

16 – FREEHOLD BOROUGH

PLANNING TEAM AND PARTICIPATION

Name	Title	Participation
Henry Stryker III	OEM Coordinator	Primary Point of Contact, Municipal Meeting #1, Municipal Meeting #2
Stephen Gallo	Borough Administrator	Reviewed appendix
Michael Sweetman	Deputy OEM Coordinator	Reviewed appendix
Robert Lithgow	Engineering Aide	Reviewed appendix
Robert Cosgrove	Borough Attorney	Reviewed appendix
Anthony Maltese	Borough Engineer	Reviewed appendix

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Overview

Completely surrounded by the Township of Freehold, the Borough of Freehold is in the western part of Monmouth County and encompasses 1.9 square miles. The borough has a vibrant downtown with county and court offices, professional services, restaurants, shops, and churches. The Monmouth County Park System (MCPS) acquired the “Freehold Hub Site” on Railroad Avenue. MCPS began construction to extend the existing Henry Hudson Trail to this park in the Fall of 2023. Future plans include the development of recreational facilities, and the potential for an extension of the trail along the active rail line towards Farmingdale.

Land Use, Development, & Growth

Freehold is a predominantly residential community and most of its land is developed. From 2015 to 2020, the community underwent minimal change in its land use composition, with urban or developed land accounting for nearly 96 percent of its total area, and forested land and wetlands making up the remaining 3 percent.

Land Use Type	Total Acres (2015)	Total Acres (2020)	Percent Change
Agriculture	-	-	-
Barren Land	-	-	-
Forest	30.6	30.4	-1%
Urban	1192.0	1192.3	>0%
Water	1.4	1.4	>0%
Wetlands	11.8	11.8	>0%

Source: NJDEP Land Use/Land Cover data, 2015-2020

Recent Major Development and Infrastructure from 2020 to Present

In 2023, the Chesapeake and Delaware Railroad began a construction and restoration project that included “25,000 track-feet of relayed rail and 12,500 new crossties, of which more than 8,000 are environmentally sustainable.” In October of the same year, the stretch of railroad between Freehold Borough and Farmingdale was reactivated after many years of being dormant.

The Borough of Freehold adopted its Core Center Rehabilitation Plan in 2019 and subsequently amended it in 2020. The Plan builds on the borough’s 2018 Downtown Vision Plan, which outlines the key changes the Borough seeks to implement at and around the downtown bus station and the Courthouse building (Hall of Records). Changes proposed for the area surrounding the bus station include revitalizing the bus station, enhancing development opportunities for up to 70 residential units and 85,000 square feet of office space, and establishing a borough green, as well as redesigning the layout

of parking areas and street crossings. The Borough achieved one of the Plan’s goals in 2020 when a mid-block pedestrian crosswalk was established on East Main Street.

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

The entirety of the Borough of Freehold has been designated in need of rehabilitation, and several redevelopment initiatives are in progress. The most significant and furthest along in the process is called Hometown Development, including the old Freehold Borough Hall and ten additional lots. The project is planned to include up to 400 residential units over retail wrapped around structured parking. A redeveloper has recently been designated for this site. There are other projects as well, including 57 units on Park Avenue, 17 units designated for people with development disabilities over retail on Main Street, and 32 units on the corner of Broad and Court Streets. There is also a four-acre site on Park Avenue in the early planning stages. With the closures of the Nestle factory and the racetrack, there is potential for redevelopment in those areas.

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).

Freehold Borough’s total estimated population is 12,498 – an estimated 4.5% of which is under 5 years old, and 13.3% of which is over age 65. The Borough saw an estimated population growth of 4.7% between the ACS survey periods of 2013-2017 and 2018-2022. Both a notable older population and a notable population growth of nearly 5.0% will direct hazard mitigation actions toward planning for aging populations as well and for increasing population.

