

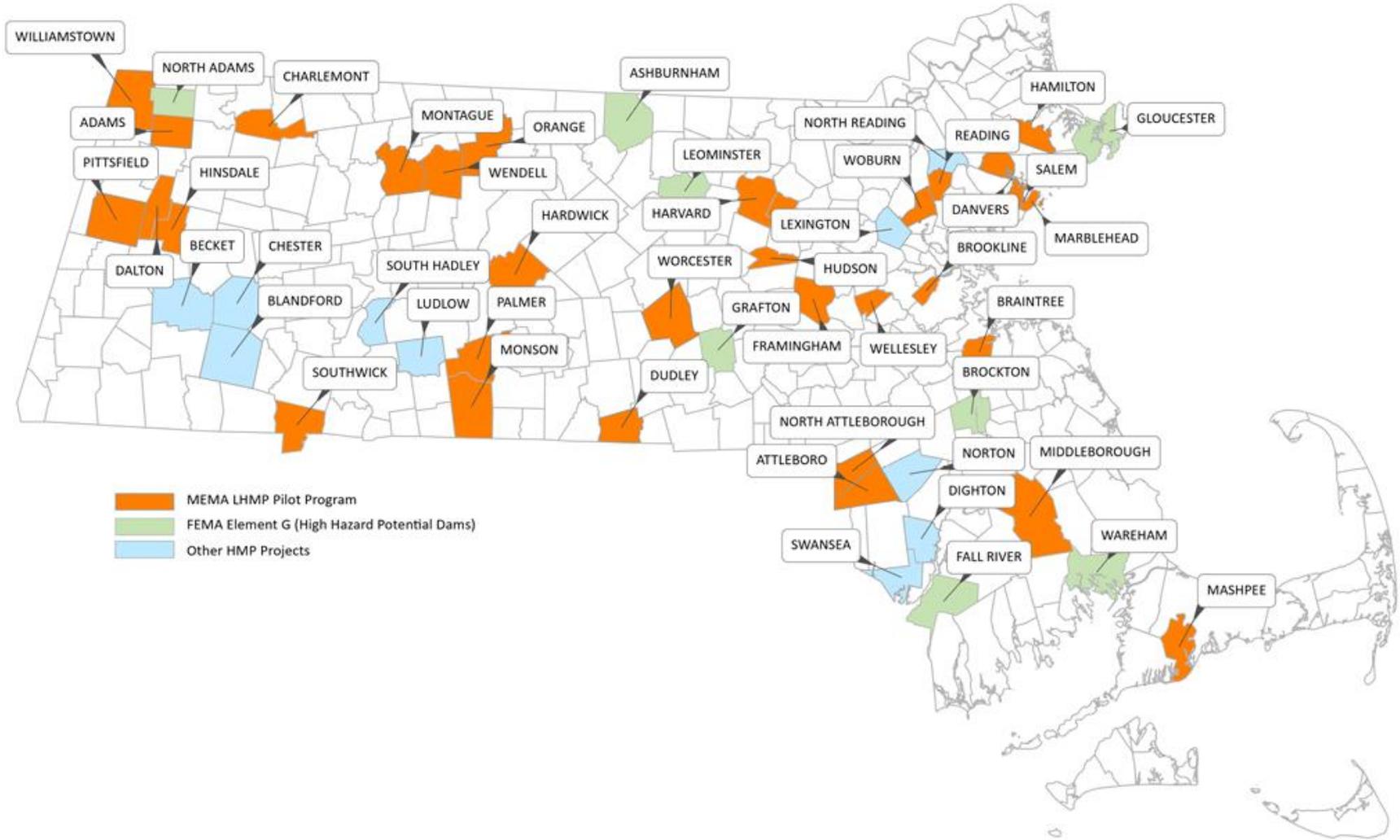
Public Meeting #1

Hazard Mitigation Plan Development

Town of Montague, MA

January 28, 2026

JAMIE CAPLAN CONSULTING, LLC.



PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA

What is Hazard Mitigation?

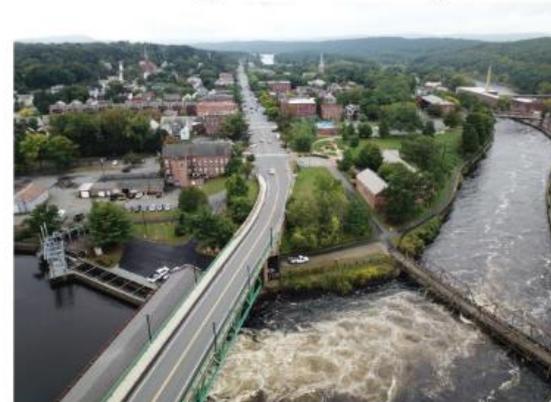
What is a Hazard Mitigation Plan and What is in it?

Identify Natural Hazards and High Hazard Areas

Brainstorming Possible Mitigation Actions

Next Steps

Town of Montague Hazard Mitigation Plan



Adopted by the Montague Select Board on
February 24, 2020

Prepared by

Montague Hazard Mitigation Committee

and

Franklin Regional Council of Governments

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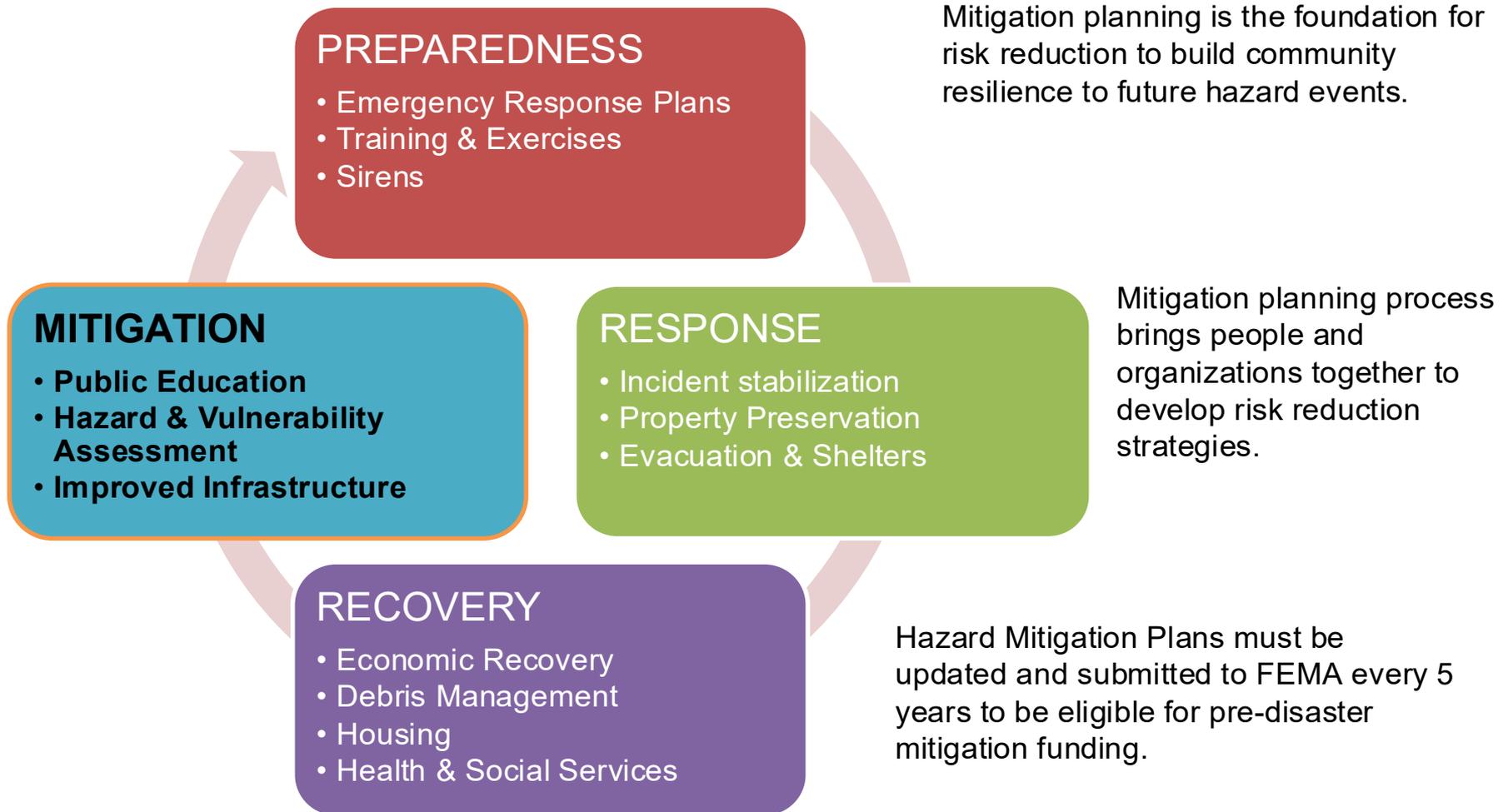
www.frcog.org

