



# Takoma Park City Council Meeting – September 4, 2024

## Agenda Item 1

### **Presentation**

2024 Montgomery County Hazard Mitigation Plan

### **Recommended Council Action**

After the presentation and any questions, it is recommended that the City Council adopt the plan by resolution. Once adopted and signed, the Plan will be forwarded to the Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (OEMHS), Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

### **Context with Key Issues**

The 2024 Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) is a roadmap for the coordination and execution of hazard mitigation policies and initiatives for jurisdictions within Montgomery County. It describes the characteristics of hazards that threaten the community, as well as mitigation goals, strategies, and associated actions to aid jurisdictions in reducing risks and minimizing damages by taking proactive steps before disaster strikes.

Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (OEMHS) developed the HMP in collaboration with emergency managers and planning officers from 19 municipalities. Takoma Park's Emergency Preparedness Manager participated in all phases of development and review, and will play a key role in tracking and sharing updates relevant to funding priorities and future HMP revisions.

### **Council Priority**

Advancing a Community of Belonging  
Environmentally Sustainable Community  
Engaged, Responsive, Service-Oriented Government

### **Environmental Considerations**

The HMP provides a thorough description of the effects of climate change on potential hazards including: extreme temperatures, change in wind pattern and intensity, storm frequency, and flooding. The HMP also recognizes components of a successful mitigation strategy: public awareness and community engagement, green infrastructure planning, sustainable transportation and farming, and data collection and preparedness.

### **Fiscal Considerations**

Adoption of the HMP shows the City of Takoma Park remains committed to local and regional preparedness coordination. Furthermore, adoption of this plan ensures that Takoma Park maintains eligibility for mitigation funding through the Maryland Department of Emergency Management (MDEM) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

### **Racial Equity Considerations**

The HMP includes a Social-Vulnerability Index (SVI) Assessment and a Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) that operationalizes variables related to Racial and Ethnic Minority Status. Outcomes from this assessment across 215 Montgomery County census tracts indicate that the most vulnerable areas are largely clustered in the central region along I-270 and in the south-southeastern portion near the borders with the District of Columbia and Prince George's County, which includes Takoma Park.

### **Attachments and Links**

2024 Montgomery County Hazard Mitigation Plan  
2024 Montgomery County Hazard Mitigation Plan Executive Summary  
2024 Montgomery County Hazard Mitigation Plan Resolution  
Presentation to Takoma Park City Council  
Draft Resolution

Resolution No.: 20-557  
Introduced: June 18, 2024  
Adopted: June 25, 2024

**COUNTY COUNCIL  
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

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Lead Sponsor: Council President at the Request of the County Executive

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**SUBJECT:** The Montgomery County Hazard Mitigation Plan 2024

**Background**

1. The Montgomery County Hazard Mitigation Plan was first approved by the County Council by Resolution 14-569 in June 2000. Updated Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plans were approved by Resolution 16-41 in February 2007 and Resolution 17-832 in July 2013, and Resolution 19-70 in April 2019. Upon adoption of this resolution, the Montgomery County Hazard Mitigation Plan 2024 supersedes all previous County mitigation plans.
2. On October 30, 2000, the federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-390) was signed into law. To reduce the effects of disasters, the law encourages, among other initiatives, a planning process based on cooperation among state and local authorities, community partners, and the public at large. The law recognizes local and state pre-disaster planning and promotes "resiliency" as a major mitigation strategy. Under the regulations implementing this law, states and local governments must have an approved and adopted hazard mitigation plan in order to maintain eligibility for pre- and post-disaster mitigation grant funding. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is responsible for reviewing and approving state and local plans.
3. The Montgomery County Hazard Mitigation Plan 2024 is a major update to the 2018 Hazard Mitigation Plan and is in accordance with the following state and federal rules and regulations governing local hazard mitigation plans.
  - Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §5121 *et seq.*, Section 322 (*Mitigation Planning*) (42 U.S.C. §5165), as enacted by Section 104 of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-390), and FEMA's Interim Final Rule published in the Federal Register on February 26, 2002, at 44 CFR Part 201.
  - Maryland Department of Emergency Management (MDEM) established under Section 14-103 in the Public Safety Article of the Maryland Code. The Emergency Management Policy was updated in 1991 through Executive Order 01.01.1991.02 State of Maryland Emergency Management Policy.

4. In developing this plan, a core planning team was assembled consisting of County agencies, municipalities, utility companies, and community and volunteer organizations. Three public hearings were held to solicit public input. Representatives from 19 local municipalities were conferred with directly to receive their input. The purpose of the Hazard Mitigation Plan is to identify policies, capabilities, activities and tools to help make Montgomery County more resilient in the face of future disasters.
5. In December 2023, the County submitted its initial draft of the Hazard Mitigation Plan to the Maryland Department of Emergency Management (MDEM) for review and incorporated all comments satisfactorily. In March 2024, the County forwarded its final Draft Hazard Mitigation Plan to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for review and approval. The partial government shutdown directly affected FEMA's review capabilities. Delaying County adoption of the Hazard Mitigation Plan until FEMA conducts its review could potentially put the County at risk of losing Federal Disaster Funds if the County suffers a declared disaster after our current plan expires.
6. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) completed its review of the draft Hazard Mitigation Plan 2024. Minor changes required by FEMA have been incorporated into the latest version of the Plan. Adoption by the County Council of the latest version of the Plan is required for final FEMA approval.

