

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR ROGERS AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: SHARI MEADS, CITY PLANNER
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
SUBJECT: ADOPT THE SONOMA COUNTY MULTIJURISDICTIONAL
HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN AND UPDATE THE CITY'S LOCAL
HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Planning and Economic Development and Fire Departments that the Council, by resolution: 1) adopt Volume 1 of the Sonoma County Multijurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, dated October 2021; and 2) update the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan by adopting the City of Santa Rosa Annex to Volume 2 of the Sonoma County Multijurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, dated October 2021, and the Appendices to Volume 2 of the Sonoma County Multijurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, dated October 2021.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hazard mitigation is the use of long-term and short-term policies, programs, projects, and other activities to reduce or alleviate the loss of life, personal injury, and damage to property and natural systems that can result from a disaster.

The City participated in a multijurisdictional planning process to increase collaboration with local agencies and special districts around hazard mitigation planning. This process was led by the County of Sonoma who received a grant for this effort in 2019. Through this effort the Sonoma County Multijurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP) was drafted including the following jurisdictions and agencies:

- City of Santa Rosa
- County of Sonoma
- Town of Windsor
- City of Sonoma
- City of Cotati
- Rancho Adobe Fire

- Sonoma Resource Conservation District
- Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District
- Cloverdale Fire Protection District
- North Sonoma Coast Fire Protection District
- Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation & Open Space District
- Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District
- Timber Cove Fire Protection District
- Sonoma County Fire Protection District

The MJHMP includes two volumes. Volume 1 contents apply to all partners and Sonoma County in its entirety. Volume 2 includes an Annex, or chapter, for each of the participating local agencies and special districts. The City of Santa Rosa Annex, found in Volume 2 Chapter 3, addresses City-specific vulnerabilities to natural hazards such as earthquake, flood, and wildfire and includes mitigation action items to minimize the effect these natural hazards have on people, property, and natural systems. The City's Annex updates the City's current Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) adopted in January 2017, and incorporates all actionable items included in the City's Community Wildlife Protection Plan adopted in September 2020.

BACKGROUND

An LHMP is a five-year plan that identifies the natural hazards faced by a local agency or special district, assesses vulnerabilities to these hazards, and identifies mitigation strategies that can be taken to reduce or alleviate the loss of life, personal injury, and damage to property and natural systems that otherwise might result from said natural hazards. LHMPs must include a community profile, hazards assessment, risk assessment, mitigation actions, and implementation and maintenance programs. LHMPs are reviewed by the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) and require Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) review and approval. LHMPs have an annual progress reporting requirement and during this time changes to an approved LHMP can be made.

The [Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000](#) (DMA 2000) requires that state, tribal, and local governments have an approved LHMP in order to be eligible to receive certain federal grants related to disaster preparedness. Requirements and procedures to implement hazard mitigation planning provisions may be found in the Code of Federal Regulations, Stafford Act Title 44, Chapter 1, Part 201 ([44 CFR Part 201](#)).

An LHMP differs from an emergency response plan in that it is proactive rather than reactive. An LHMP must include mitigation strategies in an implementation plan that the local agency will strive to carry out, and it must be updated every five years. Mitigation actions are suggested and carried out by various City departments.

On January 10, 2017, the Council adopted the City's current LHMP in compliance with California Department of Emergency Services (Cal OES) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) five-year update requirements.

On August 22, 2018, City Manager Sean McGlynn signed a Letter of Commitment to the State Hazard Mitigation Officer to be a participating jurisdiction in the Sonoma County multijurisdictional hazard mitigation planning project. The City's goals for this project include increasing local collaboration around disaster planning and utilizing the planning process to develop an update to the City's LHMP.

On July 23, 2020, the MJHMP Steering Committee held the first of nine public meetings which covered the planning process, Steering Committee roles and responsibilities, plan review, the public involvement strategy, and the jurisdictional Annex development process.

On July 21, 2021, a public webinar was held to provide an overview of the MJHMP and solicit feedback.

On August 6, 2021 the Draft MJHMP was submitted to Cal OES and FEMA for review. On September 2, 2021, Cal OES and FEMA provided feedback requiring minor changes to the MJHMP which were incorporated prior to resubmittal of the documents for approval.