Nearly all of Freehold Borough’s area qualifies for overburden (OBC) designation, as seven block groups meet OBC criteria identifying *Minority* population vulnerability (three block groups) and *Low Income and Minority* population vulnerability (four block groups). There are two census tracts in Freehold Borough’s southwest which meet CEJST criteria for designation under *Workforce Development*, *Housing*, and *Water and Wastewater* indicators. No parts of the Borough meet designation criteria for CDRZ identification.

Demographics Summary	
Total Population (2018-2022 ACS 5-year Estimates)	12,498
Population Change since 2017	4.7%
Percent of Population Age < 5	4.5%
Percent of Population > 65	13.3%

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

Hazard Ranking Explanation

Extreme temperatures remain a medium level of concern. Hotels are no longer offered in the event of a Code Blue, so those in need of shelter now stay in the warming center overnight. Floods are now a low level of concern, while they were not applicable in 2021. There is localized flooding due to poor drainage. Civil unrest remains at a low level of concern; there are periodic protests in front of Borough Hall. Economic disruption remains at a medium level of concern. Both the Nestle factory and the racetrack are closing. Power failure has increased from a low to a medium level of concern due to downed branches caused by storms that have taken out the power.

Significant Hazard Events Since Last Plan Update

In July 2020, Tropical Storm Fay caused heavy rain and strong winds, leading to power outages that left 1,097 customers in Freehold Borough without power.

With less than 2 inches of rainfall recorded, Freehold Borough was spared the worst of Hurricane Ida in September 2021, with no extensive flooding or damage noted. During a nor'easter in October 2021, the borough recorded 3.68 inches of rainfall.

Climate Change Impacts on Extent and Magnitude of Hazards

Climate change may increase the flood risk in Freehold Borough from heavy runoff and/or extending the floodplains in the surrounding Freehold Township. Other impacts are anticipated to be minimal at this time.

RISK ASSESSMENT

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) statistics

Freehold Borough	
Initial FIRM	9/25/2009
Effective FIRM	No SFHA
Number of Policies In-Force:	0
Total Losses:	0
Total Payments:	\$0
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

