

Section 4

PUBLIC COMMENT AND PLANNING PROCESS

Public Comment

Gaining public input into mitigation plans is an important step in understanding the needs and priorities of the communities served, and how natural hazards can impact people disproportionately. This section is purposefully placed before the mitigation actions in order to emphasize the importance of this step in recognizing priorities.

Public participation is not a process limited to the period of time when the plan is being updated. The participating communities and districts in this plan have been gathering input continuously from constituents since 2017 through public meetings, community organization collaboration, outreach efforts, community communication and focus groups. Public input also does not end when the plan is published, as the needs of communities continue to evolve.

The Port of Portland and the Columbia Corridor Drainage Districts have each performed significant focus group efforts in the last few years to develop their priorities as part of the development of their first Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans.

All of the participating entities also distributed a short survey through social media and newsletters to gather community priorities and mitigation project ideas. For the 2017 plan, public input was primarily collected at live community events, with a table that allowed visitors to identify the hazards that they were the most concerned about. Because of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on community gatherings, public input for this process was primarily gained through the website survey. The survey asked the same question of respondents as in 2017 so that answers could be compared for changes in attitudes about hazards over the last five years.

Internet surveys can be more inclusive for those who cannot attend or do not wish to attend community events. The internet survey was also published in multiple languages, while community event tabling did not have translators. The internet survey also asked additional questions that were not part of previous NHMP tabling, as people could take longer with a survey than they might wish to while stopping by a table at a community event. The survey was also able to collect responses over a fairly long period of time, allowing those interested to pick a time of their choosing to respond.

Of course, internet surveys are less accessible for those who do not use the internet or who have technology accessibility barriers. The survey is not considered to be a complete method of soliciting input from the public, and additional and ongoing engagement methods are part of the action strategies in this plan.

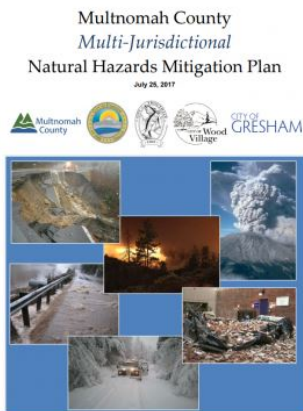
Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (Vietnamese)

☰ Menu

CHÚNG TÔI CẦN Ý KIẾN ĐÓNG GÓP CỦA QUÝ VỊ - Vui lòng dành ra một vài phút để trả lời một số câu hỏi về các thảm họa tự nhiên (động đất, lũ lụt, thời tiết khắc nghiệt, v.v.) tại khu vực của chúng ta: ([LIÊN KẾT TỚI KHẢO SÁT](#))

Quận Multnomah đang thực hiện cập nhật Chương Trình Giảm Nhẹ Các Thảm Họa Tự Nhiên. Những ý kiến và phản hồi của quý vị đối với một số câu hỏi sẽ giúp cải thiện chương trình này. Khi một chương trình dự thảo được hoàn thiện vào đầu năm 2022, dự thảo đó sẽ được đăng lên đây để nhận về các ý kiến nhận xét.

Chương Trình Giảm Nhẹ Các Thảm Họa Tự Nhiên là gì và tại sao lại đang được cập nhật?



