

TOWN OF GUILDHALL
All-Hazards Mitigation Plan



Town of Guildhall
Selectboard
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February 2023

LOCAL MITIGATION PLAN REVIEW TOOL

Jurisdiction Name & State: Guildhall, VT

The *Local Mitigation Plan Review Tool* demonstrates how the Local Mitigation Plan meets the regulation in 44 CFR §201.6 and offers States and FEMA Mitigation Planners an opportunity to provide feedback to the community.

- The Regulation Checklist provides a summary of FEMA’s evaluation of whether the Plan has addressed all requirements.
- The Plan Assessment identifies the plan’s strengths as well as documents areas for future improvement.
- The Multi-jurisdiction Summary Sheet is an optional worksheet that can be used to document how each jurisdiction met the requirements of the each Element of the Plan (Planning Process; Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment; Mitigation Strategy; Plan Review, Evaluation, and Implementation; and Plan Adoption).

The FEMA Mitigation Planner must reference this *Local Mitigation Plan Review Guide* when completing the *Local Mitigation Plan Review Tool*.

Jurisdiction: Guildhall	Title of Plan: All-Hazard Mitigation	Date of Plan: February 3, 2023
Single or Multi-jurisdiction plan? Single		New Plan or Plan Update? Update
Regional Point of Contact: Bruce Melandy Title: Emergency Mgmt. Coordinator Agency: NVDA Phone Number: 802-424-1420 E-Mail: bmelendy@nvda.net		Local Point of Contact: George Blakeslee Title: Town Clerk Agency: Town of Guildhall Phone Number: 802-676-3797 E-Mail: townclerk@guildhallvt.org

State Reviewer: Caroline Paske	Title: State Hazard Mitigation Officer	Date:
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FEMA Reviewer:	Title:	Date:
Date Received in FEMA Region I		
Plan Not Approved		
Plan Approvable Pending Adoption		
Plan Approved		

**SECTION 1:
REGULATION CHECKLIST**

INSTRUCTIONS: The Regulation Checklist must be completed by FEMA. The purpose of the Checklist is to identify the location of relevant or applicable content in the Plan by Element/sub-element and to determine if each requirement has been ‘Met’ or ‘Not Met.’ The ‘Required Revisions’ summary at the bottom of each Element must be completed by FEMA to provide a clear explanation of the revisions that are required for plan approval. Required revisions must be explained for each plan sub-element that is ‘Not Met.’ Sub-elements should be referenced in each summary by using the appropriate numbers (A1, B3, etc.), where applicable. Requirements for each Element and sub-element are described in detail in this *Plan Review Guide* in Section 4, Regulation Checklist.

1. REGULATION CHECKLIST		Location in Plan (section and/or page number)	Met	Not Met
Regulation (44 CFR 201.6 Local Mitigation Plans)				
ELEMENT A. PLANNING PROCESS				
A1. Does the Plan document the planning process, including how it was prepared and who was involved in the process for each jurisdiction? (Requirement §201.6(c)(1))	2.1 pg. 12			
A2. Does the Plan document an opportunity for neighboring communities, local and regional agencies involved in hazard mitigation activities, agencies that have the authority to regulate development as well as other interests to be involved in the planning process? (Requirement §201.6(b)(2))	2.1 pg. 12			
A3. Does the Plan document how the public was involved in the planning process during the drafting stage? (Requirement §201.6(b)(1))	2.1 pg. 12			
A4. Does the Plan describe the review and incorporation of existing plans, studies, reports, and technical information? (Requirement §201.6(b)(3))	2.1 pg. 12 Appex. A, G, H, I, J, K, L,			
A5. Is there discussion of how the community(ies) will continue public participation in the plan maintenance process? (Requirement §201.6(c)(4)(iii))	Section 4, pg 25 4.2 pg. 26			
A6. Is there a description of the method and schedule for keeping the plan current (monitoring, evaluating and updating the mitigation plan within a 5-year cycle)? (Requirement §201.6(c)(4)(i))	Section 4 pg 25, 4.2 pg. 26			
<u>ELEMENT A: REQUIRED REVISIONS</u>				

