners will provide a draft plan to the public. (Spring/Summer 2022)
6. Thurston County will adopt the updated plan by early September 2022.

## 5.6 Continuing Public Involvement



Through its website and well-publicized progress reports, the county residents will continue to learn of the plan's progress. Mitigation Initiative 20 will update the county's website and consolidate a variety of flood resources, creating a useful on-line destination with up to date helpful information. At the onset of future update processes, the FPC will supply guidance to create a new

public involvement strategy based on the needs and capabilities of Thurston County at that time. At a minimum, this strategy will include the use of local media outlets within the planning area. Thurston County will also engage the community in FEMA's Risk MAP process, the Emergency Preparedness Expos, the Thurston County Flood Bulletin, and through press releases and social media.

## 5.7 Incorporation into Other Planning Mechanisms

This plan's information on hazard, risk, vulnerability, and mitigation is based on the best science and technology available at the time. The Thurston County Comprehensive Plan (comp plan) guides the development of the FHMP and works in parallel to increase the county's resiliency to flooding. Thurston County, through adoption of a comp plan, a Critical Areas Ordinance, and zoning ordinances, plans for the impact and mitigation of flooding. The plan development process



provides the opportunity to review and expand on policies in these planning mechanisms. These complementary documents work together to achieve the goal of reducing flood risk exposure. An update to a comp plan may trigger an update to the flood hazard mitigation plan. Mitigation Initiatives 7 and 18 provide the basis for reviewing new data and information that can shape Thurston County's development standards and policies. Other planning processes and programs to be coordinated with the recommendations of the flood hazard mitigation plan include:

- All Hazards Mitigation Plan for the Thurston Region
- Climate Adaptation Plan for the Thurston Region
- Thurston County Municipal Codes
- Thurston County Critical Areas Ordinance
- Emergency response plans
- Capital improvement programs
- Community design guidelines
- Stormwater management programs

Some action items do not need regulation. Instead, the county can implement these items through new educational programs, continued interagency coordination, and improved public participation. As relevant information becomes available from other planning mechanisms, the county will incorporate that information via the update process.

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