

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

1.1: Introduction

The Marion County Emergency Management Commission (EMC) was awarded a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (IHSEMD) in 2009 for the development of a comprehensive multi-jurisdictional multi-hazard mitigation plan. The plan was completed and approved by FEMA in 2012. The EMC hired the Southern Iowa Council of Governments (SICOG) to assist in the planning process and the writing of the mitigation plan.

1.2: Purpose of the Document

This multi-jurisdictional multi-hazard mitigation plan (plan) has been prepared in order to:

- ☛ Comply with both, Federal and State disaster mitigation planning requirements;
- ☛ Provide a comprehensive hazard analysis/risk assessment that best defines the hazards most likely to impact Marion County, Iowa, and the various jurisdictions, including cities and schools, within the county;
- ☛ Identify hazard mitigation activities that would lessen or eliminate the effects of the hazards identified; and
- ☛ Outline a strategy for the implementation of hazard mitigation projects.

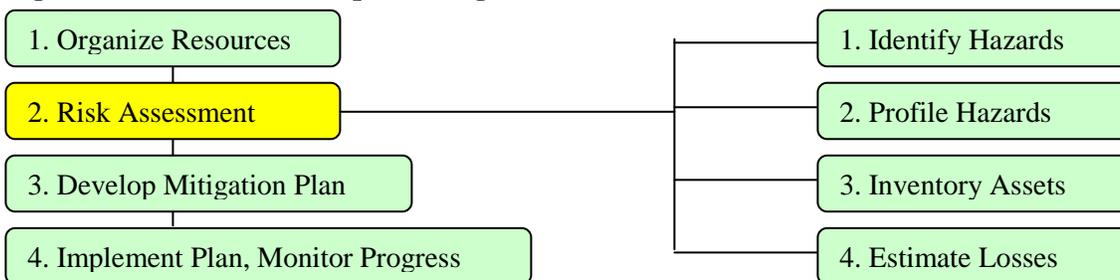
This plan was developed based on the input of elected local officials and staff, community leaders, business leaders, educators, interested public, public health professionals, utility managers, local fire departments, the County’s Sheriff’s department, local economic development staff, educators, county engineering staff, volunteers, news media, School officials, other City and County officials, and the Marion County Emergency Management Agency (EMA).

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires that all jurisdictions that wished to receive mitigation funds after November 2004 would have to complete a multi-hazard mitigation plan meeting certain planning processes and requirements. All jurisdictions are required to participate in the planning process and adopt the completed plan.

1.3: Hazard Mitigation Planning Process

In an effort to meet the Federal DMA 2000 requirements, we are implementing this planning process using the following steps.

Figure 1.1: FEMA Four-Step Planning Process



The goals of this process include:

- ☛ Build relationships among those who will manage either the disaster mitigation or the assets of the community;
- ☛ Develop and itemize hazards, including those local officials usually do not consider in planning;
- ☛ Develop and itemize assets and possible losses in order to identify means to protect those;
- ☛ Develop obtainable goals in a written format, prioritized, to enable the community to meet them at a reasonable cost instead of deal with extraneous purchases or excessive emergency purchases; and
- ☛ Provide information in support of the mitigation plan to aid in grant and proposal writing.

Before we review each part of the mitigation process, we must provide a background of the community that we can incorporate into the hazard analysis.

1.4: Key Definitions and Acronyms

Multi-hazard mitigation efforts are based on definitions and principals of good planning as a means to reduce losses. MITIGATION: to cause to become less harsh or hostile; to make less severe or painful

The following acronyms and abbreviations are found throughout this document:

- ☛ Committee or Team: The Marion County Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee or Team, the group of appointed and volunteer officials that directed the creation of this mitigation plan
- ☛ CRS: Community Rating System
- ☛ DMA 2000: Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000
- ☛ EMA: Emergency Management Agency
- ☛ EMC: Marion County Emergency Management Commission or Coordinator, depending on use/context
- ☛ EMS: Emergency Medical Services, such as ambulance and rescue teams
- ☛ EPA: United States Environmental Protection Agency
- ☛ FEMA: The Federal Emergency Management Agency
- ☛ FIRM: Flood Hazard Rate Map
- ☛ HARA: hazard analysis and risk assessment (a step in the planning process)
- ☛ HAZMAT: Hazardous Materials, generally as defined by the EPA
- ☛ HMGP: Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
- ☛ IHSEMD: Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division
- ☛ NCDC: National Climactic Data Center
- ☛ NFIP: National Flood Insurance Program
- ☛ NIMS: National Incident Management System
- ☛ PH: Marion County Public Health
- ☛ SICO: Southern Iowa Council of Governments
- ☛ USDA: United States Department of Agriculture

1.5: Assurance to Compliance with FEMA Requirements

This multi-jurisdictional mitigation plan complies with Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division's and FEMA's planning guidance; FEMA regulations, rules, guidelines, and checklists; Code of Federal Regulations; existing Federal and State laws; and such other reasonable criterion as the President/Governor, Federal/State legislatures and IHLSEM/FEMA may establish in consultation with local governments while the plan is being developed. This plan also meets the minimum planning requirements for all FEMA mitigation programs, such as the Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Program, the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Program, and the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), and where appropriate, other FEMA mitigation related programs such as the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP), the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and the Community Rating System (CRS).

