



## SECTION 10. GOALS FOR HAZARD MITIGATION

### 2023 SHMP UPDATE CHANGES

- ❖ The mitigation goals were reviewed and updated. Two of the 2018 State Hazard Mitigation Plan (SHMP) goals were maintained with enhancements, one goal was split into two separate goals, and another goal was incorporated as an objective under a newly developed goal.

#### 10.1 Overview

The mitigation strategy sets the State of West Virginia's (the State) mitigation program priorities and helps guide the regions and counties as they update their plans. The mitigation strategy is composed of goals and actions that directly address the risks and vulnerabilities identified in the risk assessment as well as the findings of the capability assessment. This section outlines the State's mitigation goals. Section 11 reviews, evaluates, and updates the mitigation actions identified in the 2018 SHMP; identifies new actions; and prioritizes all actions for implementation over the performance period of the 2023 SHMP.

#### 10.2 Mitigation Goals

**44 C.F.R. §201.4(c)(3)(i):** [The State Plan must include a] ...description of the State goals to guide the selection of activities to mitigate and reduce potential losses

Mitigation goals are broad, long-term policy and vision statements that explain what is to be achieved by implementing the mitigation strategy. The goals represent what the State seeks to accomplish through mitigation plan implementation. As part of the 2023 SHMP update process, the 2018 SHMP goals (listed below) were reviewed and validated. This review was led by the SHMP Steering Committee and was conducted over the course of the planning process.

The following were the goals of the 2018 SHMP:

- **2018 Goal 1:** Identify and implement projects that will reduce or eliminate long-term risk, directly reduce impacts from hazards, and maintain critical societal functions. This includes reducing flood risk to repetitive loss and severe repetitive loss properties.
- **2018 Goal 2:** Incorporate mitigation concepts and objectives into existing and future policies, plans, regulations, and laws in the State.
- **2018 Goal 3:** Improve the quality and accessibility of data used in the hazard identification and risk assessment and analysis process in State and local hazard mitigation plans.
- **2018 Goal 4:** Promote and support a whole community approach to awareness of hazards, their risk, and potential mitigation actions in order to increase resiliency.



At the January 18, 2023, State Planning Team (SPT) meeting, the State and its partners discussed the results of the risk assessment and capabilities assessment and how they wanted to go about reducing the vulnerability of the State and communities across the State. The discussion addressed the following questions:

- Should additional regulations be mandated? On what topics? In what geographic areas?
- Can funding mechanisms for code enforcement be developed?
- How can capacity and capability of State and local staff be increased? Should there be minimum requirements for experience and/or continuing education for certain officials?
- What funding streams can be used to implement mitigation throughout the State?
- What coordination and integration among State and local programs should be enhanced?
- What can be done to protect State or local assets and infrastructure?
- How can the State support and strengthen local jurisdictions’ mitigation programs?
- What should the State do to reduce vulnerability to high hazard potential dams (HHPD), or to communities in dam failure inundation areas?

The SPT reviewed the 2018 SHMP goals with these questions and the resulting discussions in mind. Table 10-1 summarizes the evaluation of the 2018 SHMP’s goals and the modifications made.

**Table 10-1: Evaluation of the 2018 SHMP Goals**

2018 Goal	Evaluation
2018 Goal 1: Identify and implement projects that will reduce or eliminate long-term risk, directly reduce impacts from hazards, and maintain critical societal functions. This includes reducing flood risk to repetitive loss and severe repetitive loss properties.	Keep goal; update and enhance the wording. Objectives added, including to reflect strategic and/or proactive projects being implemented.
2018 Goal 2: Incorporate mitigation concepts and objectives into existing and future policies, plans, regulations, and laws in the State.	Keep goal; update and enhance wording. Objectives added. The WVSRO is coordinating efforts to align State programs.
2018 Goal 3: Improve the quality and accessibility of data used in the hazard identification and risk assessment and analysis process in State and regional hazard mitigation plans.	The 2023 SHMP should include a goal with the same intent as Goal 3 but reword it. Data is addressed in Objective 4.5 under 2023 Goal 4.
2018 Goal 4: Promote and support a whole community approach to awareness of hazards, their risk, and potential mitigation actions in order to increase resiliency.	Keep goal; update and enhance wording. Addressed in 2023 Goals 3 and 4.

For the 2023 SHMP update, the State decided to focus on stronger, expanded goals that reduce the impacts of hazards on infrastructure, align multiple overlapping State programs that reduce vulnerability to hazards, and educate the whole community on reducing vulnerability and strengthening local mitigation programs. The State also incorporated a set of objectives for each goal to help focus the State’s efforts in implementing the SHMP. The goals and objectives of the 2023 SHMP are listed below.

**Goal 1: Reduce or eliminate the impact of hazards on infrastructure throughout the State.**

- Objective 1.1 Remove the exemption of State facilities from compliance with any development regulations by 2027.
- Objective 1.2 Ensure that State facilities comply with the State Building Code and other development regulations by the end of 2032.



- Objective 1.3 Ensure that State operations are conducted at facilities that are located outside of hazard areas, particularly areas prone to flooding.
- Objective 1.4 Implement strategic, proactive projects to protect existing State facilities from hazard impacts.
- Objective 1.5 Protect high hazard potential dams and reduce vulnerability to dam failures downstream through inventorying, continual maintenance, inspection, rehabilitation, and awareness activities.

**Goal 2: Align and integrate programs related to reducing long-term vulnerability to hazards.**

- Objective 2.1 Analyze and identify opportunities for increased coordination of State programs.
- Objective 2.2 Align and integrate multiple State agencies’/departments’ programs related to reducing vulnerability to dam failure.
- Objective 2.3 Align and integrate multiple State agencies’/departments’ programs related to resilience from flooding.
- Objective 2.4 Align and integrate programs related to preparing for, responding to, recovering from, and mitigating the impacts of hazards within individual agencies/departments.
- Objective 2.5 Further integrate the regional planning and development councils into the State’s mitigation program.

**Goal 3: Provide consistent, continual education of the whole community on reducing long-term vulnerability throughout the State of West Virginia.**

- Objective 3.1 Educate State and local officials, stakeholder groups, and the general public on hazards and reducing long-term vulnerability.
- Objective 3.2 Require initial and ongoing education of local officials with a role in regulating development and include topics on reducing long-term vulnerability in those requirements.
- Objective 3.3 Require initial and ongoing education of elected executive officials and include topics on reducing long-term vulnerability, including dam failures, in those requirements.

**Goal 4: Enhance and support mitigation programs and activities at the local (regional and county) level to reduce long-term vulnerability with minimal negative impacts to community development efforts.**

- Objective 4.1 Enact changes to existing State funding mechanisms to facilitate their use in reducing long-term vulnerability to hazards.
- Objective 4.2 Develop a State-level program to fund mitigation activities at the local level.
- Objective 4.3 Develop State-level standards for the contents of regional and county hazard mitigation plans.



- Objective 4.4 Provide technical assistance to regions, counties, and municipalities in developing their hazard mitigation programs and implementing projects.
- Objective 4.5 Develop, enhance, and advertise data that is available to support mitigation planning and implementation at the local level.
- Objective 4.6 Work with local stakeholders to protect structures and infrastructure from hazard impacts.