

**Burlington County, NJ – Hazard Mitigation Plan 2024 Update
Steering Committee Risk Assessment Meeting | Meeting Minutes**



Purpose of Meeting:	Steering Committee Risk Assessment Meeting
Location of Meeting:	Teleconference
Date of Meeting:	October 24, 2023 @ 10:00AM

<p>Attendees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burlington County Division of Emergency Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Darryl Williams, OEM Coordinator ○ Kristen Carr, OEM Deputy Coordinator ○ Madison Hoff, Assistant Planner ○ Bob Carr, Fire Marshal ○ Holly Cucuzzella, Health Department ○ Jerome Kilkenny, Transportation Coordinator ○ Michael Patton, Systems Supervisor • Burlington County Department of Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monique Davis, Assistant Health Officer • Burlington County Department of Public Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dave Levinsky, Public Information Officer • Burlington County Department of Public Works <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Joe Birkley, Director • Burlington County Division of GIS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ David Rickert, GIS Specialist 2 ○ Merrilee Torres, GIS Specialist 1, GIS Supervisor • Burlington County Division of Solid Waste <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jerome Sheehan, Director • Eastampton (Twp) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bob Carr, OEM Coordinator ○ Kim White, Municipal Clerk/Township Manager • Mansfield (Twp) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Douglas Borgstrom, OEM Coordinator/Fire Official ○ Matthew Konowicz, Township Fire Department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moorestown (Twp) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jim Carruthers, OEM Coordinator • Springfield (Twp) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Andrew Eaton, Deputy Mayor • American Water <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gary Gehringer, Environmental Program Lead • Bordentown Regional School District <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr. Trudy Atkins, Superintendent • Holy Cross Preparatory Academy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ David Moffa, Principal • FEMA Region 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meghan Wren, FEMA Region 2 Community Planner, Resilience Branch • NJOEM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cansu Yerdeleni, Mitigation Unit • Northern Burlington County Regular School District <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Matthew Konowicz, Director of Instruction for Agriscience, Applied Technology, Business & Technology, Visual & Performing Arts • Rowan College Burlington County Public Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Andrew Eaton, Director of Public Safety • Burlington County Institute of Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Joe Venuto, Principal, Westampton Campus • Tetra Tech <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chris Huch, Project Manager ○ Jessica Stokes, Lead Planner
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Agenda Summary: The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the hazard mitigation planning process, discuss public and stakeholder outreach efforts, review the risk assessment results, including the hazard ranking, and introduce the SWOO exercise to the Steering Committee.

Item No.	Description	Action item(s):
1	Introductions	-
2	<p>Project Status</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On schedule <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Risk Assessment – October 2023 ○ Identify Actions – September-November 2023 ○ Finalize Plan Maintenance – December 2023 ○ Draft Plan – January 2024 ○ Draft to NJOEM – February 2024 ○ Draft to FEMA – March 2024 • Remaining LOIPs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bass River (Twp) ○ Delran (Twp) ○ Fieldsboro (B) ○ Maple Shade (Twp) 	<p>Steering Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post links on social media and department/agency websites • Make efforts to reach out to general public, stakeholders, neighbors, and socially vulnerable populations



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Westampton (Twp) ○ Willingboro (Twp) ○ Woodland (Twp) ● Public Outreach and Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Post links on social media and department/agency websites ○ Stakeholder and neighboring municipalities surveys have been distributed ○ Make efforts to reach out to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General Public ▪ Stakeholders ▪ Neighbors ▪ Socially Vulnerable Populations 	
<p>3</p>	<p>Risk Assessment Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Risk is defined as a function of : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hazard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Source of potential danger or adverse condition ○ Exposure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manmade or natural features that are exposed to the hazard ○ Vulnerability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Damage susceptibility of the exposed features ○ Adaptive Capacity (or capability) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Plans/policies ▪ Response/recovery ▪ Financial resources 	<p style="text-align: center;">-</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Preliminary Risk Assessment Results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provided an overview of the results from the risk assessment for each hazard. Results were a combination of qualitative and quantitative data. 	<p style="text-align: center;">-</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Hazard Rankings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The calculated probability of a hazard occurring based on historical data ● <i>Impacts to <u>people</u>, <u>property</u>, and the <u>economy</u></i> based on GIS data and analysis of exposure. ● The degree to which <i><u>climate change</u></i> will affect future occurrences based on best available data. ● The degree to which existing <i><u>capabilities</u></i> (the ability of your community to respond to the hazard based on ordinances, mitigation strategies and procedures, and readiness) decrease overall risk. ● Ranking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ High: Severe Weather ○ Medium: Extreme Temperature, Dam Failure, Severe Winter Weather, Disease Outbreak, Drought ○ Low: Flood, Wildfire, Earthquake <p><i>Discussion:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jim Carruthers – Hi Jim Carruthers with more sound OEM and I had a question quick about flood the flood risk, the data that you guys use for that. I know you'd said limited mapping and some of it's outdated. How reliable is that data that you guys looked at to rank flooding at that stage and how can this committee or I guess at this program help? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chris Huch – We did use the effective floodplain maps from FEMA. In most instances, those maps aren't too, too old. But again, in the 	<p style="text-align: center;">-</p>



