Advancing Public Participation by Developing Accessible Hazard Mitigation Plans

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Overview

- Introduction
- Brief History of Public Participation in Planning
- Regulations
- Pros/Cons of Public Participation
- Accessibility Challenges
  - Plan
  - Process
- Accessibility Solutions
  - Plan
  - Process
- Discussion
Brief History of Public Participation in Planning

- Advisory Model
  - Public Hearings
  - Blue Ribbon Committee

- Collaborative Model
  - Decentralization
  - Power Sharing

- Conflict Resolution Model
  - Alt. Dispute Resolution
Regulations (Hazard Mitigation Specific)

Hazard Mitigation Planning

- CFR § 201.6 (b) Planning process. 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;

- Unified Hazard Mitigation Assistance Guidance
  - Non-discrimination Compliance
  - Universal Design Accessibility
  - Whole Community

Other

- CDGB-DR
  - Citizen Participation Plans
Pros/Cons of Public Participation

Cons
• Expensive
• Time consuming
• Create more hostility toward government
• Dull and time consuming for the public
• Decisions may be heavily influenced by interest groups
• Loss of decision-making control
Pros/Cons of Public Participation

Pros

• Improve quality of decisions
• Build consensus
• Increases the likelihood that projects will get done

• Education
Challenges with Accessibility

Plans
• Reading Level
• Technical Language
• Size of Plan
• Number of Plans
• Availability?

Process
• Meeting Logistics
• Process is overly technical
• Lack of general understanding re: risk and risk reduction
• Lack of a clear role for individuals (i.e. what they can do)
• Meetings and documents are often only in English and at a very high reading level
Accessibility Improvements

Plans

• Lower reading Level
• Develop supplemental documents
• Plan Integration
• Make plans easier to obtain

Process

• Provide multiple opportunities for engagement: different platforms, times, etc
• Go to the public
• Engage youth
• Create an engagement plan
• Provide ongoing education/outreach on risk and risk reduction which empower people to act and participate
• Clearly indicate how feedback will be utilized and follow through
• Simplify the language used and the documents provided
• Provide assistance with transportation and activities for children
Example

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<tr>
<th>Readability Formula</th>
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<tr>
<td>Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gunning-Fog Score</td>
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<td>Coleman-Liau Index</td>
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Welcome

A hazard is a danger or risk. There are two types of hazards, Natural Hazards and Man-made Hazards.

**Natural Hazards** include:
- Winter storms
- Tornadoes
- High winds
- Thunderstorms
- Flooding
- Heat
- Drought
- Plant and Animal Disease
- Earthquakes
- Landslides
- Wildfires

**Man-made hazards** include:
- Levee and Dam failure
- Chemical accidents
- Transportation Accidents
- Terrorism
- Civil disorder
- Urban fire

Cherry County studied these hazards for 2 years and wrote this guide. This guide is called a **hazard mitigation plan**.

This guide shows:
- The damage hazards can do.
- Projects that make us safer.

How did we write this report?

We did research.

We asked people, “What hazards worry you?”

We asked people, “What projects can we do?”

In 2015, Cherry County asked, “How can we be safer from hazards?”

Turn the page to see what we found.
**Winter Storms**

### What is it?

A *winter storm* is bad weather with lots of snow, ice, and strong winds.

Some words that describe a winter storm:

- Cold
- Windy
- Snow
- Ice

Winter Storms happen between October and April.

### Facts

Cherry County has about 3 winter storms each year.

**Damages**

Since 1996, Winter Storms caused:

- $10 million in property damage
- $300 million in crop damages.
- 1 traffic death
**Winter Storms**

**What can happen?**

Winter Storms can be very dangerous.
Here are some things they can cause:

- **Power Outages**
  Heavy snow can damage power lines. Sometimes, power can go out for a long time.

- **Injury/Death**
  People can get hypothermia. People can get frostbite.

- **Dangerous roads and bridges**

**At Risk**

- Elderly people
- Very young people

**What projects will we do?**

- Bury power lines
- Buy backup generators
- Educate people about dangers
- Buy new snow plows
- Improve building codes
Example (Wildfire/Flood/Drought)

Wildfire

What is it?

A wildfire is an uncontrolled fire in the countryside.

Cherry County has about 15 wildfires per year.

Some words that describe a wildfire:
Fast  Big  Burn  Trees

Wildfires can spread very quickly to trees, brush, and homes.

What projects will we do?

- Save natural green spaces
- Update flood maps
- Stop building in flood prone areas
- Buy flood insurance
- Educate people about floods

FACTS

Since 1996 in Cherry County
- 3 Droughts
- 19 months of drought
- $14 million in crop losses
- $62 million in livestock lost
The End

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Can I clarify my message?