ELEMENT B. HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT			
B1. Does the Plan include a description of the type, location, and extent of all natural hazards that can affect each jurisdiction(s)? (Requirement §201.6(c)(2)(i))	Table 2A pg. 13		
B2. Does the Plan include information on previous occurrences of hazard events and on the probability of future hazard events for each jurisdiction? (Requirement §201.6(c)(2)(i))	2.2 pg.15, 2.2.1 pg. 15 2.2.3 pg. 16		
B3. Is there a description of each identified hazard’s impact on the community as well as an overall summary of the community’s vulnerability for each jurisdiction? (Requirement §201.6(c)(2)(ii))	Table 2A pg.13		
B4. Does the Plan address NFIP insured structures within the jurisdiction that have been repetitively damaged by floods? (Requirement §201.6(c)(2)(ii))	3.3.3 pg 19		
<u>ELEMENT B: REQUIRED REVISIONS</u>			
ELEMENT C. MITIGATION STRATEGY			
C1. Does the plan document each jurisdiction’s existing authorities, policies, programs and resources and its ability to expand on and improve these existing policies and programs? (Requirement §201.6(c)(3))	1.3pg 9, 2.5 pg 15, 3.3.1, 3.3.2, 3.3.4, 3.3.5 pg.pg 19, Appex O		
C2. Does the Plan address each jurisdiction’s participation in the NFIP and continued compliance with NFIP requirements, as appropriate? (Requirement §201.6(c)(3)(ii))	3.3.3 pg 19, Appenx J, K, L		
C3. Does the Plan include goals to reduce/avoid long-term vulnerabilities to the identified hazards? (Requirement §201.6(c)(3)(i))	Table 2A pg 13, 2.2, 2.4 pg 15		
C4. Does the Plan identify and analyze a comprehensive range of specific mitigation actions and projects for each jurisdiction being considered to reduce the effects of hazards, with emphasis on new and existing buildings and infrastructure? (Requirement §201.6(c)(3)(ii))	Table 2A pg. 13, Table 3B pg 22, 3.5 pg 20, 4.2 pg 23		
C5. Does the Plan contain an action plan that describes how the actions identified will be prioritized (including cost benefit review), implemented, and administered by each jurisdiction? (Requirement §201.6(c)(3)(iv)); (Requirement §201.6(c)(3)(iii))	3.6 pg. 23 & 24 Table 3B pg. 25		
C6. Does the Plan describe a process by which local governments will integrate the requirements of the mitigation plan into other planning mechanisms, such as comprehensive or capital improvement plans, when appropriate? (Requirement §201.6(c)(4)(ii))	3.6 pg 23 & 24 4.2 pg 26 4.3 pg 27		
<u>ELEMENT C: REQUIRED REVISIONS</u>			

ELEMENT D. PLAN REVIEW, EVALUATION, AND IMPLEMENTATION (applicable to plan updates only)			
D1. Was the plan revised to reflect changes in development? (Requirement §201.6(d)(3))	2.6 pg.16		
D2. Was the plan revised to reflect progress in local mitigation efforts? (Requirement §201.6(d)(3))	Table 3B pg. 15 3.2 pg. 19, 3.3.2 pg. 20, 3.3.3 pg 20 3.6 pg. 23		
D3. Was the plan revised to reflect changes in priorities? (Requirement §201.6(d)(3))	Table 3B pg 25 3.5 pg. 22		
<u>ELEMENT D: REQUIRED REVISIONS</u>			
ELEMENT E. PLAN ADOPTION			
E1. Does the Plan include documentation that the plan has been formally adopted by the governing body of the jurisdiction requesting approval? (Requirement §201.6(c)(5))	Yes pg. 3		
E2. For multi-jurisdictional plans, has each jurisdiction requesting approval of the plan documented formal plan adoption? (Requirement §201.6(c)(5))	N/A		
<u>ELEMENT E: REQUIRED REVISIONS</u>			
ELEMENT F. ADDITIONAL STATE REQUIREMENTS (OPTIONAL FOR STATE REVIEWERS ONLY; NOT TO BE COMPLETED BY FEMA)			
F1.			
F2.			
<u>ELEMENT F: REQUIRED REVISIONS</u>			

