

PLANNING PROCESS AND UPDATE PROCEDURES

5.1 PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The plan development process consisted of the following steps:

- 1 Mobilization and Scoping.** From 2000, the Project Impact grant enabled the County to lay the groundwork for hazard mitigation planning by increasing agency and public awareness. In 2002, the Civil Defense Agency invited resource people from the State and University of Hawaii to meet with several County agencies to discuss the approach and requirements for a hazard mitigation plan. The Project Impact and agency meetings are documented in Appendix B.
- 2 Establishment of Working Committee.** The Civil Defense Agency organized a working committee composed of representatives from its agency, Planning Department, Data Systems Department and two private consultants to prepare the Hawaii County Hazard Mitigation Plan. In lieu of relying on consultants to prepare the entire plan, the County deliberately chose to invest County personnel time to prepare the plan. Only by taking an active role in the overall preparation could County personnel become intimately educated in hazard mitigation, be committed to implementing the mitigation actions, and be able to update the plan. Beginning in the summer of 2002, the committee met to establish project parameters, develop a work plan, and determine the format for the plan. Early in the process, the committee also met with representatives from State Civil Defense to gain an understanding of how the various county plans were being developed, the kind of assistance that was available and what was expected from Hawaii County. These early sessions provided an opportunity to learn about the various hazard mitigation projects and activities that were already ongoing to incorporate into the plan. The committee met on a monthly basis to provide status updates and feedback on the work accomplished during the intervening time period.
- 3 Data Collection.** In the process of preparing the plan, the County wanted to build its GIS capacity by purchasing hardware and software, compiling available data, developing needed data, and identifying the gaps to focus future efforts. The County recognizes GIS as a valuable tool for planning, response (E911 dispatch and Emergency Operating Center),

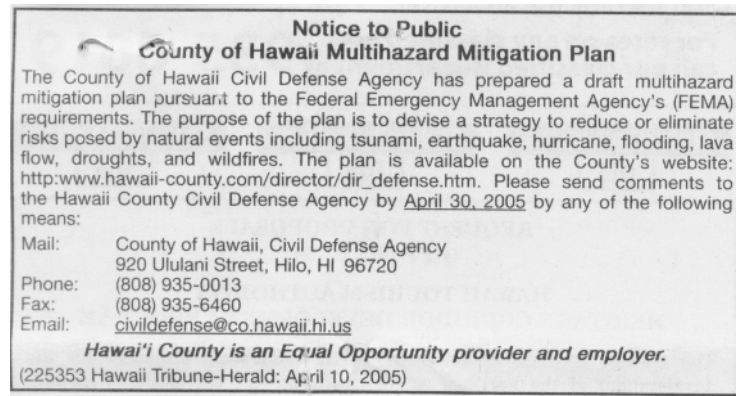
and recovery. Hence, grant funds to prepare this plan were judiciously used to obtain key base information (e.g., purchase of the tax parcel layer license, development of street centerline layer) as well as GIS software and computer hardware. Since the reliability of the GIS data is important, the GIS metadata is summarized in Appendix D.

4 Analysis.

- **Hazard Identification and Analysis.** The working committee researched available documents and consulted with pertinent agencies and experts to synthesize the state of knowledge of the various natural hazards. Reports prepared by the Hawaii State Earthquake Advisory Committee, the Hawaii Multihazard Science Advisory Committee and the Lava Flow Hazard Mitigation Plan Technical Committee were valuable resources. The sources are referenced throughout the document in footnotes and listed on page 6-1.
- **Risk and Vulnerability Analysis.** Critical facilities and infrastructure were mapped in the GIS. Hazard zones were then overlaid on the critical facilities/infrastructure maps to highlight the assets at risk. Pertinent agencies and experts were consulted to accurately describe the facilities, verify the risk, and identify the measures taken (or needed) to mitigate the risk.
- **Mitigation Strategies.** The mitigation actions were derived from the hazard analysis and the risk and vulnerability analysis. Implementation of these actions required assignment of priorities, and details regarding who, when, and how much.

5 Plan Development. The data collection and analysis was synthesized in this Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. Key stakeholder groups that have been involved or will be involved in the continuous hazard mitigation planning include: 1) frontline agencies involved in emergency and disaster response and recovery; 2) operators of critical infrastructure and facilities; 3) regulatory and funding agencies responsible for certain mitigation actions; 4) key businesses that are involved with sheltering, evacuation, or recovery; and 5) the general public.

