



## **Portland Mitigation Plan Action Plan (MAP)**

### ***Planning for Real Workshop Report***

#### **Introduction**

This report summarizes the public feedback gathered in support of Portland's 2016 update to its mitigation action plan (MAP). It is intended to be used by city bureaus and offices to identify and prioritize action items to be included in the MAP.

As part of the planning process, the planning team, with guidance from the steering committee, developed a public engagement strategy to outline the ways in which the planning team would engage the public in the development of the plan. The public engagement strategy recommended that the planning team hold 10 "Planning for Real" workshops throughout Portland. Eight of these workshops would be open to the public and focused geographically in eight of the nine risk reporting areas used for the plan. The risk reporting areas are roughly aligned with Portland's neighborhood coalitions with the addition of a Central City area. The remaining two workshops would be held with community organizations that work with Portland's communities of color and immigrant and refugee communities.

The MAP planning team ultimately held 7 geographically-based workshops in the following locations:

- Northeast and Central Northeast Portland (joint workshop), April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Northeast Portland, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016
- North Portland, April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Southeast Portland, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Southwest Portland, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016
- North/Northwest Portland and Central City (joint workshop), April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016
- East Portland, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016

The workshops were promoted through and organized with the support of the following neighborhood coalitions and groups:

- Northeast Coalition of Neighbors
- Central Northeast Neighbors
- North Portland Neighborhood Services
- Southeast Uplift
- Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc.
- Neighbors North/Northwest
- East Portland Action Plan

Two workshops were held with community organizations with the following groups:

- Coalition of Communities of Color, Native American Youth and Family Center, APANO, Portland Voz, and Latino Network, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Community Engagement Liaisons (CELs) representing Chinese, Zomi, Lao, Butanese, Somali, Latino, Iraqi, and Khmer immigrant and refugee communities, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016



Individuals in the Community Engagement Liaisons group are leaders in their communities and are contracted with the City of Portland to act as a bridge between city government and immigrant and refugee communities. Following the CELs workshop, each participant was asked to schedule a meeting with at least 10 members of his or her community to share information about hazards in Portland and to provide any feedback received to the planning team by June 15<sup>th</sup>. This work is still in progress.

### **Workshop Content**

The content of each workshop varied based on lessons learned from previous workshops. The planning team recognized that this was an entirely new process and was open to adapting the workshop content to community needs throughout the process. Earlier workshops focused on the MAP planning process and the local physical exposure to hazards of concern (primarily flood, earthquake, landslide, wildfire, and severe weather, with some discussion of drought, space weather, and volcano) in the geographic area in which the workshop was held.

Based on feedback received during the process (detailed below), the content of later workshops was adapted to align with the PBEM's long-term outreach goals and to establish partnerships with local community groups in building resilience and community capacity. Workshop participants urged the planning team to deemphasize the planning process itself, and provide more information about what projects and programs the city is currently doing to reduce vulnerability, and how the city might partner with community organizations to enhance social and economic benefits to the community. Later workshops took this feedback into account. These workshops were broader in focus, briefly covering natural hazard risks, highlighting current citywide activities to reduce risk and vulnerability, and working to identify potential partnerships and collaborations between the city and community organizations.

For workshops with fewer attendees, discussion sessions involved the whole group, while larger groups were divided into discussion groups focused on specific hazards (wildfire, flood, earthquake, etc.). The following are questions discussed during the discussion sessions:

- 1) Is your neighborhood in a hazard risk zone? Are there buildings or services you use on a daily basis that are in a hazard risk zone? What would the consequences be if they were impacted by a natural hazard?
- 2) What are some ways that you could reduce the risk impacts and negative consequences at your home, at work, and in your neighborhood?
- 3) What kinds of programs or projects can city offices do to support you and your neighbors in preparing for natural hazards?
- 4) Are there potentially vulnerable populations in your neighborhood that could experience disproportionate impacts from natural hazard events? Can you think of ways to build capacity for these groups now, so that they are better positioned to absorb and recover from a hazard event?

### **Community Feedback**



This section describes the feedback received from the Planning for Real workshops, summarized by topic. Topics include planning process, communications, and outreach; all-hazards; landslide; flood; earthquake; wildfire; severe weather; and drought.

### Planning Process, Communications, and Outreach

This topic is the broadest in scope and includes feedback related to how the MAP planning process is implemented, how to communicate messages about natural hazards and other emergencies, and how education and outreach efforts are managed across the city. This topic was the one most frequently discussed during workshops, indicating that activities that fall within this category are high priority for workshop participants.

