

PLANES DE MITIGACIÓN CONTRA PELIGROS NATURALES

Resiliencia Planificada



JUNTA DE PLANIFICACIÓN

2020

Municipality of Utuado

Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan

Executive Summary

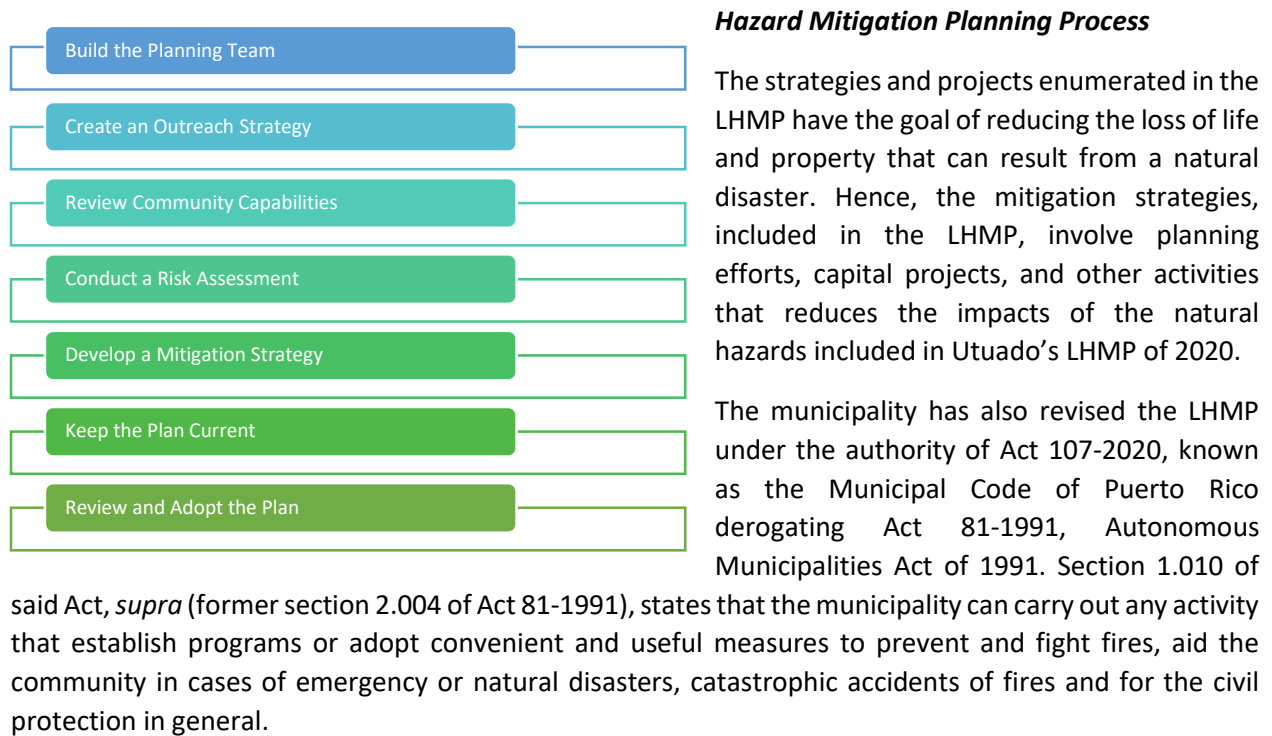


1 Introduction

The Municipality of Utuado has revised its Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP)¹ in accordance with the federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA2K), which was signed into law to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1988. One of the requirements that this legislation establishes is that in order for the municipality to receive federal mitigation funds, it must elaborate and adopt a Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) approved LHMP.² Also, the DMA2K promotes that the local government, together with the State, work on pre disaster planning and encourages the development of sustainable hazard mitigation activities.

These LHMPs must be revised and updated every five (5) years to remain in compliance with regulations and Federal mitigation grant conditions. This updating requirement offers the municipality an opportunity to reevaluate recommendations, monitor the implementation of mitigation strategies included in the previous Plan, monitor the impact of mitigation actions that have been implemented, and determine if any changes to the Plan need to be incorporated. This Plan complies with said regulations.

Figure 1: Hazard Mitigation Planning Process



¹ Please note that the 2020 Revised HMP was written in Spanish as per agreement between the Municipality, the Planning Board, the Governor’s Authorized Representative (GAR) and FEMA.

² 42 U.S.C 5165; 44 C.F.R. § 201.6.

