



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Planning Division  
m e m o r a n d u m

**TO:** Urbana Plan Commission  
**FROM:** Kevin Garcia, Principal Planner  
**DATE:** April 16, 2021  
**SUBJECT:** **Plan Case No. 2419-CP-21** – A request by the Urbana Zoning Administrator to adopt the Champaign County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan 2020 Update as an amendment to the 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan (as amended).

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## Introduction

In 2009<sup>1</sup>, and again in 2015<sup>2</sup>, the City of Urbana adopted the Champaign County Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) and amended the City of Urbana Comprehensive Plan to include the HMP as an element of the City's Comprehensive Plan. City staff now requests that the Plan Commission review and recommend adoption of the new five-year update to the HMP, which would supersede the 2015 version.

The HMP update was prepared by Champaign County Regional Planning Commission staff. The final draft of the 2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan is available online at: <http://champaigncountyhmp.info/>. Staff can provide printed copies to Plan Commissioners upon request.

## Background

The City of Urbana Council has participated in regular updates of the HMP since 2008. By participating in the HMP update process and by adopting the updated HMP, the City continues in good standing to be eligible for federal and state mitigation project grant funding, and Urbana residents remain eligible for lower flood insurance premiums, as well as other potential benefits.

## Purpose of the HMP

The HMP is intended to meet the planning requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, as administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

## HMP Update Process

The HMP update process included four major stages, with opportunities for public participation throughout: 1) organizing resources; 2) assessing risks; 3) developing the mitigation plan; and 4) implementing the plan and monitoring progress.

The existing HMP was adopted by Champaign County and by each participating local government in 2015. In July 2019, the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) and Champaign County entered into an

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<sup>1</sup> Ord. No. 2009-08-090

<sup>2</sup> Ord. No. 2015-09-100

agreement to develop an updated HMP for FEMA review and approval.

In total, 27 jurisdictions, including the City of Urbana, participated in the HMP update process. The Planning Team included municipal planners, public safety planners, and emergency responder representatives who guided the HMP update and provided key input. City of Urbana Public Works Sustainability & Resilience Officer Scott Tess and City of Urbana Fire Department Division Chief Kyle Hensch represented Urbana on the Planning Team.

A broad-based HMP Advisory Group supported the Planning Team in their review of the draft HMP update and provided review comments. The HMP Advisory Group included representatives of key area-wide public and private service providers, and selected government agency representatives.

The Planning Team selected the following types of natural hazards identified in the 2018 Illinois Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan and the 2014 Illinois Department of Public Health Pandemic Influenza Preparedness and Response Plan to include in the HMP update:

- Severe Storms
- Tornadoes
- Severe Winter Storms
- Floods
- Extreme Heat
- Earthquakes
- Drought
- Pandemic

Based on recommendations by the Champaign County EMA Manager and HMP project staff, the Planning Team selected the following human-caused hazards or threats to include in the HMP:

- Hazardous Material Storage and Transport Release or Spill
- Active Shooter
- Cyberattack

The HMP update features an assessment of community capability to address the selected hazards and threats, and a risk assessment for the selected hazards and threats. The Planning Team reviewed and proposed hazard mitigation actions for the selected hazards and threats. The HMP update includes prioritized hazard mitigation actions specific to the City of Urbana, detailed in Exhibit A.

A complete final draft of the Champaign County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update dated November 17, 2020 is available online at <http://champaigncountyhmp.info>.

### **FEMA and IEMA Review of HMP Update**

FEMA Region V and IEMA staff completed their review of the final draft of the HMP update on November 24, 2020 and provided notification that the update meets required criteria for a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan.

Formal approval of the HMP update is contingent upon adoption by the participating jurisdictions of the HMP Update. FEMA Region V received documentation of adoption from the first of 27 participating jurisdictions on December 7, 2020. As a result, FEMA will provide a FEMA letter of official approval of

the HMP Update, with the HMP Update to have an expiration date in December 2025.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) offers communities mitigation grant funds whenever there is a Presidential disaster declaration in the state. Such grant funds may be used for projects like acquiring flood-prone properties, constructing safe rooms to protect people from tornadoes, and installing measures to prevent storm water from flowing into sanitary sewer lines and backing up into basements. The Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, requires that local jurisdictions have a hazard mitigation plan prior to receiving hazard mitigation funds.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency defines hazard mitigation plans as: “any sustained action to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from hazards.” As opposed to emergency response plans, hazard mitigation plans are intended as policies to encourage or require actions that can be taken ahead of time to lessen the adverse impacts of a natural or technical hazard.

## **2005 City of Urbana Comprehensive Plan**

Staff proposes that the City adopt the 2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update as an element of 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan. The 2020 HMP will replace and supersede the 2015 HMP. The Comprehensive Plan includes the following goals, objectives, and implementation items significant to the proposed HMP Update:

### *Goals and Objectives*

Goal 7.0 Protect and beautify existing waterways.

#### *Objectives*

- 7.1 Protect the floodway of the Boneyard Creek.
- 7.2 Ensure that development regulations protect floodways and major drainage ways.
- 7.3 Redevelop parts of Boneyard Creek to provide natural and public amenities.

Goal 8.0 Minimize the impact of natural and man-made disasters.

#### *Objectives*

- 8.1 Promote construction that reduces the effects of high winds, ice storms, flooding, etc.
- 8.2 Prepare necessary disaster preparedness measures in order to best protect the community from disasters.

Goal 33.0 Provide maximum service and dependable utilities.

#### *Objectives*

- 33.2 Correct areas of storm water infiltration-inflow into the sanitary sewer system.

Goal 36.0 Provide maximum service and dependable utilities.

#### *Objectives*

- 36.1 Protect life and property from storm and floodwater damage.
- 36.2 Reduce the impacts of development on storm water conditions through regulations including appropriate provisions for detention and conveyance.

### *Comprehensive Plan Implementation Strategies*

- Adopt a Hazard Mitigation Plan that offers strategies for reducing the effect of natural disasters.  
Timing: Near Term
- Explore grants and incentives that can be used to encourage relocating existing and future utilities underground.

## Discussion

Taking a county-wide approach to hazard mitigation planning includes some important benefits, including:

- Allowing participating local government jurisdictions to become eligible for Federal hazard mitigation funds, in conformance with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000;
- Enabling coordinated approaches to mitigate hazards across jurisdictions;
- Allowing cost savings by sharing resources and using economies of scale; and
- Avoiding duplication and ensuring consistencies where appropriate.

In terms of fiscal impacts to the City, there will be some costs incurred to fully comply with the plan, but plan adoption will also reduce the costs associated with any future disasters and make the City eligible to apply for hazard mitigation grant funds to both prevent and respond to disasters. In prioritizing the action items, the relative cost versus risk and benefit was taken into account.

## Summary of Staff Findings

1. The proposed Final Draft of the Champaign County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update was prepared pursuant to the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and is consistent with the National Mitigation Strategy developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The content of the proposed HMP Update was reviewed by FEMA and by the Illinois Emergency Management Agency and has been determined to meet the required FEMA criteria.
2. The proposed Champaign County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update supersedes and acts as an update to the 2015 HMP adopted by the City of Urbana.
3. Adoption of the proposed HMP Update by the City of Urbana will better prepare the City to be eligible to receive funding assistance from FEMA in the event of a disaster. Adoption of the proposed HMP Update will also allow the City to pursue pre-disaster mitigation funds.
4. Adoption of the proposed HMP Update as an element of the Comprehensive plan is consistent with Urbana Comprehensive Plan goals, objectives, and implementation strategies.

## Options

In Plan Case 2419-CP-21, the Urbana Plan Commission has the following options in its recommendation to the City Council:

1. Approve the proposed Champaign County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update and adopt it as an element of the Urbana Comprehensive Plan; or
2. Approve the proposed Champaign County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update with specific changes and adopt it as an element of the Urbana Comprehensive Plan; or
3. Do not approve the proposed Champaign County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update.

## Staff Recommendation

Based on the evidence presented in the discussion above, and without the benefit of considering additional evidence that may be presented at the public hearing, staff recommends that the Plan Commission forward this application to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation to **APPROVE** the proposed Champaign County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update, and **ADOPT** the plan as an element of the 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan, as amended.

cc: Susan Monte, Champaign County Regional Planning Commission  
Scott Tess, Sustainability & Resilience Officer  
Kyle Hensch, Fire Department Division Chief

Attachments: Exhibit A: HMP Excerpt - Primary Hazards of Concern and Prioritized Hazard Mitigation Actions for Urbana

Exhibit B: Prior City Council Actions Related to the HMP

The final draft of the individual sections of the 2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan is available online at: <http://champaigncountyhmp.info/>

The draft is available in a single PDF document here: [https://champaigncountyhmp.info/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Champaign-County-Multi-Jurisdictional-Hazard-Mitigation-Plan-Update\\_111720r-2.pdf](https://champaigncountyhmp.info/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Champaign-County-Multi-Jurisdictional-Hazard-Mitigation-Plan-Update_111720r-2.pdf)

**Table 5-50: Primary Hazards of Concern to City of Urbana**

1	Due to changing climate conditions over the next several years, the City of Urbana can expect to experience more frequent episodes of extreme precipitation, severe weather events, and extreme temperatures.
2	Flash flooding on paved impervious areas can occur due to more frequent extreme precipitation events.
3	Riverine flooding may be exacerbated in remaining unimproved portions of the Boneyard Creek drainage basin within City limits, and along McCullough Creek, which flows through southern Urbana before joining the Embarras River and is known to experience overbank flooding as a result of short, intense thunderstorms
4	The main threats posed by severe winter storms will be injuries or deaths from dangerously low temperatures and accidents, injuries, or fatalities from hazardous driving conditions, and severe tree damage.
5	Certain natural hazards (e.g., tornado or earthquake) may occur with little or no warning.
6	The unknown and unpredictable aspects of potential human-caused hazards (i.e., active shooter, cyberattack, or hazardous materials storage/transport release or spill) will continue.

**Table 5-51: Prioritized Hazard Mitigation Actions for City of Urbana**

Hazards Addressed	Priority	Hazard Mitigation Action	Status	Implementation Notes
F	1	1) Study, develop plans, implement programs, and/or make improvements to repurpose flood-prone properties along the Boneyard Creek to expand greenways	NEW	Responsible Party: City Community Development Services and Public Works Department, City Council Funding Source: Federal, state, local, or grant
F	1	2) Study, develop plans, implement programs, and/or make improvements to green and grey stormwater infrastructure where stormwater modeling demonstrates a flooding potential.	NEW	Responsible Party: City Community Development Services and Public Works Department, City Council Funding Source: Federal, state, local, or grant
D, EH, F, SS, T	1	3) Study, develop plans, implement programs, and/or make improvements to support nature and urban biodiversity to enhance our community’s resilience amidst expected climate change impacts. Consider these hazard mitigation actions:	NEW	Responsible Party: City Community Development Services and Public Works Department, City Council Funding Source: Federal, state, local, or grant

			<p>a) Encourage public and private sector development of convenient access to green spaces including but not limited to green roofs, green walls, and rain gardens in high-traffic urban areas.</p> <p>b) Promote voluntary conservative water use measures to reduce potable water usage during times of drought.</p> <p>c) Expand and maintain tree canopies to help manage storm water, air quality, reduce Co2 shade sidewalks and bike lanes, and to curb heat island effect in parking lots and large paved areas.</p> <p>d) Encourage use of synthetic-free lawn care, native plantings, and integrated pest management practices to support pollinator, insect predator and bird habitats.</p>		
SWS, EH	1	4)	Study, develop plans, implement programs and/or improvements to ensure appropriate cooling and warming shelters for vulnerable populations.	NEW	Responsible Party: City Community Development Services and Public Works Department, City Council Funding Source: Federal, state, local, or grant
F	1	5)	Adopt, incorporate, or utilize the most recent expected rainfall amounts for selected storm durations and return periods as published by the Illinois State Water Survey.	NEW	Responsible Party: City Community Development Services and Public Works Department, City Council Funding Source: Federal, state, local, or grant
SWS, SS, EH, T, E	1	6)	Complete installation of emergency back-up power systems for remaining essential City facilities.	PENDING	Recommended for inclusion in a future list of capital projects. Responsible Party: City Fire Department and Public Works Department Funding Source: Federal, state, local, or grant Suggested Timeframe: within 1 year of FEMA approval of HMP update as resources allow
All	1	7)	Contribute to countywide integrated information base for use in assessing risk from natural and human-caused hazards or threats featured in the HMP Update 2020.	ONGOING	Responsible Party: City Community Development Services, Public Works, Fire Department Funding Source: Federal, state, local, or grant
SWS, SS, EH, T, E	1	8)	Identify existing buildings as shelters.	ONGOING	Responsible Party: City Fire Department Funding Source: Federal, state, local, or grant
All	1	9)	Offer and promote the use of area-wide warning text message system (e.g., Alert Sense).	ONGOING	Responsible Party: City Fire Department Funding Source: Federal, state, local, or grant

All	1	10)	Maintain an advance outdoor warning siren system.	ONGOING	Outdoor siren warning system is tested the first Tuesday of each month Responsible Party: City Fire Department Funding Source: Federal, state, local, or grant
All	1	11)	Use Risk Watch program in schools.	ONGOING	Responsible Party: City Fire Department Funding Source: Federal, state, local, or grant
SWS, SS, EH, T, E	1	12)	Educate the public--especially seniors and the disabled--on methods to ensure critical documents can be easily retrieved in case of emergency.	ONGOING	Responsible Party: City Fire Department Funding Source: Federal, state, local, or grant
E	1	13)	Periodically review and update International Building Code requirements concerning seismic resistance.	ONGOING	2009 International Building Code adopted. Video on City website promotes wind resistant construction techniques. Responsible Party: City Building Safety Division Funding Source: Federal, state, local, or grant
SS, T	1	14)	Periodically review and update International Building Code requirements concerning high wind resistance.	ONGOING	Responsible Party: City Public Works Department Funding Source: Federal, state, local, or grant
F	1	15)	Require developers to pre-approve a tax benefit district to include properties served by a detention basin if a property owner association fails to maintain it.	ONGOING	Responsible Party: City Community Development Services and Public Works Department Funding Source: Federal, state, local, or grant
F	1	16)	Continue to require a minimum of one-foot freeboard above the 100-year floodplain for new construction.	ONGOING	Responsible Party: City Community Development Services and Public Works Department Funding Source: Federal, state, local, or grant
F	2	17)	Participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.	ONGOING	Responsible Party: City Public Works Department Funding Source: Federal, state, local, or grant
SS, SWS, T	2	18)	Participate in the National Weather Service StormReady® program.	ONGOING	Responsible Party: City Fire Department Funding Sources: Federal, state, local, or grant
F	2	19)	Offer zoning transfer of development rights as a tool within Boneyard Creek District.	ONGOING	Responsible Party: City Community Development Services Funding Sources: Federal, state, local, or grant
E, T, SS	2	20)	Monitor and target financial assistance to improve safety of existing buildings in TIF districts through redevelopment incentive programs.	ONGOING	Responsible Party: City Community Development Services Funding Sources: Federal, state, local, or grant

T, SS, SWS	2	21)	Trim and tree removal program to reduce limb and tree hazards. Trees are rated based on risk using a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being the highest risk. All level 10 risk trees have been removed.	ONGOING	Trees are rated based on risk using a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being the highest risk. All level 10 risk trees. Anticipate completing removal of risk level 9 and 8 trees in 2015. Responsible Party: City Public Works Department Funding Sources: Federal, state, local, or grant
D, T, SS, SWS	2	22)	Improve maintenance and proper species selection in urban forestry.	ONGOING	Reducing the number of maples in our inventory by attrition. Other than maples the urban forest has good diversity among tree species. Responsible Party: City Public Works Department Funding Sources: Federal, state, local, or grant
F	3	23)	Acquire flood-prone properties along the Boneyard Creek to expand greenways.	ONGOING	Applied for an IEMA grant to purchase an additional flood prone property along Boneyard Creek but did not receive grant. Responsible Party: City Public Works Department Funding Sources: Federal, state, local, or grant
All	3	24)	Develop a Facilities Plan to provide technical support and funding or subsidies to upgrade critical facilities.	PENDING	Responsible Party: City Community Development Services and Public Works Department Funding Sources: Federal, state, local, or grant Suggested Timeframe: within 3 to 5 years of FEMA approval of HMP update

**Exhibit B: Prior City Council Actions Related to the HMP**

9/21/2015	Ordinance No. 2015-09-100 An Ordinance Amending the 2005 Comprehensive Plan of the City of Urbana, Illinois (Adoption of the <i>Champaign County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update</i> as an Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan – Plan Case 2264-CP-15)
8/17/2009	Ordinance No. 2009-08-090 An Ordinance Amending the City of Urbana Comprehensive Plan 2005 (Adopting the <i>Champaign County Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan</i> )
2/22/2008	Resolution No. 2008-02-002R Resolution Authorizing the City to Participate in the Development of a Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan
6/20/2005	Ordinance No. 2005-06-087 An Ordinance Amending the City of Urbana Comprehensive Plan 2005 (Adopting a Hazard Mitigation Plan)