



### Your Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan contains

1. A community profile
2. Locations of critical facilities
3. Hazard rankings
4. Risk and community capability assessment
5. Results of the analysis
6. Goals and strategies to mitigate risks and build resiliency
7. Implementation recommendations
8. Maintenance essentials

Strategies that minimize destruction and loss often include:

- Collaboration between multiple federal, state, and local agencies and other partners to develop natural hazard issue solutions
- Acquisition and demolition of flood prone properties
- Building resilient infrastructure like residential and community safe rooms to protect citizens during severe weather
- Taking advantage of new state and federal grants

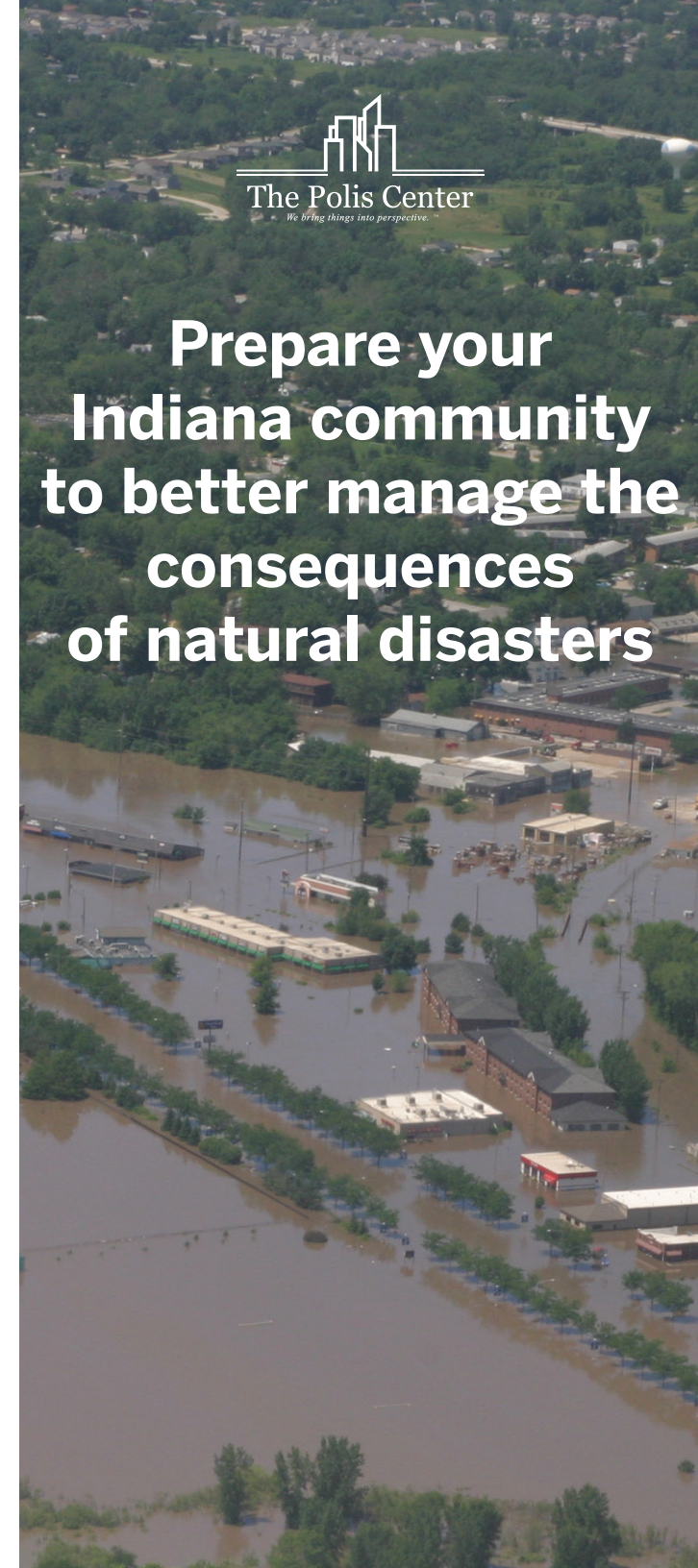
Updating a county's MHMP typically requires between six and 12 months of meetings, planning, and analysis with county and community officials. Renewal of the plan every five years is required by FEMA for a jurisdiction to qualify for mitigation-based grants. This policy encourages awareness of continually changing conditions and mitigation strategies.

