SECTION 3   PLANNING PROCESS

The Fulton County hazard mitigation planning process has been an integral part of the update of the Fulton County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). This section describes the elements of planning process, which included participation from 12 of the county's 13 municipalities and the Steering Committee; work performed by the planning team; meetings and documentation; public and stakeholder participation; and multi-jurisdictional planning. Additional details regarding the update process for each section of this HMP are included at the beginning of those sections.

A successful hazard mitigation planning process builds partnerships and brings together representatives from government agencies, the public, and other stakeholders to reach consensus on ways the community will prepare for and respond to the hazards most likely to affect them. In addition, applying a comprehensive and transparent process adds validity to the HMP. Throughout the Fulton County HMP update process, participants gained a better understanding of problems and issues and helped devise solutions and actions for the community, resulting in a revised set of common community values and widespread support for directing financial, technical, and human resources to the agreed-upon actions.

3.1   UPDATE PROCESS AND PARTICIPATION SUMMARY

In accordance with the requirements set forth in the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000), this plan documents the following topics:

- Planning process
- Hazard identification
- Risk assessment
- Mitigation strategy: goals, actions, and projects
- Formal adoption by the participating jurisdictions
- Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) approval

The 2013 PEMA All-Hazard Mitigation Planning Standard Operating Guide (PEMA 2013) lays out Pennsylvania's standard planning process to create and update HMPs (including this HMP), and is cited in Appendix A, under Authorities and References. Hazard vulnerabilities and the risk assessment are described in Section 4 (Risk Assessment), and the mitigation strategy is described in Section 6 (Mitigation Strategy) of this HMP.

Public participation and planning meetings served as the main forum for gathering information to update the HMP. The Steering Committee was afforded access to information in relevant and approved plans, policies, and procedures for Fulton County. Opportunities for public participation included public meetings, distribution of information at municipal meetings and via social media, and occasions to the review and comment on the draft HMP update. To develop all sections of the HMP, the Steering Committee used meetings, e-mail correspondence, and teleconferences to solicit input from county, municipal, and other stakeholders, including members of the general public. Most information received for this update came from Fulton County, its municipalities, and the Steering Committee. Through this planning process, the county established a comprehensive approach to reduce the effects of hazards on the county and its municipalities.

3.2   THE PLANNING TEAM

Recognizing the need to manage risk within the county and to meet the requirements of the DMA 2000, the Planning and Mapping Department and the Fulton County Steering Committee led the update to the 2020 HMP. Mary K. Seville, Planning and Mapping Director, led the Steering Committee Meeting, providing guidance and

direction to the planning effort and ensuring the resulting document will be embraced both politically and by the constituency within the county. She also served as the lead planner and point of contact for the planning process. The Fulton County Steering Committee meets each year. Membership of the Steering Committee is maintained on an ongoing basis and includes representatives from the Fulton County Planning and Mapping Department, municipalities, major industries, community organizations, and other stakeholders.

The Steering Committee was charged with the following tasks:

- Providing guidance and oversight of the planning process
- 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
  - Verifying the data and information used in the plan update process are best available
  - Reviewing and updating the hazard mitigation planning goals and objectives
  - Identifying and screening appropriate mitigation strategies and activities
  - Reviewing and updating plan maintenance procedures
- Reviewing and commenting on plan documents prior to submission to PEMA and FEMA

The Steering Committee was assembled to include representatives from each of the municipalities participating in the HMP update as well as invited stakeholders. The organizations listed in Table 3-1 were invited to participate on the Steering Committee.

Table 3-1. Organizations Invited to Participate in the Planning Process

Fulton County				
• County Commissioners	• Fulton County Conservation District	• Fulton County EMA	• Fulton County Planning & Mapping Department	Fulton County Local Emergency Planning Committee
Fulton County Municipalities				
• Ayr Township	• Brush Creek Township	• McConnellsburg Borough	• Todd Township	• Wells Township
• Belfast Township	• Dublin Township	• Taylor Township	• Union Township	
• Bethel Township	• Licking Creek Township	• Thompson Township	• Valley-Hi Borough	
Educational Institutions				
• Central Fulton School District	• Forbes Road School District	• Fulton County Community Christian School	• Southern Fulton School District	
Fire Departments				
• Hustontown Vol. Fire. Co.	• McConnellsburg Vol. Fire Co.	• Needmore Vol. Fire Co.		
Chambers of Commerce				
• Fulton Co. Chamber of Commerce & Tourism	• County Commissioners	• Pennsylvania State Police		
State Agencies				
• Pennsylvania Department of Transportation	• Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency			

Neighboring Jurisdictions				
• Allegany County Planning	• Bedford County Planning	• Franklin County Municipal Court	• Huntingdon County EMA	• Washington County EMA
• Allegany County EMA	• Franklin County EMA	• Franklin County Planning	• Huntingdon County Planning	• Washington County Planning
• Bedford County EMA				

Other Stakeholders				
• American Red Cross	• Fulton County Medical Center	• JLG Industries	• Mellott Company	• Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission (SAPDC)
• Fulton Co. Chamber of Commerce & Tourism				

Complete lists of individual invitees, participants, attendance at meetings, completion of worksheets, and comments submitted on the HMP are included in Appendices C through E.

The Steering Committee acknowledged the following important steps in developing a comprehensive risk assessment:

- ▪ Identify hazards that specifically affect Fulton County
- ▪ Assess their likelihood of occurrence, along with potential damage to the people, property, and environment of the county

The Steering Committee chose to focus on an all-hazards approach rather than to narrow the focus to natural disasters only.

As the contract consultant, Tetra Tech, Inc. (Tetra Tech) guided the Steering Committee through the HMP update planning process. More specifically, Tetra Tech was tasked to carry out the following tasks:

- Assist with the organization of the Steering Committee
- Assist with the development and implementation of a public and stakeholder outreach program
- Collect data
- Facilitate and record attendance at meetings
- Assist with the review, update, and ranking of the hazards of concern, hazard profiling, and the risk assessment
- Assist with the review and update of mitigation planning goals and objectives
- Assist with the review of progress of past mitigation strategy
- Assist with the screening of mitigation actions and the identification of appropriate actions
- Assist with the prioritization of mitigation actions
- Author the draft and final HMP documents

3.3 MEETINGS AND DOCUMENTATION

Tetra Tech supported the county in drafting planning documents and preparing for meetings. The Steering Committee reviewed documentation, provided validation, and acted as an advocate for the HMP update.

Table 3-2 lists dates and descriptions of meetings held by the Fulton County Steering Committee as part of the process of updating the Fulton County HMP.

Table 3-2. Public and Planning Meetings

Date	Description of Meeting
April 10, 2019	Project Kickoff Meeting
May 30, 2019	Steering Committee Kickoff Meeting
December 9, 2019	Risk Assessment Review Meeting
January 15, 2020	Mitigation Strategy Workshop
TBD	Draft Review Meeting

The Steering Committee provided notes that documented all agenda topics, decisions, and action items identified during the meeting and posted the meeting minutes on the HMP website. Documentation from all meetings is provided in Appendix C.

Fulton County residents were informed of the planning process through various sources, including newspaper-announced public notices and announcements on the Fulton County HMP website (https://www.co.fulton.pa.us/planning-hmp-update.php). The website is linked from the county's home page.

The Risk Assessment Review Meeting and Draft Review Meeting were advertised as public meetings. Press releases were sent to the major media outlets serving Fulton County, and invitations were posted to the county's website and social media network. One member of the general public attended. Any subsequent supporting documentation provided by county residents will be included in Appendix E (Public and Stakeholder Participation).

