



Cook County Multi-Jurisdictional All Hazards Mitigation Plan

Information Bulletin #8

Mitigation Actions

Mission Statement

Identify risks and sustainable cost-effective actions to mitigate the impact of natural hazards in order to protect the life, health, safety, welfare, and economy of the communities of Cook County.

What Is a Mitigation Action Plan?

Federal regulations require hazard mitigation plans to include a mitigation action plan. The action plan serves as a long-term blueprint for reducing potential losses or risks from natural disasters such as floods, tornadoes, and earthquakes. It includes goals and objectives (which are described in Information Bulletin 6), along with specific mitigation actions that can be implemented to help fulfill those goals and objectives.

All jurisdictions participating in the Cook County Hazard Mitigation Plan (the Planning Partners) must have their own mitigation action plans. The action plans must identify, analyze, and prioritize a comprehensive range of mitigation actions to reduce the impacts of each natural hazard, particularly on buildings and infrastructure (such as roads and bridges). The action plans are called jurisdictional annexes and will be included in the Cook County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

What Is a Mitigation Action?

Mitigation is defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as “sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to life and property.”

Mitigation actions are specific steps that can be taken by individuals, businesses, organizations, or governments. Each mitigation action can reduce risk from one or more natural hazards. Some mitigation actions may apply to more than one Planning Partner, but each Planning Partner must list the mitigation actions that apply to it in its own action plan. Cook County will also have an action plan that will include mitigation actions to be implemented county-wide or in the unincorporated areas of the county.

Although many actions can make use of currently available tools or mechanisms, such as existing capital improvement plans, Planning Partners should also consider actions that are not currently feasible but that may become feasible at a later date. They should be creative and seek new and innovative actions to reduce risk.

Mitigation actions can include a wide range of potential activities: planning, zoning, installing floodplain protection, purchasing flood-prone properties, or conducting public outreach.

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Categories of Mitigation Actions

Each action plan must provide a comprehensive range of mitigation actions. Potential mitigation actions can be grouped into five general categories:

Prevention—Government administrative or regulatory actions that influence how buildings and land are developed and built; examples include planning and zoning, building codes, capital improvement projects, open space preservation and stormwater management.

Property Protection—Actions that modify existing buildings or infrastructure; examples include acquisition, elevation, relocation, flood-proofing or storm shutters.

Public Education and Awareness—Actions that inform citizens, elected officials and property owners about risks and ways to mitigate them; examples include outreach projects, real estate disclosure and education programs.

Natural Resource Protection—Actions that preserve or restore the functions of natural systems; examples include sediment and erosion control, stream corridor restoration, watershed management and wetland protection.

Structural Projects—Actions that involve the construction of structures to reduce the impact of a hazard; examples include flood walls, retaining walls, stormwater controls and safe rooms.

Analyzing and Prioritizing Mitigation Actions

Federal regulations require that each Planning Partner analyze and prioritize mitigation actions for each hazard. Analysis of each potential action will determine its feasibility. Using criteria such as those below will help Planning Partners weigh the pros and cons of each action.

Social—Does the public support the overall mitigation strategy and specific mitigation actions?

Technical—Is the action technically feasible and will it reduce losses in the long term?

Administrative—Does the Planning Partner have the administrative capabilities to complete the action or will outside assistance be required?

Political—Is there political support at the local, regional, or state level to undertake the mitigation action?

Legal—Does the Planning Partner have the legal authority to take the desired action?

Economic—Does the Planning Partner have the financial capability to undertake the action? Is there a grant program available to support the action?

Environmental—Is the action environmentally sustainable? Will the action meet statutory requirements, such as the National Environmental Protection Act?

For more information visit our website:
www.cookcountyhomesecurity.org/hazard-mitigation-plan

For more information about this process and the plan, please contact:

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