



## 2. PLANNING PROCESS

This chapter describes the planning process used to update the Passaic County HMP, including how it was prepared, who was involved in the process, and how the public was involved. The planning approach aimed to achieve the following results:

- The multi-jurisdictional plan will include all municipalities in the County. All 16 boroughs (B), cities (C), and townships (T) in the County (the Planning Partnership) participated in the 2025 plan update process:
  - Bloomingdale (B)
  - Clifton (C)
  - Haledon (B)
  - Hawthorne (B)
  - Little Falls (Twp)
  - North Haledon (B)
  - Passaic (C)
  - Paterson (C)
  - Pompton Lakes (B)
  - Prospect Park (B)
  - Ringwood (B)
  - Totowa (B)
  - Wanaque (B)
  - Wayne (Twp)
  - West Milford (T)
  - Woodland Park (B)
- The format of this plan is such that other entities can easily join at a later date as part of the regulatory 5-year plan update process.
- The plan considers all natural hazards that pose a risk to the area, as required by 44 CFR 201. Non-natural hazards that pose significant risk were considered as well.
- The plan was developed following FEMA regulations and prevailing FEMA and state guidance. This ensures that all the requirements are met and supports plan review. In addition, this plan will meet criteria for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS) and the Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) programs.

Passaic County was awarded a multi-jurisdictional planning grant under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (DR-4488 COVID-19 Pandemic), which supported the development of this HMP. Grant administration was the responsibility of the Passaic County Department of Public Safety Office of Emergency Management.

### 2.1 GENERAL MITIGATION PLANNING APPROACH

This hazard mitigation plan was prepared in accordance with the following regulations and guidance:

- FEMA Mitigation Planning How-to Series (FEMA 386-1 through 4, 2002)
- FEMA Local Mitigation Plan Review Guide, October 1, 2011.
- FEMA Mitigation Ideas: A Resource for Reducing Risk to Natural Hazards, January 2013.
- FEMA Integrating Hazard Mitigation into Local Planning, March 1, 2013.
- FEMA Plan Integration: Linking Local Planning Efforts, July 2015.
- FEMA Local Mitigation Planning Policy Guide, April 19, 2022.
- FEMA Local Mitigation Planning Handbook, May 2023.
- DMA 2000 (Public Law 106-390, October 30, 2000).
- 44 CFR 201 and 206.
- New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM) Hazard Mitigation Planning Guidance, 2019
- State of New Jersey Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2024.



## 2.2 ORGANIZATION OF PLANNING PROCESS

### 2.2.1 Planning Process Participants

#### Project Management and Planning Consultant

Project management was the responsibility of the Passaic County Department of Public Safety Office of Emergency Management. A contract planning consultant (Tetra Tech) was tasked with the following:

- Assisting with the organization of a Steering Committee and the Planning Partnership
- Assisting with the development and implementation of a public and stakeholder outreach program
- Data collection
- Facilitation and attendance at meetings (Steering Committee, municipal, stakeholder, public and other)
- Review and update of the hazards of concern, and hazard profiling and risk assessment
- Assistance with the review and update of mitigation planning goals and objectives
- Assistance with the review of past mitigation strategy progress
- Assistance with the screening of mitigation actions and the identification of appropriate actions
- Assistance with the prioritization of mitigation actions
- Authoring of the draft and final plan documents

#### Planning Partnership

In November 2023, the County notified all municipalities in the County of the pending planning process and invited them to formally participate. Jurisdictions were asked to formally notify the County of their intent to participate via a letter of intent and to identify planning points of contact to facilitate their participation and represent the interests of their communities. All participating jurisdictions, including the County, are recognized as Planning Partners and belong to the Planning Partnership for this HMP. Planning Partnership representatives were charged with the following:

- Representing their jurisdiction throughout the planning process
- Ensuring participation of all departments and functions within their jurisdiction that have a stake in mitigation (e.g., planning, engineering, code enforcement, police and emergency services, public works)
- Assisting in gathering previously developed reports, data, and other information for inclusion in the HMP update
- Supporting and promoting the public involvement process
- Reporting on progress of mitigation actions identified in prior or existing HMPs, as applicable
- Identifying, developing, and prioritizing appropriate mitigation actions
- Reporting on progress of integration of prior or existing HMPs into other planning processes and municipal operations
- Supporting and developing a jurisdictional annex
- Reviewing, amending, and approving all sections of the plan update
- Adopting, implementing, and maintaining the plan update



Table 2-1 shows the members of the Planning Partnership as of the time of publication of this plan update. Appendix D (Participation Matrix) identifies how each individual who represented the jurisdictions during this planning effort contributed to the planning process.

Table 2-1. Passaic County Hazard Mitigation Planning Partnership Members

Jurisdiction	Primary Point of Contact	Title	Alternate Point of Contact	Title
Bloomington (B)	Michael Hudson	Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management	Ray Muller	Deputy Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management
Clifton (C)	Lt. Angelina Tirado	Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management	Capt. Jeffrey Bracken	Deputy Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management
Haledon (B)	Carlos Aymat	Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management	George Guzman	Deputy Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management
Hawthorne (B)	Matthew Fenkart	Deputy Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management	Lt. Ben Veenema	Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management
Little Falls (Twp)	James DiMaria	Construction Official	John Moncato	(Deputy) Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management
North Haledon (B)	Chief Todd Darby	Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management	Anthony Conforti	Deputy Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management
Passaic (C)	Walter Porto	Deputy Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management	Capt. Piyush Patel	Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management
Passaic County	Robert Scott	Deputy Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management	Maria Dombayci	Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management
Paterson (C)	Troy Ayers	Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management	Capt. Herb Eggers	Office of Emergency Management
Pompton Lakes (B)	Albert Evangelista	Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management	Michael Carelli	Administrator
Prospect Park (B)	Ariosto Rodriguez	Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management	Intashan Chowdhury	Business Administrator
Ringwood (B)	Scott Heck	Deputy Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management	Patrick Murray, Jr.	Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management
Totowa (B)	Detective Gary Bierach	Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management; Totowa PD	Richard Schopperth	Deputy Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management
Wanaque (B)	Thomas Carroll	Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management	Robert Hermansen	Administrator
Wayne (Twp)	Capt. Dan Daly	Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management	Chris Tietjen	Business Administrator
West Milford (T)	Michael Moscatello	Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management	Michael Weber	Deputy Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management
Woodland Park (B)	Captain Joseph Domicolo	Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management	Steven DiPaola	Deputy Coordinator, Office of Emergency Management



