

ANNEX H

LOCAL CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT

CHATHAM COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTION PRE-DISASTER HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

DECEMBER 2015



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY BLANK

WHAT IS A CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT

The purpose of conducting a capability assessment is to determine the ability of a local jurisdiction to implement a comprehensive mitigation strategy and to identify potential opportunities for establishing or enhancing specific mitigation policies, programs, or projects.¹ As in any planning process, it is important to try to establish which goals, objectives, and/or actions are feasible based on an understanding of the organizational capacity of those agencies or departments tasked with their implementation. A capability assessment helps to determine which mitigation actions are practical, and likely to be implemented over time, given a local government's planning and regulatory framework, level of administrative and technical support, amount of fiscal resources, and current political climate.

A capability assessment has two primary components: 1) an inventory of a local jurisdiction's relevant plans, ordinances, or programs already in place and 2) an analysis of its capacity to carry them out. Careful examination of local capabilities will detect any existing gaps, shortfalls, or weaknesses with ongoing government activities that could hinder proposed mitigation activities and possibly exacerbate community hazard vulnerability. A capability assessment also highlights the positive mitigation measures already in place or being implemented at the local government level, which should continue to be supported and enhanced through future mitigation efforts.

The capability assessment completed for Chatham County and its municipalities serves as a critical planning step and an integral part of the foundation for designing an effective hazard mitigation strategy. Coupled with the Risk Assessment, the Capability Assessment helps identify and target meaningful mitigation actions for incorporation in the Mitigation Strategy portion of the Pre-Disaster Hazard Mitigation Plan. It not only helps establish the goals and objectives for the County to pursue under this Plan, but it also ensures that those goals and objectives are realistically achievable under given local conditions.

CONDUCTING THE CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT

In order to facilitate the inventory and analysis of local government capabilities for Chatham County and its municipalities, a detailed Capability Assessment Survey was completed for each of the participating jurisdictions based on the information found in the existing pre-disaster hazard mitigation plan and local government websites. The survey questionnaire compiled information on a variety of "capability indicators" such as existing local plans, policies, programs, or ordinances that contribute to and/or hinder the jurisdictions' ability to implement hazard mitigation actions. Other indicators included information related to the communities' fiscal, administrative, and technical capabilities, such as access to local budgetary and personnel resources for mitigation purposes. The current political climate, an important consideration for

¹ While the Final Rule for implementing the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 does not require a local capability assessment to be completed for local hazard mitigation plans, it is a critical step in developing a mitigation strategy that meets the needs of the region while taking into account their own unique abilities. The Rule does state that a community's mitigation strategy should be "based on existing authorities, policies, programs and resources, and its ability to expand on and improve these existing tools" (44 CFR, Part 201.6(c)(3)).

any local planning or decision making process, was also evaluated with respect to hazard mitigation.

At a minimum, survey results provide an extensive inventory of existing local plans, ordinances, programs, and resources that are in place or under development in addition to their overall effect on hazard loss reduction. However, the survey instrument can also serve to identify gaps, weaknesses, or conflicts that the county and local jurisdictions can recast as opportunities for specific actions to be proposed as part of the hazard mitigation strategy.

The information collected in the survey questionnaire was incorporated into a database for further analysis. A general scoring methodology² was then applied to quantify each jurisdiction's overall capability. According to the scoring system, each capability indicator was assigned a point value based on its relevance to hazard mitigation

Using this scoring methodology, a total score and an overall capability rating of “high,” “moderate,” or “limited” could be determined according to the total number of points received. These classifications are designed to provide nothing more than a general assessment of local government capability. The results of this capability assessment provide critical information for developing an effective and meaningful mitigation strategy.

CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

The findings of the capability assessment are summarized in this Annex to provide insight into the relevant capacity of the jurisdictions in Chatham County to implement hazard mitigation activities. All information is based upon the review of the existing pre-disaster hazard mitigation plan and local government websites through the Capability Assessment Survey and input provided by local government officials during meetings of the Chatham County Hazard Mitigation Planning Team.

