

7. Plan Maintenance

7.1. *Update Process Summary*

This update to Fulton County's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-approved 2005 Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) was a comprehensive update that expanded the sources and amount of data for better trend analysis, updated the vulnerability and risk assessment for local hazards, created a more fluid process to streamline future updates to the HMP, and updated the hazard mitigation measures identified to limit the effects of local hazards.

7.2. *Monitoring, Evaluating, and Updating the Plan*

Hazard mitigation planning in Fulton County is the responsibility of all levels of government (i.e., county and local), as well as the citizens of the County. As listed in FEMA 386-4, the planning team (the Fulton County Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee) must continuously monitor and document the progress of the Plan's recommended actions. The Fulton County Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee (listed in Section 3.2), under the direction of the Fulton County Planning Commission, will be responsible for maintaining this Multi-Jurisdictional HMP. The Steering Committee will meet annually and following each emergency declaration, with the purpose of reviewing the Plan. Each year, the County will solicit new projects from the municipalities by sending out Mitigation Action Template Forms and informing the municipalities of the opportunity to update their mitigation measures.

Each review process will ensure that the Hazard Vulnerability Analysis and Risk Assessment reflect current conditions in the County and the municipalities, the Capability Assessment accurately reflects local circumstances, and the hazard mitigation strategies are updated based on the County's damage assessment reports and local mitigation project priorities. The Steering Committee will complete a Progress Report to evaluate the status and accuracy of the HMP and record the Steering Committee's findings. The Fulton County Planning Commission and EMA will maintain a copy of these records. The Progress Report template is found in Appendix H.

As directed by FEMA 386-4, the Progress Report will include the following information: the hazard mitigation action's objectives; who the lead and supporting agencies responsible for implementation are; how long the project should take, including a delineation of the various stages of work along with timelines (milestones should be included); whether the resources needed for implementation, funding, staff time, and technical assistance are available, or if other arrangements must be made to obtain them; the types of permits or approvals necessary to implement the action; details on the ways the actions will be accomplished within the organization, and whether the duties will be assigned to agency staff or contracted out; and the current status of the project, identifying any issues that may hinder implementation.

Fulton County Hazard Mitigation Plan

The HMP must be updated on a five-year cycle. This HMP will be updated within a five-year period and resubmitted to FEMA for reapproval. The monitoring, evaluating, and updating of the Plan every five years will rely heavily on the outcomes of the annual Steering Committee meetings.

7.3. Incorporation into Other Planning Mechanisms

7.3.1. Fulton County Comprehensive Plan

7.3.1.1. Method

The Fulton County Planning Commission is responsible for maintaining and updating the County Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Commission meets quarterly to review, discuss, and comment on municipal subdivision and land development plans. It uses this information to identify necessary revisions and to amend the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Commission's meetings are open to the public and are advertised according to the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act (65 PA C.S.A.). Of the 12 municipalities that returned the Capabilities Assessment Survey, all have local comprehensive plans (see Section 5: Capabilities Assessment).

Technical assistance on community planning matters is provided by the Fulton County Planning Commission. The County Planning Commission administers the County Comprehensive Plan. The County Planning Commission also performs technical reviews of municipal subdivision and land development plans, municipal floodplain ordinances, municipal stormwater management plans and ordinances, and other community planning and development matters. Since the adoption of the existing HMP, these reviews have included informal cross-referencing of the planned development or regulatory activity with the provisions of the HMP. This practice will continue, using the information in the updated HMP.

7.3.1.2. Maintenance Schedule

Article III of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (Act 247 of 1968, as reenacted and amended) requires all Pennsylvania counties (except Philadelphia) to adopt a comprehensive plan and update it at least every 10 years. Coupling this requirement with the DMA 2000-required five-year update cycle for HMPs, when possible, will allow the County to better integrate the County Comprehensive Plan and HMP planning processes and strengthen public participation for both efforts.

Fulton County's current Comprehensive Plan was adopted in January of 2007. This plan provides general direction and a blueprint for the future of Fulton County and constituent communities. As required by the Municipalities Planning Code, the Comprehensive Plan will need to be updated every 10 years. At that time, additional recommendations from the HMP can be incorporated into the document.

7.3.2. Fulton County Emergency Operations Plan

7.3.2.1. *Method*

The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Services Code (35 PA C.S. Sections 7701-7707, as amended) requires each county and municipality to prepare, maintain, and keep current an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). The Fulton County Emergency Management Agency is responsible for preparing and maintaining the County EOP. The risk assessment information presented in the existing HMP was used to update the hazard vulnerability assessment section of the County EOP. The updated risk assessment information will affect subsequent updates to the EOP.

7.3.2.2. *Maintenance Schedule*

The EOP is reviewed at least biennially. Whenever portions of the plan are implemented in an emergency event or training exercise, a review is performed and changes are made where necessary. These changes are then distributed to the County's 13 local Emergency Management Coordinators (EMCs) for safekeeping.

The Fulton County Emergency Management Agency should consider the County's HMP during its biennial review of the County EOP. Recommended changes to the HMP will then be coordinated with the Steering Committee.

