

SECTION 7

CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT

This section of the Plan discusses the capability of the jurisdictions in Wake County to implement hazard mitigation activities. It consists of the following four subsections:

- ◆ 7.1 What is a Capability Assessment?
- ◆ 7.2 Conducting the Capability Assessment
- ◆ 7.3 Capability Assessment Findings
- ◆ 7.4 Conclusions on Local Capability

7.1 WHAT IS A CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT

The purpose of conducting a capability assessment is to determine the ability of a local jurisdiction to implement a comprehensive mitigation strategy and to identify potential opportunities for establishing or enhancing specific mitigation policies, programs, or projects¹. As in any planning process, it is important to try to establish which goals, objectives, and/or actions are feasible based on an understanding of the organizational capacity of those agencies or departments tasked with their implementation. A capability assessment helps to determine which mitigation actions are practical, and likely to be implemented over time, given a local government's planning and regulatory framework, level of administrative and technical support, amount of fiscal resources, and current political climate.

A capability assessment has two primary components: 1) an inventory of a local jurisdiction's relevant plans, ordinances, or programs already in place and 2) an analysis of its capacity to carry them out. Careful examination of local capabilities will detect any existing gaps, shortfalls, or weaknesses with ongoing government activities that could hinder proposed mitigation activities and possibly exacerbate community hazard vulnerability. A capability assessment also highlights the positive mitigation measures already in place or being implemented at the local government level, which should continue to be supported and enhanced through future mitigation efforts.

The capability assessment completed for Wake County and its municipalities serves as a critical planning step and an integral part of the foundation for designing an effective hazard mitigation strategy. Coupled with the Risk Assessment, the Capability Assessment helps identify and target meaningful mitigation actions for incorporation in the Mitigation Strategy portion of the Hazard Mitigation Plan. It not only helps establish the goals and objectives for the region to pursue under this Plan, but it also ensures that those goals and objectives are realistically achievable under given local conditions.

¹ While the Final Rule for implementing the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 does not require a local capability assessment to be completed for local hazard mitigation plans, it is a critical step in developing a mitigation strategy that meets the needs of the region while taking into account their own unique abilities. The Rule does state that a community's mitigation strategy should be "based on existing authorities, policies, programs and resources, and its ability to expand on and improve these existing tools" (44 CFR, Part 201.6(c)(3)).

7.2 CONDUCTING THE CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT

In order to facilitate the inventory and analysis of local government capabilities for Wake County and its municipalities, a detailed Capability Assessment Survey was completed for each of the participating jurisdictions based on the information found in existing hazard mitigation plans and local government websites. The survey questionnaire compiled information on a variety of “capability indicators” such as existing local plans, policies, programs, or ordinances that contribute to and/or hinder the jurisdictions’ ability to implement hazard mitigation actions. Other indicators included information related to the communities’ fiscal, administrative, and technical capabilities, such as access to local budgetary and personnel resources for mitigation purposes. The current political climate, an important consideration for any local planning or decision making process, was also evaluated with respect to hazard mitigation.

At a minimum, survey results provide an extensive inventory of existing local plans, ordinances, programs, and resources that are in place or under development in addition to their overall effect on hazard loss reduction. However, the survey instrument can also serve to identify gaps, weaknesses, or conflicts that counties and local jurisdictions can recast as opportunities for specific actions to be proposed as part of the hazard mitigation strategy.

The information collected in the survey questionnaire was incorporated into a database for further analysis. A general scoring methodology² was then applied to quantify each jurisdiction’s overall capability. According to the scoring system, each capability indicator was assigned a point value based on its relevance to hazard mitigation

Using this scoring methodology, a total score and an overall capability rating of “high,” “moderate,” or “limited” could be determined according to the total number of points received. These classifications are designed to provide nothing more than a general assessment of local government capability. The results of this capability assessment provide critical information for developing an effective and meaningful mitigation strategy.

7.3 CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

The findings of the capability assessment are summarized in this Plan to provide insight into the relevant capacity of the jurisdictions in Wake County to implement hazard mitigation activities. All information is based upon the review of existing hazard mitigation plans and local government websites through the Capability Assessment Survey and input provided by local government officials during meetings of the Wake County Regional Work Groups.

