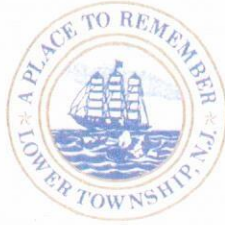


TOWNSHIP OF LOWER

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Floodplain Management 2023 Annual Progress Report September 27, 2023

1. Background

In January 2009, the Cape May County Multi-Jurisdictional All Hazards Mitigation plan was prepared in response to the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000). DMA 2000 requires states and local governments to prepare all hazard mitigation plans in order to remain eligible to receive pre-disaster mitigation funds that are annually appropriated or made available in the wake of federally declared disasters. This plan was updated in May 2016 by the County to include a jurisdictional annex for each municipality in the County. The Annex was put together by the Cape May County Office of Emergency Management and approved by the State of New Jersey OEM and FEMA Region II, which expires June 9, 2021.

On June 20, 2016, the Township of Lower adopted the "Cape May County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan," by Resolution #2016-192 and resolved to execute the actions identified in this plan. The Township agreed to utilize the Plan as an integral part of the Flood Prevention Ordinance and to review and implement additional strategies to reduce long-term risk and flood losses.

The Plan reviews a variety of measures that can help reduce property loss and protect citizens when flooding occurs. Measures include retrofitting and flood proofing structures located in hazard prone areas where appropriate, support purchase or relocation of structures in particular repetitive loss properties where appropriate, dune beach replenishment, continuous development, enhancement and implementation of existing and future emergency plans, building regulations and public information.

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2. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the initiatives identified in the Floodplain Management Plan for the Township of Lower. The goal of the plan is to ensure that there is regular and continuous progress in the mitigation planning and execution, so that the Township of Lower and its residents are well prepared for any future flooding events. The plan was prepared in accordance with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS) floodplain management planning requirements.

CRS is a voluntary program that encourages floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum requirements of the NFIP in exchange for flood insurance premium discounts for policy holders within participating communities. The Township is currently a member of the CRS program with a Class 7 rating. The class 7 rating indicates that flood insurance policy holders within special flood hazard areas receive a 15% discount on flood insurance premiums.

Under the CRS program, there are 15 activities that are recognized as measures that reduce or eliminate exposure to floods and flooding, with each of the 15 activities having assigned credit points. The activities fall under four categories: Public Information, Flood Damage Reduction, Mapping and Regulation and Flood Preparedness. Initiatives developed by the township fall under at least one of these categories.

3. Review of the Plan's Initiatives

TL-1a: Where appropriate, support retrofitting of structures located in hazard-prone areas to protect structures from future damage, with repetitive loss and sever repetitive loss properties as a priority. Identify facilities that are viable candidates for retrofitting based on cost-effectiveness versus relocation. Where retrofitting is determined to be a viable option, consider implementation of that action based on available funding.

Status: This initiative is long term and will continue for the foreseeable future. The Township currently provides information on flood-proofing existing buildings to our residents and mails out flood protection information each year. There is also additional flood hazard mitigation information on display located in the township's municipal building for residents to take home.

TL-1b: Where appropriate, support purchase, relocation of structures located in hazard-prone areas to

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protect structures from future damage, with repetitive loss and severe repetitive loss properties as priority. Identify facilities that are viable candidates for relocation based on cost-effectiveness versus retrofitting. Where relocation is determined to be a viable option, consider implementation of that action based on available funding.

Status: This is a continuing and long-term initiative that will be further studied. We continue to identify and locate structures that may fall in repetitive loss areas and are developing procedures on how respond efficiently and effectively in these situations. Since the last update, the township has purchased and raised a property located in a repetitive loss neighborhood which has saved the property from further damage.

TL-2 (CMC-2): Participation in the incentive-based program CRS.

Status: On November 1, 2015, the Township designated an ASFPM Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) as CRS Coordinator. On October 1, 2018, the Township gained entry into the CRS program as a Class 7 participating municipality. The CRS coordinator sends out annual mailers with flood protection information, conducts annual outreach programs, provides an in house map service to residents and maintains an inquiry log and a permit list of all new construction and substantial improvements and losses along with property certifications.

TL-3: Continue to support the implementation, monitoring, maintenance, and updating of this plan

Status: We have maintained contact with the County Office of Emergency Management and will forward a copy of this memo to them for inclusion into the County's updating plan. We will continue to work with the County to provide all information needed for the required five year update to this plan. Lower Township updated its Hazard Mitigation Plan in May of 2021 along with all of the municipalities in Cape May County. The Five Year Plan HMP will need to be updated again May of 2026.

TL-4: Strive to maintain compliance with, and good-standing, in the National Flood Insurance Program

Status: The Township continues to vigorously enforce our Flood Protection Ordinance and continues to examine higher regulatory measures seeking to increase safety and to improve our standing in the CRS program.

TL-5: Continue to develop, enhance, and implement existing emergency plans.

Status: This initiative is ongoing. The Township continually works to improve existing and future Emergency Plans. These plans are under constant review and updates are made as necessary. The Lower Township Office Of Emergency Management updated all of its Emergency Operations Plans (EOP'S) and Emergency Support Functions (ESF's) Numbers 1 through 15 on August 1st, 2023. The Township's Emergency Operation Plans must be updated again by February of 2025.

