

# **Union County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Public Meeting #3**

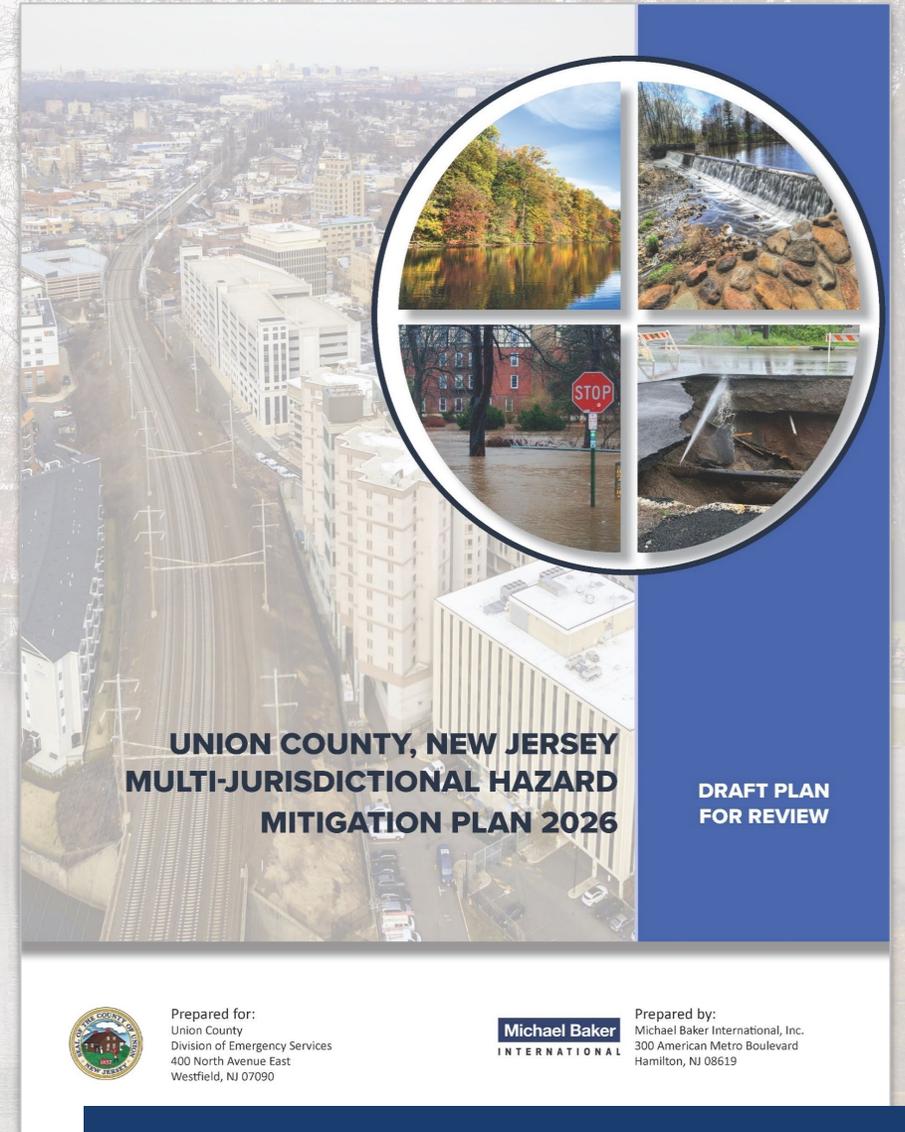
**February 25, 2026  
6:30 – 7:30 pm**

**Michael Baker  
INTERNATIONAL**



# Agenda

1. Project Overview
  - Purpose
  - Schedule
2. Highlight of Draft Plan Sections
3. Next Steps
4. Open Discussion



**UNION COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL HAZARD  
MITIGATION PLAN 2026**

**DRAFT PLAN  
FOR REVIEW**

Prepared for:  
Union County  
Division of Emergency Services  
400 North Avenue East  
Westfield, NJ 07090

**Michael Baker  
INTERNATIONAL**

Prepared by:  
Michael Baker International, Inc.  
300 American Metro Boulevard  
Hamilton, NJ 08619

*Draft 2026 Union County Hazard Mitigation Plan*

# Welcome

## Meet the Project Team!

Elizabeth Stamler  
**Client Project Manager**  
Emergency Services  
County of Union



Annie Mrazik  
**Consultant Project Manager**  
Michael Baker International, Inc.



# **Hazard Mitigation Overview**

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# Hazard Mitigation



Hazard mitigation is the effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters

State, tribal, and local governments engage in hazard mitigation planning **to identify risks and vulnerabilities** associated with disasters and **develop long-term strategies for protecting people and property** from future hazard events.