7.3.1 Planning and Regulatory Capability

Planning and regulatory capability is based on the implementation of plans, ordinances, and programs that demonstrate a local jurisdiction’s commitment to guiding and managing growth, development, and redevelopment in a responsible manner while maintaining the general welfare of the community. It includes emergency response and mitigation planning, comprehensive land use planning, and transportation planning; the enforcement of zoning or subdivision ordinances and building codes that regulate how land is developed and structures are built; as well as protecting environmental, historic, and cultural resources in the community. Although some conflicts can arise, these planning initiatives

²The scoring methodology used to quantify and rank the jurisdictions’ capability can be found in Appendix B.

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generally present significant opportunities to integrate hazard mitigation principles and practices into the local decision making process.

This assessment is designed to provide a general overview of the key planning and regulatory tools and programs that are in place or under development for the jurisdictions in Wake County along with their potential effect on loss reduction. This information will help identify opportunities to address existing gaps, weaknesses, or conflicts with other initiatives in addition to integrating the implementation of this Plan with existing planning mechanisms where appropriate.

Table 7.1 provides a summary of the relevant local plans, ordinances, and programs already in place or under development for the jurisdictions in Wake County. A checkmark (✓) indicates that the given item is currently in place and being implemented. An asterisk (*) indicates that the given item is currently being developed for future implementation. Each of these local plans, ordinances, and programs should be considered available mechanisms for incorporating the requirements of the Wake County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

TABLE 7.1: RELEVANT PLANS, ORDINANCES, AND PROGRAMS

Planning / Regulatory Tool	WAKE COUNTY	Apex	Cary	Fuquay-Varina	Garner	Holly Springs	Knightdale	Morrisville	Raleigh	Rolesville	Wake Forest	Wendell	Zebulon
Hazard Mitigation Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Comprehensive Land Use Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Floodplain Management Plan	✓												
Open Space Management Plan (Parks & Rec/Greenway Plan)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Stormwater Management Plan/Ordinance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Natural Resource Protection Plan													
Flood Response Plan	✓			✓									
Emergency Operations Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Continuity of Operations Plan	✓		✓		✓			✓					
Evacuation Plan													
Disaster Recovery Plan													*
Capital Improvements Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Economic Development Plan	✓		✓	✓					✓		✓	✓	
Historic Preservation Plan	✓		✓								✓		
Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Planning / Regulatory Tool	WAKE COUNTY	Apex	Cary	Fuquay-Varina	Garner	Holly Springs	Knightdale	Morrisville	Raleigh	Rolesville	Wake Forest	Wendell	Zebulon
Zoning Ordinance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Subdivision Ordinance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Unified Development Ordinance	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	✓	*
Post-Disaster Redevelopment Ordinance													
Building Code	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fire Code	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NFIP Community Rating System									✓				

A more detailed discussion on the county's planning and regulatory capability follows.

7.3.2 Emergency Management

Hazard mitigation is widely recognized as one of the four primary phases of emergency management. The three other phases include preparedness, response, and recovery. In reality, each phase is interconnected with hazard mitigation, as **Figure 7.1** suggests. Opportunities to reduce potential losses through mitigation practices are most often implemented before disaster strikes, such as the elevation of flood prone structures or the continuous enforcement of policies that prevent and regulate development that is vulnerable to hazards due to its location, design, or other characteristics. Mitigation opportunities will also be presented during immediate preparedness or response activities, such as installing storm shutters in advance of a hurricane, and certainly during the long-term recovery and redevelopment process following a hazard event.

FIGURE 7.1: THE FOUR PHASES OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



Planning for each phase is a critical part of a comprehensive emergency management program and a key to the successful implementation of hazard mitigation actions. As a result, the Capability Assessment Survey asked several questions across a range of emergency management plans in order to assess the participating jurisdictions' willingness to plan and their level of technical planning proficiency.

Hazard Mitigation Plan: A hazard mitigation plan represents a community's blueprint for how it intends to reduce the impact of natural and human-caused hazards on people and the built environment. The essential elements of a hazard mitigation plan include a risk assessment, capability assessment, and mitigation strategy.

- ◆ Wake County and all 12 incorporated municipalities have previously adopted hazard mitigation plans. Prior to this planning effort, each participating jurisdiction had a single-jurisdiction plan.

