

## **1.0 THE PLANNING PROCESS**

To develop a multi-jurisdictional mitigation plan that reflects the hazards, risks, and vulnerabilities in Preble County, the Preble County EMA utilized a comprehensive, whole community planning process that emphasized stakeholder engagement. This process included direct participation from stakeholders and community members across the county, representing Preble County government, municipal government, and community organizations. This section describes the process utilized to develop the mitigation plan and explains how stakeholders and the community were included in the plan development process.

### **1.1 PLAN DEVELOPMENT**

Because significant stakeholder feedback would be needed to develop the new mitigation plan, the EMA estimated that the planning process would take approximately twelve months. This timeframe was necessary to research the county's hazards and risks, meet with jurisdiction representatives and stakeholders, develop mitigation strategies and actions, and develop the revised plan. Upon completion of the plan, the state and federal review process was anticipated to take up to six additional months. The goal was to have a completed and adopted mitigation plan in place by the early 2019. This section outlines each phase of the plan development process. Because the current federal standards for mitigation plans require more inclusive and comprehensive plans than in the past, Preble County decided to develop a new plan rather than revise the existing document.

#### **1.1.1 Pre-Update Planning Process**

Preble County's most recent mitigation plan was approved on February 19, 2013 and has an expiration date of February 19, 2018. To support development of the county's plan update, the EMA submitted a Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant application through the Ohio EMA in Fiscal Year 2016. The grant of \$30,844.00 was awarded to Preble County on December 20, 2016. In May 2017, the county entered into a contract Resource Solutions Associates, LLC to develop the new mitigation plan. Their work would include research of relevant hazards, collaboration with jurisdictions and stakeholders to collect information, and development of the new plan. The EMA and Contractor developed an anticipated project timeline that began with an initial planning team meeting in October 2017 and culminated with a completed plan submitted to Ohio EMA and FEMA for review in October 2018. This timeline anticipated final approval and local adoption of Preble County's new plan in late 2018.

#### **1.1.2 Planning Team Meetings**

The initial step in the planning process was developing a master list of jurisdiction representatives, stakeholders, and community members. The Contractor developed the master list with input from the EMA. The list included representatives from all jurisdictions (county, city, villages, and townships) as well as broad range of community organizations and agencies that spanned community development, natural resources, business and industry, agriculture, education, and institutions. This whole community-based Hazard Mitigation Planning Team met

multiple times throughout the planning process. These meetings were conducted in four distinct phases: project introduction, hazard identification and risk assessment, mitigation strategy development, and plan review.

Planning team meetings were conducted at multiple locations to encourage participation from stakeholders across the county. To maintain consistency in the process and obtain comparable outcomes, worksheets that identified respondents and jurisdictions were used at all sessions and the Contractor followed the same line of discussion at all meetings. When relevant, information from one meeting was shared at another for the purpose of obtaining the best input possible and to discuss how areas were inter-connected, collaborative, and common with one another.

#### *Project Kick Off*

An initial countywide kick-off planning meeting was conducted October 3, 2017 at Eaton Fire Department. The meeting introduced the project to stakeholders, established the scope of the plan, and explained the need for stakeholder involvement in the planning process. The Contractor discussed the importance of hazard mitigation within emergency management and the process the EMA and Contractor would utilize to work with jurisdictions and stakeholders to develop the plan. Jurisdictions were asked to identify a primary point-of-contact who would coordinate with the EMA to schedule jurisdiction work sessions. The transparent planning process that is open to the public was also emphasized.

#### *Hazard and Risk Identification Work Sessions*

The hazard and risk identification phase focused on research and information gathering. Work sessions with jurisdictions and community agencies were conducted in January 2018 and individual conversations with county and local stakeholders continued throughout the coming months. Each session focused on identifying the hazards, risks, vulnerabilities, and past disasters that impacted each jurisdiction, and what types of damages were incurred as well as the cost of those repairs. Discussion included vulnerabilities across the entire county as well as in specific jurisdictions, and countywide and jurisdictional damages. Session participants included mayors, administrators, city/village council members, trustees, fiscal officers, road/street department employees, law enforcement officials, fire service personnel, public utility staff, school district leaders, and other key jurisdiction employees. Representatives of various special groups, such as soil and water conservation, regional planning, floodplain management, and economic development, were included in these meetings. Meetings were open to the public and individual stakeholders participated. As a result, the Contractor obtained detailed information about the impact of past disasters on Preble County and the hazards that are a concern.

