

TOWN OF DEWEY BEACH

General Profile

- a. Town of Dewey Beach is a coastal town that encompassed 0,3 square miles
- b. 2020 Census, the population of the Town of Dewey Beach is 424
- c. Economy centers on the tourism and vacation industry.

Top Hazards

- a. flooding
- b. wind related events and
- c. winter storms
- d. extreme heat / cold

Plans and Programs

	HMP	DRP	CLUP	FMP	SMP	EOP	COOP	REP	SARA	TRANS	CIP	REG-PL	HPP	ZO	SO	FDPO	NFIP	CRS	BC
Dewey Beach			X		X	X	X				P	X		X	X	X	X	X	X

P=Pending

Codes

- a. 2012 IRC/IBC Sussex County

Significant indicators for a local jurisdiction’s ability to implement a mitigation strategy

Comprehensive Plan Update	Plan Status:	2021		
BCEGS Grades	BCEGS Grade	8		
NFIP Participation	NFIP Entry Date	6/18/82		
CRS Communities	CRS Entry Date	10/1/94	CRS Class:	9 (2022)

Self-Assessment	Technical Capability	Fiscal Capability	Administrative Capability
	H	H	M

NFIP Registered Repetitive Loss Properties

	Number of Properties	Number of Losses	Total Cost
Severe Repetitive Loss Properties			
	1	5	\$211,718
	1	4	\$64,997
	1	4	\$84,004

Issues

- a. RL 30 RL over 10 years old. Last claim sept 2006 Other residence \$15,555.90
- b. Reed Avenue? Claim about 5 years ago?

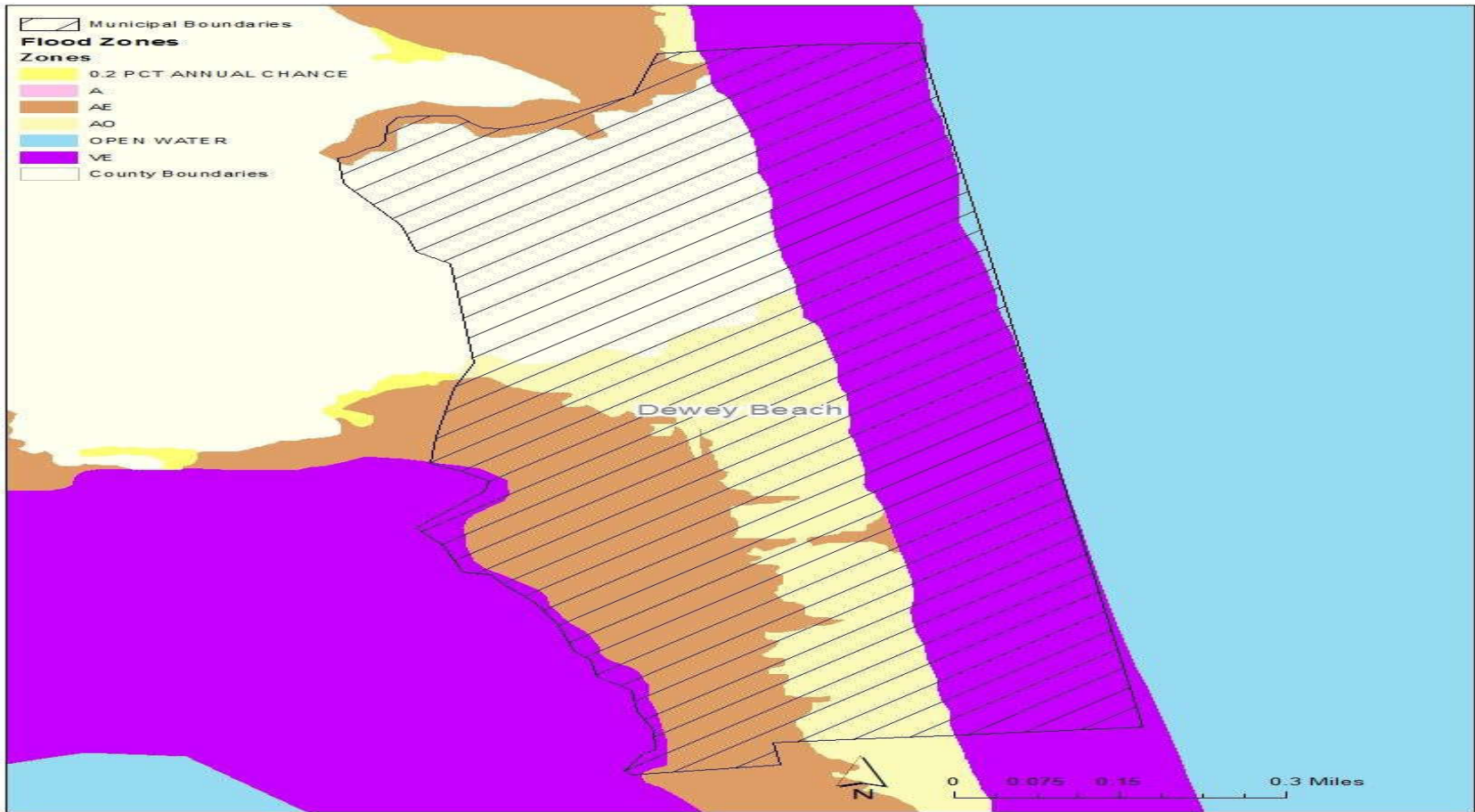
Project Description	Adopted	Priority	Timeline	Status	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source
Previous Plan Mitigation Actions Review						
Develop a Disaster Warning System to notify the community of an impending disaster.	No	High	Short term	Website upgrade	\$6300	Own Sources
Consider reconstructing the Rehoboth Bay shoreline which has been eroded due to heavy flooding from seawater and drainage from Nor' Easter storms. Inland Bays Street Beach Land Restoration	No	Moderate	Short term	Not started	\$1M	HMGP, FMA,PDM, USACE
Prepare and stock handouts of what to do in case of a disaster.	No	High	Short term	Not started	\$1,500	HMGP, FMA, PDM, CDBG
Prepare an update to the Town's Emergency Operation Plan.	No	High	Short term	Not started	\$25,000	CDBG, HSGP

