

DRAFT for Epsom HMC Review

DRAFT M4 04-17-24

Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2024



Town of Epsom New Hampshire

**Adopted by the Epsom
Board of Selectmen**

Mon xx, 2024

Approved by NH HSEM/FEMA

Mon xx, 2024



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Town of Epsom, NH

Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2024

Board of Selectmen Adopted **Month xx, 2024**
NH HSEM/FEMA Approved **Month xx, 2024**



Town of Epsom

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Epsom, NH 03234
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Central NH Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC)

28 Commercial Street, Suite 3
Concord, NH 03301
Phone: (603) 226-6020
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NH Department of Safety (NHDOS)

NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management (NHHSEM)
33 Hazen Drive
Concord, NH 03305 (*Mailing Address*)



Incident Planning and Operations Center (IPOC)

110 Smokey Bear Blvd
Concord, NH 03301 (*Physical Address*)
Phone: (800) 852-3792 or (603) 271-2231
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<https://prd.blogs.nh.gov/dos/hsem>



US Department of Homeland Security

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Region 1
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1 PLANNING PROCESS

The Town’s Hazard Mitigation Committee reformed in **2023** to update the Plan which included incorporation of the new *FEMA Local Mitigation Planning Policy Guide, effective April 19, 2023* requirements, revising outdated material with current information, and providing the latest **5**-year history of Epsom since the last Plan was approved in **November 2018**. A new online community survey was made available to the public for wider input, and the new plan development procedure was documented in the **Methodology** section.

Certificate of Adoption, 2024

Town of Epsom, NH
Board of Selectmen
Town Hall
1598 Dover Road
Epsom, NH 03234

A Resolution Adopting the Epsom Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2024

WHEREAS, the Town of Epsom has historically experienced severe damage from natural hazards and it continues to be vulnerable to the effects of the hazards profiled in the **Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2024** including but not limited to flooding, high wind events, severe winter weather, and fire, resulting in loss of property and life, economic hardship, and threats to public health and safety; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Epsom has developed and received conditional approval from the NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management (NHHSEM) for its **Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2024** under the requirements of 44 CFR 201.6; and

WHEREAS, public and Committee meetings were held between **June 2023** through **May 2024** regarding the development and review of the **Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2024**; and

WHEREAS, the **Plan** specifically addresses hazard mitigation strategies, and Plan maintenance procedures for the Town of Epsom; and

WHEREAS, the **Plan** recommends several hazard mitigation actions (projects) that will provide mitigation for specific natural hazards that impact the Town of Epsom with the effect of protecting people and property from loss associated with those hazards; and

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1 PLANNING PROCESS

WHEREAS, adoption of this Plan will make the Town of Epsom eligible for funding to alleviate the effects of future hazards; now therefore be it

RESOLVED by Town of Epsom Board of Selectmen:

The **Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2024** is hereby adopted as an official plan of the Town of Epsom; The respective officials identified in the mitigation action plan of the Plan are hereby directed to pursue implementation of the recommended actions assigned to them;

Future revisions and Plan maintenance required by 44 CFR 201.6 and FEMA are hereby adopted as a part of this resolution for a period of five (5) years from the date of this resolution; and

An annual report on the progress of the implementation elements of the Plan shall be presented to the Board of Selectmen by the Emergency Management Director or designee.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned have affixed their signature and the corporate seal of the Town of Epsom this xxnd day of Month 2024.

Board of Selectmen

Cheryl C. Gilpatrick, Chair date

Virginia J. Drew, Vice Chair date

Meadow Wysocki, Member date

ATTEST

SEAL

Town Clerk

Laura Scarbo, Town Clerk date

Plan Process Acknowledgments

The Board of Selectmen-appointed Hazard Mitigation Committee was comprised of these individuals on behalf of their respective Departments, Boards or Committees who met between **June 2023** through **May 2024** to develop the **Epsom Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2024**:

- **Ted Virgin**, Epsom Emergency Management Director
- **Meadow Wysocki**, Epsom Board of Selectmen Member
- **Andrea Novotney**, Epsom Board of Selectmen Administrative Assistant
- **Gail Quimby**, Epsom Police Department Executive Administrative Assistant
- **Scott Elliott**, Epsom Highway Department Road Agent
- **Sean Heichlinger**, Epsom Planning Board Chair
- **Kaitlin Camidge**, Epsom Public Library Director
- **Sam Currier**, Epsom Water and Sewer Committee Chair
- **Stewart Yeaton**, Epsom Fire Department Chief