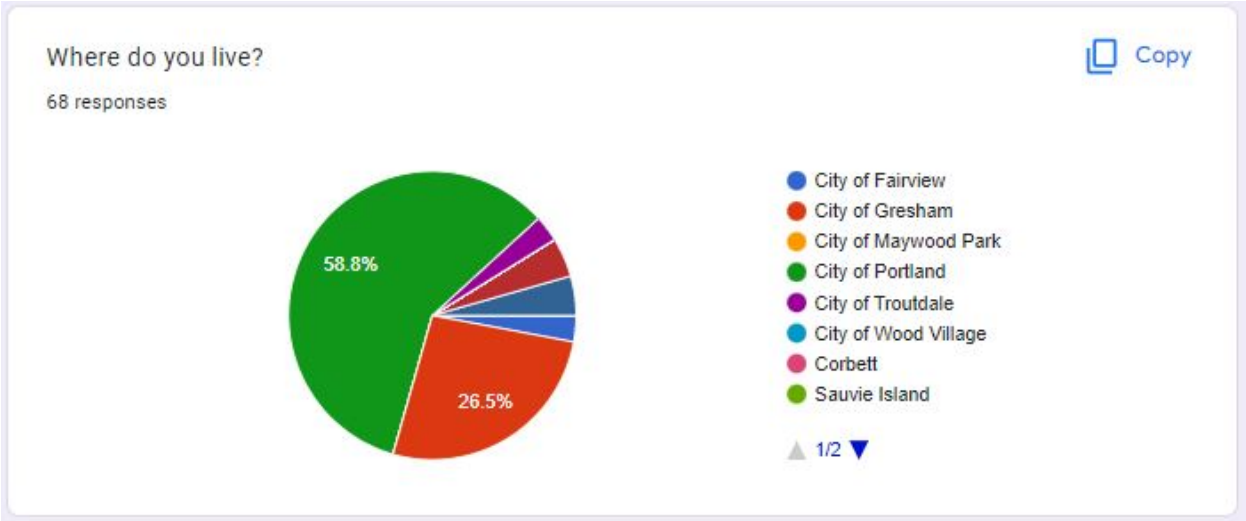
Cứ mỗi năm năm, Quận Multnomah được Cơ Quan Quản Lý Khẩn Cấp Liên Bang (Federal Emergency Management Agency - FEMA) yêu cầu cập nhật Chương Trình Giảm Nhẹ Các Thảm Họa Tự Nhiên (Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan - NHMP). Chương trình này tận dụng những thông tin có sẵn hữu ích nhất về các thảm họa tự nhiên nhằm lên kế hoạch hành động bảo vệ sự sống, tài sản và môi trường khỏi các thảm họa tự nhiên trong tương lai. [Chương trình hiện tại](#) đã được hoàn thiện vào năm 2017 và sẽ được cập nhật chậm nhất vào tháng 11 năm 2022. Chúng tôi muốn nhận về càng nhiều ý kiến đóng góp càng tốt để đảm bảo rằng chương trình phản ánh được sự quan tâm và nhu cầu của dân số đa dạng mà chúng tôi phục vụ. Bản cập nhật chương trình này bao gồm các Thành Phố Fairview, Gresham, Troutdale và Wood Village, Quận Multnomah cũng như, lần đầu tiên, Cảng Portland và Khu Thoát Nước Quận Multnomah. Thành Phố Portland sở hữu một NHMP riêng biệt, [cũng đang trong quá trình được cập nhật](#).

Giảm Nhẹ Thảm Họa là gì?

*Giảm nhẹ thảm họa là nỗ lực được thực hiện **trước khi** thảm họa xảy ra, nhằm giảm thiểu mức độ nghiêm trọng của những thảm họa tự nhiên tương lai và giúp cho công dân mau phục hồi hơn.*

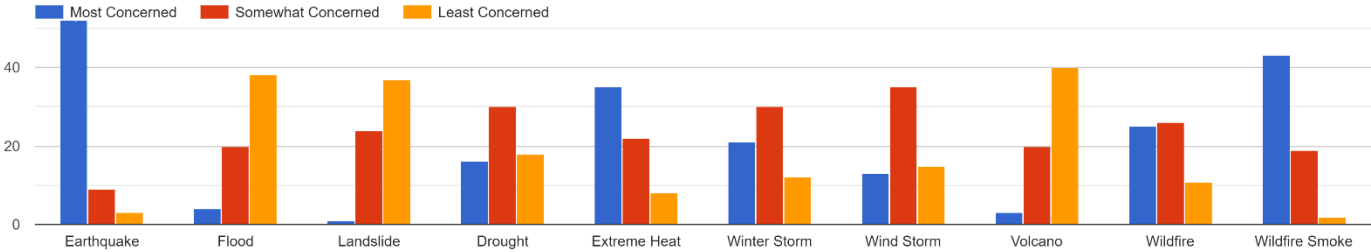
Figure 106 - [NHMP update page in Vietnamese](#), one of six language pages with natural hazard info and a link to the survey detailed below. The pages are still available for reference.