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TL-6: Create/enhance/maintain mutual aid agreements with neighboring communities.

Status: This initiative is ongoing. At this time the Township continues to maintain all mutual aid agreements with local, county and state government.

TL-7: Support County-wide initiatives identified in Section 9.1 of the County Annex. Support county-wide initiatives identified in the Cape May County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Status: This initiative is ongoing. The Township has supported County-wide mitigation initiatives over the course of the performance period of the plan and will continue to do so.

TL-8: Villas Section- Cloverdale Ave, Evergreen Ave ,Spruce Ave. Diamond Beach Section- Rochester Ave and Madison Ave.

Status: Drainage system and storm water management improvements - Analyze the existing water flow paths. Identify Road Areas of Flooding. Clean all debris from storm drains. Engineers Study to add additional inlets and underground outfall piping in these areas through a possible Small Cities Grant.

TL-9: Dune beach replenishment

Status: This initiative is ongoing. The Township continually maintains and replenishes dunes and beaches in order to mitigate coastal erosion whereas deemed necessary.

TL-10 (CMC-7): Support the replacement of three bridges and elevate 2.7 miles of County Route 621 in Lower Township.

Status: This initiative is ongoing and long term with the goal of reducing the vulnerability of critical transportation infrastructure to flooding.

TL-11 (CMC-8 and WCM-12): Elevate ~1.5 miles of CR-606 (Sunset Boulevard) through the South Cape May Meadows (Lower and West Cape May)

Status: Initiative is a long-term project with the goal of reducing the vulnerability of critical transportation infrastructure to flooding for it is a potential evacuation route. It is a lower priority project for the area is not as flood prone as many other areas.

TL-12 (CMC-17 and TM-22): Elevate CR-603 through Lower and Middle Townships through Fishing Creek Swamp

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Status: This is a long-term initiative with the goal of both townships, with the goal being to reduce the vulnerability of critical transportation infrastructure to flooding for it is a potential evacuation route.

TL-13 (CMC-44, 46, 49, 52): Continue to support County-led efforts to conduct an engineering study to understand flooding issues and evaluate possible solutions for: along Fishing Creek/Academy Road (CR 639), at low areas along Tabernacle Road (CR 647), along Shunpike Road (CR 644), and along Seashore Road (CR 626) in Lower Township.

Status: The County of Cape May OEM, partnered by Civil Solutions and the Cape May County Planning Department launched a Flood Risk Mapping Service. This GIS-based flood modeling program can be used by Township officials to track near real time water levels within streets and neighborhoods which are likely to be impacted during coastal storm events. This service has been advertised and can now be found on the Township's Official Website for both hazard mitigation officials and residents to utilize as well. Ongoing initiative.

TL-14: Continue to maintain elevation certificates.

Status: This is an ongoing initiative. The Construction office requires that all construction permits submit an elevation certificate for all new and substantially improved structures. These certificates are maintained in the Construction Office.

TL-15: Includes natural hazard risk reduction strategies in the Township open space acquisition strategy.

Status: This is an ongoing initiative with the goal of improving local capabilities to implement permanent risk reduction in high hazard areas.

TL-16: Maintain drainage systems at appropriate care level to keep drains cleared from debris to prevent flooding

Status: This is an ongoing initiative with the goal of improving localized flooding issues that may occur due to debris blockage or backup. This is a day to day activity, especially after a storm or flooding occurs.

TL-17: Keep all storm drains and facilities free from debris in order to prevent flooding.

Status: This is an ongoing initiative that relevant to that of TL-16, where the goal is improving flooding issues that may occur due to debris blockage or backup. This is a day to day activity, especially after a storm or flooding occurs.

TL-18: Create a new website for storm and flooding information, including shelter, flood insurance, map information, etc.

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Status: This initiative will re-vamp the current flood and storm related information on the Township website.

TL-19: Continue to enforce building codes to require building, renovations, and re-building so that all buildings meet the Uniform Construction Code

Status: This is an ongoing initiative within our Construction and Code Enforcement Office.

TL-20: Elevate and reconstruct roadways and drainage improvements to Wilson Drive and connecting roadways in the Schellengers Landing section of Lower Township ~.5 miles

Status: Initiative is a short term project with the goal of reducing the vulnerability of critical transportation infrastructure and property to flooding. **Several options are being considered by the Township's Engineers Office to help control Tidal flooding in this area.**

4. Summary

The Township has integrated and continues to enforce all of the recommendations in the Cape May County Hazard Mitigation Plan into the day-to-day local government operations in order to succeed in reducing long-term risk. The Township Office of Emergency Management, the Township CRS Coordinator and the Floodplain Administrator continues to review all the initiatives within the Hazard Mitigation Plan and finds that all initiatives should be continued and that possible new initiatives will be reviewed as well.

For credit under the Community Rating System, this report must be distributed to the local media and be made available to the public. Copies of the report will be available for review at the Township's Construction Office located at Township Hall 2600 Bay Shore Road. This report will also be posted on the Township's official website www.townshipoflower.org

Edward P. Donohue
Emergency Management Coordinator

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