Disaster Recovery Plan: A disaster recovery plan serves to guide the physical, social, environmental, and economic recovery and reconstruction process following a disaster. In many instances, hazard mitigation principles and practices are incorporated into local disaster recovery plans with the intent of capitalizing on opportunities to break the cycle of repetitive disaster losses. Disaster recovery plans can also lead to the preparation of disaster redevelopment policies and ordinances to be enacted following a hazard event.

- ◆ Zebulon is the only jurisdiction in the County that is working on a disaster recovery plan. The remaining jurisdictions should consider developing a plan to guide the recovery and reconstruction process following a disaster.

Emergency Operations Plan: An emergency operations plan outlines responsibilities and the means by which resources are deployed during and following an emergency or disaster.

- ◆ Wake County maintains an emergency operations plan through the County Emergency Management Department. All 12 incorporated municipalities have adopted the county plan.
- ◆ The following incorporated municipalities have also adopted municipal-level emergency operations plans: Apex, Cary, Fuquay-Varina, Garner, Knightdale, Morrisville, Raleigh, and Wake Forest.

Continuity of Operations Plan: A continuity of operations plan establishes a chain of command, line of succession, and plans for backup or alternate emergency facilities in case of an extreme emergency or disaster event.

- ◆ Wake County has adopted a continuity of operations plan (COOP). In 2010, three COOP training sessions and one executive-level tabletop exercise were conducted.
- ◆ The Towns of Cary, Garner, and Morrisville have each adopted a municipal-level continuity of operations plan.

Flood Response Plan: A flood response plan establishes procedures for responding to a flood emergency including coordinating and facilitating resources to minimize the impacts of flood.

- ◆ Although Wake County does not include a specific Annex to the Emergency Operations Plan that addresses flood response, the Basic Plan portion of the Emergency Operations Plan does discuss flooding and establishes the structure, methodology, and mechanisms to respond to a flooding incident.
- ◆ The Town of Fuquay-Varina is the only jurisdiction that has adopted a flood response plan.

7.3.3 General Planning

The implementation of hazard mitigation activities often involves agencies and individuals beyond the emergency management profession. Stakeholders may include local planners, public works officials, economic development specialists, and others. In many instances, concurrent local planning efforts will help to achieve or complement hazard mitigation goals, even though they are not designed as such. Therefore, the Capability Assessment Survey also asked questions regarding general planning capabilities and the degree to which hazard mitigation is integrated into other on-going planning efforts in Wake County.

Comprehensive Land Use Plan: A comprehensive land use plan establishes the overall vision for what a community wants to be and serves as a guide for future governmental decision making. Typically a comprehensive plan contains sections on demographic conditions, land use, transportation elements, and community facilities. Given the broad nature of the plan and its regulatory standing in many communities, the integration of hazard mitigation measures into the comprehensive plan can enhance the likelihood of achieving risk reduction goals, objectives, and actions.

- ◆ Wake County has adopted a county land use plan as well as a growth management strategy.
- ◆ Each of the 12 incorporated municipalities has adopted a comprehensive land use plan.

Capital Improvements Plan: A capital improvements plan guides the scheduling of spending on public improvements. A capital improvements plan can serve as an important mechanism for guiding future development away from identified hazard areas. Limiting public spending in hazardous areas is one of the most effective long-term mitigation actions available to local governments.

- ◆ Wake County and all 12 incorporated municipalities have capital improvement plans in place.

Historic Preservation Plan: A historic preservation plan is intended to preserve historic structures or districts within a community. An often overlooked aspect of the historic preservation plan is the

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assessment of buildings and sites located in areas subject to natural hazards and the identification of ways to reduce future damages. This may involve retrofitting or relocation techniques that account for the need to protect buildings that do not meet current building standards or are within a historic district that cannot easily be relocated out of harm's way.

- ◆ Wake County has a Strategic Plan for Historic Preservation in place. The Towns of Cary and Wake Forest also have each adopted this historic preservation plan.

Zoning Ordinance: Zoning represents the primary means by which land use is controlled by local governments. As part of a community's police power, zoning is used to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of those in a given jurisdiction that maintains zoning authority. A zoning ordinance is the mechanism through which zoning is typically implemented. Since zoning regulations enable municipal governments to limit the type and density of development, a zoning ordinance can serve as a powerful tool when applied in identified hazard areas.