#### *Mitigation Strategy Development Work Sessions*

A second round of work sessions was conducted in July 2018. These sessions focused on damage reduction activities and development of countywide and jurisdiction-specific mitigation goals and strategies based on the hazards and risks identified during the previous sessions. The strategy development sessions included the same broad participation as the hazard and risk

identification meetings and provided a forum for local officials and stakeholders to discuss specific actions to help reduce disaster risk in their community. These sessions also included a discussion of progress on the mitigation strategies identified in the county's 2013 plan; progress on the previously identified goals was documented for inclusion in the new plan and those strategies that were to be continued were incorporated into the revised new plan strategies. The EMA Director assisted with tabulation of the outcomes of 2013 plan strategies as well.

#### *Final Plan Review*

Following the collection of information from stakeholders across Preble County, the Contractor developed a draft plan for the planning team to review. All stakeholders were provided digital access to the plan through the Contractor's website and were asked to provide comments and feedback. Additionally, a printed copy of the draft plan was available at the Preble County EMA. Stakeholders were invited to a countywide final plan review forum on September 10, 2018 to provide any final comments, ask questions, and learn about implementation of the plan and future mitigation steps.

During the plan review phase, which began on August 28 for the planning team and lasted through September 24 when the public review period ended, planning partners and committee members were asked to provide input on information in the draft plan as well as countywide implementation of the plan. They were asked to read the plan components that directly applied to their jurisdiction or area of expertise area and to read about other areas in the county that might contribute to, share, or be responsible for damage reduction for a vulnerability that affects them. They were also asked to look at the plan as a countywide, multi-jurisdictional plan of action and make comments accordingly. The group considered how collaborative efforts between jurisdictions would be necessary to successfully complete many of the actions. Stakeholders reviewed how individual communities and areas worked together in the past to accomplish goals, and how cross-discipline and multi-jurisdiction efforts must support this plan as well. Conversations included a review of mitigation efforts at various levels of government, including local townships, municipalities, and the county as well as state and federal levels of involvement, and how private citizens and individual businesses might contribute, participate, and benefit.

After the planning team's initial plan review, a two-week public review period was conducted. From September 10-24, 2018, the plan was available on the Contractor's website and in print at the EMA for any member of the public to review and provide comment. The public was invited to the countywide plan review forum on September 10, 2018. This open meeting informed them about the organization of the plan, how to find specific points of information in it, and how to submit comments for consideration. They also discussed post-approval actions such as jurisdictional adoption, annual review, and creation of mitigation projects during the plan's validity period.

The public was notified of the plan review period through news releases to local media outlets and letters to jurisdictions. The EMA submitted a news release to *The Register-Herald* (Eaton) with information about the public review period. All news releases and notices included

locations where the plan could be viewed digitally and in print as well as contact information for the Contractor and EMA.

All comments and questions submitted by the planning team and the public were reviewed by the EMA Director and Contractor. After EMA approval, appropriate revisions were made to the plan. Upon final revision, the plan was submitted to the Ohio EMA for state review before submission to FEMA for federal approval. Following federal approval, the formal adoption process began. This process is explained in section 4.0 Plan Adoption.

Table 1-1 includes a complete list of planning team meetings conducted throughout the planning process.

**Table 1-1: Planning Team Meetings**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Participating Stakeholders</b>
10/03/2017	Eaton Fire Department	Project Kick Off/Initial Planning Meeting	<b>Countywide Meeting</b>
01/22/2018	Lewisburg Fire Department	Hazard Identification	<b>Countywide Meeting</b> Harrison Township Lewisburg Twin Township Verona West Alexandria West Manchester
01/22/2018	Northwest Fire Department	Hazard Identification	<b>Countywide Meeting</b> New Paris
01/23/2018	Preble County EMA	Hazard Identification	<b>Countywide Meeting</b> College Corner Eaton Lanier Township Preble County Verona
01/23/2018	Eaton Fire Department	Hazard Identification	<b>Countywide Meeting</b> Eaton Jefferson Township Preble County Soil and Water Conservation West Alexandria
01/23/2018	Lakengren Lodge	Hazard Identification	<b>Countywide Meeting</b> Dixon Township Eldorado Lakengren POA/Gaspar Township
01/23/2018	Gratis Fire Department	Hazard Identification	<b>Countywide Meeting</b> Gratis Somers Township