Participants were generally in support of using the Neighborhood Emergency Team (NET) program to connect neighbors and prepare as a community. Many neighborhoods lack NETs, and the need to expand the program was highlighted. Several outreach tools were also mentioned, including using NextDoor (social media website) to promote preparedness messages, and City of Seattle's Structured Neighborhood Assessment Program (SNAP) was mentioned as an example model for community organizing.

Emergency messaging was also a prevalent topic, particularly communication of emergency messages using a variety of media and in languages other than English. A cohort of Portland residents with hearing impairments attended the East Portland workshop, and emphasized the need to communicate emergency messages using visual means including signs and graphics or flashing lights as emergency signals. Communication through graphics would also help to reach children, people who are unable to read, and people with limited English proficiency. Participants advocated for a registry of addresses with people with special needs that could be shared with emergency responders.

There was a strong emphasis on culturally appropriate and multi-language outreach and preparedness training, as well as safety training for post-disaster reconstruction and recovery. Nearly all of the workshops included a discussion of the need for additional training and education opportunities at the community level.

In terms of outreach, workshop participants expressed that outreach about the plan should focus on information about social and economic benefits and investing in community capacity through partnerships. Community members are not likely to emotionally engage with specific plans; they see all of PBEM's work, and often the whole city, as one effort. To the community, there is no difference between each of PBEM's plans and the plans developed by other bureaus; the city's outreach efforts should align with one another rather than operating in "silos". Community members care most about how the city's work will directly impact them.

Some key recommendations in this category were:

- Include full social and economic recovery after a disaster as a goal of the plan.
- Provide culturally and community-specific training for community leaders on home safety, hazard mitigation (e.g. non-structural seismic strengthening), food and supply storage, response considerations for people with special needs, and household and neighborhood preparedness.
- Develop post-disaster safety messages based on 2013 "Day Labor, Worker Centers & Disaster Relief Work in the Aftermath of Hurricane Sandy" report.



- Provide education for rental property owners and property managers on hazard communication and mitigation actions.
- Provide training on evacuation and sheltering for retirement home staff and all licensed nursing homes and assisted living care providers.
- Increase PBEM's capacity to provide community trainings and partner with the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, Diversity in Civic Leadership program, and Community Engagement Liaisons program to connect underserved communities with training opportunities.
- Expand the NET program into every neighborhood in Portland and expand beyond the neighborhood structure to non-geographic communities (e.g. immigrant and refugee communities).
- Update Portland Maps to be more user-friendly and visually map hazards.
- Cultural and language-appropriate webpage for New Portlanders to access emergency information, videos, and events in their preferred language.
- Postcard mailers to every household in Portland to share natural hazard risks and how to be prepared. Include this information in neighborhood newsletters.
- Hold a storytelling event to share disaster survivor stories and share information about hazards in an emotionally compelling way.
- Citywide "Preparedness Tours" to highlight exemplary projects.
- Do outreach for ATC-20 damage assessment trainings at neighborhood land use and transportation meetings. Provide ATC-20 training to NET members to support ATC-20 certified engineers and architects.

### All-Hazards

Much of the feedback received during the workshops relates to reducing overall vulnerability and can be applied across multiple hazards. This category includes ideas that address multiple hazards but are not directly related to the mitigation action planning process or communication and outreach.

There was widespread interest among workshop participants in identifying a funding mechanism for assisting low-income families, particularly those with elderly or very young members, in the purchase and installation of air conditioners to address the risks posed by severe heat, as well as the diminished air quality during wildfire season and during a potential volcanic eruption. Participants were concerned about the rising summer temperatures over the past few years, and felt that the city should provide assistance for potentially vulnerable residents who don't have access to air conditioning. Participants recognized that most areas in the city are not at direct risk from volcanic lava or debris flows, but there was concern that ashfall after an eruption would pose a significant risk to the elderly and those who suffer from asthma and other respiratory problems. Another option discussed by workshop participants was to place permit requirements on new multi-family and rental housing to include air conditioning systems.

Food, water, and energy independence was another common thread in many workshop discussions. Workshop participants expressed concern about access to food and water in the case of any major natural hazard event in Portland; power outages and fuel shortages were also major concerns. Investments in community gardens and local food production, rainwater collection systems, and solar



power systems were suggested as important steps to improving community resilience while simultaneously contributing to the city's sustainability and climate change adaptation goals.

