

SECTION 6: MITIGATION STRATEGIES

This section presents mitigation actions for Saratoga County to reduce potential exposure and losses identified as concerns in the Risk Assessment portion of this plan. The Planning Committee reviewed the Risk Assessment to identify and develop these mitigation actions, which are presented herein.

This section includes:

- (1) Background and past mitigation accomplishments
- (2) General mitigation planning approach
- (3) Plan mitigation goals and objectives
- (4) Identification, analysis, and implementation of potential mitigation actions

Hazard mitigation reduces the potential impacts of, and costs associated with, emergency and disaster-related events. Mitigation actions address a range of impacts, including impacts on the population, property, the economy, and the environment.

Mitigation actions can include activities such as: revisions to land-use planning, training and education, and structural and nonstructural safety measures.

BACKGROUND AND PAST ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Although DMA 2000 does not require a discussion regarding past mitigation activities, an overview of past efforts is provided as a foundation for understanding the mitigation goals, objectives, and activities outlined in this Plan. The County, through previous and ongoing hazard mitigation activities, has demonstrated that it is pro-active in protecting its physical assets and citizens against losses from natural hazards. Examples of previous and ongoing actions and projects include:

- All jurisdictions participating in this Plan, with the exception of the Town of Edinburg and the Village of Galway, participate in the NFIP, which requires the adoption of FEMA floodplain mapping and certain minimum construction standards for building within the floodplain.
- The Town of Ballston has completed drainage improvements to address flooding in the Buell Heights neighborhood, along Jenkins Road and Outlet Road. The Town has Ballston Lake Overlay District (BLOD) regulations, Chapters 91 & 92 in place as their stormwater management ordinance. Additionally, the Town-owned dock on Ballston Lake was repaired to eliminate heaving.
- The Town of Charlton is engaged in an in-house program that follows the MS4 Plan, along with culvert and ditch upgrading to enlarge the stormwater volume capacity and flow. The Town semi-annually inspects and clears the Town's culvert and stormwater diversion system. The cutting back and trimming of the road line trees on the Town's right-of-way are also done on or before roadway resurfacing.
- The Town of Corinth has completed the following:
 - Established a command center
 - Purchased sirens/emergency generators/rapid notifier system – The Rapid Notify System was purchased by Saratoga County, and each town has access to the system with its own passwords. The system is a computer where a list of telephones can be installed to access in an emergency or any non-emergency incident may be encountered. In addition there is the capability to draw a box on the map included and ring any phone in the box, providing the

- capability to ring any number of phones, from 1 to the entire town or village with a click of the mouse.
- The Town has prepared an Emergency Response Plan
 - The Emergency Management Committee has documented those areas that are vulnerable to flooding and has created lists to use with the “Rapid Notify System”. It is also collecting information to document the special needs population.
 - Shelters – Churches in the town and village and have agreed to act as shelters if needed. The town will have shelter training for some of its members in the very near future. The town hall could be used as a shelter, but it does not have kitchen facilities.
 - NIMS training
 - RUok program– This plan documents persons with special needs to enable contact in an emergency situation.
 - Emergency planning office
 - Town has established a need for an emergency generator at the school.
- The Village of Corinth has a rapid notify system in place and has completed planning in the event of an evacuation – an additional siren system is needed in the event of dam inundation.
 - The Town of Hadley has been proactive in maintaining trees along Town lands’ right of ways to mitigate damages from storms. Additionally, a warning system project is currently under-way for hydro dam failures by Hudson River Black River Regulating Districts.
 - The Town of Halfmoon has worked on the following projects to mitigate the flood hazard:
 - Bank stabilization and rebuilt Brook Wood Road in 2007
 - Bridge and culvert replacement at the following locations:
 - Vosburg Road
 - Betts Lane
 - Fellows Road
 - Riverview Road
 - Johnson Road
 - Stone Quarry Road
 - Town of Malta: Installed three emergency warning sirens; equipped municipal facilities with emergency power and replaced culverts at Goldfoot Road and East High Street.
 - City of Saratoga Springs:
 - Improvements to drainage along Geyser Crest; Arrowhead Road and Vista Drive; and East and Union (Lincoln Frank Sullivan) have been completed.
 - Current drainage projects are being undertaken or reviewed at the following locations: Maple Avenue/East Avenue area; Lincoln Avenue, Wright Street, Jackson Street and Steele Street; Ballston Avenue and Union Street area; Church Street near Bensonhurst; East Avenue and Excelsior Avenue; Hathorn Boulevard and Vichy.
 - Loughberry Lake Dam Safety Plan has been completed
 - Multiple capital improvement projects for water-line replacements (drainage) have been completed
 - Participating in MS-4 Stormwater Program
 - Village of Stillwater: Improvements have been made to the potable water system and the sewer system. Additionally, the North Hudson area has been surveyed for a new drainage system to support sidewalks for school safety.