Project Description	Adopted	Priority	Timeline	Status	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source
Mitigation Actions Started / Completed since 2016 Plan Update						
Pump station instillation Byard and Belview.	Yes	High	High	Completed	1M+	Town
Enter for Inland Bays Street Beach land Restoration. New outfall Reed Street, relining, upgraded duckbill valves	No			Ongoing	\$480,000 approved	ARPA, EDA

Project Description	Adopted	Priority	Timeline	Status	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source
Potential / New Mitigation Actions for Consideration						
Residential Elevation Program				Pending up to 5 feet per	\$50,000 to \$75,000 per	FEMA, BRIC, Homeowner

Issues

- a. Main concern is stormwater and infrastructure management Infrastructure fund in place.
- b. Elevation of repetitive loss structures



5. CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT

This section of the Plan discusses the capability of Sussex County and the participating municipal jurisdictions to implement hazard mitigation activities. It consists of four sections:

What is a Capability Assessment?

- Capability Assessment Update.
- Capability Assessment Findings; and □ Conclusions on Local Capability.

Requirement §201.6(b)(3): *The planning process must include a review and incorporation, if appropriate, of existing plans, studies, reports, and technical information.*

ASSESSMENT

The purpose of conducting a capability assessment is to determine the ability of a local jurisdiction to implement a mitigation strategy and to identify potential opportunities for establishing or enhancing specific mitigation policies, programs, or projects⁴⁸. As in any planning process, it is essential to establish which goals, objectives, and actions are feasible based on an understanding of the organizational capacity of those agencies or departments tasked with their implementation. In addition, a capability assessment helps determine which mitigation actions are practical and likely to be implemented over time, given the community's fiscal, technical, administrative, and political framework.

A capability assessment has two primary components: an inventory of a local jurisdiction's relevant plans, programs, or policies already in place; and an analysis of its capacity to carry them out. Examining local capabilities will detect gaps, shortfalls, or weaknesses with ongoing government activities. A capability assessment also highlights the positive mitigation measures already in place or being implemented at the local government level, which should continue to be supported and enhanced, if possible, through future mitigation efforts.

The capability assessment completed for Sussex County is a critical part of the foundation for designing an effective hazard mitigation strategy. Coupled with the *Risk Assessment*, the *Capability Assessment* helps identify and target meaningful mitigation actions for incorporation in the *Mitigation Strategy* portion of the All-Hazard Mitigation Plan. In addition, it helps establish the goals and objectives for Sussex County to pursue under this Plan and ensures that those goals and objectives are realistically achievable under given local conditions.

ASSESSMENT UPDATE

The original Capability Assessment survey distributed in 2003 to local government officials asked specific questions about existing local plans, policies, programs, or ordinances that contributed to and hindered the community's ability to implement hazard mitigation actions. In addition, questions were asked concerning each jurisdiction's technical, fiscal, administrative, and political capabilities to implement mitigation actions.

⁴⁸ While the Final Rule for implementing the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 does not require a local capability assessment to be completed for local hazard mitigation plans, it is a critical step to develop a mitigation strategy that meets the needs of each jurisdiction while considering their own unique abilities. The Rule does state that a community's mitigation strategy should be "based on existing authorities, policies, programs and resources, and its ability to expand on and improve these existing tools" (44 CFR, Part 201.6(c) (3)).

The survey results provided an extensive inventory of existing local plans, policies, programs, and ordinances and required local officials to self-assess their jurisdiction’s specific capabilities. The 2016 plan information was reviewed and updated during interviews conducted with community officials as part of this update.

Initially, the information provided by the participating jurisdictions in response to the survey questionnaire was incorporated into a database for further analysis. A general scoring methodology^[1] was then applied to quantify and rank each jurisdiction’s overall capability relative to one another. According to the scoring system, each plan, policy, ordinance, or program was assigned a point value based on its relevance to hazard mitigation. Additional points were added based on each jurisdiction’s self-assessment of its fiscal, technical, administrative, and political capability. A total score and general capability rating (High, Moderate, or Limited) were then determined according to the total number of points received. The survey results also serve as a good source of introspection for those jurisdictions wishing to improve their capability, as identified gaps, weaknesses, or conflicts may be recast as opportunities for specific mitigation actions.

During this Plan update process, the Capability Assessment results from the 2016 plan were distributed and discussed with participating municipalities. The 2016 information was shared with municipal officials, and areas, where plans, ordinances, political, fiscal, administrative, and technical capability had changed were indicated. This information was shared at the Committee meeting and incorporated into the overall Capability Assessment.

ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

The findings of the capability assessment are summarized in this Plan to provide insight into the relevant capacity of Sussex County’s jurisdictions to implement hazard mitigation activities. All information is based upon the responses provided by local government officials during one-on-one interviews and meetings.

Table 5-1 on the following page summarizes the local plans and programs in place for Sussex County’s participating local governments. An “X” indicates that the given Plan or program is currently in place and implemented by the local jurisdiction. A more detailed discussion follows, incorporating additional information based on the narrative comments provided by local officials.

	HMP	DRP	CLUP	FMP	SMP	EOP	COOP	REP	SARA	TRANS	CIP	REG-PL	HPP	ZO	SO	FDPO	NFIP	CRS	BC
Sussex County	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Bethany Beach	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bethel DNP																			
Blades			X			X			X					X	X	X	X		X

	HMP	DRP	CLUP	FMP	SMP	EOP	COOP	REP	SARA	TRANS	CIP	REG-PL	HPP	ZO	SO	FDPO	NFIP	CRS	BC
Bridgeville	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Dagsboro DNP																			
Delmar	X		X			X	X		X	X	X			X	X	X	X		X
Dewey Beach			X		X	X	X				P	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Ellendale			X						X					X	X				X
Fenwick Island	X		X	X	X	X			X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Frankford	X		X	X										X	X	X	X		X
Georgetown	X		X	X		I/C			X		W/W	X		X	X	X	X		X
Greenwood DNP																			
Henlopen Acres		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X
Laurel	X	X	X	X	X	A/CP								X	X	X	X		X
Lewes	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Millsboro		X	X	X	@					D/D	X			X	X	X	X		X
Millville	X		X	X					X			X		X	X	X	X		X
Milton	X		X			X								X	X	X	X		X

	HMP	DRP	CLUP	FMP	SMP	EOP	COOP	REP	SARA	TRANS	CIP	REG-PL	HPP	ZO	SO	FDPO	NFIP	CRS	BC
Ocean View	X		X		X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X
Rehoboth Beach	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Seaford	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Selbyville	X		X	X								X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Slaughter Beach			X			X	X		X			X		X	X	X	X		X
South Bethany	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X

Table 5-1. Local Plans and Policies in Place

Key to Table 5.1

- **HMP** – Hazard Mitigation Plan
- **DRP** – Disaster Recovery Plan
- **CLUP** – Comprehensive Land Use Plan
- **FMP** – Floodplain Management Plan / Flood Mitigation Plan
- **SMP** – Stormwater Management Plan
- **EOP** – Emergency Operations Plan
- **COOP** – Continuity of Operations Plan
- **REP** – Radiological Emergency Plan
- **SARA** – SARA Title III Emergency Response Plan
- **TRANS** – Transportation Plan
- **CIP** – Capital Improvements Plan (that regulates infrastructure in hazard areas)
- **REG-PL** – Regional Planning
- **HPP** – Historic Preservation Plan
- **ZO** – Zoning Ordinance
- **SO** – Subdivision Ordinance
- **FDPO** – Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance

- **NFIP** – National Flood Insurance Program
- **CRS** – Community Rating System
- **BC** – Building Codes
- **DNP** - Did Not Participate
- **P** - Pending
- **I/C** - In Jurisdictional City Code
- **W/W** - Wastewater
- **D/D** - DelDOT
- **@** - Stormwater surface matching planning grant for stormwater infrastructure management
- **S/C** - Sussex County 2012 IRC/IBC
- **A/CP** - Needs to adopt Sussex County EOP

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES

Hazard mitigation is widely recognized as one of the four primary phases of emergency management. Other phases include preparedness, response, and recovery. Each phase is interconnected with hazard mitigation. Planning for each phase is a critical part of a comprehensive emergency management program and a key to the successful implementation of hazard mitigation actions.

HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN (HMP)

A Hazard Mitigation Plan represents a community's blueprint for how they intend to reduce the impact of natural and human-caused hazards on people and the built environment. The essential elements of a Hazard Mitigation Plan include a risk assessment, capability assessment, and mitigation strategy. Twenty two of the 25 jurisdictions in Sussex County are participating in developing this Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazard Mitigation Plan, which was an increase of two jurisdictions since the 2016 Plan.

In addition, the survey shows that of the 22 jurisdictions participating, 14 jurisdictions have local hazard mitigation plans, which was an increase of seven jurisdictions since the 2016 Plan.

Fifteen jurisdictions, including Sussex County, report having completed a Floodplain Management Plan or Flood Mitigation Plan. In addition, 10 jurisdictions reported completing a Stormwater Management Plan which was an increase of three jurisdictions since the 2016 Plan.

DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN (DRP)

A Disaster Recovery Plan serves to guide the physical, social, environmental, and economic recovery and reconstruction process following a disaster. In many instances, hazard mitigation principles and practices are incorporated into local disaster recovery plans with the intent of capitalizing on opportunities to break the cycle of repetitive disaster losses.

Survey results indicate that nine jurisdictions have prepared a Disaster Recovery Plan, which was an increase of three since the 2016 Plan.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN (EOP)

An emergency operations plan outlines responsibilities and how resources are deployed following an emergency or disaster. Survey results indicate that 15 jurisdictions have an emergency operations plan, which was an increase of four jurisdictions since the 2016 Plan.