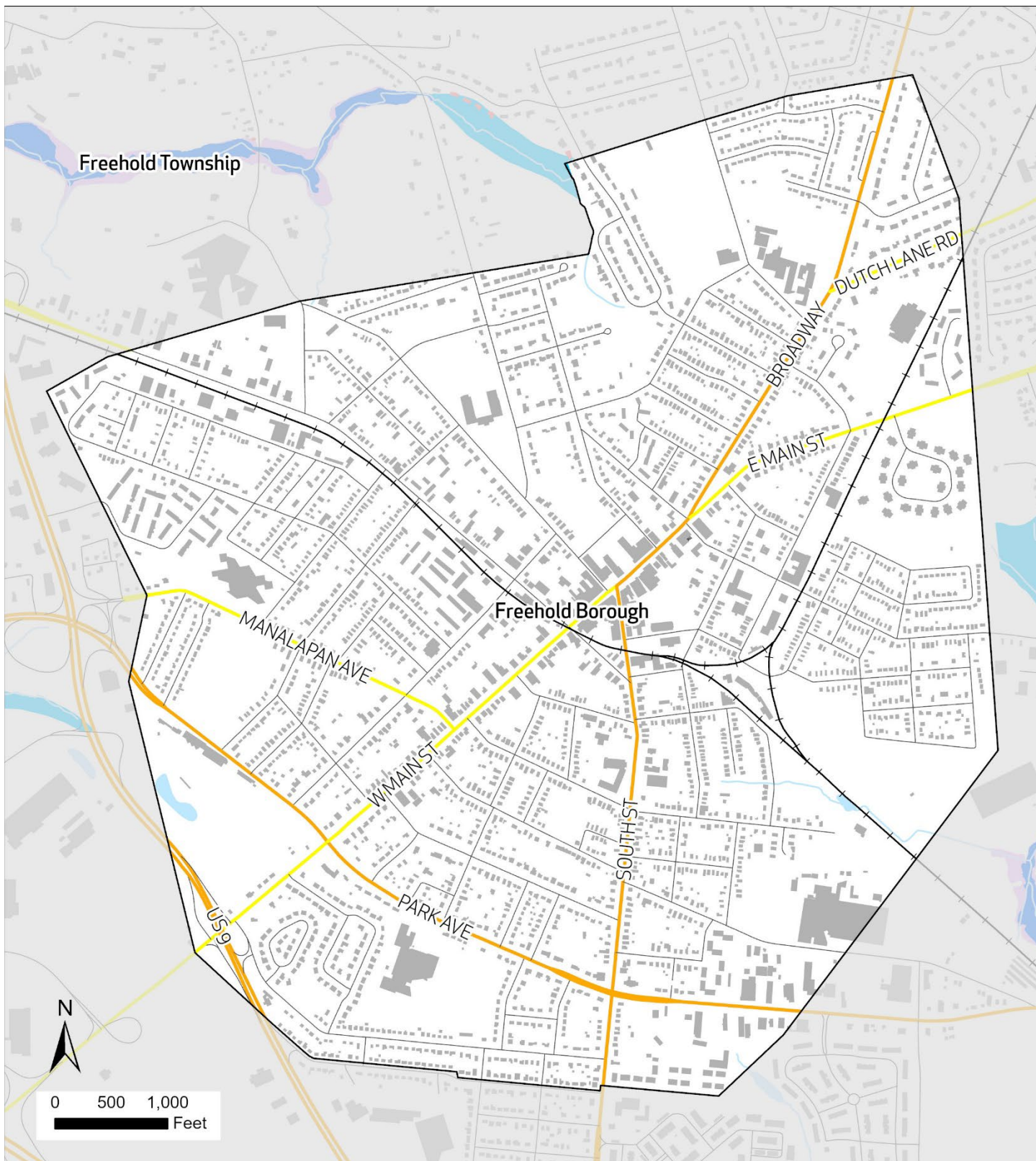
Freehold Borough contains no area within the Special Hazard Flood Area (SFHA). A small amount of floodplain in Freehold Township, within the 1% annual chance flood zone as defined by FEMA, located near Weamaconk Creek in the north of town is close to the Borough's border. The municipality contains no 0.2% annual chance flood zone.

About 91.5 percent of Freehold Borough is considered developed. Of the developed parcels of the town, 0.2 percent fall within the 1% annual chance flood zone and none 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	0.2%	NA	NA
Exposed Land Area	<0.1%	NA	NA

During the planning process, Freehold Borough 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. The municipality identified 31 total facilities. Of these facilities, none are within the floodplain or areas projected to be inundated under sea level rise.

	Number in the 1% Floodplain	Number in the 0.2% Floodplain	Number within 5 feet of Sea Level Rise
Community Lifelines and Critical Facilities	NA	NA	NA



Flood Risk Freehold Borough

FEMA Flood Zone

■ A (1%)