This project was funded by grants received from the Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program, Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

WHAT IS A HAZARD?

- A hazard is a natural event or condition that can cause harm to people, property, or the environment.
 - For example, floods, wildfires, and earthquakes.
- Are all hazard occurrences disasters?

INTRODUCTION TO MITIGATION



WHAT IS HAZARD MITIGATION?

- Hazard Mitigation is defined as any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to life and property from hazard events.
- Why create a hazard mitigation plan?
 - Reduces loss of life and property
 - Prioritizes investments
 - Improves preparedness
 - Increases resilience
 - Grant funding requirement
- Benefits
 - Safety
 - Savings
 - Community Resilience



WHAT DOES HAZARD MITIGATION LOOK LIKE?



Flood: culvert upgrades, drainage improvements, elevate structures



Wildfire: defensible space, fuel reduction, ignition-resistant construction



Heat: cooling centers, shade infrastructure, tree canopy expansion



Earthquake: retrofit critical facilities, secure utilities

MITIGATION PLAN CONTENTS

Community Profiles

Hazard Information and Risk Assessment

Community Capabilities

Mitigation Strategy

Plan Implementation and Maintenance

HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING COMMITTEE (HMPC)



PROVIDE SUPPORTING DATA AND INFORMATION.



ASSIST WITH OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT.



ASSIST IN THE IDENTIFICATION AND PRIORITIZATION OF MITIGATION ACTIONS.