- Town of Wilton:
 - The Town of Wilton Highway Department has implemented an Equipment & Manpower Readiness inventory to react to highway closure, drainage problems and flood problems.
 - The Town of Wilton Engineering & Planning Department and Building Department have developed standards and regulations to prevent or minimize damage from natural hazards.
 - The Town has adopted and maintained a Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (February 2008).
 - Completed the Federal Grant Project for emergency construction to repair the control spillway at Smith Bridge Road and the dam.
 - Addressing minor repairs to Highgate drainage facilities, pending budget allocation.
 - The Town has implemented drainage outfall by standards and regulations for proposed residential subdivisions, commercial, and industrial sites.
 - Participating in MS-4 Stormwater Program
 - Monitoring drainage areas for beaver dams
 - The town requires high water table field tests for future development
 - The town created a special district with associated regulations and fees to address home developed in high water table areas.

These past and ongoing activities have contributed to the County’s understanding of its hazard preparedness and future mitigation activity needs, costs, and benefits. These efforts provide a foundation for the Planning Committee to use in developing this HMP.

GENERAL MITIGATION PLANNING APPROACH

The general mitigation planning approach used to develop this plan is based on the FEMA publication, Developing the Mitigation Plan: Identifying Mitigation Actions and Implementing Strategies (FEMA 386-3) and input provided by NYSEMO. The FEMA document and NYSEMO guidance include four steps, which were used to support mitigation planning. These steps are summarized below and presented in more detail in the following sections.

- **Develop mitigation goals and objectives:** Mitigation goals were developed using the hazard characteristics, inventory, and findings of the risk assessment, and through the results of the public outreach program. By reviewing these outputs and other municipal policy documents, objectives tying to these overarching goals were identified and characterized into similar themes.
- **Identify and prioritize mitigation actions:** Based on the risk assessment outputs, the mitigation goals and objectives, existing literature and resources, and input from the participating entities, alternative mitigation actions were identified. The potential mitigation actions were qualitatively evaluated against the mitigation goals and objectives and other evaluation criteria. They were then prioritized into three categories: high, medium, and low.
- **Prepare an implementation strategy:** High priority mitigation actions are recommended for first consideration for implementation, as discussed under each hazard description in the following sections. However, based on community-specific needs and goals and available funding and costs,

FEMA defines **Goals** as general guidelines that explain what should be achieved. Goals are usually broad, long-term, policy statements, and represent a global vision.

FEMA defines **Objectives** as strategies or implementation steps to attain mitigation goals. Unlike goals, objectives are specific and measurable, where feasible.

FEMA defines **Mitigation Actions** as specific actions that help to achieve the mitigation goals and objectives.

some low or medium priority mitigation actions may also be addressed or could be addressed before some of the high priority actions.

- **Document the mitigation planning process:** The mitigation planning process is documented throughout this Plan.

Guiding Principle, Mitigation Goals and Objectives

This section presents the guiding principle for this Plan, and mitigation goals and objectives identified to reduce or avoid long-term vulnerabilities to the identified hazards.

Mission Statement

Per FEMA guidance (386-1), a mission statement or guiding principle describes the overall duty and purpose of the planning process, and serves to identify the principle message of the plan. It focuses or constrains the range of goals and objectives identified. This is not a goal because it does not describe outcomes. Saratoga County’s mission statement is broad in scope, and provides a direction for the Plan.

The mission statement for the Saratoga County Plan is as follows:

Through partnerships and careful planning, identify and reduce the vulnerability to natural hazards in order to protect the general health, safety, welfare, quality of life, environment and economy of the residents and communities within Saratoga County.

