

Albany Dougherty Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan

II. Local Methodology

Information in the Albany Dougherty Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan is based on research from a variety of sources, to include the Southwest Georgia Regional Development Center, Georgia Department of Transportation, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, National Climatic Data Center (NCDC), National Weather Service, Albany Dougherty Comprehensive Plan, Albany Dougherty Community Greenspace Plan, and the Albany Dougherty Emergency Operations Plan. See Appendices B and C.

In January 2003, the Albany Dougherty Pre-Disaster Mitigation Team was formed to begin the initial planning stages for the Albany Dougherty Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan. The Team held meetings to collect information, compile the plan, and review the draft plan. These meetings consisted of representatives from various local agencies including the Fire, Police, Engineering, and Public Works Departments, Water, Gas and Light Commission, Community Development, and Emergency Management Services, local Industry, among other citizen representatives. The following is a summary of the process conducted to compile the Plan:

- Step 1 – Map the Hazards. Team members identified areas where damage from historic natural disasters have occurred and areas where critical man-made facilities and other features may be at risk in the future for loss of life, property damage, environmental pollution and other risk factors. Planning generated a set of base maps with GIS (Geographic Information Systems) that were used in the process of identifying past and future hazards.
- Step 2 – Identify Critical Facilities and Areas of Concern. Team members identified facilities and areas that were considered to be important to the community for emergency management purposes, for provision of utilities and community services, evacuation routes, and for recreational and social value.
- Step 3 – Identify Existing Mitigation Strategies/Policies. After collecting detailed information on each critical facility in Dougherty County, the Team identified existing mitigation strategies and policies which are already implemented in the County relative to flooding, drought, tornados, and hazardous materials.
- Step 4 – Identify the Gaps in Protection/Mitigation. The Team then reviewed the existing strategies for coverage, effectiveness and implementation, as well as the need for improvement.
- Step 5 – Developing an Action Plan. The Team developed a list of possible alternative hazard mitigation actions and strategies for the County. Potential actions include improving emergency services (*i.e.*, upgrading the communication system) and public information (*i.e.*, cable access programs).
- Step 6 – Prioritize the Action Plan. The Team reviewed each of the proposed alternative hazard mitigation actions and strategies. Each

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strategy was rated for its effectiveness. Strategies were ranked by overall score for preliminary prioritization.

- Step 7 – Determine Priorities. The Team reviewed the preliminary prioritization list in order to make changes and determine a final prioritization for new hazard mitigation actions and existing protection strategy improvements identified in previous steps.
- Step 8 – Draft an Action Plan. The Team prepared the draft utilizing the GEMA Template.
- Step 9 - Adopt and Monitor the Plan. The draft document was then reviewed, revised and approved by the Albany Dougherty Pre-Disaster Mitigation Team. A revised, draft document was then submitted by the Team to the County and City Commissions for final review.

Brief Description of the Planning Process

The Albany Dougherty County Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Plan is the result of a collaborative effort between Dougherty County citizens, public agencies, and regional, state, and federal organizations. Public participation played a key role in identifying historic disasters and setting priorities for development of goals and mitigation projects. Interviews were conducted with the Dougherty County Administrator, Albany City Manager, and elected officials, and two public meetings were held to include the input of Dougherty County residents. Using this planning process also means the County can increase chances for obtaining planning and implementation funds from a variety of sources including continued eligibility for credit under the Community Rating System (CRS).

The PDM planning process was facilitated by the existence of a comprehensive list of individuals or stakeholders whose input was needed to help develop the Plan. This list was developed for the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) and included elected officials, the Emergency Management Agency, as well as County/City Police, Sheriff, Fire Departments Chiefs and Public Works Directors. Federal and State agencies on the contact list included the Army Corps of Engineers, GEMA, FEMA and Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Private entities contacted included local industry and local power providers. The existence of the active, broad based LEPC group greatly facilitated the process of obtaining public input. Persons on the contact list received a variety of information during the planning process, including project maps and documents for review, meeting notifications, and mitigation strategy documents.

