

Executive Summary

After suffering the effects of floods, tornadoes, winter storms, and other natural and man-made hazards, the citizens, business leaders, and officials of Fulton County recognized the need to develop a long-term approach to reducing their vulnerability to hazards. In 2003, the Fulton County Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee (Steering Committee), the local leadership for an initiative to promote communities' resistance to natural and human-caused hazards, began a hazard mitigation planning process to identify the hazards that can affect the County and create a strategy to reduce damage from these hazards. This process culminated in the development of the first version of this Fulton County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP), which was adopted by the County and several municipalities, and was approved by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in 2005. This document represents the work of citizens, elected and appointed government officials, business leaders, and volunteer and nonprofit groups to protect community assets, preserve the economic viability of the community, and save lives.

In 2009, PEMA contracted the services of Michael Baker, Jr., Inc. (Baker) and its subcontractors to revise and update 14 HMPs across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This document was among those 14, and the task of leading the County's Steering Committee through the mitigation planning process was given to Baker's subcontractor, Delta Development Group, Inc. (Delta). The planning process consisted of the following steps:

- Identification and prioritization of the hazards that may affect the County and its municipalities
- Assessment of the County's and municipalities' vulnerability to these hazards
- Identification of the mitigation actions that can reduce that vulnerability
- Development of a strategy for implementing those actions, including identifying the agency(ies) responsible for that implementation

Throughout the planning process, the general public was given the opportunity to comment on the existing HMP and provide suggestions for the updated version. Two public meetings were also conducted to give residents an opportunity to provide input on the HMP.

The following hazards were identified by the Steering Committee as presenting the highest risk to the County and its municipalities:

- Flood, flash flood, and ice jams
- Environmental hazards (e.g., hazardous materials spills)
- Transportation hazards
- Severe wind storms

Fulton County Hazard Mitigation Plan

To mitigate against the effects of those hazards, the Steering Committee identified the following goals for hazard mitigation over the next five years:

- Prevent hazards from impacting the community.
- Protect the people, property, and environment in hazard areas.
- Maintain and enhance emergency services capabilities in the community.
- Protect natural resources within the hazards areas.
- Ensure that stakeholder groups have necessary information to mitigate against hazard impacts.

The individual objectives and actions that will be implemented are shown in Section 6.4.