The following Central NH Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC) staff facilitated and prepared the Hazard Mitigation Plan Update:

- **Stephanie Alexander**, CNHRPC Senior Planner
- **Eliane Spaulding**, CNHRPC Planning Intern
- **Dylan Cook**, CNHRPC Planning Intern (GIS)

PARTICIPATION FROM NON-HAZARD MITIGATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Several other Town staff, non-Town-affiliated individuals or other agency representatives attended one or more Committee meetings and/or contributed information to the content of the Plan. Members of the public* participated as fully as appointed members in the Hazard Mitigation Committee meetings during the meetings they attended.

- **Gary Miller**, Unitil Community Representative
- **John DiNapoli**, Unitil Community Representative
- **Kashena Window**, Unitil Community Representative
- **Miriam Cahill-Yeaton**, Epsom Resident
- **Georgia Perry**, Epsom Resident

PARTICIPATION FROM SOCIALLY VULNERABLE AND UNDERREPRESENTED COMMUNITIES

All non-Committee members were invited to participate fully in the meeting discussions and activities. Aside from the general meeting postings and notifications on the Town website, the Epsom Hazard Mitigation and Severe Weather Survey, and other methods of promotion, the Epsom Hazard Mitigation Committee (HMC) reached out by personal contact to several organizations that represent and support socially vulnerable people and traditionally underrepresented communities within the Town. These included local manufactured housing park owners, social support organizations, and local businesses such as Capital Area Public Health Network, Epsom Health Care/Epsom Manor, and Epsom School District. These identified individuals and groups were placed onto the Committee’s agenda and meeting notification distribution email lists for primary meetings. Several representatives did participate in many of the HMC meetings. When there was no response after several attempts at communication, email notifications ceased so unwanted “spamming” did not occur. Anyone attending the Hazard Mitigation Committee meetings had the opportunity to actively participate in discussions and decision making. See also **Table 1.2**.

Who is a Member of the Public?

For the purposes of this Plan, “**a member of the public**” or “**the public**” or “**public participant**” means:

Anyone who is not a Town of Epsom, School District, County, State, or federal government employee; anyone who is not paid for services by property tax dollars; anyone who is not a volunteer of the Town; and anyone who does not represent non-profit agencies and other Committees of which the Town is a member.

- **Tammy Bishop**, Epsom Health Care Administrator
- **Patrick Connors**, Epsom Central School Principal
- **Damian Santana**, Capital Area Public Health Network CAPHN – Granite State United Way
- **Jim Richardson**, Former Capital Area Public Health Network CAPHN Contractor

Authority

In 2000, the President enacted the Disaster Mitigation Act 2000 (DMA) which requires states and municipalities to have local adopted and FEMA approved natural hazard mitigation plans in place to be eligible for disaster and mitigation funding programs such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) programs, including Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, and Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Program. New Hampshire is awarded funds based upon the completeness of its State Plan and the number of local plans.

As a result of the DMA, funding was provided to state offices of emergency management, including the New Hampshire Homeland Security and Emergency Management, to produce local (municipal) hazard mitigation plans. To remain in compliance with the DMA, the Town of Epsom is required to submit for FEMA approval a revised **Hazard Mitigation Plan Update** every five years.

The newest version of New Hampshire Homeland Security and Emergency Management (NH HSEM)'s *State of New Hampshire Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan 2023* was approved **October 6, 2023** for the next five years. The State's Plan guides local hazard mitigation planning and allows for New Hampshire to receive federal Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) funding programs to provide to local communities for mitigation, after disasters, and for emergency management assistance.

Prior versions of the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan are noted in the **Final Plan Dates** section. A **2020** Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant provided 75%/25% funding for the Town to update its prior Plan through the Central NH Regional Planning Commission. The 25% match required by the Town was provided by in-kind staff and volunteer time and labor.

This **Epsom Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2024** has been developed in accordance with the Disaster Mitigation Act of **2000** and the *FEMA Local Mitigation Planning Policy Guide, effective April 19, 2023*. The most recent Plan development standards provided by FEMA Region I have also been incorporated. The hazard mitigation planning effort of the Town is a regular process and this Plan is considered a "living document."