- ◆ Wake County and all 12 incorporated municipalities have adopted zoning ordinances.
- ◆ The County, Apex, Cary, Garner, Holly Springs, Knightdale, Morrisville, Raleigh, Rolesville, Wake Forest, and Wendell include zoning regulations as part of their local unified development ordinance.
- ◆ Fuquay-Varina, and Zebulon have adopted standalone zoning ordinances; however, both municipalities are currently in the process of developing a local unified development ordinance.

Subdivision Ordinance: A subdivision ordinance is intended to regulate the development of residential, commercial, industrial, or other uses, including associated public infrastructure, as land is subdivided into buildable lots for sale or future development. Subdivision design that accounts for natural hazards can dramatically reduce the exposure of future development.

- ◆ Wake County and all 12 incorporated municipalities have adopted subdivision ordinances.
- ◆ The County, Apex, Cary, Garner, Holly Springs, Knightdale, Morrisville, Raleigh, Rolesville, Wake Forest, and Wendell include subdivision regulations as part of their local unified development ordinance.
- ◆ Fuquay-Varina, and Zebulon have adopted standalone subdivision ordinances; however, all both municipalities are currently in the process of developing a local unified development ordinance.

Building Codes, Permitting, and Inspections: Building codes regulate construction standards. In many communities, permits and inspections are required for new construction. Decisions regarding the adoption of building codes (that account for hazard risk), the type of permitting process required both before and after a disaster, and the enforcement of inspection protocols all affect the level of hazard risk faced by a community.

- ◆ North Carolina has a state compulsory building code, which applies throughout the state; however, jurisdictions may adopt codes if approved as providing adequate minimum standards. The County and all 12 incorporated municipalities have adopted a building code.
- ◆ Wake County provides building inspection services for all unincorporated areas of the County and through contractual agreements for the Towns of Knightdale, Rolesville, Wendell, and Zebulon.

- ◆ Apex, Cary, Fuquay-Varina, Garner, Holly Springs, Morrisville, Raleigh, and Wake Forest are responsible for enforcement of the building codes within their planning jurisdiction.

The adoption and enforcement of building codes by local jurisdictions is routinely assessed through the Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS) program developed by the Insurance Services Office, Inc. (ISO).³ In North Carolina, the North Carolina Department of Insurance assesses the building codes in effect in a particular community and how the community enforces its building codes *with special emphasis on mitigation of losses from natural hazards*. The results of BCEGS assessments are routinely provided to ISO's member private insurance companies, which in turn may offer ratings credits for new buildings constructed in communities with strong BCEGS classifications. The concept is that communities with well-enforced, up-to-date codes should experience fewer disaster-related losses and, as a result, should have lower insurance rates.

In conducting the assessment, ISO collects information related to personnel qualification and continuing education as well as the number of inspections performed per day. This type of information combined with local building codes is used to determine a grade for that jurisdiction. The grades range from 1 to 10 with a BCEGS grade of 1 representing exemplary commitment to building code enforcement and a grade of 10 indicating less than minimum recognized protection.

Specific BCEGS rating for the participating jurisdictions can be obtained by contacting the department for building inspections within that jurisdiction.

7.3.4 Floodplain Management

Flooding represents the greatest natural hazard facing the nation. At the same time, the tools available to reduce the impacts associated with flooding are among the most developed when compared to other hazard-specific mitigation techniques. In addition to approaches that cut across hazards such as education, outreach, and the training of local officials, the *National Flood Insurance Program* (NFIP) contains specific regulatory measures that enable government officials to determine where and how growth occurs relative to flood hazards. Participation in the NFIP is voluntary for local governments; however, program participation is strongly encouraged by FEMA as a first step for implementing and sustaining an effective hazard mitigation program. It is therefore used as part of this assessment as a key indicator for measuring local capability.

In order for a county or municipality to participate in the NFIP, they must adopt a local flood damage prevention ordinance that requires jurisdictions to follow established minimum building standards in the floodplain. These standards require that all new buildings and substantial improvements to existing buildings will be protected from damage by a 100-year flood event and that new development in the floodplain will not exacerbate existing flood problems or increase damage to other properties.