Goals and Objectives

According to CFR 201.6(c)(3)(i): “The hazard mitigation strategy shall include a description of mitigation goals to reduce or avoid long-term vulnerabilities to the identified hazards.” The Planning Committee developed mitigation goals and objectives based on the risk assessment results, discussions, research, and input from amongst the committee, existing authorities, polices, programs, resources, stakeholders and the public.

The Planning Committee identified five goals through a facilitated exercise, working from a catalog of goal statements created through review of similar plans and FEMA planning guidance. Once the goals were established, objectives that meet multiple goals were selected through a similar facilitated exercise. For the purposes of this Plan, goals are defined as follows:

Goals are general guidelines that explain what is to be achieved. They are usually broad, long-term, policy-type statements and represent global visions. Goals help define the benefits that the Plan is trying to achieve. The success of the Plan, once implemented, should be measured by the degree to which its goals have been met (that is, by the actual benefits in terms of hazard mitigation).

Saratoga County goals are compatible with the needs and goals expressed in other available community planning documents as well as the NYS HMP. Each goal has a number of corresponding objectives that further define the specific actions or implementation steps. Achievement of these goals will define the effectiveness of a mitigation strategy. The goals also are used to help establish priorities.

Objectives were then developed and/or selected by the Planning Committee through its knowledge of the local area, review of past efforts, findings of the risk assessment, qualitative evaluations, and identification of mitigation options. The objectives are used to 1) measure the success of the Plan once

implemented, and 2) to help prioritize identified mitigation actions. For the purposes of this Plan, objectives are defined as follows:

Objectives are short-term aims which, when combined, form a strategy or course of action to meet a goal. Unlike goals, objectives are specific and measurable.

The Planning Committee selected objectives that would meet multiple goals, as listed below. The objectives serve as a stand-alone measurement of a mitigation action, rather than as a subset of a goal. Achievement of the objectives will be a measure of the effectiveness of a mitigation strategy. The objectives also are used to help establish priorities.

The following are the mitigation goals and objectives for the Saratoga County Plan:

Goal 1. Protect Life and Property

- *Objective 1-1:* Protect critical facilities and infrastructure.
- *Objective 1-2:* Address repetitive and severe repetitive loss properties.
- *Objective 1-3:* Encourage the establishment of policies to help ensure the prioritization and implementation of mitigation actions and/or projects designed to benefit essential facilities, services, and infrastructure.
- *Objective 1-4:* Implement mitigation actions that enhance the capabilities of the County to better profile and assess exposure of hazards.
- *Objective 1-5:* Better characterize flood/stormwater hazard events by conducting additional hazard studies and identify inadequate stormwater facilities and poorly drained areas.
- *Objective 1-6:* Develop, maintain, strengthen and promote enforcement of ordinances, regulations, plans and other mechanisms that facilitate hazard mitigation.
- *Objective 1-7:* Integrate the recommendations of this plan into existing local programs.
- *Objective 1-8:* Ensure that development is done according to modern and appropriate standards, including the consideration of natural hazard risk.
- *Objective 1-9:* Identify and pursue funding opportunities to develop and implement local and county mitigation activities.

Goal 2. Increase Public Awareness and Preparedness of Natural Hazards and their Risks

- *Objective 2-1:* Develop and implement program(s) to better understand the public's level of individual and household preparedness.
- *Objective 2-2:* Develop and implement additional education and outreach programs to increase public awareness of hazard areas and the risks associated with hazards, and to educate the public on specific, individual preparedness activities.

- *Objective 2-3:* Promote awareness among homeowners, renters, and businesses about obtaining insurance coverage available for natural hazards (i.e., flooding).
- *Objective 2-4:* Encourage property owners to take preventive actions in areas that are especially vulnerable to hazards.
- *Objective 2-5:* Provide information on tools, partnership opportunities, funding resources, and current government initiatives to assist in implementing mitigation activities.