1.6: Multi-jurisdiction Plan

The contract for this plan indicates it is a multi-jurisdiction plan according to terms in Section 201.6(c)(5) and, therefore, all area jurisdictions were asked to approve and adopt this plan, as found in **Appendix A**. The following jurisdictions are formally part of this contract and have approved the jurisdiction plan:

- ☛ Marion County (covering rural areas) – including the following parties that helped in the planning process and serve parts of the rural county but did not separately adopt the plan: Red Rock Army Corps of Engineers, Pella Electric Cooperative, and other districts
- ☛ City of Bussey
- ☛ City of Bridgewater
- ☛ City of Harvey
- ☛ City of Knoxville
- ☛ City of Melcher-Dallas

- ☛ City of Pella – including the Pella Hospital in Pella and Pella Corporation
- ☛ City of Pleasantville
- ☛ City of Swan
- ☛ Clay Township Fire
- ☛ Indiana Township Fire
- ☛ Central College
- ☛ Knoxville Community School District (CSD)
- ☛ Melcher-Dallas CSD
- ☛ Pella CSD
- ☛ Twin Cedars CSD
- ☛ Knoxville Hospital and Clinics
- ☛ Pella Regional Health Center

The following jurisdictions are part of the grant proposal but did not decide to participate in the plan. Some basic information is provided in the plan about these jurisdictions in the proper context of the county:

- ☛ City of Marysville
- ☛ City of Hamilton
- ☛ Pella Christian School

Pleasantville CSD participated in some parts of the planning processes but did not evaluate or select mitigation actions and did not adopt the plan. Those parts of the plan in which this CSD participated are included in the plan.

There are no jurisdictions on the borders of the county with part of the city in another county. No jurisdictions operating solely outside of the county were involved directly in the plan, although surrounding county information and leadership were consulted.

1.7: Plan Focus

This is a multi-jurisdictional, multi-hazard mitigation plan covering the entire county – the planning area. The plan focuses on natural hazards as part of the effort to meet DMA 2000 requirements. However, it was deemed important to address man-made hazards in order to meet local goals and objectives.

1.8: Project Timeframe

The following chart outlines the timeframe of the implementation of the mitigation plan.

Figure 1.2: Marion County Hazard Mitigation Plan Timeline

Task/Month	2010				2011				2012			
	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12
Grant Award												
Contracts Signed												
Team Creation												
Background Study												
Hazard ID and Vulnerability Assessment												
Capability Assessment												
Goals, Objectives, Alternative Mitigation Measures												
Implementation Strategy												
Draft Mitigation Plan												
Final Mitigation Plan												
Planning Team Meetings												
Final Adoption and Submittal to FEMA												

1.9: Executive Summary

Marion County and its jurisdictions were active in the planning document and did a good job providing the data necessary to complete the successful project. The project took many months to complete but the planning team was able to meet eight times, and individual jurisdictions hosted the consultant to discuss mitigation projects. The final plan includes 11 chapters organized after the planning process required by the DMA 2000. Appendices include some of the maps, charts, and data that support the plan as well as approval information, adoption resolutions, and meeting information showing public involvement. The jurisdictions were directly involved in selecting the hazards to profile, in the profile itself, in the data collection about critical assets, in identifying the capabilities, in selecting goals and objectives, in analyzing mitigation actions, and in prioritizing those selected for implementation. Committee work permeates this plan. Local governments have adopted this plan and intend to implement the plan over the next five years. Local officials are well aware that the plan ensures eligibility for federal funds and that they are not obligated to implement the plan exactly as presented, since issues, hazard risks, and funding availability change over time. In 2014, the county should seek HMGP or PDM funds to begin formally updating the plan. In the meantime, the plan should be consulted and considered as projects are programmed and budgeted each year in each jurisdiction.

1.10: Disclaimer

This mitigation plan is the best representation of the needs, concerns, and ideas of the active members of the mitigation planning team, the public that comments, elected officials that comment, and the consultant. The ideas presented in this plan are not meant to be legally binding or represent the final authority on hazard mitigation issues. Local, state, and federal officials shall make final decisions as to what projects are undertaken or funds are used. This plan provides recommendations only.