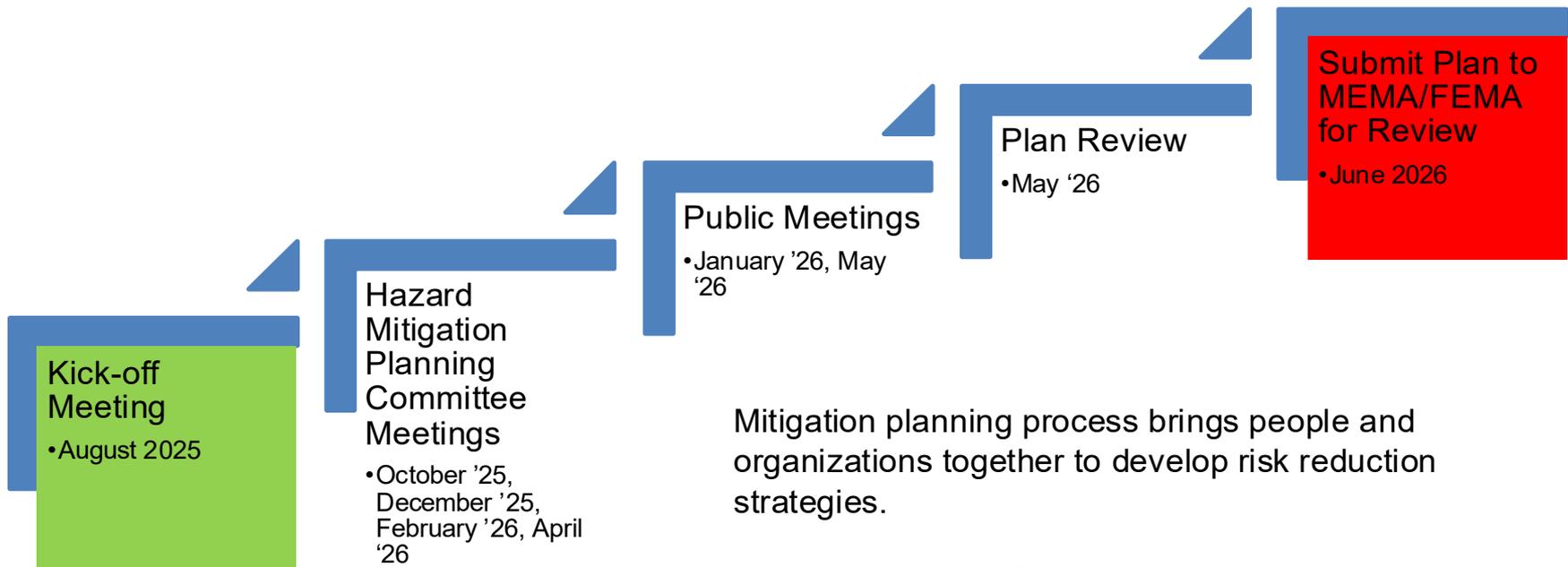


REVIEW AND COMMENT ON THE DRAFT PLAN.

- Town of Montague
- Turners Falls Fire Department
- Gill-Montague School District
- Montague Center Water Department
- Turners Falls Water Department
- Montague Police Department
- Montague Board of Health
- Brick House Resource Center

PLANNING PROCESS TIMELINE

Mitigation planning is the foundation for risk reduction to build community resilience to future hazard events.

