



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hazard Mitigation Overview

Hazard mitigation is the use of long-term and short-term policies, programs, projects, and other activities to minimize the loss of life, injury, and property damage that can result from a disaster. Communities, residents, and businesses across the United States have been faced with continually increasing costs associated with natural and human-caused hazards. Hazard mitigation is the first step in reducing risk and is the most effective way to reduce costs associated with hazards.

Passaic County has developed a hazard mitigation plan (HMP) to reduce risks from disasters to the people, property, economy, and environment within the County's planning area. The County and 16 participating local jurisdictions (the Planning Partners) prepared this plan as an update to the 2020 Passaic County HMP. The updated 2025 HMP includes countywide analysis and assessment of hazards, risk, and capabilities.

The 2025 HMP complies with federal and state hazard mitigation planning requirements. The federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires state and local entities to implement pre-disaster mitigation planning and develop HMPs in order to establish eligibility for funding under Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant programs. FEMA has issued guidelines for the development of multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plans that meet this requirement. The New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM) supports plan development for jurisdictions in New Jersey.

The Planning Process

This HMP update documents the process and outcomes of the Planning Partners' mitigation planning efforts. To support the planning process, the Planning Partners accomplished the following:

- Developed a Steering Committee consisting of key stakeholders and a countywide Planning Partnership made up of the Steering Committee members, the Planning Partners, and other regional stakeholders
- Reviewed the 2020 Passaic County Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Identified hazards of concern to the County to be included in the update
- Profiled the hazards of concern
- Estimated the inventory at risk and potential losses associated with these hazards
- Reviewed and updated the mitigation goals and objectives
- Reviewed mitigation strategy and actions outlined in the 2020 HMP to indicate progress
- Developed new mitigation actions to reduce the vulnerability of assets from hazards of concern
- Involved a wide range of stakeholders and the public in the plan update process
- Developed mitigation plan maintenance procedures to be executed after obtaining approval of the plan from NJOEM and FEMA



Involvement by Stakeholders and the Public

The Planning Partners kept stakeholders and the general public informed throughout the planning process and provided opportunities for public comment and input. In addition, numerous agencies and stakeholders participated as core or support members of the Steering Committee or Planning Partnership, providing input and expertise throughout the planning process.

Participating Jurisdictions Involved in the Mitigation Planning Effort

The following are the local governments in Passaic County that participated as Planning Partners in this HMP update:

- County of Passaic
- Borough of Bloomingdale
- City of Clifton
- Borough of Haledon
- Borough of Hawthorne
- Township of Little Falls
- Borough of North Haledon
- City of Passaic
- City of Paterson
- Borough of Pompton Lakes
- Borough of Prospect Park
- Borough of Ringwood
- Borough of Totowa
- Borough of Wanaque
- Township of Wayne
- Township of West Milford
- Borough of Woodland Park

The participating jurisdictions provided significant input into the preparation of the plan, in particular the preparation of jurisdiction-specific annexes included in Volume II.

Multiple Agency Support for Hazard Mitigation

Primary responsibility for the development and implementation of mitigation strategies and policies lies with local governments. However, local governments are not alone; various partners and resources at the regional, state, and federal levels are available to assist communities in the development and implementation of mitigation strategies. In New Jersey, NJOEM is the lead agency providing hazard mitigation planning assistance to local jurisdictions. In addition, FEMA provides grants, tools, guidance, and training to support mitigation planning.

In updating the HMP, the participating jurisdictions fully coordinated with and solicited participation from county and local governments, relevant organizations and groups, state and federal agencies, and the general public. This coordination ensured that stakeholders had established communication channels and relationships to support mitigation planning and mitigation actions included in the plan.

