



Orleans Parish, Louisiana – 2015 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update
Section 2 - Introduction

Section 2. Introduction

Contents of this Section

- 2.1 IFR Requirements for Plan Updates
- 2.2 Overview
- 2.3 Purpose of Plan
- 2.4 Organization of Plan
- 2.5 Plan Contact
- 2.6 Acronyms

2.1 Interim Final Rule (IFR) Requirements for Plan Updates

IFR §201.6(d)(3): A local jurisdiction must review and revise its plan to reflect changes in development, progress in local mitigation efforts, and changes in priorities, and resubmit it for approval within five (5) years in order to continue to be eligible for mitigation project grant funding.

2.2 Overview

New Orleans is one of the most important cities in the United States for historical, cultural, and economic contributions. It is also one of the most vulnerable cities to natural and man-made disasters. Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent levee system failure in 2005 and the 2010 BP oil spill are examples of recent catastrophes, but the city also faces ongoing risk from other hazards.

Hazard Mitigation is a vital piece of the City of New Orleans' resilience and emergency management/preparedness efforts. Hazard Mitigation is defined as the sustained action to reduce or avoid long-term risk to life and property from a hazard event in order to: 1) save lives and reduce property damage, 2) reduce the cost of disasters to property owners and all levels of government, 3) protect critical facilities and minimize community disruption.

Disaster Mitigation Act 2000 and Interim Final Rule (IFR)

To reinforce the importance of hazard mitigation planning the federal government amended the Stafford Act with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000), Public Law 106-390. The provisions of this law are governed by the FEMA regulations published under 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 201.6, as the Interim Final Rule. The February 26, 2002 Interim Final Rule was subsequently amended in October 2002, September 2004, October 2007, September 2009, April 2014, and most recently on December 19, 2014. The regulations require that a local government must have an approved plan that is updated every five years in order to apply for and/or receive grant funds for any of the hazard mitigation assistance programs.



Orleans Parish, Louisiana – 2015 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Section 2 - Introduction

These programs include funds from the 1) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), 2) Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM), and 3) Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA). Mitigation plans must demonstrate that mitigating actions were developed through a sound planning process that accounts for risk to and capabilities of the community.

Benefits of Mitigation Planning

Hazard mitigation plans help communities reduce their risk from hazards by identifying vulnerabilities and developing strategies to lessen and sometimes avoid the effects of the hazard. Benefits of mitigation planning include:

- Reducing risks to human life and property.
- Improving ability to recover after a disaster.
- Long-term strategy to reduce disaster losses and break the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage.
- Ensuring that resources are committed to reduce identified hazards.

2.3 Purpose of Plan

This hazard mitigation plan outlines New Orleans' strategy to reduce the effects of hazards on people and property. In accordance with the requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and the Interim Final Rule, this Plan examines all hazards that might affect New Orleans and focuses on those hazards that are most prevalent. It estimates the location and the extent of possible losses to life and property, identifies and prioritizes mitigation strategies, proposes ways of implementing these strategies, and establishes a method to monitor and maintain the plan. The purpose of the 2015 Plan is to review and update all sections of the 2010 Orleans Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Hazard mitigation planning is important to all communities. Every year, local governments and individuals across the U.S. must spend time, energy, and money to recover from natural and man-made disasters. The costs of disaster recovery are high and frequently state and federal aid is insufficient to cover the full extent of damages. Hazard mitigation planning can help reduce the risks from hazards, lowering the overall damage costs from disasters and hastening the response and recovery process.

With its location in southeastern Louisiana, New Orleans is vulnerable to many natural hazards (e.g., tropical cyclones and coastal erosion), as well as many man-made hazards (e.g., dam and levee failure and hazardous materials spills). The information in this plan provides a detailed picture of the risks that face New Orleans. Based on this information, mitigation strategies specifically tailored to New Orleans have been created. By implementing these strategies, New Orleans will improve its ability to cope with the hazards it faces.

The 2010 Orleans Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan was approved by GOHSEP and FEMA, and subsequently adopted by the New Orleans City Council in March 2010. The Orleans Parish 2015 Hazard Mitigation Plan



Orleans Parish, Louisiana – 2015 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Section 2 - Introduction

is an update to the 2010 Plan. The planning team for the 2015 Plan has reaffirmed and updated its 2010 Mission Statement as follows:

To promote, implement, and sustain mitigation measures in Orleans Parish in order to reduce and manage risks to human life, the environment, and property in order to protect New Orleans and the surrounding region from the effects of natural and manmade hazards while ensuring community continuity when such hazards do occur.

In addition to the Mission Statement, the planning team developed the following Foundational Principles as key to all the Goals and Actions in the 2015 Hazard Mitigation Plan:

1. Consider the principles of equity in risk reduction decisions, including land use, zoning, and the allocation of funds and resources;
2. Plan for future conditions, including development and climate change;
3. Plan for minimizing damage and maximizing disaster recovery; and
4. Treat risk reduction and hazard mitigation as part of an integrated system, with an emphasis on safety.

It is important to note that this hazard mitigation plan is not an emergency operations plan. The City of New Orleans Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan establishes the framework to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a wide variety of emergencies and disasters. Instead, the Hazard Mitigation Plan is dedicated to reducing risk and vulnerability to the human, built, and natural environment, including cultural resources, Parish infrastructure, critical facilities, and the surrounding ecosystems.

2.4 Organization of Plan

The organization of the Orleans Parish 2015 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update has been changed slightly from the 2010 Plan. The table at the end of this section provides a comparison between the 2010 and 2015 Plans to show how the sections have changed. The five (5) sections of the 2005 Plan were expanded into ten (10) sections in the 2010 Plan. The 2015 Plan retains this format.

