

Stanislaus County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2021

Background

Stanislaus County in collaboration with the cities of Ceres, Hughson, Modesto, Newman, Oakdale, Patterson, Riverbank, Turlock, Waterford, and the County Office of Education is updating their 2017 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP). This planning process involves the development of community mitigation strategies designed to reduce risks and vulnerabilities posed by natural, man-made, and human-health hazards. The plan must be updated and approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) every five years to keep it current and to maintain eligibility for federal and state mitigation grant assistance. The plan is currently being updated as a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan (MJHMP) and under the guidance of a Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee (HMPC).



What is Hazard Mitigation?

The term “hazard mitigation” describes actions that can help reduce or eliminate long-term risks caused by hazards, such as floods, wildfires, and earthquakes. Hazard mitigation is best accomplished when based on a comprehensive, long-term plan that is developed before a disaster strikes.

As the costs of disaster and hazard impacts continue to rise, governments and citizens must find ways to reduce hazard risks to our communities. Oftentimes after disasters, repairs and reconstruction are completed in such a way as to simply restore damaged property to pre-disaster conditions. These efforts may “get things back to normal,” but the replication of pre-disaster conditions results in a repetitive cycle of damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage.

Hazard mitigation breaks this cycle by producing less vulnerable conditions through pre- and post- disaster actions, projects, and resilient reconstruction. The implementation of hazard mitigation actions by local governments means building stronger, safer, and smarter communities that will be able to withstand future impacts and damages.



Project Benefits

Mitigation is an investment in a community’s future safety, sustainability, and resiliency. Recent cost-benefit studies have proven mitigation to be cost effective for communities, with mitigation projects returning \$6 for every \$1 spent. Mitigation planning helps communities take action now, before a disaster, and to reduce impacts when a disaster occurs.

Hazard mitigation planning allows residents, business owners, elected officials, and municipalities to think through how to plan, design, build, and establish partnerships for risk reduction. Hazard mitigation can also benefit a community by:

- Protecting public safety and preventing loss of life and injury.
- Reducing harm to existing and future development.
- Maintaining community continuity and strengthening the social connections that are essential for recovery.
- Preventing damage to the community’s unique economic, cultural, and environmental assets.
- Minimizing operational downtime and accelerating recovery after disasters.
- Reducing the costs of disaster response and recovery and the exposure to risk.
- Implementing capital improvements, infrastructure protection, open space preservation, and supporting economic resiliency.

Additionally, the County, the nine participating municipalities, and the Board of Education will benefit from this planning project by:

- Ensuring continued eligibility for FEMA hazard mitigation funds.
- Increasing public awareness on community vulnerabilities and supporting actions that reduce losses from future disasters.
- Ensuring policies, programs, and goals are compatible with reducing vulnerability to all hazards.
- Building partnerships with diverse stakeholders and increasing opportunities to leverage data and resources.
- Expanding the understanding of potential risk reduction measures to include local plans and regulations; structure and infrastructure projects; natural systems protection; education and awareness programs; and other tools.
- Informing the development, prioritization, and implementation of mitigation projects.



The Plan Update Process

Stanislaus County is following a 4-phase and 9-step planning process to update and develop a MJHMP during 2021, following FEMA guidance with consultant assistance.

How to Get Involved:

Residents, organizations, interested stakeholders and businesses are encouraged to contribute to the planning process. The HMPC regards broad public participation in the planning process as an essential strategy for developing an updated and multi-jurisdictional plan that will be effective, supported by County residents, and ultimately implemented. One way to get involved is to take a short public survey designed to gather input on hazards and their mitigation.

Take the Public Survey! The survey will be open until October 1, 2021.

<https://forms.office.com/r/nNdzTUej2>

Stanislaus County will host two virtual public outreach workshops on the planning update process in the upcoming months. The first workshop is tentatively scheduled for September or October 2021. The updated plan is anticipated to be ready for public review and comment by in 2022. The second workshop will be scheduled during this public review period.

For More Information Contact:

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