

APPENDIX 4.2 – STATE RESOURCES

Capabilities and Resources – State of New York

The State of New York, through the New York State Consolidated Laws, Executive Law Article 2-B entitled “*State and Local: Natural and Man-Made Disaster Preparedness*” established the Disaster Preparedness Commission (DPC) to examine all aspects of natural and human induced disasters. While the law emphasized local authority and responsibility in the development and maintenance of plans and programs for natural and human induced disaster mitigation, DPC is tasked to examine all aspects of disaster prevention, response, and recovery, as well as prepare the state disaster preparedness plans.

The DPC consists of commissioners, directors, and chairs of State agencies and the American Red Cross. State agencies such as the New York State Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES), the Department of State (DOS), the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), and the Department of Transportation (DOT) are participants in the DPC. The DPC, with the support of the Mitigation Section of the DHSES, developed the New York State Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. The State Plan was not only designed to fulfill the requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, but was also created to serve as a resource for local governments in the development of local hazard mitigation plans.

The State’s Plan includes an evaluation of the State’s pre and post hazard mitigation policies, programs, and capabilities; the policies related to development in hazard prone areas; and the State’s funding capabilities. The Ulster County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan incorporates many of the resources identified in the State Plan to demonstrate the capabilities present for local jurisdictions to consider in the development of local hazard mitigation. Many of these capabilities are described in further detail in this portion of the assessment.

New York State Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES)

In addition to facilitating the development of the New York State Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan, DHSES offers a variety of assistance to local governments in the preparation and implementation of mitigation activities. For example, the DHSES Mitigation and Planning Sections recently coordinated to develop the “Empire Plan,” a comprehensive emergency management plan which addresses the aspects of emergency management: readiness, mitigation, response, and recovery. DHSES developed the “Empire Plan” as a model for local governments to use in the creation of local comprehensive emergency management plans. In addition to the “Empire Plan” DHSES also offers direct funding support and technical assistance for the preparation of all-hazards mitigation plans for those communities to which funding for such assistance is not available. Beyond these activities, DHSES also coordinates with agencies such as the New York Department of State and the Department of Environmental Conservation to provide resources for hazard mitigation.

New York State Department of State (DOS)

DOS offers local governments many forms of assistance for preparing, implementing, and sustaining mitigation activities. The DOS Division of Coastal Resources, for example, provides local governments with technical assistance in the completion of Local Waterfront Revitalization Plans (LWRP). These plans are comprehensive land and water use plans which contain many components and address issues such as coastal erosion management and waterfront development. Upon completion of the LWRP, the plan is reviewed by the DHSES Mitigation Section to ensure that the policies and strategies outlined do not place people or property at undue risk to a hazard event. Approximately sixty-six local jurisdictions in the State have approved LWRPs, including Ulster County.

In addition to providing assistance for the LWRPs, the Division of Coastal Resources also provides technical, planning, and zoning assistance to local governments on coastal development and natural resource protection. Furthermore, in coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Division of Coastal Resources tracks shoreline erosion conditions and warns local communities of areas highly susceptible to erosion. These resources, as well as other forms of assistance provided by DOS are valuable tools for preparing and implementing mitigation activities in local jurisdictions.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)

The DEC directs many programs and forms of assistance useful to local governments developing mitigation strategies. DEC administers the Coastal Erosion Hazard Areas Act which establishes requirements for activities undertaken in identified coastal erosion areas. The Act restricts and/or prohibits development in coastal hazard areas, requires permits for development in areas prone to coastal hazards, and establishes standards to minimize the impacts of new development. While these requirements place restrictions upon local governments, they are designed to protect natural features in coastal hazard areas, prevent further damages from erosion, and minimize the undue risks of hazard events.

DEC also provides technical assistance to local governments through the Floodplain Management Program and the Flood Protection Bureau. The Floodplain Management Program provides assistance to local governments adopting and administering local floodplain management ordinances. Similarly, the Flood Protection Bureau provides technical assistance in eligibility requirements for the National Flood Insurance Program in order to qualify local governments for entrance into the program. Each of these forms of assistance aids local governments in the development and implementation of flood mitigation activities to eliminate or reduce future flood damages.

Further technical assistance in floodplain management is provided through “Community Assistance Visits” administered by the DEC in collaboration with the DHSES. These two agencies partner in this effort to provide technical assistance on floodplain management program development. The Visits are prioritized by an assessment of needs conducted by the DEC and the DHSES. In addition to the “Community Assistance Visits,” these agencies also coordinate to provide assistance for flood mitigation planning and sponsor technical assistance workshops for local governments interested in developing flood mitigation programs.

New York State Department of Transportation (DOT)

The Department of Transportation incorporates mitigation techniques into routine design, construction, and maintenance procedures throughout the State and also engages in mitigation projects, technical assistance activities, and training. For example, DOT provides guidance to local communities developing plans for the long-term re-routing of traffic due to a disaster. Furthermore, DOT engages in mitigation projects such as the elevation of roads in flood prone areas, cleaning of ditches and streams, management of stormwater erosion, tree pruning, and bi-annual inspection of bridges. DOT also develops and conducts training sessions on heavy snow removal and snow plowing for highway maintenance supervisors and equipment operators.