— State Routes

— County Routes

— Local Roads

— Rail Lines

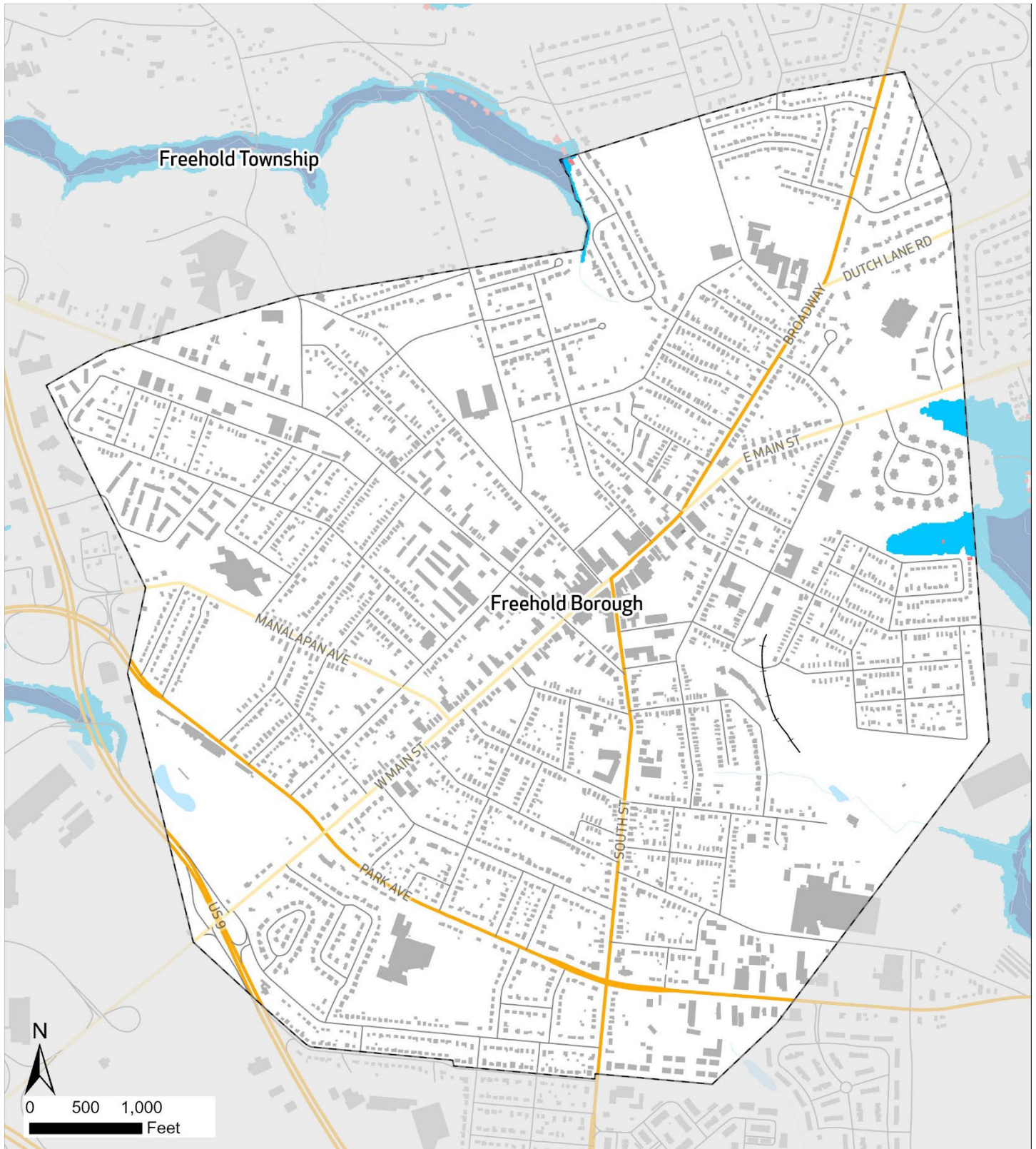
Municipal Boundaries

Building Footprints

Building Footprints within Floodplain

Water

Source: FEMA NJDEP, NJOIT, NJTransit



NJ Inland Design Flood Elevation Freehold Borough

FEMA Flood Zone

Current Base Flood
Elevation (1%)

**NJ Inland Design Flood
Elevation**

FEMA BFE (1%) plus 3
Feet

State Routes

County Routes

Local Roads

Railroad

Municipal Boundaries

Water

Building Footprints

Building Footprints within
IDFE

Source: FEMA, Rutgers University, NJDEP, NJOIT, NJTransit



**Wildland Urban
Interface (WUI)
Classification**
Freehold Borough

- | | |
|--|--|
| Intermix | State Routes |
| High or Medium Density Housing | County Routes |
| Low or Very Low Density Housing | Local Roads |
| No Housing | <div style="width: 5px; height: 5px; background-color: black; position: absolute; left: -5px; top: -5px;"></div><div style="width: 5px; height: 5px; background-color: black; position: absolute; left: 5px; top: -5px;"></div> Rail Lines |

- | |
|---|
| Municipal Boundaries |
| Building Footprint |
| Water |

Source: USFS, NJDEP, NJOIT, NJTransit

CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT

Planning & Regulatory Capabilities

Freehold 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		April 2017	
Capital Improvement Plan	x		2024	
Local Emergency Operations Plan/Continuity of Operations Plan	x		May 2023	
Floodplain Development Ordinance	x		2014	
Floodplain Management Plan	x		2014	
Stormwater Management Ordinance	x		2024	
Stormwater Management Plan	x		2024	
Watershed Management Plan	x		2024	
Sheltering Plan	x		2023	
Evacuation Plan	x		2023	
Substantial Damage/Improved Structures Response		x		
Repetitive Loss Plan		x		
Disaster Debris Management Plan	x		2023	
Tracking elevation certificates and/or Letter of Map Change		x		
Post-Disaster Recovery Plan		x		
Current/recent redevelopment plans or studies	x		2023	
Community Wildfire Protection Plan		x		
Climate Adaptation Plan		x		
Other Plans that discuss hazard mitigation	x		2017	
Other ordinance and regulation that mitigate the impacts of natural hazards	x		2017	

Administrative and Technical Capabilities

Freehold Borough has the following Administrative and Technical capabilities:

Position	Yes	No	Explanation
Floodplain Administrator	x		
Grant Writer	x		Millennium Strategies
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		Red Cross
Organizations that work with socially vulnerable or underserved populations	x		Casa Freehold, CARC, Open Door

Education and Outreach Capabilities

Freehold Borough has the following Education and Outreach capabilities:

Education & Outreach Capability	Yes	No	Explanation
Communicate natural and human-based hazards to the public	x		Everbridge Reverse 911
StormReady	x		
Firewise USA	x		
Severe Weather Awareness Week		x	
Community Rating System (CRS)		x	

Financial Capabilities

Within the last five years, Freehold 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		Covid reimbursement
FEMA HMGP		x	
Non-FEMA Federal Funding Programs	x		Road Hazard Mitigation
Other FEMA resources		x	
NJ Infrastructure Bank		x	
Other state municipal assistance or grant programs	x		NJ Infrastructure, Lead Water Service Line Replacement
Evaluation process on the prioritization of risk reduction projects against other local activities	x		
Other ongoing efforts to build additional financial capabilities	x		Applying for Grants

Additional Capability Assessment Information:

MITIGATION STRATEGY

Overview and Progress Since Last Update

The Borough of Freehold is an older town with many large trees. Some of these trees are located between the sidewalk and the curb making them a hazard as the mature in age. These trees are easily uprooted during times of storms and heavy winds. The Borough of Freehold Shade tree Program will continue to identify these trees and dead trees and remove them so they do not fall on structures, take down power lines and block streets. The Borough also works with the Power Company, Jersey Central Power & Light and allows them to trim the trees so they are less likely to take down power lines and create power outages throughout the Borough of Freehold. The Borough of Freehold also, when it is possible, replaces trees that have been removed, the replacement trees that are used are ones that are less likely to uproot sidewalks and curbs and only grow to a height which are below the power lines so in the future there will be less large trees that could fall on and damage structures and take down power lines. The Borough of Freehold will continue to investigate funding to install backup electrical generators as stated in the below new actions.

