

CHAPTER THREE: LMS PROCEDURES

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Documents Reviewed

The Working Group continues to review existing plans, studies, reports and technical information. One of the primary efforts of the Mitigation Planning Subcommittee is to review the existing plans, policies and regulations of the local governments in Marion County to search for gaps, inconsistencies or contradictions that impact the effectiveness of mitigation planning for the County. Each local government will assist the Working Group by updating their portions of the original LMS. At a minimum, the documents used in this review process include:

Marion County Comprehensive Plan
Marion County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan
City of Ocala Comprehensive Plan
City of Ocala Land Development Code
City of Belleview Comprehensive Plan
City of Belleview Land Development Code
City of Dunnellon Comprehensive Plan
City of Dunnellon Land Development Code
Town of McIntosh Comprehensive Plan
Town of McIntosh Land Development Code
State of Florida Building Code
SLOSH Models and Atlas
Withlacoochee Regional Hurricane Evacuation Study - WRPC US Census
County Business Patterns
Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BEER) Economic Outlook
Florida Statistical Abstract
County Tax Assessor Records
Florida Department of Transportation
Florida Geographic Data Library
Hazardous Materials Emergency Plan for the Withlacoochee Region

As adopted in the initial LMS, the Working Group will continue to use the following “ten principles” to guide the planning process and decisions of the Working Group:

- 1) The program will be a permanent, voluntary association, open to any and all local governments and community-based organizations with interest in the vulnerability of Marion County to disasters.
- 2) The program will consider, without partiality, the interests of all sectors and areas of the county participating in the planning and programming effort.
- 3) The program will seek implementation of mitigation initiatives based only on objective and scientifically valid information.
- 4) The activities of the program will be based on continuing cooperation and collaboration among all sectors of the community.

- 5) The program's priorities will be commensurate with predicted risk posed by hazards threatening and/or vulnerabilities of the community.
- 6) The program will seek to address vulnerabilities to all types of hazards (natural, technological, and societal) that threaten any area, population, economic sector, or community function within Marion County and those political subdivisions participating in the program.
- 7) Mitigation initiatives proposed through the program will be intended to minimize harm to: people and property, community services and functions, valuable environmental and/or cultural resources, and the economic vitality and stability of the community.
- 8) Mitigation initiatives will be cost-effective, while striving to weigh both the tangible and intangible values of the community.
- 9) Mitigation plans and programs will seek to balance the use of government regulation, voluntary cooperation, economic incentives, community awareness, and individual responsibility.
- 10) Community acceptance and understanding of the program's plans and projects will be fostered through trust in the credibility and integrity of its operations.

One of the key objectives of the process for developing the LMS is to propose mitigation initiatives that would, if implemented, improve the programs, plans and policies that guide mitigation programming by local government and other sectors of the community.

Structure and History

The LMS Working Group is a multi-organizational, public and private committee that oversees the activities and projects involved in maintaining a current Plan. The initial Strategy was approved September 1999, with Belleview, Dunnellon, McIntosh and Ocala entering into inter-local agreements with Marion County to create a single unified LMS. The towns of Reddick and McIntosh elected not to participate in the LMS, however since the initial strategy adoption, all jurisdictions within Marion County now participate in the LMS. The Contractual Services Agreement and subcontracts remain in effect as the ongoing basis for updating and maintaining the multi-jurisdictional LMS for the County. The LMS Working Group was created with five subcommittees led by a Steering Committee. The organizational structure is presented below.

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee provides guidance, leadership and coordination to all five of its supporting subcommittees. This committee is responsible for considering and adopting, as needed, the recommendations of the four subcommittees for mitigation initiatives for incorporation into the Strategy and for updates of the plan. According to the by-laws of the Marion County, Florida, Hazard Mitigation Working Group (henceforth the By-laws), the policy-making body can have up to fourteen members, with one representative from each local government and one representative from the business community. Individuals are appointed to the Steering Committee by majority vote.