# Six Step Planning Process

1

Gather input from stakeholders

2

Develop risk and vulnerability assessment

3

Capability assessment

4

Develop mitigation strategy

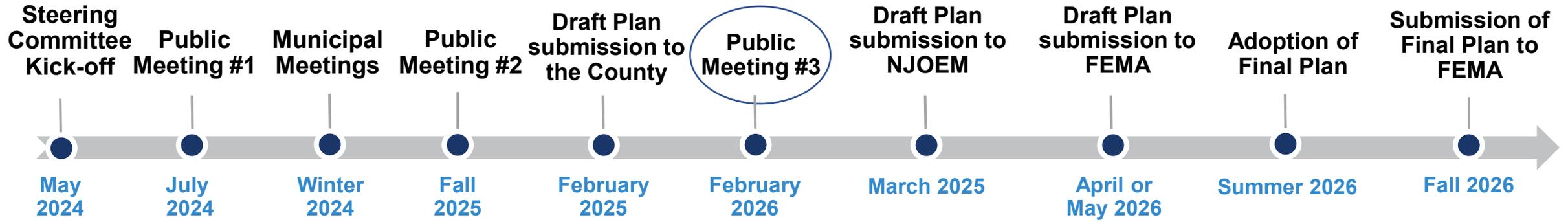
5

Determine plan maintenance process

6

Obtain mitigation plan approval and adoption

# Project Schedule



# Highlight of Draft Plan Sections

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# Community Profile

- Population and the Economy
- Built Environment
- Ecosystems and Natural Assets



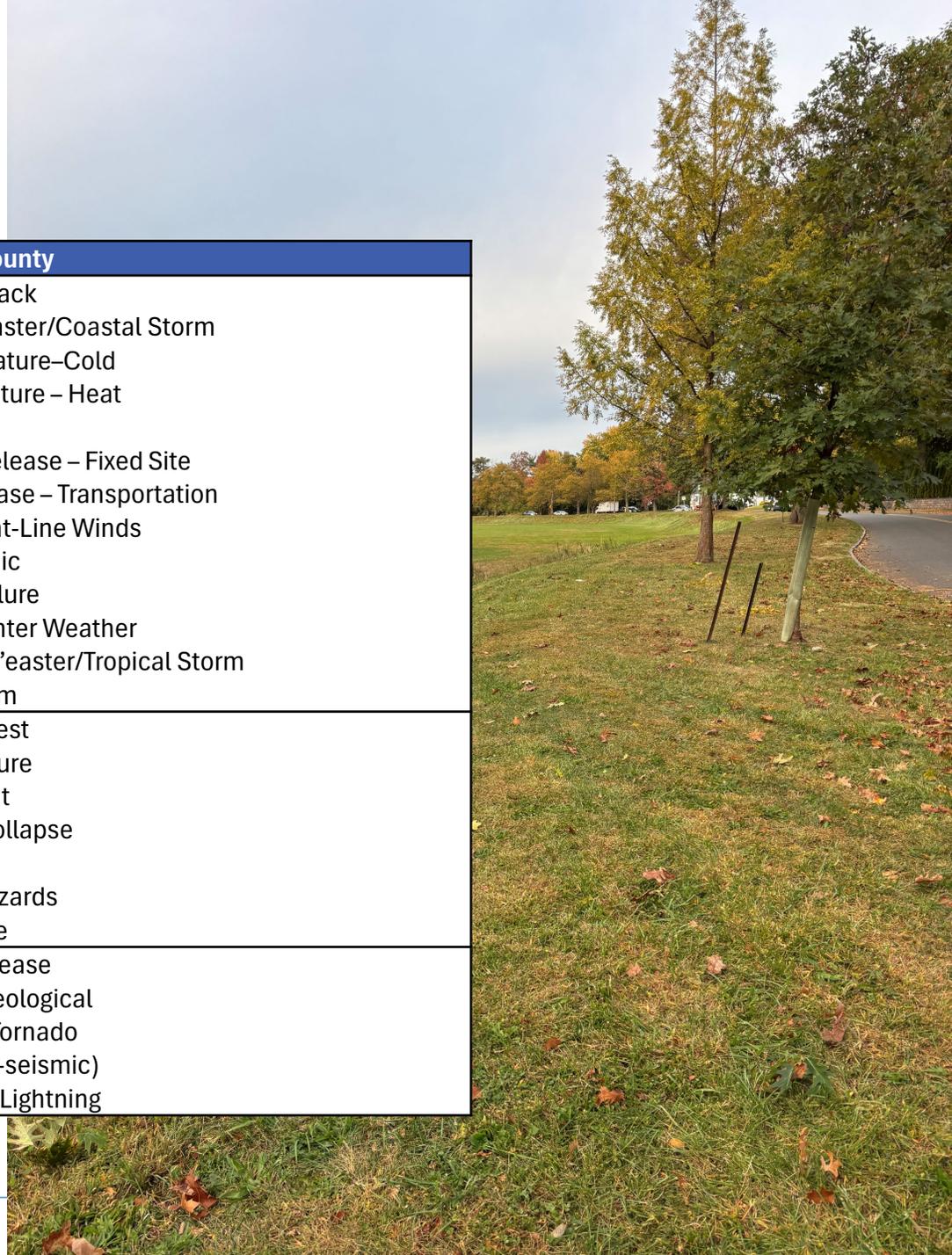
## Section Highlight

### Recent and Future Development in Union County, by Municipality

Municipality	New and Future Development
Rahway City	<p>In 2023, Merck relocated their headquarters back to their campus in Rahway, NJ. Over the company's nearly 120-year history in Rahway, the 200-acre site, which extends into Linden, expanded from one manufacturing plant to approximately 100 buildings. The recent developments include a multipurpose auditorium, additional parking and a \$450 million learning and manufacturing facility. Other major developments include the construction of several multi-family residential developments including Brownstones Phase 1 and The Mint 2. The Brownstones Phase 1, the first of two proposed phases, is situated at 1901 Elizabeth Avenue and consists of 298 residential units. <a href="#">The Mint 2</a>, the second of two phases, is situated at 84 Monroe Street and consists of 109 residential units.</p> <p><a href="#">Vermella</a> Rahway, which is situated along Essex Street, broke ground in 2024 and is expected to open for leasing in 2026. <a href="#">Vermella</a> Rahway consists of 164 residential units. <a href="#">Glendennings</a> Homes is a public housing community located along Capobianco Plaza and is managed by the Rahway Housing Authority. This development consists of 112 units and is scheduled to be completely replaced in several phases over the next few years. While the unit count will remain the same, the project aims to modernize the existing housing units and improve living conditions for residents.</p>
Roselle Borough	<p>There have been a few recent developments in the past five years. There were 953 apartments built on Pine Street, where certain sections of the area are within the FEMA flood zone. On 4<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut, 31 one-bedroom apartments were built outside of the flood zone. 1100 Spruce Street has 195 units built recently but it is outside of the flood zone as part of a five-story apartment building.</p> <p>In the next five years, there are three anticipated developments. On the 100 block of West Avenue, the new borough hall will be constructed. 135 units are expected to be built at the Top Line Property on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue as part of a five-story apartment building. There will also be 30 units included in <a href="#">a new development</a> on 792 East 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.</p>
Roselle Park Borough	<p>Several dispensaries were opened in the Meridia block on Westfield Avenue.</p> <p>A 400-unit mixed-use development and two buildings comprising 300 units are being planned at Westfield Avenue. These developments are located close to a regulatory floodplain. Additionally, the entire Meridia block will be undergoing redevelopment.</p>
