

2021 Maryland State Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)

HAZARD MITIGATION



PROJECT DETAILS

DIFFICULTY: Medium

COST: \$90,000 - \$110,000

TIMEFRAME: 14 Months

DELIVERABLES: A comprehensive hazard mitigation strategy, capability assessment, and outreach strategy for involvement of statewide departments/agencies and county and local jurisdictions.

CORE COMPETENCIES:

- Multi-Jurisdictional Workshop Facilitation
- Plan Integration
- Implementation Plans
- Public Outreach and Education
- Survey/Questionnaire

PROJECT TEAM

Vision Planning and Consulting
AECOM
Maryland Environmental Services (Prime)

CLIENT CONTACT

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

In coordination with AECOM and Maryland Environmental Service (MES), VPC played a critical role in the 2021 State of Maryland Hazard Mitigation Plan Update process. In light of the Covid-19 Pandemic, the State's Hazard Mitigation Plan was updated in a one hundred percent virtual format. Processes and materials had to be reformatted to be accessible and user friendly in the virtual environment. As part of this process, VPC was integral in the plan development process. VPC updated the Mitigation Strategy, Implementation Plan, and Capability Assessment chapters of the Plan completely remotely, by reaching out to all 24 county and jurisdictional stakeholders involved throughout the State of Maryland using online surveys, virtual workshops, and email, to gather pertinent information, materials, data, and feedback.

PROJECT SUMMARY

VPC developed a comprehensive stakeholder engagement strategy to garner participation from three different stakeholder groups – State departments/agencies; County/Local jurisdictions; and NGO and academic organizations. VPC developed an online survey for each stakeholder group to capture each organization/department's current, and future, mitigation, planning, and preparedness resources, programs, and data into one, useful, "at-a-glance" reference table.

VPC also assisted with designing an online mapping exercise where County/Local jurisdictions had the opportunity to identify where in their region they feel are particular "trouble spots," and make recommendations for state sponsored mitigation actions. These outreach instruments were distributed to state agencies, counties and cities, NGOs, environmental advocacy groups, and universities to ensure a well-coordinated and comprehensive engagement effort.

Additionally, a new "Virtual Room" was developed to support the project by providing a public-facing online "home" for all outreach materials, presentations, maps, surveys, and

project documentation. The Room served in place of in-person meetings and workshops that would normally have been conducted in the regions around the State.

The Virtual Room was designed to look and "feel" like a traditional public meeting room including signs and banners, maps, activity stations, and (pre-recorded) presentations. This allowed the Virtual Room to be available to users 24-hours a day, seven days a week, to accommodate planners' and emergency managers unique needs and schedules.

VPC updated the Mitigation Strategy so it is action-oriented, straightforward, and clearly connects mitigation actions with the identified risks. VPC coordinated with the Steering Committee to review and update the goals from the 2016 HMP as well as to develop new Goals for inclusion in the 2021 HMP. Over 40 Mitigation Actions were developed based on the hazards identified in the HIRA, feedback on trouble spots from stakeholders, and best practices. VPC developed an Implementation Strategy as well to include a timetable for action, potential lead and supporting agencies, estimated cost, and potential funding sources for each mitigation action.