

White County Hazard Mitigation Plan Information

Executive Summary

White County Emergency Management Agency completed the update of the 2020 White County Hazard Mitigation Plan as required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA requires the Hazard Mitigation Plan be updated every five (5) years. This update involved 23 people who comprised the White County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Committee, which represented White County, the City of Cleveland, and the City of Helen. The committee also included representatives from other organizations, such as the Friendship Health & Rehab and UGA Extension. Three Committee meetings were held to review the 2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan, identify hazards facing White County, perform a full risk assessment of those hazards, review previous mitigation strategies, and identify new mitigation strategies for White County and all municipalities. The plan has been approved by the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Major Changes and Updates from the 2020 White County Hazard Mitigation Plan

White County's updated Hazard Mitigation Plan identified nine (9) natural hazards and Five (5) technological/manmade hazards. The hazards identified were:

Natural	Technological/Manmade
Severe Thunderstorms	Hazardous Materials Incident
Severe Winter Weather	Dam Failure
Tornadoes	Transportation Incident
Flooding	Terrorism
Drought	Emergent Infectious Diseases
Earthquake	
Wildfire	
Tropical Cyclone	
Landslide	

Geologic, Landslide, and Emergent Infectious Diseases were new hazards identified as part of the Hazard Mitigation planning process for this update.

Information specific to the City of Cleveland includes:

- Municipal Information – Cleveland (Page 33)
- Description of the Flood Hazard (Page 57)
- Flood Maps (Page 65)
- Wildfire Hazard Maps (Pages 82-84)
- Cleveland-specific Mitigation Strategies (Pages 124; 126; 128-129; 134-135)

The mitigation strategies are the most important aspect of the White County Hazard Mitigation Plan. These strategies provide a blueprint for how White County can decrease the impact of the identified hazards on the community and/or prevent the hazards from occurring. The White County Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee identified ten (10) mitigation strategies that had been completed during the five years between the previous plan and the updated plan. The completed strategies specific to White County include:

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- Provide adequate shelters for citizens, especially vulnerable populations
- Purchase and distribute NOAA weather radios to low-income family and elderly populations
- Purchase voice-over outdoor warning and alert system for Yonah Preserve
- Coordinate with Truett McConnell University regarding an evacuation plan
- Continue coordination efforts with state and federal partners
- Update CAD/RMS Systems
- Coordinate with state and federal partners with efforts on SAR and weather events
- Purchase satellite phones for each public safety agency
- Purchase and install automatic transfer switches at Public Safety facilities currently without a system
- GIS mapping of all defined critical infrastructure in White County

Overall, the White County Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee identified seventy-seven (77) mitigation strategies – sixty-three (63) for natural hazards and fourteen (14) for technological hazards. This includes thirty-seven (37) new mitigation strategies. It should be noted that jurisdictions are not required to complete the mitigation strategies identified in the White County Hazard Mitigation Plan. These strategies are expected to be guidelines to help jurisdictions make decisions when the opportunity arises to implement strategies to reduce the impact hazards may have on the community. Research has shown that for every \$1 spent on mitigation projects, a community can save up to \$6-12 in response and recovery costs when a disaster happens. As such, this document can be particularly helpful as justification of grant applications when attempting to secure grant monies for projects identified in this plan. Some of the mitigation strategies specific to the City of Cleveland identified in the White County Hazard Mitigation Plan include, but are not limited to:

- Build storm shelters in strategic locations in White County, Cleveland, and Helen
- Maintain NFIP Compliance for the City of Cleveland
- Maintain and Enforce the Erosion and Sediment Control Act
- Purchase and equip AWD or 4WD vehicles within all local government departments with response needs
- Maintain and purchase additional ATV/UTV resources for White County, Cleveland, and Helen
- Purchase response equipment and provide appropriate training to deal with electric vehicle fires
- Evaluate and enhance security at critical facilities