Scotch Plains Township	<p>The township's Third Round Affordable Housing settlement required the township to rezone several properties and areas to permit housing at a higher density to fulfill affordable housing requirements. As required by the settlement agreement, 228 residential units are under construction on Terrill Road at the former Parker Gardens site (now Orchid Park) and 200 residential units were constructed on Route 22 at the former <a href="#">Bowcraft</a> site (now Glenside). Furthermore, the township is currently planning towards addressing its fourth-round state-mandated affordable housing obligations received in October 2024. The township is seeking to satisfy as much of their affordable housing obligations as possible in the downtown area to protect their well-established residential neighborhoods. There have been several projects (mixed-use, residential, and commercial) that have been constructed or are currently under construction downtown. The township's Housing Element and Fair Share Plan is due on June 30, 2025.</p> <p>The NJDEP's new Flood Hazard Area (FHA) and Stormwater Management Rules, adopted in July 2023, put a significant portion of the township's downtown and other parts of town in the regulated floodplain. A mixed-use downtown redevelopment project spread across approximately nine acres area in Downtown Park Avenue toward U.S. Highway Route 22 is planned. The redevelopment plan includes the relocation of the township's Emergency Services (Police, Fire, OEM, Fire/EMS), currently located in a floodplain, to township-owned property on Plainfield Avenue where a new state of the art combined facility will be constructed. The facility is not planned in a location prone to flooding. Additionally, the township is working with a developer to sell several large parking lots to reduce impervious surfaces and mitigate flooding in the area. Any projects that have been constructed recently, are in the process of construction, or that will be constructed need Individual Permit approval from the NJDEP.</p>

# Hazard Identification

Hazard Risk Rankings for Union County	
<b>HIGH RISK</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cyber Attack</li> <li>Erosion–Hurricane/Nor’easter/Coastal Storm</li> <li>Extreme Temperature–Cold</li> <li>Extreme Temperature – Heat</li> <li>Flood</li> <li>Hazardous Materials Release – Fixed Site</li> <li>Hazardous Materials Release – Transportation</li> <li>High Wind – Straight-Line Winds</li> <li>Pandemic</li> <li>Power Failure</li> <li>Severe Storm – Winter Weather</li> <li>Storm Surge –Hurricane/Nor’easter/Tropical Storm</li> <li>Terrorism</li> </ul>
<b>MODERATE RISK</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Civil Unrest</li> <li>Dam Failure</li> <li>Drought</li> <li>Economic Collapse</li> <li>Hail</li> <li>Nuclear Hazards</li> <li>Wildfire</li> </ul>
<b>LOW RISK</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Animal Disease</li> <li>Earthquake/Geological</li> <li>High Wind – Tornado</li> <li>Landslide (non-seismic)</li> <li>Severe Storm – Lightning</li> </ul>



