



# FEMA Hazard Mitigation Planning Process

State, **local**, tribal, and territorial governments engage in hazard mitigation planning to identify risks and vulnerabilities associated with natural disasters and develop long-term strategies for protecting people and property from future hazard events.

This page describes the general process to develop or update a hazard mitigation plan. The mitigation planning process is slightly different for each state, local, tribal, and territorial governments, but regardless of the plan type, there are four core steps in completing a hazard mitigation plan or plan update.

**Organize the Planning Process** – At the start, local government should focus on assembling the resources needed for a successful mitigation planning process. This includes securing technical expertise, defining the planning area, and identifying key individuals, agencies, neighboring jurisdictions, businesses, and/or other stakeholders to participate in the process. The planning process for local governments must include opportunities for the public to comment on the plan.

**Assess Risks and Capabilities** – Next, local government needs to identify the characteristics and potential consequences of hazards. It is important to understand what geographic areas each hazard might impact and what people, property, or other assets might be vulnerable. Every local government has a unique set of capabilities to undertake local mitigation. Reviewing those capabilities helps identify available resources to reduce losses, as well as any potential gaps that exist.

**Develop a Mitigation Strategy** – Local government then sets priorities and develops long-term strategies for avoiding or minimizing the undesired effects of disasters. The mitigation strategy addresses how the mitigation actions will be implemented and administered.

**Adopt and Implement the Plan** – Once FEMA has received the adoption from the governing body and approved the plan, they can bring the mitigation plan to life in a variety of ways, ranging from implementing specific mitigation actions to changing aspects of day-to-day organizational operations. To ensure success, the plan must remain a relevant, living document through routine maintenance.