



# City of Los Angeles

## Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Frequently Asked Questions



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# What is Hazard Mitigation?

Natural hazards have the potential to cause property loss, loss of life, economic hardship, and threats to public health and safety. While an important aspect of emergency management deals with disaster recovery – those actions that a community must take to repair damages and make itself whole in the wake of a natural disaster – an equally important aspect of emergency management involves hazard mitigation.

Hazard mitigation measures are efforts taken before a disaster happens to lessen the impact that future disasters of that type will have on people and property in the community. They are things you do today to be more protected in the future.

Hazard mitigation actions taken in advance of a hazard event are essential to breaking the typical disaster cycle of damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. With careful selection, hazard mitigation actions can be long-term, cost-effective means of reducing the risk of loss and help create a more disaster-resistant and sustainable community.



## What is a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP)?

A Hazard Mitigation Plan is prepared by local governments in response to the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-390). These plans act as a key to federal funding afforded under the Robert T. Stafford Act. These plans meet statutory requirements that include:

- Organizing resources
- Assessing Risk
- Engaging the public
- Identifying Goals and Objectives
- Identifying actions
- Developing plan maintenance and implementation strategies

# Why is the City of Los Angeles Local Hazard Mitigation Plan important?

The City of Los Angeles Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (“LHMP”) sets the City's mitigation priorities, strategies, and actions. The plan also describes how risk assessment and mitigation strategy information is coordinated and linked to the State of California’s Hazard Mitigation Plan. Local Governments must review and revise their LHMP and resubmit it for FEMA approval at least every five years (5) pursuant to 44 Code of Federal Regulations §201.6 to ensure the continued eligibility of Stafford Act funding. This includes eligibility for FEMA's hazard mitigation assistance programs:

- Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)
- Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)
- Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA).



## What hazards will the mitigation plan address?

At a minimum, the plan must address the natural hazards of concern that could impact the defined planning area. It may also include a select number of technological or human-caused hazards, but they are not required. It should also be noted that many secondary hazards are directly attributable to these primary hazards, which the plan will also address as part of the analysis of the primary hazard of concern.



## How can I find out more about hazards and associated risks in my neighborhood?

Go to the [City of Los Angeles Hazard Mapper](#) for a visual depiction of the hazards being analyzed.



## Will Climate Change be addressed in the LHMP?

Yes. While climate change will not be viewed as a stand-alone hazard in this plan, there will be detailed discussions of the potential impact of climate change on those applicable hazards of concern.

In addition to the LHMP, the City is preparing a [Climate Vulnerability Assessment \(CVA\)](#) to examine the anticipated impacts of climate change across the City and to identify the areas and communities most vulnerable to those impacts. The CVA will coordinate with the update of the City’s LHMP and other relevant data sources to map projected climate hazards and analyze impacts related to:

- Extreme Heat
- Sea Level Rise and Coastal Flooding
- Extreme Precipitation and Flooding
- Wildfires
- Drought



# What is the difference between Disaster Recovery Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Grants?



Disaster Recovery manages and coordinates presidential declared disaster programs including Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation. When damages during an event exceed the predetermined per capita threshold, a Presidential Declaration results and activates federal disaster recovery programs. This federal disaster recovery program includes Public Assistance and Individual Assistance.



## Public Assistance Program (PA)

Provides aid to state or local governments to pay part of the costs of repairing or rebuilding a community's damaged public infrastructure, public buildings, and public parks to pre-disaster conditions. Generally, public assistance programs pay for 75 percent of the approved project costs. Public Assistance may include debris removal, emergency protective measures, and public services, repair of damaged public property, community loans for essential government functions, and grants for public schools. The remaining 25 percent is a shared state and local responsibility.

## Individual, Households, & Other Needs Assistance Program (IA)

Provides funding assistance up to predetermined limits for home damage repair, transportation repair or replacement, and funeral expenses. IA provides several areas of assistance to include limited funding for crisis counseling, unemployment assistance, and loans from the Small Business Administration. IA funds will not duplicate any funds being covered by insurance or any other federal program. IA funds are restricted in total amount that will be paid out. The cost share equates to 75 percent federal and 25 percent state.



## Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program (e.g. HMGP, BRIC, FMA)

Provides funding for projects that will reduce or permanently eliminate future risk to lives and property. Home acquisition from floodways and floodplains, infrastructure protective measures (roads and bridges), storm water management (culverts, diversions, flap gates, floodgates, detention basins, and other local flood control measures), and mitigation planning are examples of the many types of qualifying projects.



# What is a Risk Assessment?

The risk assessment is the “hub of the wheel” for any hazard mitigation plan. Understanding risk is mission-critical to the ability to identify actions to reduce risk. For the Los Angeles LHMP, risk has been defined as the probability of a hazard event occurring, times the impact that hazard can have on the people, property, economy, and environment of a defined planning area (Probability x Impact). The Los Angeles risk assessment uses the best available spatial data (GIS datasets) to map the extent and location of each identified hazard of concern to measure the exposure and vulnerability of the people, property, economy and environment. Models have been utilized to estimate the losses that can be expected for each hazard event. This is a very important aspect of any risk assessment, because for a project to be eligible for FEMA Grant funding, the net benefits of a project must equal or exceed the total costs for that project. For FEMA grants, a “benefit” is defined as an avoided loss.

## What type of mitigation activities can these plans consider?

Possible mitigation activities may include:

- Adoption and enforcement of regulatory tools, including ordinances, regulations, and building codes, to guide and inform land use, development, and redevelopment decisions in areas affected by hazards.
- Acquisition or elevation of flood-damaged homes or businesses
- Retrofitting public buildings, schools, and critical facilities to withstand extreme wind events or ground shaking from earthquakes.
- Creating a buffer area by protecting natural resources, such as floodplains, wetlands, or sensitive habitats. Additional benefits to the community may include improved water quality and recreational opportunities.
- Create Stormwater parks, which are recreational spaces designed to flood during extreme events.
- Implement outreach programs to educate property owners and the public about risk and about mitigation measures to protect homes and businesses.





## Why does the LHMP not address how the City responds to disasters?

While the LHMP mainly focuses on identifying the actions to mitigate the impact of natural hazards, the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is the plan that delineates the functions, roles, and responsibilities of all emergency response agencies and the overall emergency management system for the City of Los Angeles.

## Why is the LHMP implementation and monitoring important?

History shows that hazard mitigation planning and implementing risk reduction activities can significantly reduce the physical, financial, and emotional losses caused by disasters. Putting the plan into action will be an ongoing process that may include initiating and completing mitigation projects and integrating mitigation strategies into other community plans and programs. Monitoring the plan's implementation helps to ensure it remains relevant as community priorities and development patterns change.



To implement and monitor this plan, the Emergency Management Department is creating a new Mitigation Task Force, composed of City departments, stakeholders, and community members, to ensure the City is putting this plan into action.



## Is it possible to add more mitigation actions in the LHMP?

Absolutely! Once the LHMP has been approved by FEMA and adopted by the City, the LHMP is considered a living document. This means the City can identify and add more mitigation actions.

## Does the LHMP expire?

Yes. Once the City adopts the LHMP, FEMA requires that the LHMP be updated every five years.