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Participating Stakeholders</b>
01/24/2018	Preble County EMA	Hazard Identification	<b>Countywide Meeting</b> West Elkton Gratis Twp Fire Department
01/24/2018	Preble County EMA	Hazard Identification	<b>Countywide Meeting</b> Monroe Township Preble County Wayne County EMA (Indiana) Union County EMA (Indiana)
07/16/2018	First Baptist Church	Strategy Development	<b>Countywide Meeting</b> Camden Dixon Township Gratis Israel Township Jackson Township New Paris Preble County Somers Township
07/17/2018	Preble County EMA	Strategy Development	<b>Countywide Meeting</b> Eaton Gasper Township Lewisburg Northwest Fire Department Preble County Preble Shawnee Schools Tri-County North Schools
07/17/2018	Preble County EMA	Natural Resources	Preble County Soil and Water Conservation
07/17/2018	Preble County EMA	Strategy Development	<b>Countywide Meeting</b> College Corner Jefferson Township Lanier Township Monroe Township Preble County Chamber of Commerce Preble County Development Partnership Washington Township West Manchester
07/17/2018	Preble County EMA	Strategy Development	<b>Countywide Meeting</b> Gratis Township Jackson Township National Trail School District Eaton City School District Twin Township West Alexandria
09/10/2018	Preble County EMA	Final Plan Review Forum	<b>Countywide Meeting</b>

## **1.2 STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT**

With a population of 41,210 and multiple jurisdictions, including one city, ten villages, and twelve townships, Preble County had many stakeholders to include in the mitigation planning process. The Hazard Mitigation Planning Team included broad participation from these identified stakeholders. Throughout the project, the EMA used a whole community approach for the planning process. Using a broad, inclusive planning team, the intention was to include all jurisdictions, organizations, and agencies with an interest or role in emergency management, and thus in disaster mitigation.

Invitations to participate in the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team were extended to the following officials, leaders, and stakeholders across Preble County:

- Incorporated jurisdictions (county, city, and village officials)
- Township representatives (trustees, fiscal officers)
- Specialized disciplines, including fire service, law enforcement, engineering, utilities, public health, healthcare, hospitals, business and industry, education, nonprofits, and social agencies
- Elected officials, including the commissioners, county auditor, treasurer, and engineer
- Appointed officials, including the county floodplain manager, GIS mapping specialists, conservation specialists, regional planning, building officials, development officials, fire chiefs, police chiefs, public health commissioners, extension agents
- Economic development organizations such as economic development corporations, and chambers of commerce
- Emergency management officials from adjacent counties
- Non-government agencies and community action groups
- Special interest groups such as watershed coalitions, conservancy districts, federal partners, state agencies with facilities in the county, and others with a special interest in the well-being of Preble County
- Residents, businesses, and the general public

All primary contacts were advised that planning activities were open to the public and were encouraged to extend meeting and work session invitations to anyone else who wished to participate.

### **1.2.1 Jurisdiction Participation**

All incorporated jurisdictions in Preble County chose to participate in the hazard mitigation plan. The county and all incorporated jurisdictions (city and villages) are expected to formally adopt the hazard mitigation plan. For the purpose of plan adoption and future grant administration, the county is authorized to act on behalf of the townships. While Preble County represents the townships in plan adoption, all townships elected to participate in the planning work sessions and contribute to the process. This broad participation ensured that all areas of the county were represented.

The officials identified in Table 1-2 served as the primary point of contact for each jurisdiction. A complete list of all individuals who participated in the mitigation planning process is provided in Appendix A: Mitigation Planning Team.

**Table 1-2: Participating Jurisdictions and Representatives**

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Position/Title</b>	<b>Representative</b>
<b>COUNTY</b>		
Preble County	EMA Director	David Anderson
<b>CITIES</b>		
Eaton	City Manager	Brad Collins
<b>VILLAGES</b>		
Camden	Village Council	Debbie Hickman
College Corner	Village Council	Michael Ruthier
Eldorado	Mayor	Tiana White
Gratis	EMS Chief	Joan Vance
Lewisburg	Village Manager	Jeff Sewert
New Paris	Mayor	Katherine Smallwood
Verona	Mayor	Mary Myers
West Alexandria	Mayor	Carol Lunsford
West Elkton	Fire Chief	Michael Roberts
West Manchester	Village Council	Doug Thompson
<b>TOWNSHIPS</b>		
Dixon Township	Trustee	Steven Orr
Gasper Township	Trustee	Eric White
Gratis Township	Trustee	Greg Thompson
Harrison Township	Trustee	John Ferguson
Israel Township	Trustee	Matt Nixon
Jackson Township	Trustee	Josh Ruebush
Jefferson Township	Trustee	David McDermitt
Lanier Township	Trustee	Clarence Eby
Monroe Township	Trustee	Lloyd Lee
Somers Township	Trustee	Andrew Grob
Twin Township	Trustee	Roger Brunk
Washington Township	Trustee	Rodger Clark