The 2022 survey was distributed in English and in the five next most widely spoken languages—Chinese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese. The survey was also publicized by the Multnomah County Office of Community Involvement to improve response rates in languages other than English.



The majority of English-language respondents identified as living in Portland (40), with a significant number also responding from Gresham (18). Other respondents selected being from unincorporated Multnomah County (3), outside of Multnomah County (3), the City of Fairview (2) and the City of Troutdale (2). Respondents from Portland may also include residents from parts of unincorporated Multnomah County with Portland addresses and constituents of the Columbia Corridor Drainage Districts and the Port of Portland.

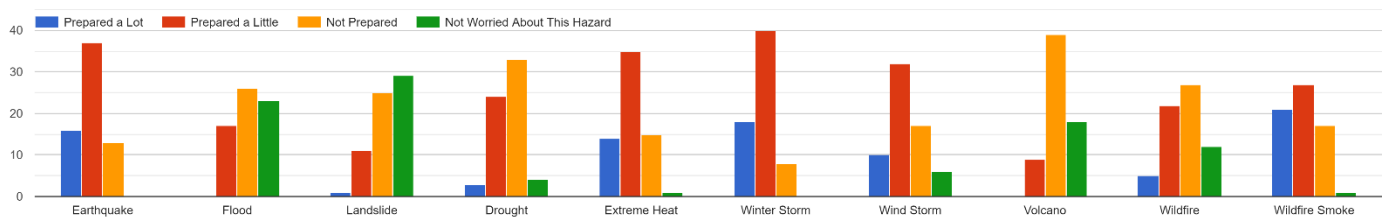
Which natural hazards are you the most concerned about?



English-language responses to the survey indicated continuing highest concern about earthquakes, with wildfire smoke and extreme heat rated as the next highest hazards of concern. The data collected in the 2017 plan had severe weather as one of the lowest hazards of concern, indicating that the extreme climate events of the last five years have significantly heightened public risk perception. This increased risk perception was also reflected in the suggested mitigation priorities provided by respondents.

Other hazards that impact Multnomah County on a more regional scale—drought, winter storm, windstorm and wildfire—were the next most concerning hazards. Flood, landslide, and volcano were of lowest concern, which perhaps reflects that these hazards are the most localized by geography and topography. Flood can happen regionally, but has not occurred at that scale since 1996, so these results may indicate that awareness of flood risk has become undervalued, especially considering that climate impacts are expected to increase the intensity of future floods.

How much have you prepared for each natural hazard?



The survey also asked how much people had prepared for each hazard, to get a further sense of risk perception and to cross-analyze which hazards are perhaps hardest for residents to feel prepared for.

Climate hazards were high on the list for preparation, showing the awareness of risk and that the preparation efforts for these hazards may be less costly and difficult to take on, such as adding air conditioning units, preparing homemade air filters, and low-barrier home weatherization. Preparation for earthquakes is not as complete compared to the high level of concern. This likely indicates a greater difficulty in preparing enough to feel safe—actions such as retrofitting homes and being able to provide long-term water and sanitation. The extreme nature of a large earthquake may fundamentally make it difficult for people to feel prepared.

Responses in languages other than English were provided in Russian (8) and Spanish (1).



Responses in Russian were evenly split between Portland (dark green) and Gresham (red), with one response from outside Multnomah County. Russian language respondents identified extreme heat and wildfire and wildfire smoke as of the most concern, and indicated less concern than English-language respondents around earthquake.

Какие стихийные бедствия беспокоят вас больше всего?