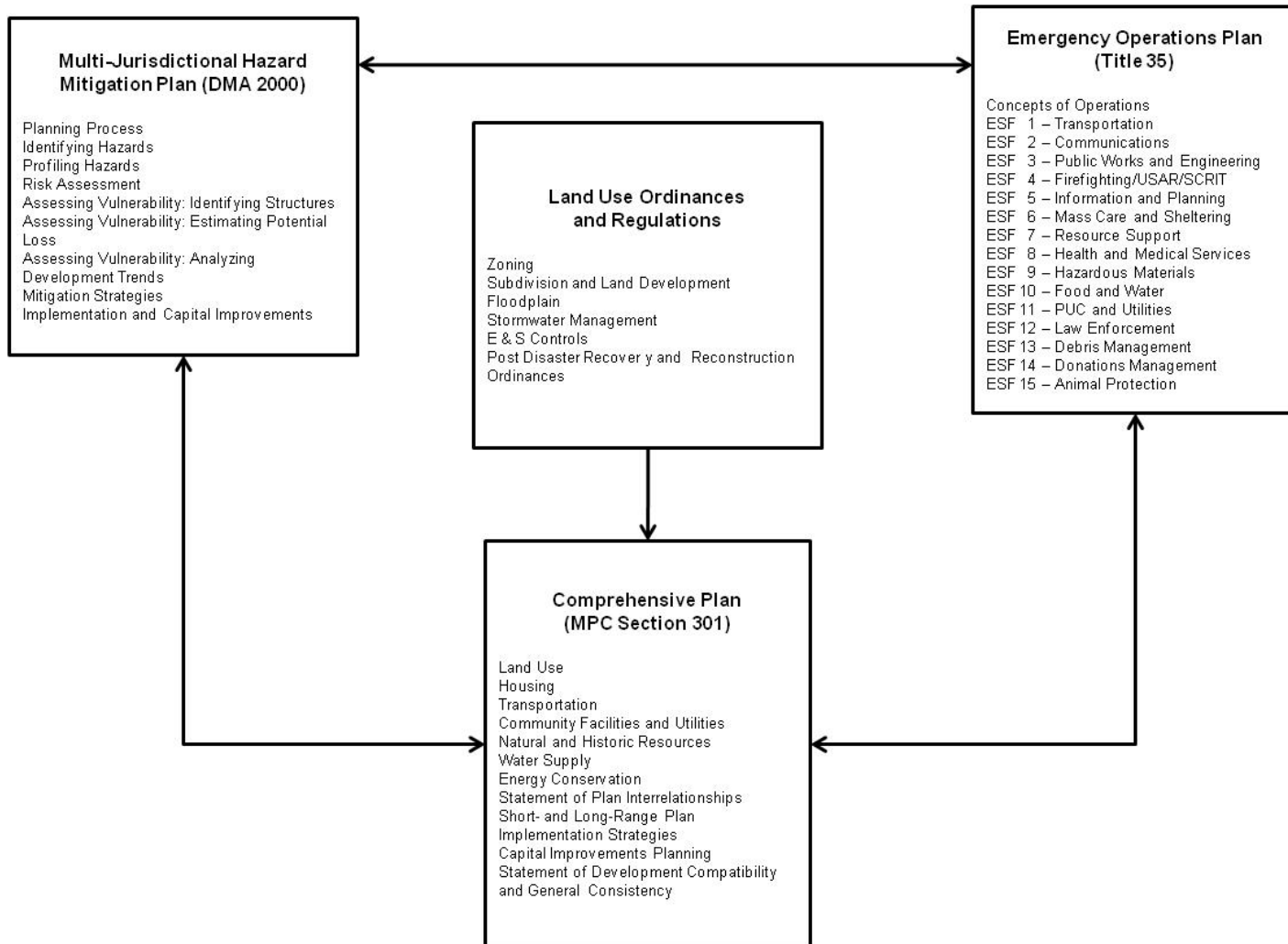
7.3.3. Plan Interrelationships

Figure 8 illustrates the interrelationships between the HMP, County Comprehensive Plan, County EOP, and other community planning mechanisms. Ensuring consistency between these planning mechanisms is critical. In fact, Section 301 (4.1) of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires that comprehensive plans include a discussion of the interrelationships among their various plan components, "which may include an estimate of the environmental, energy conservation, fiscal, economic development, and social consequences on the environment."

When developing the HMP, certain sections of the County Comprehensive Plan, EOP, and various land use ordinances and regulations provided key information. Moving forward, each of these documents should not be treated as unrelated and updated separately. The County and each participating municipality are responsible for incorporating the specific mitigation actions recommended in this Plan into the necessary planning documents, including the appropriate comprehensive plan, the County EOP, and any land use ordinances and regulations.

To that end, Fulton County and its municipalities must ensure that the components of the HMP are integrated into existing community planning mechanisms and are generally consistent with goals, policies, or recommended actions. Fulton County and the Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee will utilize the existing maintenance schedule of each plan to incorporate the goals, policies, or recommended actions as each plan is updated.

Figure 8: Plan Interrelationships



7.4. Continued Public Involvement

The Fulton County Planning Commission will ensure that the HMP is posted and maintained on the County Web site, and will continue to encourage public review and comment on the Plan.

The citizens of Fulton County are encouraged to submit their comments to elected officials and/or members of the Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee. To promote public participation, Fulton County welcomed comments on the HMP for a 45-day period. This offered the public the opportunity to share their comments and observations. All comments received will be maintained and considered by the Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee when updating the HMP.

Fulton County will continue to reach out to municipalities regarding mitigation projects, especially those municipalities that did not submit projects for inclusion in this HMP. Any additional Hazard Mitigation Project Opportunity Forms received during the life of this five-year HMP will be incorporated into the Plan as an interim, updated and included in the next five-year Plan update.

The HMP is available online for review at <http://www.co.fulton.pa.us/planning-commission.php>.