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Prerequisites

CERTIFICATE OF PLAN ADOPTION

TOWN OF GUILDHALL SELECTBOARD

Formal Resolution Adopting the 2023-2028

Guildhall Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

WHEREAS, the Town of Guildhall has worked with local officials, residents and regional partners to identify hazards, analyze past and potential future losses due to natural and manmade-caused disasters, to identify strategies for mitigating future losses, and to prepare an updated hazard mitigation plan for the town; and

WHEREAS, a duly-noticed public meeting was held by the Guildhall Planning Board on February 3, 2023 to present and receive public comment on the draft 2023-28

Guildhall Hazard Mitigation Plan;

And

WHEREAS, the 2023-28 Guildhall Hazard Mitigation Plan was submitted to the Vermont Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency for review on February 7, 2023;

And

WHEREAS, FEMA approved the updated 2023-28 Guildhall Hazard Mitigation Plan on _____, pending adoption by the Guildhall Selectboard:

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the

Guildhall Selectboard hereby adopts the 2023 Town of Guildhall Hazard Mitigation Plan for municipal use and implementation.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 2023.

Chair, Guildhall Selectboard

Vice Chair, Guildhall Selectboard

Clerk, Guildhall Selectboard

Section One - Planning Process

1.1 Introduction and Purpose

This All-Hazards Plan is a single plan covering the Town of Guildhall. The purpose of this plan is to assist the Town of Guildhall to identify all hazards facing the community and identify strategies to begin reducing risks from identified hazards. The goals and priorities have not changed since the previous plan.

The impact of expected, but unpredictable natural and human-causes events can be reduced through community planning. The goal of this plan is to provide all-hazards local mitigation strategies that make the communities in northeastern Vermont more disaster resistant.

Hazard Mitigation is any sustained action that reduces or eliminates long-term risk to people and property from natural and human-caused hazards and their effects. Based on the results of previous efforts, FEMA and state agencies have come to recognize that it is less expensive to prevent disasters than to get caught in a repetitive repair cycle after disaster have struck. This plan recognizes that communities have opportunities to identify mitigation strategies and measures during all of the other phases of Emergency Management – Preparedness, Response, and Recovery. Hazards cannot be eliminated, but it is possible to determine what they are, where they might be most severe and identify local actions that can be taken to reduce the severity of the hazards.

Hazard mitigation strategies and measures alter the hazard by eliminating or reducing the frequency of occurrence, avert the hazard by redirecting the impact by means of a structure or land treatment, adapt the hazard by modifying structures or standards or avoid the hazard by stopping or limiting development and could include projects such as:

- Flood proofing structures
- Tying down propane/fuel tanks in flood prone areas
- Elevating structures
- Identifying high accident locations
- Monitor and protect drinking water supplies
- Enlarge or upgrade culverts and road standards
- Proactive local planning
- Ensuring that critical facilities are safely located
- Providing public information

1.2 About Guildhall

Population: 261
Median Housing Value: \$146,100
Essex County Tax Rate for 2022-2023 fiscal year: .0310 cents
Chartered: October 10, 1761 ([New Hampshire Grant](#))
Area: 21,107 Acres / 32.98 Square Miles
Coordinates (Geographic Center): 71°34'W 44°34'N
Altitude ASL: 874 feet
Population Density (persons per square mile): 8.1
Tax Rate: 2022
Municipal: \$ 0.72.16
Resident Education: \$ 1.5639
Non-Resident Education: \$ 1.5356
Equalized Value: \$ 36,143,151