The new Epsom Hazard Mitigation Committee was established by the Board of Selectmen to begin meeting **June 2023** and guided the development of the Plan. The appointed Committee consisted of the Town's Police, Fire, Emergency Management Department, Highway Department, Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, School District, Library, and Administrative Staff. Hybrid meetings were held, with an in-person meeting at the Epsom Fire Station with Zoom Webinar hosted and advertised by the Town.

The attendees of the meeting process are noted in the **Acknowledgements**. The Central NH Regional Planning Commission, of which Epsom is a member, contributed to the development of this Plan by facilitating the meeting and technical processes, working with the Committee and its members to obtain information, preparing the document, and handling the submissions to NH HSEM and FEMA.

Methodology

The **Epsom Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2024** was developed over a seven-month period with a group of Town staff members and volunteers, open to public participants, and the CNHRPC comprising the Hazard Mitigation Committee. The **2023** methodology for Plan development is summarized in this section. The **Hazard Mitigation Plan** is designed differently from the **2018 Plan** with the intent to better conform to the current approvable Central NH Region format and incorporating the new **2023 State Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan** items, with the purpose of easier updating and implementation while meeting FEMA’s requirements. The Plan roughly follows the **FEMA Local Mitigation Planning Handbook, 2023** by using its terminology and some of its tasks, ensuring **Epsom’s Plan Update 2024** begins to follow a standardized approach to Plan construction and content endorsed by FEMA. Many of the vital sections of the **2024 Plan Update** will be contained in **10 APPENDICES** for easier display, usage, sharing, and update.

MEETINGS AND DUTIES

The meetings and tasks of the Hazard Mitigation Committee were dictated by Agendas and how much the Committee was able to complete for each Agenda is displayed in **Table 1.1**. Work Sessions were designed to accomplish what could not be completed at meetings due to time constraints and additional information to process. All meetings were publicly accessible by Zoom.

Table 1.1
Meeting Schedule and Agenda Activities

Meeting	Date	Agenda Activities – See APPENDIX C	Attended by Public and Stakeholders
Meeting 1 <i>Remotely held via Zoom Webinar, In person at Fire Station</i>	06-14-23	Discuss Process and Schedule; Review Declared Disasters and Public Assistance Funding to Epsom; Develop New Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA); Begin to Identify Recent Past Hazard Locations 2018-2023; Schedule Meetings	HMC, Epsom Health Care, Epsom Central School, Public Library, CNHRPC, Resident GP
Work Session 1 <i>Remotely held via Zoom Webinar, In person at Fire Station</i>	06-28-23	Finish Past Hazard Events 2018-2023; Finalize Epsom Haz Mit and Severe Weather Survey on Survey Monkey; Update Critical and Community Facilities Vulnerability Assessment and Develop Problem Statements; Revise Maps 1-2	HMC, Epsom Health Care, Epsom Central School, Public Library, CNHRPC, Resident GP
Work Session 1.2 <i>Remotely held via Zoom Webinar, In person at Fire Station</i>	07-19-23	Repost Survey; Update Critical and Community Facilities Vulnerability Assessment Updates and Develop Problem Statements; Revise Maps 1-2	HMC, Epsom Central School, Public Library, Capital Area Public Health Network, Unitol, CNHRPC, Resident GP, Resident MCY

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Town of Epsom, NH Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2024

