

Executive Summary of the *Charleston Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan* 2020-2021

Introduction

The *Charleston Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan* is the result of a community wide effort to address the various types of hazards facing the Charleston Region. The *Charleston Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan* was developed under *Project Impact* to assist local communities in the Region to become more disaster resistant through cooperative efforts of the private, public and non-profit sectors. The *Charleston Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan* addresses hazards that may strike our community, assesses risks, and prioritizes needs. The *Hazard Mitigation & Public Information Plan Committee*, which drafted this *Plan*, consists of members from each local government, from State agencies focusing on hazard mitigation, from Federal agencies focusing on hazard mitigation, and from the non-profit and public sectors. The *Plan* is drafted in such a manner that local government entities within Charleston County are able to prepare an action plan for their respective entities and adopt this plan for their use. The *Charleston Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan* is updated annually to allow a continual planning process to keep the *Plan* current, the jurisdictions involved, and the history more dynamic.

Mission/Purpose

The *Plan* outlines Charleston County's strategy for all hazard mitigation goals, actions, and initiatives. Implementation of this *Plan* is crucial to the hazard mitigation program and the county's efforts to reduce or eliminate the threat of future disasters.

Hazard and Problem Assessment

Charleston County is the most hazardous county in South Carolina. Vulnerable to many hazards, Charleston County is especially open to large-scale hazard events that could negatively impact its tourism-driven economy. The *Charleston Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan* reflects the efforts of the community to anticipate, mitigate, and prevent such hazards. The *Charleston Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan* is based upon the results of the questionnaires regarding hazard mitigation, project prioritization, and resiliency and the comments received through both committee and public meetings. These questionnaires are available online through Google Forms and email, as well as through public and private meetings conducted throughout the Region. Each cycle these results are updated to keep the *Plan* as relevant as possible.

Section 4 *Hazard Assessment* of the *Plan* includes a ranking of the types of hazards facing the Charleston Region. The hazard description section of the *Plan* provides a brief description of the nature of each identified hazard within the Charleston Region. The discussion section of the *Plan* provides a more detailed description of the history of

hazard event incidents in the Charleston Region.

The *Plan* also addresses the vulnerability of the Region to each of the major types of hazards facing the Region in Section 5 *Problem Assessment*. Each of the major hazard types are discussed in terms of:

- Types of buildings that are most vulnerable to particular hazards
- Estimation of the total number of vulnerable buildings
- Estimated potential building/property losses
- Critical Facilities
- Natural and Beneficial Functions of floodplains
- Development and Population Trends
- Economic Impact of hazard events

Section 6 Possible Activities addresses preventative activities, property protection, natural and beneficial functions of floodplains, emergency services, structural projects and Public Information Plan activities to protect us from the possible hazards.

Goals

The goals of the program include, but are not limited to:

1. Protecting the lives of our citizens to the best of our abilities from natural and man-made environmental hazards.
2. Assessing the extent of our vulnerability to natural and man-made environmental hazards
3. Establishing cooperative relationships between the public, private and non-profit sectors to enhance our preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation for hazard events.
4. Educating our citizens regarding their vulnerability to natural hazards and steps which may be taken to reduce that vulnerability.
5. Reducing vulnerability of our infrastructure and built environment to natural and man-made environmental hazards through specific mitigation projects that will also consider the historic and environmental resources of our area.

Conclusion

The *Charleston Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan* is the result of a cooperative effort of the public and private sectors and intended to enhance the ability of all of the local jurisdictions within the Charleston Region to prepare for and respond to hazard events. The *Plan* is comprehensive and complements other initiatives to help make the Region more resistant to disasters. Additional information regarding this *Plan* is available through the local jurisdictions or Charleston County Building Inspection Services.