### 1.2.2 Hazard Mitigation Planning Team

Because Preble County's intention was to solicit broad participation in the multi-jurisdictional planning process, an extensive invitation list was developed for the project kick-off meeting. Using information from multiple sources, including EMA contact lists, jurisdiction and agency websites, the Board of Elections, and general online information, a master planning team of more than 175 people was developed. The master list identified the name, position, agency or jurisdiction, and contact information for each individual and included representation from business and industry, community services, economic and community development, education, government, infrastructure and engineering, natural resources and agriculture, and public

safety. Emergency management officials from adjacent counties in Ohio and Indiana were also invited to participate.

Throughout the planning process, more than 70 people representing the identified jurisdictions and organizations contributed to the planning process. The complete list of participating stakeholders is provided in Appendix A: Hazard Mitigation Planning Team.

The planning team's participation occurred over four phases of plan development: project kick-off, hazard identification and risk assessment, mitigation strategy development, and final plan review. The plan development schedule included four sets of countywide meetings and work sessions. Because achieving meaningful participation from a wide range of partners through these sessions was important, the meeting schedule was developed to maximize participation from stakeholders. This was achieved by scheduling meetings at different times of day and at varied locations throughout the county.

The EMA sent invitations by email and postal mail to ensure delivery to each recipient. When necessary, the director reached out to stakeholders by phone or through other communication mechanisms to provide information to stakeholders. To encourage broad participation from the community, planning team members were encouraged to share the invitation with others in their community. Contact information for the EMA and Contractor was freely distributed to all participants so that all community members could ask questions, provide input, or otherwise become involved in the planning process.

### **1.3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Throughout the planning process, comprehensive community participation in the mitigation plan was a goal of the EMA. Utilizing FEMA's Whole Community Planning framework, the EMA reached out to a broad scope of community partners, jurisdiction officials, and stakeholders. These representatives were invited to participate in the planning process and provide input through all phases of the project. The EMA and Contractor began by developing an inclusive planning team invitation list. A significant amount of time was dedicated to identifying contacts across all jurisdictions, subject-areas, and segments of the county and creating an accurate contact list of those individuals. Collectively, this list was referred to as the mitigation planning team. Some planning team work sessions focused on countywide issues while others allowed for discussion of specific jurisdictional concerns. Regardless of topic, all meetings were open to the public and participants were welcome to attend any meeting that fit their schedule.

The current hazard mitigation plan was made available for the planning team's review; participants were encouraged to review that document to facilitate discussions at work sessions. Attendees were also encouraged to share meeting invitations, plan documents, and all information with colleagues, community members, and others who may have an interest in participating in the project.



Once the initial draft plan was complete and had been released to the planning committee for preliminary review, it was posted on the Contractor's website for public review. This two-week public review was conducted from September 10-24, 2018. A final countywide plan review forum was conducted on September 10, 2018. This forum was open to the public and provided all stakeholders with the opportunity to view and comment on the plan. It also provided an opportunity to discuss multi-jurisdictional plan implementation, ongoing countywide participation, and annual review by all jurisdictions in the coming five years.

All jurisdictions and members of the planning team were notified of the review period and final planning meeting by email and postal mail, as they were throughout the project. To notify the general public, the EMA submitted a news release to *The Register-Herald* (Eaton) and posted a notice on the agency's website and social media pages. Jurisdictions were encouraged to share the invitation on their website and social media pages.

All notifications included a link to view the plan online, the timeline for public review, and instructions for submitting comments and questions. A printed copy of the plan was available at the Preble County EMA during regular business hours for anyone who preferred to view a printed copy of the plan.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES**

Throughout the planning process, the Contractor conducted extensive research into Preble County's hazards, risks, and vulnerabilities as well as the regulations and authorities in the county. The research process included reviews of existing data, plans, and reports and detailed discussions with stakeholders and subject-matter experts.

The Preble County profile was developed based on various county and jurisdiction documents, plans, and websites. Demographic and statistical information was provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, Ohio Development Services Agency, and other government sources. Additional information available on jurisdiction and community websites was incorporated into the plan. The Preble County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and Land Use Plan was consulted for information about countywide development goals, building regulations, and goals and objectives for community growth. The City of Eaton, Ohio Comprehensive Plan was the source of development and regulation information for Eaton. The Preble County Land Use Management Office provided information about building and zoning regulations, permit processes and requirements, occupancy rules, and floodplain regulations. Watershed plans and government discovery reports were consulted for information about rivers and streams.