This Executive Summary will provide an overview on:

- Utuado’s population characteristics;
- The public participation and outreach efforts with the community during the LHMP planning process;
- Utuado’s risk assessment;
- A review of the mitigation strategies, goals and LHMPs action plan; and
- Plan maintenance, and how to keep the Plan current.

2 Utuado’s Profile: Main Population Characteristics

Figure 2: Utuado and its wards



The Municipality of Utuado is located in the central/western mountainous region of Puerto Rico. It borders the municipalities of Arecibo and Hatillo to the north, the Municipality of Lares to the west, to the south are the municipalities of Adjuntas and Ponce, and to the east are the municipalities of Jayuya and Ciales. The Municipality of Utuado has a territorial area of approximately 115 square miles (297.83 square kilometers).

The Puerto Rico Planning Board, according to the most recent area delimitation, divides the island into eleven areas, grouping the different municipalities by their demographic trends and human settlements, infrastructure endowment, socioeconomic variables, sociodemographic characteristics, internal cohesion, and the resources and development potential of each. The Functional Area of Arecibo, to which the Municipality of Utuado belongs, is

composed of the municipalities of Arecibo, Hatillo, Camuy, Lares, Quebradillas and Utuado.

The municipality has twenty-four (24) official *barrios* or wards: Ángeles, Arenas, Caguana, Caniaco, Caonillas Abajo, Caonillas Arriba, Consejo, Don Alonso, Guaonica, Las Palmas, Limón, Mameyes Abajo, Paso Palma, Río Abajo, Roncador, Sabana Grande, Salto Abajo, Salto Arriba, Santa Isabel, Santa Rosa, Tetuán, Utuado Pueblo, Viví Abajo and Viví Arriba.

In hydrographic terms, its most important feature is the Grande de Arecibo River, which crosses the Municipality from south to north and whose hydrographic system includes multiple other tributaries such as the Guaonico, Viví, Caonillas and Tanama rivers. Four (4) reservoirs are fed by the Utuado hydrographic system: Caonillas, Viví, Dos Bocas and Jordán.

Table 1: Population by age group: 2010 and 2018

Population	2010 Census	2017 ACS estimate	% Rate of Change
Younger than 5 years age	1,939	1,501	-22.59%
5 to 19 years of age	7,308	5,731	-21.58%
20 to 64 years of age	18,974	17,213	-9.28%
65 years of age and older	4,928	5,764	-16.96%
Total	33,149	30,209	-8.87%

Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2010; American Community Survey 2013-2017 Estimates

According to the 2010 Census, Utuado has a population of 33,149. The American Community Survey (ACS) of 2017 estimated that the population of Utuado had decreased by 2,940 inhabitants. This represents a reduction of 8.87%. Eight (8) wards experienced population increases, with the greatest in percentual terms

occurring in Caonilla Arriba with 34.46% (296 to 398 inhabitants). The remaining sixteen (16) experienced a reduction in population, with the highest in percentage terms being Guaonica, with a 73.05% reduction (538 to 145 inhabitants), and the lowest being Consejo with a 0.82% reduction (610 to 605 inhabitants). Further details, regarding the profile of the municipality can be found in Chapter 3, Section 3.2, of the updated 2020 LHMP.

3 Outreach and Public Participation

In order to guide the development of this Plan, Hon. Ernesto Irizarry Salva, Mayor of Utuado, appointed the following officials to constitute the Mitigation Planning Committee (henceforth, the Planning Committee). The Planning Committee is comprised by representatives from several departments and citizen involvement with key roles and experience in community planning, public works, and emergency management to serve as key components in the planning process. Please refer to Section 2.5 on the LHMP for more information.

Table 2: Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee

Name	Position	Agency	Email
Hon. Ernesto Irizarry Salva	Mayor	Municipality of Utuado	ernestoirizarry2013@gmail.com
Héctor Cruz Cruz	Director	Municipal Emergency Management Office	ommeutuado@yahoo.com
Tnt. Coronel Crispín	Area Commandant	Puerto Rico State Police	Not provided
Sgto. Melvin Morales	Chief Fire Department	Puerto Rico State Fire Department	322morales@gmail.com
María A. Montero	Director of Public Housing	Puerto Rico Department of Public Housing	Not provided
Javier Molina	Aide to the Superintendent	Executive Branch/Education	787-341-0420

