



TOWN OF ARLINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING and
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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MEMORANDUM

To: Adam Chapdelaine, Town Manager

From: Jennifer Raitt, Director of Planning and Community Development/ ES

Date: January 22, 2020

RE: Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

Arlington received \$17,500 from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) in 2018 to update the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). Arlington's HMP was first adopted in 2012. Per the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), HMPs must be updated every five years in order for a community to remain eligible for FEMA mitigation and preparedness grant funding. Updating the HMP is important so that Arlington is eligible for this funding and so that the Town can reassess which mitigation measures are most important. HMPs provide policy makers with more information to ensure that residents and property are protected from hazards. Through the hazard mitigation planning process, Arlington mapped the vulnerability of Arlington and engaged stakeholders in conversation about hazard mitigation and protection.

The updated HMP documents natural hazards that affect the Town, such as floods, hurricanes, and winter storms, as well as actions that the Town can take to reduce its vulnerability to these hazards. The HMP update incorporated the findings and actionable priorities identified during the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Community Resilience Building Workshop, conducted in January and February 2018, and at a public workshop held in June 2019.

Arlington is working with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to update the HMP. MAPC also wrote the 2012 plan. In addition to technical support from MAPC, Arlington's Local Hazard Mitigation Team met three times to update the plan. The team consists of Town staff and officials from various departments. They met on March 12, 2019, June 27, 2019, and September 24, 2019. During these meetings, the Team discussed where the impacts of natural hazards most affect the Town, goals for addressing these hazards, updates to the Town's existing mitigation measures that were identified in 2012, and new or revised hazard mitigation measures that would benefit the Town in the plan update.

Public participation in this planning process has been important for improving awareness of the potential impacts of natural hazards and to build support for the actions the Town takes to mitigate them. The Town's Local Hazard Mitigation Planning Team hosted one public meeting on June 13, 2019. Key stakeholders and neighboring communities were notified and invited to participate in the public meeting. The January 27, 2020 Select Board presentation will be the plan's second and final public meeting, through which MAPC and the Department will present the planning process to date and invite feedback on the draft plan. Once the public commenting period for the draft plan ends, MAPC and DPCD will update the plan and submit the plan for approval to MEMA and FEMA. Once approved by MEMA and FEMA, the Town will adopt the updated plan through a formal vote by the Select Board. MEMA and FEMA's review of the plan will take several months. We anticipate final plan adoption by May 2020.