

PLANNING PROCESS

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Plan Preparation and Development

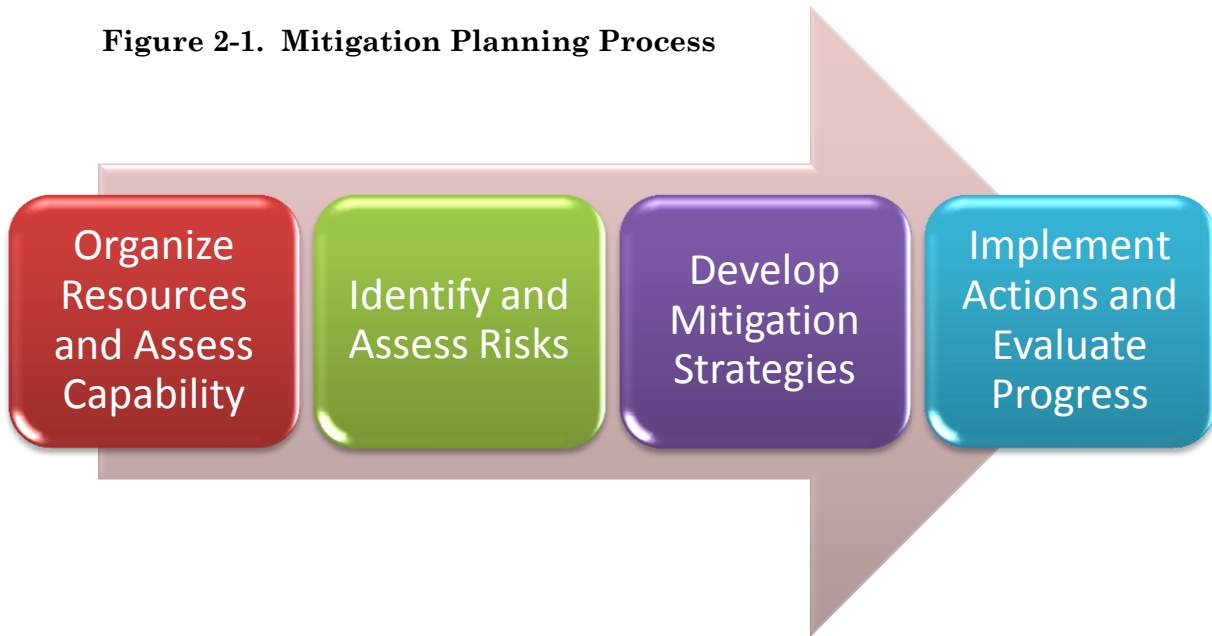
Mitigation planning involves bringing together multiple components and players to create more disaster-resistant communities. This section provides an overview of the planning process, highlighting key steps as well as providing a detailed description of how stakeholders and the public were involved.

Overview of the Plan Update

Concho Valley Council of Governments (CVCOG) received funding under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) to develop a FEMA-approved Hazard Mitigation Plan Update. CVCOG solicited bids and hired the consultant team of H2O Partners, Inc. to

provide technical support and oversee the development of the Plan Update. In developing the Plan, the consultants used the July 2008 “*Local Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning Guidance*” and the *State and Local Mitigation Planning How-to Guides* (FEMA Publication Series 386) to create the Plan Update in accordance with the process as shown in Figure 2-1 below.

Figure 2-1. Mitigation Planning Process



CVCOG and the consultant team met early October 2010 to begin organizing resources by identifying Planning Team Members and conducting a capability assessment.

Planning Team

The planning team was developed using an Advisory Committee comprised of CVCOG staff including the Homeland Security Planner and Economic Development District Representative. The Advisory Committee was then supported by one or more representatives from each participating county or community in the Plan Update. Stakeholders and the public were also included in the planning process as described in Appendix B. The entire planning team consisted of participating stakeholders, CVCOG staff and project team members of H2O Partners.

Review of the 2005 Plan

In accordance with 44 CFR §201.6(d)(3), the Advisory Committee and the consultant team met in early October 2010 to review the 2005 Plan.

Each section from the 2005 Plan was reviewed and analyzed, and it was decided the entire 2005 Plan would be revised and re-developed for the plan update process. The Committee

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decided to use the most current information in updating the demographics and profile section.

Upon review of the introductory and overview sections of the risk assessment, the Committee decided to eliminate the terrorism hazard that was considered in the 2005 Plan as this hazard is not required by FEMA to be addressed. In addition, many of the human-caused or technological hazards are included in various emergency plans and are not eligible for funding assistance under FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) funding programs. For the hazards that remained from the 2005 Plan, occurrence and probability data were updated. Critical facilities, building counts and losses were also updated to reflect changes over the past five years. The overall goals and objectives of the 2005 Plan were reviewed and it was determined that the objectives and goals needed to be updated in the Plan Update as reflected in Section 15. Plan maintenance procedures were also reviewed and updated to reflect current changes in staff and annual/bi-annual meetings.