Sussex County has an EOP that was updated in 2004 and is available to the community via the Sussex County Emergency Operations Center Website.

The municipalities of Bethany, Bridgeville, Delmar, Fenwick Island, Lewes, Rehoboth Beach, Seaford, Selbyville, and South Bethany also have emergency operations plans to cover their jurisdictions. Several of the municipal officials indicated that their jurisdictions continue to rely on the County for emergency operations planning and management.

CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN (COOP)

COOP Plans establish a chain of command, line of succession and plans for backup or alternate emergency facilities in case of an extreme emergency.

Survey results indicate that 12 jurisdictions have completed COOP Plans which was an increase of four jurisdictions since the 2016 Plan. Many times, communities include COOP planning into their Emergency Operations Plan. An additional three communities also have completed a municipal EOP and may also have completed a COOP plan as part of that effort.

RADIOLOGICAL EMERGENCY PLAN (REP)

A Radiological Emergency Plan delineates roles and responsibilities for assigned personnel and the means to deploy resources in the event of a radiological accident. Survey results indicate that four jurisdictions have a Radiological Emergency Plan, which is an increase of one jurisdiction since the 2016 Plan. However, Sussex County indicated that their Radiological Emergency Plan is a component of their Emergency Operations Plan.

SARA TITLE III EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN (SARA)

A SARA Title III Emergency Response Plan outlines the procedures to be followed in the event of a chemical emergency such as the accidental release of toxic substances. These plans are required by Federal law under Title III of the Superfund Amendments and Re-authorization Act (SARA), also known as the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA). The Sussex County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) has developed an Emergency

Response Plan for hazardous materials incidents throughout the County in coordination with the Delaware State Emergency Response Commission. Sussex County LEPC maintains the goal to review and update the Per Hazardous Material Response Plan annually. The 2015 SERC Annual Report, the Sussex County Hazardous Material Response Plan is scheduled for review and update in 2016.

Only 16 jurisdictions report active SARA Title III Emergency Response Plans in place. Many of the municipalities participate in the LEPC through town and city representatives. In addition, the County LEPC has approximately 34 industry representatives engaged as members of the County LEPC.

GENERAL PLANNING CAPABILITIES

Hazard mitigation activities often involve agencies and individuals with planning, land use management, and risk management from other disciplines. Other stakeholders may include local planners, public works officials, and economic development specialists. In many instances, concurrent local planning efforts will help to

achieve or complement hazard mitigation goals even though they are not designed. Therefore, the Capability Assessment included a discussion with each jurisdiction regarding general planning capabilities.

REGIONAL PLANNING (REG-PL)

Regional planning refers to any planning effort that involves a community working in conjunction with neighboring jurisdictions. For example, the development of this All-Hazard Mitigation Plan is representative of a regional planning effort.

Survey results indicate that 13 jurisdictions participate in regional planning decisions.

Twelve jurisdictions also maintain a Capital Improvement Plan. In addition, Sussex County coordinates with municipalities on issues and projects related to the County's Comprehensive Plan and the State's *Livable Delaware* initiative. Many local jurisdictions also coordinate regional issues through the Sussex County Association of Towns (SCAT).

Sussex County's local jurisdictions are members of the Delaware League of Local Governments (DLLG). The DLLG is a statewide, nonprofit, nonpartisan association of city, town, and County governments established in 1963 to improve and assist local governments through legislative advocacy at the state and federal levels. The DLLG also serves as a clearinghouse for important governmental and business-oriented information.

COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN (CLUP)

A complete plan establishes the overall vision for what a community wants to be and is a guide to future governmental decision-making. Typically, a comprehensive plan comprises demographic conditions, land use, transportation elements, and community facilities. Given the broad nature of the plan and its regulatory standing in many communities, integrating hazard mitigation measures into the comprehensive plan can enhance the likelihood of achieving risk reduction goals, objectives, and actions.

Delaware requires its counties to adopt and regularly update comprehensive plans in conformity with the Quality-of-Life Act of 1988, Del. Code tit. 9 § 6960. The Act requires the plan to include the following elements: Economic Development, Housing, Conservation (including Agriculture), Historic Preservation, Recreation, Open Space, Accomplishments, Intergovernmental Coordination, Mobility, Water and Sewer, Community Facilities, and Future Land Use. An optional element is Community Design.

Local governments use such plans to establish land-use policies, identify growth areas, and consider various other community concerns, such as affordable housing availability, agriculture preservation, open space protection, historic preservation, economic development, and transportation mobility.

Delaware law mandates that all counties and municipalities have a comprehensive plan. In addition, under a change in Delaware law in 2011, counties and jurisdictions must review and update their plans for State certification every ten years while providing yearly updates on the implementation progress. The Sussex County Council adopted the County's 2018 comprehensive plan update.⁴⁹

TRANSPORTATION PLAN (TRANS)

A transportation plan identifies the means to gauge transportation demands and the options to meet those needs while considering the area's social, economic, and environmental characteristics. The development of transportation networks can significantly impact the amount, type, and location of future growth. As a result, transportation planning can dramatically affect future hazard vulnerability.