A key service provided by the NFIP is the mapping of identified flood hazard areas. Once completed, the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) are used to assess flood hazard risk, regulate construction practices, and set flood insurance rates. FIRMs are an important source of information to educate residents, government officials, and the private sector about the likelihood of flooding in their community.

Table 7.2 provides NFIP policy and claim information for each participating jurisdiction in Wake County.

³ Participation in BCEGS is voluntary and may be declined by local governments if they do not wish to have their local building codes evaluated.

TABLE 7.2: NFIP POLICY AND CLAIM INFORMATION

Jurisdiction	Date Joined NFIP	Current Effective Map Date	NFIP Policies in Force	Insurance in Force	Closed Claims	Total Payments to Date
WAKE COUNTY†	11/15/78	04/16/13	405	\$108,769,300	62	\$787,324
Apex	03/20/92	04/16/07	90	\$25,797,600	0	\$0
Cary	07/17/78	04/16/07	729	\$211,433,100	83	\$1,297,771
Fuquay-Varina	11/01/78	04/16/07	85	\$20,597,500	1	\$5,783
Garner	07/03/78	04/16/07	131	\$30,599,600	18	\$107,854
Holly Springs	12/23/94	04/16/07	74	\$20,803,800	3	\$32,312
Knightdale	08/01/78	04/16/07	35	\$8,640,800	2	\$17,361
Morrisville	11/01/78	04/16/07	92	\$24,778,300	3	\$66,219
Raleigh	08/15/78	04/16/07	1,988	\$513,805,200	725	\$18,503,795
Rolesville	07/31/01	04/16/07	9	\$2,380,000	0	\$0
Wake Forest	07/02/78	04/16/13	123	\$35,436,900	0	\$0
Wendell	06/01/78	04/16/07	13	\$3,155,000	6	\$77,232
Zebulon	07/03/78	04/16/13	18	\$3,176,000	7	\$183,092

†Includes unincorporated areas of county only

Source: NFIP Community Status information as of 3/20/14; NFIP claims and policy information as of 12/31/13

Community Rating System: An additional indicator of floodplain management capability is the active participation of local jurisdictions in the Community Rating System (CRS). The CRS is an incentive-based program that encourages counties and municipalities to undertake defined flood mitigation activities that go beyond the minimum requirements of the NFIP by adding extra local measures to provide protection from flooding. All of the 18 creditable CRS mitigation activities are assigned a range of point values. As points are accumulated and reach identified thresholds, communities can apply for an improved CRS class rating. Class ratings, which range from 10 to 1, are tied to flood insurance premium reductions as shown in **Table 7.3**. As class rating improves (the lower the number the better), the percent reduction in flood insurance premiums for NFIP policyholders in that community increases.

TABLE 7.3: CRS PREMIUM DISCOUNTS, BY CLASS

CRS Class	Premium Reduction
1	45%
2	40%
3	35%
4	30%
5	25%
6	20%
7	15%
8	10%
9	5%
10	0

Source: FEMA

Community participation in the CRS is voluntary. Any community that is in full compliance with the rules and regulations of the NFIP may apply to FEMA for a CRS classification better than class 10. The CRS application process has been greatly simplified over the past several years based on community comments. Changes were made with the intent to make the CRS more user-friendly and make extensive technical assistance available for communities who request it.

- ◆ The City of Raleigh (Class 7) is the only jurisdiction that currently participates in the CRS. Participation in the CRS program should be considered as a mitigation action by the County and other incorporated municipalities. The program would be most beneficial to the Town of Cary, Wake County, the Town of Garner, and the Town of Wake Forest, which have 729, 405, 131, and 123 NFIP policies, respectively.

Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance: A flood damage prevention ordinance establishes minimum building standards in the floodplain with the intent to minimize public and private losses due to flood conditions.

- ◆ All communities participating in the NFIP are required to adopt a local flood damage prevention ordinance. The County and all 12 incorporated municipalities also participate in the NFIP and they all have adopted flood damage prevention regulations.

Floodplain Management Plan: A floodplain management plan (or a flood mitigation plan) provides a framework for action regarding corrective and preventative measures to reduce flood-related impacts.

- ◆ Neither the County nor any of the incorporated municipalities have adopted floodplain management plans.