Source: FEMA, NJDEP, NJGIN, NJDOT, NJ TRANSIT

Morris County

Essex County

Somerset County

Middlesex County

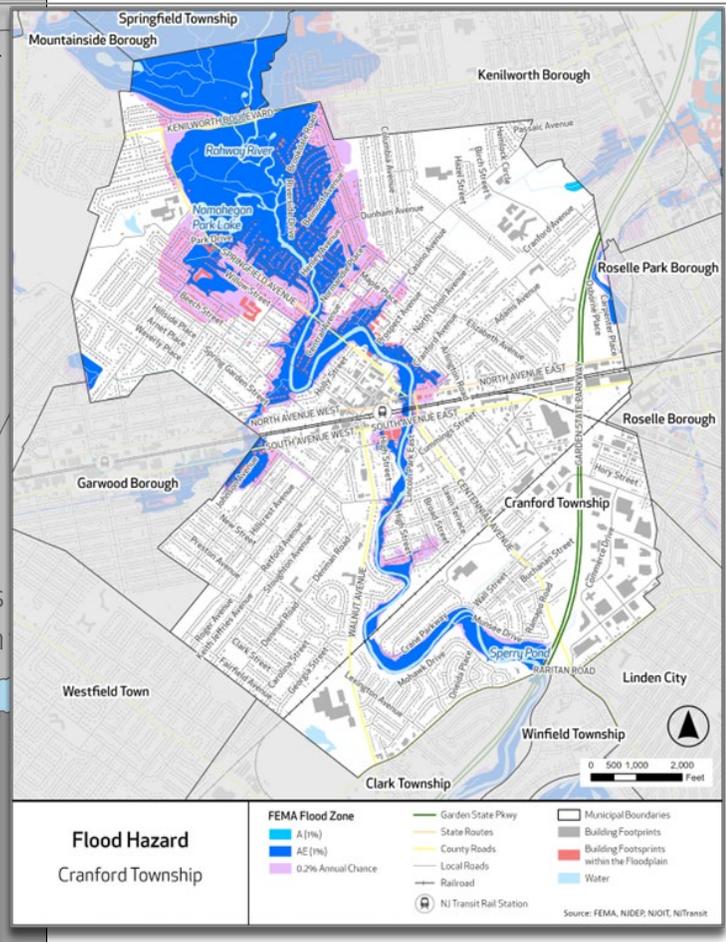
Hudson County

NEW YORK

### Union County Special Flood Hazard Area

- Garden State Pkwy
  - New Jersey Tpke
  - Interstate Routes
  - US Routes
  - State Routes
  - Municipal Boundaries
  - Waterbodies
- FEMA Flood Zone**
- A (1% Annual Chance)
  - AE (1% Annual Chance)
  - AO (1% Annual Chance)
  - 0.2% Annual Chance