On September 27, 2021 Cal OES and FEMA approved the MJHMP pending adoption by the City Council.

ANALYSIS

The City elected to participate in the development of an MJHMP recognizing that hazards cross jurisdictional and political boundaries. The benefits of taking a multijurisdictional approach to hazard mitigation planning include the ability to pool resources and eliminate redundant activities within a planning area that has uniform risk exposure and vulnerabilities, creating opportunities for coordination and collaboration, and the ability to create stronger grant applications by joining with other agencies.

A core planning team consisting of a contract consultant and County staff facilitated development of the MJHMP and a Steering Committee was assembled to oversee the MJHMP planning process. The Steering Committee consisted of Sonoma County governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, and coordination with other local, state, and federal agencies involved in hazard mitigation occurred throughout development of the MJHMP. City staff served as Vice Chair of the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee and planning partners chose "*Create a resilient Sonoma County for the whole community.*" to serve as the mission statement for the MJHMP.

The MJHMP and updated LHMP will integrate into the Safety Element of the City's General Plan and will serve multiple purposes, including:

- Enhancing public awareness and understanding of the hazards that threaten public health, safety, and welfare
- Creating a decision tool for management to take action to address vulnerabilities to future disasters
- Promoting compliance with state and federal program requirements to ensure that the City can take full advantage of state and federal grant and disaster reimbursement eprograms
- Enhancing local policies for hazard mitigation capability to provide the policy basis for mitigation actions
- Providing inter-jurisdictional coordination of mitigation-related programming
- Serving as a foundational document for the General Plan Safety Element update

MJHMP Components:

The MJHMP is comprised of two volumes. Volume 1 includes all federally required elements of a disaster mitigation plan as they apply to the entirety of Sonoma County. Volume 1 elements include:

Volume 1 Part 1 – Planning Process and Community Profile

This MJHMP section provides an introduction to hazard mitigation planning and explains the legal requirements for, and purposes of, the MJHMP and explains the collaborative processes used in its development. A Sonoma County profile includes geographic, physical, development, and historical overviews, contains information about cultural, scenic, and natural resources, major past hazard events, as well as information related to the County's demographics and economy. Part 1 also reviews Sonoma County's legal and regulatory, fiscal, administrative and technical, National Flood Insurance Program, public outreach, development and permitting capabilities.

Volume 1 Part 2 – Risk Assessment and Rating

Risk assessment is the process of measuring the potential loss of life, personal injury, economic injury, and property damage that may result from natural hazards in order to determine the vulnerability of people, buildings, and infrastructure. This MJHMP section addresses how Sonoma County's nine identified Hazards of Concern were determined and ranked based on history, risk assessment tools, and modeling and exposure analysis. Each Hazard of Concern has a dedicated MJHMP Chapter (Chapters 7-15).

Sonoma County's areawide Hazards of Concern* by rating include:

- Landslide/Mass Movement – 42

- Earthquake – 36
- Wildfire – 36
- Dam Failure – 24
- Flood – 18
- Sea-Level Rise – 18
- Severe Weather – 18
- Drought – 12
- Tsunami – 5

*Note that Santa Rosa-specific Hazards of Concern are discussed in the Volume 2 City Annex portion of this report beginning on page 7.

Though not a rated MJHMP Hazard of Concern, a chapter is dedicated to Climate Change (Chapter 16). Chapter 16 recognizes the measureable impact climate change will have on the occurrence and severity of natural hazards and includes projections for how climate change might impact local communities. The MJHMP Steering Committee also identified additional hazards, both natural and human-caused, as having potential to impact Sonoma County. These Hazards of Interest, including public health emergencies, domestic and international terrorism, and cyberterrorism, including cyberattack are discussed in Chapter 17 but are not included in the risk rating.

Volume 1 Part 3 – Mitigation Strategy

Part 3 includes chapters related to MJHMP Mission Statement, Goals, and Objectives, Mitigation Best Practices and Adaptive Capacity, Area-Wide Action Plan, and Plan Adoption and Maintenance.