Because the county's most recent hazard mitigation plan was developed in 2012, hazard information and disaster data from 2012 through 2018 was identified to ensure that the new plan included current, relevant, and accurate hazard and risk information. This information was identified based on reports from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Storm Events Database. Additional hazard data was obtained from the Ohio EMA, FEMA, Tornado History Project, Stanford University Dam Program, Ohio Department of Natural

Resources, and other federal, state, and private sources. Incidents prior to 2012 were reviewed for accuracy and any additional information was added; incidents occurring since 2012 were incorporated into the new plan. This information was shared with stakeholders during planning team work sessions so that local knowledge of the impact, consequences, and recovery efforts of incidents was incorporated into the county's hazard history. Appendix B: Hazard and Vulnerability Data includes a complete list of all recorded occurrences of each hazard, organized by type.

Additional data for hazardous materials incidents was found using resources from the Ohio Department of Transportation, the United States Department of Transportation, and the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration incident reports data base. These resources provided ongoing hazardous materials incident information from approximately 1973, including injuries, damages, chemical involved, and method of conveyance for the materials.

Water quality objectives were also new to this plan and resources included the Ohio EPA guidance on salt storage, interviews with Miami River Watershed Conservancy District staff and Ohio Farm Bureau staff, and online reporting from the Ohio Department of Health and the Ohio EPA. Additional information was obtained through written documents and interviews with staff from the Preble County Soil and Water Conservation District.

The vulnerability assessment and risk analysis are based on multiple data sources. HAZUS projections helped establish potential losses in flood and earthquake incidents. Preble County property values were provided by the County Auditor and the GIS department provided mapping support. Because the 2012 mitigation plan contained information that still reflected countywide risks, vulnerabilities, and conditions, that information was retained and included in the revised plan. FEMA records provided additional loss data based on federal disaster assistance provided in the county. The State of Ohio Enhanced Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan (2014) also provided some data and explanation.

A variety of sources were used to examine county's issues with water and drainage. These includes watershed reports published by ODNR, US EPA documents, reports developed by local government agencies and watershed coalitions, and others as identified in table 1-4. This information was combined with discussions with stakeholders and subject-matter experts to develop the mitigation plan. Preble County Soil and Water Conservation District, Ohio State University Extension Service, and Natural Resource Conservation Service resources provided additional information. The USDA agricultural statistics system supplied data regarding agriculture and production. Interviews and telephone interviews with Miami River Watershed Conservancy District staff provided information about drainage, karst geography characteristics and consequences, and mitigation strategy options.

Local interviews were extensive. Development information was obtained from the various economic development groups in Preble County through direct conversation and information from plans and other documents was discussed and confirmed and exceptions noted. The

school district superintendents and transportation coordinators provided information about risk factors pertinent to the schools, and explained risk factors and mitigation actions that would assist them in making the schools safer for children and staff. Conversations with public safety staff members and volunteers provided information about local response capabilities and challenges, and the types and extent of impact various hazards have on county residents and others. The county's land use management director was interviewed several times; he responded to questions and provided clarification of specific points of discussion or plan components as needed throughout the process. Additionally, numerous public meetings were held in various parts of the county with attendance from various community leaders and residents. Their comments at these meetings were documented and used in development of the plan.

Where discrepancies existed between input from different individuals, the county official with expertise in that area and the EMA Director were consulted for clarification. All discrepancies were minor and able to be resolved in a short conversation. Google Earth was used to clarify locations of facilities, small dams and waterways, and other points of interest as the plan was developed. Various mapping tools from ODNR and the Preble County Auditor were also used.

Many local and government-developed documents were used in the research for this plan. This included documents from all critical areas of input, including but not limited to economic development, land use planning, public health and emergency management. Table 1-4 provides a list of the studies, reports, and references utilized in developing this plan.