Completed or Removed Actions

Action	Name	Description	Hazards Addressed	Priority	Responsible Party	Potential Funding	Cost Estimate	Time-line	Action Status	Notes
16_01	Update Generator for Firehouse Emergency Operations Center (EOC)	Upgrade the current and outdated generator at the firehouse which houses the Emergency Operations Center for OEM, Fire Department, Police Department, and EMS.	Extreme Wind, Nor'easter, Hurricane and Tropical Storm, Winter Storm	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$95,000		Completed	
16_02	Upgrade Generator for Shelter	Upgrade of current generator at the Freehold Learning Center used as an evacuation center.	Extreme Wind, Nor'easter, Hurricane and Tropical Storm, Winter Storm	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$50,000		Completed	
16_03	Install Surveillance Cameras at Water Plant	Add security cameras to the new water plant, which is currently in the design phase.	Terrorism	N/A	N/A	N/A			Completed	

New and Ongoing Actions

Action	Name	Description	Hazards Addressed	Priority	Responsible Party	Potential Funding	Cost Estimate	Time-line	Action Status	Notes
16_04	Improve Emergency Notification System	System that is presently in place will lose grant funding and will be continued for notification of first responders and public in emergencies.	All Hazards	Medium	Borough Administrator and OEM	Municipal budget	\$10,000	1 year	Ongoing	Ongoing. Using Everbridge and the Borough is funding themselves. For fire, the Borough uses "I am Responding".
16_05	Continue Tree Maintenance to Reduce Risk of Power Outages and Property/Human Harm	The Shade Tree Program is removing trees and limbs that are dead or hazardous in the area where they could fall on power lines, houses, or people.	Extreme Wind, Nor'easter, Hurricane and Tropical Storm, Winter Storm	Low	Borough Administrator and OEM, Shade Tree Commission	Municipal budget	\$50,000	1 year	Ongoing	Ongoing. There is a contractor who has been coming in, but funding is getting light.
16_06	Purchase and Install Generator for The Continental at Freehold	The Continental at Freehold (Family and Senior Apartments) houses low-income and senior citizens, in addition to a police station and needs backup power in case of a power outage.	All Hazards	Low	Borough Administration	FEMA HMA	\$200,000	1 year	Ongoing	Ongoing. Still need to purchase.
16_07	Purchase and Install Backup Generators for Lights at High-volume Intersections	Coordination with the State, County, and Freehold Township on backup generators for traffic signals at the intersections of Route 79 & Route 537, E. Main St. & South St., Dutch Ln. & Route 79, Route 9 & Route 79, Jackson St. & E. Main St.	All Hazards	Medium	State, County, and Freehold Township, Freehold Borough	Homeland Security, Municipal budget, County budget	\$100,000	1 year	Ongoing	Ongoing waiting on NJ DOT to install the electrical connections at these traffic lights, so the Borough could at least hook up temporary generators during power outages
16_08	Target Harden Critical Facilities by Installing Surveillance Cameras, an Access Control System, Security	Install surveillance cameras, an Access Control System, security personnel, and/or bulletproof glass at the Borough facility in Freehold Township, DPW,	Terrorism	Medium	Borough Administration	Homeland Security grants	\$50,000	2 years	Ongoing	

Action	Name	Description	Hazards Addressed	Priority	Responsible Party	Potential Funding	Cost Estimate	Time-line	Action Status	Notes
	Personnel, and/or Bulletproof Glass	and the Municipal Building to target harden against terrorist attack.								
16_09	Mitigate Flooding at Veterans Park and Liberty Street Park Through New Pipelines	Structure of inlet is gone; need new piping by railroad track.	Flood, Nor'easter, Hurricane and Tropical Storm	Medium	Township	FEMA HMA, Municipal budget	\$200,000	1 year	Ongoing	Veterans Park has been completed. New drainage pipes were put in. Liberty Street Park still needs work. The work at Liberty Street is scheduled to start in Spring 2025
16_10	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 are 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	High	Borough and Property Owners	FEMA HMA		5 + years	Ongoing	Ongoing, at the present time no structures have been identified that require this mitigation.
16_11	Purchase generator for municipal building	The municipal building is home to municipal departments and is a critical facility. Needs backup power in case of a power outage.	All Hazards	Low	Borough Administration	FEMA HMA	\$200,00	1 year	New	Investigating funding for this project.