

## West Hartford

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West Hartford is a fully suburbanized community located in Hartford County that encompasses a land area of 22 square miles. It is a largely residential community with a population of approximately 63,300. The major transportation routes that travel through West Hartford include Interstate 84, State Routes 4, 44, 71, 173, 185, 189 and 218. The Town hosts the University of Hartford, University of St. Joseph, American School for the Deaf, and the Hartford Branch of the University of Connecticut. About 21% of the Town's non-agricultural employment is in manufacturing. The Town has several large established commercial districts.

West Hartford is within the Park River Watershed, and contains several reservoirs that supply the Metropolitan District Commission's system. Major watercourses in town include Meadow, Piper, Rockledge, Trout, and Tumbledown Brooks, and the North Branch of the Park River.

## Existing Strategies

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The Town has experienced significant flooding events in the past and has worked to mitigate the problem over the course of many years. The Town of West Hartford undertook significant structural mitigation projects in the early 1980s, including rechanneling the Trout Brook to remove 238 houses from the floodplain.

The National Flood Insurance Program has paid 318 property damage claims in West Hartford totaling \$1,171,709.48 to-date. The NFIP has paid out has 91 Repetitive Loss Property claims on 34 properties in West Hartford to-date. These claims have totaled over \$712,392. In 2001, the Town adopted a Repetitive Flood Loss Plan, and has consistently worked to implement the action plan contained within. The Town periodically ensures that repetitive flood loss property owners have adequate information for retro-fitting flood-prone structures. The Town also holds regular meetings with residents to provide technical advice on flood protection and flood preparedness. In 2008, in order to remain eligible for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program, the Town revised its floodplain ordinance using adopting language that meets or exceeds federal or state requirements. The revised ordinance improves the Town's ability to restrict new development in flood prone areas.

Since 2008, the Town's Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission has approved ten (10) separate regulated activities in areas either identified as floodplain or wetlands. Most of these approvals were for work in regulated inland wetlands areas outside of the floodplain. The Commission approved construction of a multi-family residential building and several commercial and accessory structures outside the floodplain in inland wetland regulated areas, as well as several minor structural renovations and site improvements in regulated areas in accordance with the flood hazard reduction and resource compensation standards outlined in the Zoning Ordinance and Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations. No new structures were approved in the special flood hazard area. Portions of a parking lot and access drives were approved in a 500 year floodplain. These permitted activities did not result in increased vulnerabilities to flooding and in some cases reduced the community's flood risk. For example, permitted activities included structural stormwater drainage improvements, stream bank stabilization and removal of sediment and debris in floodplain and wetlands that help mitigate flood risks.

Some of the remaining flooding issues in West Hartford result from sanitary sewer service back-ups. The Metropolitan District Commission owns and operates the sewer system in West Hartford. The Clean Water Project should alleviate overflow problems in this area.

## Challenges

Despite these efforts, flooding continues to be a major concern for the Town. A significant flood event could result in substantial damage in the community. CRCOG used FEMA's Hazus-MH model to analyze the risks that the Town of West Hartford might face from a major flood. The model estimates that economic losses to the town including residential and commercial damage and business interruptions due to a flood having a 1% chance of occurring any given year (the 100-year flood) would be nearly \$131 million. The impacts of such a flood are summarized below:

Estimated Damages from 100-Year Flood	Households Displaced	893
	People Needing Shelter	2,004
	Buildings at Least Moderately Damaged	140
	Expected Damage to Essential Facilities	One school could sustain moderate damage
	Total Estimated Economic Losses	\$130,710,000
	Total Residential Building & Content Losses	\$49,140,000
	Total Commercial, Industrial & Other Building & Content Losses	\$80,830,000
	Total Business Interruption Losses	\$740,000

In addition to flooding, hurricanes and severe winter storms can also create significant impacts to the Town and its residents and businesses. CRCOG also used FEMA's Hazus-MH model to analyze the risks that the Town of West Hartford might face from a hurricane as powerful as the 1938 hurricane. The model estimates that economic losses to the town including residential and commercial damage and business interruptions due to such a Category 3 hurricane would be over \$355 million. The impacts of such a storm are summarized below:

Estimated Damages from a 1938 Strength Hurricane	Households Displaced	178
	People Needing Shelter	36
	Buildings at Least Moderately Damaged	2,358
	Buildings Completely Damaged	138
	Total Estimated Economic Losses	\$355,325,000
	Total Residential Building Losses	\$265,371,000
	Total Commercial, Industrial & Other Building Losses	\$53,553,000
	Total Business Interruption Losses	\$36,402,000
	Total Debris Generated	56,362 tons
	Truckloads (at 25 tons/truck) of building debris	1271

According to information from the Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, the three federally declared natural disasters of 2011 resulted in total expenses to the municipality and local private nonprofit agencies of nearly \$11 million. These expenses include

debris and snow removal, emergency protective measures and repairs to damaged infrastructure and buildings but do not include damages experienced by private citizens and businesses.