**Table 1-4: Studies, Reports, and References**

<b>Document</b>	<b>Author/Agency</b>	<b>Date</b>
Biological and Water Quality Study of the Lower Great Miami River and Select Tributaries	Ohio EPA	2012
City of Eaton, Ohio Comprehensive Plan	Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission	2003
Federal Disaster Declaration Statistics	FEMA	2018
Ground Water Pollution Potential of Preble County, Oh	ODNR	1992
HAZUS Earthquake and Flood data	Ohio EMA	2012
Ohio Enhanced Hazard Mitigation Plan	Ohio EMA	2014
Preble County Community Health Assessment	Preble County Public Health	2010
Preble County Community Health Improvement Plan Annual Report	Preble County Public Health	2016
Preble County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and Land Use Plan	Preble County Commissioners	2016
Preble County Hazard Mitigation Plan	Preble County EMA	2012
Preble County Profile	Ohio Development Services Agency	2017
Preble County Soil and Water Conservation District Annual Report	Preble County SWCD	2016
Storm Events Database	NOAA	2018
United States Census 2010	US Census Bureau	2010

## **1.5 PLAN MAINTENANCE**

Plan maintenance is a critical element of the hazard mitigation plan. Ongoing plan maintenance establishes hazard mitigation as part of regular community development activities, provides a mechanism for the EMA to continually engage stakeholders in issues related to disaster risk reduction, and lays a solid groundwork for the required five-year update. By regularly reviewing disaster occurrences and assessing progress on mitigation activities identified in the plan, the mandatory five-year plan update can be a quick and efficient process. Preble County intends to implement an ongoing plan maintenance schedule that will establish this process. Plan maintenance efforts will be led by the EMA.

### **1.5.1 Plan Maintenance Methodology**

One of the difficulties in maintaining the mitigation plan is ongoing participation from the planning team and stakeholders. Attendance at plan review meetings is often limited, leading to minimal feedback and discussion of ongoing mitigation issues. Many stakeholders have competing demands on their time as they fill multiple roles in the community, making meeting attendance an even greater challenge. In response to this issue, Preble County will utilize a plan maintenance methodology that incorporates multiple engagement and communication methods rather than relying solely on individual attendance at meetings.

When conducting plan maintenance activities, the EMA will utilize a variety of methods, including but not limited to those listed below. The specific activity will be chosen based on the needs of the planning team, stakeholders, and the EMA.

- Jurisdiction-based meetings conducted in municipalities and townships
- Countywide meetings conducted at a centralized location
- Surveys and questionnaires, distributed electronically or on paper
- Webinars/conference calls
- Post-incident review sessions following a significant hazard incident

These types of activities are commonly used in today's business environment and will be accessible to most stakeholders. As with any planning activity, documentation of participation, copies of surveys, and other communication surrounding these events will be maintained. This will be the responsibility of the EMA.

### **1.5.2 Annual Plan Review**

The Hazard Mitigation Planning Team will conduct an annual review, evaluation, and discussion of the mitigation plan. This review process will begin approximately one year after the county receives final approval of the plan and will continue through years two and three of the plan validity period. In the fourth year, the county will begin the formal plan update process. Annual plan maintenance discussions may be conducted through traditional in-person meetings or webinars, surveys, questionnaires, or other forms of communication. The specific methodology will be determined by the EMA Director based on what best meets the needs of stakeholders and is appropriate at that specific time. After a significant hazard incident, a face-to-face

planning team session should be considered to identify mitigation opportunities and discuss any additional strategies that should be considered.

Regardless of the specific method utilized, the annual plan maintenance discussion will include an assessment of the past years' disaster incidents and any resulting damages, costs, and recovery efforts. It will define shortages, gaps in capabilities, and ineffective loss prevention actions and identify mitigation actions that would have reduced or eliminated loss. Status reports on in-progress mitigation projects and updates on the mitigation strategies and actions developed by each jurisdiction will also be included. The EMA Director will maintain records of these annual discussions and develop a list of proposed strategy modifications. The report will identify any reduction in losses due to a successful mitigation strategy, action, or project implementation.

As part of the annual review process, jurisdictions will be asked to conduct an internal analysis of their identified mitigation goals and strategies and provide a brief report of their findings to the EMA. This report will also identify any mitigation actions currently underway in their jurisdiction and new strategies that should be included in the next plan update as well as an assessment of disaster incidents that occurred during the year, damages and recovery efforts, and any mitigation actions initiated as a result of those incidents. If a strategy has been completed, the jurisdiction will evaluate its effectiveness in reducing losses. This information will be shared with the countywide planning team during the annual countywide review process. The EMA will maintain a summary of these reports and findings.