Name	Position	Agency	Email
Olvin Montalvo	Regional Director DTOP		Not provided
Luis Correa Rivera	Commissioner Municipal Police	Municipality of Utuaado	policiamunicipalutuaado@gmail.com
Marcelino Orama	Municipal Public Works	Municipality of Utuaado	opmorama@gmail.com
Ramon Bermúdez	Municipal Secretary	Municipality of Utuaado	secretariamunicipalutu@gmail.com
Yomaira Torres	Director of Finances	Municipality of Utuaado	finanzasutuaado@gmail.com
Ashlem Martes	Director of Human Resources	Municipality of Utuaado	municipioutuaado2017@gmail.com
Militza Torres	Director of Federal Programs	Municipality of Utuaado	progfedmtj@gmail.com
Raúl Morales	Director Recreation and Sports	Municipality of Utuaado	ordutuaado2013@hotmail.com
Carlos Bermúdez	Interim Director Ornament and Recycling	Municipality of Utuaado	ornatoreciclaje@gmail.com
Alejandro Echevarría	First Sergeant	Puerto Rico National Guard	Does not have acces
José Guzmán	N/A	American Red Cross, Puerto Rico Chapter	Not provided

The Planning Committee activities included: (1) updating the list of the municipality assets and local critical facilities; (2) updating the status of the previous LHMP mitigation strategies; (3) determine possible new mitigation strategies for the 2020 LHMP; (4) development and implementation of public participation and outreach activities and stakeholders at large such as neighboring municipalities, governmental agencies; (5) announce the municipality's LHMP efforts to agencies, stakeholders and public feedback for Utuaado's LHMP 2020 draft version and incorporate such comments on the Plan.

An initial notice was published on a local newspaper (Primera Hora). Said notice informed the public about the first Public Participation meeting to be held in Utuaado on April 29, 2019. A second notice was published regarding the publication of the 2020 LHMP draft version for review providing 20 days period for review, submit comments, and the opportunity to participate in a second community meeting held on June 20,

2019. A draft version of the 2020 LHMP was made available on the Puerto Rico Planning Board’s (PRPB) website (jp.pr.gov).

4 Utuado’s Risk Assessment

After reviewing the natural hazards identified as priorities on the previous Utuado’s 2011 LHMP, the Municipal Emergency Response Plan, the municipality’s disaster history, and other literature related to potential future hazards, the Planning Committee identified the following hazards in the 2020 LHMP; (1) Extreme Temperatures, (2) Drought, (3) Earthquakes, (4) Flooding, (5) Landslides, (6) Strong Winds (Tropical Cyclones), and (7) Wildfire. Discussion of these natural hazards are included in the 2020 LHMP’s Chapter 4. In addition, the 2020 LHMP includes a quantitative vulnerability analysis based on the best available data for Utuado and Puerto Rico accounting for future development to assess mitigation strategies to prevent repetitive and severe property loss.

This assessment served as a key tool for the Planning Committee and the public to identify and prioritize potential mitigation strategies by focusing attention on areas that present the greatest risk of damages to people, critical facilities, and normal municipality operations. The analysis for earthquake, flood, landslides, and high winds was performed by assessing the potential impacts from each hazard using geographic information system data (GIS).

By ranking each section, the municipality was in position to determine an overall risk classification. It is important to mention that this classification exercise resulted from the municipality’s 2020 LHMP technical risk assessment along with a capability gap analysis and the local community input, which is based on previous natural events experienced by the Planning Committee and the residents and business owners of Utuado.

Table 3 provides a summary of the risk classification for each identified hazard. Part of the process of completing the following appraisal required input from the community as well as from the Committee. Beyond the risk analysis, this table presents the municipality’s prioritization analysis.

Table 3: Natural Hazard Ranking

Natural Hazard	Risk to people	Risk to facilities	Risk to operations	Classification
Extreme Temperatures	1	1	1	Low
Drought	1	1	1	Low
Earthquake/Liquefaction	2	1	2	Moderate
Flooding	3	3	3	High
Landslide	3	3	2	High
Strong Winds/Tropical Cyclones	3	3	3	High
Wildfire	1	1	1	Low

Source: Planning Committee 2019-2020

High=3, Moderate=2, Low=1

Currently, the potential risks with the highest classification or greater impact identified for the municipality are: (1) flooding, (2) landslide and (3) strong winds/tropical cyclone.

A ranking methodology was adopted to develop the mitigation strategies based on these risks as discussed on Chapter 6 and are divided into the following categories: (1) Prevention, (2) Property Protection, (3) Natural Resources Protection, (4) Structural Projects, (5) Emergency Services, and (6) Education and Public Awareness. The strategy category with most mitigation actions is “Structural Projects” with a total of 34 mitigation projects. Flooding and landslides are the natural hazards that are most addressed within the mitigation actions.

