Osceola County
Hazard Mitigation Plan

Framework

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Executive Summary

In Osceola County, it is recognized that disasters can cause loss of life; damage buildings and infrastructure; and have devastating consequences for the community's economic, social, and environmental well-being. It is also acknowledged that hazard mitigation reduces disaster damages and is defined as sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from hazards.

As the local government, Osceola County and its comprising jurisdictions have the responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens. This mitigation plan is an investment in the community's future safety and sustainability. The critical importance of this mitigation plan is to:

- Protect public safety and prevent loss of life and injury.

- Reduce harm to existing and future development.

- Prevent damage to the community's unique economic, cultural, and environmental assets.

- Minimize operational downtime and accelerate recovery of government and business after disasters.

- Reduce the costs of disaster response and recovery and the exposure to risk for first responders.

- Help accomplish other community objectives, such as leveraging capital improvements, infrastructure protection, open space preservation, and economic resiliency.

It is the goal of this proactive mitigation plan to help reduce risk and create a safer, more disaster resilient community.

This Hazard Mitigation Plan was developed in coordination with the townships, cities, and villages that comprise Osceola County and included involvement from numerous community stakeholders and officials as well as the public. A draft version of this updated plan was made available for public review at all related board and commission meetings, libraries, public safety facilities and other locations as well as posted online to provide opportunities for additional feedback to be submitted by citizens, area businesses, other stakeholders, non-profit organizations, regional and academic institutions, and neighboring communities.

Hazards were selected for inclusion in this plan, based upon records of historical occurrence, known risks, and guidance provided by the Federal Emergency

Management Agency and by the Michigan State Police - Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division.

As a multi-jurisdictional plan representing multiple agencies and jurisdictions, shared agreement exists about the need to mitigate the top-priority hazards throughout the planning area.

The Hazard Mitigation Planning Team will evaluate changing conditions and input from interested parties, then suggest changes to the existing plan. This strategy allows the existing edition of the plan to be used as a benchmark which may be modified in the future by simple editing. As plan proposals are developed, they will be made available to the public and other interested parties through meetings, public announcements and web site postings. Once an updated proposed plan is developed, local jurisdictions will consider adopting the plan through resolution as long as they choose to participate in the regional hazard mitigation plan.

All jurisdiction involved in the planning process are considered to be covered by, and participants in, this multi-jurisdictional plan. Their adoption of the finalized plan is the final demonstration of their participation and commitment to hazard mitigation.

Implementation of this action plan, pending funding where required, will be led by the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team (and where appropriate will include the relevant representatives of other involved agencies and communities). Project implementation will be timely and efficient once the necessary funding is obtained. Acquisition of flood-prone properties would be coordinated through appropriate local governments, as specified in existing FEMA mitigation requirements. Deployment of warning systems would be coordinated through the local emergency management directors, with the cooperation of local jurisdictions.

Installation of these systems would be contracted to a vendor, with a timeline negotiated to provide prompt improvement of the warning infrastructure. Study of communication infrastructure reliability would be coordinated by the Emergency Management Department. Specific responsibilities and timelines would be arranged according to "request for proposal" documents, to be developed if funding becomes available. A formal cost-benefit analysis would be performed at approximately that time in the process.

This document will be reviewed and revised by the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team annually and updated every five years per FEMA guidance.

Local jurisdictions, by agreeing to adopt this regional hazard mitigation plan, will cooperate in the maintenance of this plan according to FEMA guidance. Local jurisdictions will also provide sufficient resources in order to maintain this plan in order

to meet FEMA guidance as long as they choose to participate in the regional hazard mitigation plan. The EMDs, as part of their job responsibilities, will take action appropriate to the needs of the public, based on this plan and any deficiencies which may be identified.

The HMP will remain available on the Emergency Management Department website. Input will be directed to the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team. The Planning Team shall periodically solicit public input, using their respective website links and other public announcements with an invitation for public input regarding HMP evaluation and update. Based on their assessment of the response, the Planning Team may also hold public meetings for the purpose of public input to the HMP. The Planning Team will not only target the general public, but members of business, academia, special interest groups, and others who may offer valuable input. The Planning Team will evaluate changing conditions and input from interested entities, then suggest changes to the existing plan.

This strategy allows the previous edition of the plan to be used as a benchmark which may be modified in the future by simple editing.

