

Hunterdon County Office of Emergency Management Preparing County For Future Storms Through FEMA Grant Request

Hunterdon County's Department of Public Safety and Office of Emergency Management (OEM) recently submitted a \$2 million FEMA mitigation grant application to protect residents by implementing a first of its kind project in New Jersey, to enhance and expand flood monitoring systems and provide traffic control gates in flood-prone areas County Commissioner Susan J. Soloway reported at the August 2nd Board meeting.

Commissioner Soloway said, "As Public Safety and OEM liaison for the Board, I am pleased to announce that this important application previously authorized by the Commissioner Board for mitigation funds has been filed with the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management. This necessary project will protect those who use our roadways by implementing a first of its kind project in New Jersey.

This innovative solution is a collaboration between Hunterdon County OEM, Office of the County Engineers, USGS (United States Geological Survey), local officials and other state and federal agencies to develop an enhanced network of flood monitoring systems and road closure gates.

These flood gates will target areas in Hunterdon County that have experienced repetitive flooding, numerous water rescues, and comes on the heels of Tropical Storm Ida in September of 2021."

The project is also targeting areas in Hunterdon County that have a history of numerous water rescues.

Public Safety Director Brayden Fahey said, "In December of last year, we received notification from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that the update to the Hunterdon County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Action Plan had received federal approval.

This document is updated every five years in accordance with federal guidance and positions the County to be able to seek funding under different federal hazard mitigation grant programs."

The county's Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Action Plan is a shared service through the inclusion of the twenty-six municipalities into the planning effort and affords participants to seek the same funding opportunities.

Fahey continued, "In the first quarter of 2022, all twenty-six towns, and the County, adopted the Mitigation Action Plan by resolution."

Hazard Mitigation's overarching intent is to target the reduction of risks through data collection and analysis and ranking the severity of impacts from a variety of severe weather events. Flooding, hurricanes and tropical storms each receive their own analysis outside of the severe weather category.

"I am advised that the county has targeted infrastructure improvements through hazard mitigation and risk reduction activities. Property buyouts, drainage improvements, and stabilization of waterways and roadways, all to combat floods.

For example, after Superstorm Sandy generators were installed at critical facilities throughout the County to make us more resilient during power outages," Soloway said.

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“These mitigation funds will help us protect residents and all those who use our roadways in Hunterdon County,” Fahey added.

“Protecting and saving lives is the county’s number one priority and installing flood gates is one more step the county can take to provide what can be a life-saving resource. The Board thanks Public Safety Director Brayden Fahey and the county’s OEM for their diligence in keeping those who use the county’s roads safe,” Soloway concluded.

For more information about the county’s Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Action Plan, click [here](#).