In addition to the initial review by the Advisory Committee, all of the participating jurisdictions reviewed the mitigation strategies developed in the 2005 Plan and any amendments thereto and provided an analysis as to whether each action is ongoing, has been completed or should be deleted from the Plan Update.

The following factors were taken into consideration when reviewing the 2005 Plan:

- Whether the goals address current and expected conditions;
- Whether the nature/magnitude of risks have changed;
- Whether there are current resources appropriate for implementing the Plan;
- Whether implementation problems, such as technical, political, legal or coordination issues hinder development;
- Whether outcomes have occurred as expected; and
- How communities, agencies and partners participated in the implementation process.

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The process used to prepare this Plan Update included following the four major steps included in Figure 2-1. After the Planning Team was organized, a capability assessment was developed and distributed at the Kick-Off Workshop. Hazards were identified and assessed, the result of which was provided at the Risk Assessment Workshop. Based on the CVCOG Region's vulnerabilities, specific mitigation strategies were discussed and created at the Mitigation Workshop. Finally plan maintenance and implementation procedures were developed and are included with this Plan at Section 18. Documentation for participation at each workshop is found in Appendix E.

Kickoff Workshop

The Kickoff Workshop was held in the region on October 20, 2010. The meeting was conducted at the Concho County Emergency Operations Center. The initial meeting was an opportunity to inform city and county officials and key department personnel about how the planning process pertained to their distinct roles and responsibilities, and also to involve stakeholder groups, such as school districts and area businesses. In addition to the kickoff presentation, participants received the following information:

- Background paperwork about the Plan Update;
- Public Survey access information; and
- Capability assessment survey for completion.

Hazard Identification

At the close of the Kickoff Meeting, and through a series of email and phone correspondences, the Planning Team confirmed hazards identification by the Advisory Committee for inclusion in the Plan Update. The group reviewed and considered a full range of natural and man-caused hazards for inclusion then narrowed the list to significant hazards by reviewing hazards affecting the area as a whole, the State of Texas Hazard Mitigation Plan, and initial study results from reputable sources such as federal and state agencies. Based on this initial analysis, the team identified a total of 10 natural hazards and 2 human-caused hazards that could affect the area.

Risk Assessment

An initial risk assessment for the CVCOG Region was completed in April 2011 and results presented to Plan participants and stakeholders at a workshop on April 20, 2011. The stakeholder meeting was held at the CVCOG Regional Training Center in San Angelo, and followed by a public meeting at 6:30 p.m. At the stakeholder workshop, the characteristics and consequences of each hazard were evaluated to determine how much of the area would be affected, in terms of potential danger to property and citizens.

Potential dollar losses from each hazard were estimated using the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Hazards U.S. Multi-Hazards (MH) Model (HAZUS-MH) and other HAZUS-like modeling techniques. The assessments examined the impact of various hazards on the built environment, including on general building stock (e.g., residential, commercial, industrial), critical facilities, lifelines, and infrastructure. The resulting risk assessment profiled hazard events, provided information on previous occurrences, estimated probability of future events, and detailed the spatial extent and magnitude of impact on people and property. Each participant was also given a risk ranking sheet at the Risk Assessment Workshops in order to reflect unique and varied risks among the planning

area. Participants ranked hazards in terms of the probability or frequency of occurrence, extent of spatial impact, and the magnitude of impact.

The assessments were also used to set priorities for mitigation based on potential dollar losses and loss of lives. A hazard profile and vulnerability analysis for each of the hazards can be found in Sections 5 through 14 in this Plan Update.

Mitigation Review and Development

The mitigation strategy development for the Plan Update involved developing mitigation goals and developing new mitigation actions, in addition to evaluating and revising the mitigation strategies included in the 2005 Plan. A Mitigation Workshop was held on April 20, 2011 at the CVCOG Regional Training Center in San Angelo. The Mitigation Workshop was followed by a public meeting at 6:30 p.m. As with the Risk Assessment Workshop, stakeholder groups were invited.

An inclusive and structured process was used to develop and prioritize new mitigation actions for this Plan, including the following steps:

- A “menu” of optional mitigation actions was developed based on plan reviews, studies, and interviews with federal, state and local officials. The participants reviewed the optional mitigation actions, and narrowed the list down to those that were most applicable to their area of responsibility, most cost-effective in reducing risk, could be implemented easily, and would be most likely to receive institutional and community support.
- The participants inventoried federal and state funding sources that could potentially assist in implementing the proposed mitigation actions. Information was collected, including the program name authority, purpose of the program, types of assistance and eligible projects, conditions on funding, types of hazards covered, matching requirements, application deadlines, and a point of contact. Mitigation Planning Team Members considered benefits that would result from the mitigation actions versus the cost of those projects. Detailed cost-benefit analyses were beyond the scope of this plan. However, economic evaluation was one factor that helped Team Members select one mitigation action from competing actions.
- Team Members then selected and prioritized mitigation actions.