Future projects may be identified by local jurisdictions and integrated into the plan. Projects may be submitted to the Planning Team for inclusion in the updated plan. The Planning Team will monitor project submissions, and biannually review and rank prospective submissions to the plan. The Planning Team will make local jurisdictions and planning committees aware of updates. As future plan proposals are developed they will be made available to the public and other interested parties through meetings, public announcements or web site postings. Once an updated plan is developed, local jurisdictions will consider adopting the plan through resolution as long as they choose to participate in the regional hazard mitigation plan.

Upon approval, copies of this plan will be distributed by the Planning Team to each participating township, city, and village. Jurisdictions agreeing to participate in the use of this HMP through local resolution will be responsible for consideration of this HMP in existing planning and development mechanisms.

Plan Structure

Framework
Part 1 - Community Profile
    Planning Area
    Community Profile
Part 2 - Hazard Analysis
    Hazard Identification
    Extended Hazard Profiles
    Hazard Analysis Summary
Part 3 - Mitigation Strategy
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    Mitigation Actions
    Prioritized Mitigation Actions
Part 4 – Plan Development and Maintenance
    Planning Process
    Incorporated Plans & Sources
    Jurisdictions
    Planning Team
    Public Involvement
    Plan Implementation
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Forms
    Mitigation Action Proposal Form
    Mitigation Action Scoring Form
Appendices
    Supplemental Documentation of the Planning Process

Planning Process & Involvement

This mitigation plan belongs to the local communities and was developed with the following guiding principles in mind:

- **The focus is the mitigation strategy.** The mitigation strategy is the plan's primary purpose. All other sections contribute to and inform the mitigation strategy and specific hazard mitigation actions.

- **The process is as important as the plan itself.** In mitigation planning, as with most other planning efforts, the plan is only as good as the process and people involved in its development. The plan serves as the written record, or documentation, of the planning process.

- **This plan belongs to the communities who help develop it.** The plan represents the current needs and values of the communities and was developed with usefulness to stakeholders in mind. The mitigation plan was developed in a way that best serves the communities' purposes and people.

The development and implementation of an effective Hazard Mitigation Plan requires participation and input from the entire community. The Planning Lead coordinates the planning process and provides administrative support. The Planning Team, in coordination with community stakeholders and the public develop the Hazard Mitigation Plan and implement the mitigation strategies.

This Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) is the result of a multi-jurisdictional effort within the county. Local governments participated by reviewing and supplying information about area hazards, concerns and priorities, current prevention measures, and planned mitigation projects.

Planning Lead
The Osceola County Emergency Management Department (OCEMD) is the coordinating entity for all emergency management activities and therefore assumes the role of planning lead for the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The Planning Lead responsibilities include facilitating the mitigation planning process coordinating Planning Team involvement, and providing administrative support.

Planning Team

The Hazard Mitigation Planning Team is a core group within the Local Emergency Planning Team/Committee (LEPT/C) responsible for making decisions, guiding the planning process, and reviewing the final plan. The LEPT/C representatives include:

- Osceola County Board of Commissioners
- Osceola County Townships Association
- Osceola County Coordinator's Office
- Meceola Central Dispatch
- Osceola County Public Information Officer
- Osceola County Equalization Department
- Osceola County Economic Alliance & Planning Commission
- Osceola County Road Commission
- Osceola County Sheriff's Office
- Osceola County Fire Chiefs' Association
- Osceola County Emergency Medical Service
- Spectrum Health Reed City
- Central Michigan District Health Department
- American Red Cross, Mecosta/Osceola Chapter
- Department of Human Services
- Osceola County Commission on Aging
- Mecosta/Osceola Intermediate School District

Planning Team responsibilities include:
- Providing facilities and resources for meetings
- Participating in meetings
- Collecting and sharing information and data
- Making decisions about the plan process and content
- Reviewing plan and project proposal drafts
- Coordinating and assisting in stakeholder and public involvement and plan adoptions

Stakeholders

The community stakeholders are individuals or entities that affect or may be affected by any component of the Mitigation Plan and are therefore represented and informed by members of the Planning Team.

