

1 INTRODUCTION AND PLANNING PROCESS

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Maries County Hazard Mitigation Plan is to substantially and permanently reduce the county's vulnerability to natural hazards. This plan demonstrates the communities' commitment to reducing risks from hazards and serves as a tool to help decision makers direct mitigation activities and resources. The plan is intended to promote sound public policy designed to protect citizens, critical facilities, infrastructure, private property and the natural environment. This can be achieved by increasing public awareness, documenting resources for risk reduction and loss-prevention, and identifying activities to guide the community towards the development of a safer, more sustainable community.

The original plan was completed in 2006 with a revision and update completed in 2014.

In an effort to ensure the purpose of the Maries County Hazard Mitigation Plan is fulfilled, the participants in the development of this plan defined and established a list of goals which are directly relevant to meeting the purpose of the plan. The following is a list of the goals identified by the participants of this plan:

1. Reduce risks and vulnerabilities of people in hazard-prone areas through current technology, better planning and hazard mitigation activities.
2. Reduce the potential impact of natural disasters on new and existing properties and infrastructure and the local economy.
3. Promote education, outreach, research and development programs to improve the knowledge and awareness among the citizens and industry about hazards they may face, their vulnerability to identified hazards, and hazard mitigation alternatives that can reduce their vulnerabilities.
4. Strengthen communication and coordinate participation between public agencies, citizens, non-profit organizations, business, and industry to create a widespread interest in mitigation.
5. Establish priorities for reducing risks to the people and their property with emphasis on long-term and maximum benefits to the public rather than short-term benefit of special interests.
6. Secure resources for investment in hazard mitigation.

This plan was also developed to make Maries County and participating jurisdictions eligible for certain federal disaster assistance. Those programs include the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program and Flood Mitigation Assistance Program.

1.2 Background and Scope

Each year natural disasters take the lives of hundreds of people and injure thousands more in the United States alone. Nationwide, taxpayers pay billions of dollars annually to help communities, organizations, businesses and individuals recover from disasters. Taxpayer dollars only partially reflect the total cost of disasters. Insurance companies and non-governmental organizations that respond to disasters and/or assist with recovery also contribute enormous sums of money in the wake of natural disasters. Many of these events are predictable and loss of life and property damage could be reduced or eliminated with proper planning and preparation.

Hazard mitigation is defined by FEMA as “any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to human life and property from a hazard event.” The results of a three-year congressionally mandated independent study to assess future savings from mitigation activities provides evidence that mitigation activities are highly cost-effective. On average, each dollar spent on mitigation saves society an average of \$4 in avoided future losses in addition to saving lives and preventing injuries (National Institute of Building Science Multi-Hazard Mitigation Council, 2005).

Hazard mitigation planning is the process through which hazards that threaten communities are identified, likely impacts of those hazards are determined, mitigation goals are set and appropriate strategies to lessen impacts are determined, prioritized and implemented. This plan documents Maries County’s hazard mitigation planning process and identifies relevant hazards, vulnerabilities and strategies the County and participating jurisdictions will use to decrease vulnerability and increase resiliency and sustainability in Maries County.

This multi-jurisdictional plan complies with SEMA’s and FEMA’s planning guidance; FEMA regulations, rules, guidelines and checklists; the Code of Federal Regulations; and existing federal and state laws; and such other reasonable criterion as the President, Governor, federal and state congresses and SEMA and FEMA may establish in consultation with local governments while the plan is being developed. This plan also meets the minimum planning requirements for all FEMA mitigation programs, such as the Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Program, the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Program, the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), and where appropriate, other FEMA mitigation related programs such as the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP), the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and the Community Rating System (CRS).

The Maries County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan is a multi-jurisdictional plan that covers the participating jurisdictions within the County’s borders, including the following:

- Maries County
- City of Belle
- City of Vienna
- Maries County R-I School District
- Maries County R-II School District

Jurisdictions added in the 2014 revision:

- Maries County R-I School District
- Maries County R-II School District

Table 1.1 Continuing, New or Discontinued Jurisdictions Participating in the Plan

Jurisdiction name	Continuing Jurisdiction	New Jurisdiction	Discontinued Jurisdiction
Maries County	X		
City of Belle	X		
City of Vienna	X		
Maries County R-I Schools		X	
Maries County R-II Schools		X	

The information and guidance in this plan document will be used to help guide and coordinate mitigation activities and decisions for local jurisdictions and organizations. Proactive mitigation planning will help reduce the cost of disaster response and recover to local communities and residents by protecting critical infrastructure, reducing liability exposure and minimizing overall community impacts and disruptions. Maries County has been affected by natural disasters in the past and participating jurisdictions and organizations are committed to reducing the impacts of future incidents and becoming eligible for hazard mitigation-related funding opportunities.