⁴⁹ <https://sussexcountyde.gov/comprehensive-plan>

Survey results indicate that most jurisdictions do not have their stand-alone transportation plan. Eight of the jurisdictions reported having a Transportation Plan, an increase of 3 jurisdiction since 2016 Plan. Transportation planning (including emergency evacuation) is commonly addressed as an element of the local comprehensive plans and in coordination with the Delaware Department of Transportation.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN (CIP)

A capital improvements plan guides the scheduling of spending on public improvements. A capital improvement plan can be an essential mechanism to guide future development away from identified hazard areas. Limiting public spending in hazardous areas is one of the most effective long-term mitigation actions available to local governments.

Survey results indicate that fourteen jurisdictions have capital improvement plans that regulate the provision or extension of infrastructure in hazard areas.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN (HPP)

A historic preservation plan is intended to preserve historic structures or districts within a community. An often-overlooked aspect of the historic preservation plan is the assessment of buildings and sites located in areas subject to natural hazards to include the identification of the most effective way to reduce future damages. This may involve retrofitting or relocation techniques that account for the need to protect buildings that do not meet current building standards or are within a historic district that cannot easily be relocated out of harm's way.

Survey results indicate that nine jurisdictions have historic preservation plans, which is no change from the 2016 Plan update.

ZONING ORDINANCES (ZO)

Zoning represents how local governments control land use. As part of a community's police powers, zoning protects the public health, safety, and welfare of those in each jurisdiction that maintains zoning authority. A zoning ordinance is a mechanism through which zoning is typically implemented. Since zoning regulations enable municipal governments to limit development type and density, they can be a powerful tool when applied in identified hazard areas. Survey results indicate that all 22 participating jurisdictions listed in the All-Hazard Mitigation Plan have a zoning ordinance.

SUBDIVISION ORDINANCES (SO)

A subdivision ordinance is intended to regulate the development of housing, commercial, industrial, or other uses, including associated public infrastructure, as land is subdivided into buildable lots for sale or future development. Subdivision design that accounts for natural hazards can dramatically reduce the exposure to future growth.⁵⁰

BUILDING CODES, PERMITTING, AND INSPECTIONS

Building Codes regulate construction standards. In many communities, permits are issued, and inspections of work take place on new construction. Decisions regarding the adoption of building codes (that account for

⁵⁰ For additional information regarding the use of subdivision regulations in reducing flood hazard risk, see Subdivision Design in Flood Hazard Areas. 1997. Morris, Marya. Planning Advisory Service Report Number 473. American Planning Association: Washington, D.C.

hazard risk), the permitting process required both before and after a disaster, and the enforcement of inspection protocols all affect the level of hazard risk a community faces. Surveys reaffirmed that all jurisdictions interviewed had adopted a local building code or administered by the County.

Sussex County currently has a MOU in place with the following local jurisdictions, and they are responsible for issuing of permits, certificate of occupancy, inspections, and enforcement. Sussex County is currently using 2012 IRC/IBC but in process of updating to 2020 codes to reflect the necessary changes.

Name	Name	Name
Town of Bethel	Town of Blades	Town of Bridgeville
Town of Dagsboro	Town of Dewey Beach	Town of Ellendale
Fenwick Island	Town of Frankford	Georgetown
Town of Greenwood	Henlopen Acres	Ocean View
Slaughter Beach	South Bethany	

Table 5-2. Building Codes and Permits Administered by County

In addition to using survey results, the adoption and enforcement of building codes by local jurisdictions were assessed using the Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS) program developed by the Insurance Services Office, Inc. (ISO)⁵¹ Under the BCEGS program, ISO assesses the building codes in effect in a particular community and how the community enforces its building codes, *with specific emphasis on mitigating losses from natural hazards*. The results of BCEGS assessments are routinely provided to ISO's member private insurance companies, which may offer rating credits for new buildings constructed in communities with strong BCEGS classifications. The concept is that communities with well-enforced, up-to-date codes should demonstrate better loss experience.

In conducting the assessment, ISO collects information related to personnel qualification and continuing education, as well as several daily inspections. This type of information, combined with local building codes, determines a grade for that jurisdiction. The grades range from 1 to 10, with the ideal lower grade. A BCEGS grade of 1 represents an exemplary commitment to building code enforcement, and a grade of 10 indicates less than minimum recognized protection. BCEGS grades for each of Sussex County's local jurisdictions are listed in **Table 5-4**.

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT CAPABILITY

Flooding represents the most significant natural hazard facing the nation. At the same time, the tools available to reduce the impacts associated with flooding are among the most developed compared to other hazard-specific mitigation techniques. In addition to approaches that cut across hazards, such as education, outreach, and the training of local officials, the *National Flood Insurance Program* (NFIP) contains specific regulatory measures that enable government officials to determine where and how growth occurs relative to

⁵¹ Participation in BCEGS is voluntary and may be declined by local governments if they do not wish to have their local building codes evaluated

flood hazards. Local governments voluntarily participate in the NFIP, but FEMA and DEMA promote the program as an essential step for implementing and sustaining an effective hazard mitigation program and as a critical indicator for measuring local capability.

For a County or municipality to join the NFIP, they must adopt a local flood damage prevention ordinance that requires jurisdictions to follow established minimum building standards in the floodplain. These standards require that all new buildings and substantial improvements to existing buildings be protected from damage by the 100-year flood and that new floodplain development will not aggregate existing flood problems or increase damage to other properties.

Another critical service provided by the NFIP is the mapping of identified flood hazard areas. Once prepared, the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) are used to assess flood hazard risk, regulate construction practices, and set flood insurance rates. FIRMs are an essential source of information to educate residents, government officials, and the private sector about the likelihood of flooding in their communities.

