

# Hazard Mitigation Technical Assistance Program, Focus Groups, Outreach, and Publications

FEMA Headquarters, Washington DC, and Regions

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION



## PROJECT DETAILS

**DIFFICULTY:** Medium

**COST:** \$200,000

**TIMEFRAME:** 60 Months

**DELIVERABLES:** Plans, guides, publications, and technical assistance.

## CORE COMPETENCIES:

- Consensus Building
- Public Outreach and Education
- Inter-Departmental Cooperation
- Hazard Mitigation
- Risk Assessment

## PROJECT TEAM

Vision Planning and Consulting  
URS (AECOM)  
Dewberry

## CLIENT CONTACT

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## PROJECT OVERVIEW

Vision Planning and Consulting supports the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to provide on-going technical services in support of FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Technical Assistance Program (HMTAP). These technical support services include: risk and vulnerability assessments; mitigation program technical assistance; community planning; policy/program review and guidance; training delivery and development; outreach and communications; and publication review and development.

## PROJECT SUMMARY

### Public Outreach and Long-Term Improvement Plan

VPC's expertise in stakeholder engagement, education, and outreach helped achieve FEMA's Building Science Branch's goal to increase their visibility and the quality of their products. VPC assisted FEMA in developing a Public Involvement Plan that included a review of over 200 FEMA publications for: date of last publication, target audience, average number of publications ordered per year, and style guide issues (font, graphics, color, etc.).

An integral part of this Public Involvement Plan was to develop customer satisfaction surveys for publication users, to maintain ongoing communication and receive feedback from these customers. The purpose of the surveys was to identify ways in which FEMA publications could be improved technically, visually, etc. Separate surveys were developed for: 1) engineers and design professionals, 2) local building officials, and 3) homeowners.

### Technical Assistance

VPC provided technical assistance to four counties in Central Pennsylvania (FEMA Region III) in developing their DMA 2000 Hazard Mitigation Plans. This assistance included a review of the hazard identification and vulnerability assessment; providing guidance on

and assistance with conducting the capability assessment; and establishing goals and action items. VPC also served as Plan Reviewer for DMA 2000 plans for various FEMA regions. Local plans were reviewed in light of the local planning guidance and local mitigation planning crosswalk. As many as 12 plans across multiple FEMA regions were reviewed.

### Building Science Publications Focus Groups

FEMA's Building Science Branch develops publications for a variety of users who influence the design and construction of buildings and infrastructure to reduce the impact of damage from various natural hazards. VPC facilitated a series of focus group sessions throughout the country to determine how FEMA's Building Science and Technology publications could be made more useful.

Six different locations were identified to allow for different perspectives from professionals on location-specific hazards, including flood, hurricane, earthquake, wildfire, landslide, and tornado. A final report was developed to include findings on: Use and usefulness; Audience segmentation; Content; Media and tools; Format and features; and Awareness and outreach.