The various jurisdictions in Passaic County have differing levels of capabilities and resources available to apply to the plan update process, as well as differing levels of vulnerability to and impacts from the natural hazards being considered in this plan. It was Passaic County's intent to encourage participation by all jurisdictions, and to accommodate their specific needs and limitations while still meeting the intent and purpose of plan update participation. Such accommodations have included establishing a Steering Committee, engaging a contract consultant to assume certain elements of the plan update process on behalf of the jurisdictions, and providing alternative mechanisms for planning participation.

Ultimately, jurisdictional participation is evidenced by a completed annex of the HMP, wherein jurisdictions individually identify their planning points of contact, evaluate their risk from the hazards of concern, identify their capabilities to effect mitigation in their community, identify and prioritize a suite of actions to mitigate their hazard risk, and adopt the updated plan via resolution. Annexes are included in Volume II of this HMP.

After completion of the plan, implementation and ongoing maintenance will become a function of the Planning Partnership as described in Chapter 17 (Plan Maintenance). The Planning Partnership will be responsible for reviewing the draft plan and soliciting public comment as part of an annual review and as part of the five-year mitigation plan update.

### HMP Coordination with the National Flood Insurance Program

All municipalities in the County actively participate in the National Flood Insurance Program and have a designated NFIP floodplain administrator. All floodplain administrators were informed of the planning process, reviewed the plan documents, and provided direct input to the plan update. Local floodplain administrators are identified as part of each jurisdiction's hazard mitigation planning team, as presented in the jurisdictional annexes in Volume II, as well as in Appendix D (Participation Matrix).

## Steering Committee

Passaic County developed a Steering Committee to provide guidance and direction to the HMP update effort, and to ensure that the resulting document will be accepted by local government leaders as well as all who live and work within the planning area. Steering Committee members were charged with the following:

- Providing guidance and oversight of the planning process on behalf of the general planning partnership
- Attending and participating in Steering Committee meetings
- Assisting with the development and completion of certain planning elements, including:
  - Reviewing and updating the hazards of concern
  - Developing a public and stakeholder outreach program
  - Ensuring that the data and information used in the plan update process is the best available
  - Reviewing and updating the hazard mitigation goals
  - Identifying and screening appropriate mitigation strategies and activities
- Reviewing and commenting on plan documents prior to submission to NJOEM and FEMA.

The Steering Committee provided guidance, leadership, and oversight of the planning process and acted as the point of contact for participating interest groups in the planning area. Table 2-2 lists the members of the Steering Committee.

Table 2-2. Passaic County Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee Members

Affiliation	Name	Title
American Red Cross	Sara Huisking	Executive Director



Affiliation	Name	Title
Catholic Family and Community Services	Ariel Alonso	Director of Community and Emergency Support
Highlands Council	James Humphries	Director of Planning, Science & GIS
NJOEM	Trooper Joseph Palach	NJOEM Liaison
NJOEM	Cansu Yerdelenli*	Disaster Recovery Analyst
North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority	David Behrend	Executive Director
Passaic County	Andras Holzman	Director of Planning
Passaic County	Dr. Arti Kakka	Director of Human Services
Passaic County	George Rosenthal	Office of Emergency Management Coordinator
Passaic County	Robert Scott	Co-Deputy Office of Emergency Management Coordinator
Passaic County	Maria Dombayci	Co-Deputy Office of Emergency Management Coordinator
Passaic County	Jonathan Pera	County Engineer
Passaic County	Kelly Ruffel	Director of Cultural and Historic Affairs
Passaic County	Kenneth Simpson	Supervisor of Roads
Passaic County Department of Health Services	Yonette Fredericks	Division Director, Community Outreach Family Services
Passaic County Superintendent of Schools	Alicia Anderson	Executive Assistant
Paterson Public Schools	Dalton Price	Director
Pompton Lakes (B)	Albert Evangelista	Office of Emergency Management Coordinator
Rutgers University	Ashlyn Spector	Bloustein Unit Manager
United Way of Passaic County	Mary Celis	President/CEO

\*Until May 2024.

## 2.2.2 Planning Activities

Members of the Planning Partnership (individually and as a whole), as well as key stakeholders, met and communicated as needed to share information. This included workshops to identify hazards, assess risks, update inventories of critical facilities, and assist in updating mitigation goals and strategies. All members of the Planning Partnership had the opportunity to review the draft plan, supported interaction with other stakeholders, and assisted with public involvement efforts. These activities provided continuity through the process to ensure that natural hazard vulnerability information and appropriate mitigation strategies were incorporated.

Table 2-3 summarizes meetings and other planning activities conducted during the development of the plan. It also identifies which 44 CFR 201 requirements each activity satisfies. Documentation of meetings (agendas, sign-in sheets, minutes, etc.) may be found in Appendix C (Public and Stakeholder Outreach).

Table 2-3 identifies only formal meetings and milestone events in the plan update process. In addition to these meetings, there was a great deal of communication between Planning Partnership members and the consultant through individual local meetings, phone, and email.

