

Epsom Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2024

From the Critical and Community Facilities Vulnerability Assessment (CCFVA)

HMC Task: Identify 2024 Problem Statements and Mitigation Actions

1. List accurate Problem Statements initially identified in Critical & Comm Facilities Excel doc tables.
2. Try to solve the Problem (vulnerability to 1 or more natural hazards) long-term by writing reasonable, future fundable, or “wish list” Mitigation Actions.

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What is a Problem Statement?

A brief description of a site/building/road’s vulnerability to (natural or other) hazard impacts.

A good Problem Statement contains:

the Problem [WHAT]

the Natural Hazards addressed [HAZARD]

the Specific Location / Road / Site/ Building / Facility in Town [WHERE]

the Description of Impact to Location [IMPACT]

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What is a Mitigation Activity versus a Preparedness, Response or Recovery Activity?

Mitigation is long-term risk reduction like an ordinance/regulation, construction, upgrade of existing, or rehabilitation of facilities.

Action Type	Duration	Definition or Characteristics
Mitigation	Long Term 2024-2029+	Action / project supports sustained risk prevention or reduces long-term risk to people, property, and infrastructure. ↳ Best suited for <i>Town Hazard Mitigation Plan</i> .
Preparedness	Short Term Ongoing	Action assists or supports planning, protective activities, public education, training and exercise. AVOID MOST in HMP ↳ Best suited for <i>Town Emergency Operations Plan</i> . Strikethrough
Response, Recovery, Other Related	Short Term Ongoing	Action supports preventative, response, recovery-related, repeated or deferred maintenance activities. AVOID MOST in HMP ↳ Best suited for <i>Town Emergency Operations Plan</i> . Strikethrough

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(Natural) Hazards for Problem Statements & Mitigation Actions:

New Natural Hazards 2023	HIRA RANKED TOP Natural Hazards	At Least 1 Mitigation Action? Yes / No
HYDROLOGIC Hazards		
DROUGHT	HIGH	
WILDFIRE Brushfire, Outdoor Fires, Accidental, etc	EXTREME ③	
COLD WEATHER STORMS (Atmospheric Hazards)		
WINTER STORMS BLIZZARD, NOR'EASTER	EXTREME ③	
ICE STORM	EXTREME ③	
EXTREME TEMPERATURES (Atmospheric Hazards)		
COLD WAVE Wind Chill, Freezing	HIGH	
HEAT WAVE Excessive Heat	HIGH	
FLOODING (Hydrologic Hazards)		
DAM FAILURE Water Overtop, Breach, Beaver, etc.	MEDIUM	
INLAND FLOODING Rain, Snow Melt, Flash Floods- Cause Ditch Erosion, Washouts, Pond Overtop, etc	HIGH	
RIVER HAZARDS Flood, Ice Jams, Scouring, Erosion, Channel	EXTREME ③	
GEOLOGIC Hazards		
EARTHQUAKE >4.0MM	LOW	
LANDSLIDE Soil, Rockslide, Excavation Areas, etc	LOW	
PUBLIC HEALTH (Biologic Hazards)		
Swimming Water Quality		
Air Quality		
Drinking & Surface Water Quality		
Infectious Diseases		
Arboviral Diseases		
Tickborne Diseases		

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New Natural Hazards 2023	HIRA RANKED TOP Natural Hazards	At Least 1 Mitigation Action? Yes / No
SOLAR STORMS AND SPACE WEATHER		
GEOMAGNETIC STORMS Aurora Borealis	HIGH	
SOLAR RADIATION	HIGH	
RADIO BLACKOUT	HIGH	
WARM WEATHER STORMS (Atmospheric Hazards)		
HIGH WINDS	EXTREME ②	
THUNDERSTORMS	EXTREME ③	
DOWNBURSTS	HIGH	
LIGHTNING	EXTREME ②	
TORNADOES	EXTREME ①	
HAIL	EXTREME	
TROPICAL AND POST-TROPICAL CYCLONES Hurricanes, Tropical Storms, Tree Debris	MEDIUM	