1.3 Plan Organization

The Maries County Hazard Mitigation Plan has been prepared according to the requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, which emphasized the need for a more coordinated approach to mitigation planning and implementation. Furthermore, the plan has been developed and organized within the rules and regulations established under the 44 CFR 201.6, published in the *Federal Register* on February 26, 2002 and finalized on October 31, 2007. The regulations established the requirements that local hazard mitigation plans must meet in order to fulfill the eligibility requirements for local jurisdictions to apply for certain federal disaster assistance and hazard mitigation funding under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Act. The plan update was completed in accordance with the revised Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Review Guide document, dated October 2011.

The plan contains a mitigation action listing, a discussion of the purpose and methodology used to develop the plan, a profile on Maries County, as well as the hazard identification and vulnerability assessment of natural hazards. In addition, the plan offers a discussion of the community's current capability to implement the goals, objectives and strategies identified here in. The plan is organized as follows:

- Executive Summary
- Prerequisites
- Chapter 1: Introduction and Planning Process
- Chapter 2: Planning Area Profile and Capabilities
- Chapter 3: Risk Assessment
- Chapter 4: Mitigation Strategy
- Chapter 5: Plan Implementation and Maintenance
- Appendices

To assist in the explanation of the above identified contents, there are several appendices included which provide more detail on specific subjects. This plan is intended to improve the ability of Maries County and the jurisdictions within to handle disasters and will document valuable local knowledge on the most efficient and effective ways to reduce loss.

1.4 Planning Process

44 CFR Requirement 201.6(c)(1): [The plan shall document] the planning process used to develop the plan, including how it was prepared, who was involved in the process and how the public was involved.

The Maries County Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee (HMPC) first organized in 2005 when the Missouri State Emergency management Agency (SEMA) provided funding for hazard mitigation planning to counties throughout the state of Missouri. Maries County's hazard mitigation plan was originally developed by the Meramec Regional Planning Commission. MRPC assisted the county in forming a planning committee comprised of representatives from each of Maries County's cities, city and rural fire departments, police departments, the county health department, local businesses, utility companies, the American Red Cross, and not-for-profits and school districts. This cross section of local representatives was chosen for their experience and expertise in emergency planning and community planning for Maries County. The HMPC was re-activated in 2011 to conduct the review and update of the plan. The County joined with SEMA to contract with the Meramec Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) to assist with the review and update of the plan document that was originally approved on August 22, 2006. Three plan update meetings were held. The first meeting was held on September 8, 2011; the second on September 26, 2011; and the third on July 25, 2013. All meetings were advertised on MRPC's website and public notices were provided through the Maries County Courthouse. Sign in sheets and meeting notices from each of the meetings are included in Appendix A: Planning Process Documentation. Much of the information gathering for the plan was done by written and electronic correspondence as well as by phone.

The Maries County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan was developed as a result of a collaborative effort among Maries County, the cities of Belle and Vienna, the Maries County R-I and R-II School Districts, and public agencies, no-profit organizations, the private sector as well as regional, state and federal agencies. MRPC contacted and asked volunteers to serve on the planning committee from the county and local city governments, school districts, local fire departments, ambulance districts, police departments, the county health department, local businesses, utility companies and the American Red Cross. This cross-section of local representatives was chosen for their experience and expertise in emergency planning and community planning in Maries County.

Interviews were conducted with stakeholders from the community and three meetings were conducted during the plan update. Additionally, through public committee meetings, press releases and draft plan posting on MRPC's website, ample opportunity was provided for public participation. Any comments, questions and discussions resulting from these activities were given strong consideration in the development as well as the review and update of this plan. A

mitigation planning committee guided and assisted the Meramec Regional Planning Commission in both the development and updating of the plan.

1.4.1 Multi-Jurisdictional Participation

44 CFR Requirement 201.6 (a) (3): Multi-jurisdictional plans may be accepted, as appropriate, as long as each jurisdiction has participated in the process and has officially adopted the plan.