Goal 3. Promote a Sustainable Economy

- *Objective 3-1:* Encourage the establishment of policies to help ensure the prioritization and implementation of mitigation actions and/or projects designed to benefit essential facilities, services, and infrastructure.
- *Objective 3-2:* Where appropriate, coordinate and integrate hazard mitigation actions with existing local emergency operations plans.
- *Objective 3-3:* Identify the need for, and acquire, any special emergency services, training, equipment, facilities and infrastructure to enhance response capabilities for specific hazards.
- *Objective 3-4:* Ensure continuity of governmental operations, emergency services, and essential facilities at the local level during and immediately after disaster and hazard events.
- *Objective 3-5:* Maintain and expand shared services in acquiring maintaining and providing emergency services and equipment.
- *Objective 3-6:* Develop and maintain adequate services and utilities to serve the County's population and business

Goal 4. Protect open space, the environment and natural resources

- *Objective 4-1:* Protect and preserve environmentally sensitive and critical areas.
- *Objective 4-2:* Protect and restore natural lands and features that serve to mitigate losses (including wetlands, floodplains, stream corridors, hillsides and ridge lines). Such lands should be clearly mapped and identified for protection.
- *Objective 4-3:* Continue to preserve, protect and acquire open space, particularly in high hazard areas. Include hazard considerations into the prioritization schema for land acquisition.
- *Objective 4-4:* Incorporate hazard considerations into land-use planning and natural resource management.
- *Objective 4-5:* Promote sustainable land development practices

Goal 5. Promote Partnerships

- *Objective 5-1:* Maintain and expand shared services in acquiring maintaining and providing emergency services and equipment.
- *Objective 5-2:* Strengthen inter-jurisdiction and inter-agency communication, coordination, and partnerships to foster hazard mitigation actions and/or projects.
- *Objective 5-3:* Identify and implement ways to engage public agencies with individual citizens, non-profit organizations, business, and industry to implement mitigation actions more effectively.

In addition to facilitating the identification of appropriate mitigation actions, the established mitigation planning goals and objectives are used to:

- Define the effectiveness of a mitigation strategy
- Prioritize identified mitigation actions
- Measure the success of the Plan once implemented

Table 6-1 presents an alternate method of presenting the identified objectives that correspond to multiple identified planning goals.

Table 6-1. Saratoga County All-Hazard Mitigation Plan Goals and Objectives Crosswalk

Objective Statements	Goal Statements				
	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4	Goal 5
1-1: Protect critical facilities and infrastructure.	X		X		
1-2: Address repetitive and severe repetitive loss properties in the City.	X	X			
1-3: Encourage the establishment of policies to help ensure the prioritization and implementation of mitigation actions and/or projects designed to benefit essential facilities, services, and infrastructure.	X		X		
1-4: Implement mitigation actions that enhance the capabilities of the City to better profile and assess exposure of hazards.	X	X	X	X	X
1-5: Better characterize flood/stormwater hazard events by conducting additional hazard studies and identify inadequate stormwater facilities and poorly drained areas.	X	X		X	
1-6: Develop, maintain, strengthen and promote enforcement of ordinances, regulations and other mechanisms that facilitate hazard mitigation.	X	X		X	
1-7: Integrate the recommendations of this plan into existing local programs.	X	X	X	X	X
1-8: Ensure that development is done according to modern and appropriate standards, including the consideration of natural hazard risk.	X	X		X	
1-9: Identify and pursue funding opportunities to develop and implement local and county mitigation activities.	X	X	X	X	X
2-1: Develop and implement additional education and outreach programs to increase public awareness of hazard areas and the risks associated with hazards, and to educate the public on specific, individual preparedness activities.		X			X
2-2: Promote awareness among homeowners, renters, and businesses	X	X			X