Hazard mitigation plans must identify goals for reducing long-term vulnerabilities to identified hazards (44 CFR Section 201.6(c)(3)(i)). The Steering Committee and planning partners established the following MJHMP goals:

- Protect people and minimize loss of life, injury, and social impacts
- Minimize potential for loss of property, economic and social impacts, and displacement due to hazard.
- Minimize potential for environmental impacts and consider a broad-range of mitigation solutions, including nature-based solutions where feasible
- Communicate natural hazard risk to the whole community within Sonoma County
- Support and inform the development of relevant mitigation policies and programs.

- Promote an adaptive and resilient Sonoma County that proactively anticipates the future impacts from hazards within the county
- Pursue the development and implementation of long-term, cost-effective, and environmentally sound mitigation projects
- Enhance the capability/capacity of the Sonoma County planning area to prepare, respond and recover from the impact of natural hazards

Chapter 20 discusses mitigation best practices and adaptive capacity and includes recommended actions that were selected based on an analysis of each planning partner's ability to implement the action. Each of the identified Hazards of Concern are evaluated at a personal, corporate, and government level scale for the ability to manipulate the hazard, reduce exposure to the hazard, reduce vulnerability to the hazard, and build local capacity to respond to or prepare for the hazard.

Some of the actions identified to build capacity for adapting to both current and future risks include:

- Incorporating climate change adaptation into relevant local and regional plans and projects
- Establishing a climate change adaptation and hazard mitigation public outreach and education program
- Building collaborative relationships between regional entities and neighboring communities to promote complementary adaptation and mitigation strategy development and regional approaches
- Establishing an ongoing monitoring program to track local and regional climate impacts and adaptation strategy effectiveness
- Increasing participation of low-income, immigrant, non-English-speaking, racially and ethnically diverse, and special-needs residents in planning and implementation
- Asking local employers and business associations to participate in local efforts to address climate change and natural hazard risk reduction
- Conducting a communitywide assessment and develop a program to address health, socioeconomic, and equity vulnerabilities
- Focusing planning and intervention programs on neighborhoods that currently experience social or environmental injustice or bear a disproportionate burden of potential public health impacts
- Using performance metrics and data to evaluate and monitor the impacts of climate change and natural hazard risk reduction strategies on public health and social equity.

MJHMP Implementation

The Steering Committee developed an MJHMP implementation and maintenance strategy that includes grant monitoring and coordination, a strategy for continued public involvement, a commitment to plan integration with other relevant plans and programs, and a recommitment from the planning partnership to actively monitor and evaluate the plan over the five-year performance period.

The LHMP Planning Team (detailed below) and the MJHMP Steering Committee will meet at least annually to ensure implementation of mitigation actions and to prepare the required annual progress report.

Senate Bill 379 requires local jurisdictions to adopt the LHMP into the Safety Element of the City's General Plan to maintain maximum post disaster aid eligibility. City staff will address this within the current General Plan Update (Santa Rosa Forward) process.

Final MJHMP FEMA Approval

The MJHMP must document that it has been formally adopted by the governing bodies of the jurisdictions requesting federal approval of the plan (44 CFR Section 201.6(c)(5)). For multijurisdictional plans, each jurisdiction requesting approval must document that it has been formally adopted.

County staff will present the MJHMP to the Board of Supervisors for review and adoption on December 7, 2021.

Volume 2

Volume 2 is comprised of the Annexes for each local agency and special district participating in the MJHMP. The City of Santa Rosa Annex is found in Chapter 3 beginning on page 81. The elements included in the City of Santa Rosa Annex include:

Local Hazard Mitigation Planning Team. The LHMP Planning Team included representatives from each City department and contributed to development of the City's Annex and will remain instrumental throughout its implementation and the annual review process.

Jurisdiction Profile. This section includes information about the City's geographic location, employers who are headquartered in Santa Rosa, the City's Köppen climate classification and "typical" weather patterns, and a brief history of the City from Native American habitation beginning approximately 7,000 years ago, through the Gold Rush days and City incorporation in 1868, through the substantial growth periods beginning after World War II, to the 2017 wildfires. The City's governing body format is also highlighted.