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REVIEW & FINALIZE Critical Facilities Problem Statement for accuracy.	DEVELOP 1 or More 2024 Mitigation Actions?	Natural Hazard
Essential Town Facilities Table:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wet heavy snow accumulation on flat town roofs (School) could result in the potential for roof collapse if snow is not removed regularly. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town Office, Police Department, Post Office, Library, Epsom Central School, Epsom Manor are targets for human threats (active shooter, bombing, powders, etc). Safety Committee has reviewed. FD is looking for tactical vests in 30-60 days. Alert Lockdown Inform Counter Evacuate ALICE “train the instructor” training sponsored by the PD for 2 days on April 24-25 at the Epsom Central School, although it has a high cost (\$600) - all staff have basic training & annually, refresher course. Police does instruct for ALICE for school. Many school staff involved in CPR, certifications. Police & Fire doing walk throughs of all 4 towns, Loudon, Pittsfield, Epsom, Chichester, multi-jurisdictional effort. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NEW 		
Utilities Table:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the main transmission towers were destroyed by any weather event or hazard event, all public safety communications would be jeopardized. People panic when internet and power are out, calling emergency facilities. Infrastructure is protected, but the residents lose service. ATT given broadband contract by governor’s office, but it does not cover Epsom well. Some of the towers are vacant, have no service. Poor communications on emergency side of operations. Equipment taking even longer to get in. 		

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breezeline and internet has often been and Consolidated with telephone. Internet has been down for up to a month with poles fallen during storm events. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water utilities are old , especially Short Falls Road. Needs to be replaced, have a need for regular services. Lots of holes everywhere. Black Hall road also. INFO: New pipes laid t the circle have been used multiple times and are a huge asset to Fire Dept. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry Hydrants are needed, ponds, river access - seasonal. They regularly dry up from drought. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEW 		
Dams Table:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With an upstream Northwood Lake dam breach, Epsom’s Route 4 at Route 107 intersection would be fully washed out if the Lake drains. A breach would also result in flooding the Cass Pond Dam which may flood Route 4. Northwood Lake dam failure would flood the Suncook River, with detrimental effects experienced along its length. Road damages and diversion of traffic around those areas. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOSTLY STABILIZED. With the Buck Street Dam out, flash flood but not does not stay around. {previously flood stage 6 feet in 5 hours - 3 feet in 1.5 hours evacuation stage}. Swimmers are often floating down the river during floods, FD notifies but they choose to remain. From the Chichester/Epsom town line on Route 28, the Suncook River experiences erosion beside the road to the blacktop. The State of NH replaced and 		

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maintains riprap to stop the area from further erosion. So far, seems to be holding up. State should erect guardrails at Route 28 near Deer Meadow Road (Chichester side).		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town has had problems with propane tank debris floating down the Suncook River from Kingstowne, Lazy River and Suncook Valley Campground and lodging against bridges during flooding events. Could happen again during extreme events. Some homes have been moved. Campgrounds are more responsive to potential flooding. Solved this issue for the most part, although the river has not yet risen high enough. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> INFO: 07-10 week flooding- Very fast response and very fast flood. Just short of 11', projections had been higher. 10'6" stage at N Chichester Bridge. Lazy River Campground and (11 out) and Epsom Valley Campground (26) FD also stabilized the banks and tanks from floating down. 	Promote and enforce tank tie down and anchoring.	
Bridges Table:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little Suncook River has the potential to overtop the Route 107 bridge and/or Black Hall Road bridge, Center Hill Bridge. State has taken care of some of the damming concerns. Ice jams would be more problematic. River woody debris above Center Road bridge, which is a newer bridge, had been causing the ice jam, but resolved now. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NEW Woody debris still found on Little Suncook River at Center Hill. One was new fallen tree after erosion, one rotten tree that came from upstream. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leighton Brook at intersection of Old Town Road. Now a culvert, should be a box culvert - engineering review permitting. Blackhall Road culvert overtopped downstream in multiple 	->> ACTION ITEM FOR PB DRAINAGE.	