Open Space Management Plan: An open space management plan is designed to preserve, protect, and restore largely undeveloped lands in their natural state and to expand or connect areas in the public domain such as parks, greenways, and other outdoor recreation areas. In many instances, open space

management practices are consistent with the goals of reducing hazard losses, such as the preservation of wetlands or other flood-prone areas in their natural state in perpetuity.

- ◆ The County and all 12 incorporated municipalities have adopted parks, recreation, greenways, and/or open space plan.

Stormwater Management Plan: A stormwater management plan is designed to address flooding associated with stormwater runoff. The stormwater management plan is typically focused on design and construction measures that are intended to reduce the impact of more frequently occurring minor urban flooding.

- ◆ The Town of Cary is the only jurisdiction that has adopted a stormwater master plan.
- ◆ Wake County and all 12 of the incorporated municipalities have adopted a stormwater management ordinance.

7.3.5 Administrative and Technical Capability

The ability of a local government to develop and implement mitigation projects, policies, and programs is directly tied to its ability to direct staff time and resources for that purpose. Administrative capability can be evaluated by determining how mitigation-related activities are assigned to local departments and if there are adequate personnel resources to complete these activities. The degree of intergovernmental coordination among departments will also affect administrative capability for the implementation and success of proposed mitigation activities.

Technical capability can generally be evaluated by assessing the level of knowledge and technical expertise of local government employees, such as personnel skilled in using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to analyze and assess community hazard vulnerability. The Capability Assessment Survey was used to capture information on administrative and technical capability through the identification of available staff and personnel resources.

Table 7.4 provides a summary of the capability assessment results for Wake County with regard to relevant staff and personnel resources. A checkmark (✓) indicates the presence of a staff member(s) in that jurisdiction with the specified knowledge or skill.

TABLE 7.4: RELEVANT STAFF / PERSONNEL RESOURCES

Staff / Personnel Resource	WAKE COUNTY	Apex	Cary	Fuquay-Varina	Garner	Holly Springs	Knightdale	Morrisville	Raleigh	Rolesville	Wake Forest	Wendell	Zebulon
Planners with knowledge of land development / land management practices	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Engineers or professionals trained in construction practices related to buildings and/or infrastructure	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Planners or engineers with an understanding of natural and/or human-caused hazards	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Emergency Manager	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Floodplain Manager	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Land Surveyors													
Scientists familiar with the hazards of the community	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff with education or expertise to assess the community's vulnerability to hazards	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Personnel skilled in GIS and/or Hazus	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Resource development staff or grant writers	✓						✓						

Credit for having a floodplain manager was given to those jurisdictions that have a flood damage prevention ordinance, and therefore an appointed floodplain administrator, regardless of whether the appointee was dedicated solely to floodplain management. Credit was given for having a scientist familiar with the hazards of the community if a jurisdiction has a Cooperative Extension Service or Soil and Water Conservation Department. Credit was also given for having staff with education or expertise to assess the community's vulnerability to hazards if a staff member from the jurisdiction was a participant on the existing hazard mitigation plan's planning committee.

7.3.6 Fiscal Capability

The ability of a local government to take action is often closely associated with the amount of money available to implement policies and projects. This may take the form of outside grant funding awards or locally-based revenue and financing. The costs associated with mitigation policy and project implementation vary widely. In some cases, policies are tied primarily to staff time or administrative costs associated with the creation and monitoring of a given program. In other cases, direct expenses

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are linked to an actual project, such as the acquisition of flood-prone homes, which can require a substantial commitment from local, state, and federal funding sources.

The Capability Assessment Survey was used to capture information on the region’s fiscal capability through the identification of locally available financial resources.

Table 7.5 provides a summary of the results for Wake County with regard to relevant fiscal resources. A checkmark (✓) indicates that the given fiscal resource is locally available for hazard mitigation purposes (including match funds for state and federal mitigation grant funds) according to the previous hazard mitigation plans.