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Objective Statements	Goal Statements				
	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4	Goal 5
about obtaining insurance coverage available for natural hazards (i.e., flooding).					
2-3: Encourage property owners to take preventive actions in areas that are especially vulnerable to hazards.	X	X	X		
2-4: Provide information on tools, partnership opportunities, funding resources, and current government initiatives to assist in implementing mitigation activities.	X	X	X	X	X
3-1: Encourage the establishment of policies to help ensure the prioritization and implementation of mitigation actions and/or projects designed to benefit essential facilities, services, and infrastructure.	X		X		
3-2: Where appropriate, coordinate and integrate hazard mitigation actions with existing local emergency operations plans.	X		X		
3-3: Identify the need for, and acquire, any special emergency services, training, equipment, facilities and infrastructure to enhance response capabilities for specific hazards.	X		X		
3-4: Review and improve, if necessary, emergency traffic routes; communicate such routes to the public and communities.	X		X		
3-5: Ensure continuity of governmental operations, emergency services, and essential facilities at the local level during and immediately after disaster and hazard events.	X		X		X
3-6: Maintain and expand shared services in acquiring maintaining and providing emergency services and equipment.	X		X		X
4-1: Protect and preserve environmentally sensitive and critical areas.				X	
4-2: Protect and restore natural lands and features that serve to mitigate losses (including wetlands, floodplains, stream corridors, hillsides and ridge lines). Such lands should be clearly mapped and identified for protection.	X			X	
4-3: Continue to preserve, protect and acquire open space, particularly in high hazard areas. Include hazard considerations into the prioritization schema for land acquisition.	X			X	
4-4: Incorporate hazard considerations into land-use planning and natural resource management.				X	
5-1: Maintain and expand shared services in acquiring maintaining and providing emergency services and equipment.			X		X
5-2: Strengthen inter-jurisdiction and inter-agency communication, coordination, and partnerships to foster hazard mitigation actions and/or projects.	X	X	X	X	X
5-3: Identify and implement ways to engage public agencies with individual citizens, non-profit organizations, business, and industry to implement mitigation actions more effectively.	X	X	X	X	X

Capability Assessment

According to FEMA 386-3, a capability assessment is an inventory of a community's missions, programs and policies; and an analysis of its capacity to carry them out. This assessment is an integral part of the planning process. It identifies, reviews and analyzes local and state programs, polices, regulations, funding and practices currently in place that may either facilitate or hinder mitigation.

A capability assessment was prepared by Saratoga County and each participating jurisdiction. The capability assessments are presented in Section 9, Volume II of this Plan. By completing this assessment, Saratoga County and each jurisdiction learned how or whether they would be able to implement certain mitigation actions by determining the following:

- Types of mitigation actions that may be prohibited by law;
- Limitations that may exist on undertaking actions; and
- The range of local and/or state administrative, programmatic, regulatory, financial and technical resources available to assist in implementing their mitigation actions.
- Action is currently outside the scope of capabilities (funding)
- The jurisdiction is not vulnerable to the hazard
- Action is already being implemented

Identification, Prioritization, Analysis, and Implementation of Mitigation Actions

This subsection discusses the identification, prioritization, analysis and implementation of mitigation actions for Saratoga County.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Obstacles (SWOO)

On September 29, 2009, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Obstacles (SWOO) session was held with the Planning Committee. The purpose of this session was to review information garnered from the risk assessment and the public involvement strategy to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and obstacles in hazard mitigation within Saratoga County through a facilitated brainstorming session on risks, vulnerabilities, and capabilities. All information shared during this session was recorded and used to prepare catalogs of mitigation alternatives to be used by the Planning Committee in preparing their individual jurisdictional annexes. Many of the strategies (such as community outreach) identified in the catalogs could be applied to multiple hazards. This Plan identifies strategies for multiple hazards for the County and each jurisdictional annex for participating jurisdictions (Section 9).

The Planning Committee generated a comprehensive list of mitigation actions (see Appendix D) to be considered that met the following objectives:

- Use information obtained from the public involvement strategy;
- Use information provided in the risk assessment;
- Seek mitigation actions consistent with the goals and objectives for the Saratoga County Plan;
- Create catalogs of mitigation actions to be used as a tool by the Planning Committee in selection of mitigation actions.

Catalogs of Mitigation Actions

Based on information gathered during the SWOO session, catalogs of mitigation actions were created that list initiatives that could manipulate the hazard, reduce exposure to the hazard, reduce vulnerability to the hazard, and increase the Planning Committee's ability to respond to or be prepared for a hazard (Appendix D). These catalogs are separated by responsibility for implementation (i.e., who would most likely implement the initiative: personal property owners, private sector business, or government). The hazards addressed by the catalogs were deemed to be those to which the planning area is most vulnerable based on the risk assessment.