#### Learn more

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# Prepare your Indiana community to better manage the consequences of natural disasters

## A national leader in disaster resiliency

With climate change driving extreme weather conditions on communities, it is important for Hoosiers to know that work is constantly ongoing throughout the state to decrease future damage and loss. The Polis Center is involved in this effort in a major way, working closely with most Indiana counties, the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS), and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR).

The center reinforces and contributes to efforts to effectively resolve environmental resiliency issues, steward resources, and improve a community's quality of life. It does this by supporting emergency preparedness, response, and recovery from disasters for greater responsiveness to climate change and its social, health, and economic repercussions.

Preparing Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plans (MHMPs) for communities to better manage the consequences of natural disasters is a specialty of the center, and it develops MHMPs for many counties in Indiana and the State of Indiana overall.

The work is critical as identifying a community's weaknesses, strengths, and needs has the potential to significantly decrease destruction or losses from natural disasters. Damage from severe storms, flooding, tornadoes, and earthquakes can be enormous and extremely expensive. Polis estimates that a 100-year flood could damage 57,000 buildings in the state. Damages to these buildings could exceed \$5 billion statewide.

It is essential that a community learn about its risks and work toward greater resiliency in the face of natural disasters to keep residents safe.

Having a plan in place to guide community response during such an emergency prepares the community for better outcomes.

## We bring more to the table

A MHMP outlines the natural hazard risks faced by the region's citizens, buildings and infrastructure, and its economy, as well as opportunities for making communities more resilient to those risks. Our process incorporates up-to-date data for mapping and modeling, applies scientifically based methodologies for assessing risk and associated impacts, and leverages local community plans and input to ensure MHMP findings and recommendations are consistent with other county initiatives.

When it comes to preparing MHMPs, Polis is unique in several ways. The Polis Center's expertise in neighborhood level community information differentiates it, bringing a holistic perspective to best identify improvements. It looks beyond the physical infrastructure elements of mitigation by bearing in mind a region's vulnerable populations, social weaknesses and services, social determinants of health, and more when preparing a community's MHMP.

Because Polis is affiliated with a university, it has access to a wealth of academic experts and researchers to consult on behalf of client communities as it creates practical solutions.

Polis is one of two FEMA Cooperating Technical Partners (CTP) in the State of Indiana (IDNR is the other). This is an important distinction because CTP projects support high quality flood risk assessment and protection. The partnership allows close work with local, state, and federal policymakers, applying best practices to the mitigation of the social and economic impacts of flood, earthquakes, and other natural disaster hazards. It provides greater awareness of government grant opportunities. It also supports customized approaches to flood hazard identification where unique conditions exist.

## Indiana's primary natural hazards

Floods, tornadoes, severe storms, and earthquakes are among the natural hazard risks in Indiana. From 2000-2022, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) declared 20 major disasters for the State of Indiana, which includes the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a result of these 20 disaster declarations, FEMA approved over \$200 million in individual and household program dollars and obligated over \$300 million in public assistance grants.

As documented in the *Indiana Climate Change Impacts Assessment*, estimates from 1895 to 2016 show the state has seen an increase in its annual average precipitation from 3.3" in the northeast portion of the state to almost 7" in the southern portion of the state. Continued increases in rainfall will lead to additional flooding issues in the future.

There is also a projected increase in extreme temperature events (hot and cold).

In addition, new research shows that the most frequent area of tornado activity nationwide ("Tornado Alley," of which Indiana is not a part currently) is starting to shift eastward due to these precipitation and temperature changes. This shift would bring more frequent severe storms and/or tornadoes to the state.

It is important to note as well that the threat of earthquakes is not confined to southwestern Indiana. The entire state needs to be prepared for an earthquake.