**Table 2-3. Summary of Mitigation Planning Activities / Efforts**

Date	44 CFR 201 Requirement	Description of Activity	Participants
June 24 and June 29, 2022	2	Meetings with NJOEM to discuss planning process timeline, State and FEMA requirements	Passaic County Office of Emergency Management, NJOEM, Tetra Tech
October 23, 2023	2	Project Startup Meeting: Discuss proposed planning process and scope of work including documenting participation, schedule, and public and stakeholder outreach and involvement.	Passaic County Office of Emergency Management, Tetra Tech
November 2023	2	All municipalities invited to participate in the planning process.	Passaic County Office of Emergency Management
January 19, 2023	1, 2	Press release developed and sent to publicize planning process.	Passaic County Office of Emergency Management, Tetra Tech
April 3, 2023	2, 3c	GIS data collection meeting	Passaic County Office of Emergency Management, Passaic County GIS Operations, Tetra Tech
Bi-Weekly	-	Weekly project status meeting to discuss action items in support of the expedited planning process	Passaic County Office of Emergency Management, Tetra Tech
December 2023	1c, 2	Interested jurisdictions submit letters of intent to participate in this planning process, acknowledging municipal participation requirements and identifying planning points of contact.	See Appendix D
February 20, 2024	1b, 2, 3a, 3b, 3c, 4a, 5c	Steering Committee Kickoff Meeting: Review project schedule; review municipal participation, discuss Planning Partnership kickoff meeting and local data collection; review and discuss sources and availability of County and regional data; discuss public and stakeholder outreach efforts.	See Appendix D
February 20, 2024	1b, 2, 3a, 3b, 3c, 4a	Planning Partnership Kickoff Meeting: Complete overview of planning process, plan participant expectations, review of hazards and hazards of concern identification, discussion of data needs and data collection process explaining all provided worksheets, discussion of public and stakeholder outreach efforts	See Appendix D
May 13, 2024	2	Public project website developed: <a href="https://www.passaiccountynjhmp.com/">https://www.passaiccountynjhmp.com/</a>	Passaic County Office of Emergency Management, Tetra Tech
June 6, 2024	1b	Letters to neighboring municipalities, counties, and stakeholders were developed to publicize the planning process, identify opportunities for involvement and engagement, and provide links to the HMP website and surveys.	Passaic County Office of Emergency Management, Tetra Tech
June 6, 2024	2	Online public survey developed and deployed	Passaic County Office of Emergency Management, Tetra Tech
June 6, 2024	2	Online stakeholder surveys developed and deployed	Passaic County Office of Emergency Management, Tetra Tech





Date	44 CFR 201 Requirement	Description of Activity	Participants
June 6, 2024	2	Online neighboring communities survey developed and deployed	Passaic County Office of Emergency Management, Tetra Tech
September 5, 2024	2	Monthly meeting with Passaic County Office of Emergency Management Coordinators to provide worksheet assistance and notify participants of upcoming meetings and engagement opportunities.	Passaic County Office of Emergency Management, Tetra Tech, Planning Partnership
November 14, 2024	3	Risk Assessment and Mitigation Action Workshop: The meeting covered the current project status, provided an overview of risk assessments, and discussed strategies for mitigating identified risks.	See Appendix D
March 20, 2025	1b, 2, 3, 4, 5	Steering Committee Meeting - Plan Maintenance, Draft Plan Review	Steering Committee Contract Planner See Appendix D
April 1, 2025	2	Draft Plan posted to public project website	Public and Stakeholders
March 20, 2025	1b	FEMA Flood Risk Insurance Open House. Information on the HMP planning process was made available to attendees. Attendees were encouraged to review the Draft Plan.	Public and Stakeholders
May 19, 2025	1b, 2	Public and stakeholder comments to Draft Plan received and incorporated into Final Plan.	Public and Stakeholders
June 27, 2025	All requirements	Final plan submitted to NJOEM and FEMA Region 2	NJOEM, FEMA Region 2
TBD (Upon plan approval by FEMA)	1a	Plan adoption by resolution by the governing bodies of all participating municipalities	All plan participants

Note: TBD = to be determined.

Numbers in column 2 identify specific requirements of 44 CFR 201.6, as follows:

- 1a – Prerequisite – Adoption by the Local Governing Body (201.6.a.1)
- 1b – Public Participation (201.6.b)
- 2 – Planning Process – Documentation of the Planning Process (201.6.c.1)
- 3a – Risk Assessment – Identifying Hazards (201.6.c.2.i)
- 3b – Risk Assessment – Profiling Hazard Events (201.6.c.2.i)
- 3c – Risk Assessment – Assessing Vulnerability: Identifying Assets (201.6.c.2.ii.A)
- 3d – Risk Assessment – Assessing Vulnerability: Estimating Potential Losses (201.6.c.2.ii.B)
- 3e – Risk Assessment – Assessing Vulnerability: Analyzing Development Trends (201.6.c.2.ii.C)
- 4a – Mitigation Strategy – Local Hazard Mitigation Goals (201.6.c.3.i)
- 4b – Mitigation Strategy – Identification and Analysis of Mitigation Measures (201.6.c.3.ii)
- 4c – Mitigation Strategy – Implementation of Mitigation Measures (201.6.c.3.iii)
- 5a – Plan Maintenance Procedures – Monitoring, Evaluating, and Updating the Plan (201.6.c.4.i)
- 5b – Plan Maintenance Procedures – Implementation through Existing Programs (201.6.c.4.ii)
- 5c – Plan Maintenance Procedures – Continued Public Involvement (201.6.c.4.iii)

## 2.3 STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH AND INVOLVEMENT

The Passaic County HMP update was written using the best available information obtained from a wide variety of sources. Throughout the HMP update process, a concerted effort was made to gather information from municipal and regional agencies and staff as well as stakeholders, federal and state agencies, and the residents of the County. The Steering Committee solicited information from local agencies and individuals with specific knowledge of certain



natural hazards and past historical events. In addition, the Steering Committee and Planning Partnership took into consideration planning and zoning codes, ordinances, and recent land use planning decisions.

