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**Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments Seeking Input on Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan**

*Virtual Workshop Scheduled for November 18*

The Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG) recently received a Pre-disaster Hazard Mitigation Planning grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to prepare a regional, multi-jurisdiction Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) that will update plans in all 19 municipalities in its planning region. The project team will hold virtual public workshops where attendees can learn about hazard mitigation planning, possible risks they face from a natural hazard, and speak directly with the consultants developing the HMP update. The study team also wants to hear from residents about their concerns and opinions. The first public workshop is scheduled for November 18, 2020 at 5:30 PM.

A Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) is a tool that helps a community to understand risk and to take specific steps to reduce property damage, injury, and loss of life from natural disasters, such as Tropical Storm Isaias. The November 18 workshop will provide details on the hazards being addressed in the plan, the risks they pose, and the types of losses that can occur to life and property in the Naugatuck Valley region. Details of how to participate in the workshop are available at [www.nvcogct.gov/HMP](http://www.nvcogct.gov/HMP).

Public engagement is critical to the planning process, and a short online survey is also available for members of the public to provide information to project staff. The survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete and can be found on the project webpage. While the ongoing pandemic will limit typical public engagement forums, such as public meetings and in-person workshops, the webpage, survey and workshop provide key opportunities for residents to learn about the project and provide feedback.

A FEMA-approved Hazard Mitigation Plan is required for a municipality to be eligible for certain hazard mitigation grant funding. An approved HMP is not required, however, for a community to be eligible for relief funding after an event has occurred. The HMP helps public officials and residents understand vulnerabilities and will identify actions that communities can take to prevent or minimize future risk.

NVCOG and project consultant Milone & MacBroom, Inc. of Cheshire will be working with all 19 regional municipalities over the next year to develop the multi-jurisdictional HMP. Developing a multi-jurisdictional plan is a more cost-effective approach than each community creating its own HMP.

However, understanding that each community is unique and has its own specific risks, hazards specific to each municipality will be addressed in separate municipal sections in the regional plan. The plan will take recent major events into account and will investigate risks from floods, winter storms, tornadoes, hurricanes, wildfires, earthquakes, and dam failure, among others. The HMP will also identify activities that can be undertaken by each community to prevent loss of life and reduce property damages associated with the identified hazards. Public safety and property loss reduction are the driving forces behind this plan, but careful consideration will also be given to the preservation of history, culture and the natural environment of the region.

Future virtual public meetings will focus on specific communities in the region. Stay tuned for dates and times!

Please visit [www.nvcogct.gov/HMP](http://www.nvcogct.gov/HMP) for more details.