Planning and Regulatory Capability

Planning and regulatory capability is based on the implementation of plans, ordinances, and programs that demonstrate a local jurisdiction's commitment to guiding and managing growth, development, and redevelopment in a responsible manner while maintaining the general welfare of the community. It includes emergency response and mitigation planning, comprehensive land use planning, and transportation planning; the enforcement of zoning or subdivision ordinances and building codes that regulate how land is developed and structures are built; as well as protecting environmental, historic, and cultural resources in the community. Although some conflicts can arise, these planning initiatives generally present significant opportunities to integrate hazard mitigation principles and practices into the local decision making process.

This assessment is designed to provide a general overview of the key planning and regulatory tools and programs that are in place or under development for the jurisdictions in Chatham

²The scoring methodology used to quantify and rank the jurisdictions' capability can be found in at the end of this Annex.

County along with their potential effect on loss reduction. This information will help identify opportunities to address existing gaps, weaknesses, or conflicts with other initiatives in addition to integrating the implementation of this Plan with existing planning mechanisms where appropriate.

Table H.1 provides a summary of the relevant local plans, ordinances, and programs already in place or under development for the jurisdictions in Chatham County. A checkmark (✓) indicates that the given item is currently in place and being implemented. An asterisk (*) indicates that the given item is currently being developed for future implementation. Each of these local plans, ordinances, and programs should be considered available mechanisms for incorporating the requirements of the Chatham County Pre-Disaster Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Table H.1: Relevant Plans, Ordinances, and Programs

Planning / Regulatory Tool	CHATHAM COUNTY	Bloomingtondale	Garden City	Pooler	Port Wentworth	Savannah	Thunderbolt	Tybee Island
Hazard Mitigation Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Comprehensive Land Use Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Floodplain Management Plan	✓					✓		
Open Space Management Plan (Parks & Rec/Greenway Plan)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Stormwater Management Plan/Ordinance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Natural Resource Protection Plan	✓					✓		
Flood Response Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Emergency Operations Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Continuity of Operations Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Evacuation Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Disaster Recovery Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Capital Improvements Plan	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Economic Development Plan								
Historic Preservation Plan								
Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



Planning / Regulatory Tool	CHATHAM COUNTY	Bloomingtondale	Garden City	Pooler	Port Wentworth	Savannah	Thunderbolt	Tybee Island
Zoning Ordinance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Subdivision Ordinance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Unified Development Ordinance								
Post-Disaster Redevelopment Ordinance								
Building Code	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fire Code	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NFIP Community Rating System	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

A more detailed discussion on the county’s planning and regulatory capability follows.

Emergency Management

Hazard mitigation is widely recognized as one of the four primary phases of emergency management. The three other phases include preparedness, response, and recovery. In reality, each phase is interconnected with hazard mitigation, as **Figure H.1** suggests. Opportunities to reduce potential losses through mitigation practices are most often implemented before disaster strikes, such as the elevation of flood prone structures or the continuous enforcement of policies that prevent and regulate development that is vulnerable to hazards due to its location, design, or other characteristics. Mitigation opportunities will also be presented during immediate preparedness or response activities, such as installing storm shutters in advance of a hurricane, and certainly during the long-term recovery and redevelopment process following a hazard event.

Figure H.1: The Four Phases of Emergency Management



Planning for each phase is a critical part of a comprehensive emergency management program and a key to the successful implementation of hazard mitigation actions. As a result, the Capability Assessment Survey asked several questions across a range of emergency management plans in order to assess the participating jurisdictions' willingness to plan and their level of technical planning proficiency.

Hazard Mitigation Plan: A hazard mitigation plan represents a community's blueprint for how it intends to reduce the impact of natural and human-caused hazards on people and the built environment. The essential elements of a hazard mitigation plan include a risk assessment, capability assessment, and mitigation strategy.

- Chatham County has previously adopted a hazard mitigation plan. Each participating municipality was included in the county's plan.