During the 2011-13 update and revision process, Maries County invited incorporated cities, school districts, emergency response agencies, utility companies and not-for-profits to participate in the hazard mitigation planning process. The following is the list of people and organizations that were invited to participate:

- Ray Schwartz, Presiding Commissioner
- Doug Drewell, Associate Commissioner
- Ed Fagre, Associate Commissioner
- Rhonda Brewer, County Clerk
- Judy Logan Honse, County Assessor
- Mark Buschmann, Circuit Clerk and Recorder
- Jayne Helton, County Collector
- Rhonda Slone, County Treasurer
- Chris Heitman, Maries County Sheriff
- Ken Ramsey, Emergency Management Director
- Tony Gieck, Mayor (2011), Alderman (2012-13), City of Belle
- Donna Stough, Office Manager, City of Belle
- Carla Butler, Treasurer, City of Belle
- Frankie Hicks, City Clerk, City of Belle
- Steve Vogt, Alderman in 2011 and Mayor in 2013, City of Belle
- Steve Honse, Alderman, City of Belle
- Dave Grubbs, Alderman, City of Belle
- Joe Lockard, Alderman, City of Belle
- Kevin Guffey, Alderman, City of Belle (2013)
- Michael Dixon, Jr., Chief of Police, City of Belle (2011)
- Dwight Francis, Fire Chief, Belle Volunteer Fire Department
- Darryl Jenkins, Public Works, City of Belle
- Jamie Jones, Mayor, City of Vienna
- Sherry James, City Clerk, City of Vienna
- Brenda Davis, Alderman, City of Vienna
- Carol Miller, Alderman, City of Vienna
- Christine Robertson, Alderman, City of Vienna
- Laura Stratman, Alderman, City of Vienna
- Dennis Bullock, Alderman, City of Vienna
- Shannon Thompson, Chief of Police, City of Vienna
- Shon Westart, Public Works Superintendent, City of Vienna

- Mark Pottorff, Superintendent, Maries County R-I School District
- Dr. Zach Templeton, Superintendent, Maries County R-II School District (2011)
- Gary Doerhoff, Superintendent, Maries County R-II School District (2013)
- Albert Crump, Maries County IDA
- Intercounty Electric Cooperative
- Gascosage Electric Cooperative
- Janet Driscoll, Dixon Ambulance District
- Craig Faith, Maries/Osage Ambulance District
- Andy Littrell, Ozark Central Ambulance District
- Mark Honse, Fire Chief, Vienna Fire Protection District
- Ameren
- Don Chamber, Fire Chief, Vichy Volunteer Fire Protection Association
- Darrin Bacon, Manager, Rolla Regional Airport
- Nathan Abel, Public Works, City of Belle
- Jodie Waltman, Maries/Phelps County Health Department
- Chief Dennis Lachowicz, Dixon Rural Fire Protection District

The Disaster Mitigation Act requires that each jurisdiction either participate directly in the planning process or authorize another entity to represent them in the planning process. There were a number of criteria for participation including the following:

- Providing a representative to serve on the planning committee;
- Participating in at least one of two or more meetings of the planning committee, either by direct representation or through authorized representation;
- Providing data for plan development;
- Identifying goals and mitigation actions for the plan;
- Prioritizing mitigation actions/projects for the plan;
- Reviewing and commenting on the draft plan document;
- Informing the public, local officials and other interested parties about the planning process and providing opportunities for them to comment on the plan;
- Formally adopting the plan

The jurisdictions that participated in the process, as well as their level of participation in the process are shown in Table 1.3. Documentation of meetings, including sign-in sheets are included in Appendix A: Planning Process Documentation.

1.4.2 The Planning Process

Maries County and MRPC worked together to develop the plan and based the planning process on FEMA's Local Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning Guidance (2008), the State and Local Mitigation Planning How-To Guides (2001) and the *Multi-Jurisdictional Mitigation Planning (2006)*. The planning process has included organizing the county's resources, assessing the risks to the county, developing the mitigation plan and implementing the plan and monitoring the progress of plan implementation.

The planning process formally began with the initial meeting being held in conjunction with the Maries County Commission meeting on September 8, 2011. MRPC mailed out letters of invitation to all of the jurisdictions listed above. MRPC’s invitations were mailed out to representatives of each of Maries County’s cities, city and rural fire departments, ambulance districts, police departments, the county health department, local businesses, and utility companies. This cross section of local representatives was chosen for their experience and expertise in emergency planning and community planning for Maries County. The mailing list is included in Appendix A: Planning Process Documentation. In some cases jurisdictions desired to participate in the planning process but were not able to attend planning meetings. In order to insure that these jurisdictions would be considered part of the plan, they were asked to participate by providing information, responding to surveys and reviewing the plan document.

All planning committee members were provided drafts of sections of the plan as they became available. Members of the planning committee then reviewed the plan drafts and provided valuable input to MRPC staff. The planning committee performed a needs assessment, developed goals, objectives and recommendations and prioritized mitigation projects. Additionally, MRPC staff contacted several employees of the county and city governments to gain needed information concerning city services, plans and capabilities.