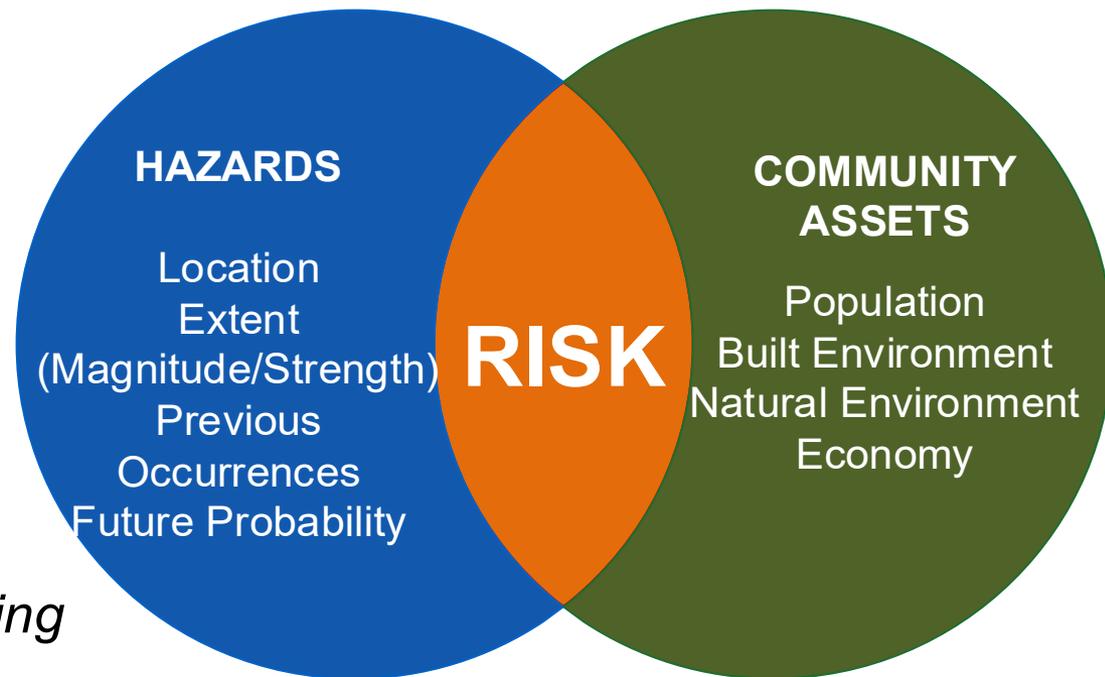


Mitigation planning process brings people and organizations together to develop risk reduction strategies.

Hazard Mitigation Plans must be updated and submitted to FEMA every 5 years to be eligible for pre-disaster mitigation funding.

WHAT IS RISK?

- The potential for damage, loss, or other impacts created by the interaction of natural hazards with community assets.



Source: Local Mitigation Planning Handbook, FEMA 2013.

HAZARD RANKING

Hazards	Probability	Impact	Spatial Extent	Warning Time	Duration	Value	Rank
Flooding from Precipitation	4	3	2	3	2	3	High
Severe Winter Storms	4	2	4	1	3	3	High
Average and Extreme Temperatures	4	2	4	1	2	2.9	High
Other Severe Weather	4	2	4	2	1	2.9	High
Wildfires/Brushfires	2	3	3	3	3	2.7	Mod.
Hurricanes/Tropical Storms	3	2	4	1	2	2.6	Mod.
Droughts	2	2	4	1	4	2.5	Mod.
Flooding from Dam Failure	2	3	2	4	2	2.5	Mod.
Tornadoes	2	4	1	3	1	2.4	Mod.
Invasive Species	3	1	2	3	4	2.3	Mod.
Landslides	2	2	1	4	3	2.1	Mod.
Earthquakes	1	1	4	4	1	1.9	Low

- Probability = 30%
- Impact = 30%
- Spatial Extent = 20%
- Warning Time = 10%
- Duration = 10%

VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

Exposure – determining what is at risk



Loss – modeling damage and loss using GIS-based software and analysis



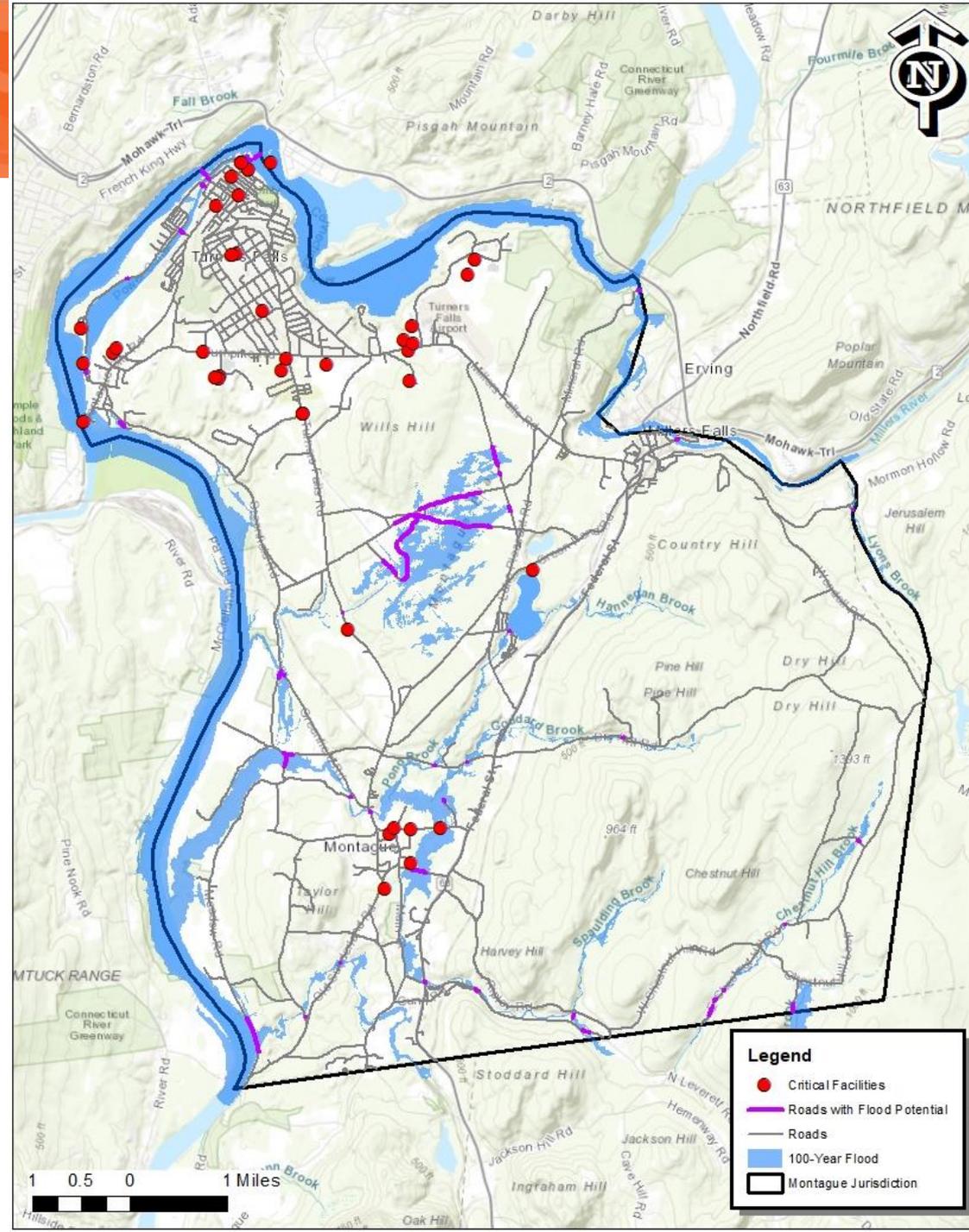
Hazus will be used for flood, wind, and earthquake hazards



Identify problems and impacts which will carry into the mitigation planning

FLOOD RISK

- New flood maps
- Flood concerns – Hillcrest School, Montague Book Mill, Main Street, Montague City Road, Millers Falls Roads, ice jams

