



City of Atlantic City

**2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan
Annual Evaluation Review**

Rutala Associates

September 2020

**2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan
Annual Evaluation Report
City of Atlantic City, NJ (CID: 345278)**

**Submitted by: Jim Rutala, PP, AICP, CFM
jmrutala@comcast.net | (609) 743-0354**

**Date of Report: September 21, 2020
Floodplain Management Committee Meeting: September 24, 2020
Date Report sent to Governing Body: September 25, 2020**

Name of Plan: *Atlantic County Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan*

Date of Adoption of Plan: February 18, 2016

5-Year CRS Expiration Date. October 1, 2021 (The County has started the process of revising the *Atlantic County Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan* and the City of Atlantic City will actively participate in this process.)

1. How can a copy of the original plan or area analysis report be obtained?

The County Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan can be viewed online at <http://www.atlantic-county.org/hazard-mitigation/>. The repetitive loss area analyses are on file with the City's Construction Office.

2. Describe how this evaluation report was prepared and how it was submitted to the governing body, released to the media, and made available to the public:

The evaluation report was prepared by City staff and its consultants after reviewing City documentation and activities. It was reviewed by the Floodplain Management Committee on September 24, 2020. The Floodplain Management Committee members include:

Josh Levin, Real Estate
Robert Johnson, Resident
Tom Heist, Insurance
Joe Ciapanna, Banking
Art Ponzio, Arthur W. Ponzio & Co.
Earnest Coursey, Chief of Staff
Anthony Cox – City Construction Official
Scott Evans – Fire Chief/Emergency Management Coordinator
Barbara Woolley-Dillon, Director, Planning & Development

The evaluation report was submitted to the governing body and posted on the City's web site on September 25, 2020. The public and media will be aware of the evaluation through the posting of the City Council meeting agenda and the web site posting.

3. Provide a review of each recommendation or action item in the action plan or area analysis report, including a statement on how much was accomplished during the previous year:

- (1) *Construct steel bulkhead and stone revetment from Oriental Avenue to Atlantic Avenue.*
This action was completed in 2018. This project was expanded and extended to Grammercy Avenue.
- (2) *Baltic Avenue Drainage Improvement Project- repair stormwater project.*
The flood gates on either end of the Baltic Avenue Canal were replaced in 2018. A pump system is being designed and permitted and will be constructed in 2021. The City has recently secured a \$2.45 million grant from the US Economic Development Administration to leverage a \$7.94 million grant from the NJ Department of Environmental Protection.
- (3) *Drainage improvements to Boardwalk Hall basement.*
This action has not yet been completed. Boardwalk Hall is owned and operated by the State of New Jersey under the auspices of the New Jersey Casino Reinvestment Development Authority and this organization is spearheading this improvement.
- (4) *Installation of new bulkhead along Inside Thorofare from Albany Avenue to Jackson Avenue.*
The City has actively pursued this project given the decrepit state of the existing bulkhead. In 2018, the City was received FEMA approval to allocate \$1,039,000 in alternative funds towards this project. These funds have been used for project engineering and permitting and will be used for the reconstruction of a portion of the City-owned bulkheads from Richmond to Kingston Avenue. The City has awarded an engineering/permitting contract of the all the city-owned bulkheads in this project area. The Tallahassee Avenue street-end bulkhead was recently replaced owing to emergency conditions created by its condition. FEMA has approved a \$3.6 M grant in additional funds for this project and a \$3.5 million in Superstorm Sandy CDBG-DR funds have been secured.
- (5) *Installation of bulkheads and berms to protect public infrastructure in Chelsea Heights.*
A Federal Interest Determination by the US Army Corps of Engineers was completed in 2014. Superstorm Sandy CDBG-DR funds have been allocated for the South Boulevard bulkhead and this project is being designed and permitted with construction planned in 2021. The City is continuing to pursue funds for other aspects of this project as they become available.
- (6) *Revise city codes to increase BFE to +2.*
As of 2015, the City's codes reflect the two-foot freeboard requirement.
- (7) *Develop a plan for backup electric and telecommunications systems in critical facilities.*
The City is pursuing backup electric generators through grant programs and as funding is available. The City has also secured NJ Board of Public Utilities funds and completed a feasibility study for a microgrid to serve the medical center, Boardwalk Hall, and nearby facilities. Atlantic City is also studying long-term changes to its communication system, which may include fiber optics and enhanced public safety capabilities.
- (8) *Elevate Albany Avenue between Sunset Avenue and Ventnor Avenue.*
A feasibility study has been completed by the South Jersey Transportation Authority to elevate Albany Avenue and re-locate the Intracoastal Waterway (ICWW). The City considers this project a high priority, particularly with the recent completion of the Stockton University Atlantic City campus and new South Jersey Gas headquarters located at the end of Albany Avenue, the development potential of Bader Field and the fact that this roadway is an emergency access route for the residents of Atlantic City and the Downbeach communities.

