

Appendix D
Mitigation Capabilities Assessment

App. D – Mitigation Capabilities Assessment

1.0 Summary of Findings

1.0 Summary of Findings

The City of Alabaster has exceptional capabilities for implementation of a full range of mitigation activities. This finding is based upon the five measures of capability identified below:

1. Planning and Regulatory Tools.

- *Hazard mitigation planning.* The City has a record of experience in hazard mitigation planning. It has been an active participant on the Shelby County Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee since it was first created in 2003. They participated in the planning processes for the initial 2004 plan and the 2010 update and adopted both editions of the plan. Most recently the City again participated in the 2016 plan update and adopted the 2016 Shelby County, Alabama, Multi-Jurisdictional Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. This plan includes the “All-Hazard Mitigation Action Plan” for the City of Alabaster which lays out mitigation measures that respond to flooding and related natural hazards.
- *Comprehensive planning.* The City’s first comprehensive plan, Comprehensive Plan for Alabaster, Alabama was prepared by the Alabama Development Office in 1971 and was updated by the Birmingham Regional Planning Commission in 1978. In 1990, the City embarked on a more creative and strategic approach to comprehensive planning with the 1990 adoption of Reshaping Alabaster, Planning for the Future: A Comprehensive Land Use Planning Program, 1990-2010 by the Birmingham Regional Planning Commission (now the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham). The City waited until 2005, however, to revive its long-range planning initiatives with the adoption of Alabaster Comprehensive Plan 2030: A City for Families! Planning for the Future!, also prepared by the Regional Planning Commission (RPC), The last initiative, adopted in 2015, has been termed Alabaster Forward by the RPC, with a 25-year planning horizon to the year 2040. It is the currently effective comprehensive plan.
- *Zoning Ordinance.* The current Zoning Ordinance of Alabaster, Alabama was adopted in 1999, with a number of amendments since then. It is a conventional zoning ordinance, which regulates land uses and development standards by district. The Department of Planning and Zoning administers and enforces the zoning ordinance.

- *Subdivision Regulations.* The Planning and Safety Division in association with the Office of the City Engineer administers the City of Alabaster Subdivision and Development Regulations, which set forth platting requirements and design and construction standards, which include standards for drainage improvements.
- *Building and Technical Codes.* The City enforces the International Building Code series, 2009 edition, through the Planning and Safety Division.
- *Stormwater Management Ordinance.* The Office of the City Engineer administers the City's stormwater regulations for erosion and sedimentation control, stormwater discharge, and drainage improvements.
- *Flood Hazard Ordinance.* The City Engineer serves as the Floodplain Administrator who administers and enforces the provisions of the Flood Hazard Areas Ordinance. This ordinance is based upon the model recommended by the Alabama State Floodplain Administrator. It includes a freeboard of one foot, and some higher regulatory standards have been added to the model.

2. GIS Resources.

- The City maintains GIS data and software by trained GIS technicians and provides full access for use by City staff.
- Flood hazard maps and data are maintained in GIS, in addition to a complete inventory of other essential City attributes.

3. Staffing and Administrative Resources.

The City operates under a mayor-council form of government and has a City Manager who oversees for the management of day-to-day operations. Council representatives from seven wards are elected every four years. Every four years the Council elects a Council President who presides over Council meetings and a President Pro-Tem to act in the absence of the Council President. The City Council is the City's legislative branch that enacts ordinances and resolutions, adopts budgets, and establishes City policies. The City Manager oversees the operations of City departments and also serves as the City Clerk. Department heads and principal staff include the following titles:

- Chief of Police
- Fire Chief
- Finance Director
- Treasurer
- City Engineer
- Planning & Zoning Coordinator
- Library Director
- Clerk of Court
- Public Works Director
- Parks and Recreation Director
- Human Resources Director
- Environmental Services Director

4. Fiscal Resources.

City fiscal resources are very sound. Because of Alabaster's growing economy coupled with sound fiscal management by the City, the ending fund balance in the City's General Fund has grown significantly over the past 10 year period between 2007 and 2016. The fund balance for fiscal year 2016 ended with \$6,118,380, a 131% increase over fiscal year 2007. With such healthy reserve levels, Alabaster has the capabilities to fund significant mitigation projects without relying on long-term debt.

The City's annual budget includes a Capital Improvement Plan of major capital projects to be implemented over a five year period. Capital Projects Fund identifies funding for property acquisition, infrastructure improvements, and other capital improvements, including flood mitigation and drainage improvement projects. Capital projects are usually funded through debt proceeds, state appropriations, or federal and state grants.

The City maintains eligibility for FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grants, including the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) program, and the Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) program. To date, the City has not actively pursued these funds for mitigation projects.

5. Public Education and Outreach Programs.

The City maintains an open and interactive municipal government with many opportunities for public education, outreach, and involvement. Among other public involvement opportunities, such as public meetings, media releases, boards and committee representation, the City encourages interaction through the City's website at <http://www.cityofalabaster.com/>. Plans are in progress to add social media through Facebook and Twitter.

6. Insurance Services Office (ISO) Ratings.

Ratings are established by the Insurance Services Office on a scale of 1 (highest rating) through 10. The Public Protection Classification (PPC) rates the effectiveness of a municipality's fire-protection services, and the Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS) program rates the building codes in effect and how those codes are enforced.

- PPC rating = 2
- BCEGS rating for residential = 6
- BCEGS rating for commercial = 5

In addition to the above ratings, the ISO administers the optional Community Rating System (CRS) Program of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). All NFIP participants are class 10 but can enter the CRS Program as a class 9 community. As of the end of 2017, the City had not yet entered the CRS Program. Until it does become a CRS community, the City remains a class 10 community.