1.3 Community Background and History¹

Guildhall is a rural community located in the northern Connecticut River Valley, 35 miles east of St. Johnsbury in the southern part of Essex County. It is square in shape, six miles on a side, except for the irregularity of the river, and encompasses 23,043 acres, of which about ninety percent is mountainous forest land rising to a height of 2,753 feet at Stone Mountain. The remainder, lying along the Connecticut River on its eastern flank is relatively flat and used for agriculture and residences. The elevation there ranges around 850 feet above mean sea level.

Major water courses in the town include the Connecticut River and Cutler Mill Brook with several lesser streams, but no major stationary water bodies. There are many flat, swampy areas, and eleven mountains over 1400 feet (five being over 2000 feet).

In terms of geographic distribution there is presently only one concentration within town, that being Guildhall Village with approximately fifty residents in the compact area, the rest being relatively evenly distributed mainly along Vermont Route 102, the North Road and Fellows Road.

This area is defined as the only built-up area in Guildhall, with predominantly single-family dwellings and public buildings and uses which should continue to be such. About a third of the buildings in Guildhall are in this area. This is the community's nucleus and in view of restrictions imposed in other areas of town by natural features and many practical considerations, should be the basis for future growth. Most existing lots are small in size (average 1 acre), and the compact nature of the village gives it its distinction and should be preserved. The main trunk of the present municipal water system services this area, but lot sizes must be large enough for on-site sewage disposal. The area is generally defined as extending from the Hawkins hydrant on Route 102 to the hydrant in front of the Silver-Allen residence. This main trunk is 2.5 miles. There is 0.75 miles off the main trunk to the school.

¹ Excerpts from the Guildhall Town Plan 2013
All Hazards Mitigation Plan
Town of Guildhall

In the center of the village is an area of great historic charm, architectural merit and scenic beauty; it includes the Guildhall Common, Court House Hill Cemetery, the Guild Hall, the Essex County Courthouse and Eben Judd Justice Center, Meeting House formerly Community Church, the former Colonel E. C. Benton Summer Home, the Guildhall Public Library/ Masonic Building, Guildhall Village General Store, Veteran's Memorial, the fountain located on the triangle, Historic Guildhall Sign and the river portage trail on the site of the old dam.

The north side of Route 102 to the west of the existing village and behind Court House Hill and coming back out on 102 south of Mason's and recreation and public facilities seems the most suitable for residential expansion. These areas have convenient access to the village center and can be serviced easily by municipal water, power and phone lines, have good soil conditions, and development can be set back from the main highway and encourage the feeling of a compact village.

Income sources and occupations are varied and many people receive a fixed income from the government. No one employer is predominant, although agriculture is very important as an in-town occupation. Industries presently being carried on in town are farming, lumbering, quarrying, maple products production and numerous home industries. There are two trucking businesses, and a few other local businesses specializing in potatoes, concrete, dairy farming, and small retail. Forestry is of regional importance and occupies approximately 80% of the land area. Public service, business/self-employment, industry, trades, and retail /commercial rate high as out-of-town employment primarily concentrated in Northumberland and Lancaster, New Hampshire. A number of professional people in town also serve on a regional basis.

Guildhall is fortunate to have the number and quality of public buildings currently existing. These include the Guild Hall, the Public Library/Masonic Hall, the Essex County Court House, Meeting House/Community Church and the Eben Judd Justice Center. All are considered to be adequate to fulfill their functions and programs. The Guildhall Common and surrounding structures offer a beautiful setting and public open space.

The Guildhall school closed June 30, 2016. The property reverted to the family who had granted it to the town for as long as it was needed for a school. The town then joined the NEK Choice Unified Union School District.

Current police service consists of the Essex County Sheriff's Department and Vermont State Police.