Only one community, Ellendale, is reported as a Non-Special Flood Hazard Area. **Table 5-4** summarizes NFIP participation for each of Sussex County's local jurisdictions.

An additional indicator of floodplain management capability is the number of participants in the Community Rating System (CRS). The CRS is an incentive-based program that encourages counties and municipalities to undertake defined flood mitigation activities beyond the minimum requirements of the NFIP, adding extra local measures to protect from flooding. All 18 creditable CRS mitigation activities are assigned a range of point values. Communities can apply for an improved CRS class after accumulating points and reaching identified thresholds. Class ratings, which run from 10 to 1, are tied to flood insurance premium reductions, as shown in **Table 5-3**. As class ratings improve (decrease), the percent reduction in flood insurance premiums for NFIP policyholders in that community increases.

CRS Class	Premium Reduction
1	45%
2	40%
3	35%
4	30%
5	25%
6	20%
7	15%
8	10%
9	5%

CRS Class	Premium Reduction
10	0

Table 5-3. CRS Premium Discounts, By Class⁵²

Community participation in the CRS is voluntary. Any community in full compliance with the rules and regulations of the NFIP may apply to FEMA for a CRS classification better than class 10. The CRS application process has been dramatically simplified over the past several years based on community comments to make the CRS more user-friendly as possible, and extensive technical assistance is also available for communities who request it.

Table 5-4 lists the current CRS communities in Sussex County. A total of seven municipalities belong to the Community Rating System. Of these there are three jurisdictions with a class 8, and four are class 9 communities.

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT PLAN (FMP)

Survey results indicate that 15 jurisdictions interviewed have floodplain management or flood mitigation plan. Through the CTP program, DNREC updated portions of New Castle, Kent, and Sussex County floodplain maps. The Kent and Sussex map updates are effective in June 2018.⁵³ As a result of these floodplain map updates, all communities in Delaware which participate in the National Flood Insurance Program will be required up adopt updated floodplain regulatory language to comply with NFIP requirements.

To assist communities in meeting these requirements, DNREC has developed “model” floodplain ordinances that communities may find easier to adopt, rather than amending existing floodplain regulations. Four model ordinances have been designed to assist coastal and non-coastal communities and communities wishing to adopt higher floodplain standards, which DNREC highly recommends reducing flood damage and lower flood insurance premiums.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN (SMP)

A stormwater management plan is designed to address flooding associated with stormwater runoff. The stormwater management plan is typically focused on design and construction measures intended to reduce the impact of more frequently occurring minor urban flooding.

Survey results indicate that nine of the jurisdictions interviewed have a stormwater management plan which was three more than reported in 2016. Many communities identified this as one of their hazard mitigation needs going forward. Several have projects under development utilizing state grants and technical resources to manage stormwater runoff.

COUNTY AND JURISDICTIONAL SELF-ASSESSMENT

In addition to the above inventory of existing plans, programs, and policies, the Capability Assessment required each local jurisdiction to evaluate the 2016 self-assessment of its capability to implement hazard mitigation activities. As part of this process, County and municipal officials were

⁵² FEMA- http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1458756801023http://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1458756801023-311019d76271533f6b21ce505df7bd3c/20_crs_508_apr2016.pdf

⁵³ <https://dnrec.alpha.delaware.gov/watershed-stewardship/waterways/floodplains/mapping/>

encouraged to consider the barriers to implementing mitigation strategies and the mechanisms that could further such strategies. In response to the survey questionnaire, local officials classified the capabilities listed the following abilities as either “limited,” “moderate,” or “high”:

- Technical Capability
- Fiscal Capability
- Administrative Capability

Table 5.4 summarizes the results of the self-assessment process for technical, fiscal, and administrative capabilities. An “L” indicates limited capability; an “M” indicated moderate capability; and an “H” indicates high capability. Further descriptions and discussions on each are provided below, in addition to some of general findings on political capability.

Jurisdiction	Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update	BCEGS Grade	Date of NFIP	CRS Date	CRS Class	Technical Capability (L, M, H)	Fiscal Capability (L, M, H)	Administrative Capability (L, M, H)
Sussex County	2018	8	10/1976	N/A	N/A	M	M	M
Bethany Beach	2017	N/A	04/1973	05/2009	8	M	M	M
Bethel			10/1981					
Blades	Update Under Revision	N/A	01/1981	N/A	N/A	L	L	M
Bridgeville	2019	8	01/1977	N/A	N/A	M	L	M
Dagsboro			6/1981					
Delmar	2020	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	L	L	L
Dewey Beach	2021	8	06/1982	10/1994	9	H	H	M
Ellendale	2022	8	N/A	N/A	N/A	L	L	L

Jurisdiction	Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update	BCEGS Grade	Date of NFIP	CRS Date	CRS Class	Technical Capability (L, M, H)	Fiscal Capability (L, M, H)	Administrative Capability (L, M, H)
Fenwick Island	2017 Update (2021 in progress)	8	03/1973	10/1994	9	M	M	M
Frankford	Adopted 2021	8	09/1981	N/A	N/A	M	L	M
Georgetown	Adopted 2021	8	05/2003	N/A	N/A	L	M	L
Greenwood			2/1978					
Henlopen Acres	Updated 2016	8	08/1978	N/A	N/A	M	M	M
Laurel	2018	6	01/1981	N/A	N/A	L	L	M
Lewes	2017	9	03/1977	UNK	8	H	M	M
Millsboro	2021	7	09/1978	N/A	N/A	H	H	H
Millville	Updated 2019	8	09/1981	N/A	N/A	L	L	L
Milton	2018	8	08/1978	N/A	N/A	L	M	M
Ocean View	Revised 2020	8	09/1980	N/A	N/A	H	M	H
Rehoboth Beach	2014 (Update Pending)	6	3/1973	UNK	8	H	M	H
Seaford	Updated 2020	6	02/1979	10/1996	9	M	M	H