Disaster Recovery Plan: A disaster recovery plan serves to guide the physical, social, environmental, and economic recovery and reconstruction process following a disaster. In many instances, hazard mitigation principles and practices are incorporated into local disaster recovery plans with the intent of capitalizing on opportunities to break the cycle of repetitive disaster losses. Disaster recovery plans can also lead to the preparation of disaster redevelopment policies and ordinances to be enacted following a hazard event.

- Chatham County has adopted a disaster recovery plan. Each participating municipality is also in the county's plan.

Emergency Operations Plan: An emergency operations plan outlines responsibilities and the means by which resources are deployed during and following an emergency or disaster.

- Chatham County maintains an emergency operations plan through the County Emergency Management Department. All seven participating municipalities have adopted the county plan.

- The Cities of Garden City and Tybee Island also have municipal-level emergency operations plans in place.

Continuity of Operations Plan: A continuity of operations plan establishes a chain of command, line of succession, and plans for backup or alternate emergency facilities in case of an extreme emergency or disaster event.

- Chatham County has adopted a continuity of operations plan (COOP). This plan also include the seven participating municipalities.
- The City of Savannah is currently in the process of developing a municipal continuity of operations plan.

Flood Response Plan: A flood response plan establishes procedures for responding to a flood emergency including coordinating and facilitating resources to minimize the impacts of flood.

- Chatham County includes a Flood Response Plan in Annex I of the county's Catastrophic Incident Management Annex to the Emergency Operations Plan. This plan supports each of the county's municipalities.
- The City of Garden City has developed a municipal-level flood response plan and the City of Savannah is currently in the process of developing one for its jurisdiction.

General Planning

The implementation of hazard mitigation activities often involves agencies and individuals beyond the emergency management profession. Stakeholders may include local planners, public works officials, economic development specialists, and others. In many instances, concurrent local planning efforts will help to achieve or complement hazard mitigation goals, even though they are not designed as such. Therefore, the Capability Assessment Survey also asked questions regarding general planning capabilities and the degree to which hazard mitigation is integrated into other on-going planning efforts in Chatham County.

Comprehensive Land Use Plan: A comprehensive land use plan establishes the overall vision for what a community wants to be and serves as a guide for future governmental decision making. Typically a comprehensive plan contains sections on demographic conditions, land use, transportation elements, and community facilities. Given the broad nature of the plan and its regulatory standing in many communities, the integration of hazard mitigation measures into the comprehensive plan can enhance the likelihood of achieving risk reduction goals, objectives, and actions.

- Chatham County and the City of Savannah have adopted a joint comprehensive plan.
- Each of the remaining six participating municipalities also have a local comprehensive plan in place.

Capital Improvements Plan: A capital improvements plan guides the scheduling of spending on public improvements. A capital improvements plan can serve as an important mechanism for guiding future development away from identified hazard areas. Limiting public spending in hazardous areas is one of the most effective long-term mitigation actions available to local governments.

- Chatham County, Bloomingdale, Garden City, Savannah, Thunderbolt, and Tybee Island have capital improvement plans in place.

Historic Preservation Plan: A historic preservation plan is intended to preserve historic structures or districts within a community. An often overlooked aspect of the historic preservation plan is the assessment of buildings and sites located in areas subject to natural hazards and the identification of ways to reduce future damages. This may involve retrofitting or relocation techniques that account for the need to protect buildings that do not meet current building standards or are within a historic district that cannot easily be relocated out of harm's way.

- Neither the county nor any of the participating municipalities have adopted a historic preservation plan.

Zoning Ordinance: Zoning represents the primary means by which land use is controlled by local governments. As part of a community's police power, zoning is used to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of those in a given jurisdiction that maintains zoning authority. A zoning ordinance is the mechanism through which zoning is typically implemented. Since zoning regulations enable municipal governments to limit the type and density of development, a zoning ordinance can serve as a powerful tool when applied in identified hazard areas.

- Chatham County and the City of Savannah County have adopted a unified zoning ordinance. They are currently development the New Zoning Ordinances which are intended to have two separate ordinances for the city and unincorporated county.
- Each of the remaining six participating municipalities have also adopted local zoning ordinances.

