



**OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN**  
**CITY OF SEATTLE**  
**ALL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN UPDATE**

**November 2020**



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The City of Seattle Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is conducting an update of the Seattle All-Hazards Mitigation Plan (HMP). The purpose of the HMP is to strategically guide actions and investments to reduce the impacts of natural and human-caused hazards on human life and property. Updates are required every five years, and the last update of the HMP was approved by FEMA in February 2016.

This Outreach and Engagement Plan (Plan) describes opportunities for the public and stakeholders to be involved during the update process. This Plan is designed to meet the requirements of:

- FEMA Local Mitigation Planning Handbook, Task 3 Create an Outreach Strategy
- 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §201.6, and
- Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) Standard 4.4.

### Impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic

The update process was initiated in January 2020. Once the impact of the emerging pandemic became clear, staff resources were redeployed to address the urgent work of coordinating federal grants and aid to help the City through this emergency.

Work on this update was paused, then restarted in fall 2020. In order to complete the update before the current plan expired, outreach and engagement plans were streamlined and focused. This plan reflects those constraints.

Governor Inslee's Stay Home – Stay Healthy Order issued on March 23, 2020 means that all public outreach and engagement for the All Hazard Mitigation Plan Update must take place virtually. In person community briefings, meetings, and events are not possible because of this global health crisis. Connecting with public sector stakeholders has also been challenging due to the increased demands on staff during this time. We will continue to look for additional opportunities and creative ways to engage with communities, and to focus on feedback essential to this work.

## 2.0 OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

The Plan is designed to meeting the following objectives:

- Raise awareness of hazard mitigation, the update process and when opportunities to provide input will occur.
- Provide the opportunity to all who live, work and play in Seattle to participate in the update process.
- Ensure a process that is open and transparent, culturally sensitive, accessible, and ensures that input is considered.
- Gather input in ways that are safe for staff and the public during the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Ask for input where the public feedback can authentically influence the plan.

## 3.0 OUTREACH STRATEGY

Developing a Hazard Mitigation Plan requires participation and input from a range of City departments and partners in the planning process. To that end, OEM will implement a transparent approach to

providing clear and accurate information through written materials and graphics that allow the public to easily engage in the process, receive information, and have their voices heard.

The key elements of this public involvement strategy include virtual meetings with community members and stakeholder groups to engage them in the HMP update process. The activities and materials outlined in the following sections will be used together to ensure that the public is aware of the project and understands the need for updating the plan.

### 3.1 Key Messages

It is critical that key messages communicated about the project remain consistent. Key messaging will minimize the risk of presenting inconsistent information to the community and help keep the project moving forward efficiently, on schedule.

- The City of Seattle Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is conducting an update of the HMP.
- Updates are required every five years. Keeping the HMP current is a good emergency management practice for the people of Seattle, and allows the City to maintain eligibility for state and federal mitigation funds that support mitigation activities such as:
  - Seismic risk assessments and retrofit projects.
  - Urban flooding hazard identification.
  - Public education efforts surrounding risks of unreinforced masonry buildings.
- The purpose of the HMP is to strategically guide actions and investments to reduce the impacts of natural and human caused hazards on human life and property.
- This HMP is one plan in a suite of plans maintained by OEM as required by City codes. Other plans include the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, Continuity of Government, Continuity of Operations Plans, and Disaster Recovery Framework.
- The HMP keeps the City eligible for millions of dollars in federal hazard mitigation grants.

### 3.2 Key Audiences and Stakeholders

Key audiences identified to participate in the HMP may choose various ways to participate including receive project updates, take polls or surveys, review and provide comments on a public draft of the HMP via email. City departments and key external stakeholders participate in the Mitigation Work Group which meets regularly to update status of projects annually and update the HMP every five years.

The DRAFT HMP will be provided directly to a wide variety of stakeholders via email with a request for comment. This will include representatives from neighboring government jurisdictions, city departments, regional transit agencies, healthcare institutions, community-based organizations, colleges and universities, business and economic development organizations, and elected officials.

### 3.3 Key Planning Considerations

Every public outreach process is unique and presents a variety of opportunities and challenges for the planning team. The following key planning considerations have been identified as potentially impacting this project and the planning team, along with strategies to address issues as they arise.

### ***Outreach during the COVID-19 Pandemic***

The HMP could potentially benefit anyone within Seattle’s borders at the time of a hazardous event. While all members of the public will be encouraged to participate and provide project input, the pandemic has restricted what can be accomplished. Even in normal circumstances, the City has limited resources and must be prioritized to maximize outreach effectiveness across a broad spectrum of stakeholders. The pandemic has made it even more challenging to do extensive outreach. To maximize the project’s reach, the project team will leverage resources to invite online participation. OEM will rely on contact lists, social media, newsletters associated with City departments that are part of the Mitigation Work Group.

