

## Section 7

# Plan Maintenance Procedures Requirements

### ***Monitoring, Evaluating, and Updating the Plan---Requirement §201.6(c)(4)(i):***

[The plan maintenance process **shall** include a] section describing the method and schedule of monitoring, evaluating, and updating the mitigation plan within a five-year cycle.

- Does the plan describe the method and schedule for **monitoring** the plan?
- Does the plan identify the party responsible for monitoring and include a schedule for reports, site visits, phone calls, and meetings?
- Does the plan describe the method and schedule for **evaluating** the plan?
- Does the plan identify the party responsible for evaluating and include the criteria used to evaluate the plan?
- Does the plan describe the method and schedule for **updating** the plan within the five-year cycle?

### ***Incorporation into Existing Planning Mechanisms---Requirement §201.6(c)(4) (ii):***

[The plan **shall** include a] process by which local governments incorporate the requirements of the mitigation plan into other planning mechanisms such as comprehensive or capital improvement plans, when appropriate...

- Does the plan identify other local planning mechanisms available for incorporating the requirements of the mitigation plan?
- Does the plan include a process by which the local government will incorporate the requirements in other plans, when appropriate?

### ***Continued Public Involvement---Requirement §201.6(c)(4) (iii):***

[The plan maintenance process **shall** include a] discussion on how the community will continue public participation in the plan maintenance process.

- Does the plan explain how **continued public participation** will be obtained?
- Will there be public notices, an on-going mitigation plan committee, or annual review meetings with stakeholders?

**PIERCE COUNTY  
PLAN MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES**

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The planning process undertaken in last three years is just the foundation of breaking the disaster cycle by planning for a disaster resistant Pierce County. This section details the formal process that will guarantee the Pierce County Plan remain an active and relevant document. The Plan Maintenance Section includes a description of the documentation citing the Plan's formal adoption by the Pierce County Council. The Section also describes: the method and schedule of monitoring, evaluating, and updating within a five-year cycle; the process for incorporating the mitigation strategy into existing mechanisms, and; the process for integrating public participation throughout the plan maintenance. The section serves as a guide for implementation of the hazard mitigation strategy.

## **Plan Adoption**

The Pierce County Council is responsible for adopting the Pierce County Plan after the Pre-Adoption Review by Washington State Emergency Management Division (EMD) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region X. The Washington State EMD has 30 days to then take action on the Pierce County Plan and forward it to the FEMA Region X for review. This review, which is allowed 45 days by law, will address the federal criteria outlined in FEMA Interim Final Rule 44 CFR Part 201.6.

When the Pierce County Plan is submitted for Pre-Adoption Review, there may be revisions requested by the Washington State EMD and/or FEMA Region X. Revisions could include changes to background information, editorial comments, and alteration of technical content. PC DEM will call a Planning Team Meeting to address any revisions needed and resubmit the changes.

Once Pierce County adopts the Plan, the Program Manager of the Mitigation and Recovery Division of PC DEM will be responsible for submitting it to the State Hazard Mitigation Officer at the Washington State EMD. Upon acceptance by FEMA Region X, Pierce County will gain eligibility for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program funds.

Appendix A will list the dates of Washington State EMD and FEMA Region X approval of the Pierce County Plan. A copy of the resolution will be attached here following State and FEMA approval. The Plan will be rerouted to the State and FEMA for final approval and will include the ordinance by the Pierce County Council. In future updates of the plan Appendix A will be used to track changes and/or updates to the Pierce County Plan.

## **Maintenance Strategy**

The County's maintenance strategy for implementation, monitoring, and evaluation provides a structure that encourages collaboration, information transference, and innovation. Through a multi-tiered implementation method, the County will provide its citizens a highly localized approach to loss reduction while serving their needs through coordinated policies and programs. Implementation through existing programs within this structure will be monitored through a GIS based database that will aid in establishing performance measures and accurate evaluations. The system's emphasis on all levels of participation promotes public involvement and adaptability to changing risks and vulnerabilities. Finally, it will provide a tangible link between citizens and the

various levels of government service, ranging from community action to the Department of Homeland Security. Through this strategy, Pierce County will continue to break the disaster cycle and achieve a more disaster resistant community.

## Implementation

In order to ensure efficient and effective implementation, Pierce County will make use of its capabilities, infrastructure, and dedicated population. Pierce County will implement its mitigation strategy over the next five years primarily through the annual Pierce County budget process and varying grant application processes. All programs and entities identified in the Capability Identification will serve as the implementing mechanisms within those processes.

Pierce County has a variety of regulatory mechanisms that can be used to achieve the overall mitigation strategy. These are identified in detail in the capability identification section. PC DEM will work in conjunction with those departments identified in both the capability identification and the mitigation strategy section to initiate the strategy outlined in the Mitigation Strategy Section. For example, any facility-related measures will be implemented through the Capital Facilities Program and the various departments involved through the normal budget schedule. Any regulatory and land use measures will continue to be implemented through collaboration with PC PALS and its updating of the County's Comprehensive Plan. Other measures will be implemented through collaboration with the identified jurisdictions/departments and through the mechanisms and funding sources identified in the Capability Identification Section.