The prioritization method was based on FEMA’s STAPLE+E criteria and included social, technical, administrative, political, legal, economic and environmental considerations. As a result of this exercise, an overall priority was assigned to each mitigation action by each Team Member. The overall priority of each action is reflected in the mitigation actions found in Section 17.

Team Members developed action plans identifying proposed actions, costs and benefits, the responsible organization(s), effects on new and existing buildings, implementation schedules, priorities, and potential funding sources.

Mitigation actions identified in the process were made available to the Planning Team for review. In addition, the Plan Update will be made available for review and comment on CVCOG's website.

Review and Incorporation of Existing Plans

Review

A variety of existing studies, plans, reports, and technical information were reviewed as part of the planning process. Sources of the information included FEMA, the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the U.S. Fire Administration, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB), the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), the State Comptroller, the Texas State Data Center, Texas Forest Service, the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), local hazard assessments and plans, including those identified in the 2006 Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Section 4 and the hazard-specific sections of the Plan Update (Sections 5-14) summarize the findings from these information sources. Some of these documents, including those from FEMA, provided information on risk, existing mitigation actions currently underway, previous actions identified in the 2005 HMAP, and ideas for possible future mitigation actions. Other documents, including those from NOAA, provided histories of disasters in the area. The USACE studies were reviewed for their assessment of risk and potential projects in the region. State Data Center documents were used to obtain population projections. Materials from FEMA and TDEM were reviewed for guidance on plan development requirements. Communities included actions from other plans, such as Floodplain Management Plans and developed actions to implement and incorporate other plans such as Storm Water Management Plans and Wildfire Management Plans.

Incorporation of Existing Plans

Current projects and studies were utilized as a starting point for discussing mitigation actions among Team Members. This information was also developed into a table for review by the Planning Team for an assessment on the CVCOG Region's capability. Previous hazard events, occurrences and descriptions were identified through NOAA's National Climatic Data Center (NCDC). Results of past hazard events were found through searching the NCDC and included in Section 4 of this Plan Update. The preliminary results were also presented at the Risk Assessment Workshop held April 20, 2011 in order to facilitate a

discussion on risk to help participants appropriately rank hazards for their jurisdiction. The Water Development Board studies were reviewed for population and other projections and included in Section 3 of the Plan Update. Further, these studies were used as a starting point for suggesting grant and mitigation activities based on flood-related funding availability. The State Comptroller materials were reviewed for regional economic projections, which were also used to fully develop Section 3 of the Plan Update. Information from the Texas Forest Service was used to appropriately rank the wildfire hazard, and to help identify potential grant opportunities. The State of Texas Mitigation Plan, developed by TDEM, was discussed in the initial planning meeting in order to develop a specific group of hazards to address in the planning effort. The State Plan was also used as a guidance document, along with FEMA materials, in the development of the Plan Update.

Public and Stakeholder Involvement

An important component of mitigation planning is public participation and stakeholder involvement. Input from individual citizens and the community as a whole, provides the Planning Team with a greater understanding of local concerns and increases the likelihood of successfully implemented mitigation actions. If citizens and stakeholders, such as local businesses, non-profits, hospitals and schools, are involved, they are more likely to gain a greater appreciation of the hazards present in their community and take steps to reduce their impact.

Public Participation

Public involvement in the development of CVCOG Hazard Mitigation Plan Update was sought at three separate periods of the planning process: (1) during the beginning of the planning process; (2) during the hazard identification stage of the Plan Update; and (3) during mitigation development but prior to official plan approval and adoption. Public input was sought using three methods: (1) open public meetings; (2) survey instruments; and (3) making copies of draft Plan Update deliverables available for public review on the CVCOG website, as well as in government offices and public libraries. Two separate public meetings were held during the development of this Plan Update, as described below.

First Series of Public Meetings

Following the Kickoff workshop for stakeholders, area businesses, and schools on October 20, 2010, a public survey was posted to the CVCOG website to provide background on the Plan Update and garner input from the public. The first series of open public meetings was held on April 20, 2011 at the CVCOG office in San Angelo. This meeting was scheduled on the same day as the Risk Assessment Workshop. The meeting was scheduled to further seek public and stakeholder input. Topics of discussion for this first meeting included the

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purpose of hazard mitigation, discussion of the planning process, and types of hazards, both natural and man-caused.