- (9) *Elevate repetitively flooded residential properties.*
Atlantic City continues to make consistent progress on the elevation and mitigation of repetitively damaged buildings. RREM and FEMA Grants continue to be disbursed to assist with owners' elevation projects. The Division of Construction oversee these elevation projects to confirm compliance with the current design flood elevations at the time of completion and prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.
- (10) *Elevate traffic signal control boxes.*
Superstorm Sandy CDBG-CR funds has been secured and engineering and permitting are underway for this project with construction planned for 2021.
- (11) *Installation of emergency communications system.*
An audio/visual broadcast system was installed on the Boardwalk, one of the City's top attractions and most-visited pedestrian corridors, in 2014.
- (12) *Purchase and install ten emergency generators at various locations.*
Emergency generators have been installed at the All Wars and Police Athletic League Buildings. The design and permitting of emergency generators at the City's six fire houses is complete. The City continues to seek funding for the installation of these emergency generators and will be applying for a FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation in 2020.
- (13) *Replace 160 lf of bulkhead and install a stormwater pump station and appurtenant facilities along Massachusetts Avenue.*
Bulkhead replacement along Massachusetts Avenue has been engineered and permitted, construction is planned for Winter 2020.
- (14) *Promote public education about hazards and the mitigation plan.*
The City has completed a Program for Public Information as a part of its Community Rating System program. This program result in new, more effective public outreach and education.
- (15) *Install new bulkheads along Sunset Avenue.*
A Federal Interest Determination by the US Army Corps of Engineers was completed in 2014. The City has secured Superstorm Sandy CDBG-DR funds replace public bulkheads between Albany Avenue and Atlantis Avenue.
- (16) *Dry Floodproof City Hall and the All War Memorial Building*
Grant funding has been secured for dry floodproofing of City buildings, design is underway, and construction is planned in 2021.
- (17) *Gardner's Basin Park Bulkhead Stabilization and Dredging*
Grant funding has been secured to repair or replace bulkheads at Gardner's Basin and to dredge the marina. Design is underway and construction is planned in 2021.
- (18) *Inspection and Replacement of Check Valves along the Bayfront*
Grant funding has been secured to inspect and replace the check valves along the Bayfront. Design is underway and construction is planned in 2021.
- (19) *Program for Public Information and Flood Insurance Coverage Assessment*
On October 18, 2019, City Council adopted the Atlantic City Program for Public Information and Flood Insurance Coverage Assessment.

(20) *Floodplain Management Plan*

On August 20, 2020, City Council adopted the Atlantic City Floodplain Management Plan which was developed in full compliance with the CRS guidelines to qualify for a Class 4 designation.

4. Discuss why any objectives were not reached or why implementation is behind schedule.

Atlantic City continues to actively pursue funding opportunities to further its mitigation objectives and has been very success. The City has secured over \$80 million in funding for resiliency projects alone in the past few year. As noted in this report, many projects and planning efforts have been completed and other initiatives are schedule for completion in 2021. Nevertheless, the City of Atlantic City has limited capital funding available for mitigation projects due to decreased tax revenue. The Atlantic City tax base has decreased from an inflation-adjusted \$24.49 billion to \$2.5 billion in 2019. The City intends to complete its mitigation projects as funding becomes available, even as many of the projects are complicated and require significant collaboration and complicated financing arrangements between federal, state, and local partners.

5. What are the recommendations for new projects or revised recommendations?

- a. Continue to work with the US Army Corps of Engineers to develop recommendations for the *New Jersey Back Bays Coastal Storm Risk Management Study*. As the project progresses, Atlantic City will adjust its mitigation activities considering more comprehensive and detailed risk data.
- b. Participate in the *Resiliency NJ Program* being sponsored by the State of New Jersey. This Atlantic County regional effort will identify and implement solutions to coastal flooding through a comprehensive planning process.
- c. Expand Community Rating System activities to enhance resiliency, flood-related municipal operations, and attain higher discounts for policyholders in the City.
- d. Maintain and expand the City's Emergency Operations Plan and Program for Public Information.
- e. Support the elevation and resilience of private structures through grants and technical assistance.
- f. Continue to advocate for the elevation of US Route 40/322 to provide emergency access. This project includes elevation of US Route 40/322 from Exit 2 of the Atlantic City Expressway to the Inside Thorofare.
- g. Promote the elevation of bulkheads throughout the City, including pursuing funding for replacing city-owned bullheads in Chelsea Height, Venice Park, and Bungalow Park.
- h. Promote the construction of stormwater pump stations where needed based on sound engineering principles.
- i. Install generators at critical facilities, including fire stations.

- j. Complete a Watershed Management Plan. The City has secured a FEMA FMA Grant to complete this Plan and the Stockton Coastal Research Center has been retained.
- k. Work with waterfront private property owners to ensure that bulkhead replacements and back bay improvements provide a consistent level of protection.