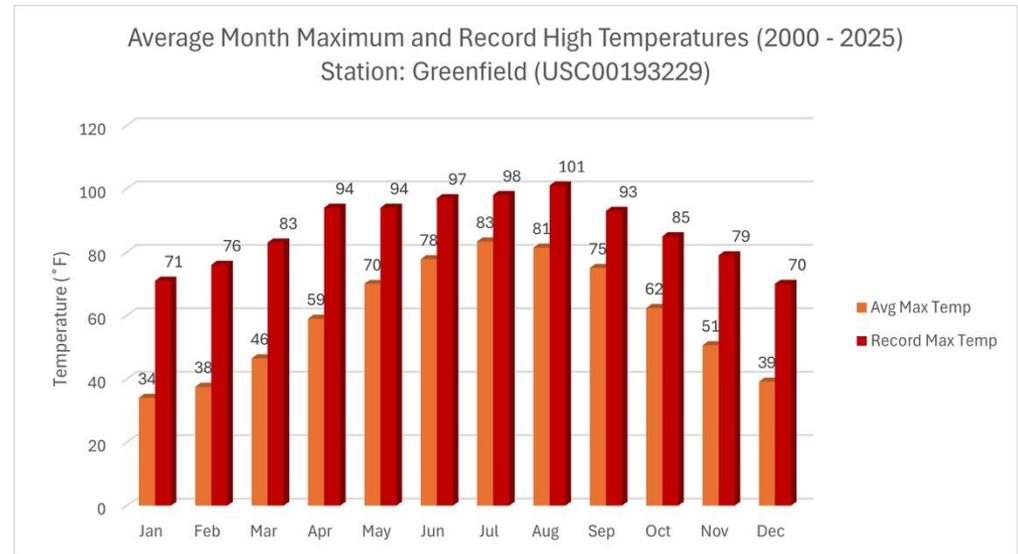


SEVERE WINTER STORMS

- Additional heating and cooling center locations should be investigated.
- Snow removal is particularly difficult for elderly residents due to both the cost of snow removal and declining physical ability.
- Roof ice dams may cause damage to structures.
- Aboveground lines can be knocked out by snow and ice.
- The electrical grid and roadways are susceptible to failure and loss of use during winter storms. Sidewalks, though typically plowed within 48 hours, are also often inaccessible during and after storms.
- Snow impacts bus routes and the pedestrian paths leading to bus stops.

AVERAGE AND EXTREME TEMPERATURES

- Extreme heat will be a significant public health threat to all residents, but especially for vulnerable populations living in older homes or homes without air conditioning.
- The elderly and those with mobility issues may not be able to leave their homes and travel safely.
- People who work primarily outdoors may face either reduced ability to work or be at risk of heat illness.
- People working in businesses without air conditioning may be at risk of heat illness.



OTHER SEVERE WEATHER

- People in Montague have been disrupted by severe weather events (rain, snow, sleet, ice) and other more frequent wind and thunderstorm events.
- Vulnerable populations may be isolated if roads are closed.
- First responders may have difficulty reaching people if roads are not plowed/treated or are closed due to tree debris.

WHAT WE NEED TO HEAR FROM YOU

Where do hazards occur?

What valuable assets need protection?

How do you recommend reducing risk?

DRAFT GOALS FOR 2026

Save Lives and Reduce Losses to Private Property

- Reduce risks to people and property through natural hazard mitigation and climate adaptation.

High Hazard Potential Dams

- Assess the vulnerabilities of high-hazard dams (including the canal system) and implement strategies to reduce risks.

Increase Capacity to Mitigate Risk

- Implement plans, land use policies, and development regulations to promote smart growth and low-impact development while prioritizing equity.

Buildings and Infrastructure

- Strengthen Town-owned facilities, including historic buildings, and infrastructure to improve community resiliency throughout the five villages while prioritizing green infrastructure and other nature-based solutions.

Natural Resources

- Prioritize the protection of open spaces, farmland, and natural resources such as waterways.

Education and Awareness

- Improve community-wide resilience to natural hazards and climate change through public education and engagement.

WHAT IS A MITIGATION ACTION?

Local Plans and Regulations

- Government authorities, policies, or codes that shape how land and buildings are developed and maintained.

Structure and Infrastructure

- Projects modifying existing infrastructure to remove it from a hazard area, or building new structures in ways that reduce the impacts of hazards.

Natural Systems Protection

- Actions that reduce damage and losses, and that preserve or restore the functions of natural systems.

Education and Awareness Programs

- Sustained programs to teach the public and decision makers about hazard risks and community mitigation programs.

A specific project, policy, program, or practice that reduces risk.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT AND HOW YOU CAN STAY INVOLVED?

Join the second
Public Meeting
in April.

Review the
HMP draft in
April.

- What happens when the HMP is complete?
 - HMP goes to MEMA in May and then to FEMA.
 - Community adopts the HMP Update.
 - Plan implementation and maintenance.

THANK YOU

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