Second Series of Public Meetings

The second series of open public meetings was held on July 27, 2011 at the CVCOG office in San Angelo, TX. This meeting was scheduled in the evening following the Mitigation Workshop meeting for Planning Team Members, and was specifically for seeking public and stakeholder input. The meeting was advertised through a variety of means, including a newspaper ad, flyers at meeting locations, notices on the CVCOG's website, and invitations sent via e-mail to community members.

Members of the general public did attend each of the public meetings. Representatives from area civic organizations were present, and other interested citizens. The purpose of the plan and the planning process was described as a whole. Lengthy discussion regarding hazards facing the region ensued. A key topic during the public meetings was long-term drought and wildfire. Public surveys were distributed and attendees were asked to sign in so that they could be invited to future public meetings.

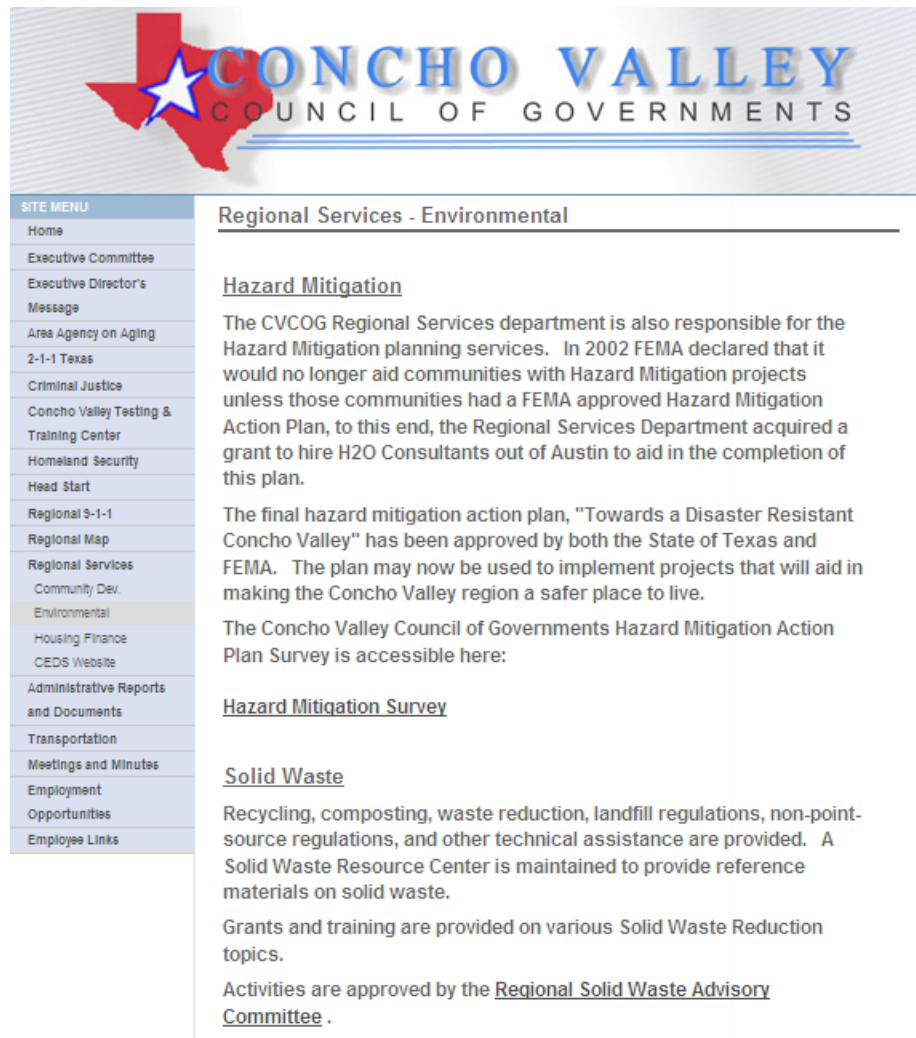
Documentation of participation in meetings is found in Appendix E.

Public Participation Survey

In addition to the open public meetings, CVCOG was able to solicit input from citizens and stakeholders through the use of a public participation survey. This survey was designed to obtain data and information from the residents of the CVCOG Region. Planning Team member communities distributed surveys at public forums and posted the survey on their community website.

Copies of the Participation Survey were distributed by local officials and at public meetings. A total of 72 responses to the survey were submitted, which provided valuable input in the development of the Plan Update. A summary of the survey findings is provided in Appendix C.

Figure 2-2. Screen Shot of CVCOG’s Online Public Survey



Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholders provide an essential service in hazard mitigation planning; therefore, throughout the planning process, members of state and federal agencies, community groups, local businesses, schools and hospitals were invited to workshops held throughout the planning process. Numerous local businesses were invited to participate in the Hazard Mitigation Planning Process. A partial list of organizations invited to attend may be found in Figure 2-3.

Figure 2-3. List of Stakeholders Invited to Attend HMAP Meetings