### **Action**

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following resolution:

The County Council approves and adopts the Montgomery County Hazard Mitigation Plan 2024.

This is a correct copy of Council action.



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Sara R. Tenenbaum  
Clerk of the Council



# Executive Summary

Hazard mitigation is often described as sustained actions taken to reduce or eliminate impacts of natural or human-made hazards including preventing loss of life and damage to property. It is a process that identifies and profiles hazards, analyzes people and facilities at risk because of these hazards, and develops mitigation actions to reduce or eliminate hazard risk and create a stronger, more resilient community.

The 2024 Montgomery County Hazard Mitigation Plan is designed to function as a roadmap for the coordination and execution of hazard mitigation policies and initiatives for jurisdictions within Montgomery County. It describes the characteristics of hazards which threaten the community, as well as mitigation goals, strategies, and associated actions to aid jurisdictions in reducing risks and minimizing damages by taking proactive steps before disaster strikes. This not only protects lives and properties but also reduces the social, economic, and environmental aftereffects which often follow hazardous events.

Prior to the implementation of any hazard mitigation strategies, it is necessary to understand the characteristics of both current and emerging hazards. To achieve this, a significant portion of time was allocated to researching past occurrences of hazards – both natural and human-made – that have impacted Montgomery County. To ensure no stone went unturned, the team parsed through a robust set of databases from government agencies including the National Weather Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Centers for Environmental Information, Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fire Administration, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, and more. Further information was obtained from Maryland and Montgomery County resources, when available.

There are 17 unique hazards detailed in this plan. Through a review of the available resources, some of which date into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a picture of previous hazard occurrences within Montgomery County was formed. This illustrates how Montgomery County responded to previous events and also provides insight into trends and future conditions. The findings for each of the 17 hazards are presented in separate, dedicated sections within the Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment. Within these sections, the location and extent, range of magnitude, past occurrences, possible future occurrences, impacts due to climate change, and vulnerability assessment of each hazard is laid out. The vulnerability assessments specifically examine the consequences for people, systems, and natural, cultural, and historic assets.

Hazard mitigation is most effective when it serves the needs of the whole community. To achieve this, our planning process cast a wide net and engaged many participants and the public through a comprehensive virtual and in-person outreach process. The actions and



strategies which emerged are representative of the comprehensive and strategic improvements that the county is already targeting, as well as thoughtfully tailored actions from each of the engaged participants and stakeholders that call Montgomery County home.

Individual capability and strategy meetings were held with most of the County's incorporated communities. Through these calls the planning team was able to speak with community officials and discuss their individual concerns. These conversations provided insight about the local circumstances which likely would not have been attainable through other means. Although these communities are all within the same county, they often have different hazard exposure levels, needs, and response capabilities, and a mitigation strategy which works for one community may not be actionable for all.

After outlining the mitigation goals, objectives, and approaches, the 2024 Montgomery County Hazard Mitigation Plan delves into a comprehensive assessment of the capabilities of Montgomery County and its encompassing communities. This section begins with a review of administrative and technical capacities, such as the presence of in-house engineers, the utilization of geographic information systems (GIS), and so on, across different jurisdictions. It then transitions to a review of financial strengths, followed by an evaluation of policy-driven and programmatic capabilities. The legal powers vested in the communities across Montgomery County are also appraised. The section wraps up with a synthesis of the capabilities of each jurisdiction within the County, which is accompanied by a consequence analysis.

Introduced by:

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND**

**RESOLUTION**

**ADOPTING THE 2024 MONTGOMERY COUNTY HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN**

**WHEREAS,** the City Council recognizes the need for the coordination and execution of hazard mitigation policies and initiatives; and

**WHEREAS,** the City of Takoma Park has a responsibility to provide for the safety and wellbeing of its residents, employees, and visitors; and

**WHEREAS,** the City of Takoma Park has established and appointed an Emergency Preparedness Manager to oversee emergency preparedness for the City and to ensure that emergency plans are kept up to date.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Council of the City of Takoma Park, Maryland hereby adopts the 2024 Montgomery County Hazard Mitigation Plan; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Emergency Preparedness Manager, or their designee, is tasked and authorized to maintain and revise as necessary this document over the next five-year period or until such time it be ordered to come before this Council.

**Adopted this \_\_\_\_ day of September, 2024.**

Attest:

Jessie Carpenter, CMC  
City Clerk