



HAZARD MITIGATION & CEDS INTEGRATION

TIP SHEET



WHY SHOULD CEDS AND HAZARD MITIGATION PLANS BE ALIGNED?

With the recent updates to the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) [CEDS Content Guidelines](#) and [FEMA State and Local Mitigation Planning Policy Guides](#), planners now have more opportunities to better align and integrate planning across program areas. Recognizing a gap in the available guidance, EDA and FEMA worked together to create the [CEDS and Hazard Mitigation Plan Alignment Guide](#) in 2022, that provides tangible recommendations for navigating these changing planning landscapes. What does all of this mean for economic development and hazard mitigation program managers at EDDs and why has this change been made at the Federal level?

In recent years, federal agencies have centered resilience – including climate resilience – in planning requirements. By integrating existing planning processes, regions can grow their community and economic resilience to both economic shocks and natural disasters, while simultaneously building community emergency preparedness and public safety. Additionally, regions that understand the value of aligned and responsive planning make site selectors and industry professionals feel more confident in the longevity, sustainability, and safety of their investments in regions. Many planners will find the process of aligning these plans a natural end-product of many existing conversations they are already having in their regions around resilience, climate change impact mitigation emergency response, and future smart economic growth.

Hazard Mitigation Plan Process:



CEDS Process:



ALIGNING COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND MITIGATION PLANS

Successful plan alignment starts with understanding how the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and Mitigation Planning processes line up.



SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cross-Pollinate Planning Groups - Engage the private sector and source input from major employers in the region in your hazard mitigation planning efforts. Consider including emergency management, first responders, and hazard mitigation specialists in your CEDS Strategy Committee. Integrating these public engagement outreach opportunities allows you to source the information needed by asking the 'right' questions from the start. Getting these partners thinking and working with an integrated mindset from the start ensures that the goals and recommendations from your CEDS are feasible and realistic from an emergency management perspective and vice versa. At a minimum, information sharing across planning groups provides great dividends for informing each plan.

Hazard Mitigation as Economic Development - Include economic development data modeling like the [National Economic Resilience Data Explorer \(NERDE\)](#) in your hazard exposure and risk assessment models to identify the economic impact of potential natural disasters or hazards (including those driven by changes in climate). Factoring in expected economic loss of certain industries or sectors gives a more comprehensive view of the impact of disasters on communities. Additionally, [Argonne National Lab's Climate Risk Portal](#) and [the National Oceanic and Aviation Administration's Climate Mapping for Resilience and Adaptation Tool](#) are both great resources for understanding the economics of hazard mitigation.

Diversity as Strength - Plan integration opportunities offer a great chance for EDDs to analyze who in their region they are inviting to the planning table. Hazardous environmental conditions generally harm those with the least power, voice, and opportunity first. Casting a wide and inclusive net and expanding out public outreach efforts to include a more diverse and accurate assessment of your region creates stronger plans that can identify the real pressing issues across your communities. The New Growth Innovation Network's [Elevating Equity in Economic Development: An Inclusive Recovery Toolkit](#) can give EDDs a great start in creating stronger, more accurate, and more effective public outreach efforts when integrating plans.

Collect Once, Save Later – The general community and economic data required in both plans can be collected at the same time. Information like socioeconomic data, natural resources profiles, major employers, declining or growing regional economic clusters, and land use and building code policies are relevant for both planning processes. Data sharing across program areas can save staff time and create cost-efficiency during planning cycles.

An Effective, Informed SWOT – Present a summary of specific regional hazards to your CEDS Strategy Committee prior to conducting a SWOT analysis to give the Strategy Committee a more comprehensive understanding of the greater regional context. Potential exposure to natural hazards and risks are well-suited for the weaknesses section of the SWOT analysis and can start conversations about mitigation and resiliency opportunities.

Go Above and Beyond – FEMA requires hazard mitigation plans at the local level for communities to be eligible for FEMA hazard mitigation project funding. However, disasters do not recognize local jurisdictional boundaries. Expanding this planning process to the regional level will open communities and regions up to more federal funding opportunities and create more informed, prepared, and resilient regions and communities. Having the CEDS and hazard mitigation plans conducted by the same entity (EDDs) and covering the same geographic boundaries creates stronger individual and combined plans. EDDs are ideal regional organizations to create regionally oriented hazard mitigation plans and then align those regional hazard mitigation plans with the region's CEDS.

Utilize Existing Resources – FEMA, EDA, Cybersecurity Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), and a host of federal and state agencies are united in growing community economic resilience. Many of these existing resources and case studies are widely available for use and planners can use these to begin the work in their communities. There is no need to reinvent the wheel.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [FEMA/EDA – CEDS and Hazard Mitigation Plan Alignment Guide \(Fact Sheet\)](#)
- [FEMA/EDA – CEDS and Hazard Mitigation Plan Alignment Guide \(Full Guide\)](#)
- [NADO - Building Economic Resilience in the Kerr-Tar Region: Recommendations for Linking CEDS and Hazard Mitigation Plans](#)
- [EDA Disaster Recovery – Economic Recovery and Resilience Resources](#)
- [EPA - Climate Change Adaptation Resource Center](#)
- [FEMA – Implement, Integrate and Maintain Mitigation Planning Activities](#)
- [CISA Infrastructure Dependency Primer](#)
- [CISA – Green River Area Development District Case Study](#)
- [HUD – Community Resilient Toolkit](#)
- [Center for Climate and Energy Solutions – Building Climate Resilience](#)

SCENARIOS:

When integrating seemingly unrelated plans, it can be difficult to understand how to approach the multi-faceted issues facing communities. The following scenarios show how some common hazards can affect region's economic resources and communities. With each example, a solution is presented as a possible way forward for economic development and hazard mitigation planners on the ground.