Two public meetings were conducted in Dougherty County during plan development. The purpose of the meetings was to gather information on historic disasters, update the list of critical facilities, and gather ideas from citizens about mitigation planning and priorities for mitigation goals.

An initial public forum was held to inform the community as to the difference between pre-disaster mitigation and emergency operation planning. During this

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meeting the Planning Committee had hoped to develop a corps of community stakeholders. Even though the Forum was publicly promulgated, public attendance was zero. Prior to submitting the Plan to the Dougherty County Administrator the Planning Committee announced a second public forum where the Pre-Disaster Plan was to be presented for comments and approval. Committee Members attended the forum prepared to present the Plan; however, again the community attendance was zero.

The Albany Dougherty County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) shall be the lead agency in coordinating the efforts of the Albany Dougherty Pre-Disaster Mitigation Planning Committee in formulating and supporting the Plan promulgation and maintenance. Future comments or questions regarding this Plan should be addressed to:

Albany Dougherty Emergency Management Agency
320 North Jackson Street
Albany, Georgia 31701
(229)431-2155

Pre-Disaster Mitigation Committee Tasks:

- Coordinate with the Albany Dougherty County Emergency Management Agency to oversee planning process
- Prioritize hazards vs. resources
- Select highest and best mitigation recommendations
- Review planning drafts, recommendations and updates
- Develop and implement long and short term goals
- Integrate the plan with all phases of Emergency Management Planning
- Provide for the implementation of committee decisions
- Encourage, coordinate and provide a methodology for the implementation of public input
- Meet on an annual basis to review the work of and contribute to the Albany Dougherty Pre-Disaster Mitigation Planning Committee activities
- Bring forth the concerns and views of the Community to the Planning Committee for inclusion in the hazard mitigation planning process
- Assist in informing the public and community of the hazard mitigation strategies recommended by both the Steering and Planning Committee
- Determine implementation ability and constraints for proposed hazard mitigation planning steps and measures
- Identify implementation resources
- Provide for the update of Albany Dougherty Pre-Disaster Plan on a scheduled basis
- Evaluate and carry out mitigation activities
- Assist in implementation of funding identification and procurement

Participants in Planning Process

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Executive Subcommittee Representatives:

- (Chair) Thomas Thomas, Assistant County Administrator (County)
- James Bramble, Emergency Management Coordinator (City)
- Tracy Hester, Development Services Manager (City)
- Gail Kohler, Finance Director (County)
- Randy Weathersby, GIS Specialist (City)
- Richard Wooten, Planning and Development Services Director (City)
- Spencer Lee, County Attorney (County)
- Al Grieshaber, City Attorney (City)

Planning Coordinator:

- James Bramble, Albany Dougherty Emergency Management Agency (City)

Critical Facilities Subcommittee Representatives:

- Chief Don Cheek, Police Chief (County) (Chair)
- Sue Bays, Water, Gas and Light Commission
- James Carswell, Assistant Fire Chief (City)
- Chief Bobby Johnson, Police Chief (City)
- Gerald Kirksey, Public Works Director (County)

Identify/Profiling Hazards Representatives:

- Kenny Cribb, Merck and Company (Chair)
- Richard Howell, Southwest Georgia Regional Airport Director (City)
- Gerald Kirksey, Public Works Director (County)

Assessing Vulnerability/Estimating Potential Losses Representatives:

- Larry Cook, Public Works Assistant Director (County) (Chair)
- Rod Hutchinson, Civil Engineering Project Manager (City)
- Wes Smith, Engineering Projects Manager (City)

Developing Mitigation Goals/Strategy Representatives:

- Bob Alexander, Engineering Director (City) (Chair)
- Gerald Kirksey, Public Works Director (County)
- Phil Roberson, Public Works Director (City)
- Ken Cribbs, Albany Tomorrow Inc.

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- Ann Zimmer-Shepperd, Sewer Systems Superintendent (City)
- Sue Bays, Water, Gas and Light Commission
- Linda Sootzman, Community Economic Development/Planning (City)
- Robert Loyd, Dougherty County School Board
- Jim Vaught, Stormwater Management (County)