middle part of the state, the middle part of the county's a lot of the mapping is old. So even if you were to do a very in-depth mapping process there to update everything, you probably wouldn't result in much more information that would impact development that's taking place, because most of those lands are protected in the Pinelands. That being said, with NJDEP updating their inland flood rule, we are anticipating that the state at some point here in the next few years is probably going to go through their own mapping exercise to present a new version of the special Flood Hazard area that reflects where you are required to build these higher standards. In terms of the overall mapping and what we can do right now, if we think that we do have outdated flood maps in our in certain areas of the county, we can always reach out to FEMA. So, a lot of what's going on there is based on limited resources and amount of time, but that's kind of the mapping section here.

- Matthew Konowicz: I see this as on natural disaster. Is there a place to consider "human behavior" as a risk? I am seeing more and more conflict/violence/crime. Is there also place in this risk assessment to consider human behavior and the negative changes in human behavior such as increased crime or violence?
 - Chris Huch: Hazard mitigation planning is primarily focused on natural hazards. In the past few years, we've seen a lot of plans include some more manmade hazards, including things like cyber terrorism, active shooters. We did have discussions about including some of that stuff. The focus was to stick with natural hazards for this plan and use some of the other planning efforts that are out there like emergency operations, plans to kind of deal with those types of hazards in a way that they can more accurately be dealt with. The main reason why is because hazard mitigation planning is about kind of putting projects in place that help reduce overall risk. Those manmade hazards or human behavior hazards are more about typically response.
 - Matthew Konowicz: I'm glad you said it that way because they could also be thought of as if we consider the risks. Maybe we can put attention into mitigating the negative human behaviors. So, while it doesn't fit in this mold, maybe in the very near future it can be considered something that we can get ahead of.
 - Chris Huch: And, you know, emergency operation plans in the state of New Jersey must be updated on a 2-year basis now. It's frequent, so there's always new emerging threats that are coming into that sector. We can always include some notes in the plan to talk about some of the changes that we've seen on.
 - Matthew Konowicz: in my industry of education, I see mental health has changed the way students and adults handle situations, and I think that leads to other risks or risky behavior that affects the communities. but to try to bring it back a little tighter to what you're working on my secondary comment there, which you also referenced his response. So, while these threats are real, I think in an equal threat is the lack of responders we have across the counting across the state. So, I don't know if there's a place to really highlight that in this committee.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chris Huch: Yeah, that's something that we include. So, when we're talking about capabilities, I'm having adequate staffing is one of the main things that that holds a lot of municipalities back and they'll say, yeah, you know, I could go out and take care of these events pretty easily if I had enough people, I could get my roads cleared from a winter snowstorm. So, keeping that in mind, if there are instances where we feel like, hey, we're understaffed or we don't have the necessary resources to really address some of these events, that is an opportunity to put some work into build up that capability and include that as an action. ○ Matthew Konowicz: That's why I want to make sure that you know, when I'm sure this drives funding decision making and if we don't have enough police just to cover regular shifts where we don't have enough firefighters, EMT's just to do the regular day-to-day emergency response. ● Merilee Torres: Due to the 2004 storm event, FEMA re-mapped Burlington County. I believe the Floodplain/FIRM preliminary data was released in 2016 and made effective December 2017. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chris Huch: I see that you are, uh, noting the FEMA remapping effort based on the 2004 event, and that the preliminary data was released in 2016, made effective in 2017. Was that for the entire county or just for specific portions? ○ Merilee Torres: As far as I know, it was the entire county. ○ Chris Huch: OK, great. I'll go back and check to make sure that we've got that fully reflected. ● Chris Huch: Speaking of flood, did anybody have any thoughts about that hazard ranking being low for flood? Do we want to consider moving that up to at least a medium hazard ranking based on past events based on the fact that flooding doesn't necessarily only take place in the floodplain, it can take place on streets, roadways, things like that. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Darryl Williams: I tend to hear more conversations circling around the flooding, especially in certain areas. In the Mount Holly area, we get information and phone calls from homeowners that are concerned about it more than I tend to hear really about the drought, so you know you know to me flooding tends to be a constant conversation that that we're talking about especially with the dams and then overflow and then how other communities you are affected by that. So again, I haven't heard in my role much conversation circling around drought, but flooding has been an issue. ○ Chris Huch: Yeah, I think the drought focus here largely comes from the agricultural side of drought. You know not that impactful to folks that aren't farmers, but obviously we've got a lot of agriculture taking place in Burlington County. So, I think that's where we ended up having that one sit higher because of economic input. ○ Matthew Konowicz: I am not sure if someone on this call can speak to it, but I hear farmers are hurt more by flooding than drought. ● Meghan: Flood is certainly a high concern in some Burlington communities. it's tough when it must be averaged out. In Delaware River/Route 130 corridor plan endorsement process several communities flagged flooding as their primary concern. 	