Fire protection and ambulance services are contracted with Lancaster, New Hampshire, which has a well-trained and equipped department and has good access to most of the populated parts of Guildhall. This is considered a very good arrangement, as it provides better protection than the town would otherwise be able to afford, and response time is about 15 minutes. Indian Pumps are used in fighting local brush fires. The town has hydrants in the village area and three dry hydrants strategically located throughout town.

Health services are available from a number of sources including Weeks Medical Center a critical access hospital in Lancaster, New Hampshire which is State and Medicare accredited general hospital. The practicing medical staff of Weeks Medical Center serves the area via offices in Lancaster, Groveton and Whitefield and North Stratford. There is also a Medicare

approved nursing home and Rehabilitation Center in Lancaster and the Caledonia Home Health Care Agency which provides the mechanism to receive home health care based on the referral system. The town appropriates monies on an annual basis to Caledonia Home Health and in addition clients pay for services according to a sliding scale formula.

Road maintenance work is contracted locally. The town has virtually no equipment and has limited storage area. There are twenty-five miles of highways in Guildhall of which 1.1 (Route 2) is rural minor arterial, 7.8 (Route 102) is rural major collector and 4 miles (T.H.#1, Granby Road and Route 102 from the triangle to the bridge) of rural minor collectors, the rest being local roads. These four categories follow basically the four administrative classifications for Guildhall's roads. Vermont Routes 2 and 102 are paved. A portion of the Granby Road is paved; the rest are gravel roads, maintained in accordance to State Standards. There is no public transportation available in Guildhall. However Rural Transportation Services has offered intermittent service in the past by contacting them directly. Airports are located in Lyndonville, Vermont and Whitefield and Berlin, New Hampshire.

Agricultural open space accounts for about 8% of the total land area and is some of the best agricultural land in Essex County. Five full time commercial farms are currently utilizing these lands for a variety of crops and pasture land. Industrial uses account for less than 1% of the land area and consist of the Carroll Concrete, Inc. gravel operation and the Beattie Enterprise gravel pit at the end of town highway #5, Breault Road, and a right-of-way for the Portland Pipe Line. Commercial use is presently limited to State Line Auto, Matthew & Heather Linehan Potato, one law office and a therapeutic riding center. There are approximately 105 permanent homes in Guildhall, with 20% of this total concentrated in the Village and the rest relatively evenly distributed throughout town along existing roads, especially Route 102, the North Road and Fellows Road. Residential use occupies 5% of the land areas. There are two categories of seasonal uses -1) second homes of which there are eight (two in the Village and the rest throughout town) and 2) hunting or wilderness camps. Seasonal uses total about 1% of the land area. Public/ Semi-public uses include only the Common, three acres at the school, a fifty-acre town forest, four cemeteries, and the area around several public buildings probably totaling about 0.25% of the total land area. Streets, utilities and the like utilize perhaps 3%. Forestry/conservation ion areas comprise 81% of the total land area, a great deal being owned and managed by wood products industries.

The Northumberland chlorinated water system serves the community. Approximately 50 households are served by this source of water.

There exists no public sewage system and there is no need foreseen for one. Soils are adequate within the village area, if proper lot sizes are maintained, so that private septic systems can be installed by individual owners, based on current State Wastewater Regulations of the State of Vermont.

There is identified shelter for Guildhall but the shelters would most likely not be sufficient in a flood situation because they are in/near the floodplain and access to them would be limited. There are no municipal generators that could be used for power outages. The plan is to install a generator in the Guildhall.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shelter # 1: Guildhall Court House	75 Court House Drive, Generator on site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shelter #2: Town Hall	13 Courthouse Drive, No generator on site.