Along with these review activities, the EMA will conduct an annual review of the Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment and note any necessary changes. The review should identify any significant development, regulation, or community changes, such as changes in countywide property valuations, additions or deletions of significant capital equipment, businesses or industries, service centers, institutions or facilities; changes in agricultural or conservation practices; initiation or completion of community, residential, commercial or industrial development; changes in zoning, building codes, or other regulations; modifications of NFIP or CRS participation; changes to floodplain or flood maps; major projects underway or completed, including cleaning of rivers, ditches, and streams, installation of structurally engineered projects or devices, creation of natural habitat or runoff detention areas; changes in warning and notification equipment or procedures; and changes in any first responder capability or capacity. The EMA Director will also review the inclusion of mitigation in community development and will make recommendations for changes to the county process that will ensure that mitigation strategies are included in the implementation of growth in the countywide community. The EMA Director may add other information at his/her discretion.

### **1.5.3 Community Participation**

Ongoing consideration of hazard mitigation strategies is critical to creating a resilient and sustainable community and it is the goal of the EMA to make mitigation part of daily operations. While the EMA is responsible for leading plan maintenance efforts, the process is only effective if jurisdictions and stakeholders are engaged. The EMA intends to engage the same broad group of stakeholders and community members in ongoing plan maintenance as were included in plan development. This group included representatives from municipalities, jurisdictions, public agencies, community organizations, and the public. To ensure comprehensive and accurate plan maintenance discussions, all parties involved in developing this plan must perceive the annual review process as critical to the pre- and post-disaster welfare of the county. This was stressed to stakeholders during the plan development process.

Public involvement is an important component of ongoing mitigation efforts. As with all plan development meetings, annual update meetings will be open to the public and community input will be encouraged. Public notices of review activities will be published through local media and other appropriate sources. Meeting announcements will include the date, time, and location of the session and adequate notice so that people have reasonable time to plan their attendance. If surveys and other electronic tools are utilized, these documents will be made available to the community with instructions on how to utilize the tools. Any feedback submitted by the public will be reviewed by the EMA. Documentation of public participation will be maintained by the EMA. The public should have open access to any findings in annual reports as well as any recommendations for future projects, initiatives, and actions.

### **1.5.4 Integration with Community Planning Mechanisms**

County development partners include the Preble County Development Partnership, the Preble County Chamber of Commerce, the New Paris Chamber of Commerce, the Rural Zoning Commission, the Preble County Township Association, the Preble County Mayors' Association, the Dayton Development Coalition, the I-70/75 Development Association, the Preble County Visitors and Convention Bureau, and the Preble County Planning Commission.

Preble County community planners include individuals from a broad base of organizations, agencies, and departments. The Preble County Development Partnership is the countywide organization that brings various entities together to recruit, retain, and enhance business and community development activities across the county. The activities of the organization are coordinated by staff members, using input from a wide array of county stakeholders.

The development approval process in Preble County involves three steps. First, a project goes to the Planning Commission for review, coordination with development goals, and evaluation of standards and regulations that apply. It then moves to the Rural Zoning Board or municipal zoning department. Permits are obtained after plan review and any jurisdiction-specific mandatory steps like subdivision boards, homeowners associations (homes only), business district organizations and so forth for their review and approvals. The last step is to go to the Preble County Board of Commissioners for their input and approval. This process ensures that

all levels of relevant government are involved and all affected parties are in the communication loop.

The Preble County Development Partnership Business Development Committee includes the City of Eaton Manager and Assistant Manager; Preble County Commissioners; Preble County Director of Land Use Management; the Director of the Preble County Development Partnership, the Director of the Chamber of Commerce, a representative of village mayors, and representation from the Preble County Farm Bureau and various businesses located in Preble County. Other jurisdictions and agencies are members of the organization. This group developed the Preble County Community Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy document. The Preble County Development Partnership (PCDP) then coordinates the efforts outlined in the documents. The PCDP is a membership organization that includes many development partners like the various municipalities, townships, and county government.

The Preble County Planning Commission, coordinated by the Land Use Management Director, is the lead county agency in development activities. The Preble County Comprehensive Land Use Plan provided a basis for the community and economic development plan. In the land use plan, characteristics of the county, its land and resources, and risks and hazards are described, and specific usage goals and limitations are placed upon specific parcels. Building regulations, including zoning, construction codes, occupancy rules, and floodplain regulations are documented and maintained by the Land Use Management Director.

Each municipality has either a staff member, such as the village administrator, or an official, such as a zoning inspector or a council representative, who works with the Land Use Management Director to guide development within the jurisdiction. Township trustees also work with the Land Use Management office for unincorporated areas of the county through the Township Trustees Association. The county commissioners participate, as do several county agencies including the county engineer, the Preble County Health Department and the Soil and Water Conservation District. The EMA Director, as a subordinate of the County Commissioners, has input too, whether it is regarding economic development, community development, or land use efforts.