Jurisdiction	Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update	BCEGS Grade	Date of NFIP	CRS Date	CRS Class	Technical Capability (L, M, H)	Fiscal Capability (L, M, H)	Administrative Capability (L, M, H)
Selbyville	Updated 2020	8	07/1991	N/A	N/A	M	M	M
Slaughter Beach	2016	8	07/1980	N/A	N/A	L	L	L
South Bethany	2016 (Update Pending)	Declined	10/1976	10/207	8/9	M	L	H

Table 5-4. Capability Assessment

TECHNICAL CAPABILITY

Technical capability can be defined as possessing the skills and tools needed to improve decision-making, including developing and implementing sound mitigation actions. For gauging the technical capability of Sussex County's local jurisdictions for mitigation planning purposes, the Capability Assessment interview focused on the local availability and application of Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

Due to financial limitations, most cities and towns don't employ GIS staff or have direct access to GIS systems. Sussex County maintains a GIS system. Many local officials also indicated that they rely on Sussex County and state agencies to provide necessary technical capabilities and resources.

The analysis of the responses to the Capability Assessment indicated that there is generally a *limited to the moderate* technical capability of Sussex County's jurisdictions to implement mitigation strategies. Eight of the 25 jurisdictions indicated they had limited technical ability, fifteen indicated they had average technical capacity, and two showed they had the high technical capability. Approximately six communities have shifted from low to moderate. This is a substantial shift in the technological capabilities of Sussex County communities to medium technical capability.

Recommendations: Technical capabilities among the communities in the County have significantly increased. The strategy of developing resource and capability sharing has been successful over the past five years. Several jurisdictions also have increased staffing to provide more technical capabilities within the community. However, there are still communities with limited technical capabilities throughout the County. Therefore, there remains a need for ongoing support for a systematic sharing of technical resources to support risk reduction strategy development. Sharing resources and capabilities with the County should continue to increase the technical capability to analyze natural hazards and develop meaningful actions to reduce their impact. This includes additional training to enhance the ability to use information technologies to facilitate the formulation, development, implementation, and monitoring of mitigation efforts.

FISCAL CAPABILITY

The ability to act is often closely associated with the money available to implement policies and projects. This may take the form of grants received or state and locally based revenue. The costs related to policy and project implementation vary widely. In some cases, policies are tied primarily to staffing costs associated with creating and monitoring a given program. In other cases, money is linked to an actual project, like the development of stormwater management strategies and the acquisition of flood-prone homes, which can require a substantial commitment from local, state, and federal funding sources.

It is imperative that jurisdictions research non-federal sources of revenue and funding for risk management strategies. This will reduce the dependence on the availability of federal and state funding to implement mitigation actions. Additional assistance may be available from economic development and private sector partnerships considering funding community resiliency to support overall growth and sustainability.

The analysis of the Capability Assessment responses indicated that a significant number of communities had moved from limited to the moderate fiscal capability of Sussex County's jurisdictions to implement mitigation strategies. This is partly due to substantial growth and development in the County.

Eleven jurisdictions indicated they had limited fiscal capability. Thirteen municipalities, and Sussex County, now identify as having moderate fiscal capabilities to support mitigation efforts. Only one, Dewey Beach, based on 2010 data, remains at a high budgetary capability.

Recommendations: The results of the local Capability Assessment should be used as a general guide to help craft achievable mitigation actions. When considering the effect of fiscal capability on implementing mitigation policies and projects, jurisdictions should consider whether the activities require monetary commitment or staff resources. Consideration should be given to open government and non-governmental grant funding sources. It may also be possible to combine resources such as Community Development Block Grants, rural development grants, and County or other resources to meet risk reduction priorities. In addition, it may be possible to create a regional effort by working with other municipalities to offset the implementation costs. Consideration should also be made whether the jurisdiction is willing to commit local revenue to assure community resiliency and sustainability.

To implement mitigation projects and policies, monetary commitment or staff resources will be required as a cost-share. This may be a non-federal match requirement, or the costs associated with staff time devoted to project administration, policy development, program implementation, and monitoring. Identifying eligible Pre-Disaster Mitigation projects and other federal funding sources identified in the Sussex County Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazard Mitigation Plan enables communities to compete nationally for available funding. Therefore, the County and municipal governments should consider, whenever possible, combining financial and staff resources to address hazards, most of which tend to impact regions rather than individual jurisdictions.

Finally, if local governments have access to an ongoing source of revenue rather than a strict reliance on grant funds, a more comprehensive and sustained mitigation effort can be achieved. Examples include the development of a stormwater utility fee, a special district for floodplain management, or developing a budgetary line item that specifically addresses hazard mitigation.