Section Two - Risk Assessment

2.1 Identify Hazards

Original Committee Meeting Date: January 16, 2020

Following Covid delay: Valerie Foy review/update September 2022 – January 2023

Planning Board review/update January – February 2023

Meeting Attendees:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. EMC	Valerie Foy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Vice Select Chair	Patricia Rogers 2020 / John Orłowski 2023
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3. Fire Chief	Lancaster Fire Dept.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4. Police	Sheriff Trevor Colby & VSP Dispatch
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5. Road Foreman	Gary Brown
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6. Town Clerk	George Blakeslee
7. Committee Members	Thomas Rogers Planning Comm. 2020-23 Dennis Bacon, Panning Comm. 2020-23 John Orłowski, Planning Comm. 2020-23 Patricia Brown, Planning Comm. 2020-23 Ron Resden, Planning Comm. 2020-2022 Eileen Thietten, Planning Com. 2020-22 Jim Spillane, Planning Com. 2022-23 Thomas Rogers, Jr, Planning Com. 2022-23 Valerie Foy, EMC

Guildhall local officials have identified several hazards that are addressed in this Plan. These were identified through interviewing the Selectboard, Road Commissioner and Town Clerk. These individuals have a thorough knowledge of the community through direct involvement in community issues. Reviewing the history of the community with local officials was instrumental in determining the vulnerability of the community. The public was involved in the planning process during the drafting stage. Notices of meetings were posted on the Town’s web page and all meetings were open to the public as required by Vermont’s Open Meeting Law. The public was invited to join the committee through notices posted on the web site. In addition to the meetings it has been an item on the agenda for the monthly Selectboard meetings with the committee giving a report and discussion being held. To further expand community involvement The Lancaster Assistant Fire Chief and EMS Director met with the committee to help with the planning process. The contractor that maintains the town roads was invited to a meeting to provide information. NVDA was also contacted for information. No one from the public attended the meetings.

The prior Mitigation Plan was used as a reference document to assist with the preparation. In addition, plans from other towns were obtained and reviewed. It was very difficult to locate a plan to review for a town the size of Guildhall which is only one jurisdiction. The committee

members reviewed many plans at meetings and took work home to study for the final plan. At each meeting we reviewed previous work continuing to enhance the documentation, changing verbiage or adding on information, appendices were outlined to add information to the plan. These appendices provide answers to many questions and fill in with additional information that describes Guildhall creating a picture of a small Vermont community in the NEK. The Zoning By-Laws and Town Plan provided valuable information and guidelines as the planning and preparation took place. At selectboard meetings comments were solicited and any information or questions from the public were encouraged. The initial work plan outline was developed and served as the foundation along with meeting agendas and weekly meetings.

The opportunity for neighboring towns, local and regional agencies plus residents was available at least weekly when committee meeting were held (posted on town web site and in 3 town locations). In addition the monthly selectboard meetings enhanced that opportunity with postings on the website and in the previous monthly selectboard minutes that were posted. NVDA was used as a resource as was the towns of Lancaster, NH and Groveton (Northumberland), NH. Maidstone, Vermont also had communication with the committee. The draft plan will be mailed to Maidstone, Granby, Lunenburg, Vermont as well as Lancaster, and Northumberland, NH. The Town By-Laws redone in 2013 addressed the new flood regulations and Flood Management and NVDA were resources for that in 2013. The Zoning Administrator was a member of the committee ensuring development regulations were addressed as in the By-Laws.

Following the lifting of Covid restrictions in Summer 2022, Valerie Foy undertook a further update. The neighboring towns were sent the updated draft in January 2023 (none responded of comments). On December 27, 2022 the Planning Board Warned a Public Hearing for February 3, 2023, and all abutters, the Selectboard and Zoning Administrator were notified by mail. The Public Hearing was conducted as Warned on February 3, 2023 (Minutes in appendices lists attendees).

The plan identifies the Town Plan, Town Zoning By-Laws, including NFIP status, the up-dated Emergency Operations Plan EMS and Fire Contracts, water contracts, road contracts including the Roads Standards, Road & Bridge Standards Certificate of Compliance, the evaluation of Gravel Roads, the Town Report for 2013, rubbish removal contract and the Town History.

