

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Plan Authority and Adoption

The Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000), Section 322 (a-d), as a condition of receiving Federal disaster mitigation funds, requires local governments, including counties, cities, and tribes in the United States, to complete a Local Hazards Mitigation Plan. These Plans are to identify the hazards that have occurred or may occur in the study area, and provide mitigation strategies, or action items, designed to save lives and reduce the destruction of property. The City of Newport Beach has addressed this requirement by completing a Local Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan (“the Plan”) that describes and analyzes several issues of concern to the City, including earthquakes, floods, tsunamis, wildfires, unstable slopes, and strong winds. The Plan provides resources and information, in addition to action items and programs, that are meant to assist Newport Beach in reducing risk and preventing loss from future natural hazard events. Per Federal requirements, this Plan is to be reviewed and updated every five years. This is the first five-year update to the original plan completed in 2008 and adopted in 2009.

Adoption of the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan by the local jurisdiction’s governing body is one of the prime requirements for approval of the Plan. Once the Plan is completed, City Council is responsible for adopting the Local Hazards Mitigation Plan. The local agency governing body has the responsibility and authority to promote sound public policy regarding natural hazards. The City Council will periodically need to re-adopt the Plan as it is revised to meet changes in the natural hazard risks and exposures in the community. The approved Local Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan will be significant in the future growth and development and redevelopment of the community. The City of Newport Beach will use a resolution to adopt the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update. The adoption process is scheduled for January 2015.

Summary of Findings

Analysis of the natural hazards that could impact the City of Newport Beach indicates that there are five main hazards (earthquakes, flooding, wildfires, landslides and strong winds) that could impact Newport Beach causing sufficient damage that a Federal emergency could be declared. The hazard most devastating to Newport Beach would be an earthquake on any of three faults that extend through or are located near the City. An earthquake under or near the City has the potential to cause extensive damage due to ground shaking, fault rupture, liquefaction, earthquake-induced slope instability, and inundation due to catastrophic failure of the City’s water storage reservoirs. Other potential secondary effects of such an earthquake include urban fires ignited by fallen appliances, rupture of gas mains, or fallen electrical lines, and the release of hazardous materials as a result of broken containers.

Flooding due to intense rainfall, often combined with high tides, can cause damage in some sections of Newport Beach. Flooding of the coastal areas could also occur due to tsunamis, storm surge, and as a result of a rise in sea level due to global warming. During wet winters, when the ground becomes saturated, the hilly areas of the City can slide, with the potential for loss of property and damage to the City’s infrastructure. Another hazard with the potential to cause significant losses in the City is wildland fire, especially at the interface with urban development. Wildland fires fanned by strong Santa Ana winds have the potential to increase the burn area and therefore losses. Thunderstorms, tropical hurricanes, and winter storms descending from the north have in the past caused sporadic, but widespread flooding and damage in Southern California. Tornadoes and water spouts have occasionally landed in the Southern California area. These unusual, but potentially damaging meteorological conditions are

discussed, with emphasis on their historical incidence in Newport Beach and potential future impacts in the region.

Plan Mission

The mission of the Newport Beach Local Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan is to promote sound public policy designed to protect citizens, critical facilities, infrastructure, private property, and the environment from natural hazards. This can be achieved by increasing public awareness, documenting resources available for risk reduction and loss prevention, and identifying activities to guide the City towards building a safer, more sustainable community.

Plan's Goals

The goals of the Mitigation Plan describe the overall direction that the City of Newport Beach, through its departments, agencies, organizations, and citizens, can take toward reducing its risk to natural hazards. The goals of the Plan are stepping-stones between the broad direction of the mission statement and the specific recommendations outlined in the action items. The main goals of Newport Beach's Mitigation Plan are:

1. Protect life and property,
2. Increase public awareness of natural hazards,
3. Preserve and enhance the natural systems to provide natural hazard mitigation functions,
4. Develop partnerships among stakeholders with an interest in hazard reduction to facilitate the implementation of mitigation measures, and
5. Strengthen emergency services.

Action Items

The action items are a list of activities that Newport Beach's agencies and citizens can implement to reduce risk in the community. Some action items have community-wide application, whereas others can be implemented on an individual basis by residents and business owners. Each action item includes an estimate of the time line for implementation. This Plan identifies action items by timing of implementation (already being implemented, short-term, and long-term), and by hazard (multi-hazard, and hazard-specific).

Chapter 4 includes all of the action items developed for the Plan, including both multi-hazard action items, and hazard-specific action items. Each action item is followed by the following information:

Coordinating Organization

The coordinating organization is the public agency with regulatory responsibility to address natural hazards, or that is willing and able to organize resources, find appropriate funding, or oversee activity implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

Timeline

Action items include both short- and long-term activities. Each action item includes an estimate of the time line for implementation. Short-term action items are activities which Newport Beach's agencies are capable of implementing with existing resources and authorities in the next five years. Long-term action items may require new or additional resources or authorities, and may take between five and ten years (or more) to implement. Section 4 also lists the action items that are already being implemented on an on-going

basis.

Ideas for Implementation

Each action item includes ideas for implementation and potential resources, which may include grant programs or human resources.

Plan Goals Addressed

The Mitigation Plan needs to be regularly monitored and evaluated to measure its success in achieving its goals once implementation begins. To that end, the plan goals addressed by each action item are identified – they provide the means by which the success of each action can be measured.

Partner Organizations

Partner organizations are agencies or public/private sector organizations that may be able to assist in the implementation of action items by providing relevant resources to the coordinating organization. The partner organizations listed in the Resource Directory (Appendix A) of the City of Newport Beach's Local Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan are potential partners recommended by the Hazard Mitigation Advisory Board. These organizations, however, were not involved during the development of the Mitigation Plan, and should therefore be contacted by the coordinating organization to establish their commitment of time and resources to action items.

Constraints

Constraints may apply to some of the action items. These constraints may be a lack of City staff, lack of funds, or vested property rights, which might expose the City of Newport Beach to legal action as a result of adverse impacts on private property.

How Will the Plan be Implemented, Monitored, and Evaluated?

The Plan Maintenance Section (Section 5) of this document details the formal process that will ensure that the Newport Beach Local Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan remains an active and relevant document. The plan maintenance process includes a schedule for monitoring and evaluating the Plan annually and producing a Plan revision every five years. This section describes how the City will integrate public participation throughout the plan maintenance process. Finally, this section includes an explanation of how the City's government intends to incorporate the mitigation strategies outlined in this Plan into existing planning mechanisms such as the City's General Plan, Building and Safety Codes, and community development plans.

Coordinating Body

The City of Newport Beach Hazard Mitigation Strategic Committee has been and will continue to be responsible for coordinating implementation of Plan action items and undertaking the formal review process. The City's Manager, or his or her designee, can and will assign representatives from City agencies and other organizations to serve in this committee, as appropriate, including, but not limited to, the current Hazard Mitigation Advisory Committee members.

Convener

City Council is responsible for adopting the City of Newport Beach Local Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan and Plan Updates, and the Hazard Mitigation Advisory Committee has

responsibility for Plan implementation. The City Manager, or designee, serves as a convener to facilitate the Hazard Mitigation Advisory Committee meetings, and can assign tasks such as updating and presenting the Plan to the members of the committee. Plan implementation and evaluation are a shared responsibility among all of the Hazard Mitigation Advisory Committee members.

Implementation through Existing Programs

The City of Newport Beach addresses statewide planning goals and legislative requirements through its General Plan, Capital Improvement Plans, and City Building and Safety Codes. The Local Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan provides a series of recommendations that are closely related to the goals and objectives of these existing planning programs. The City of Newport Beach has a responsibility to implement recommended mitigation action items through existing programs and procedures.

Economic Analysis of Mitigation Projects

A study conducted in 2005 by the National Institute of Building Sciences through its Multihazard Mitigation Council has found that on average, every dollar spent by FEMA on hazard mitigation provides the country with about four dollars in future benefits. This figure does not include the more than 200 lives and nearly 5,000 injuries that are expected to be prevented over the next 50 years by these programs. Thus, money spent on hazard mitigation is money well spent.

But, where is this pre-disaster mitigation money best spent? To answer this question, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) uses two different but valid approaches to identify and measure the costs and benefits associated with natural hazard mitigation strategies or projects: benefit/cost analysis and cost-effectiveness analysis. Conducting benefit/cost analysis for a mitigation activity can assist communities in determining whether a project is worth undertaking now, in order to avoid disaster-related damages later. Cost-effectiveness analysis evaluates how best to spend a given amount of money to achieve a specific goal. Determining the economic feasibility of mitigating natural hazards can provide decision makers with an understanding of the potential benefits and costs of an activity, as well as a basis upon which to compare alternative projects. These exercises can also help prioritize the implementation of action items based on the limited resources available.

Formal Review Process

Newport Beach's Local Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan will be evaluated on an annual basis to determine the effectiveness of its programs, and to reflect changes in land development or programs that may affect the mitigation priorities. The evaluation process includes a firm schedule and time line, and identifies the local agencies and organizations participating in the evaluation of the Plan. The Convener will be responsible for contacting the Hazard Mitigation Advisory Committee members and organizing the annual meeting. Committee members will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the progress of the mitigation strategies in the Plan.

Continued Public Involvement

The City of Newport Beach is dedicated to involving the public directly in the continual review and updates of its Local Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. Copies of the Plan and Plan Updates are to be made available at City Hall. The existence and location of these copies is published on the City's website and in City newsletters. The Plan is also published on the City's website, with links that allow the public to submit feedback. The comments are received and reviewed by the City's Emergency Services Coordinator.