This section details the outreach to, and involvement of, the many agencies, departments, organizations, non-profits, districts, authorities, and other entities that have a stake in managing hazard risk and mitigation, commonly referred to as stakeholders.

Diligent efforts were made to ensure broad regional, county, and local representation in this planning process. A comprehensive list of stakeholders was developed with the support of the Steering Committee and Planning Partnership. Stakeholder outreach was performed early and throughout the planning process, including mass media notification efforts. Identified stakeholders were invited to attend the Planning Partnership risk assessment meeting, and key stakeholders were requested to participate on the Steering Committee and/or Planning Partnership. Information and input provided by these stakeholders has been included throughout this plan.

The following sections list the stakeholders who were invited to participate in the development of this plan and describe how they contributed to the plan. Beyond those described here, many stakeholders were aware of and/or contributed to this plan through formal and informal outreach efforts by the Planning Partners involved in the plan update.

### 2.3.1 Federal and State Agencies

The federal and state agencies listed in Table 2-4 were contacted during the planning process. The table describes how each participated.

### 2.3.2 County and Regional Agencies

The county and regional agencies listed in Table 2-5 were invited to participate during the planning process. The table describes how each participated.

### 2.3.3 Stakeholders by Community Lifeline Category

FEMA defines community lifelines as fundamental services in a community that, when stabilized, enable all other aspects of society. All participating jurisdictions invited their internal agencies associated with community lifeline categories to complete a stakeholder survey. The sections below describe outreach to and participation by stakeholders in the planning process associated with FEMA's eight designated community lifeline categories. More detailed information about community lifelines in the planning area is provided in Section 3.9.

Table 2-4. Participation of Federal and State Agencies

Agency	Participation
FEMA Region 2	Provided updated planning guidance; provided summary and detailed NFIP data for planning area; presented preliminary regulatory flood products to municipalities and the public; attended meetings; participated in a Mitigation Strategy Workshop; conducted plan review.





Agency	Participation
New Jersey State Police Office of Emergency Management	Administered planning grant and facilitated FEMA review; provided updated planning guidance; attended meetings; participated in the Mitigation Strategy Workshop, provided review of Draft and Final Plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI)</li><li>National Hurricane Center (NHC)</li><li>National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)</li><li>National Weather Service (NWS)</li><li>Storm Prediction Center (SPC)</li><li>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)</li><li>U.S. Census Bureau</li><li>U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)</li></ul>	Information regarding hazard identification and the risk assessment for this HMP update was requested and received or incorporated by reference.
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Bureau of Dam Safety	The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Bureau of Dam Safety was asked to provide information on the location of dams, identified issues with dams, and suggested mitigation actions to include in the mitigation strategy to address dam failure.

Table 2-5. County and Regional Agencies

Agency	Participation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Passaic County Office of Emergency Management</li><li>Passaic County Department of Engineering</li><li>Passaic County Department Human Services</li><li>Passaic County Department of Planning and Economic Development</li><li>Passaic County Superintendent of Schools</li><li>New Jersey Office of Emergency Management</li><li>New Jersey Highlands Council</li><li>Borough of Pompton Lakes Office of Emergency Management</li><li>American Red Cross</li><li>Rutgers University</li></ul>	Served on steering committee, attended meetings, completed hazard of concern exercise and goals and objectives exercise, and reviewed draft plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Passaic County Roads Division</li><li>Passaic County Parks and Recreation</li><li>Passaic County Public Works</li></ul>	Provided input and reviewed draft plan.

## Safety and Security

The following agencies were invited to complete a stakeholder survey and review the draft plan:

- Passaic County Animal Response Team
- Passaic County Sheriff's Department
- Passaic County Intelligence/Homeland Security Unit
- Passaic Public Schools Safety and Security

In order to address high hazard potential dams, outreach was conducted to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Bureau of Dam Safety. The following information was requested:



- Information regarding the risk to dam failure as a result of deficiencies or exposure to hazards such as flooding, geologic impacts, and severe storms
- Concerns with dam safety due to changing climate conditions
- Concerns with emergency action plan deficiencies including warning time, evacuation needs, etc.
- Completed or in progress repairs/improvements to dams
- Potential new mitigation actions that should be considered for inclusion in the HMP mitigation strategy

### **Food, Hydration, Shelter**

Jurisdictions were asked to invite their emergency management related agencies to provide information on shelters and sheltering procedures. The following stakeholders that provide food, hydration, shelter, and agricultural activities in the County were invited to complete a stakeholder survey and review the draft plan:

- Catholic Family and Community Services

### **Health and Medical**

The following hospitals and health-care facilities were invited to complete a stakeholder survey and review the draft plan:

- Passaic County Preakness Healthcare Center
- St. Joseph's University Medical Center

Jurisdictions were asked to invite their ambulance and emergency medical service providers to complete a stakeholder survey. In addition, the following ambulance and emergency medical service providers in the County were invited to complete a stakeholder survey and review the draft plan:

- Passaic County Emergency Medical Services

### **Energy**

In addition to municipal utilities, the following electrical, natural gas, and fuel companies were invited to complete a stakeholder survey and review the draft plan:

- New Jersey Board of Public Utilities
- PSE&G
- JCP&L

### **Communications**

Each jurisdiction was asked to provide information on emergency communication and warning systems. In addition, the following communications companies were invited to complete a stakeholder survey and review the draft plan:

- Verizon
- T-Mobile
- Optimum
- HughesNet
- Viasat



### Transportation

The following transportation companies and organizations were invited to complete a stakeholder survey and review the draft plan:

- NJ Transit
- New Jersey Department of Transportation
- Passaic County Para Transit
- North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
- Passaic County Roads Division

### Hazardous Materials

The following agency dealing with hazardous material facilities was invited to complete a stakeholder survey and review the draft plan:

- Passaic County Department of Health

### Water Systems

In addition to municipal utilities, the following water utility companies were invited to complete a stakeholder survey and review the draft plan:

- North Jersey District Waters Commission
- New Jersey American Water
- Passaic Valley Water Commission
- Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission
- Passaic Valley Flood Advisory Committee

## 2.3.4 Additional Stakeholder Groups

### Groups Supporting Socially Vulnerable Populations and Underserved Communities

The following groups and agencies that provide support to and work with socially vulnerable populations and underserved communities were invited to complete a stakeholder survey and review the draft plan:

- Catholic Family and Community Services
- United Way of Passaic County

### School Districts and Other Academic Institutions

Jurisdictions were asked to invite representatives of their local schools to complete a stakeholder survey. Additionally, the following school districts, colleges, and academic organizations were invited to complete a stakeholder survey and review the draft plan:



- K-12 Schools
  - Passaic County Schools
  - Classical Charter School of Clifton
  - College Achieve Paterson Charter School
  - Community Charter School of Paterson
  - John P. Holland Charter School
  - Passaic Arts Charter School for Science and Technology
  - Paterson Arts and Science Charter School
  - Philip's Academy Charter School
  - Bloomingdale School District
  - Brilla New Jersey Charter School
  - Clifton Public School District
  - Haledon Public School District
  - Hawthorne Public School District
  - Lakeland Regional High School District
  - Little Falls Township Public School District
  - North Haledon School District
  - Northern Region Educational Services Commission
  - Passaic City School District
  - Passaic County Manchester Regional High School District
  - Passaic County Technical-Vocational School District
  - Passaic Valley Regional High School District
  - Paterson Charter School for Science and Technology
  - Paterson Public School District
  - Pompton Lakes School District
  - Prospect Park Public School District
  - Ringwood School District
  - Totowa Public School District
  - Wanaque School District
  - Wayne Township Public School District
  - West Milford Township Public School District
  - Woodland Park School District
- Higher Education
  - Passaic County Technical Vocational School
  - Rutgers University
  - Passaic Community College
  - William Paterson University

### 2.3.5 Neighboring Jurisdictions

The County kept surrounding jurisdictions apprised of the project, invited them to complete a neighboring community survey, and requested their review of the draft plan. The following adjoining county and jurisdictional representatives were contacted in September 2022 to inform them about the availability of the project website, draft plan documents, and surveys and to invite them to provide input to the planning process:

#### New Jersey

- Morris County
  - Township of Parsippany
  - Township of Pequannock
  - Township of Jefferson
- Essex County
  - Township of Fairfield
  - Borough of North Caldwell
  - Township of Cedar Grove



- Township of Rockaway
- Borough of Kinnelon
- Township of Butler
- Borough of Riverdale
- Township of Lincoln Park
- Warren County
- Sussex County
  - Borough of Stanhope
  - Borough of Hopatcong
  - Town of Sparta
  - Borough of Ogdensburg
  - Hardyston Township
  - Township of Vernon
- Township of Montclair
- Township of Bloomfield
- Township of Nutley
- Bergen County
  - Borough of Franklin Lakes
  - Borough of Ramsey
  - Borough of Midland Park
  - City of East Rutherford
  - City of Hackensack
  - Town of Allendale

### New York

- Orange County
  - City of Port Jervis
  - Town of Greenville
  - Town of Warwick
  - Town of Tuxedo
  - Town of Minisink
- Rockland County
  - Town of Orangetown
  - Town of Ramapo
  - Town of Clarkson (Located in Monroe County)

### 2.3.6 Stakeholder and Neighboring Community Survey Summaries

This section summarizes the results and feedback received by those who completed the stakeholder and neighboring community surveys. Feedback was reviewed by the Steering Committee and integrated where appropriate in the plan.

#### Stakeholder Survey

The stakeholder survey was designed to identify general needs for hazard mitigation and resiliency within Passaic County from the perspective of stakeholders, as well as to identify specific projects that may be included in the mitigation plan. It was distributed to identified stakeholders, including county and municipal departments and agencies. As of March 2025, one stakeholder completed the survey—a respondent from a K-12 school district. Key responses were as follows:

- The represented agency does manage building facilities.
- The represented agency works with socially vulnerable populations by assisting coordination efforts for students and families who might fall into this category.
- The represented agency has special interest and/or expertise in disease/pandemic outbreak and flood.
- The represented agency has buildings, facilities, or structures that have been impacted by a natural hazard. An elementary school flooded in 2011 with Hurricane Irene, and buildings have lost power due to storms.



- Of known local hazards, the represented agency is most vulnerable to flooding.
- The represented agency does own or lease facilities, but they are not critical facilities or community lifelines.
- The respondent was not aware of any plans that cover the represented agency.
- The respondent was not aware of the number and location of vulnerable populations within the community/operating area.
- One of the represented agency's facilities is used as an alternate shelter for the community during a disaster.
- The represented agency is not currently involved in conducting any studies or developing any programs that could support Passaic County's hazard mitigation program.

### Neighboring Community Survey

The neighboring community survey was sent to the county and municipal governments that border Passaic County due to their proximity to the county and because the effects of hazard events that impact Passaic County would be similar to that of their neighbors. As of Friday, March 2025, three counties submitted the survey (Mahwah Township, Pequannock Township, and Ramsey Borough). Key responses were as follows:

- Responses related to emergency operations and continuity of operations planning:
  - Respondents providing information about shared service or mutual aid agreements between their county and Passaic County—None
  - Respondents indicating that Passaic County is involved in their county's emergency operations planning—One
  - Respondents noting Passaic County's involvement in their ##—One
  - Respondents stating that Passaic County is not involved in their continuity of operations planning—Two
  - One respondent mentioned that their county maintains constant communication with Morris County Office of Emergency Management and Pompton Lakes Office of Emergency Management via cell phone, email, or portable radio during emergency operations and disaster response
- Responses related to risk and vulnerability:
  - Respondents indicating that their county does not share risk and vulnerability assessments with Passaic County—Two (one was unsure)
  - One respondent identified the following situations or hazards as concerns for both the community and Passaic County: the Wanaque Reservoir Dam, any impact on the Ramapo River, and any failure or excessive overflow of the Pompton Lakes Dam.
- Responses related to evacuation and sheltering:
  - Respondents identifying spaces suitable for temporary housing, including locations for residents displaced by a disaster—None
  - Respondents indicating that they do not consult with one another or the County before making sheltering decisions—Three
  - Respondents indicating that they do not collaborate with Passaic County or its municipalities on establishing shelters—Three
  - Respondents indicating that they would collaborate with Passaic County and its municipalities when establishing evacuation routes and alternative evacuation routes—One





- Respondents indicating that they would not collaborate with Passaic County and its municipalities when establishing evacuation routes and alternative evacuation routes—One
- Respondents stating that evacuation routes are maintained to the same level of protection across jurisdictional lines—One (another was unsure)
- Respondents indicating that would not consult with Passaic County before making evacuation decisions if the need arose—One
- One respondent mentioned that there is communication between police departments and their municipality and Wayne Township to coordinate closure efforts for State Highway Route 23.
- Responses related to information sharing:
  - Respondents indicating that they have access to Passaic County's emergency operations center contact information—One (another was unsure)
  - Respondents indicating that information regarding mitigation shared during the planning and implementation phases of projects is not shared—One (another was unsure, and one indicated that it was not applicable)
  - Respondents providing details on how information is shared between their jurisdiction and Passaic County concerning mitigation projects—None
- Responses related to projects, grants, education, and outreach:
  - Respondents indicating that there is a watershed project or planning initiative requiring cross-collaboration between jurisdictional boundaries—One
  - Respondents noting that their jurisdiction and Passaic County have not collaborated on grant applications—One (another was unsure)
  - Respondents noting that they are not aware of any organizations conducting education and outreach regarding hazards in their community and Passaic County—Two
  - Respondents noting that they were unaware of any organizations supporting socially vulnerable or underserved populations—Two
  - One respondent suggested that increased communication between counties and coordination at the Office of Emergency Management and/or state level are needed.
  - Once respondent recommended contacting Bergen County Office of Emergency Management regarding opportunities to optimize cooperation with Passaic County on emergency management operations and hazard mitigation projects.

## 2.4 PUBLIC OUTREACH

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### 2.4.1 Outreach Activities

The Steering Committee and Planning Partnership made the following efforts toward public participation in the development and review of the HMP update:

- The public was informed of the hazard mitigation planning effort commencement at the kickoff meeting and through press releases, news articles, and public service announcements released throughout the planning process. Copies of these announcements may be found in Appendix C.
- Media releases were issued to local news organizations.



- A public website (<https://www.passaiccountynj.org/departments/office-of-emergency-management/hazard-mitigation-plan>) contains a project overview, County and local contact information, access to a public survey (as described below) and the stakeholder surveys, and sections of the HMP for public review and comment.
- All participating jurisdictions were encouraged to distribute press releases on the project, including links to the project webpage and public and stakeholder surveys.
- The draft plan was posted to the public website as of March 31, 2025, for public review and comment. All public comments were directed to the Passaic County Office of Emergency Management for collection and review by the Steering Committee. All public comments received were forwarded to the appropriate jurisdiction and/or agency and incorporated into the final plan as appropriate.
- Once submitted to NJOEM/FEMA, the final plan will be available for public review and comment in the same manner and format as the draft plan, as well as in hard-copy format at the Passaic County Office of Emergency Management, and Passaic County Department of Planning.

Examples of virtual outreach via websites and social media completed by the Planning Partners are provided in Figure 2-1 and Figure 2-2.

### 2.4.2 Public Survey Summary

An on-line survey was developed to gauge household preparedness for hazards that may impact Passaic County and to assess the level of knowledge of tools to assist in reducing risk from those hazards. The survey asks quantifiable questions about respondents' perception of risk, knowledge of mitigation, and support of community programs. It also asks demographic questions to help analyze trends.

The survey was posted on the County website on February 20, 2023 and was available through March 12, 2025 for public input. All participating jurisdictions were requested to advertise the availability of the survey via local homepage links, and other available public announcement methods (e.g., Facebook, X, email blasts, etc.). As of March 2025, four survey responses were received. A summary of survey results follows. Jurisdiction-specific responses can be found in Volume II. Refer to Appendix D (Public and Stakeholder Outreach) for the full list of survey questions and responses.

Respondents who provided information on where they live reside in the City of Passaic, the City of Paterson, and the Township of Wayne. Two-thirds of these respondents have lived in their jurisdiction for 10 to 19 years, and one-third lived there for 20 years or more. All of these respondents own the single-family detached residences where they live. Two-thirds are between 51 and 60 years old, and one-third are between 41 and 50 years old.



Figure 2-1. Passaic County HMP Webpage and Local On-Line Outreach



Figure 2-2. Passaic County HMP Social Media Outreach





The following are the top five methods through which respondents reported receiving information about disasters:

- Police, Fire, EMS, 9-1-1 (100 percent)
- County Website (75 percent)
- Newspaper (75 percent)
- TV News (75 percent)
- Radio News (75 percent)

Survey respondents identified the most frequently occurring natural hazard events within Passaic County in the past 10 years, as shown in Figure 2-3

The top five listed hazards in the past 10 years are as follows:

- Flooding
  - Street/Land (100 percent)
  - Stormwater (75 percent)
- Severe Storms - thunderstorm, hail (100 percent)
- Winter Storm (100 percent)
- Disease/Pandemic Outbreak (75 percent)
- Extreme Temperature – heat and cold (75 percent)

Respondents were asked if their homes had been damaged by a hazard event in the past. One respondent confirmed damage due to frozen pipes; the other three reported no damage. The damage was not reported to local authorities such as the police, fire department, or emergency management agency.