VTrans did the Technical evaluation of the gravel roads in town. In 2005/2006 VTrans did a study on the North Road Bridge that resulted in a new one replacing a 1950's bridge. These are the only studies or evaluations done to our knowledge or archived in Guildhall. There have been no geographic earthquake, landslide or fluvial hazard studies done in Guildhall

Table 2-A Hazard Inventory and Risk Assessment

Possible Hazard	Likelihood	Impact	Vulnerability	Vulnerable
Tornado	Low	Medium	Low	Gravel road impact, buildings & trees/Forest
Flood	High	High	High	Murphy Dam
Flash Flood	High	High	High	Steep grades, mountains
Hazardous Materials	Medium	Medium	Medium	Rte 2 corner w/heavy truck traffic
Radiological Incident	Low	Low	Low	Residents
Structure Fire	Medium	Low	Low	Chimney fire
Power Failure	High	High	High	Residents

Winter Storm/Ice/Hail	High	High	High	Roads, Trees & Power lines
High Wind/Severe Thunderstorms	High	High	High	Power outages, Power lines, Trees
Air Crash	Low	Low	Low	One crash
Water Supply Contamination	Low	High	Low	New Hampshire – Groveton supply
Hurricane	Low	High	Low	Utilities, Roads
Earthquake	Low	Low	Low	Utilities, Roads
Dam Failures	Medium	High	High	Murphy Dam, NH
Drought	Medium	Low	Low	Public OK, not private. Agriculture
Chemical or Biological Incident	Low	Medium	Medium	Fertilizer trucks, propane (see hazardous materials incident)
Highway Incidents	High	Medium	Medium	All Roads
Wildfire/Forest Fire	Low	Low	Low	Farms, sugar bushes, residences
Landslide	Low	Low	Low	
School Safety Issues	Low	Low	Low	Closed
Terrorism	Low	Low	Low	Residents, businesses, local officials, school
Portland Pipe Line	Med.	High	High	Rt 2, Surrounding Residents, Morin Rd., Lamotte Rd.
Northumberland Water System	Med.	High	High	Village
Ice Jam Flooding	Low	Low	Low	Junction of the Israel River and the Connecticut River
Erosion	High	High	Low	Farm Land along the Connecticut River
Extreme Temperatures	Low	Low	Low	N/A

DEFINITIONS FOR THE CATEGORIES

LOW	10% probability of occurrence per year or at least once chance in next 100 years	
MEDIUM	50% probability per year, or at least 1 chance in next 10 years	
HIGH	75 % probability in a year	

The Medium to High risks for Guildhall are: floods, flash floods, hazardous materials, power failure, winter storm/ice, high winds, dam failure, drought, and highway incidents.

Past FEMA Declarations and Funding

Town	NFIP	1428 Jul-02	Total
Guildhall	YES	\$ 362,828	\$ 362,828

These are areas that will typically flood/wash during a high rain or flash flood event:

- Route 2 and 102 along the Connecticut River
- April 1 of 1998 saw flooding caused by water runoff with a thaw of the snow and ice.
- April of 2011 saw extensive road washing and rebuilding.

2.2 Profiling Hazards

Only those hazards that are considered a Medium to High vulnerability in Guildhall will be profiled below. There is no historical data available to profile Low vulnerability. While those not being profiled are still important, they are considered a low-to-medium threat to the community where damage would be minimal. Historical data in Guildhall is limited regarding past disasters. Only pictures of the 1950 hurricane can be located. These pictures show trees down in the village area. Also, 1936 pictures show trees down and clusters in the CT River area meadows, however again no story to go with pictures and no one in town today remembers any details. In 2013 the micro burst in the village area blew off the Courthouse roof-again replaced by the County. Downed trees also needed to be cleaned up.