Current Trends. This section discusses the City’s population gains between 2000 and 2016 and the slight population losses that have been recorded since 2017, as well as anticipated and current development trends.

Capability Assessment. This section provides an assessment of existing capabilities for hazard mitigation strategy implementation. Findings of the capability assessment were used to identify opportunities to expand, initiate, or integrate capabilities to further hazard mitigation goals and objectives.

Integration Review. This section identifies where integration of hazard mitigation information into other relevant planning mechanisms such as General Plans and Capital Improvement Plans is already in place, and where there are opportunities for future integration.

Risk Ratings and Ranking. This section includes past occurrences of Hazards of Concern for which specific damage was recorded in the City, a ranking of City of Santa Rosa Hazards of Concern, and Repetitive Loss Properties information.

As described previously in the Volume 1 section of this report, the rating process involved an assessment of the occurrence likelihood for each hazard, along with its potential impacts on people, property, natural systems, and the economy.

City of Santa Rosa Hazard Risk Ratings and Ranking			
Rank	Hazard Type	Risk Rating Score (Probability x Impact)	Category
1	Earthquake	36	High
2	Wildfire	34	High
3	Severe Weather	30	Medium
4	Dam Failure	26	Medium
5	Flood	18	Medium
6	Landslide	18	Medium
7	Drought	6	Low
8	Sea Level Rise	0	None
9	Tsunami	0	None

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The MJHMP was promoted via a multi-media public involvement strategy. Engagement opportunities included virtual public meetings, a hazard mitigation survey, a Sonoma County project website, a City of Santa Rosa project website, the use of social media, and multiple media releases. The table below provides a summary of public engagement events and the number of attendees.

MJHMP Public Engagement Activities		
Date	Location	Attendees
2/25/2021	Virtual Public Meeting/ Story Map Presentation	109
Presentations at Various Community Organizations		
4/7/2021	Windsor Senior Citizens Advisory Committee	24
5/10/2021	Bodega Bay Community Emergency Response Team	16
5/11/2021	Oakmont Citizens Advisory Committee	92
5/11/2021	Cotati City Council Meeting	56
5/12/2021	Town of Windsor Parks and Recreation	44
5/12/2021	Mark West Community Advisory Committee	72
5/17/2021	North County Citizens Organized to Prepare for Emergency	~25
5/20/2021	California Wildfire Recovery Roundtable	~70
5/25/2021	Springs Citizens Organized to Prepare for Emergency	~50
5/25/2021	Town of Windsor Planning Commission	17
6/14 to 7/8/2021	Open Public Comment Period	0
Total		~575

FISCAL IMPACT

Following adoption of the MJHMP and LHMP update, the City will be eligible to apply for additional funding through federal mitigation grant programs and be eligible to receive post-disaster recovery funding from the State of California should a disaster occur. Departments may also seek to fund specific mitigation actions through future budget processes.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Adoption of the MJHMP and LHMP update is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a “project” pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378 (b) in that it does not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment. In addition, or in the alternative, adoption of the MJHMP and LHMP is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)3, because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that adoption of the MJHMP and LHMP may have a significant effect on the environment and therefore adoption of the plans is not subject to CEQA.

Adoption of the MJHMP and LHMP update is consistent with the City of Santa Rosa General Plan, involves feasibility and planning studies, data collection and research, and does not have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Any future projects that may result from mitigation activities included in the MJHMP or LHMP will undergo additional CEQA review.

NOTIFICATION

A public hearing notice was posted at City Hall and advertised in the Press Democrat, pursuant to Zoning Code Section 20-66.020(D), Alternative to Mailing, because this item impacts Citywide interest.

Meeting details were also posted on the City's dedicated [Local Hazard Mitigation Plan website](#) and promoted via the City's social media channels and City Connections newsletter.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: [Local Hazard Mitigation Plan](#), October 2016
- Attachment 2: City of Santa Rosa Letter of Intent dated August 22, 2018
- Attachment 3: MJHMP Volume 1, October 2021
- Attachment 4: MJHMP Volume 2, October 2021
- Resolution

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