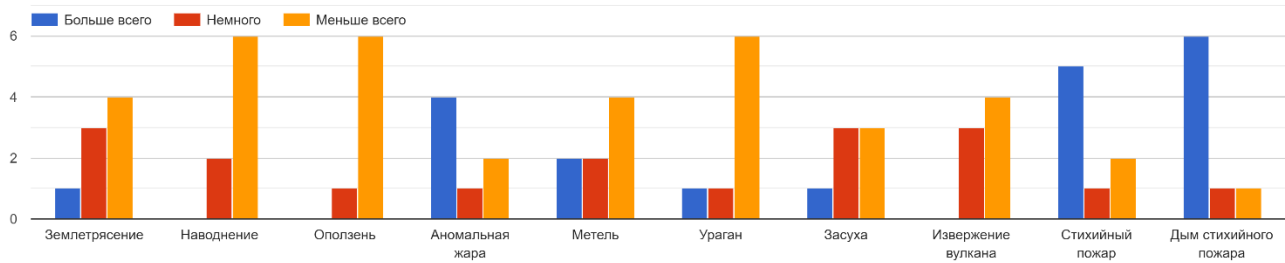


Figure 107 - Chart showing Russian language responses to the question of which hazards are you the most concerned about. Categories are in the same order as in the English-language version shown on the previous page.

The survey also asked respondents how money and resources could best be used to keep the community safe from natural disasters. Answers are printed in full in an Annex, but have been roughly grouped into categories here.

- The most commonly promoted strategy was to **provide personal disaster safety gear to residents**, especially those with less financial resources. Mentioned items included air conditioning units, portable air filters, evacuation go kits, earthquake post-disaster supplies, and informational resource booklets.

- A number of respondents asked for increased efforts to **financially support home retrofits** for earthquakes and weatherization. Providing subsidies particularly for homeowners who have faced historic housing discrimination was mentioned.
- **Increasing the resilience of infrastructure and critical facilities** was also a high priority, with bridges and reservoirs especially mentioned. Mitigating risk from earthquake to the Critical Energy Infrastructure Hub was also a top priority. Concern over water supplies after a major earthquake was frequently noted.
- Other suggestions focused on pre- and post-disaster actions for catastrophic disaster were the development of **supply cache locations, expanded and more accessible evacuation plans and exercises/events**.
- **Reducing the risk of wildfire through forest management**, including the use of controlled burning, was mentioned by multiple respondents.
- **Community building** was cited by multiple respondents as a strategy for increasing neighborhood resilience, including more use of local resources such as the City of Portland's Neighborhood Emergency Teams (NETs).
- **Continuing and increased emergency sheltering** those most at risk from extreme weather events was supported.
- Other suggestions related to climate disasters were to **increase tree planting and preserve more large trees**.

Port of Portland Focused Engagement

The Port of Portland undertook focused engagement related to earthquake mitigation and preparedness, in collaboration with a research team from the Portland State University School of Social Work. This engagement was to complete an analysis of community concerns and interests with respect to the role the Portland International Airport plays in emergency earthquake response and recovery. Specifically, the engagement sought to learn about the needs of individuals and groups most likely to be directly affected by a prolonged closure of the airport, based on demographic information about those working in major employment sectors in the region.

The research findings were that:

- A fast earthquake recovery is more important than other factors, particularly for people of color.
- Resuming airport service, even when solely emergency services, is symbolically important because it provides a sense of hope.

These findings indicate that using mitigation to reduce vulnerability to earthquakes in a way that maintains the ability to run operations at PDX is essential.

The Port also hosted a discussion about natural hazard risks at the public PDX Community Advisory Committee meeting on January 26, 2022. Priorities raised included:

- Mitigating harm to natural resources
- Having a coordinated plan across facilities to ensure the greatest benefit from investment
- Having continuous and independent power provision
- Using a climate-action lens in decision making
- Determining how the Port will serve the surrounding community and those at the airport, including understanding communication and preparedness limitations and barriers for some served communities.

Multnomah County Drainage District Focused Engagement

During the Fall of 2021, Multnomah County Drainage District staff created an online and mail survey to assess natural hazard concerns and priorities of people who work, live, or own property within the drainage districts. The survey was promoted in the district's newsletter and at District Board and landowner meetings.

The survey received 231 responses with the following key themes emerging:

- Participants recommended activities related to levee improvements, monitoring and maintenance as approaches to flood mitigation.
- Participants shared concerns about the impacts that camps of unsheltered residents have on the integrity and maintenance ability of flood infrastructure.
- Participants recommended that the drainage district engage in better education and outreach related to flood risk and general emergency preparedness.

Multnomah County Community Involvement Committee

The [Community Involvement Committee \(CIC\)](#) is Multnomah County government's advisory body for community engagement and involvement. The CIC makes direct recommendations to the Multnomah County Office of Community Involvement and County Leadership on topics relating to the removal of barriers to civic participation.