Half of the respondents indicated that their property is located in a designated floodplain. One respondent (25 percent) has flood insurance. When asked if they had flood insurance for properties located outside the floodplain, two respondents (66.67 percent) answered no, one (33.33 percent) responded not applicable, and one skipped the question.

Regarding strategies to reduce hazard risks in Passaic County, three respondents strongly agreed with implementing measures to safeguard the local economy following a disaster. Three respondents agreed with a regulatory approach to risk reduction and improving disaster preparedness in local schools. Two-thirds of respondents have received training in first aid or CPR and have installed smoke detectors in their homes.

The top three priorities identified as very important by respondents were:

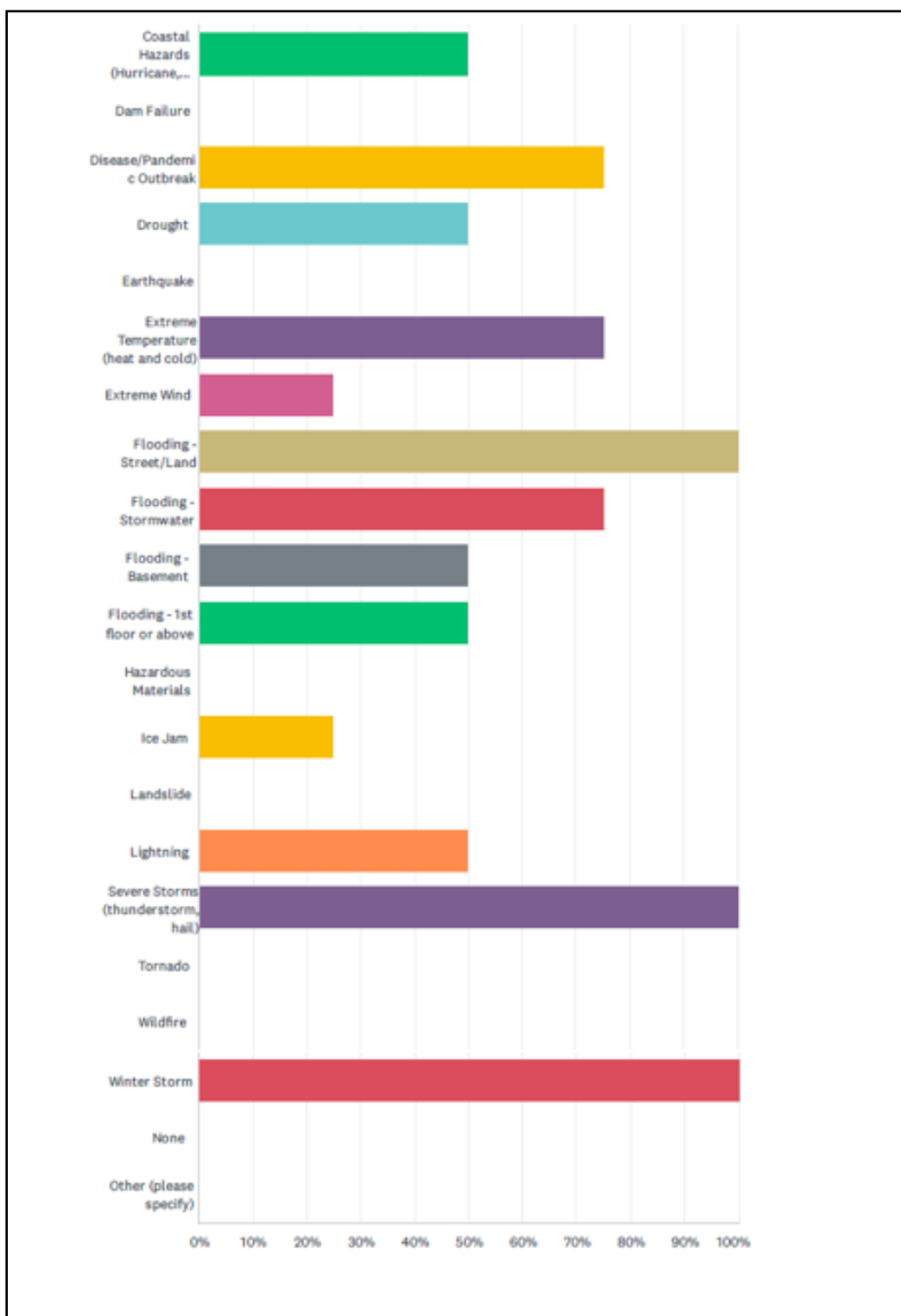
- Protecting private property
- Protecting and reducing damage to utilities
- Disclosing natural hazard risks during real estate transactions

The respondents identified specific vulnerabilities within their city/town/village:

- Wayne and Paterson flood too often during any event
- Paterson and Wayne get direct flooding from the Passaic River
- Local flooding through Wayne



Figure 2-3. Most Frequently Experienced Natural Hazard Events in Passaic County







### 2.5 INCORPORATION OF EXISTING PLANS, STUDIES, REPORTS AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION

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The Passaic County HMP uses the best available information to support hazard profiling, risk assessment, review and evaluation of mitigation capabilities, and the development and prioritization of County and local mitigation strategies. Plans, reports, and other technical information were identified and accessed online through independent research by the planning consultant or provided directly by the County, participating jurisdictions, and stakeholders involved in the planning effort. The asset inventory data used for the risk assessment is presented in the County Profile (Chapter 3). Details of the source of this data, along with technical information on how the data was used to develop the risk assessment, are presented in Chapter 4, as well as throughout the hazard profiles in this HMP. Detailed sources of technical data and information used are listed in the References section.