0 10,000 20,000 Feet



Morris County

Essex County

Somerset County

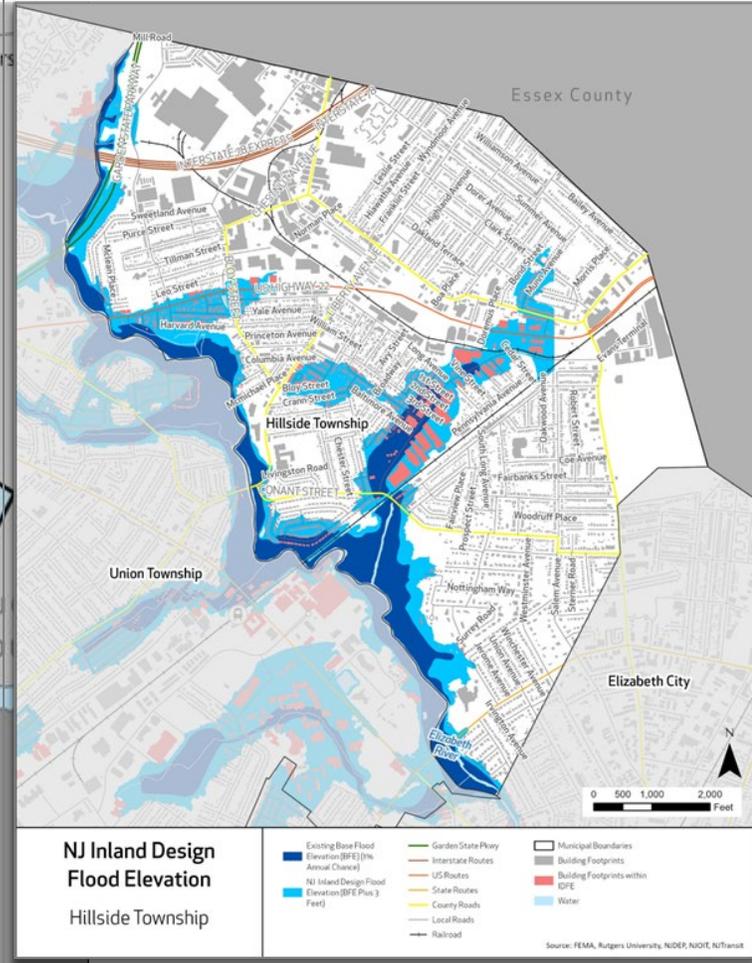
Middlesex County

NEW YORK

### Union County NJ Inland Design Flood Elevation

-  Garden State Pkwy
-  New Jersey Tpke
-  Interstate Routes
-  US Routes
-  State Routes
-  Municipal Boundaries
-  Waterbodies
-  Existing Base Flood Elevation (BFE) (1% Annual Chance)
-  NJ Inland Design Flood Elevation (BFE Plus 3 Feet)

0 10,000 20,000 Feet



Source: NOAA, NIGIN, NJDOT, NJ Transit, NJ

Morris County

Essex County

Somerset County

Middlesex County

NEW YORK

### Union County Permanent Inundation Under Sea Level Rise Scenarios

- Garden State Pkwy
  - New Jersey Tpke
  - Interstate Routes
  - US Routes
  - State Routes
  - Municipal Boundaries
  - Waterbodies
- Sea Level Rise Projections**
- Inundation Under 2 Feet SLR
  - Inundation Under 3 Feet SLR
  - Inundation Under 5 Feet SLR

0 10,000 20,000 Feet



### Permanent Inundation Under Sea Level Rise (SLR) Scenarios Linden City

- Inundation Under 2 Feet SLR
  - Inundation Under 3 Feet SLR
  - Inundation Under 5 Feet SLR
  - Interstate Routes
  - State Routes
  - US Routes
  - County Roads
  - Local Roads
  - Railroad
  - Municipal Boundaries
  - Building Footprint
  - Water
- Source: FEMA, NIDEP, NIOIT, NJTransit

0 500,000 2,000 3,000 Feet

Morris County

Essex County

Somerset County

Middlesex County

NEW YORK

### Union County Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Area

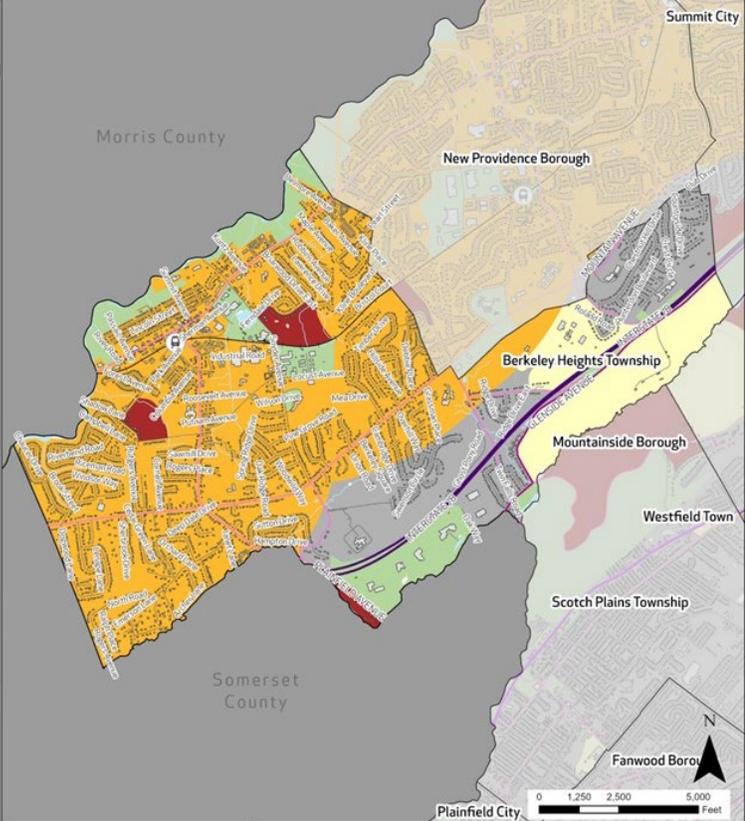
Garden State Pkwy	Municipal Boundaries	<b>WUI Areas</b>	<b>Non-WUI Areas</b>
New Jersey Tpke	Waterbodies	WUI Intermix	Non-WUI High and Medium Density Housing
Interstate Routes		WUI Interface	Non-WUI Low and Very Low Density Housing
US Routes			Non-WUI No Housing
State Routes			



### Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Classification Berkeley Heights Township

WUI Intermix	Interstate Routes	Municipal Boundaries
WUI Interface	State Routes	Building Footprint
Non-WUI High and Medium Density Housing	County Roads	Water
Non-WUI Low and Very Low Density Housing	Local Roads	
Non-WUI No Housing	Railroad	
	NJ Transit Rail Station	

Source: USFS, NJDEP, NJDOT, NJ Transit



# Capability Assessment

- Union County, Regional, and Municipal Capabilities
- Plan Integration

The Union County Board of County Commissioners is proud to announce the launch of the

## Community Outreach Program



Our outreach teams will be visible in the community, wearing distinctive safety vests

<b>Monday - Thursday</b> 1:00PM - 6:00PM	<b>Saturdays</b> 12:00PM - 5:00PM
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For more information about the Union County Community Outreach Program, please contact our Department of Human Services Action line at 908-677-5405 or visit our website at [www.ucnj.org/outreach](http://www.ucnj.org/outreach)

A SERVICE OF THE UNION COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

UNION COUNTY We're Connected to 23rd

ucnj.org

UNION COUNTY Department of Human Services Keeping in Mind Community Needs



## Section Highlight

### Ongoing Planned Municipal Integration Activities

Cranford Township	<p>The Capital Improvement Plan identifies projects that, if implemented, could prevent and reduce the impacts of hazards.</p> <p>Cranford's Flood Development Ordinance models the State ordinance for development within the flood hazard areas. Additionally, the Township requires an additional 3 feet of freeboard above the base flood elevation for properties located within the flood hazard zone.</p> <p>Per the Stormwater Management Ordinance, stormwater management measures for major development should be designed so that the post-construction peak runoff rates for the current and projected two-, ten-, and 100-year storm events, are 50%, 75% and 80%, respectively, of the pre-construction peak runoff rates. The percentages apply only to the post-construction stormwater runoff that is attributable to the portion of the site on which the proposed development or project is to be constructed.</p> <p>Substantial damage/improved structures response is conducted via inspection by Building, Engineering, Property Maintenance, or Fire Officials. Notices of violation are issued with follow-up to the responsible party to ensure compliance in accordance with Uniform Construction Code, Uniform Fire Code, and Property Maintenance Code. When an applicant applies for a building permit for home improvements the structure is evaluated for SD/SI. If during storm events structures are damaged, in the past, OEM, building code official, and Engineer have looked at structures for substantial damage determination.</p> <p>If a project is being developed in an FHA zone engineering requirements will indicate that an elevation certificate (EC) is required prior to issuance of a C.O. The Letter of Map Change (LOMC) will require approval from Township floodplain manager. All EC/LOMC are on record in the building department.</p> <p>The township has prepared a Flash Flood map that shows impacted areas outside of the flood plain.</p>
Elizabeth City	<p>The Capital Improvement Plan identifies projects that could prevent or reduce the impacts of natural hazards.</p> <p>The Floodplain Development Ordinance enforces higher freeboard or other standards.</p> <p>The Stormwater Management Ordinance adopted higher standards than the model.</p>
Fanwood Borough	<p>Drainage improvements are included in the yearly update to the Capital Improvement Plan to reduce surface flooding.</p> <p>The borough adopted NJDEP's Stormwater Management Ordinance which is strict for minor development.</p>

# Mitigation Strategy

## County-Wide:



**63** New  
Actions



**215** Ongoing  
Actions



**82** Completed  
Actions



**21** Withdrawn  
Actions



## Section Highlight

### Municipal Mitigation Strategy Summary

*Municipal mitigation strategies are new to this plan. These strategies contain actions they have focused on since the previous plan and actions they plan to prioritize for the next 5 years.*

Jurisdiction	Mitigation Statement	# of New Actions	# of Ongoing Actions	# of Completed Actions	# of Withdrawn Actions
Garwood Borough	Since the 2021 plan update, the Borough has made strides in strengthening its defenses against natural hazards. We are adopting modern FEMA standards and reinforcing backup power at key facilities, these efforts have laid the groundwork for a more resilient community. Looking ahead, the Borough is setting its sights on the future—prioritizing initiatives that confront the growing challenges of climate change, including rising sea levels. Over the next five years, it plans to expand mitigation strategies by refining flood maps and implementing state-of-the-art emergency alert systems. These actions reflect the Borough’s strong commitment to protecting residents and supporting sustainable growth in an ever-changing environment.	5	6	0	0
Hillside Township	The township is working with the engineering and administration to develop a mitigation strategy. This will include working with the Planning and Zoning Boards as well as the Township Planner. American Water Company is in the process of replacing old water lines and Elizabethtown Gas Company is replacing all old gas lines and meters. Request for assistance from FEMA for the flume that runs from the Rahway River down Central Avenue and turns left on Mertz Avenue was denied during Hurricane Ida; however, a maintenance plan is in place to assure that there <u>is</u> no spillage and unrestricted flow. An application for the BRIC grant to mitigate several roadways and a new OEM office were put on hold due to lack of funding.	0	11	0	0
Kenilworth Borough	Since the last update, the borough has continued to get funding to improve its OEM building. It also has been working to identify and fix areas that experience flooding on a regular basis. The borough is working on an update for its master plan, which is due to include a vulnerability assessment.	0	2	2	0
Linden City	Since 2021, the City of Linden has initiated a comprehensive mitigation action strategy aimed at strengthening its resilience against natural disasters and human-made hazards. This strategy focuses on enhancing infrastructure, promoting sustainable development practices, and fostering community engagement to effectively reduce vulnerabilities and ensure the well-being of its residents. The collaborative efforts of its various City Departments, as well as other governmental partners and stakeholders within the private <u>sector</u> , have demonstrated the City’s commitment to a safer and more sustainable future.	3	12	6	4