TABLE 7.5: RELEVANT FISCAL RESOURCES

Fiscal Tool / Resource	WAKE COUNTY	Apex	Cary	Fuquay-Varina	Garner	Holly Springs	Knightdale	Morrisville	Raleigh	Rolesville	Wake Forest	Wendell	Zebulon
Capital Improvement Programming	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
Special Purpose Taxes (or taxing districts)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Gas / Electric Utility Fees		✓											
Water / Sewer Fees		✓											
Stormwater Utility Fees							✓						✓
Development Impact Fees		✓					✓						
General Obligation, Revenue, and/or Special Tax Bonds	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓				
Partnering Arrangements or Intergovernmental Agreements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Other: PDM, FMAP, HMGP, PA, other Federal and state funding sources, etc.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

7.3.7 Political Capability

One of the most difficult capabilities to evaluate involves the political will of a jurisdiction to enact meaningful policies and projects designed to reduce the impact of future hazard events. Hazard mitigation may not be a local priority or may conflict with or be seen as an impediment to other goals of the community, such as growth and economic development. Therefore, the local political climate must be considered in designing mitigation strategies as it could be the most difficult hurdle to overcome in accomplishing their adoption and implementation.

The Capability Assessment Survey was used to capture information on political capability of Wake County. Previous hazard mitigation plans were reviewed for general examples of local political

capability, such as guiding development away from identified hazard areas, restricting public investments or capital improvements within hazard areas, or enforcing local development standards that go beyond minimum state or federal requirements (i.e., building codes, floodplain management, etc.).

- ◆ The previous local hazard mitigation plans identified existing ordinances that address natural hazards or are related to hazard mitigation such as flood damage prevention, watershed protection, soil erosion and sediment control, zoning, and subdivision.
- ◆ The citizens, property owners, business owners, and elected officials of Wake County are committed to improving the greater community through coordinated hazard mitigation planning efforts. The County has taken the lead in organizing and coordinating hazard mitigation efforts by inviting all 12 incorporated municipalities to participate in a planning process that has encouraged the sharing of common concerns and hazard issues.
- ◆ In the coming years, Wake County will continue to take a proactive role in planning for and encouraging mitigation of hazards that put citizens and property at risk. The elected Board of Commissioners remains committed to making the greater Wake County a safer community in which to live, work, and play, and as representatives of the citizens of Wake County, see hazard mitigation planning and implementation as a key component in helping to achieve that goal.

7.4 CONCLUSIONS ON LOCAL CAPABILITY

In order to form meaningful conclusions on the assessment of local capability, a quantitative scoring methodology was designed and applied to results of the Capability Assessment Survey. This methodology, further described in Appendix B, attempts to assess the overall level of capability of Wake County to implement hazard mitigation actions.

The overall capability to implement hazard mitigation actions varies among the participating jurisdictions. For planning and regulatory capability, the majority of the jurisdictions are in the high range. There is also some variation in the administrative and technical capability among the jurisdictions with larger jurisdictions generally having greater staff and technical resources. Almost all of jurisdictions are in the moderate range for fiscal capability.

Table 7.6 shows the results of the capability assessment using the designed scoring methodology. The capability score is based solely on the information found in existing hazard mitigation plans and readily available on the jurisdictions’ government websites. According to the assessment, the average local capability score for all jurisdictions is 42.5, which falls into the high capability ranking.

TABLE 7.6: CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Jurisdiction	Overall Capability Score	Overall Capability Rating
WAKE COUNTY	49	High
Apex	44	High
Cary	45	High

SECTION 7: CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT

Fuquay-Varina	42	High
Garner	43	High
Holly Springs	40	High
Knightdale	44	High
Morrisville	41	High
Raleigh	46	High
Rolesville	38	Moderate
Wake Forest	40	High
Wendell	39	Moderate
Zebulon	40	High

As previously discussed, one of the reasons for conducting a Capability Assessment is to examine local capabilities to detect any existing gaps or weaknesses within ongoing government activities that could hinder proposed mitigation activities and possibly exacerbate community hazard vulnerability. These gaps or weaknesses have been identified for each jurisdiction in the tables found throughout this section. The participating jurisdictions used the Capability Assessment as part of the basis for the Mitigation Actions that are identified in Section 9; therefore, each jurisdiction addresses their ability to expand on and improve their existing capabilities through the identification of their Mitigation Actions.

7.4.1 Linking the Capability Assessment with the Risk Assessment and the Mitigation Strategy

The conclusions of the Risk Assessment and Capability Assessment serve as the foundation for the development of a meaningful hazard mitigation strategy. During the process of identifying specific mitigation actions to pursue, the Regional Work Groups considered not only each jurisdiction's level of hazard risk, but also their existing capability to minimize or eliminate that risk.