1. Consider how an industry's geographic location and natural features can expose it to future hazards.

- **Example:** A packaging plant, located at a river port industrial park, is the main employer in a community. Due to the proximity of the river, the main employer in the region is more vulnerable to potential floods that could destroy inventory, irreparably ruin the hard infrastructure or facilities of the plant, and force the packaging plant to move out of the community.
- **Solution:** Engage the employer in hazard mitigation planning and CEDS planning to understand the risks posed to the facility and make a priority list of improvements that can be made to the area to mitigate flooding risks, (e.g. levees, embankments, flood spillways, facility improvements). Make connections between the employer and local waterways commissions, environmental regulators, or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which can lead to cost-sharing opportunities with state or federal agencies.

2. Identify how the type of industry in an area can make the region's economy more vulnerable to potential hazards.

- **Example:** A region with an expansive outdoor recreation tourism economy is prone to wildfires as well as a growing infestation of the Southern Pine Beetle that can destroy native trees, flora, and resources. The region's economy is at higher risk of downturns or declines based on these natural hazards to the region's main economic resources.
- **Solution:** Work with local forestry service or conservation groups to educate the public on hazards and risks posed to the area while helping communities diversify their local economy away from one major economic driver. Expand workforce training opportunities for industries in areas that are not reliant on outdoor recreation and tourism.

SCENARIOS:

3. Determine the region's economic dependency on infrastructure systems and the risks of interconnected utility systems going offline.

- **Example:** A region with a packaging plant located at a river port industrial park is the main employer in a community. During its' hazard mitigation planning process, the region identified specific infrastructure improvements that could be made to protect the area from frequent flooding. The plant is highly dependent on consistent electric power transmission to operate heavy machinery. The planning group previously failed to consider how the electrical power substation located near the packaging plant could be affected by frequent flooding. Without infrastructure and utility support, the plant's continuity of operation could be in danger even after immediate flood risks are mitigated.
- **Solution:** Use the [CISA Infrastructure Resilience Planning Framework](#) to examine the region's dependency on infrastructure systems and how threats to those systems could negatively impact the businesses and communities that rely on these systems.

4. Examine how development, growth, and desired land use patterns can negatively impact response times and emergency preparedness of first responders.

- **Example:** A rapidly growing city is running out of desirable land for in-fill housing development. Further growth is predicated on utilizing suburban and exurban spaces on the periphery of the existing city limits. Growth away from the existing emergency service coverage areas will constrain the ability of EMS, fire, and police response in the event of a disaster.
- **Solution:** Coordinate development and land use patterns based on hazard mitigation risk assessments. Where higher risk land uses are identified, work with developers to mitigate potential risks and hazards or identify complementary spaces in the region that can better support growth. Analyze staffing needs and capacity of existing emergency services and identify gaps where additional funding and attention is needed.

SCENARIOS:

5. Explore how local design and building codes can be changed or modified to create more resilient economies.

- **Example:** A region next to, but not within, a Zone of Required Investigation or Seismic Hazard Zone does not require new construction to be built under the provisions of a seismic building code. Local leaders have put off the risks of seismic activity in order to promote new development and keep construction costs down. While at lower risk than being in a Zone of Required Investigation, an earthquake could still cause significant damage to the local community and infrastructure in the area.
- **Solution:** Work with local leaders and developers through hazard mitigation planning risk assessment to better understand the dangers posed by lax or insufficient local building codes. Through additional CEDS discussions, planning groups can explore the impact and downturns that could be caused by seismic activity in an unprepared area. While incorporating new building codes may be an unpopular and growth-constraining action, the benefits in the event of a disaster could outweigh the initial costs.

6. Quantify how dependent a region's economy is on specific industries that are at an outsized risk from natural disasters or hazards.

- **Example:** A coastal region on the Gulf of Mexico is highly economically dependent on seasonal tourism ebbs and flows. Along with this economic dependency, the region's natural beach resources and existing businesses are in danger of rising sea levels from climate change. The region is at an outsized risk for economic downturns due to its' natural and economic features.
- **Solution:** Regions with these highly trained and specialized workforces that don't have opportunities for growth are primed for industry redevelopment based around green infrastructure development, carbon sequestration, and other renewable energy development opportunities. These regions have massive opportunities for redevelopment and capital investment, not only in mitigating or controlling existing harmful environmental conditions on the ground, but also in building stronger, less dependent on resource extraction, and more sustainable business practices. The [National Association of Counties Building Resilient Economies in Coal Communities](#) program can be a great start for building capacity and momentum on these energy transition issues.

This resource is offered through the Economic Development District Community of Practice (EDD CoP), managed by the NADO Research Foundation to build the capacity of the national network of EDDs. To learn more, visit: www.nado.org/EDDCoP. The EDD CoP is made possible through an award from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce (ED22HDQ3070106). The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations in this resource are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Economic Development Administration or the U.S. Department of Commerce.

