



June 15, 2020

For Immediate Release:

Kent County is embarking on the update of our Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). This plan is required by FEMA, and is usually updated every 5 years. HMP's are prepared and adopted by counties and/or communities with the primary purpose of identifying, assessing, and reducing the long-term risk to life and property from hazard events. Effective mitigation planning can break the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. Hazard mitigation plans can address a range of natural and human-caused hazards.

Hazard Mitigation Plans typically include a THIRA plus a plan that addresses four key elements:

- 1) a risk assessment,
- 2) capability assessment,
- 3) mitigation strategy, and
- 4) plan maintenance procedures.

A **THIRA** is a local Threat and Risk Identification and Risk Assessment. The development of our THIRA will help us to identify the top 10 hazards in our County. These may include natural and man-made events, and may include hurricanes, tornados, flooding, pandemics, active assailant events, sea level changes, nuclear events, among others. Once the THIRA has been developed, the HMP will focus on addressing our County's mitigation strategies. These strategies will address the vulnerabilities and include a comprehensive range of mitigation measures to reduce our risks

The plan will be developed by a team of local stakeholders and the final version will need to be approved by FEMA and adopted by our Commissioners. The public is invited to be part of this process by becoming stakeholders in our process. We have created a web site that addresses the process of the HMP update.

How can you help? You can view the web site by visiting <https://www.kentcounty.com/kenthmp2020>. Click on the tab entitled "Engage in the Planning Process." On it, you will find a link to a public survey. We invite you to take the survey and submit your results to us so that we have your input on the risks to our County. We will also be holding virtual meetings for our stakeholders to participate in a live fashion as we move forward with our plan's formation. The dates and times of future meetings will be listed on this web site. We welcome and encourage public participation in this process and hope you will join us. Any questions may be directed to Wayne Darrell or Ginger Gregg in the Office of Emergency Services. You may reach us at 443.282.6480 or vgregg@kentgov.org

#####