1 PLANNING PROCESS

Meeting	Date	Agenda Activities – See APPENDIX C	Attended by Public and Stakeholders
Work Session 1.3 <i>Remotely held via Zoom Webinar, In person at Fire Station</i>	08-02-23	Complete Update of Critical and Community Facilities Vulnerability Assessment and Problem Statements; Identify Maximum Natural Hazard Magnitude (HIRA), Status Updates	HMC, Epsom Health Care, Epsom Central School, Public Library, Capital Area Public Health Network, CNHRPC, Resident GP
Work Session 1.4 <i>Remotely held via Zoom Webinar, In person at Fire Station</i>	08-16-23	Determine Intensity of Natural Hazard (HIRA), Identity Natural Hazard Magnitude, Status Updates	HMC, Public Library, Capital Area Public Health Network, Unital, CNHRPC, Resident GP
Meeting 2 <i>Remotely held via Zoom Webinar, In person at Fire Station</i>	09-13-23	Finalize Problem Statements and Identify Those to Utilize as NEW 2024 Mitigation Actions; Review and Update Goals and Objectives; Status Report of Outstanding Items	HMC, Epsom Central School, Public Library, CNHRPC, Resident GP, Resident MCY
Work Session 2 <i>Remotely held via Zoom Webinar, In person at Fire Station</i>	09-27-23	Finalize Problem Statements and Identify Those to Utilize as NEW 2023 Mitigation Actions; Department Roundtable- Review & Update Goals and Objectives; Begin to Review Capability Assessment	HMC, Epsom Central School, Public Library, Capital Area Public Health Network, CNHRPC, Resident GP, Resident MCY
Work Session 2.2 <i>Remotely held via Zoom Webinar, In person at Fire Station</i>	10-11-23	Finalize Problem Statements and Identify Those to Utilize as NEW 2024 Mitigation Actions; Status Report- Capability Assessment; Schedule Additional Meetings, Status Report: Outstanding Items	HMC, Epsom Central School, Public Library, CNHRPC, Resident GP, Resident MCY
Meeting 3 <i>Remotely held via Zoom Webinar, In person at Fire Station</i>	11-08-23	Determine Status of the 2018 Mitigation Actions; Provide Observations on the 2018 Plan and new Plan 2024 Update; Begin to Develop Mitigation Action Plan 2024; Next Steps	HMC, Epsom Central School, Public Library, CNHRPC, Resident GP, Resident MCY
Work Session 3 <i>Remotely held via Zoom Webinar, In person at Fire Station</i>	11-29-23	Provide Observations on the 2018 Plan and new Plan 2024 Update; Begin Mitigation Action Plan, Next Steps	HMC, Epsom Health Care, Epsom Central School, Public Library, CNHRPC, Resident GP
Work Session 3.2 <i>Remotely held via Zoom Webinar, In person at Fire Station</i>	12-13-23	Observations on the 2018 Plan and new Plan 2024 Update; Develop Mitigation Action Plan 2024; Next Steps	HMC, Epsom Central School, Public Library, CNHRPC, Resident GP, Unital
Work Session 3.3 <i>Remotely held via Zoom Webinar, In person at Fire Station</i>	01-10-24	Develop Mitigation Action Plan 2024; Prioritize Mitigation Action Ranking Scores for Action Achievability; Review Survey Results for Comments; Next Meetings	HMC, Epsom Health Care, Epsom Central School, Public Library, CNHRPC, Resident GP, Capital Area Public Health Network

Meeting	Date	Agenda Activities – See APPENDIX C	Attended by Public and Stakeholders
Work Session 3.4 <i>Remotely held via Zoom Webinar, In person at Fire Station</i>	01-24-24	Develop Mitigation Plan; Prioritize Mitigation Action Ranking Scores for Action Achievability Using Enhanced STAPLEE; Review Survey Results; Next Meetings	HMC, Epsom Central School, Public Library, CNHRPC, Resident GP, Unutil
Work Session 3.5 <i>Remotely held via Zoom Webinar, In person at Fire Station</i>	02-07-24	Prioritize Mitigation Actions with Enhanced STAPLEE; Review Survey Results; Next Steps	HMC, Epsom Central School, Public Library, CNHRPC, Resident GP, Capital Area Public Health Network, Unutil
Meeting 4 <i>Remotely held via Zoom Webinar, In person at Fire Station</i>	04-09-24	Review Draft Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2024; Overview of Work Session 4 Tasks; Schedule Public Information Meeting	HMC, CNHRPC
Work Session 4.2 <i>Remotely held via Zoom Webinar, In person at Fire Station</i>		Review Draft Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2024; Review Draft Community Survey for Haz Mit and Severe Weather Events; Interim Hazard Mitigation Plan Implementation 2023-2028; Prepare for Public Information Meeting; Review Plan Approval Process; Prepare for Board of Selectmen Adoption Meeting	
Public Information Meeting <i>In person at Fire Station</i>		HMC members present sections of the Plan to the public in a brief question and answer format meeting. Describe hazards and mitigation Actions. Maps will be available.	