Because the boundaries of the City of New Orleans and Orleans Parish are coterminous, the names "New Orleans," "City of New Orleans," and "Orleans Parish" are used interchangeably throughout the Plan.

Where appropriate, sections have been updated to reflect current conditions and new development, and also to review and summarize what has been accomplished between 2010 and 2015.

The 2015 Plan update is organized as follows:



Orleans Parish, Louisiana – 2015 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Section 2 - Introduction

Section I: Executive Summary

The Executive Summary provides highlights of the plan, including an overview of the planning process, identified hazards and risks, a summary of the mitigation strategy and implementation process, and a method to monitor and update the plan.

Section II: Introduction

The Introduction section provides an overview of the plan purpose and organization.

Section III: Plan Adoption

The Plan Adoption section identifies all requirements for approval of the plan by the City of New Orleans, Governor's Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP), and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Section IV: Community Profile

For context, the Community Profile section provides a brief illustration of the community of New Orleans. Descriptions of the geography and climate, the economy past and present, transportation, and the community's assets are included. Additionally, trends in population and land use are discussed.

Section V: Planning Process

The Planning Process section outlines the manner in which 2015 Plan Update was created. It identifies all participating parties, agencies, and organizations involved in the overall process. How the community was engaged and included in the process is also described in this section.

Section VI: Hazard Identification, Profiling, and Ranking

The Hazard Identification and Profile section includes an analysis of the hazards identified as a risk to the City of New Orleans and a detailed profile of each hazard.

Section VII: Vulnerability Assessment and Loss Estimation

The Risk Assessment section includes an assessment of risks associated with each hazard identified in the plan. This section provides a scientific and technical basis to guide the Mitigation Strategy.

Section VIII: Capability Assessment

The Capability Assessment section includes a review of the planning tools, as well as administrative, technical, and financial resources available to implement the plan. The assessment will include capabilities of the City of New Orleans, GOHSEP, and FEMA as they relate to supporting mitigation activities in the Plan.

Section IX: Mitigation Strategy

The Mitigation Strategy describes how the City of New Orleans intends to reduce losses identified in the Risk Assessment. It includes goals and objectives to guide the selection of actions to mitigate and reduce potential losses. The section contains a prioritized list of cost-effective, environmentally sound, and technically feasible mitigation actions. It identifies current and potential sources of funding and other resources needed to implement the mitigation actions.

Section X: Plan Maintenance



Orleans Parish, Louisiana – 2015 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update
Section 2 - Introduction

The Plan Maintenance section describes how New Orleans will monitor, evaluate, and update its mitigation plan. It establishes a process for review and a method for measuring progress. FEMA requires mitigation plan updates every five years.

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Orleans Parish, Louisiana – 2015 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update
Section 2 - Introduction

Changes in Plan Organization between 2010 Plan and 2015 Plan Update

Contents	2010 Plan	2015 Plan
Executive Summary	Section 1	
Introduction	Section 2	
Plan Adoption	Section 3	
Community Profile	Section 4	
Planning Process	Section 5	
Hazard Identification	Section 6	
Vulnerability (Risk) Assessment	Section 7	
Analysis of Future Development Trends	Section 4	
Capability Assessment	Section 8	
Mitigation Strategy	Section 9	
Mitigation Actions	Section 9	
Mitigation Implementation Plan	Section 9	
Plan Maintenance	Section 10	

2.5 Plan Contact

If you have any questions or comments on the Orleans Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan or require additional information, please contact:

Hazard Mitigation Office
City Hall Room 9E06
1300 Perdido Street
New Orleans, LA 70112
(504) 658-8740
Bradford W Case (bwcase@nola.gov)



Orleans Parish, Louisiana – 2015 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update
Section 2 - Introduction

2.6 Acronyms

Following is a list of acronyms used throughout the Plan Update.

ABFE	Advisory Base Flood Elevation
ASCE	American Society of Civil Engineers
BFE	Base Flood Elevation
CAEP	City Assisted Evacuation Plan
CEMP	Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CPRA	Coastal Protection & Restoration Authority
CRS	Community Rating System
CZO	Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance
DEQ	Department of Environmental Quality
DMA	Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FIS	Flood Insurance Study
FMA	Flood Mitigation Assistance
GOHSEP	Governor's Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness
HIRA	Hazard Identification & Risk Assessment
HMGP	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
HMP	Hazard Mitigation Plan
HPS	Hurricane Protection System
HSDRRS	Hurricane Storm Damage Risk Reduction System
IFR	Interim Final Rule
IHNC	Inner Harbor Navigation Canal
IW	Intercoastal Waterway
LACPR	Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration
LANOIA	Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport
LRA	Louisiana Recovery Authority



Orleans Parish, Louisiana – 2015 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update
Section 2 - Introduction

MAT	Mitigation Assessment Team
MRGO	Mississippi River Gulf Outlet
NCDC	National Climatic Data Center
NEPA	National Environmental Protection Act
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NHC	National Hurricane Center
NIST	National Institute of Standards and Technology
NOAA	National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
NOHSEP	New Orleans Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness
NWS	National Weather Service
PDM	Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program
RFC	Repetitive Flood Claims Program
RL	Repetitive Loss
SRL	Severe Repetitive Loss
STAPLEE	Social, Technical, Administration, Political, Legal, Economic, Environmental
TPC	Tropical Prediction Center
UNO-CHART	University of New Orleans Center Hazards Assessment Response Technology
UNOP	Unified New Orleans Plan
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers