3 – ALLENTOWN BOROUGH

PLANNING TEAM AND PARTICIPATION

Name	Title	Participation
Steve Gomba	**OEM Coordinator**	**Primary Point of Contact, Municipal Workshop #1, Municipal Workshop #2, Coordination, review and input**
Carmela Roberts	Engineer	Municipal Workshop #2, review and input
Laurie Roth	Administrator	Appendix review following Workshops

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Overview

The Borough of Allentown is a small, historic village located in the southwest corner of Monmouth County, bordered on three sides by Upper Freehold Township, and to the north by Robbinsville (Mercer County). The Borough has a land area of 0.6 square miles, and 56 percent of its properties are in single-family residential use. Allentown is characterized by its tree-lined Main Street, a historic mill, and the Colonial and Victorian era houses found throughout the Borough. According to the Panhandle Region Plan (2011), the Borough seeks to maintain its historic character with a viable downtown offering goods and services to residents. Allentown is served by County Routes 28, 524, 526, 539, which converge in its historic downtown. It is also proximal to two interchanges of Interstate 195, and by extension the New Jersey Turnpike.

Land Use, Development, & Growth

Allentown is a predominantly residential community and home to substantial publicly owned land. From 2015 to 2020, the community underwent minimal change in its land use composition; urban or developed land accounted for nearly 81 percent of the Borough's total area, while water and wetlands together covered roughly 9 percent of its total area. Throughout this period, forested land accounted for 5 percent of the Borough's total area.

Land Use Type	Total Acres (2015)	Total Acres (2020)	Percent Change
Agriculture	-	-	-
Barren Land	6.1	5.9	-3%
Forest	95.3	95.6	0%
Urban	663.5	664.4	0%
Water	7.9	6.9	-13%
Wetlands	18.6	18.6	0%

Source: Land Use/Land Cover, 2015-2020

Recent Major Development and Infrastructure from 2020 to Present

In 2021 a new wastewater treatment facility came online, and the Borough adopted a comprehensive Land Development Regulations Ordinance that consolidated its land development and zoning regulations into a single chapter. The following year, the Borough completed streetscape improvements along Main Street in the historic village. Some parts of Main Street fall under FEMA's 1% and 0.2% annual chance floodplain, and within the New Jersey State Flood Hazard Area, as estimated by FEMA BFE +3.

Known or Anticipated Major Development and Infrastructure in the Next Five (5) Years

There is no anticipated development in the Borough as it is already largely built out.

Demographics & Vulnerable Populations

This plan analyzed census-derived data on population trends and population age distributions to help illustrate potential vulnerability within the Borough. A population increase or decrease can illustrate potential hazard vulnerability through development pressures on the built environment, or through physical and social impacts of marked population loss. A

community with a large share of population under age five may indicate vulnerabilities in hazard response, resource allocation, and evacuation – FEMA identifies that the pediatric population is disproportionately affected during disasters, and requires special consideration in categories of anatomy and physiology, psychological, and education vulnerabilities (FEMA, 2022, NLM, 2022). Individuals over age 65 are a growing share of the country's population and often represent the greatest share of deaths from extreme weather events and other natural disasters. A larger share of population over 65 may indicate local vulnerabilities to hazard events both before and after a disaster occurs – these populations may have mobility needs, uneven access to resources, and limited social networks that makes pre-disaster engagement challenging (FEMA, 2023).

Allentown Borough has an estimated 1,817 residents, of which 5.8% are estimated to be under 5 years of age, and nearly 15% (14.64%) are estimated to be over age 65. As this 15% continues to age, the Borough may integrate targeted communication, emergency preparation, and evacuation planning with an older population in mind. The Borough saw a moderate population decline (-3.9%) estimated over the 2013-2017 and 2018-2022 ACS survey periods, which could have impact on residential density for the remaining populations, and may lead to future redevelopment opportunity.

No areas of Allentown Borough meet designation criteria for CDRZ, CEJST, or OBC identification.

Demographics Summary	
Total Population *(2018-2022 ACS 5-year Estimates)*	1,817
Population Change since 2017	-3.9%
Percent of Population Age < 5	5.8%
Percent of Population > 65	14.6%

Source: 2018-2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2013-2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

HAZARD IDENTIFICATION

One of the first steps in developing a risk assessment is for participating municipalities to review and prioritize the hazards that can affect them. This was done based on how often a hazard has occurred, how significant effects have been in the past, the difficulty and cost of recovering from such events. Jurisdictions ranked the list of hazards as either high, medium, low, or no concern. The following include the Borough's hazard ranking. The full risk assessment for each hazard is located in Section 4.0.

Hazard Ranking

High	Medium	Low
	Natural Hazards	
Dam Failure	Extreme Temperatures	Earthquake
Flood	Extreme Wind	Lightning
	Hurricane/Tropical Storm	Flood
	Nor'easter	Wildfire
	Tornado	
	Winter Storm	
	Drought	
	Human-made Hazards	
	Power Failure	Civil Unrest
	Pandemic	Cyber Attack
		Economic Disruption
		Terrorism

The Borough ranked Coastal Erosion, Landslide, Storm Surge, and Wave Action as N/A.

Hazard Ranking Explanation

The majority of changes in hazard rankings in this update have resulted in a lowered level of hazard. Storm surge and wave action have been marked as not applicable since the Borough is not near the ocean. For man-made hazards, the rankings for cyber-attacks, economic disruptions, and terrorism have all been lowered, primarily due to the lack of events and the relatively small size of the Borough. Flooding has also been downgraded, as there has been no significant flooding in the past five years. Dam failure is the only hazard that has increased in severity and remains the only natural hazard of high concern. This is mainly due to the Indian Dam being classified as a high-hazard potential dam, which will remain a high concern until the dam is upgraded.

Significant Hazard Events Since Last Plan Update

There is a significant flood risk due to the proposed development in Upper Freehold Township. Additionally, development in Mercer Corporate Park could cause potential flooding as it will add more impervious surfaces. Heavy rains continue to affect the treatment plant within the Borough, but there have been no reported damages.

Climate Change Impacts on Extent and Magnitude of Hazards

Climate change is expected to significantly impact the risks and hazards faced by the Borough of Allentown. As global temperatures rise, the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events such as heavy rainfall, hurricanes, and tropical storms are likely to increase. This will exacerbate flooding risks, particularly in areas already prone to flooding, such as the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) adjacent to Indian Run, Indian Lake, Doctors Creek, and Conines Millpond. The increased precipitation and storm intensity will likely lead to more frequent and severe flooding events, putting additional strain on the Borough's infrastructure, including the wastewater treatment plant and stormwater management systems.

Moreover, the Borough's aging population, with nearly 15% of residents over the age of 65, may face heightened vulnerability during extreme weather events. Older adults often have mobility needs and limited access to resources, making pre-disaster engagement and post-disaster recovery more challenging. As climate change continues to alter weather patterns, the Borough will need to prioritize resilience and adaptation measures, such as upgrading critical infrastructure, improving drainage systems, and maintaining dams and floodgates, to mitigate the increased risks and protect its residents.

RISK ASSESSMENT

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) statistics

Allentown Borough	
Initial FIRM	9/16/1981
Effective FIRM	9/25/2009
Number of Policies In-Force:	12
Total Losses:	3
Total Payments:	$10,865.75
Number of RL Properties:	0
Number of Mitigated RL Properties:	0
RL – Total Losses:	$0
RL – Total Paid:	0
Number of SRL Properties:	0
Number of Mitigated SRL Properties:	0
SRL – Total Losses:	$0
SRL – Total Paid:	0

Source: FEMA Policy and Loss Data, August 2024

Vulnerability of the Built Environment

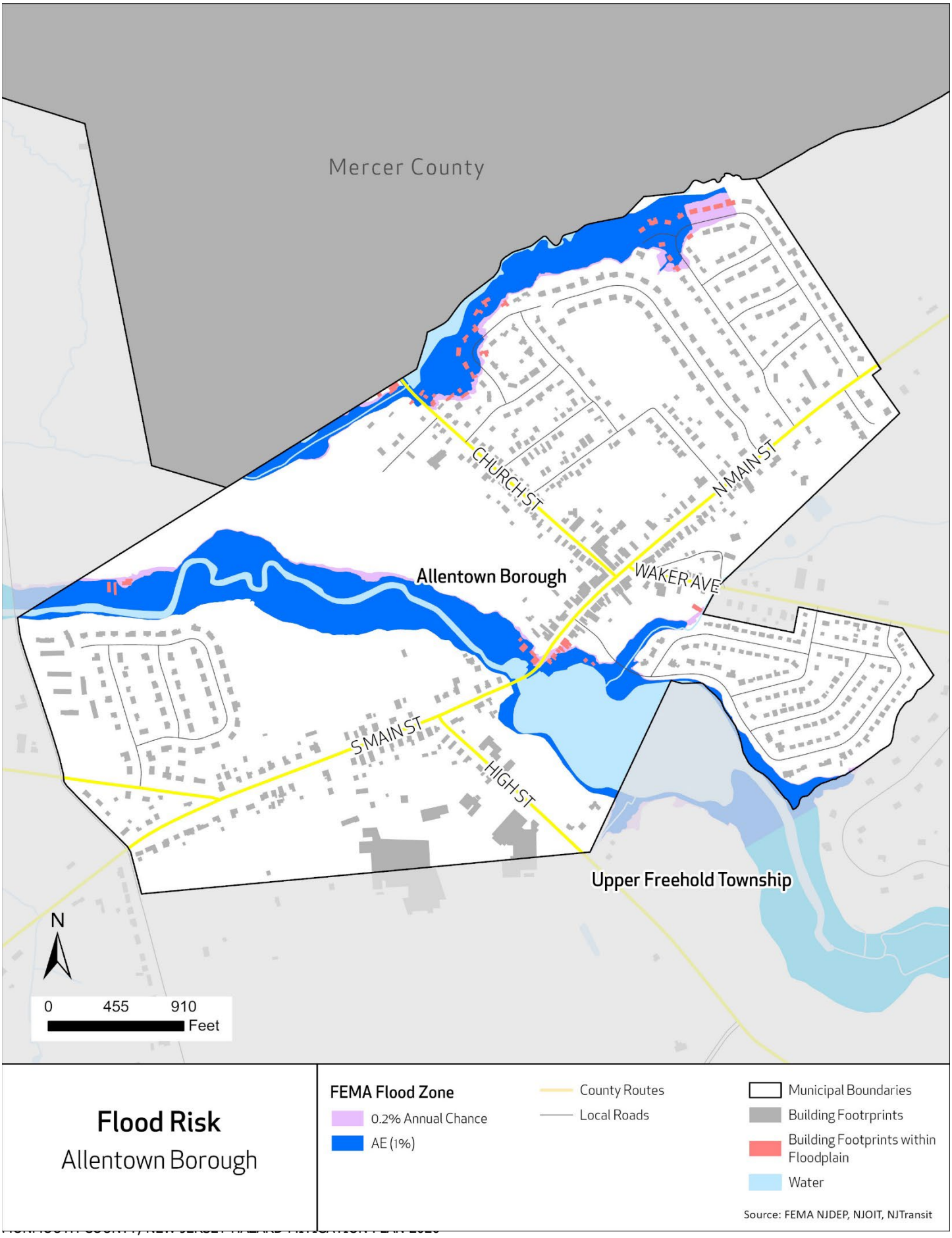
The Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) in Allentown Borough is primarily located adjacent to the waterbodies of the Borough, Indian Run, Indian Lake, Doctors Creek, and Conines Millpond and its smaller tributaries. Approximately 15.4 percent of the total area of Allentown lies within the 1% annual chance flood zone as defined by FEMA. An additional 1.2 percent of the area of the municipality is in the 0.2% annual chance flood zone.

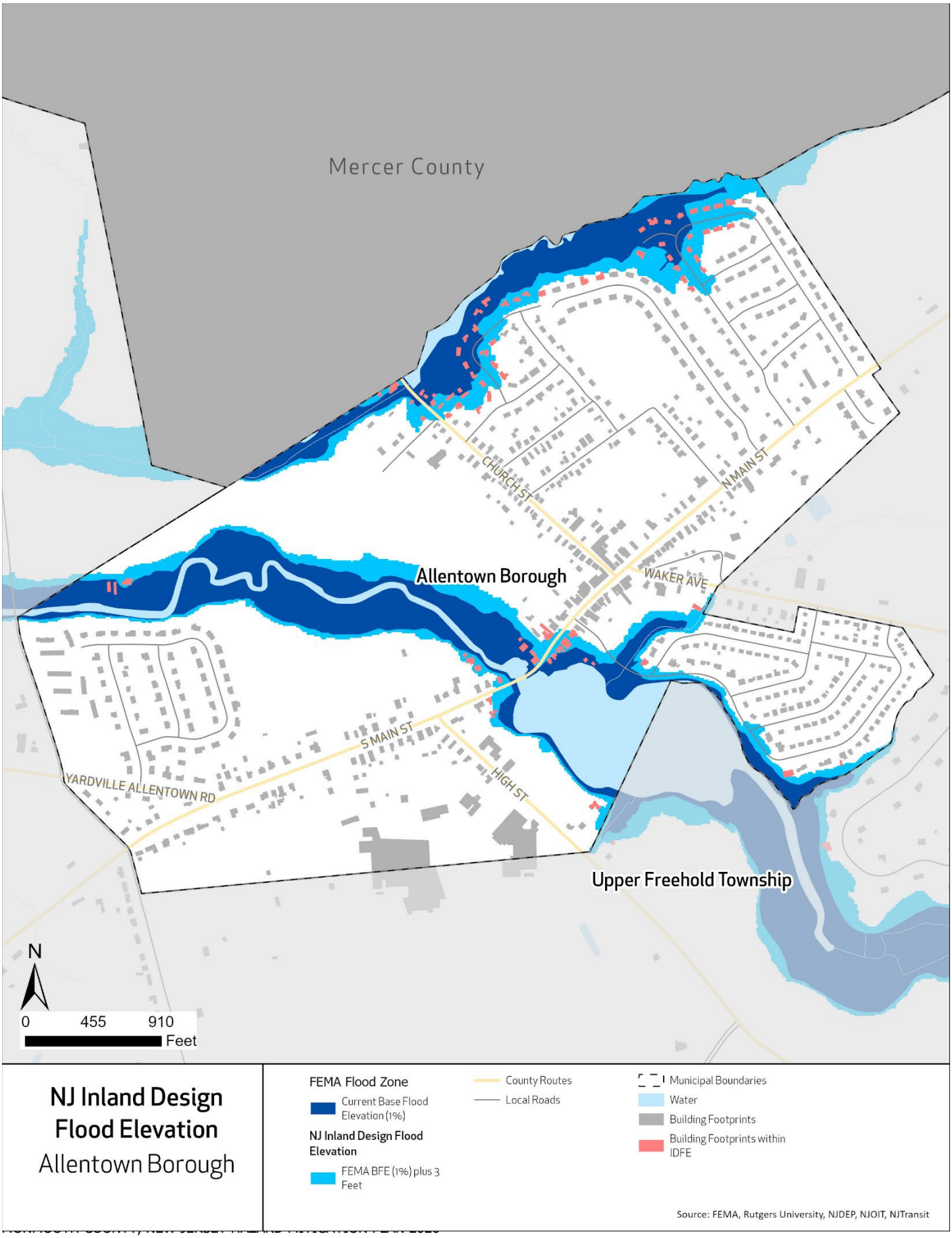
Roughly 68.3 percent of Allentown is considered developed. Of the developed parcels of the town, 11.4 percent fall within the 1% annual chance flood zone and 1.2 percent are within the 0.2% annual chance flood zone. This illustrates that the developed area of the municipality is generally in line with overall flood risk.

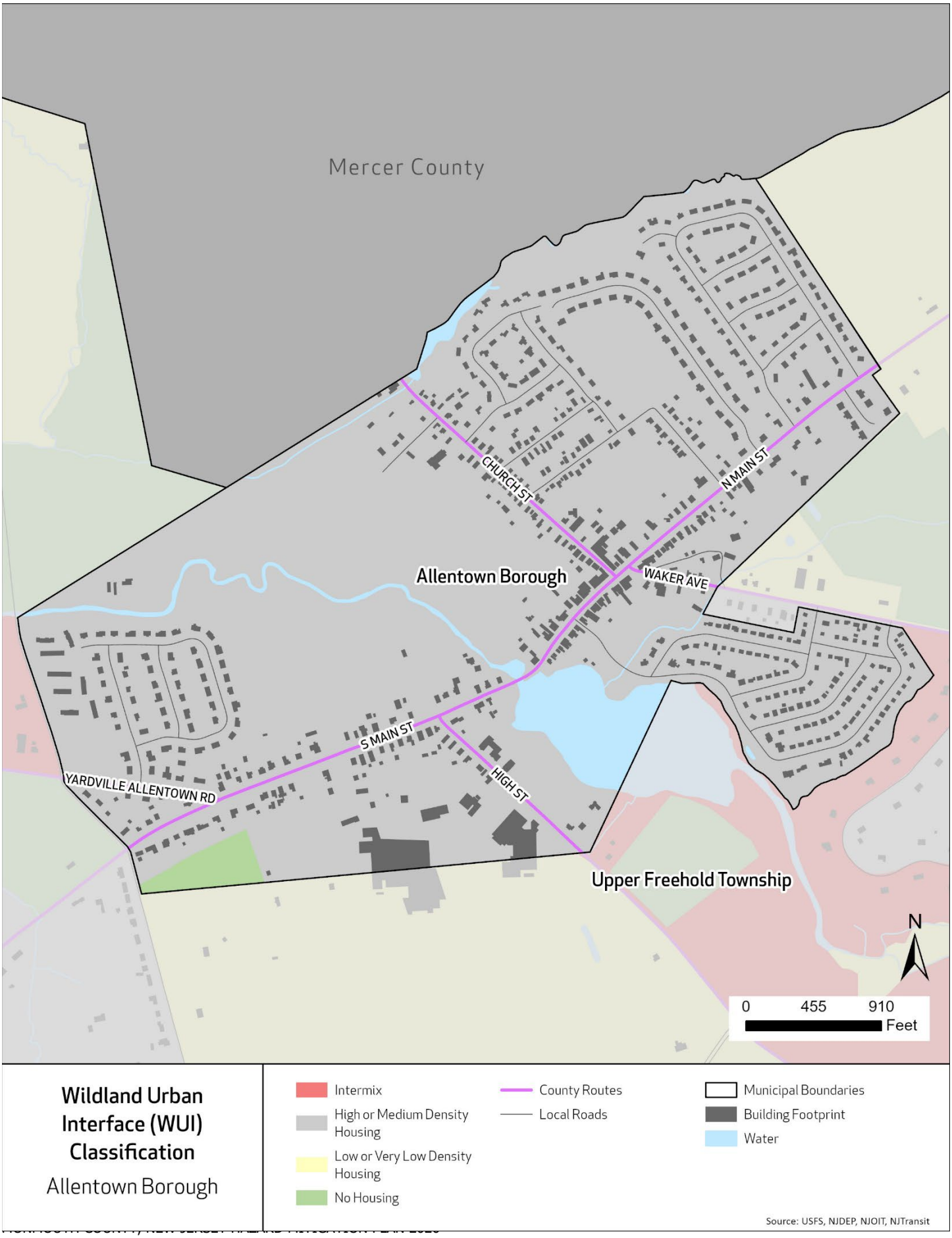
	Percentage in the 1% Floodplain	Percentage in the 0.2% Floodplain	5 feet of Sea Level Rise
Developed Parcels	11.4%	1.2%	NA
Exposed Land Area	15.4%	1.2%	NA

During the planning process, Allentown identified critical facilities which function as community lifelines. These facilities provide the most fundamental services in the community that, when stabilized, enable all other aspects of society to function. Allentown identified 11 total facilities. Of these facilities, three facilities within the "Water Systems" lifeline are located within the 1% floodplain. Water Systems lifelines include facilities such as dams and water treatment plants.

Community Lifeline Type	Number in the 1% Floodplain	Number in the 0.2% Floodplain	Number within 5 feet of Sea Level Rise
Water Systems	3	-	NA


Mercer County
Allentown Borough
Upper Freehold Township
CHURCH ST
N MAIN ST
WAKER AVE
S MAIN ST
HIGH ST
N
0
455
910
Feet
Flood Risk
Allentown Borough
FEMA Flood Zone
0.2% Annual Chance
AE (1%)
County Routes
Local Roads
Municipal Boundaries
Building Footprints
Building Footprints within Floodplain
Water
Source: FEMA NJDEP, NJOIT, NJTransit


Mercer County
Allentown Borough
Upper Freehold Township
CHURCH ST
N MAIN ST
WAKER AVE
S MAIN ST
HIGH ST
YARDVILLE ALLENTOWN RD
N
0
455
910
Feet
NJ Inland Design Flood Elevation
Allentown Borough
FEMA Flood Zone
Current Base Flood Elevation (1%)
NJ Inland Design Flood Elevation
FEMA BFE (1%) plus 3 Feet
County Routes
Local Roads
Municipal Boundaries
Water
Building Footprints
Building Footprints within IDFE
Source: FEMA, Rutgers University, NJDEP, NJOIT, NJTransit


Mercer County
Allentown Borough
Upper Freehold Township
CHURCH ST
N MAIN ST
WAKER AVE
S MAIN ST
HIGH ST
YARDVILLE ALLENTOWN RD
N
0
455
910
Feet
Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Classification
Allentown Borough
Intermix
High or Medium Density Housing
Low or Very Low Density Housing
No Housing
County Routes
Local Roads
Municipal Boundaries
Building Footprint
Water
Source: USFS, NJDEP, NJOIT, NJTransit

CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT

Planning & Regulatory Capabilities

Allentown Borough has the following additional Planning & Regulatory capabilities:

Plan and Regulation	Yes	No	Date of last update	How does this capability support hazard mitigation?
Master Plan	X		2018	Conservation Plan Element The 2018 Borough Master Plan details strategy statements on storm resiliency and environmental sustainability which details recommendations for conserving and protecting environmental features within the Borough including floodplains and steep slopes.
Capital Improvement Plan	X			
Local Emergency Operations Plan/Continuity of Operations Plan	X			
Floodplain Development Ordinance	X			
Floodplain Management Plan		X		
Stormwater Management Ordinance	X			
Stormwater Management Plan	X			
Watershed Management Plan		X		
Sheltering Plan	X			
Evacuation Plan	X			
Substantial Damage/Improved Structures Response		X		
Repetitive Loss Plan		X		
Disaster Debris Management Plan	X			
Tracking elevation certificates and/or Letter of Map Change		X		
Post-Disaster Recovery Plan		X		
Current/recent redevelopment plans or studies		X		
Community Wildfire Protection Plan		X		
Climate Adaptation Plan				
Other Plans that discusses hazard mitigation	X			Panhandle Plan, Upper Freehold Historic Farmland Byway Corridor Management Plan (2010)
Other ordinance and regulation that mitigate the impacts of natural hazards		X		

Administrative and Technical Capabilities

Allentown Borough has the following Administrative and Technical capabilities:

Position	Yes	No	Explanation
Floodplain Administrator	X		
Grant Writer	X		
Staff trained to support mitigation	X		
Existing mutual aid or technical assistance agreements to support hazard mitigation projects		X	
Non-governmental organizations/other partners that work with the municipality on mitigation projects		X	

Position	Yes	No	Explanation
Organizations that work with socially vulnerable or underserved populations		X	

Education and Outreach Capabilities

Allentown Borough has the following Education and Outreach capabilities:

Education & Outreach Capability	Yes	No	Explanation
Communicate natural and human-based hazards to the public	X		
StormReady		X	
Firewise USA		X	
Severe Weather Awareness Week		X	
Community Rating System (CRS)		X	

Financial Capabilities

Within the last five years, Allentown Borough has used the following financial capabilities to implement hazard mitigation activities:

Financial Capability	Yes	No	Explanation
FEMA BRIC		X	
FEMA FMA		X	
FEMA Public Assistance		X	
FEMA HMGP		X	
Non-FEMA Federal Funding Programs		X	
Other FEMA resources		X	
NJ Infrastructure Bank	X		
Other state municipal assistance or grant programs		X	
Evaluation process on the prioritization of risk reduction projects against other local activities	X		
Other ongoing efforts to build additional financial capabilities	X		

Additional Capability Assessment Information:

- **Sustainable Jersey Participation Status**: Registered

MITIGATION STRATEGY

Overview and Progress Since Last Update

Allentown Borough actively works to improve resilience to damage from natural disasters. Since 2020, the Borough has adopted updated stormwater management and floodplain management ordinances. Moving forward, the Borough will remain forward thinking and continue to coordinate with state and local agencies on the best ways to achieve resiliency within the community.

Completed or Removed Actions

Action	Name	Description	Hazards Addressed	Priority	Responsible Party	Potential Funding	Cost Estimate	Time-line	Action Status	Notes
Action 3-1	Build a Flood Wall around the Wastewater Treatment Plant	Protect two buildings at the wastewater treatment plant by installing a flood wall around both buildings and portable flood gates which can be installed or removed when storms are approaching. All other tanks and treatment units will be installed above the 500-year flood hazard elevation as part of the Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade Project.	Dam Failure, Flood	N/A	Allentown Borough OEM	N/A	$4M	N/A	Completed	Upgraded to 500-year flood. Elevated tank to 500-year flood.
Action 3-2	Repair, Remove, or Rehabilitate the Allentown Dam	Repair, remove, or rehabilitate Allentown Dam, a High-Hazard Potential Dam, located along Doctors Creek	Dam Failure	N/A	Borough	N/A	N/A	N/A	Withdrawn	Withdrawn due to the dam recently being upgraded and requires more ongoing maintenance than a remodel (see Action 3-3).

New and Ongoing Actions

Action	Name	Description	Hazards Addressed	Priority	Responsible Party	Potential Funding	Cost Estimate	Time-line	Action Status	Notes
Action 3-3	Continue ongoing maintenance of Conine's Millpond Dam/ Allentown Dam	The dam under Rt. 524 and bridge U-12 need to be cleared of any debris deposited near the floodgate to facilitate the movement of water from the drainage out of Conine's Millpond Dam/ Allentown Dam. Additionally, general maintenance is needed to preserve functionality.	Dam Failure, Flood, Nor'easter, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	Low	Allentown Borough OEN	Municipal Budget, NJDEP Bureau of Dam and Safety and Flood Control	$2k/ year	5+ years	Ongoing	The dam was recently upgraded in 2015, however, ongoing maintenance is needed to preserve the health of the dam and mitigate future dam failures. This action does not address socially vulnerable populations. If climate change increases the number of extreme storms seen having a high-functioning dam with adequate drainage will be crucial. Emergency Action Plan last revised in December 2024.

Action	Name	Description	Hazards Addressed	Priority	Responsible Party	Potential Funding	Cost Estimate	Time -line	Action Status	Notes
Action 3-4	Improve drainage of the sewer system on county roads	The municipal sewer system that travels alongside and underneath Rt 524, Rt. 526, and Rt 539 in Allentown Borough need to be clear of any debris deposited by natural and manmade refuse that collects in the openings and drainage areas of the system.	Flood, Nor'easter, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	Low	Monmouth County	County/ Municipal Budget	$1.5k	2 years	Ongoing	DPW currently maintains the inlet heads and grates for the stormwater system, however, the greater stormwater system needs to be maintained by the county for adequate flood drainage which is an ongoing commitment. This is a current requirement of the MS4 stormwater permit. This will help mitigate the effects of floods, nor'easters, hurricanes, and tropical storms. As climate change continues to worsen, the frequency of severe storms increases. The stormwater system needs to be adequately maintained and prepared.
Action 3-5	Dredge Mill Pond to Alleviate Erosion	Dredge the entirety of the Mill Pond area to maximize a depth of 4 feet deep. The depth would be shallower near the edges of the pond.	Flood	Low	Allentown Borough OEM	Municipal budget, USDA grant	$2,357,500.00	2 years	Ongoing	The depth of Mill Pond is decreasing as leaves and other animal debris fill the area around the edges of the pond. Dredging will reduce the flood risk of this pond by increasing retention. If the frequency and severity of storms are affected by climate change more adequate retention will be necessary. Ongoing as carried over from the last plan.
Action 3-6	Replace the outfall pipe and storm pipe on Probasco Drive.	Replace the outfall pipe and storm pipe, as well as dredge the tributary from Probasco Drive to Indian run/ dam spillway, to provide a discharge point. The estimated dredging depth is 4 feet deep.	Flood, Nor'easter, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	Medium	Allentown Borough OEM	FEMA HMA, Municipal Budget	$603,200.00	5+ years	Ongoing	The current outfalls have submerged because of the amount of development, and they are filled with silt. There is no solution besides dredging the entire stretch of the river. This is an ongoing effort as it was carried off from the last plan. The Indian Run River needs to be cleaned which is approximately 3,000 feet. Dredging and desilting will help address concerns associated with floods, nor'easters, hurricanes, and tropical storms. If the frequency and severity of storms are affected by climate change more adequate retention will be necessary.

Action	Name	Description	Hazards Addressed	Priority	Responsible Party	Potential Funding	Cost Estimate	Time-line	Action Status	Notes
Action 3-7	Acquire, elevate, or relocate buildings and infrastructure in flood-prone areas, with a focus on Repetitive Loss (RL) and Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL) properties.	There is currently no RL or SRL properties in the Borough; however, the Borough realizes the floodplain changes over time and the risk is always present. If in the next five years, properties become RL/SRL, the Borough will coordinate with residents to mitigate properties through structure elevation, demolition to open space, or another type of mitigation.	Flood, Nor'easter, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	Low	Borough and Property Owners	FEMA HMA	TBD	5+ years	Ongoing	Climate change may negatively impact the flood zone and the frequency of floods within the Borough. The Borough will be proactive in managing properties that may become repetitive loss or severe repetitive loss properties in the future. This is an ongoing effort.
Action 3-8	Dredge Indian Run Lake and river from Probasco Drive to Indian Run Dam.	The Indian Run River needs to be dredged along with Indian Run Lake which is approximately 3,000 ft.	Flood	High	Allentown Borough OEM	USDA, municipal budget	$1.5M	2 years	New	The severe build-up of sediment and debris within the lake and river has decreased the water that can be retained and allows for an adequate flow of water. The current build-up results in flooding within the Borough after significant rain events. If the frequency and severity of storms are affected by climate change more adequate retention will be necessary.
Action 3-9	Begin Water Plant Flood Mitigation Projects	The current water plant within the Borough needs several maintenance projects to improve flood mitigation within the Borough. This includes floodproofing the mechanics of the building, improving floodgates, and replacing the roofs, aerators, and electricity. This is currently in the design phase.	Flood	Medium	Allentown OEM	Municipal Budget, I-Bank	$2M	2 years	New	Newly added to increase flood preparedness. This is crucial if the frequency and severity of storms are affected by climate change adequate flood mitigation efforts will be needed.