Additional input and support for this planning effort was obtained from a wide range of agencies as well as through public involvement. Under the project management of the Passaic County Office of Emergency Management (OEM), the Passaic County Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee provided oversight for the preparation of this plan. The Steering Committee included representatives from the following entities:

- Passaic County OEM
- Passaic County Department of Planning
- Passaic County Department of Human Services
- Passaic County Sheriff's Office
- Passaic County Department of Cultural and Historic Affairs



- Passaic County School Superintendents
- Borough of Pompton Lakes
- Paterson Public Schools
- New Jersey Highlands Council
- North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
- Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
- Catholic Charity and Community Services
- United Way of Passaic County

Risk Assessment for Local Hazards of Concern

The Planning Partners evaluated each jurisdiction’s risk and vulnerability due to each of the hazards of concern, based on past events, past and predicted future losses, and the expected probability of future occurrence. From these evaluations, hazards were ranked as high, medium, or low risk to each jurisdiction. The hazard rankings were used to focus and prioritize individual jurisdictional mitigation strategies. Summary overall hazard rankings for all of Passaic County are presented in Table ES-1.

Table ES-1. Countywide Ranking for Passaic County Hazards of Concern

Hazard of Concern	Hazard Ranking
Dam Failure	Medium
Drought	Medium
Extreme Temperature	Medium
Flood	High
Geological Hazards	Low
Severe Weather	Medium
Severe Winter Weather	Medium
Wildfire	Low

Capability Assessment and Plan Integration into Other Local Mechanisms

Effective mitigation is achieved when hazard awareness and risk management approaches and strategies become an integral part of public activities and decision-making. Within the County, there are many existing plans and programs that support hazard risk management. It is critical that this HMP integrate, complement, and reference those plans and programs to the extent practical in order for it to be a comprehensive resource for hazard mitigation.

The HMP includes a capability assessment to review relevant local mechanisms for each participating jurisdiction. This assessment identifies where each jurisdiction is currently able to implement hazard mitigation measures and where each would benefit from improved capabilities for such measures. The capability assessment also 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, each participating jurisdiction identifies how it has integrated hazard risk management into its existing



planning, regulatory and operational/administrative framework, and how it intends to continue to promote this integration.

Mitigation Strategy

Hazard Mitigation Plan Goals and Objectives

It is a federal requirement for hazard mitigation plans to include a description of mitigation goals to reduce or avoid long-term vulnerabilities to the identified hazards of concern.

The Passaic County HMP planning process included a review and update of mitigation goals and objectives that were previously established to guide the selection of mitigation actions addressing all hazards of concern. Mitigation goals were updated based on the updated risk assessment, discussions, research, and input from plan participants and stakeholders. The goal development process considered the goals expressed in the State of New Jersey Hazard Mitigation Plan, as well as other relevant county and local planning documents.

2025 Passaic County HMP Goals

Goal 1: Protect Life

Goal 2: Protect Property

Goal 3: Increase Public Preparedness and Awareness

Goal 4: Develop and Maintain an Understanding of Risks from Hazards

Goal 5: Enhance County and Local Mitigation Capabilities to Reduce Hazard Vulnerabilities

Goal 6: Support Continuity of Operations Pre-, During and Post-Hazard Events

Goal 7: Reduce the Risk of Natural Hazards for Socially Vulnerable Populations and Underserved Communities

Goal 8: Increase Hazard Mitigation Collaboration Within Watersheds and Along Waterways That Are Flood Prone to Ensure Cohesive Mitigation Strategies

Goal 9: Address Long-Term Vulnerabilities from High Hazard Dams

Implementation of the 2020 Plan

The status of the mitigation projects identified in the 2020 HMP was reviewed for this HMP. Numerous projects and programs have been implemented that have reduced hazard vulnerability to assets in the planning area. Uncompleted projects have been re-evaluated and either deleted or incorporated into this updated plan, with modifications as necessary. The Planning Partners' annexes describe these mitigation activities in more detail, and plan maintenance procedures have been developed to encourage thorough integration with local decisions and processes and regular review of implementation progress.

2025 Mitigation Strategy

Passaic County included a variety of actions within each jurisdiction's annex, including updates to local flood damage prevention ordinances to be congruent with state regulations, outreach to socially vulnerable populations, backup power for critical facilities, and flood mitigation along flood-prone roads. Identify how many total actions were developed by all participants.