Subdivision Ordinance: A subdivision ordinance is intended to regulate the development of residential, commercial, industrial, or other uses, including associated public infrastructure, as land is subdivided into buildable lots for sale or future development. Subdivision design that accounts for natural hazards can dramatically reduce the exposure of future development.

- Chatham County and all seven participating municipalities have adopted subdivision ordinances.

Building Codes, Permitting, and Inspections: Building codes regulate construction standards. In many communities, permits and inspections are required for new construction. Decisions regarding the adoption of building codes (that account for hazard risk), the type of permitting

process required both before and after a disaster, and the enforcement of inspection protocols all affect the level of hazard risk faced by a community.

- The Georgia Department of Community Affairs states that local jurisdictions may adopt their own local codes; however, in order to enforce them, the proposed amendment must have been submitted to the Department of Community Affairs for review. The County and all seven participating municipalities have adopted a building code.
- Chatham County provides building inspection services for all unincorporated areas of the County and each participating municipality is responsible for enforcement of the building codes within their planning jurisdiction.

The adoption and enforcement of building codes by local jurisdictions is routinely assessed through the Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS) program developed by the Insurance Services Office, Inc. (ISO).³ In Georgia, the Department of Community Affairs assesses the building codes and provides the minimum requirements.

In conducting the assessment, ISO collects information related to personnel qualification and continuing education as well as the number of inspections performed per day. This type of information combined with local building codes is used to determine a grade for that jurisdiction. The grades range from 1 to 10 with a BCEGS grade of 1 representing exemplary commitment to building code enforcement and a grade of 10 indicating less than minimum recognized protection.

Floodplain Management

Flooding represents the greatest natural hazard facing the nation. At the same time, the tools available to reduce the impacts associated with flooding are among the most developed when compared to other hazard-specific mitigation techniques. In addition to approaches that cut across hazards such as education, outreach, and the training of local officials, the *National Flood Insurance Program* (NFIP) contains specific regulatory measures that enable government officials to determine where and how growth occurs relative to flood hazards. Participation in the NFIP is voluntary for local governments; however, program participation is strongly encouraged by FEMA as a first step for implementing and sustaining an effective hazard mitigation program. It is therefore used as part of this assessment as a key indicator for measuring local capability.

In order for a county or municipality to participate in the NFIP, they must adopt a local flood damage prevention ordinance that requires jurisdictions to follow established minimum building standards in the floodplain. These standards require that all new buildings and substantial improvements to existing buildings will be protected from damage by a 100-year flood event and that new development in the floodplain will not exacerbate existing flood problems or increase damage to other properties.

³ Participation in BCEGS is voluntary and may be declined by local governments if they do not wish to have their local building codes evaluated.



A key service provided by the NFIP is the mapping of identified flood hazard areas. Once completed, the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) are used to assess flood hazard risk, regulate construction practices, and set flood insurance rates. FIRMs are an important source of information to educate residents, government officials, and the private sector about the likelihood of flooding in their community.

Table H.2 provides NFIP policy and claim information for each participating jurisdiction in Chatham County.

Table H.2: NFIP Policy and Claim Information

Jurisdiction	Date Joined NFIP	Current Effective Map Date	NFIP Policies in Force	Insurance in Force	Closed Claims	Total Payments to Date
CHATHAM COUNTY		07/07/14	17,952	\$5,138,570,300	666	\$6,835,116
	07/02/81	07/07/14	211	\$42,470,600	20	\$292,523
		08/05/13	224	\$62,176,200	22	\$184,617
	09/30/81	07/07/14	1,304	\$370,069,000	35	\$464,859
	03/16/73	07/07/14	239	\$53,515,300	31	\$265,218
		07/07/14	7,340	\$1,930,975,800	1,611	\$26,436,849
		09/26/08	324	\$81,410,100	14	\$361,486
Tybee Island	01/14/72	09/26/08	2,450	\$645,524,700	123	\$778,904

†Includes unincorporated areas of county only

Source: NFIP Community Status information as of 5/19/15; NFIP claims and policy information as of 3/31/15

Community Rating System: An additional indicator of floodplain management capability is the active participation of local jurisdictions in the Community Rating System (CRS). The CRS is an incentive-based program that encourages counties and municipalities to undertake defined flood mitigation activities that go beyond the minimum requirements of the NFIP by adding extra local measures to provide protection from flooding. All of the 18 creditable CRS mitigation activities are assigned a range of point values. As points are accumulated and reach identified thresholds, communities can apply for an improved CRS class rating. Class ratings, which range from 10 to 1, are tied to flood insurance premium reductions as shown in **Table H.3**. As class rating improves (the lower the number the better), the percent reduction in flood insurance premiums for NFIP policyholders in that community increases.

Table H.3: CRS Premium Discounts, By Class

CRS Class	Premium Reduction
1	45%
2	40%

CRS Class	Premium Reduction
3	35%
4	30%
5	25%
6	20%
7	15%
8	10%
9	5%
10	0

Source: FEMA

Community participation in the CRS is voluntary. Any community that is in full compliance with the rules and regulations of the NFIP may apply to FEMA for a CRS classification better than class 10. The CRS application process has been greatly simplified over the past several years based on community comments. Changes were made with the intent to make the CRS more user-friendly and make extensive technical assistance available for communities who request it.

- Chatham County and all of its municipalities, except Port Wentworth, participate in the CRS.

Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance: A flood damage prevention ordinance establishes minimum building standards in the floodplain with the intent to minimize public and private losses due to flood conditions.

- All communities participating in the NFIP are required to adopt a local flood damage prevention ordinance. Chatham County and each of its municipalities participate in the NFIP and they all have adopted flood damage prevention regulations.

Floodplain Management Plan: A floodplain management plan (or a flood mitigation plan) provides a framework for action regarding corrective and preventative measures to reduce flood-related impacts.

- Chatham County and the City of Savannah have each adopted a local flood mitigation plan.

Open Space Management Plan: An open space management plan is designed to preserve, protect, and restore largely undeveloped lands in their natural state and to expand or connect areas in the public domain such as parks, greenways, and other outdoor recreation areas. In many instances, open space management practices are consistent with the goals of reducing hazard losses, such as the preservation of wetlands or other flood-prone areas in their natural state in perpetuity.



- Chatham County has adopted a countywide open space plan which also covers all of the participating municipalities.

Stormwater Management Plan: A stormwater management plan is designed to address flooding associated with stormwater runoff. The stormwater management plan is typically focused on design and construction measures that are intended to reduce the impact of more frequently occurring minor urban flooding.

- Chatham County and each of the participating municipalities has adopted a stormwater management plan as well as a stormwater management ordinance.

Administrative and Technical Capability

The ability of a local government to develop and implement mitigation projects, policies, and programs is directly tied to its ability to direct staff time and resources for that purpose. Administrative capability can be evaluated by determining how mitigation-related activities are assigned to local departments and if there are adequate personnel resources to complete these activities. The degree of intergovernmental coordination among departments will also affect administrative capability for the implementation and success of proposed mitigation activities.

Technical capability can generally be evaluated by assessing the level of knowledge and technical expertise of local government employees, such as personnel skilled in using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to analyze and assess community hazard vulnerability. The Capability Assessment Survey was used to capture information on administrative and technical capability through the identification of available staff and personnel resources.

Table H.4 provides a summary of the capability assessment results for Chatham County with regard to relevant staff and personnel resources. A checkmark (✓) indicates the presence of a staff member(s) in that jurisdiction with the specified knowledge or skill.

Table H.4: Relevant Staff / Personnel Resources

Staff / Personnel Resource	CHATHAM COUNTY	Bloomingtondale	Garden City	Pooler	Port Wentworth	Savannah	Thunderbolt	Tybee Island
Planners with knowledge of land development / land management practices	✓	✓	✓			✓		
Engineers or professionals trained in construction practices related to buildings and/or infrastructure	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Staff / Personnel Resource	CHATHAM COUNTY	Bloomingtondale	Garden City	Pooler	Port Wentworth	Savannah	Thunderbolt	Tybee Island
Planners or engineers with an understanding of natural and/or human-caused hazards	✓					✓		
Emergency Manager	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Floodplain Manager	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Land Surveyors		✓						
Scientists familiar with the hazards of the community	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff with education or expertise to assess the community's vulnerability to hazards	✓			✓		✓		✓
Personnel skilled in GIS and/or Hazus	✓		✓			✓		✓
Resource development staff or grant writers	✓							

Credit for having a floodplain manager was given to those jurisdictions that have a flood damage prevention ordinance, and therefore an appointed floodplain administrator, regardless of whether the appointee was dedicated solely to floodplain management. Credit was given for having a scientist familiar with the hazards of the community if a jurisdiction has a Cooperative Extension Service or Soil and Water Conservation Department. Credit was also given for having staff with education or expertise to assess the community's vulnerability to hazards if a staff member from the jurisdiction was a participant on the existing hazard mitigation plan's planning committee.

Fiscal Capability

The ability of a local government to take action is often closely associated with the amount of money available to implement policies and projects. This may take the form of outside grant funding awards or locally-based revenue and financing. The costs associated with mitigation policy and project implementation vary widely. In some cases, policies are tied primarily to staff time or administrative costs associated with the creation and monitoring of a given program. In other cases, direct expenses are linked to an actual project, such as the acquisition of flood-prone homes, which can require a substantial commitment from local, state, and federal funding sources.

The Capability Assessment Survey was used to capture information on the county's fiscal capability through the identification of locally available financial resources.

Table H.5 provides a summary of the results for Chatham County with regard to relevant fiscal resources. A checkmark (✓) indicates that the given fiscal resource is locally available for hazard mitigation purposes (including match funds for state and federal mitigation grant funds) according to the previous hazard mitigation plan.

Table H.5: Relevant Fiscal Resources

Fiscal Tool / Resource	CHATHAM COUNTY	Bloomingtondale	Garden City	Pooler	Port Wentworth	Savannah	Thunderbolt	Tybee Island
Capital Improvement Programming	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Special Purpose Taxes (or taxing districts)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gas / Electric Utility Fees	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Water / Sewer Fees	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Stormwater Utility Fees	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Development Impact Fees	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
General Obligation, Revenue, and/or Special Tax Bonds								
Partnering Arrangements or Intergovernmental Agreements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Other: HMGP, PDM, FMA, SBA, other Federal, state, and non-governmental funding sources, etc.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Political Capability

One of the most difficult capabilities to evaluate involves the political will of a jurisdiction to enact meaningful policies and projects designed to reduce the impact of future hazard events. Hazard mitigation may not be a local priority or may conflict with or be seen as an impediment to other goals of the community, such as growth and economic development. Therefore, the local political climate must be considered in designing mitigation strategies as it could be the most difficult hurdle to overcome in accomplishing their adoption and implementation.

The Capability Assessment Survey was used to capture information on political capability of Chatham County. The previous pre-disaster hazard mitigation plan was reviewed for general examples of local political capability, such as guiding development away from identified hazard areas, restricting public investments or capital improvements within hazard areas, or enforcing



local development standards that go beyond minimum state or federal requirements (i.e., building codes, floodplain management, etc.).

- The previous pre-disaster hazard mitigation plan identified existing ordinances that address natural hazards or are related to hazard mitigation such as flood damage prevention, stormwater management, soil erosion and sedimentation control, zoning, and subdivision.
- All communities in the county currently participate in the NFIP and have adopted the requirement flood damage prevention ordinance. The County and all but municipality are also participates in the CRS which demonstrates to some extent both favorable political support and a willingness to adopt hazard mitigation efforts in an active manner.

CONCLUSIONS ON LOCAL CAPABILITY

In order to form meaningful conclusions on the assessment of local capability, a quantitative scoring methodology was designed and applied to results of the Capability Assessment Survey. This methodology, further described at the end of this Annex, attempts to assess the overall level of capability of Chatham County to implement hazard mitigation actions.

The overall capability to implement hazard mitigation actions varies among the participating jurisdictions. For planning and regulatory capability, the majority of the jurisdictions are in the high range. There is some variation in the administrative and technical capability among the jurisdictions with larger jurisdictions generally having greater staff and technical resources. All of jurisdictions are in the moderate range for fiscal capability.

Table H.6 shows the results of the capability assessment using the designed scoring methodology. The capability score is based solely on the information found in the existing hazard mitigation plan and readily available on the jurisdictions’ government websites. According to the assessment, the average local capability score for all jurisdictions is 44.9, which falls into the high capability ranking.

Table H.6: Capability Assessment Results

Jurisdiction	Overall Capability Score	Overall Capability Rating
CHATHAM COUNTY	61	High
Bloomingtondale	42	High
Garden City	46	High
Pooler	38	Moderate
Port Wentworth	36	Moderate

Jurisdiction	Overall Capability Score	Overall Capability Rating
Savannah	52	High
Thunderbolt	40	High
Tybee Island	44	High

As previously discussed, one of the reasons for conducting a Capability Assessment is to examine local capabilities to detect any existing gaps or weaknesses within ongoing government activities that could hinder proposed mitigation activities and possibly exacerbate community hazard vulnerability. These gaps or weaknesses have been identified for each jurisdiction in the tables found throughout this section. The participating jurisdictions used the Capability Assessment as part of the basis for the Mitigation Actions that are identified in the Plan; therefore, each jurisdiction addresses their ability to expand on and improve their existing capabilities through the identification of their Mitigation Actions.

Linking the Capability Assessment with the Risk Assessment and the Mitigation Strategy

The conclusions of the Risk Assessment and Capability Assessment serve as the foundation for the development of a meaningful hazard mitigation strategy. During the process of identifying specific mitigation actions to pursue, the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team considered not only each jurisdiction's level of hazard risk, but also their existing capability to minimize or eliminate that risk.

Capability Assessment Scoring Methodology

Points System for Capability Ranking

0-19 points = Limited overall capability 20-39 points = Moderate overall capability 40-68 points = High overall capability
--

I. Planning and Regulatory Capability (Up to 43 points)

Yes = 3 points

Under Development = 1 point

Included under County plan/code/ordinance/program = 1 point

No = 0 points

- Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Comprehensive Land Use Plan
- Floodplain Management Plan
- National Flood Insurance Program
- NFIP Community Rating System

Yes = 2 points

Under Development = 1 point

Included under County plan/code/ordinance/program = 1 point

No = 0 points

- Open Space Management Plan / Parks & Recreation Plan
- Stormwater Management Plan
- Natural Resource Protection Plan
- Flood Response Plan
- Emergency Operations Plan
- Continuity of Operations Plan
- Evacuation Plan
- Disaster Recovery Plan
- Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance
- Post-disaster Redevelopment / Reconstruction Ordinance

Yes = 1 point

No = 0 points

- Capital Improvements Plan
- Economic Development Plan
- Historic Preservation Plan
- Zoning Ordinance
- Subdivision Ordinance
- Unified Development Ordinance
- Building Code
- Fire Code

**II. Administrative and Technical Capability
(Up to 15 points)**

Yes = 2 points

Service provided by County = 1 point

No = 0 points

- Planners with knowledge of land development and land management practices
- Engineers or professionals trained in construction practices related to buildings and/or infrastructure
- Planners or engineers with an understanding of natural and/or human-caused hazards
- Emergency manager
- Floodplain manager

Yes = 1 point

No = 0 points

- Land surveyors
- Scientist familiar with the hazards of the community
- Staff with education or expertise to assess the community's vulnerability to hazards
- Personnel skilled in Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and/or Hazus
- Resource development staff or grant writers

**III. Fiscal Capability
(Up to 10 points)**

Yes = 1 point

No = 0 points

- Capital Improvement Programming
- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
- Special Purpose Taxes (or tax districts)
- Gas / Electric Utility Fees
- Water / Sewer Fees
- Stormwater Utility Fees
- Development Impact Fees
- General Obligation / Revenue / Special Tax Bonds
- Partnering arrangements or intergovernmental agreements
- Other