5 Mitigation Strategies, Goals, and Action Plan

The municipal capabilities, along with the risk assessment, serve as a foundation for the design, development and implementation of mitigation strategies. Mitigation strategies, found in Chapter 6, consist of a broad amount of local goals and strategies. The local mitigation actions were gathered from the 2011 LHMP and were incorporated into the current LHMP. This chapter provides information about the assigned implementation mechanisms and target completion dates. The sections in this chapter are designed to make the Plan strategic by identifying long-term goals, and functional, by identifying short term and immediate actions that will guide the daily local decision-making process and project implementation.

Mitigation goals consist of general guidelines that explain what the Municipality of Utuado wants to achieve in terms of hazards and mitigation. Thus, the goals included in the 2020 LHMP, offer the Planning Committee and the communities a framework for identifying, prioritizing and implementing actions to reduce the risks associated to natural hazards in Utuado.

Mitigation strategies are activities, projects, measures, or processes that Utuado will adopt in order to reduce or eliminate risk to people and property from hazards. Consequently, Utuado reviewed and revised the criteria adopted in the 2011 LHMP to analyze and prioritize potential mitigation strategies for the municipality. In order to developed the actions, the Planning Committee used the following criteria: (1) the potential of the strategy to reduce expected future damages and/or losses; (2) the capacity of the municipality to implement the action within the 5-year cycle of the Plan; (3) support from the public, agencies, municipal departments, amongst others; and (4) the potential of the action to increase resiliency of Utuado and its residents. Accordingly, the Planning Committee adopted these criteria, the results from the risk assessment, and the feedback from local and neighboring communities to prioritize each mitigation strategy that was contained in this LHMP.

The following summarizes some of the strategies intended to mitigate these hazards:

- Identifying and cataloging buildings built without consideration for the building code.
- Construction of new water drainage to control flooding in different areas of the municipality.
- Restore creeks to their natural state in order to prevent flooding due to obstruction or unsanctioned constructions/modifications.
- Build retaining walls and other structural elements to protect communities at risk of landslides.
- Cleaning and maintenance of existing drainage systems to prevent these from backing up during heavy rains and contributing to flooding.
- Purchase buildings and relocate residents from flood prone areas.

6 Maintenance to Keep the Plan Current

Chapter 7 details the revision and monitoring process in great extent. The formal maintenance process, identified by the Planning Committee, aims to keep the document viable and current, as it is a living document that shall reflect the hazards and realities affecting its community, and how to plan and prepare ahead in the event of a natural disaster. The plan maintenance process provides the procedures for evaluation and review every third quarter of each fiscal year during its 5-year life cycle. Evaluation will include a review of the mitigation action plan implementation, continued public involvement through the Plan's life cycle, as required by federal legislation. As part of the review process, the members of the Planning Committee. In the event of a major natural disaster affecting the island and/or municipality, an emergency meeting must be scheduled, and the Plan should be updated or amended, as necessary, bypassing the 5-year term. The Committee will coordinate with other municipal dependencies, as needed, to achieve the goals and objectives stated in this LHMP.

Finally, the municipality will promote continued public participation during the plan maintenance by, including, but not limited to (Refer to Section 7.4 of the LHMP):

- Making sure to coordinate meetings between those involved in the Plan maintenance process, which will take place at the beginning of each year and after each natural disaster occurring in the jurisdiction of Utuado.
- Prepare the Reports of the Plan Progress Analysis, which will be presented and discussed in meetings with the people involved in the Plan maintenance process.
- Review whether there were changes in the Act, regulatory agency regulations, which affect the Plan in one way or another, as well as budget allocations that may affect the development of projects programmed for communities.
- Ensure that applications for funds for the development of the activities described in the Plan to be made by the municipality are included in the budget of the relevant fiscal year.
- Identify opportunities to access funds.
- Establish the program-specific Work Plan, based on the schedule and goals set out in the Plan.

7 Plan Approval and Adoption

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) completed review of the Municipality of Utuado's Hazard Mitigation Plan, based on the standards pursuant to title 44 C.F.R. Section 201 as authorized by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA2k). The Plan received a satisfactory rating for all required criteria and was approved as approvable pending adoption (APA) on September 1, 2020. Accordingly, the Municipality of Utuado, adopted said Plan on November 18, 2020 via Resolution 14, 2020-2021 series.

Upon receiving the record of adoption from the municipality, FEMA approved Plan by November 30, 2020 and issued an official approval letter to municipality stating the jurisdiction has adopted said Plan thus approved and eligible for FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance programs. The approval letter establishes the expiration date 5 years from the date of approval, or until November 29, 2025.