The catalogs are not meant to be exhaustive or site-specific but rather to inspire thought and provide members of the Planning Committee a baseline of initiatives backed by a planning process, consistent with the goals and objectives of the planning area, and within the capabilities of the Partners. The Planning Committee was not bound to these actions. They could have added to the catalogs if an action was not included. Actions in the catalogs that were not selected by the Partners in their jurisdictional annexes were not selected based on the following:

- Action is currently outside the scope of capabilities (funding)
- The jurisdiction is not vulnerable to the hazard
- Action is already being implemented

All proposed mitigation actions were identified in relation to the goals and objectives presented above. The mitigation actions include a range of options in line with the six types of mitigation actions described in FEMA guidance (FEMA 386-3), including:

1. **Prevention:** Government, administrative or regulatory actions or processes that influence the way land and buildings are developed and built. These actions also include public activities to reduce hazard losses. Examples include planning and zoning, floodplain local laws, capital improvement programs, open space preservation, and storm water management regulations.
2. **Property Protection:** Actions that involve (1) modification of existing buildings or structures to protect them from a hazard or (2) removal of the structures from the hazard area. Examples include acquisition, elevation, relocation, structural retrofits, storm shutters, and shatter-resistant glass.
3. **Public Education and Awareness:** Actions to inform and educate citizens, elected officials, and property owners about hazards and potential ways to mitigate them. Such actions include outreach projects, real estate disclosure, hazard information centers, and school-age and adult education programs.
4. **Natural Resource Protection:** Actions that minimize hazard loss and also preserve or restore the functions of natural systems. These actions include sediment and erosion control, stream corridor restoration, watershed management, forest and vegetation management, and wetland restoration and preservation.
5. **Emergency Services:** Actions that protect people and property, during and immediately following, a disaster or hazard event. Services include warning systems, emergency response services, and the protection of essential facilities.

- 6. Structural Projects:** Actions that involve the construction of structures to reduce the impact of a hazard. Such structures include dams, setback levees, floodwalls, retaining walls, and safe rooms.

Mitigation Actions

The mitigation actions are the key element of the natural hazards mitigation plan. It is through the implementation of these actions that Saratoga County and the participating jurisdictions can strive to become disaster-resistant through sustainable hazard mitigation. For the purposes of this Plan, mitigation actions are defined as follows:

Mitigation actions are activities designed to reduce or eliminate losses resulting from natural hazards.

Although one of the driving influences for preparing this Plan was grant funding eligibility, its purpose is more than just access to federal funding. It was important to the Planning Committee to look at mitigation actions that will work through all phases of emergency management. Some of the actions outlined in this Plan may not be grant eligible—grant eligibility was not the focus of the selection. Rather, the focus was the actions' effectiveness in achieving the goals of the Plan and whether they are within the County or each jurisdiction's capabilities.

A series of mitigation actions were identified by Saratoga County and each participating jurisdiction. These actions are summarized in Section 9, Volume II of this Plan. Along with the hazards mitigated, goals and objectives met, lead agency, estimated cost, potential funding sources and the proposed timeline are identified. The parameters for the timeline are as follows:

- Short Term = To be completed in 1 to 5 years
- Long Term = To be completed in greater than 5 years
- Ongoing = Currently being funded and implemented under existing programs.

Prioritization

Section 201.c.3.iii of 44 CFR requires an action plan describing how the actions identified will be prioritized. The Saratoga County Planning Committee, along with their contract consultant, developed a prioritization methodology for the Plan that meets the needs of the County and participating jurisdictions while at the same time meeting the requirements of Section 201.6 of 44 CFR. The mitigation actions identified were prioritized according to the criteria defined below.

- **High Priority:** A project that meets multiple plan goals and objectives, benefits exceed cost, has funding secured under existing programs or authorizations, or is grant-eligible, and can be completed in 1 to 5 years (short-term project) once project is funded.
- **Medium Priority:** A project that meets at least one plan goal and objective, benefits exceed costs, funding has not been secured and would require a special funding authorization under existing programs, grant eligibility is questionable, and can be completed in 1 to 5 years once project is funded.
- **Low Priority:** A project that will mitigate the risk of a hazard, benefits exceed costs, funding has not been secured, and project is not grant-eligible and/or timeline for completion is considered long-term (5 to 10 years).

It should be noted that these priority definitions are considered to be dynamic and can change from one category to another based on changes to a parameter such as availability of funding. For example, a project might be assigned a medium priority because of the uncertainty of a funding source. This priority could be changed to high once a funding source has been identified such as a grant. The prioritization schedule for this Plan will be reviewed and updated as needed annually through the plan maintenance strategy described in Section 6 of this Plan.