Maries County assisted in the planning process by issuing public notice of the planning meetings as well as by providing facilities for the meetings. County officials, including commissioners and the County Clerk attended and participated in the meetings.

The planning committee contributed to the planning process by:

- attending and participating in meetings
- collecting data for the plan
- making decisions on plan content
- reviewing drafts of the plan document
- developing a list of needs
- prioritizing needs and potential mitigation projects
- assisting with public participation and plan adoption

Table 1.2 shows the meeting dates as well as agenda items for each of the meetings.

Table 1.2 Maries County Hazard Mitigation Planning Meetings

Meeting	Topics Covered	Date
Maries County Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee	Initial meeting: Welcome & introductions, review of plan update requirements, review of current plan, discussion of goals & objectives & progress made in 5 years, discussion of possible changes to goals and objectives	September 8, 2011
Maries County Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee	Welcome & introductions, discussion of hazard mitigation programs/strategies and progress made in past 5 years, discussion of possible changes to goals and objectives for next 5 years	September 26, 2011

Meeting	Topics Covered	Date
Maries County Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee	Welcome & introductions, overview and update of planning process, review of action items and prioritization, plan for administering and implementing action items	July 25, 2013

Agenda items at the first meeting on September 8, 2011 included a review of the plan update requirements; a review of the current Maries County Hazard Mitigation Plan; a discussion of mitigation goals and objectives and what if any progress had been made on those goals and objectives during the past five years; and discussion of possible updates and changes that might need to be made to the goals and objectives. Staff provided copies of the plan for HMPC members to take home and review and provided information on where to view the document on the MRPC website. Participants were asked to provide input and updates to MRPC staff. Planning committee members were asked to review the background, history, capabilities and hazards sections to make sure that the information was correct and current. Staff explained how the planning and review process would progress at the local, state and federal levels. The following individuals, by jurisdiction, attended the first planning committee meeting:

Tony Floyd, Intercounty Electric Cooperative
 Leisa Stilley, Intercounty Electric Cooperative
 Stephen Brown, Maries County Emergency Management
 Dave Clifton, Assistant Emergency Management Director, Maries County
 Ken Ramsey, Emergency Management Director, Maries County
 Rhonda Brewer, Maries County Clerk
 Ray Schwartz, Presiding Commissioner, Maries County
 Doug Drewel, Associate Commissioner, Maries County
 Edward Fagre, Associate Commissioner, Maries County
 Steve Vogt, Alderman, City of Belle
 Dwight Francis, Belle Fire Department
 Nathan Abel, Public Works, City of Belle
 Laura Schiermeier, Maries County Gazette

The following jurisdictions and organizations were in attendance at the September 26, 2011 meeting of the Maries County HMPC:

Ray Schwartz, Maries County Presiding Commissioner
 Doug Drewel, Maries County Associate Commissioner
 Edward Fagre, Maries County Associate Commissioner
 Rhonda Brewer, Maries County Clerk
 Ken Ramsey, Emergency Management Director, Maries County
 Dave Clifton, Assistant Emergency Management Director, Maries County
 Chris Heitman, Maries County Sheriff
 Laura Schiermeier, Maries County Gazette

The following jurisdictions and organizations were in attendance at the July 25, 2013 meeting of the Maries County HMPC:

Ray Schwartze, Maries County Presiding Commissioner
 Doug Drewel, Maries County Associate Commissioner
 Edward Fagre, Maries County Associate Commissioner
 Rhonda Brewer, Maries County Clerk
 Ken Ramsey, Emergency Management Director, Maries County
 Laura Schiermeier, Maries County Gazette

Table 1.3 shows the entities involved in the planning process and how they participated. All of these jurisdictions, as well as jurisdictions located in neighboring counties, were asked to review the draft plan and provide input into the document.

Table 1.3 Participation in Maries County Hazard Mitigation Planning Meetings

Jurisdiction	Participating Jurisdiction	Participated in Planning Process	HMPC September 8, 2011 Meeting	HMPC September 26, 2011 Meeting	HMPC July 25, 2013	Completed Surveys/ Provided Information
Maries County	X	X	X	X	X	X
City of Belle	X	X	X			X
City of Vienna	X	X				X
Maries R-I School District	X	X				X
Maries R-II School District	X	X				X

In some cases jurisdictions desired to participate in the planning process but were not able to attend planning meetings. In order to insure that these jurisdictions would be considered part of the plan, the planning committee reviewed their participation and determined that if the jurisdictions provided information, completed surveys, responded to questions and/or reviewed the plan document and provided input they were considered active participants in the planning process. Those individuals who provided information for the plan, and the jurisdictions they represent, are listed in Table 1.4 below.