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- Jim: What factors are brought in to determine, you know, the risk or the hazard level for a dam? Because I know there's three different types of dams, but I'm not familiar necessarily with the how those statuses are achieved.
 - Chris Huch: So there's three different rankings. The state has a high is the highest level, then there's significant, followed by low, and then there's also a few that are just undetermined, which are usually very, very old. High ranked dams are ones that, if they were to fail, they pose a risk to both life and property. So those are the ones that we're most concerned with when we went through our hazard ranking process here and it's with the local municipalities, it shows up those municipalities that have high ranked dams end up having dam ranked much, much higher than those that do not have high ranked dams. And those municipalities that don't have any dams at all, we're going to be noting that if we're going to work with those municipalities to know, do you have any concerns with dams failing and neighboring municipalities that maybe we are not able to fully understand through the mapping right now? If not, if you've got no exposure, we're going to be able to kind of cross dam failure off the list as a hazard of concern for those municipalities. But the focus here is on those high hazard dams for a couple of reasons. Obviously, the threat to life, but there is a program out there specifically available for funding, for retrofitting of those high hazard dams to the FEMA high hazard potential dam grant program. Given the importance of that program, the funding that's available, and the connection to hazard mitigation action development, we've pulled it out as a standalone hazard. We do factor in climate change, and the one thing to keep in mind here is that most of our dams are based on a hydrograph that is kind of looking back in the past, looking at what are the typical conditions that existed previously that we should be designing for. However, we know that due to climate change, we're likely to see more intense rainfall events and a higher overall level of precipitation is probably going to be heading our way too, which means there's going to be a lot more water flowing and that may result in a higher risk of dam failure as dams get overtopped.
- Monique Davis: My concern is the disease outbreak category and looking at that if we're looking at like the ranking within on the property and the people and the economy, were you kind of focusing in on the number of deaths? Not that 800 plus deaths was minimal, but I think we also need to consider that all of the people who were sick and the research showing this phenomenon known as long COVID. I'm just trying to kind of wrap my head around how within the medium category, how did you arrive at disease outbreak to be the 4th one out of the 5?
 - Chris Huch: We spent time focusing on those sectors of the population that we know are most likely to have severe impacts, such as the elderly. One of the things that really knocked the overall hazard ranking down because we did factor in economy and economic impacts, was probability of occurrence. Again, the fact that we had that event right now, it's fresh in our minds and we're still dealing with some of the stuff from coronavirus. But the fact that it only can probably anticipate an event of that magnitude once every 100 years based upon looking back and you know that's not to say that we

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	<p>won't see a higher frequency in the future. But just looking at previous occurrences, that's what brought the probability down from a high ranked hazard to a medium ranked hazard.</p> <p>Consensus from the Steering Committee to increase the flood ranking to Medium.</p>	
6	<p>Strengths, Weaknesses, Obstacles, and Opportunities (SWOO)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengths – what the County and communities do well; things upon which we can capitalize. • Weaknesses – what can be done better; what can be strengthened. • Obstacles – what stands in the way to implementation to prevent mitigation or response (for example regulatory, geographical, environmental, financial issues). • Opportunities - actions or projects to mitigate issues or improve resilience. 	<p>Steering Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete SWOO worksheets and return to Chris Huch by 10/27/23
7	<p>Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share information about the HMP Update via social media, community groups, and networks • Attend the Risk Assessment and Mitigation Strategy Workshop on Monday, October 30 @ 9:00 a.m. at the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Burlington County Emergency Services Training Center (ESTC) 53 Academy Road, Westampton, New Jersey 08060 • Attend the Public Risk Assessment Meeting on Thursday, November 9 @ 7:00 p.m. via Teams: https://msteams.link/4HOW 	-
8	Questions/Discussion	-