Source: Epsom Hazard Mitigation Committee Agendas, 2023

For all meetings, hosted remotely via Zoom and in-person at the Epsom Fire Station on Dover Road, CNHRPC staff took a roll call during each meeting and completed a meeting match timesheet for participants documenting their time at the meetings. The Committee members worked to complete the Agendas, including developing the **Hazard Risk Assessment, Critical and Community Facilities Vulnerability Assessment, Capability Assessment, and Mitigation Action Plan**, completing the **Enhanced STAPLEE Action Prioritization**, etc. along with input from members of the public and guests. The agendas and attendance sheets are included in **APPENDIX C** of the Plan.

The specific meeting tasks are described in detail on the Agendas in **APPENDIX C** and in **Table 1.1**. CNHRPC staff facilitated the Committee Meetings and Work Sessions. Information needed on the Agenda Tasks indicated above was collected from any attendees present, including any members of the public, by CNHRPC, during discussions among attendees. The new and updated information was

described in each Chapter under the **2024 Plan Update** section. Maps were reviewed and updated by the Committee and guests and revised using a Geographic Information System (GIS) by CNHRPC.

In between meetings, Town staff and volunteers and CNHRPC staff researched and collected information for the Chapters. CNHRPC updated and rewrote Chapters, tables, and sections as appropriate. The Chapters were also updated by revising the document to the current FEMA standards and the *2023 State Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan*.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Several types of public participation were possible throughout the planning process. These ranged from in-person and online Hazard Mitigation Committee meetings, responding to the online survey, and attending the Public Information Meeting.

Public Invited to Attend Epsom's Hazard Mitigation Committee Meetings

Epsom went to lengths to have an inclusive hazard mitigation planning process. The most successful avenue was the online Hazard Mitigation and Severe Weather Survey where **110** responses were provided. Information to the general public on how, when and where to attend Committee meetings was included on the survey, on the Town website and social media pages, on the Town calendar, and through regular email distribution lists. The Committee meetings were held both at the

Public Outreach Strategy

Many individuals and agencies were personally invited to attend and participate in the Epsom Hazard Mitigation Plan Committee meetings by email, personal discussions, and by phone call. They included Town Boards and Committees, Town Departments, Epsom School District, Epsom Health Care/Epsom Manor, Epsom School District, Capital Area Public Health Network, Unitil, NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management (NHHSEM) Representatives, local Emergency Management Directors and others, along with general email invitations through the Town's public notification email list. In addition, an online and highly publicized Severe Weather and Hazard Mitigation Survey yielded **110** responses.

The Hazard Mitigation Committee itself was comprised of Town Department staff and volunteers, including Town Administration, Fire Department, Highway Department, Police Department, Planning Board, Public Library. Other staff members or volunteers may have occasionally participated on behalf of their Departments.

The public process for this Plan included posting the meeting information on the Town's online calendar and website at <https://www.epsomnh.org>. Meetings were held remotely via the secure Zoom Webinar platform hosted by the Town. For the first meeting, the Town advertised by sending a mass email to the Town's notification list and posting flyers and meeting announcements at the Town Hall. Notifications or the Agenda were placed on the Town bulletin boards. Copies of publicity for the Plan are included in **APPENDIX C**.

The Central NH Regional Planning Commission staff facilitated the Hazard Mitigation Committee meetings, guided the planning process, compiled new and old data, updated information, and prepared the 2024 Plan documents, Appendices, and Maps.

The draft **Hazard Mitigation Plan 2024** was presented at a specially noticed Public Information Meeting on **May xx, 2024** during a Board of Selectmen's meeting to obtain additional public input. This meeting was publicly noticed on the Town website and calendar and on the Board of Selectmen's Agenda. All documents were available for review on the Town's website in advance of the meeting. The attendees and publicity of the public planning process are noted in the **Acknowledgements**.

Epsom Fire Station with a remote hybrid option using Zoom Webinar.