Benefit/Cost Review

Section 201.6.c.3iii of 44CFR requires the prioritization of the action plan to emphasize the extent to which benefits are maximized according to a cost/benefit review of the proposed projects and their associated costs. The County was asked to weigh the estimated benefits of a project versus the estimated costs to establish a parameter to be used in the prioritization of a project, utilizing the same parameters used by each of the participating jurisdictions as outlined in Volume II of this Plan.

This benefit/cost review was qualitative; that is, it did not include the level of detail required by FEMA for project grant eligibility under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) grant program. This qualitative approach was used because projects may not be implemented for up to 10 years, and the associated costs and benefits could change dramatically in that time. Each project was assessed by assigning subjective ratings (high, medium, and low) to its costs and benefits, described in Table 6-2:

Table 6-2. Cost and Benefit Definitions

Costs	
High	Existing funding levels are not adequate to cover the costs of the proposed project, and implementation would require an increase in revenue through an alternative source (for example, bonds, grants, and fee increases).
Medium	The project could be implemented with existing funding but would require a re-apportionment of the budget or a budget amendment, or the cost of the project would have to be spread over multiple years.
Low	The project could be funded under the existing budget. The project is part of or can be part of an existing, ongoing program.
Benefits	
High	Project will have an immediate impact on the reduction of risk exposure to life and property.
Medium	Project will have a long-term impact on the reduction of risk exposure to life and property or will provide an immediate reduction in the risk exposure to property.
Low	Long-term benefits of the project are difficult to quantify in the short term.

Using this approach, projects with positive benefit versus cost ratios (such as high over high, high over medium, medium over low, etc.) are considered cost-beneficial and are prioritized accordingly. For many of the County initiatives identified, Saratoga County may seek financial assistance under FEMA’s HMGP or PDM programs. Both of these programs require detailed benefit/cost analysis as part of the application process. These analyses will be performed when funding applications are prepared, using the FEMA model process. The Planning Committee is committed to implementing mitigation strategies with benefits that exceed costs. For projects not seeking financial assistance from grant programs that require this sort of analysis, the Planning Committee reserves the right to define “benefits” according to parameters that meet its needs and the goals and objectives of this plan.

Using this approach, projects with positive benefit versus cost ratios (such as high over high, high over medium, medium over low, etc.) are considered cost-beneficial and are prioritized accordingly.

The annexes presented in Section 9, Volume II present the results of applying the prioritization methodology presented to the set of mitigation actions identified by Saratoga County and each participating jurisdiction, and includes the following prioritization parameters:

- Number of objectives met by the initiative
- Benefits of the project (high, medium, or low)
- Cost of the project (high, medium, or low)
- Do the benefits equal or exceed the costs?
- Is the project grant-eligible?
- Can the project be funded under existing programs and budgets?
- Priority (high, medium, or low)

The annexes in Section 9, Volume II of this Plan present the County's and each participating jurisdiction's mitigation action implementation strategy including:

- Mitigation actions for individual and multiple hazards
- Mitigation objectives supported by each action. Goals are not listed because all objectives meet multiple goals.
- Implementation priority
- Potential funding sources for the mitigation action (grant programs, current operating budgets or funding, or the agency or jurisdiction that will supply the funding; additional potential funding resources are identified)
- Estimated budget for the mitigation action (financial requirements for new funding or indication that the action is addressed under current operating budgets)
- Time estimated to implement and complete the mitigation action
- Existing policies, programs, and resources to support implementation of the mitigation action (additional policies, programs, and resources identified)

Specific mitigation actions were identified to prevent future losses; however, current funding is not identified for all of these actions at present. Saratoga County has limited resources to take on new responsibilities or projects. The implementation of these mitigation actions is dependent on the approval of the local elected governing body and the ability of the community to obtain funding from local or outside sources. Where such actions are high priorities, the community will work together with NYSEMO, FEMA and other Federal, State and County agencies to secure funds.

In general, mitigation actions ranked as high priorities will be addressed first. However, medium or even low priority mitigation actions will be considered for concurrent implementation. Therefore, the ranking levels should be considered as a first-cut, preliminary ranking and will evolve based on input from Saratoga County departments and representatives, the public, NYSEMO, and FEMA as the Plan is implemented.