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locations. New development upstream has no drainage on BH Road, increased stress on all seasonal streams and intermitted streams under BH Rd. Devts try to keep the water within their developments. Many repairs from Leighton Brook on the higher side upstream (not downstream DES repaired). PB working on detention ponds		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Town has 3 redlisted/closed bridges for which there is no funding to rehabilitate or remove. No funds to take down the bridges during closed - hazard to kids, people who try to walk across. The Old Turnpike Bridge is historical- may be limited in what can be done later.. Cass Bridges not in DOT TYP. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NEW 		
Shelters, Schools and Medical Facilities Table:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Among the biggest potential disasters to the Town are biological hazard events occurring at the Epsom Central School, Epsom Manor, and the Family Medical Center. School tracks symptoms and notifies the State. Town notifies local health officer who then notifies the State. Lyme disease, influenza (POD is in Northwood Coe Brown Academy). Od Sears Building was used for COVID. State Plan 2009 has not been updated. Town held 1 drill as a result. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Power failures would severely impact these critical facilities (Epsom Central School, Epsom Nursing Home, or Epsom Family Medical Clinic) that provide medical assistance and sheltering during disasters. Only Epsom Manor has a generator system. Epsom Traffic Circle area is one of the first areas to regain power on a priority basis. Feb 2018 Epsom Medical Center one of the generators 		

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failed and pumped smoke into the building.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Epsom Central School does not have a generator and could lose food in its freezers. However, it can serve as a temporary Town shelter and people can be bussed to a secondary location if needed. Can be purchased with grant funding. Who will staff it? This is an issue to resolve. Often combine resources (people) is the better way -shared shelter and transportation during electrical events. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Private LRC campground properties - why approve & build campgrounds down low at the riverside? Always evacuate) 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INFO: Library and Epsom Bible Church can be used for either warming or heating shelters. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INFO: US 4 and NH 28 all priority restoration areas through Fort Mountain (primary communications, has a generator). 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		

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Vulnerable Populations Table:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There exists a probability of future flooding & need of evacuation for Lazy River, Kingstowne MHP (a few left) and Epsom Valley Campground from the Suncook River and along Route 28. These are all private communities and they’ve been better with avoiding flooding (home elevation, home moving, etc.). Once a Flood Watch comes in, they have an alert process in place. More aware now than in the past. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town receives multiple first responder calls for trees down in seasonal campgrounds, on manufactured homes and town wide during severe wind events and storms. These locations are particularly vulnerable with light structures and heavy trees. During the drought, more trees fall over with dry and exposed roots. Residents are becoming proactive with tree removal. Power companies come in every 5 years. Town can call and request trees removal. HD also removes trees. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dead-end roads- trees down block entire roads for several hours. Emergency services impacted from reaching residents. People cannot get from one side to homes or from homes out of development. Traffic crashes. 	ACTION - private ROW easement?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NEW 		
Economic Assets Table:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With any accident or casualty at the Epsom Traffic Circle (Routes 4/202 & 28), a traffic backup can occur, possibly for miles in each direction. 		

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Evacuation of businesses may be needed, and traffic rerouting (within 1 mile) would be necessary. Epsom Manor would be very difficult would be the last option available, as these are critical care patients. No specific policy, no incident is the same and requires scaling up as needed. Staged response. Communications plan in place, all Departments follow protocol and contact the State when needed.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After electricity in region goes out, power to the 1 gas station at the Epsom Circle and State Liquor Store is restored quickly because of nearby vulnerable populations and Town services. As a result, many, many people are drawn to Epsom to get fuel, causing traffic backups and hampering the local recovery situation. Situation will get worse when Bow Merrimack Plant goes offline, rolling brownouts will become more severe. PD & FD keeps an eye on the situation and would provide more coverage if needed. Gas station reserves run out quickly. Town has a backup list of locations of emergency fuel storage, gas and diesel. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Sand and gravel excavation has begun to run off more sediment during the last flood. Most of the agricultural fields impacted by river changes and flooding have mostly been abandoned. Campgrounds still flood, but that's where they are traditionally located. Steve Landry DES considers the Suncook River 90% stable, but during major events the course will change more. 		
Churches & Cemeteries Table:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are lots of private cemeteries and individual graves . Individual graves and family cemeteries 		

