

Capabilities Assessment

A capability assessment helps identify, review, and analyze current mitigation activities undertaken within the region, as well as the ability of each jurisdiction to implement future mitigation projects. Below are self-ratings of localities in the region for the technical, fiscal, and administrative capacity to implement hazard mitigation strategies. The assessment utilized the Capability Assessment Worksheets from the Local Mitigation Planning Handbook. Local staff serving on the Hazard Mitigation Plan Working Group filled out the forms, which also guided the review of other local plans for actions to include in the plan. The form included tables for the areas of Planning and Regulatory, Administrative and Technical, Financial, and Education and Outreach. As of the public release of this Draft Plan, forms had not yet been received from Louisa and Nelson Counties. The four towns in the region are considered within their respective counties, since town residents are served by relevant county services.

through the Office of Emergency Management and the Emergency Communications Center.

Financial: All localities have Capital Improvements project funding, fees for utilities, and have the ability to incur debt through general obligation bonds. The City of Charlottesville is an entitlement community for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, but generally utilizes those for economic development purposes. All Counties have utilized CDBG funds, with current projects underway in Albemarle County and the Town of Stanardsville in Greene County. Charlottesville and Albemarle County assess storm water fees, but the rural counties do not. Charlottesville and Albemarle utilize federal and state funding to a greater extent than the rural counties.

Education and Outreach: All localities have active local citizen groups and non-profit organizations. Only Greene County reported having Storm Ready and FireWise certifications.

	Fluvanna	Nelson	Louisa	Albemarle	Charlottesville	Greene
PLANNING and REGULATORY – plans, policies codes and ordinances						
	High			High	High	High
ADMINISTRATIVE and TECHNICAL: staff, skills and tools for planning and action	High			High	High	High
FINANCIAL – access or eligibility for funding resources	Moderate			High	High	Moderate
EDUCATION and OUTREACH – programs and methods in place to implement actions	Moderate			Moderate	Moderate	High
OVERALL CAPABILITY	Moderate			High	High	High

Planning and Regulatory: Most localities do not have an Economic Development Plan or Continuity of Operations Plan, but all have Local Emergency Operations Plan, Comprehensive Plans, and Capital Improvement Plans. Transportation Planning for the urban areas is carried out by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and coordinated for the rural areas through the Rural Long-Range Planning process. All localities have codes and ordinances in place.

Administrative and Technical: All localities have Commissions, Committees, and staff in place, with some positions being part-time or having some functions shared by a single staff person. The City of Charlottesville, County of Albemarle, and University of Virginia have shared staff

» Other Capability Considerations

Current local funding

The City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County have dedicated local funds to hazard mitigation, but the other counties in the region have not. Albemarle County conducts staff training on building and fire codes, citizen education on hazards, and GIS mapping products that identify hazard-related features. The county also invests in conservation easements in high-hazard areas and other open space protection measures. The City of Charlottesville has also used local funds for a stream restoration project and the rehabilitation of the stormwater system.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

Localities in the region augment their hazard mitigation and emergency response capabilities by cooperating regionally. All localities have joined a mutual aid agreement between emergency services departments. Staff from Louisa County report having used the mutual aid agreement in response to a disaster. Staff from the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County rate the current level of intergovernmental cooperation as high. Both localities are currently in the process of updating their comprehensive plans in partnership with the Livable Communities project administered by the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission. The other localities Louisa County, Nelson County, and Fluvanna County rate their intergovernmental cooperation as moderate. However, staff in the outlying localities note that the potential for cooperation in mitigation-related goals is high.

Intragovernmental Organization

Within localities, a variety of departments are assigned responsibilities for handling certain hazard mitigation tasks. In most counties, planning and public works departments are the key players. Nelson County assigns most responsibility to the Emergency Management Department. Police and fire departments are integral to emergency response, and they also play a supportive role in pre-disaster mitigation.

Land use

Local land use planning and regulations, in general, have an impact on mitigation capabilities. All localities in the region practice some form of growth management, including limiting development in hazard areas such as flood plains. Comprehensive plans delineate growth areas that are intended to absorb the majority of commercial and residential growth projected over the next planning cycle. Zoning codes, subdivision ordinances, and other regulations have been adopted to support and further the land use goals in the comprehensive plans.

Towns

Governmental services offered by counties apply to towns, including emergency response such as fire and rescue. The Town of Scottsville supplements county law enforcement with a town department, and several towns offer general public services such as water and sewer and solid waste disposal. In terms of hazard mitigation activities, towns have little additional capacity beyond the counties they are contained within.

Some county-wide regulations apply to towns, but towns must adopt their own zoning and subdivision ordinances. The Town of Stanardsville adopts the Greene County

ordinance as their own. The town does not hire their own staff, but shares planning and development staff with Greene County. The Town of Mineral and the Town of Louisa practice a similar approach, and each have a person on staff to administer the code and direct public works operations. The Town of Scottsville has an independent zoning ordinance that was last updated in 2011.