These efforts fall under a broader implementation strategy that represents a county-wide effort. This strategy must be adaptable to change while being consistent in its delivery. It must also provide a means for tracking and evaluating implementation so that benefit-cost ratios be maximized.

The implementation strategy for Pierce County mitigation measures is a four-tiered system that emphasizes localized needs and vulnerabilities while addressing county-wide and multi-jurisdictional policies and programs. The first tier is implementation through individual citizen level—existing Public Education Programs throughout Pierce County (for example, at the neighborhood level through PC NET). The second is through the larger Community Planning Groups that comprise all of unincorporated Pierce County. The third Hazard Mitigation Committee (HMC), a county-wide mechanism for implementation comprised of government representatives. The fourth tier is a more external and multi-jurisdictional mechanism, the Hazard Mitigation Forum (HMF).

This system ensures that implementation speaks to unique vulnerabilities at the most local level, allows for coordination among and between levels, and promotes collaboration and innovation. Further, it provides a structured system of monitoring implementation. Finally, it is a system that can adapt to the changing vulnerabilities of the County, the region, and the times. These four levels and their methods of implementation and collaboration are described below.

## *Public Education Programs*

At the individual citizen level, Public Education Programs provide the County with a localized mechanism for implementation. This approach to mitigation can adapt to the varying vulnerabilities and needs throughout the County. Public Education Programs are also a means for involving the public in mitigation policy development. Departments conducting mitigation-related programs will provide the existing targeted neighborhoods a catalogue of mitigation measures from which individuals can choose those that would be most effective in their communities. For example, currently PC DEM helps neighborhoods form PC NETs to better prepare for, and respond to, disasters. PC NETs provide a coordinated group of communities through which individuals can implementation home and neighborhood level mitigation measures.

The Public Education Programs level will also include NFIP recommended aspects that will help improve the County's CRS rating. PC Water Programs will coordinate this effort, and the specific measures that need to be undertaken.

## *Community Planning Efforts*

Currently PC PALS works with areas of the county in developing Community Plans that address land use issues. This second tier provides a broader group through which mitigation measures may be implemented. Land use recommendations made at this level that address hazards will speak to local characteristics and vulnerabilities. These areas also provide a mechanism for implementing broader public education and community-wide initiatives. The County will incorporate hazard mitigation during the normal schedule.

The Community Planning level will also include NFIP recommended aspects that will help improve the County's CRS rating. PC Water Programs will coordinate this effort and the specific measures that need to be undertaken.

## *Hazard Mitigation Committee*

The HMC will be the body responsible for determining the direction of mitigation policy recommendations and will be responsible for reviewing the performance measures and Plan implementation. The HMC represents a county-wide group of hazard experts and government employees whose departments will be responsible for many of the implementation activities. This Committee will be composed of representatives from all the departments comprising the Planning Team as well as representatives from departments identified in the Capability Identification Section as having a role in hazard mitigation. The Committee will be responsible for collaborating on county-wide policies and programs on the county-wide level. Meetings will occur bi-annually (January and June) to coincide with the normal budgeting processes and provide an ample time period for review and adoption of any necessary changes to the implementation schedule. The HMC will be responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and updating the Plan (discussed below). The HMC will ultimately provide a mechanism for coordination among those departments engaged in mitigation to ensure that a comprehensive and efficient

approach be undertaken in the County's efforts at all-hazards mitigation. PC DEM will coordinate HMC activities.

The HMC level will also include NFIP recommended aspects that will help improve the County's CRS rating. PC Water Programs will assist in this effort and the specific measures that need to be undertaken.

### *Hazard Mitigation Forum*

The PC HMF represents a broader and multi-jurisdictional approach to mitigation implementation. The PC HMF will be comprised of all representatives of all jurisdictions within the Pierce County boundary that have undertaken mitigation planning efforts. The PC HMF will serve as coordinating body for projects of a multi-jurisdictional nature and will provide a mechanism to share successes and increase the cooperation necessary to break the disaster cycle and achieve a disaster resistant Pierce County. Members of the PC HMF will include the following jurisdictions who have completed, or who have begun the process of completing, DMA 2000 compliant plans:

- City of Bonney Lake
- City of Sumner
- City of Puyallup
- City of Tacoma
- City of University Place
- East Pierce Fire and Rescue
- Riverside Fire District
- Bethel School District
- Clover Park School District
- Sumner School District
- Puyallup Tribe of Indians
- Pierce County

The HMF level will also include NFIP recommended aspects that will help improve the County's CRS rating. PC Water Programs will assist in this effort, and the specific measures that need to be undertaken.