# Plan Maintenance

- **Monitoring Implementation and Evaluating Effectiveness**
- **Updating the Plan**
- **Continued Public Input**

## APPENDIX D. ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Reporting Period (Year):

Jurisdiction:

Contact Name/Title:

Agency/Department:

Contact Email:

Contact Phone:

1. Did any significant hazard events occur within the past year? Any changes to your hazards of concern?

2. Have there been any reports, studies, or documentation of change in potential hazards, that you are aware of?

3. Have there been any major changes in growth or development?

4. Are there any mitigation projects underway or completed? Any actions that no longer are applicable or needed? (Brief Project Description)

5. Are there any new projects you would like to add to your mitigation strategy?

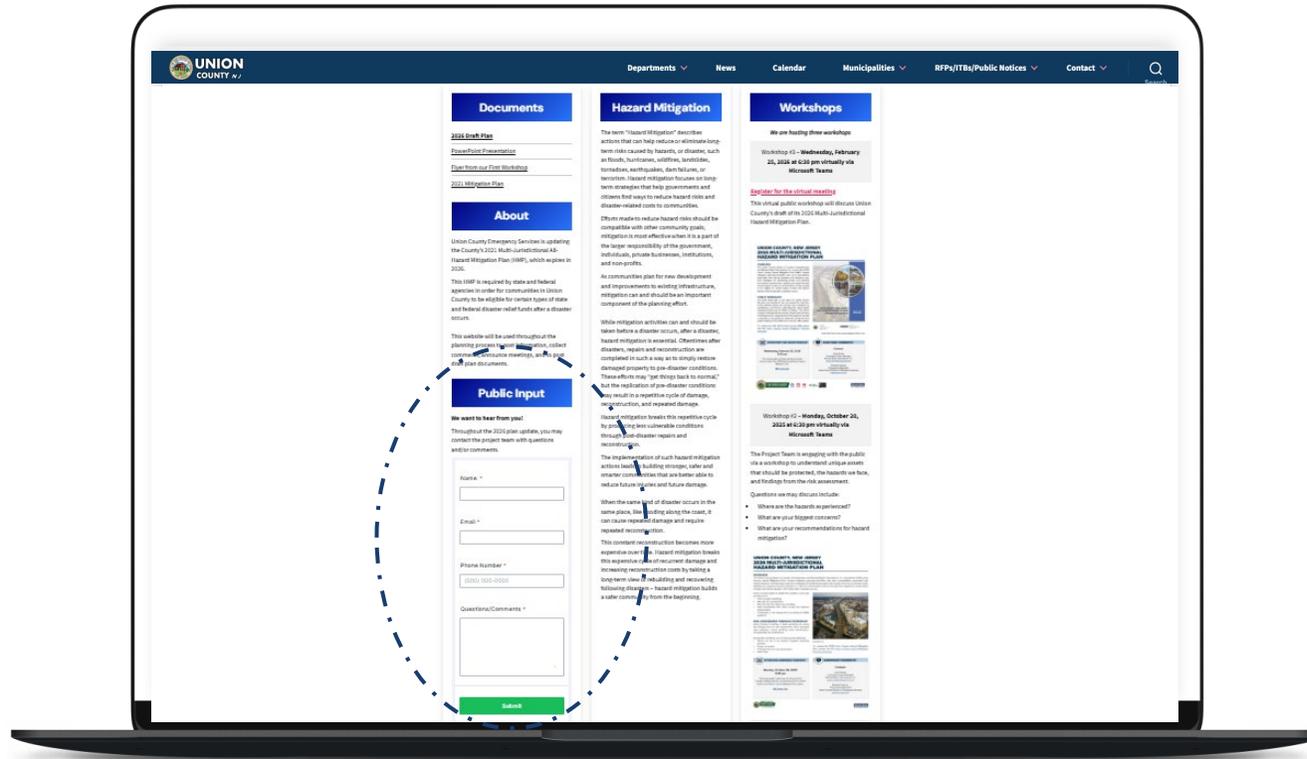
6. Have you engaged the public on hazard mitigation? If so, how?