Table 1.2

Meeting Invitations and Participation

Invitations and Participation		
MUNICIPAL INVITEES	How Invited	Participation (see Also Table 1.1)
General Public	Town website Meetings Calendar www.epsomnh.org Zoom Webinar Paper surveys left at the Community Center	Completed Online Surveys (110) Attended HMC Meetings No paper Surveys completed
Town Boards (volunteer) Planning Board Zoning Board Conservation Commission Board of Selectmen	Discussed at Board meetings, Received all HMC Meeting Emails	Hazard Mitigation Committee. People serving on Boards who were also Town staff may have participated (see Meeting Timesheets)
Town Departments & Staff Fire Department Town Administration Police Department Highway Department Planning Board Youth Services Department	Appointed by Board of Selectmen, Received all HMC Meeting Emails	Hazard Mitigation Committee. Some attended meetings (see Meeting Timesheets)
Non-Municipal Local Stakeholders	How Invited	Participation
Epsom Central School	Received all HMC Meeting Emails	Participated in most HMC meetings, may have submitted surveys (see Meeting Timesheets)
Epsom Public Library	Received all HMC Meeting Emails	Participated in most HMC meetings, may have submitted surveys (see Meeting Timesheets)
Epsom Health Care/Epsom Manor	Received all HMC Meeting Emails	Participated in most HMC meetings, may have submitted surveys (see Meeting Timesheets)
Selected residents	Received all HMC Meeting Emails	Participated in most HMC meetings, may have submitted surveys (see Meeting Timesheets)
	Emailed Stakeholder invitations; Emailed Agendas (did not spam)	Did not attend meetings, may have submitted surveys (see Meeting Timesheets)
Abutting Community EMDs	How Invited	Participation (No or type)
Allenstown EMD Chichester EMD Northwood EMD Deerfield EMD Pittsfield EMD Pembroke EMD	Emailed Stakeholder invitation; Emailed some Agendas (did not spam)	Did not attend meetings
Capital Area Public Health Network	Emailed Stakeholder invitations; Emailed Agendas	Attended some HMC meetings (see Meeting Timesheets)

Invitations and Participation		
Concord Monitor	Emailed Stakeholder invitations; Emailed Agendas (did not spam)	Did not attend meetings
Regional & State Stakeholders	How Invited	Participation (No or type)
Central NH Regional Planning Commission	Contracted by Board of Selectmen	Facilitated Plan update on behalf of community, attended all meetings
Capital Area Public Health Network	Received all HMC Meeting Emails, phone call	Attended some HMC meetings (see Meeting Timesheets)
NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management	Received all HMC Meeting Emails	Did not attend meetings
NH DOT District #5	Received some HMC Meeting emails (did not spam)	Did not attend meetings
Unitil	Received some HMC Meeting emails (did not spam)	Attended some HMC meetings (see Meeting Timesheets)
Eversource	Received some HMC Meeting emails (did not spam)	Did not attend meetings

Public Input from the Hazard Mitigation Committee Meetings

The public notification is described in the Public Outreach Strategy sidebar. Members of the public who attended the HMC meetings are indicated in the **Acknowledgements** and by the Meeting Timesheets in **APPENDIX C Meeting Information**, in addition to Public Information Meeting attendees. Members of the public would have assisted with completing the Agendas, including developing the **Hazard Identification Risk Assessment, Critical and Community Facilities Vulnerability Assessment, Capability Assessment, and Mitigation Action Plan**, completing the **Enhanced STAPLEE Action Prioritization**, etc. along with the Committee members. The general public had the opportunity to attend and participate in the **17** posted meetings or to contact the Town Administrator/Emergency Management Director for more information prior to the Board of Selectmen adoption of the Plan.

Public Input from the Public Information Meeting

The **Public Information Meeting (PIM)** was held on **Date xx, 2024**. The Hazard Mitigation Committee members presented portions of the Plan and had the Maps available for display. Agenda are included in **APPENDIX C**. Held during a scheduled Board of Selectmen meeting, the PIM offered additional opportunity for the public to listen to presentations, ask questions and had the opportunity to review the final draft Plan document, Appendices and Maps.

Epsom Community Survey for Hazard Mitigation and Severe Weather Events

To obtain broad public input on hazard mitigation and severe weather events, an online community survey posted on Survey Monkey was developed in **June 2023** and remained open through the **Date xx, 2024** Public information Meeting. Every person on the Town's public email distribution list received notification of the survey, the Town website prominently published its link, as did Department social media. A total of **110** responses was received from the community at large. Following the HIRA hazard list, the survey asked respondents seven questions:

- **Q1** Which road(s) or areas are you most concerned about in Epsom when severe weather hits or other hazard events occur? Check all that apply.