### ***Input from Diverse Communities***

The HMP is intended to mitigate (i.e., reduce exposure to) hazards for all residents of Seattle, and non-residents within the city’s borders at the time a hazardous event occurs. The HMP update process will not create disproportionate impacts on a particular population or geographic area. However, access to the planning and decision-making process must ensure that diverse voices are heard, and that priorities and strategies emerge that reflect multi-cultural perspectives and are racially equitable. OEM will use its Community Safety Ambassador program to solicit input from diverse communities. Input sought will be focused on prioritizing the types of potential future mitigation project community partnerships, and which services are most important to protect from future disaster.

## **4.0 INCLUSIVE OUTREACH AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**

The following outreach activities will be used to engage the public in the Seattle HMP update process:

### **4.1 Mitigation Work Group**

OEM established a Mitigation Work Group (MWG) made up of City representatives and key stakeholders. The MWG meets regularly to discuss mitigation actions, annual progress, grant opportunities and the 5-year update. Mitigation Work Group members will serve as project liaisons to community groups and interests, they represent. The group will meet five times throughout the HMP update process and are encouraged to assist with public outreach and engagement through their department/agency digital media.

### **4.2 Public Website**

OEM will establish space on their public website to share information about the HMP. The website will include the following basic information:

- Project description
- Downloadable one-page summary about the HMP update
- Dedicated email address ([HazardMitigationPlanUpdate@seattle.gov](mailto:HazardMitigationPlanUpdate@seattle.gov))
- Outreach and Public Engagement materials (see below)

### **4.3 Stakeholder Meetings**

In addition to the MWG, other stakeholders will have opportunity to provide input during development of the plan. The information about the DRAFT HMP will be presented during online meetings of following key stakeholder groups to solicit input and feedback:

- Seattle Disaster Management Committee (includes 200+ representatives of City departments, King County agencies, local non-profits, NW Healthcare response network, University of Washington, 211 partners agencies, community emergency hubs)
- Strategic Work Group (internal working group of representatives of City departments)
- Emergency Executive Board (Sub-cabinet of department directors convened by Mayor's Office)

#### 4.4 Traditional and Social Media

The broader public will be invited to learn about the project, respond to polling question and comment on the DRAFT HMP. The following media will be used to communicate with the broader public:

- OEM general email list
- OEM Community Organizations email list
- Community HUBS email list
- OEM Newsletter
- Posts on OEM social media

#### 4.5 Outreach and Public Engagement Materials

The following materials will be developed to keep the public informed throughout the HMP update process to ensure that a wide range of stakeholders (the public, neighboring communities, interested agencies, private organizations, etc.) are informed about opportunities to comment on the plan at key milestones. Project materials will follow the City's IOPE Guide in striving for multiculturalism, with equal access and respect for all groups and creating conditions for understanding. Materials will include:

- News release. The project team will develop one news release for submittal to local media outlets. The release will be issued upon completion of the Draft HMP to solicit comments on the planning document.
- Website updates. The project team will post periodic updates regarding the HMP update process to the OEM's website.
- Community Partnership Survey. A survey will be developed to solicit input on types of mitigation partnerships OEM could develop in the future.
- Comment form/survey to collect feedback on the Draft HMP.
- Draft HMP Presentation. A narrated presentation about the Draft HMP will be posted on the website to solicit input. It will summarize the HMP process, timeline, changes in hazards and highlight select actions, and ask questions that will help finalize the plan.
- Narrated presentation about the Draft HMP
- Instructions on how to submit comments on the Draft HMP

## 5.0 OUTREACH TIMELINE

The table below provides estimated public outreach dates and milestones related to the HMP update process.

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Description</b>
Mitigation Work Group Meeting #1	January 28, 2020	Overview of project
Project paused due to COVID-19 Pandemic (March – August 2020)		
OEM Website update	September 2020	Website is updated with HMP description and timeline.
Mitigation Work Group Meeting #2	September 14, 2020	Restart process; review progress and milestones
OEM Newsletter	September 16, 2020	HMP information included in the September newsletter distributed to 6000+ people
Mitigation Work Group Meeting #3	September 28, 2020	Present results of first open house and comment period to inform work
Community Survey	November	OEM shares survey about community priorities on website, social media, newsletter
Mitigation Work Group Meeting #4	November 4, 2020	Monitoring the HMP; Public outreach for Draft HMP
Stakeholder Meetings (SWG, DMC)	November/ December	Input on HMP
Mitigation Work Group Meeting #5	December 7, 2020	Review public comments, refine and rank mitigation actions
Public Comment Period (3 weeks)	January 2020	Solicit public comments on the Draft HMP
Outreach for Draft Plan	January 2020	OEM and City-media notices, releases, stories to solicit comment on Draft HMP
Mitigation Work Group Meeting #6	January 2020	Review public comments and finalize HMP.
Pre-review of Draft HMP by State and FEMA	January 2020	
DMC and EEB Review and Approval	1Q/2Q 2021	Final HMP is submitted to EEB and DMC



City Council Adoption	2Q 2021	Final HMP is submitted to City Council for review and adoption
State/FEMA Approval	2Q/3Q 2021	Adopted HMP is submitted to State and FEMA for review and approval