# Next Steps

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# Next Steps

- Review Draft Plan and provide comments by **March 10, 2026**
- <https://ucnj.org/union-county-2026-multi-jurisdictional-all-hazard-mitigation-plan/>



## Public Input

### We want to hear from you!

Throughout the 2026 plan update, you may contact the project team with questions and/or comments.

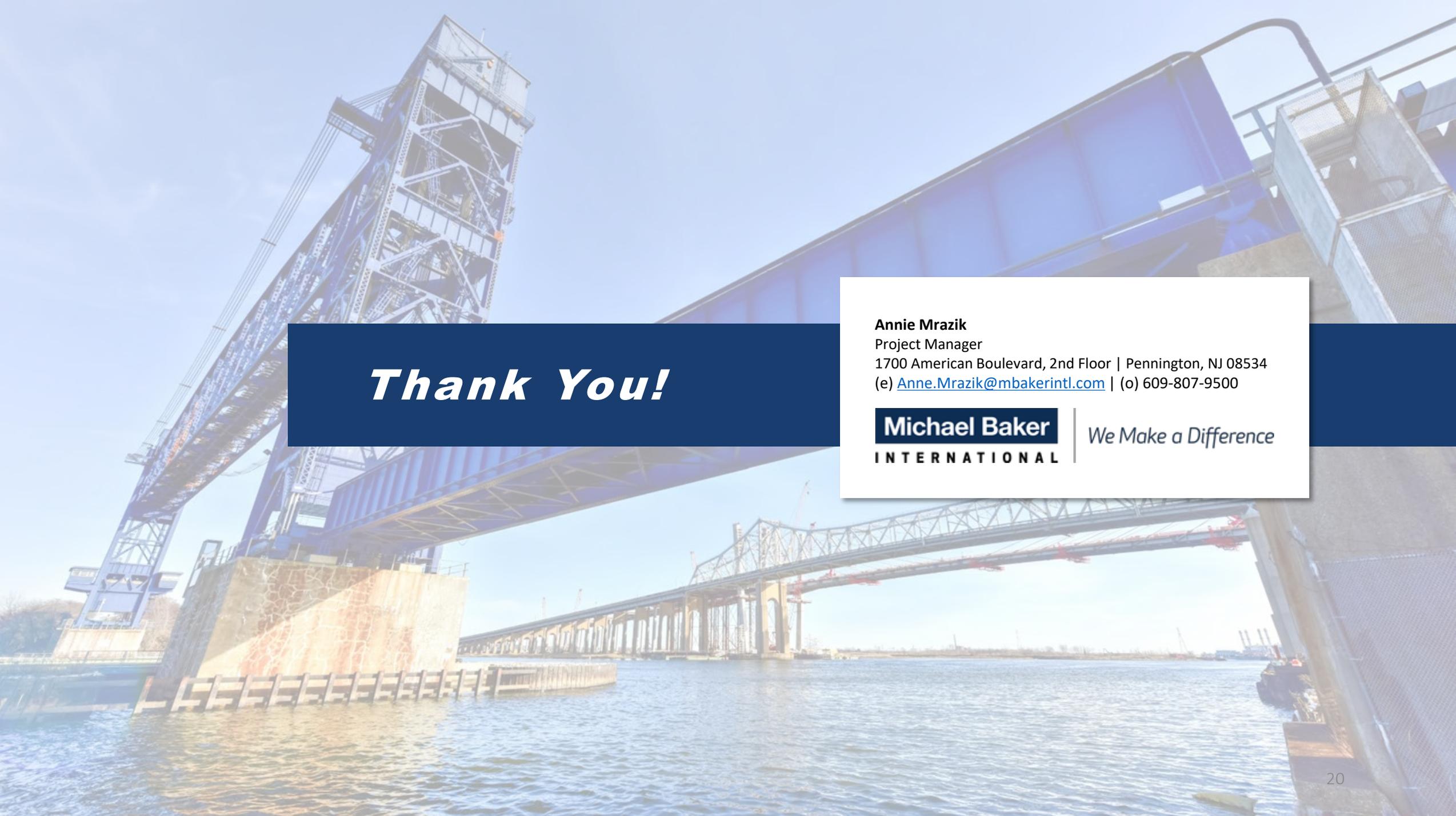
Name \*

Email \*

Phone Number \*

Questions/Comments \*

Submit



***Thank You!***

**Annie Mrazik**

Project Manager

1700 American Boulevard, 2nd Floor | Pennington, NJ 08534

(e) [Anne.Mrazik@mbakerintl.com](mailto:Anne.Mrazik@mbakerintl.com) | (o) 609-807-9500

**Michael Baker**  
INTERNATIONAL

*We Make a Difference*