All of rural Preble County is zoned, and Eaton, Lewisburg, New Paris, and West Alexandria have municipal planning boards or committees that represent the interests of the municipality in development, regulation review and compliance. The Township Trustees Association represents the unincorporated areas of the county in these concerns, and the Mayors Association speaks for the small villages that do not have their own planning commission.

Membership in PCDP and the Chambers of Commerce is a voluntary, paid membership and participation can vary from year to year. This does represent a challenge for the smaller communities in the development planning process because some of the villages do not have adequate funds to become members. However, the Mayors Association and the Township Trustees Association do belong and advocate for those jurisdictions as a group. The Trustees

Association meets quarterly and the Mayors Association meets bi-monthly, and consideration of development issues is an agenda item each time.

The Land Use Management Director is the county's floodplain manager and GIS coordinator. The director works with the townships and municipalities to enforce building codes, zoning regulations, and land use rules. He works to help communities with floodplain regulation and NFIP participation. The Land Use Planning Director is the link between various public and private entities when it comes to questions of land usage, application of regulations, or exceptions and variances to those regulations. He also is the leader of the county's regional planning commission.

Preble County is in good standing with the National Floodplain Insurance Program. The City of Eaton, and the Villages of Camden, New Paris, and West Alexandria are in good standing. Eldorado, Gratis, Lewisburg, Verona, and West Elton are sanctioned by NFIP due to lack of regulation development; College Corner and West Manchester are not NFIP members and do not have floodplain within village limits.

Preble County Soil and Water Conservation supports the county ditch maintenance program by working with landowners to identify the best method of maintaining waterways, whether that is through the ditch maintenance program, grants and other programs, or by privately completing the work. They assist with conservation tillage and other production practices that preserve natural resources and prevent loss of topsoil or contamination of groundwater.

The Preble County Engineer is responsible for cleaning, construction and repair of county ditches on the ditch maintenance program. He works with SWCD by maintaining ditches under his management and advising farmers of best practices when it comes to drainage issues.

Preble County is a small community. Most community leaders wear multiple hats and work together to protect and preserve the land, its resources, and productivity. With a relatively sophisticated program of development and usage evaluation and remediation, they are able to incorporate mitigation strategies into daily operational plans on a regular basis. These parties all participated in the hazard mitigation planning process and have taken the strategies seriously, viewing them as yet another set of tools to protect and preserve Preble County for future generations.



**Table 1-5: Regulatory Participation and Mechanisms**

Program	Preble County	Camden	Eaton	Eldorado	Gratis	Lewisburg	New Paris	Verona	West Alexandria	West Elkton	West Manchester
National Flood Insurance Program	X	X	X	S	S	S	X	S	X	S	N
CRS Rated Community	X										
Zoning	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Preble County Health Department (Septic and water wells)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Commercial Building Codes	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Residential Building Codes	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Fire Code Commercial Enforcement	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
County-wide ditch maintenance	P										
Land use planning participation	X	X	X	X		X	X		X		
Economic development participation	X		X			X	X		X		
Chamber of Commerce participation	X		X			X	X		X		
Preble County Development Partnership	X								X		
Jurisdictional Planning Commission	X		X			X	X		X		

KEY: X: Regulation in place  
O: Ordinances only; no zoning  
S: Sanction in place  
N: Non-member or non-participant  
P: Partially regulated in specific locations

### 1.5.5 Documentation of Plan Maintenance

The Preble County EMA will be responsible for maintaining documentation of all plan maintenance activities. This documentation should include attendance records for review meetings, contact lists for any parties invited to complete digital or on-site reviews where the EMA staff is not physically present, meeting notes and summaries, and recommendations from stakeholders for changes, additions, or deletions to the plan. Results from surveys and questionnaires, annual jurisdiction reports, and comments submitted by the public should also be maintained. All reports, documents, and files can be saved digitally so they are more accessible and less cumbersome to maintain. These records should be part of the data shared with the author of the next update to the mitigation plan.

**1.5.6 Plan Update Cycle**

The newly approved Preble County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan will expire in 2023. With annual plan maintenance activities, the county will be positioned to submit an updated plan before the current plan's expiration date. To ensure the appropriate timeline is met, formal efforts to update the plan will begin in mid-2021. The EMA Director will ensure that the appropriate and necessary steps are taken to complete this process.