

**Press Release
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

George Washington Regional Commission Begins Update of Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan

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Fredericksburg, VA: The George Washington Regional Commission (GWRC; Virginia Planning District 16), in partnership with the City of Fredericksburg, the Counties of Caroline, King George, Spotsylvania, and Stafford, and the Towns of Bowling Green and Port Royal, along with the Rappahannock Tribe, is updating the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan (<http://www.gwregion.org/hmp>). The purpose of the Plan is to identify hazards, ranging from wildfires to flooding to ice storms, that threaten the Region and its communities, and determine and prioritize strategies to lessen the impacts of future hazards on people and property. The Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan is an important tool for the region's localities in reducing the risks and impacts to communities from hazards.

“The Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan is an important part of long-term planning for future resilience and keeping the citizens in each of GWRC’s localities safe. We are looking forward to collaborating with locality staff, residents, and other stakeholders to make this plan relevant and useful to the people it will serve.”

– Chip Boyles, GWRC Executive Director

Hazard mitigation plans are required by federal regulations to be updated every five (5) years in order to remain eligible for certain Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grants, programs, and disaster relief funds. The GWRC Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan was last updated in 2017, and the 2022 update is expected to be completed this fall with approval by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) and FEMA.

Public input is critical to the update of the Plan, and GWRC staff, the local representatives of the project management team, and the project consultant, The Berkley Group, will be coordinating a number of activities to educate and solicit input, including a survey and forum. Individual member localities will assist in public outreach and physical and digital materials can be expected to be received through the coming months. Those interested in staying informed of developments should connect with participating localities on social media, or visit the GWRC hazard mitigation planning website at <http://www.gwregion.org/hmp>.

As an initial task, the GWRC and its locality partners are seeking public input and thoughts on the relevance and usefulness of the current Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan. The GWRC would like to know whether members of the public were previously aware of the Plan and its value in local decision making, how the Plan is or can be made more relevant to them personally, whether the Plan accurately captures those hazards that impact or potentially impact their community, or any other relevant thoughts. Members of the public are asked to review the current Plan at the following link www.gwregion.org/hmp and submit any thoughts or feedback to hazardplan@gwregion.org.

The project to update the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan is largely funded through a FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant, awarded as the result of a successful application submitted by GWRC.

For any questions or additional information, you may contact the project team at hazardplan@gwregion.org

Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact the GWRC at (540) 642-1579 or gibson@gwregion.org.

Las personas que requieren alojamiento especial de acuerdo con el Americans with Disabilities Act, o personas que requieren servicios de traducción (libre de cargo) deben comunicarse con la GWRC al (540) 642-1579 o gibson@gwregion.org.

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