Stakeholder responsibilities include:
- Collecting and sharing information and data as requested
- Providing technical assistance as requested

The Mitigation Planning Team coordinates with the following stakeholders:
- Osceola County Emergency Management Department
  - Neighboring Emergency Management Departments
  - Michigan State Police - Emergency Management Homeland Security Department, Region 6 District Coordinator
  - Michigan State Police - Emergency Management Homeland Security Department, State Hazard Mitigation Officer
- Osceola County Board of Commissioners
  - Local jurisdiction governing bodies
- Osceola County Townships Association
  - Township governments
- Osceola County Coordinator's Office
  - Osceola County Building Department
- Meceola Central Dispatch
  - Neighboring dispatch centers
- Osceola County Public Information Officer
  - Local media
- Osceola County Equalization Department
- Osceola County Economic Alliance & Planning Commission
  - Local businesses and employers
  - Private, non-profits
- Osceola County Road Commission
  - Local public works departments
  - Michigan Department of Transportation
- Osceola County Sheriff's Office
  - Local police departments
  - Michigan State Police
  - Osceola County Animal Control
- Osceola County Fire Chiefs' Association
  - Fire Departments
- Osceola County Emergency Medical Service

- o Mutual Aid EMS services
- Spectrum Health Reed City
  - o Neighboring hospitals and medical centers
- Central Michigan District Health Department
- American Red Cross, Mecosta/Osceola Chapter
- Department of Human Services
- Osceola County Commission on Aging
- Mecosta/Osceola Intermediate School District
  - o Local schools

Public Involvement

Planning Team members and stakeholders reach out to organizations and sectors of the public for whom they are best suited to provide information. Information is made available for public review at all related board and commission meetings, libraries, public safety facilities and other locations as well as posted online to provide opportunities for additional feedback to be submitted by citizens, area businesses, other stakeholders, non-profit organizations, regional and academic institutions, and neighboring communities

The mitigation planning process occurs in six phases:

- *Planning Process Development* - identification of the planning area and establishment of the planning team and stakeholders, development of the project plan and schedule, community profile and outreach strategy
- *Community Capability Assessment* - identification of capabilities and resources currently available to the community to develop and implement the mitigation strategies
- *Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment* - identification of hazards with potential to impact the jurisdictions, followed by an assessment of risk and vulnerability and analysis of consequences
- *Mitigation Strategy Development and Implementation* - development of mitigation initiative prioritization criteria, review and scoring of proposed mitigation initiatives and implementation planning for accepted mitigation initiatives
- *Plan Maintenance* - development of policy for annual plan reviews to update newly proposed and ongoing mitigation initiatives and consider community input and development
- *Plan Review and Adoption* - five year plan reviews and updates by local jurisdictions prior to submission to the State and FEMA for review, followed by local plan adoption

A draft version of this updated plan was made available for public review and posted online to provide an opportunities for feedback to be submitted by citizens, area businesses, other stakeholders, non-profit organizations, regional and academic institutions, and neighboring communities.

Numerous public meetings were held to present the project and collect input. All of the meetings were open to the public, and attracted the participation of nonprofit groups, academia, business and government. Additionally, the plan was posted on the Osceola County Emergency Management Department website at http://www.osceolacountyemd.org where public input was invited and contact information was provided, for the sending of such input.

Plans such as the Osceola County Emergency Plan were reviewed, as were studies and technical information from local jurisdictions and other interested parties. Applicable information was considered and included in this plan. Hazard-Specific Annexes were considered and included in their respective hazard categories within this plan. Existing extremely hazardous site (EHS) plans were examined via the local emergency planning committee and considered during development of the hazardous materials sections of this plan. The local American Red Cross has a plan to shelter a large number of people in Osceola County. The local health department has flexible plans to immunize the entire population.

A number of hazards such as flooding are associated with specific geographical areas of impact. In assessing the risks associated with these hazards the Planning Team evaluated current building types, potential property damage and potential loss of life within these areas.

Each jurisdiction was asked to provide a point of contact (POC) to act as the jurisdiction's representative in the planning process and provide input, as appropriate, for each of the identified hazards. For each hazard, the POC was asked to describe current hazard prevention efforts, planned mitigation projects, and any other information pertaining to the hazard.

Plan Adoption and Updates

The following jurisdictions have adopted the Osceola County Hazard Mitigation Plan via resolution and its updates by board or council motion:

Jurisdiction	Date of Adoption	Date of Update	Date of Update	Date of Update	Date of Update
Osceola County					
Burdell Township					
Highland Township					
LeRoy Township					
Hartwick Township					
Lincoln Township					
Osceola Township					
Richmond Township					
Evart Township					
Sherman Township					
Marion Township					
Rose Lake Township					
Middle Branch Township					
Cedar Township					
Sylvan Township					
Hersey Township					
Orient Township					
City of Evart					
Reed City					
Village of Tustin					
Village of LeRoy					
Village of Marion					
Village of Hersey					