Respondents were most concerned about the Epsom Traffic Circle, US 202 East of Traffic Circle, NH 28 South, Black Hall Road, and Damage along the Suncook River, all over 27% or responses. Other roads and areas of concern were NH 28 North, Short Falls Road, US 202 West of the Traffic Circle. Additional roads and areas were identified by selection and by write-in response.

- **Q2** How concerned are you about the following natural hazards, severe weather events, or human/technological hazards impacting Epsom within the next 5 years? (On an Extremely Concerned-Very Concerned-Moderately Concerned-Slightly Concerned-Not Concerned 1-5 scale)

Aggregated responses of Extremely Concerned + Very Concerned hazards indicated respondents were most concerned about High Wind (60%), Ice Storm (48%), Winter (47%), and Long Term Utility Outage (45%). The lowest-rated categories of concern were Solar Storms (7%), Landslide (7%), and Earthquake (4%).

- **Q3** Natural hazards can have a significant impact on a community but planning for or mitigating these events can help lessen the impacts. Planning may require Town funds as well as federal funds in addition to Town staff support and volunteer support. Please indicate how important you believe these mitigation planning priorities are for Epsom: (On an Extremely Important-Very Important-Moderately Important-Slightly Important-Not Important 1-5 scale).

The aggregated Extremely + Very Important top three mitigation planning priorities were to protect and reduce damage to commercial facilities (74%), protect Town facilities and operations (67%), strengthen emergency services (67%), followed closely by improving the transportation network (65%).

- **Q4 & Q6** Can you describe any notable hazard events or severe weather events you experienced in Epsom within the last 5 years? If yes, please provide brief comments on up to 2 events by describing what happened (What), the location (Where), the

approximate month and year of the occurrence (When), and how (How) you and your household were impacted.

Respondents most frequently recalled severe rain, lightning, freezing cold, microbursts/winds, snowstorm as notable severe weather events. The locations occurred throughout town, and the dates were either uncertain or are regular occurrences. Impacts included transportation disruption to/from homes, power outages, roadway flooding and flash flooding, and tree damage.

- »» **Q5 & Q7** How bad would you rate Event 1 & 2? (On an adjustable scale bar between 0-100, 0-Not Too Bad/ 50-Bad/ 100-Worst in Memory).

Respondents provided a wide range of ratings for the events they recounted, averaging 46% on the scales.

- »» **Q8** In your household, has anyone completed any of the following preparedness or mitigation activities? Check all that apply.

Regarding mitigation and preparedness, respondents most frequently removed hazardous trees at their home (51% of respondents), subscribed to an emergency alert service (47%), talked about what to do in case of severe weather emergency or natural disaster (54%), and maintained their driveway culverts (37%).

- »» **Q9** What are the best ways for you to receive information about disasters and severe weather events in Epsom? Please check your top 4:

Respondents preferred to learn about disasters and severe weather by subscribing to a new future Town website emergency alerts by text system (69% of respondents), Town E-Alerts Notification email system (54%), Local Television WMUR 9 (53%), Internet News Media (47%) and cell phone apps like CodeRed or NH Alerts (41%). Secondary choices included Town Website, Town Social Media, and talking with neighbors and friends.

- »» **Q10** Please feel free to provide any other information related to severe weather, disasters, and hazard mitigation in Epsom in the space below.

Only 7 of the 110 respondents added Q10 write-comments, so there were no common threads. But, each question of the survey offered additional room for write-in choices or comments. The summary of survey responses including all write-in comments are provided in **APPENDIX F COMMUNITY SURVEY**.

Public input from the **110** survey responses was used to confirm Town Department and operations priorities, and specifically informed the Town on how the public wishes to be notified during a disaster event. The natural hazards of greatest concern to the public, wind, public health, climate change, drought, and winter storms, are being addressed in **8 MITIGATION ACTION PLAN**.