The County and participating jurisdictions provided relevant jurisdiction-specific planning and regulatory documents, which were reviewed to identify:

- Existing jurisdictional capabilities
- Needs and opportunities to develop or enhance capabilities, which may be identified in the County or local mitigation strategies
- Mitigation-related goals or objectives, considered in the review and update of the overall goals and objectives (Chapter 16)
- Proposed, in-progress, or potential mitigation actions to be incorporated into the updated local mitigation strategies

The following regulations, codes, ordinances, and plans were reviewed to develop mitigation planning goals and objectives and mitigation strategies that are consistent across local and regional planning and regulatory mechanisms:

- Comprehensive/master plans
- Building codes
- Zoning and subdivision ordinances
- Flood insurance studies
- Flood insurance rate maps
- NFIP flood damage prevention ordinances
- Site plan requirements
- Stormwater management plans
- Debris management plans
- Emergency management and response plans
- Land use and open space plans
- Capital plans
- Sustainable Jersey Community
- Community Rating System
- 2024 New Jersey Hazard Mitigation Plan





The County and participating jurisdictions were tasked with updating the assessment of their planning and regulatory capabilities (see capability assessment section of each jurisdictional annex in Volume II). They reviewed relevant plans contributing to the capability of the County and each jurisdiction to integrate effective mitigation efforts into their daily activities. This review is reflected in the capability assessment table in each of the municipal annexes. These tables list plan types, names, and dates, as well as a summary of how each plan supports mitigation and resilience.

## 2.6 INTEGRATION WITH EXISTING PLANNING MECHANISMS AND PROGRAMS

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

The capability assessment presented in Chapter 15 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 in the County. In the jurisdictional annexes in Volume II, each participating jurisdiction identifies how it has already integrated hazard mitigation into its planning, regulatory and administrative framework (“integration capabilities”) and how it intends to promote this integration (“integration actions”).

## 2.7 PLAN ADOPTION

Adoption by the local governing bodies of each participating jurisdiction demonstrates the commitment of the Planning Partners to fulfill the mitigation goals and strategies outlined in this HMP. Adoption via a municipal resolution legitimizes the HMP and authorizes responsible agencies to execute their responsibilities.

All participating jurisdictions will proceed with formal adoption proceedings. Each jurisdiction must submit a copy of its formal adoption

resolution or other legal instrument to the Passaic County HMP Coordinator in the Passaic County Office of Emergency Management. Passaic County will forward the executed resolutions to NJOEM, after which they will be forwarded to FEMA for the record. FEMA allows two options for submitting adoption resolutions:

In addition to being required by DMA 2000, adoption of the HMP is necessary because:

- It lends authority to the plan to serve as a guiding document for all local and state government officials.
- It gives legal status to the plan in the event it is challenged in court.
- It certifies to program and grant administrators that the plan’s recommendations have been properly considered and approved by the jurisdictions’ governing authority and citizens.
- It helps to ensure the continuity of mitigation programs and policies over time because elected officials, staff, and other community decision-makers can refer to the official document when making decisions about the community’s future.

*Source: FEMA. 2003. How to Series: Bringing the Plan to Life (FEMA 386-4).*

- **Submittal of adoption resolutions with plan**—All participating jurisdictions provide documentation of plan adoption when the plan is initially submitted to the state for review. After receiving the draft plan from the state, FEMA conducts its review and approves the plan if it meets all requirements.
- **Approvable pending adoption**—A draft HMP is submitted to the state and FEMA for approval prior to adoption by the jurisdictions. When FEMA determines that the plan as a whole and each participating jurisdiction have met all the requirements except adoption, FEMA will inform the state that the plan is



“approvable pending adoption” (APA). After that, once FEMA receives documentation of adoption resolutions from at least one jurisdiction, the status is changed from APA to approved for the entire plan and for that jurisdiction. Other jurisdictions that participated in the planning process then receive approval once they pass their own adoption resolutions. A jurisdiction with a plan in APA status does not meet the requirement for an approved mitigation plan to apply for and receive funding assistance.

FEMA will transmit acknowledgement of verification of formal plan adoption and the official approval of the plan to the Passaic County HMP Coordinator. The plan approval date begins the five-year approval period and sets the expiration date for the plan. All participating jurisdictions will have the same expiration date regardless of their own jurisdiction’s adoption date. The date indicated on FEMA’s approval letter is the official approval date.

The resolutions issued by each jurisdiction to support adoption of this HMP are included in Appendix A.

## 2.8 CONTINUED PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

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Passaic County and participating jurisdictions are committed to the continued involvement of the public in the hazard mitigation process. This HMP update will be made available for review on the HMP public website. Each jurisdiction’s elected official shall be responsible for receiving, tracking, and filing public comments regarding this HMP update. After completion of this HMP update, implementation and ongoing maintenance will continue to be a function of the Planning Partnership.

The Planning Partnership will review the plan and accept public comment as part of an annual review and as part of five-year mitigation plan updates. A notice regarding annual updates of the plan and the location of plan copies will be publicized annually after the annual plan evaluation meeting and posted on the public website at <https://www.passaiccountynj.org/departments/office-of-emergency-management/hazard-mitigation-plan>. Through the website, the public will be provided an opportunity to comment on the HMP update as a part of the annual mitigation planning evaluation process and the next five-year mitigation plan update.

The 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 5-year plan update as appropriate; however, members of the Planning Partnership will assist the HMP Coordinator. George Rosenthal has been identified as the ongoing County HMP Coordinator, and is responsible for receiving, tracking, and filing public comments regarding this HMP update. Contact information is as follows:

Mailing Address:	Passaic County Office of Emergency Management 300 Oldham Road, Wayne, NJ 07470
Contact Name:	George Rosenthal
Email Address:	<a href="mailto:georger@passaiccountynj.org">georger@passaiccountynj.org</a>

Additional meetings may also be held as deemed necessary to provide the public an opportunity to express concerns, opinions, and ideas about the HMP. Further details regarding continued public involvement are provided in Chapter 17.