
PR-10 CONSULTATION - 91.100, 91.200(B), 91.215(L)

TABLE 3 – OTHER LOCAL / REGIONAL / FEDERAL PLANNING EFFORTS (CONTINUED)

Name of Plan	Lead Organization	How do the goals of your Strategic Plan overlap with the goals of each plan?
Hall County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update, 2017-2022	Hall County Emergency Management Agency	This plan contains goals and strategies to mitigate environmental and manmade hazards through prevention, emergency services, public education and awareness, structural projects, and property and natural resource protection.

NA-10 HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT - 24 CFR 91.205 (A,B,C)

Broadband Access Needs

Reliable access to the internet is increasingly imperative for job searches, primary and secondary education, college and continuing education programs, and applying for and obtaining assistance from various social service agencies and housing providers. Low- and moderate-income households often face difficulties accessing the internet due to prohibitive costs (of internet access or of devices upon which to access the internet) or limited availability, particularly in rural areas. Stakeholder interviews and other community input did not specifically identify internet access as an unmet need for low- and moderate-income households in Gainesville. However, several agencies that participated in the community engagement process do provide internet access and/or computers on which to access the internet for their clients.

Family Promise of Hall County has a day center open weekdays from 7:30 AM to 5 PM where client families can use computers and access the internet. Both the Gainesville Housing Authority and the Gainesville-Hall County Senior Life Center have computer rooms with internet access and offer regular computer classes for their residents/clients. Internet access is also available for students through the Gainesville school system and the general public at Hall County libraries. Additionally, using local funds and a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission, the City of Gainesville installed free public wireless internet in downtown, Roosevelt Square, and the Midtown Greenway.

The Market Analysis (Section MA-20) provides an overview of the extent of broadband availability in Gainesville, including the number of providers and download/upload speeds.

Environmental Resiliency

The degree to which low- and moderate-income households are vulnerable to increased natural hazards associated with climate change is an important consideration for jurisdictions and regions as they prepare environmental resiliency and other plans. With its location on Lake Lanier, flood risk is an important consideration for Gainesville. However, a review of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Flood

Map Program indicates low- and moderate- income block groups in Gainesville are generally not located near enough to the lake to put them at risk for flooding. Flat Creek does run through some of these areas; while there is generally not residential development within its flood risk zone, there are some housing units within its 100-year flood plain.

Environmental hazards and natural disasters were not mentioned by stakeholders or survey participants as a key issue in Gainesville during the community engagement process. The planning team interviewed representatives from the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission, which is responsible for regional environmental planning, and reviewed Hall County's Hazard Mitigation Update, which Gainesville signed on to in 2017. The Market Analysis (Section MA-20) provides an overview of recent activities designed to increase environmental resiliency in Gainesville and Hall County.

MA-20 HOUSING MARKET ANALYSIS: CONDITION OF HOUSING – 91.210(A)

Broadband Access Availability

As discussed in NA-10, broadband internet is increasingly necessary for adults to access job ads and applications, online continuing education and college programs, and social service and housing resources. For children and teens, online education resources are also important. There are three considerations to be taken into account in assessing internet access: (1) need for broadband wiring and for connections to broadband service; (2) competitive pricing and service resulting from having more than one internet service provider within an area; and (3) affordability of broadband service for low- and moderate-income households.

According to the Federal Communication Commission's database and maps of broadband availability, 99.3% of Gainesville's population lives in areas with access to three or more service providers offering internet service at download speeds of 25 megabits per second (Mbps) or higher and upload speeds of 3 Mbps, which would be sufficient for most use. The remaining 0.7% of the population has access to two providers with these speeds. The FCC's data indicates that the availability of broadband connections through a variety of providers should not be an issue in Gainesville.

Despite the availability of several internet access providers, affordability may still be a challenge for many low- and moderate-income households, including homeless individuals and families. As discussed in the Needs Assessment, several organizations providing housing or otherwise serving the Gainesville community do provide computer and internet access, including the Gainesville Housing Authority, Gainesville City Schools, Gainesville-Hall County Senior Life Center, Hall County Public Libraries, and others. Additionally, the City of Gainesville provides free public wireless internet at several areas in the city.

Environmental Resiliency

The impacts of environmental hazards on low- and moderate-income households is an important consideration for regional planners, city staff, and housing and service providers in Gainesville. The Hall

County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) provides emergency preparedness and management for residents living in Gainesville. In 2017, the County adopted a Hazard Mitigate Update covering 2016 through 2021, and Gainesville and other cities in the county signed onto the plan. The Update identified hazards most likely to impact the County and each of its cities. According to this assessment, Gainesville is most vulnerable severe weather (such as lightning, thunderstorms, and hailstorms), high wind, tornadoes, and drought. Each of these hazards have a high probability of occurring, may occur frequently, and may be extremely severe.

To mitigate environmental hazards in the County, EMA identified a variety of techniques focused primarily on prevention, emergency services, and public education and awareness. High priority hazards mitigation techniques include:

- Utilize planning and zoning regulations to deter development in flood plains
- Enforce building design standards related to flooding
- Maintain National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) compliance
- Purchase and install outdoor warning sirens
- Create a community outreach program regarding winter storms, particularly roof damage and regulation
- Create a community education campaign regarding safe sheltering during tornadoes/severe thunderstorms
- Utilize Firewise Communities program to inform public about threat of wildfires and encourage planning initiatives
- Institute water use ordinances and enforce water use ordinances currently in place
- Update inventory of generators at critical facilities
- Maintain generators at all critical facilities
- Maintain safety procedures/policies/plans in accordance with state and federal regulations
- Maintain an active and viable Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)
- Continue to train and equip first responders in hazardous materials operations

Over the next few years, Hall County EMA, Hall County Public Works, Hall County and municipal fire departments, municipal planning departments, and other partners will work to implement these and other strategies to prevent and mitigate natural and manmade hazards.