How Public and Community Input Was Incorporated into the Plan

Aside from the Community Survey responses, and the few community members attending the Hazard Mitigation Committee meetings, the general public has not shown much interest in updating the **Epsom Hazard Mitigation Plan** yet the level of interest is higher than previous **Plan** update cycles. During periods of relatively few major weather events, emergency declarations, or disaster declarations, the public tends to not participate until they experience a significant event and want to affect change. It is difficult for New Hampshire communities including Epsom to retain volunteers for their regular municipal committees. Volunteers are often available during the evening after their jobs have ended while Department staff, who hold the bulk of the update information needed for the **Plan**, are available during the daytime because their jobs require other nighttime meetings or calls. Town Department staff and others participating in the Plan update process are often Epsom residents.

Survey responses were not directly incorporated into the Plan, but the results run in tandem with activities underway. Although the broad prioritization of hazards from the public were slightly different than the detailed HIRA ratings in Chapter 4 completed by the Committee, the Town of Epsom works to combat the effects of seasonal climate variation (wind, rain, storms, flood, drought) through staff Department and volunteer Committee work. The Survey results were used to bolster Department priorities but did not directly change the Plan's content. For instance, the Highway Department upgrades culverts and rehabilitates roads washed out by flooded areas. Unutilized electric maintains trees along the utility rights of way. The Survey helped both understand the public's perspective, solidifying the work in progress. From the Emergency Management perspective, some public education and outreach Actions were developed based on their Survey responses.

Anyone who participated in developing the **Hazard Mitigation Plan 2024**, including the members of the general public, Hazard Mitigation Committee, Town staff, Town volunteers, stakeholders, and guests, attended meetings and worked on the following group tasks as noted in the Agendas **Table 1.1**, including: **Goals and Objectives (CHAPTER 3)**, **Hazard Identification Risk Assessment** and identification of new hazard events since the last Plan (**CHAPTER 4**), **Critical and Community Facilities Vulnerability Assessment (CHAPTER 5)**, **Capability Assessment (CHAPTER 6)**, identifying the **Status of Prior Actions (CHAPTER 7)**, developing **Mitigation Action Plan** from problem statements, new ideas, and deferred Actions, and completing the **Enhanced STAPLEE Action Prioritization (CHAPTER 8)**. These primary tasks are the basis upon which the **Hazard Mitigation Plan** is founded, about **75%** of the document. These sections are found in the **TABLE OF CONTENTS**.

COMPLETION OF THE PLAN STEPS AND DATES

On **Date xx, 2024**, the Committee held a **Public Information Meeting**. The same extensive public notification described in the Public Outreach Strategy sidebar occurred to obtain review and comment from the public for the Plan. On **Date xx, 2024**, this Plan, Appendices and Maps were submitted to the NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management (NHHSEM) for compliance review and revision to apply for Approved Pending Adoption (APA) status, also known as conditional approval.

On **Month xx, 2024**, Epsom received an **Approved Pending Adoption (APA)** notification from NHHSEM. The APA states the Plan will be approved by FEMA after proof of adoption by the local governing body, a Certificate of Adoption from the Board of Selectmen, is submitted.

On **Month xx, 2024**, the Board of Selectmen **adopted the Hazard Mitigation Plan Update** for the Town at a duly noticed public meeting. Copies were made available at the Town Office and on the Town website for public review. The public notice and flyers are included in **APPENDIX C**. The signed Certificate of Adoption was sent to NHHSEM/FEMA.

On **Month xx, 2024**, Epsom received a **Notification of Formal Approval** from NHHSEM, with the Plan approval granted effective that day. A **Letter of Formal Approval** from FEMA confirming the notification will be forthcoming. The next Hazard Mitigation Plan update is due five (5) years from this date of approval, on **Month xx, 2029**.

Final Plan Dates

The following is a summary of the required dates which guide the adoption and update of the **Epsom Hazard Mitigation Plan**. Included is the history of the Plan approvals and lapsing dates as shown in **Table 1.2**.

Table 1.2
Epsom’s Hazard Mitigation Plan Adoption History

Year of FEMA-Approved Hazard Mitigation Plan	Adoption by Epsom Board of Selectmen	NHHSEM/ FEMA’s Formal Approval	Plan Lapse
Original 2004	7/12/04	7/23/04	7/23/09
Update 2007	12/02/09	12/07/09	12/07/14
Update 2012	9/17/12	12/04/12	12/04/17
Update 2018	11/05/18	11/26/18	11/26/23
Update 2024	xx/xx/24	xx/xx/24	xx/xx/29

Source: Plan Adoption History