6 Public Input. The County's recent update of the General Plan adopted by the County Council in February 2005 included a major revision to the policies relating to natural hazards. The previous policies addressed only flooding hazards. The revision broadened the policies to address multi-hazards. The public meetings held for the General Plan provided an opportunity to educate the public on the types of natural hazards and land use mitigation measures such as regulating development or even acquiring development rights to prevent future development in high risk areas. The Planning Department and the County Council held numerous meetings in 2000 through 2002 in the various districts to discuss the proposed changes to the General Plan (see Appendix B, "Planning Process Meetings Documentation"). In addition, an initial draft of this hazard mitigation plan has been available for public review and comment on the State's hazard mitigation website since November 2003. The final draft of this hazard mitigation plan has been available on the County's website since April 5, 2005. The following public notice was published in the two local newspapers in this County (Hawaii Tribune Herald and West Hawaii Today) to provide broad opportunity for comment before finalizing the plan:



As of May 10, 2005, no comments were received.

7 Verification, Refinement, and Public Outreach. With thoughts gathered together and organized in this Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan, the County will continue to hold interagency meetings and public workshops. For more grassroots involvement, the County has established a community outreach network called Project Kumiai to serve two functions: 1) to prepare communities to respond to emergencies and 2) to serve as a two-way communication conduit between the community and County officials.¹ This communication network would function during non-emergency periods as well as emergency periods. Paid trained facilitators in each district will provide a steady and reliable link and to ensure that action items do not “fall through the cracks.” The County’s Department of Research and Development, together with a steering committee of key interagency representatives (e.g., police, fire, civil defense, public works, American Red Cross), will oversee the program.

5.2 PLAN UPDATE PROCEDURES

In recognition of the need for establishing a formal process for hazard mitigation planning and preparedness within the County's operational structure, the County will initiate a two-pronged approach to ensure that this plan is kept updated and pertinent actions are incorporated in other plans as applicable:

- **Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee.** Within the County government itself, the County will establish a Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee that will be responsible for monitoring, evaluating and updating the plan. The Steering Committee will include representatives from each County agency or department having hazard mitigation responsibilities. The Steering Committee will meet on a quarterly basis to ensure that the monitoring, evaluation and updating tasks are being carried out and will interface with the newly created Community Emergency Organization that is being formed to enlist community participation and support in response to emergencies. The Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee will ensure that the hazard mitigation measures identified in the plan are being carried out. The department and agency representatives will be required to prepare quarter-

1. “Kumiai” is a Japanese term used by the local population to refer to a neighborhood support group. Project Kumiai is Hawaii County’s implementation of FEMA’s Citizen Corps concept. Through this Citizen Corps program, FEMA envisions engaging citizens in homeland security, community preparedness, and family safety through public education and outreach, through training opportunities, and through volunteer programs such as the Community Emergency Response Team program.

ly reports to be discussed during their regularly scheduled meetings. This enhanced communication will enable the various agencies to gain a comprehensive view of the County's hazard mitigation activities and a better understanding of the interrelationship of their actions. The quarterly reports will enable the Steering Committee to prepare an annual report which will serve as an evaluation tool measuring the progress that has been made toward achieving the objectives of the plan.

- **Community Emergency Organization (Project Kumiai).** The Community Emergency Organization will be an ongoing community based entity to implement training programs, educate the public, serve as technical resource on various initiatives such as home improvement retrofit projects, and to provide feedback on the mitigation plan.

The plan will be monitored and updated according to the following procedures:

- 1 The Steering Committee will prepare a draft of the annual report by September of every year and present the draft to the Community Emergency Organization for review. The annual report will: 1) evaluate progress on meeting the mitigation objectives set forth in Section 4.1 of this plan; 2) indicate the status of the projects approved in prior years; 3) identify priority projects for the upcoming year by potential funding source; 4) propose a workplan for the year assigning responsibilities and target deadlines; 5) propose specific revisions to the mitigation plan; and 6) highlight other plans that should incorporate hazard mitigation measures. The Committee will finalize the report by the end of the calendar year, to provide timely input to the County's capital improvement and operational budget process.
- 2 By March of every other year, the County's Civil Defense Agency will prepare draft revisions to the mitigation plan based on the annual reports, input from the Community Emergency Organization, and its own independent research. The Steering Committee and the Community Emergency Organization will review the draft revisions. The Civil Defense Agency will prepare final revisions by June, in time for any last minute changes to the County's budget necessitated by the plan revisions.
- 3 The updating process will be a means to keep the Council informed on hazard mitigation efforts. A standard resolution will be drafted for the Council to adopt the revisions biannually. If no revisions are necessary for the 2-year period, a resolution will recite that determination.

This biannual process is necessary for the plan to serve as a reliable compendium of the latest information, a means to allocate scarce resources, and a compass to keep the County pointed towards its disaster-resilient goals.