PC HMF will meet annually in October and will be coordinated by PC DEM. Only through this level of cooperation can these jurisdictions meet all of their mitigation goals.

## Plan Evaluation and Update

The County Plan will guide the County's mitigation efforts for the foreseeable future. The Planning Team has developed a method to ensure that regular review and update of the Pierce County Plan occurs within a five year cycle. PC DEM will coordinate any reviews. The Mitigation and Recovery Division Program Manager will be responsible for contacting the relevant experts and planners, organizing meetings, and coordinating the efforts below.

PC DEM will collaborate with members of the HMC and the PC HMF to monitor and evaluate the mitigation strategy implementation. This will be done through a combination of mitigation performance measures and a GIS database that will track implementation. Findings will be presented and discussed at the HMC meetings.

Establishing performance measures for mitigation activities is central to determining effectiveness and ensuring precision of strategy application. Yet outcome-based performance measures are difficult to apply to hazard mitigation. For this reason, the County will employ modeled events in the absence of actual events. This will be accomplished through the GIS-based database. The database will include performance measure ratings, will allow for rapid evaluation using simulated models actual hazard events, and will eventually provide a method of rapid cost-benefit analysis tied to specific grant sources. Through this system, PC DEM will be able to monitor and evaluate implementation at all levels. The database of mitigation activities will track implementation and provide real-time updates that will illustrate overall static or decreasing vulnerabilities. Through this database and tracking system, performance measures for each mitigation measure will be more accurately analyzed.

PC DEM will provide a report of the entire implementation strategy to the HMC at its bi-annual meetings. This report will drive the meeting agendas and will include the following:

- Updates on implementation at the Public Education and Community Planning levels;
- Updates on the PC HMF and mitigation activities undertaken by neighboring jurisdictions;
- Reports on performance measures of the mitigation strategy;
- Changes or anticipated changes in hazard risk and vulnerability at the county, regional, State, FEMA X, and Homeland Security levels.

The HMC members will also provide updates regarding:

- Any implementation activities undertaken, by department;
- Problems encountered or success stories;
- Any technical or scientific advances that may alter, make easier, or create measures.

Finally, the HMC will decide on updates to the strategy based on the above information and a discussion of:

- The various resources available through budgetary means as well as any relevant grants;
- The current and expected political environment and public opinion;
- Meeting the mitigation goals with regards to changing conditions.

The first few meetings will work to begin implementation and establish a baseline for measuring successes.

PC DEM will also review the Risk Assessment and Capability Identification Sections to determine if the information should be updated or modified based on new information. Implementation of various mitigation measures will be reviewed, and status reports of each measure will include which implementation processes worked well, any difficulties encountered, evaluations of coordination efforts, and which goals, objectives, and measures should be revised.

PC DEM will also review any of these above criteria for implementation as they relate to neighboring jurisdictions/communities' mitigation plans and the Washington State Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Additional reviews of this Plan will be required following disaster events and will not substitute for the annual meeting. Within ninety days following a significant disaster or an emergency event impacting Pierce County, PC DEM will provide an assessment that captures any "success stories" and/or "lessons learned." The assessment will detail direct and indirect damages to the County and its critical facilities, response and recovery costs, and will determine any new mitigation initiatives that should be incorporated into the Pierce County Plan to avoid similar losses due to future hazard events. In this manner, recovery efforts and data will be used to analyze mitigation activities and spawn the development of new measures that better address any changed vulnerabilities or capabilities.

Following the assessment, the PC DEM will have two months to update and make changes to the County Plan.

## **Continued Public Involvement**

Pierce County is dedicated to continued public involvement and education in review and updates of the Pierce County Plan. This is reflected in many of the mitigation measures. PC DEM will seek comment at such time the plan undergoes a formal update. In addition, PC DEM is committed to public education and will include information regarding hazard mitigation and community disaster resistance in educational materials and presentations as appropriate.

The public will also have the opportunity to provide ongoing feedback about the County Plan. DEM will retain copies of the Plan and will post it on the Pierce County website<sup>1</sup> where comments can be made. The Division Manager will post any proposed changes to the Pierce County Plan on the Pierce County DEM Website.<sup>2</sup> The Division Manager will publish any comments and updates to the Plan on the website.

The four-tiered implementation structure provides an opportunity for continuous public involvement. Public Education campaigns and Community Planning Groups are a means of informing the public on updates and implementation activities. Pierce County will hold a public meeting after each HMF meeting to discuss mitigation issues throughout the County. The meetings will provide the public a forum for which it can express its concerns, opinions, or ideas about the County Plan as well as other plans. These meetings will be advertised in advance through a variety of media. The Mitigation and Recovery Division of PC DEM will be responsible for publicizing the annual public meetings and maintaining public involvement through the public access channel, webpage, and newspapers.

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# Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.co.pierce.wa.us/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.co.pierce.wa.us/pc/abtus/ourorg/dem/abtusdem.htm>.