Multnomah County Emergency Management staff were invited to a committee meeting in January 2022 to discuss mitigation and response efforts for severe weather hazards. The committee also met with representatives from Multnomah County Sustainability, Health, Human Services, and Communications and the Joint Office of Homeless Services, and created a set of recommendations for actions to lessen the harm from extreme weather events.

The recommendations made are to:

- Resource the most vulnerable members of our community around severe weather events.
- Continue expanding and strengthening relationships with the community, including mutual aid organizations and school districts.
- Continue to assess the efficacy and accessibility of warming and cooling shelters for our most vulnerable community members.
- Increase collaboration with other jurisdictions to support long term solutions for community resilience.
- Increase collaboration with other jurisdictions to resource community members to shelter in place during an extreme weather event.

Each topic includes specific approaches and further implementation recommendations. The recommendations are available [online](#).

NHMP Steering Committee

The development of this plan was guided by stakeholders representing all of the participating entities, with multiple members from larger communities and an advisory and coordinating member from the City of Portland. In some cases, there was change of stakeholders during the plan process—those no longer with jurisdictions are included to note their contributions to this effort.

Steering committee members provided specific information and mitigation strategies for their jurisdictions, through internal processes. Steering committee

meetings were held with all participating members to develop shared plan content and collaborate on jurisdictional mitigation approaches.

City of Fairview

- Nolan Young, City Manager
- Allan Berry, Public Works Director

City of Gresham

- Kelle Landavazo, Emergency Manager
- Shannon Martin, Solid Waste and Recycling Manager
- Tina Núñez-Osterink, Natural Resources and Parks Planner
- Robin Pederson, Utility Resilience Coordinator
- Michael Whiteley, Water Division Manager

City of Portland

- Jonna Papaefthimiou, Chief Resilience Officer

City of Troutdale

- Arini Farrell, Assistant Planner
- Ryan Kruger, Assistant Planner
- Alex Lopez, Assistant Planner

City of Wood Village

- John Niiyama, Public Works Director

Columbia Corridor Drainage Districts

- Matt Burlin, Emergency Manager and Project Planner (Multnomah County Drainage District)
- Brian Eberhardt, Emergency Manager and Project Planner (Multnomah County Drainage District)
- Colin Rowan, Deputy Director (Multnomah County Drainage District)

Port of Portland

- Alex Howard, Senior Policy Development Manager

Multnomah County

- Jenny Carver, Human Services Emergency Manager
- Kevin Cook, Senior Planner
- Mark Dorin, Facilities Specialist
- Tina Lefebvre, Transportation Division
- David Lentzner, Emergency Management Planner

Additional local support and content were provided by:

- Ashley Carroll, Multnomah County Disability Resource Specialist
- Celeste Duvall, Emergency Manager, Joint Office of Homeless Services
- Arini Farrell, Multnomah County Emergency Management Planner
- Ryan Linskey, Project Manager, Multnomah County Health Department
- Mike Pullen, Multnomah County Communications Office
- Megan Neill, Engineering Services Manager, Multnomah County Transportation

Meetings held

All meetings listed were intended for all participating jurisdictions. This list does not include meetings held internally by stakeholders. When members were not able to attend a meeting, individual discussions were arranged to share meeting information.

2020

- December 14 – Final 2017 NHMP Maintenance Meeting
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2021

- February 5 – Plan Update Kickoff
- May 25 – Equity Goals Discussion
- June 23 – Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment Review
- November 2 – External/Regional Stakeholder Input Workshop

2022

- May 3 – Mitigation Action Workshop
- August 24 – Mitigation Action and Plan Adoption Discussion

Plan for Continuing Plan Comment and Further Plan Updates

As part of a transition of the NHMP to become a more living document and because of some limitations of soliciting input during the plan revision process due to COVID-19, public and additional stakeholder comment will continue to be sought during the maintenance period. Revisions will be considered annually, or maintained throughout the period to be used in the next update. Ideally, public comment will be prioritized outside of the update process, so that it does not get rushed during periods with timelines.