ADMINISTRATIVE CAPABILITY

County and municipal staffing and existing organizational structures for local governments were evaluated to implement mitigation strategies and administrative capability. The ability of a local government to develop

and implement mitigation projects, policies, and programs is directly tied to its ability to direct staff time and resources for that purpose.

The analysis of the responses to the Capability Assessment indicated that there is generally a *moderate to the high* administrative capability of Sussex County's jurisdictions to implement mitigation strategies. Three jurisdictions indicated they had limited organizational capability, while thirteen said they had moderate administrative capability. New in 2016 is that nine communities report high administrative capability. Local municipal jurisdictions in Sussex County indicated that they work cooperatively with the County on many activities, helping offset their organizational and staff limitations. This includes emergency-related activities coordinated by the Sussex County EOC and mutual aid agreements between police and fire departments, but not specifically mitigation activities. Many communities report an increase in staffing focused on municipal services and code enforcement. However, some local officials say minimal full-time staff to implement local government programs, and they rely heavily on volunteers, outside agencies, and professional consultants.

Recommendations: Demand for services continues to grow within the County. Many communities report that their year-round population has grown significantly over the past five years. In addition, many seasonal homeowners are now becoming permanent residents. This has created a demand for municipal services and an increase in staffing. The County and larger municipalities tend to possess a more substantial administrative capability than smaller communities. This is primarily due to fiscal limitations, as smaller jurisdictions have a limited tax base to support local government services. The development of local administrative capability could best be achieved through enhanced intergovernmental cooperation, outreach, training, and mentoring for smaller jurisdictions, as well as the sharing of resources, when appropriate.

POLITICAL CAPABILITY

Local governments needing to enhance local internal staff's emergency management expertise should consider sending a team to the free or low-cost training seminars available through DEMA's Training Program and FEMA's Emergency Management Institute. In addition, in preparing local mitigation strategies, local governments should look to integrate hazard mitigation activities into routine governmental functions whenever possible, particularly when limited to only a few full-time employees.

One of the most challenging capabilities to evaluate involves the political will of a jurisdiction to enact meaningful policies and projects designed to reduce the impact of future hazard events. Due to the nature of the difficulties, political capabilities were discussed in a more informal nature.

In many cases, hazard mitigation initiatives may not be a local priority or can be mistakenly seen by regional leaders as an impediment to other community goals. Therefore, the local political climate must be considered in designing mitigation strategies, as it could be the most challenging hurdle to overcome in their adoption or implementation.

The political capability was discussed in general terms. The discussions showed that Sussex County's jurisdictions generally have a *moderate* political capability to implement mitigation strategies. Due to several coastal events such as Hurricane Sandy, coastal and riverine flooding, and severe wind events, hazards and disasters have increased as a significant issue of concern in Sussex County. The local political climate is favorable for implementing mitigation actions consistent with sustainability and community growth.

An example of the political climate in favor of hazard mitigation can be found in the update of this plan. The planning team and Sussex EOC leadership met with the County Planning and Zoning Commission and the County Council to discuss the planning process and the value of hazard mitigation on community resiliency and growth.

Recommendations: Increasing local political capability to implement mitigation strategies is most often achieved through a coordinated approach to loss reduction that includes:

- Community outreach efforts designed to inform residents and businesses of the risk faced by natural hazards,
- Gaining community support through a wide range of local interest groups (particularly those that may be affected by proposed actions), and
- Informing and educating the elected and executive officials of the community in advance of the formal decision-making process.

Identifying key stakeholders early in designing and proposing mitigation strategies should generate community support and help eliminate or minimize potential impediments to acceptance before plans become drafted or officially presented.

Local elected and executive officials should become informed and educated on mitigation strategies before any formal considerations or decisions, which will facilitate a greater understanding of specific mitigation objectives and expected outcomes.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The capability of local governments in Sussex County varies significantly from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

Sussex County's local governments should continue working beyond this plan's development to maximize existing resources and local capabilities. The City of Lewes has gained considerable knowledge and expertise in applying hazard mitigation principles through local government programs and should serve as a mentor to its neighboring communities in Sussex County. As the above findings indicate, Sussex County has significantly more capability than its municipal jurisdictions and should serve as a clearinghouse for information while striving to enhance and maintain intergovernmental cooperation and coordination.

The plan provides the vehicle to begin this process. However, to succeed, it will require clearly articulating the benefits of participating in and sustaining the countywide mitigation planning process. One of the best ways to obtain local buy-in and long-term success is to identify and implement possible mitigation actions (as listed in this Plan's *Mitigation Strategy*) that will facilitate continued intergovernmental coordination not only across the County but with state and federal agencies as well.

The conclusions of the *Capability Assessment* and *Risk Assessment* serve as the foundation for a meaningful hazard mitigation strategy.

While identifying the goals, objectives, and mitigation actions, each jurisdiction must consider its level of hazard risk and its capability to minimize or eliminate that risk.

In jurisdictions where the overall hazard risk is considered HIGH and local capability is considered LIMITED, specific mitigation actions that account for these conditions should be assumed, including less costly measures such as minor ordinance revisions or public awareness activities. Further, if necessary, specific capabilities may need to be improved to address recurring threats better. Similarly, in cases where the hazard vulnerability is LIMITED and overall capability is HIGH, more emphasis can be placed on actions that may impact future exposure, such as guiding development away from known hazard areas.

No significant changes warranted a difference in the hazard risk or overall capability for the County (unincorporated areas) or municipalities.