Recognizing the important role day laborers can have in disaster response and recovery, as well as their increased risk of suffering negative consequences after a disaster, workshop participants expressed the desire to see the city take an active role in protecting this group's safety during post-disaster response, reconstruction, and recovery, and preventing post-disaster displacement. Guidelines were developed based on lessons learned from Hurricane Sandy (*Day Labor, Worker Centers & Disaster Relief Work in the Aftermath of Hurricane Sandy*, by Cordero-Guzman et al., 2013) to include these groups in planning activities, protect workers' rights during reconstruction, provide preparedness and safety trainings, provide access to personal protective equipment, and allocate funds for day labor centers to be established as community resources prior to a major natural hazard event.

Many community-based projects would rely on partnerships with community organizations for implementation. Participants expressed interest in finding ways for the city to financially support community organizations that promote activities related to preparedness and increasing community resilience.

Some key recommendations in this category were:

- Financial assistance and/or regulatory support for low-income residents and renters who are vulnerable to extreme heat or diminished air quality to install air conditioning systems.
- Training and support for day laborers consistent with guidance in "Day Labor, Worker Centers & Disaster Relief Work in the Aftermath of Hurricane Sandy" report from 2013.
- Funding for community organizations outside of formal neighborhood structure whose projects focus on preparedness and community resilience.
- Invest in and promote community gardens and local food production.
- Invest in and promote rainwater collection systems in public, residential, and commercial properties.
- Require new development to include onsite rainwater storage and/or emergency drinking water storage tanks. Include water storage solutions in seismic retrofit projects for schools and other public buildings.
- Update city policies to include energy and water purification solutions promoted internationally by Green Empowerment.
- Invest in and promote solar and other alternative energy in public, residential, and commercial properties.
- Prioritize clearing bike paths so that non-automobile traffic can flow safely and develop plans to locate aid stations along these routes.
- Prioritize road access to grocery stores, medical offices, and hospitals. Consider isolated communities in establishing road-clearing priorities.
- Partner with community groups and critical social service organizations to ensure that they have continuity of operations plans.
- Develop hazard-specific evacuation plans that consider likely impacts to bridges and other transportation infrastructure.



- Develop a recovery plan to promote hazard-informed decision-making for post-disaster redevelopment and to take advantage of the opportunity to move critical assets to safer locations.
- Provide neighborhood tool libraries for mitigation projects and post-disaster reconstruction. Partner with home improvement stores to build tool collections.
- Require Portland's emergency responders to live within the city. Provide financial support to purchase or rent a home within the city limits.

### Landslide

Landslides were a major concern for many workshop participants, especially those who live in or near the West Hills in Portland; many were worried about the closure of key access roads and life safety hazards from collapse of bridges and tunnels. Participants were also worried about the dramatic increase in infill development over the past few years and the addition of large multi-family developments in known landslide hazard areas. There was strong interest in preventing any additional development within the city's regulatory landslide hazard zone.

Some key recommendations in this category were:

- Financial support and education for property owners wishing to remediate their properties for erosion.
- Emergency moratorium on all development in high landslide risk areas.
- Enhanced communication with adjacent property owners and neighbors about how landslide risk is being minimized if development is permitted in landslide risk areas.
- Erosion control projects using bio-swales and beneficial drainage systems.
- Pre-established detour routes for access in and out of known landslide risk areas.

### Flood

Flood risks were of particular concern to workshop participants who live in East Portland. Clear communication about safe alternative routes through highly flood-prone areas emerged as a top priority.

Some key recommendations in this category were:

- Replace unsafe or structurally compromised bridges and rebuild to more flood-resistant standards.
- Identify high-traffic bridges and flood-prone routes and establish alternative routes to be used in case they are flooded.
- Require construction of bio-swales for large construction projects where appropriate.
- Promote the use of French drains and other on-site stormwater management systems.



## Earthquake

Because of the potential for long-term citywide and regional impact, earthquake is the “model hazard” for many participants in the Planning for Real workshops. Many of the recommendations in the all-hazards category above were discussed in the context of earthquake hazards, but were described in this report as all-hazards recommendations because of their broader applicability to other hazards of concern. It is also important to note that earthquakes may cause or contribute to incidences of other hazard events such as landslides or floods. For that reason, many concerns and recommendations from workshop participants that fall under other categories discussed in this report would also be applicable to earthquake hazards.