Table 1.4 Names of Participants Providing Data for Maries County Plan

Name	Jurisdiction	Completed Survey	Provided Information
Rhonda Brewer, County Clerk	Maries County		X
Ray Schwartze, Presiding Commissioner	Maries County	X	X
Ken Ramsey, County EMD	Maries County		X
Chris Heitman, Sheriff	Maries County		X
Steve Vogt, Mayor	City of Belle		X
Nathan Abel, Public Works	City of Belle	X	X
Frankie Hicks, City Clerk	City of Belle		X
Daryl Jenkins, Public Works	City of Belle		X

Name	Jurisdiction	Completed Survey	Provided Information
Sherry James, City Clerk	City of Vienna		X
Shon Westart, Public works Supt.	City of Vienna		X
Joe Dunlap, Superintendent	Maries County R-I School District		X
Beth Hollis, Secretary	Maries County R-I School District		X
Dr. Patrick Call, Superintendent	Maries County R-II School District	X	X
Peggy Terrill, Secretary	Maries County R-II School District		X

1.4.3 Public Participation in the Planning Process

44 CFR Requirement 201.6 (b): An open public involvement process is essential to the development of an effective plan. In order to develop a more comprehensive approach to reducing the effects of natural disasters, the planning process shall include: (1) An opportunity for the public to comment on the plan during the drafting stage and prior to plan approval.

The development of this plan has involved the public throughout. All meetings were publicized in accordance with Missouri’s Sunshine Law (RSMo 610.010, 610.020, 610.023 and 610.024) the public was notified each time the plan, or sections of the plan, was presented for review and discussion. Input from each public official of city, county and school district, as well as surrounding jurisdictions, was solicited by mailing a postcard and directions to the MRPC website where a copy of the draft plan could be viewed or downloaded. Hard copies of the final draft could be obtained by contacting MRPC and requesting one. MRPC did press releases to make people aware of the planning process and of where to view drafts of the plan document. Copies of public notices and press releases are included in Appendix A: Planning Process Documentation.

In addition Maries County is dedicated to the continued involvement of the public during the bi-annual review and the five-year update, as well as, in the interim. Maries County and its encompassing jurisdictions have established strategies herein which will provide opportunity for continued public involvement. These strategies include a copy of the adopted plan to be placed at the Maries County Courthouse and the city hall or municipal building of each jurisdiction for public review. In addition, a copy of the plan and any proposed revisions will be displayed on MRPC’s website with a phone number for the public to direct questions or comments regarding the plan to the emergency management director.

1.4.4 Coordination with Other Departments/Agencies/Jurisdictions

44 CFR Requirement 201.6 (b): An open public involvement process is essential to the development of an effective plan. In order to develop a more comprehensive approach to reducing the effects of natural disasters, the planning process shall include: (2) An opportunity for neighboring communities, local and regional agencies involved in hazard mitigation activities and agencies that have the authority to regulate development, as well as businesses, academia and other private and non-profit interests to be involved in the planning process. (3) Review and incorporation, if appropriate, of existing plans, studies, reports and technical information.

There are several organizations that have a presence in Maries County whose purpose and goals coincide with hazard mitigation. In order to insure that those agencies were included in the hazard mitigation planning process they were invited to participate in the planning committee. The organizations that chose to participate in the planning process are listed in 1.4.2. The complete mailing list is included in Appendix A: Planning Process Documentation.

Planning meetings and the planning process were announced through press releases and public notices in accordance with Missouri's Sunshine Law (RSMo 610.010, 610.020, 610.023 and 610.024). Press releases were distributed throughout the eight-county Meramec region. The public was notified each time the plan, or sections of the plan were presented for review. Input from each public official (city and county) was solicited by mailing an explanatory letter and copy of the particular draft. All planning committee members were given a draft of each section as it became available. Additionally, MRPC staff contacted many employees of the county, its cities and other organizations to gain needed information concerning services, plans and capabilities. Drafts of the plan were made available to any interested citizen either in hard copy or via download from the MRPC website. Postcards were mailed out to neighboring jurisdictions inviting them to review the plan and provide input and notifying them of where to view copies of the document. A listing of those jurisdictions that received postcards is included in Appendix A.

MRPC staff contacted jurisdictions as well as the planning committee to insure that all applicable plans, studies, reports and technical information were identified and made available for review and comparison with the draft plan. The list of documents can be found in Section 2.2.