2011 Disasters Damage Amounts Eligible for 75% Reimbursement Under FEMA Public Assistance Program				
Applicant: Town & Other (Other = Fire Districts, Schools, Private Non-Profit Agencies)	100% of Amount Eligible for 75% Reimbursement			Total Damages Eligible for Public Assistance Due to 2011 Disasters
	DR-1958-CT 2011 Snow	DR-4023-CT Irene August 2011	DR-4046-CT Severe Weather Oct 2011 Alfred)	
Town of West Hartford	\$224,752.76	\$111,036.05	\$10,423,313.83	\$10,759,102.64
West Hartford Other	\$11,074.33	\$1,630.43	\$86,759.95	\$99,464.71
West Hartford Total	\$235,827.09	\$112,666.48	\$10,510,073.78	\$10,858,567.35

## Goals, Objectives and Strategies

*In the 2008 Plan, West Hartford identified a single goal, objective and strategy with a focus on reducing flood losses:*

### **GOAL: MINIMIZE LOSS OF LIFE AND PROPERTY FROM NATURAL HAZARDS**

#### Objective 1:

Reduce risk to flood-prone structures.

#### Strategic Action:

##### 1.1 Continue to implement Repetitive Flood Loss Plan.

Lead: Various

Priority: High

Status: The Town has consistently worked to implement the Repetitive Flood Loss Plan's action plan. The Town periodically ensures that repetitive flood loss property owners have adequate information for retro-fitting flood-prone structures and holds regular meetings with residents to provide technical advice on flood protection and flood preparedness. In addition, the Town has identified a storm water management program in its Capital Improvements Program. The storm water management program includes repair and replacement of storm sewers as part of street reconstruction or resurfacing projects. Storm sewers are also replaced or improved as a result of flooding complaints or roadway failures.

Funding Source: Bonds are issued to fund the storm water management program

Timeframe: 2014-2019: Recurring: annual evaluations of projects will be undertaken during budget process.

*In reassessing and evaluating the 2008 Plan, West Hartford modified its goal statement and identified three additional objectives and twelve mitigation projects for the upcoming five years:*

**GOAL: MINIMIZE LOSS TO CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND REDUCE LOSS OF LIFE, PROPERTY AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES AS A RESULT OF NATURAL DISASTERS.**

Objective 2:

Improve the ability of town to provide emergency sheltering for at least 6,000 residents.

Strategic Actions:

- 2.1 Install generators at all primary and tertiary shelters and designated alternate care sites.  
Lead: Facilities Management  
Priority: High  
Status: This is a new initiative  
Potential Funding Sources: grants, bonding  
Timeframe: 2014-2016
  
- 2.2 Increase sheltering supplies (cots, water, food, etc.).  
Lead: Emergency Management  
Priority: High  
Status: This is a new initiative to be undertaken in partnership with the American Red Cross  
Potential Funding Sources: operating budget, grants  
Timeframe: 2014-2015
  
- 2.3 Ensure and supply transportation access to emergency shelters.  
Lead: Emergency Management, Board of Education  
Priority: High  
Status: This is a new initiative  
Potential Funding Sources: operating budget, grants  
Timeframe: 2014-2017
  
- 2.4 Ensure ability of the town to safely shelter in place, and when necessary, evacuate residents and visitors.  
Lead: Emergency Management, Fire, Police, Community Services  
Priority: High  
Status: This is a new initiative  
Potential Funding Sources: operating budget, grants  
Timeframe: 2014-2017

- 2.5 Establish pet sheltering alternatives.  
Lead: Emergency Management, Animal Control, Public Health, Facilities Management  
Priority: Low  
Status: This is a new initiative  
Potential Funding Sources: operating budget, grants  
Timeframe: 2014-2017

Objective 3:

To reinforce, renovate and upgrade existing critical town facilities and support facilities.

Strategic Actions:

- 3.1 Implement needed improvements to the Emergency Operations Center to withstand high wind and other natural and manmade disasters.  
Lead: Emergency Management, Facilities Management  
Priority: High  
Status: This is a new initiative, however work has been initiated. An architect is on retainer and has begun design.  
Potential Funding Sources: operating budget, bonding  
Timeframe: 2014-2016
- 3.2 Upgrade and enhance operational equipment in Emergency Operations Center including radio communications, satellite communications and visual display media.  
Lead: Emergency Management, Police, Fire  
Priority: Medium  
Status: This is a new initiative  
Potential Funding Sources: operating budget  
Timeframe: 2014-2018
- 3.3 Identify and establish a secondary Emergency Operations Center.  
Lead: Emergency Management, Facilities Management  
Priority: Medium  
Status: This is a new initiative  
Potential Funding Sources: grants  
Timeframe: To be completed by 2016
- 3.4 Work with local fuel stations to ensure adequate emergency generating equipment for emergency response vehicles.  
Lead: Emergency Management, Community Services

Priority: Medium  
Status: This is a new initiative  
Potential Funding Sources: operating budget  
Timeframe: 2013-2016

Objective 4:

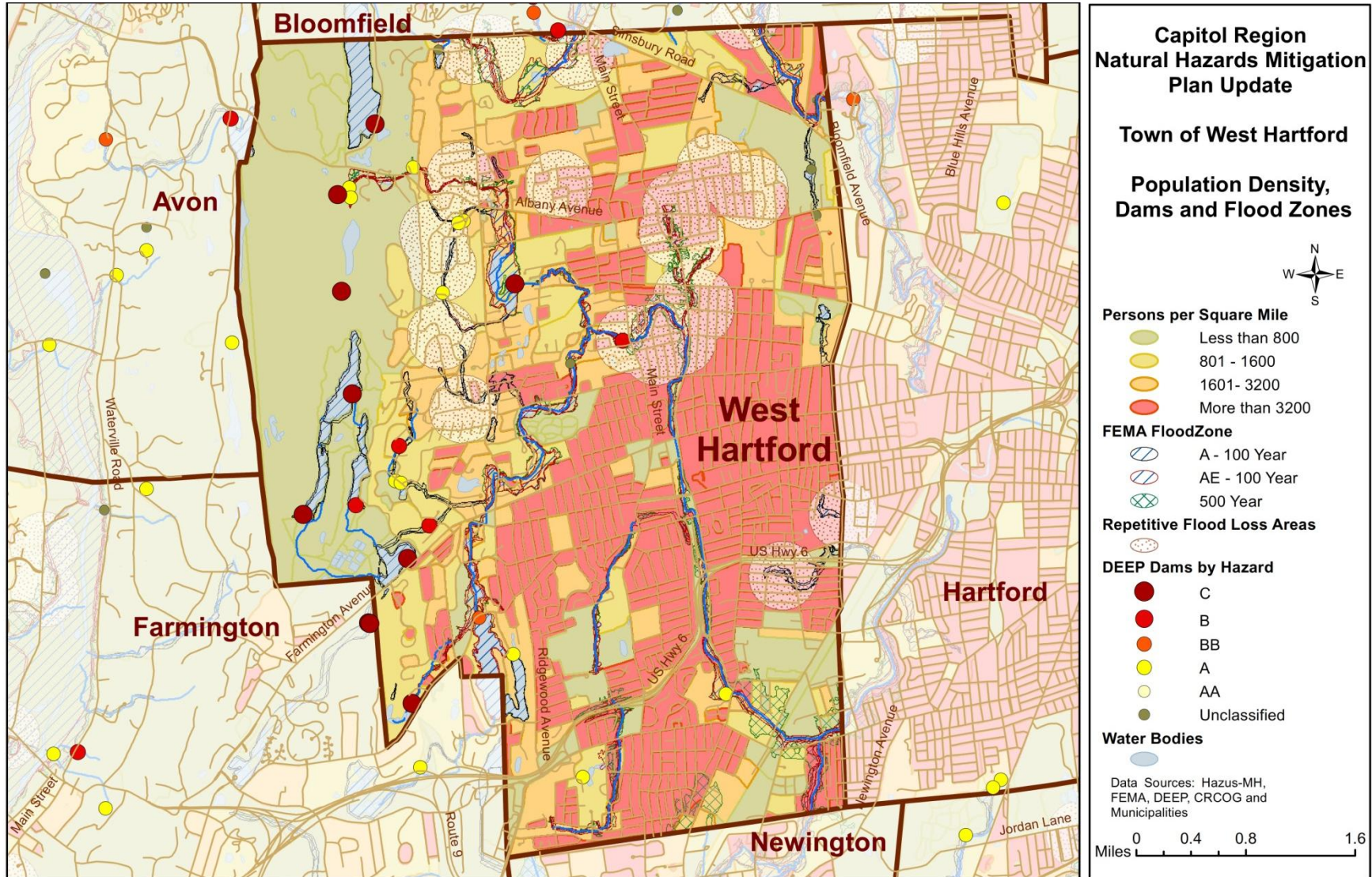
Increase training for hazard response to town employees, volunteers and emergency services personnel.

Strategic Actions:

- 4.1 Provide Incident Command training to all personnel for position and function.  
Lead: Emergency Management, Police, Fire  
Priority: Medium  
Status: This is a new initiative  
Potential Funding Sources: operating budget  
Timeframe: Training to be undertaken annually 2014-2019
- 4.2 Provide shelter management training to all personnel for position and function.  
Lead: Emergency Management, Police, Fire  
Priority: Medium  
Status: This is a new initiative  
Potential Funding Sources: operating budget  
Timeframe: Training to be undertaken annually 2014-2018
- 4.3 Provide specific incident action plan development training to positions and functions of EOC representatives.  
Lead: Emergency Management, Police, Fire  
Priority: Medium  
Status: This is a new initiative  
Potential Funding Sources: operating budget  
Timeframe: Training to be undertaken annually 2014-2019



Map 62: West Hartford Population Density, Dams and Flood Zones





Map 63: West Hartford Flood Plains, Repetitive Loss Areas, Dams and Important Facilities