3.4   PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

To maximize effectiveness of the HMP, the Steering Committee fostered continual public and stakeholder engagement. Input was encouraged and collected through a variety of methods. Five worksheets and surveys—the Hazard Identification and Risk Evaluation, Hazard/Risk Identification Survey, Capabilities Assessment Survey, NFIP Survey, and Mitigation Strategy 5-Year Plan Review Worksheet (Mitigation Review Worksheet)—were given to representatives from each municipality in Fulton County. Of the county and the 13 municipalities within Fulton County surveyed, 13 jurisdictions (the county and 12 municipalities) provided information so that their input could be reviewed and incorporated into the updated HMP.

The following entities with vested interest in development of the updated HMP were given the opportunity to participate in the planning process by attending a Steering Committee or public meeting, or by offering comments on the project website:

- local, state, and federal agencies
- neighboring jurisdictions (e.g., Franklin)
- community leaders and educators
- healthcare facilities
- other relevant private and nonprofit groups

Invitations to participate in meetings were sent to the stakeholders listed. Appendix E includes a copy of the Steering Committee meeting invitation list and copies of invitation letters sent. Meeting invitations were also sent to all municipalities, including elected officials and Emergency Management Coordinators. Twelve of the 13 municipalities in Fulton County had representatives attending at least one meeting. Additionally, direct outreach was conducted with municipalities who were unable to attend other meetings or who had questions about worksheets, participation requirements, the planning process, or mitigation project selection. This additional outreach was conducted by phone or in one-on-one meetings.

Through public notices published in the local newspapers, the groups listed in Section 3.2 and the general public were invited to visit the project website, review the draft County HMP update, and send comments to Fulton County Planning and Mapping Department. In addition, two general public meetings were held during the planning process, as listed in Table 3-2. Copies of the public notices and other forms of public and stakeholder outreach are presented in Appendix E.

Throughout the course of the entire planning process, two members of the general public attended a meeting, and a representative from the following stakeholder organizations participated:

- American Red Cross
- Mellott Company

Section 3.5, Multi-jurisdictional Planning, includes Table 3-3, which indicates overall municipal participation in the planning process.

3.5 MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL PLANNING

Fulton County led a multi-jurisdictional effort to prepare and update the HMP, which will apply to the county and all participating municipalities. The county provided resources (e.g., demographic data, geographic information system [GIS] data, etc.) to municipalities to augment locally available information. Fulton County undertook an intensive effort to involve all 13 municipalities in the update process. However, Fulton County depended on municipal buy-in for plan participation, as municipalities in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania have the legal authority to enforce compliance with land use planning and development directives, and thus determine whether to participate in the planning process.

Each municipality was given the opportunity to join the process. The county invited municipal officials and representatives to attend Steering Committee and public meetings; provided worksheets to update the hazards of concern, capabilities, and mitigation strategy; and tasked municipalities to review and prioritize the mitigation actions. Municipal participation culminated in formal adoption of the HMP; copies of municipal adoption resolutions are provided in Appendix F. Table 3-3 indicates the ways each municipality participated in the planning process.

Table 3-3. Worksheet Completion and Planning Meetings

Jurisdiction	Worksheets					Meetings		
	Hazard Identification and Risk Evaluation Worksheet Received	Municipal Risk Factor Analysis Received	Capabilities Assessment Survey Received	Mitigation Review Worksheet Received	NFIP Survey	Steering Committee Kickoff 05/30/19	RA and CA Review Meeting 12/09/19	Mitigation Strategy Workshop 01/15/20
Fulton County	X	N/A	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ayr Township	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Belfast Township	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X
Bethel Township	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X
Brush Creek Township	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	-
Dublin Township	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X
Licking Creek Township	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	-
McConnellsburg Borough	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-
Taylor Township	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-
Thompson Township	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Todd Township	X	X	X	X	X	-	-	X
Union Township	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Valley-Hi Borough	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wells Township	X	-	X	X	X	-	-	-