The need for enhanced communication about seismic risks and the seismic stability of structures throughout the city was highlighted as a priority during workshop discussions. Participants expressed the need for information about whether public buildings such as schools or office buildings have been seismically strengthened. It was also important to workshop participants that unreinforced masonry buildings be clearly marked so that people who live and work in these buildings are aware of the risks they face.

Participants were also generally unsure about whether current seismic codes were sufficient for a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake, and many strongly advocated for higher seismic standards for new buildings and infrastructure. Failure of bridges and overpasses, disrupted communications, and damage to key energy infrastructure and potential hazardous materials in liquefaction zones were major concerns for workshop participants. Many were also concerned about fires caused by broken gas lines and other ignition sources during and after an earthquake.

Some key recommendations in this category were:

- Retrofit and/or move fuel infrastructure in Linnton. Maintain fuel reserves in safe locations for use in disaster recovery.
- Strengthen levees to seismic standards.
- Develop an inventory of and distribute information about which shelter facilities have been retrofitted.
- Provide property owners with financial assistance for seismic strengthening, especially owners of multi-family and low-income housing.
- Reinforce and fire-proof the Linnton Community Center as a place of refuge for residents who cannot evacuate.
- Require automatic shutoff valves for gas lines in all new development.
- Evaluate whether current seismic codes are sufficient for a 9.0 subduction zone earthquake. If not, adopt higher standards.
- Assess seismic stability of large water towers throughout the city to determine whether they pose a risk or could be used as an emergency water source.
- Communicate information about hazardous materials and potential plume areas prior to major event. Ensure firefighters and NET members know hazard types and response considerations.
- Label unreinforced masonry buildings to notify occupants of their risks.
- Require signage about risks and evacuation routes in hotels.



- Retrofit and reinforce schools beyond life-safety standards so that they can be used as neighborhood shelters and storage locations for emergency supplies.
- Stage emergency resources on the west side of the river in case bridges fail and east-west access is blocked.
- Continually update water and sewer pipe systems, and continue with the project to build a seismically reinforced water pipe that crosses under the Willamette River.

### Wildfire

Wildfire was primarily a concern for workshop participants who live in or near the West Hills, although participants from other areas in the city recognized the air quality risks associated with wildfire outside of their immediate neighborhoods. Recommendations to address air quality issues are discussed in the all-hazards topic above.

Many participants expressed concerns about hotter, drier summers leading to increased wildfire risk. There was also some concern about invasive or non-native species contributing to wildfire risk, as well as certain diseases affecting trees that can cause massive tree die-outs including Swiss-Cass Needle Disease, which is currently affecting Portland's Douglas Fir tree population.

Workshop participants provided a number of zoning and building code solutions to reduce fire risk in urban-wildland interface zones, such as requiring non-combustible roofing materials in wildfire risk zones. There was also interest in the city providing training to community members and NET members to use firefighting equipment and hoses.

Some key recommendations in this category were:

- Require metal or composition roofing materials when replacing greater than 50% of a roof in a wildfire risk zone.
- Provide NET members with training on fire response, especially how to use fire hydrants and hoses.
- Provide clear information to the public on burn restrictions.

### Severe Weather

Primary concerns from workshop participants about severe weather were related to extreme heat and emergency shelters for all extreme weather conditions. All recommendations for severe weather are included under the all-hazards topic above.

### Drought

Although drought was not a major concern for most workshop participants, some did provide recommendations for reducing Portland's drought risk. These recommendations were primarily focused on water conservation and planting native and drought-resistant plants that require less water.

Some key recommendations in this category were:



- Promote homeowners to plant native and drought-resistant plants that require less water during drier months.
- Provide water conservation education to kids in schools.

### **Next Steps - Instructions for Bureaus**

This report is intended to inform the development and prioritization of action items for the MAP. City bureaus and offices should use this feedback from community members to supplement the list of recommended action items from other sources in this planning process. Bureaus and offices should consider which of the recommendations might fit under their portfolios. Those actions that are selected should be included in the final list of actions submitted to the MAP planning team. They should also be refined using the equity screening process and prioritized using the prioritization tables provided in the bureau toolkit.

Questions? Contact Danielle Butsick at 503-823-3926 or [danielle.butstick@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:danielle.butstick@portlandoregon.gov).