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are not considered public cemeteries so they may not be tracked or made available or public access. (see NH Cemetery Association.org)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lightning rod protection for historical buildings - may be possible to mitigate for certain Historic buildings and church buildings. 		
•		
•		
•		
• NEW		
Hazardous Materials Facilities Table:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a high number of hazardous materials facilities all around Town and along major routes Route 4 & 28. If a fire or incident occurs, evacuations of nearby vulnerable populations must occur. Traffic will need to be rerouted, major traffic hazards will result. FD is updating contacts at businesses and MSD sheet and are preplanning for response, inspections and walk through. Have a procedure to follow, bill of lading, Central NH Hazmat rules. Federal Highway went to a new placarding system to replace the MSDS, with a simpler related sheet. Materials Safety Data Sheet. 	NONE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There may be more Tier 2 businesses in town that do not report. Technically any small businesses generating even electronic waste could qualify as a generator. 		
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Historic Sites and Buildings Table:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire suppression becomes difficult when some of 		

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<p>the historical sites are beyond the water precinct zones. Most of them are up on the hills. Placed a wet hydrant to the old Meetinghouse. Hoping to extend to 10” pipe. Engineering plans developed by Underwood. Contaminated water at Getty Station (MtBE), Exxon Mobil contributed funding to the State that will benefit Epsom. Town Wells 1 & 2 are located on Dover Road (Route 4). Expansion of water service went to the Manor by 2021. May have a 3rd well needed in the future.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Forest Management Plan needed and in progress for Town Forest for logging. Also has an old mill, cemetery and cellar foundations on site at Tarleton Road entrance. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		
Recreational & Gathering Sites Table:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Epsom has many remote wooded sections of Town used for recreation. There is a high risk of fire due to the use of and access to remote sites. FD has a budget to keep access to Class VI roads. Upgrading forest fire truck in 2021 and a UTV to get access to hiker rescue and searchers. Town has a forester, regular logging. FD kept up to date on logging. Slash cleared out, less fire. FD conducts controlled burns. Several areas like Fort Mountain are gated. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency response has difficulty locating and evacuating injured or lost people even in the Town Forest. If the person has a cell phone, PD can ping the phone through 911. NH Fish & Game will assist, as will Town Forester. FD do mapping and GPS training every year. PD can access K-9 units and thermal imaging units. The Town does not 		

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have Town Forest & other conservation area maps readily available to all emergency response or the public. Maps are needed and should be available to the public and for emergency response.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INFO: (map sketch, popular trail system, maybe 200/week, in walking distance of residents. Scout waiver for camping). Cons Comm program working to digitally create a map for people to walk. AllTrails.com has some trails uploaded from Town Forest 		
•		
•		
Future Development Table:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town services and the School system could not accommodate development of the large lot legacy properties at current Town service levels. Significant upgrades to services, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and staff would need to occur. Some of the lots could be conserved. Bear Paw Regional Greenway recently approached 8 landowners for conservation land, asked town to purchase. Economic development is an important theme in the community right now. The 3 Economic Revitalization Zone (ERZ) ordinance was passed, have an Economic Development Committee, signs are being printed for installation. Purchased 20-22 Bearpaw conservation land added to Town Forest. No purchase of additional land is proposed, too expensive for budget. Cons Comm does not get 100% of the LUTC, a smaller %. 		
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