



City of San Marino

Staff Report

*Gretchen Shepherd Romey, Mayor
Tony Chou, Vice Mayor
Hunter Chang, Council Member
John Chou, Council Member
Calvin Lo, Council Member*

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Philippe Eskandar, City Manager
BY: Mario Rueda, Fire Chief
DATE: April 9, 2025

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF 2024 UPDATE TO THE CITY OF SAN MARINO LOCAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

STRATEGIC PLAN CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

Efficient, Responsive, and Effective City Services
Safe Community

BACKGROUND

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA2000) established a national program for pre-disaster mitigation, which provides federal funding for projects that are not dependent on a presidential disaster declaration and streamlines the administration of disaster relief. In order to be eligible for federal disaster relief, DMA2000 requires that local agencies conduct a disaster mitigation planning process that includes drafting of a local hazard mitigation plan (LHMP) for addressing:

- Cost effective actions for risk reduction that are agreed upon by stakeholders and the public;
- Providing resources for the greatest risks and vulnerabilities;
- Building partnerships involving residents, organizations, and businesses;
- Education and awareness of hazards and risks; and
- Communicating priorities to state and federal officials.

In addition, this process is used to identify policies and actions that can be implemented over the long term to reduce risk and future losses. LHMPs form the foundation for a community's long-term strategy to reduce disaster losses

and break the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requires LHMPs to address hazards, vulnerability and risk to be eligible for future FEMA mitigation grant funds and reimbursement of disaster related expenses.

The planning process is dependent on increasing public awareness, documenting the resources for risk reduction and loss-prevention, and identifying activities to guide the City towards building a safer, more sustainable community. The LHMP is intended to be an educational and planning document and is not for regulatory purposes.

State and local governments must prepare and adopt an update to federally approved LHMPs that comply with FEMA requirements every five years. In December 2023, the San Marino Fire Department selected Atlas Planning Solutions as the vendor to prepare the 2024 update of the City of San Marino LHMP.

DISCUSSION

Since February 2024, the San Marino Fire Department and Atlas Planning Solutions (APS) have been updating the City's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, with support from City staff and key stakeholders. The LHMP planning process consists of four phases:

Phase 1 – LHMP Planning/Development Process

- LHMP project team meetings with City staff and key stakeholders
- Community Kick-Off Meeting
- Community local hazard mitigation plan survey

Phase 2 – Hazards Assessment Update

- Development and review of hazard profiles
- Asset inventory and vulnerability analysis

Phase 3 – Hazard Mitigation Plan Maintenance Strategy

- Development of mitigation strategies and actions

Phase 4 – Plan Draft / Adoption and Approval

- Administrative draft review and revision
- Public draft review and revision
- California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES)/FEMA draft review
- Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Adoption by City Council

The attached LHMP includes a detailed profile of the City identifying specific vulnerabilities with corresponding mitigation measures. The LHMP identifies

goals that describe the overall direction the City, partner agencies, and citizens can take to work toward mitigating risk. These goals are stepping-stones between the broad direction of the mission statement and the specific recommendations outlined in the action items. The goals were developed by examining the history of disasters in San Marino and surrounding communities.

The goals are organized into three categories; mitigation, collaboration, and education. Each goal has different items within them to help with guidance. For example, "Mitigation" has a sub-goal: "Protect lives by implementing activities that make homes, businesses, infrastructure, critical facilities, and other property more resistant to losses from natural and manmade hazards."

The LHMP identifies seven hazards to San Marino. These hazards include: Earthquake, Windstorm, Wildfire, Human-Caused Hazards, Extreme Heat, Flood, and Landslide. Each has a set of action items that can be used to address these hazards. Each action item addresses at least one overall goal. These action items provide guidance on suggesting specific activities that the City can undertake to reduce risk and prevent loss from identified hazard events.

New in the 2024 LHMP are mitigation efforts related to climate change, as required by California Government Code Section 65302 (g)(4). California Government Code Section 65302 (g)(4), also known as Senate Bill (SB) 379, requires that the safety element of a community's general plan address the hazards created or exacerbated by climate change. The safety element must identify how climate change is expected to affect hazard conditions in the community and include measures to adapt and be more resilient to these anticipated changes.

Because the LHMP can be incorporated into the safety element, including these items in the LHMP can satisfy the state requirement. SB 379 requires that climate change be addressed in the safety element when the LHMP is updated after January 1, 2017, for communities that already have an LHMP or by January 1, 2022, for communities without an LHMP. Once the Council has adopted the LHMP, staff intends to process an amendment to the safety element through public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council to incorporate the LHMP by reference to satisfy SB 379, as well as qualify the City for additional disaster relief funds in the future.

Additionally, the San Marino Unified School District was an active key stakeholder throughout the development of the 2024 LHMP. Two representatives of the school district were members of the Hazard Mitigation

Planning Committee, and many of the mitigation action items share joint responsibility between the City and the School District.

Public Outreach

Guidelines from FEMA require that the City create opportunities for community members to be involved in the development of the LHMP and these opportunities are documented. This process helps ensure that the plan reflects community values, concerns, and priorities. At the March 18, 2024, meeting of the Public Safety Commission, APS hosted a Community Kick-Off meeting for the LHMP update that focused on informing participants about the hazard mitigation planning process, the project schedule, ways to stay engaged with the City, and ways to stay informed about upcoming events and project documents.

Following the Community Kick-Off meeting, the City distributed an online survey to collect information and comments from community members about issues of importance to the LHMP. The survey included questions about community members' experience and familiarity with emergency conditions, level of preparedness for future emergencies, and preferred actions for the City to take to increase community resilience. The City received 29 responses to the survey.

The draft Local Hazard Mitigation Plan was made available for public review on September 5, 2024, and was presented to the Public Safety Commission on September 16, 2024. The public review period for the LHMP closed on October 4, 2024.

Plan Approval

APS prepared a final draft of the LHMP and submitted it to Cal OES/FEMA on November 4, 2024. Cal OES reviews all LHMPs in accordance with FEMA regulations and coordinates required revisions to ensure compliance with FEMA policy. Once Cal OES planning staff find the LHMP meets requirements, the LHMP is forwarded to FEMA Region IX mitigation planning staff for final review and approval. On February 10, 2025, the San Marino Fire Department received notice that FEMA had completed its review of the LHMP and determined that the plan is eligible for final approval pending adoption by the City of San Marino.

The San Marino Municipal Code, Chapter 4, Article 2 codifies the creation of a San Marino Disaster Council for the purpose of developing and recommending mutual aid plans, agreements, and the City's Emergency Operations Plan, for adoption by the City Council. The Disaster Council consists of the Director of

Emergency Services (City Manager) as the chair; two members of the City Council appointed by the Mayor, the primary delegate, Mayor Shepherd Romey and the alternate delegate, Vice-Mayor Chou; a representative from the City's Fire Department, Fire Chief Rueda; and the Police Department, Chief of Police Incontro. On March 7, 2025, the Disaster Council convened to review the 2024 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and recommended the plan for adoption by the City Council.

FISCAL IMPACT & PROCUREMENT REVIEW

There is no fiscal impact associated with the approval of the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

LEGAL REVIEW

The City Attorney's office has reviewed and approved as to form.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Council approve the 2024 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. If the City Council concurs with staff's recommendation, an appropriate motion would be:

"I move to approve Resolution No. R-25-10 adopting the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan."

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2024 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan
2. FEMA Approval Letter
3. Resolution No. R-25-10