Working Group Subcommittees

In 2002, the Steering Committee decided to convene the Working Group subcommittees on an as need basis, where additional research or information is required outside of the bounds of the Steering Committee or Marion County Planning Staff. The membership for the four permanent subcommittees is unlimited and open to all interested jurisdictions, organizations and individuals. The permanent subcommittees may be combined or further divided into smaller groups at the discretion of the Steering Committee Chair.

Public Affairs Subcommittee

This subcommittee promotes activities of the Working Group to the public. Activities include developing tools for educating the public and coordinating with the media to raise the community's awareness of the hazards and the mitigation planning process.

Mitigation Planning Subcommittee

This subcommittee reviews and analyzes the various Vulnerability Assessments and Hazard Identification studies that are conducted by the Risk Assessment Subcommittee. The subcommittee also reviews existing plans, policies, codes, and proposed mitigation initiatives before providing recommendations to the Steering Committee for formal adoption into the LMS.

Risk Assessment Subcommittee

This subcommittee defines the natural, technological, and societal hazards that threaten Marion County. Components of communities that are vulnerable to certain hazards are also identified. The level of vulnerability of various facilities, systems and neighborhoods are determined by the hazard identification and vulnerability assessment analysis. This group has oversight of analysis implementation.

Financial Issues Subcommittee

This subcommittee assists the Working Group by identifying potential funding sources for supporting implementation of the mitigation initiatives incorporated in the Strategy. The subcommittee advises regarding funding sources and the approaches for seeking and securing funding by the participants in the planning process.

Updating the 2015 LMS Plan

The process to update the 2015 Marion County LMS Plan began in late 2020. Staff began the process of updating the Plan in accordance with the 5 year update requirement. Staff began work on the Plan update

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with a series of internal staff meetings and discussions. A thorough review of the adopted LMS plan, in conjunction with review of FEMA’s “Local Mitigation Planning Handbook” document was conducted, in order to identify changes in Plan requirements.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, public involvement activities were limited but outreach efforts were still conducted to solicit stakeholder and public input through online surveys. Notification of these surveys was made directly to all stakeholders via direct e-mail, and in some cases, via telephone follow-up. Notification to the public was made via social media notifications and posting to the Marion County County Board of County Commissioners website, as well as similar efforts by LMS partnering agencies via their social media platforms and websites.

Staff conducted a meeting, with the LMS Committee, regarding the LMS update and to obtain input on desired changes to the document. The most recent copy of the FEMA HAZUS-MH model was obtained to estimate potential hazards and vulnerabilities using ArcMap software. The revised 2015 draft material was posted to the Marion County Board of County Commissioner’s website along with the LMS agenda to provide online access using the internet for all interested parties. Other key events included:

- Maintain LMS Webpage established on the Marion County Growth Services website
- October 15, 2020 - Notification of Commencement of the Plan Update to LMS Committee
- January 22, 2021 – Transmittal of DRAFT Chapters 1-5 to LMS Committee For Review
- February 11, 2021 - LMS Meeting Review of Draft Chapters 1- 5
- December 2020 - January 2021 – Stakeholder & Public Surveys
- March 2021 – Transmittal of DRAFT Chapters 6-8, HAZUS Model Outputs & Survey Data to LMS Committee Members
- March/April 2021 – LMS Committee Review of Draft Chapters 6-8
- April 2021 - Draft Chapters and agenda material posted to public SIRE website
- April 2021 – Public Review Draft Chapters/Virtual Public Workshop
- April 12, 2021 – City of Dunnellon Adoption
- April 20, 2021 – City of Belleview Adoption
- May 4, 2021 – Marion County Board of County Commissioners Adoption
- May 4, 2021 – City of Ocala Adoption
- May 6, 2021 – Town of Reddick Adoption
- May 13, 2021 – Town of McIntosh Adoption