2.2.1 Flood History

The Town of Guildhall has a history of flooding; however none have been totally devastating except one that required significant repairs to a section of Cutler Brook on the north side of the community. The bridge on North Road over Cutler Brook was damaged due to the fact that it was not attached to the headers. A new bridge was put in and the curve approaching the bridge was taken out. Ice jams are frequent along the Connecticut River especially at bridge locations. In Guildhall the Connecticut River height rises and falls daily in the early spring with the flooding in the meadows and farm land on the banks. Damage is very minimal as far as the town is concerned. Once every 5 to 10 years the Connecticut River flows over State RT 102 at Camp Brook Hollow which reseeds by the next day. This presents a problem for the traffic but drops by the next day so town is isolated 12 hours at the most. During the spring thaw isolation occasionally occurs in parts of the Town because the main roads are flooded.

2.2.2 Hazardous Materials

There are no fixed hazardous material sites or underground storage tanks in Guildhall. There is always a concern that there may be a hazardous materials incident on the highways in and around Guildhall, especially on Vermont Routes 2 and 102. These accidents could involve moose during the early evening hours in the summer.

The Portland Pipeline traverses Guildhall and is monitored regularly for leaks and spills by the Portland Pipeline Company. This section of pipeline travels along the southern border of town.

2.2.3 Power Failure, Winter Storms/Ice, and High Winds

Large windstorms normally knock out power to parts of Guildhall. Electrical service is provided by Vermont Electric Cooperative and Green Mountain Power Company. In winter both Town and State roads are kept open and present no inconvenience. People on the gravel roads have plows on their trucks.

In July 2013 a micro burst and rain storm hit a few areas in town with the North Road being hardest hit with trees down. The road was made passable that night by local residents and the next days the town removed downed trees, Fairpoint restored phone service within three days and VT Electric Coop restored power in approximately 48 hours. Most people had their own generators and cell phones. The main damage was on private property and at least one maple sugar bush which is still being cleared.

There is a large elderly population with persons on Lifeline and oxygen. There have been instances where the power has gone out for over 24 hours. There is always the possibility that an ice storm or snow storm could cause major problems with access to the more remote areas and power outages. Most families are well prepared for severe weather events that could keep them in their homes with little resources for several days.

2.2.4 Dam Failures

Above Guildhall and part of the Connecticut River system, is the Murphy Dam, a large earthen dam on Lake Francis, built approximately 80 years ago that impounds a large expanse of the river system. This dam is monitored 24 hours per day and is perhaps the highest risk to the communities in Guildhall and all along the upper Connecticut River. An inundation plan is on file with the State of New Hampshire, State of Vermont, and all towns below the dam for 81 miles until the Centennial Mill Dam is reached in Gilman, Vt. Should this dam breach, it is estimated the peak flow would be between 6-8 feet above the 100-year flood limit at approximately 15-30 hours after the Murphy Dam breach. The elementary school, roads bridges and other public facilities would be underwater with damaging effects. An evacuation plan is in the Guildhall Emergency Plan. Both identified shelter are located in the potential flood area. Another evacuation shelter is needed on higher ground. Presently a warning would be dispatched through Derby State Police dispatch.

2.3 Vulnerability: Overview

In terms of vulnerability, Guildhall rated these potential hazards below as High or Medium threats: flooding, hazardous materials, severe weather, and dam failures. Mitigation strategies are identified for the highest priority projects in Section Three. Only those hazards that were identified as a high risk to the town were profiled. While other types of hazards may cause smaller problems for the community, they are a lower risk.

2.4 Identifying Structures

It is difficult to estimate the total number of structures in the 100-year limit of the FIRM identified floodplain as those maps do not accurately match up to the E911 maps that are based on the structures' geographical location (latitude and longitude). However, it can be estimated that there are approximately 20 structures in or near the flood areas depicted on the NFIP maps. The most vulnerable area is the historic village area of Guildhall. The center of commerce is here along with its school, higher density historic homes and a bridge to New Hampshire.

2.5 Estimating Potential Losses

Future losses should be lessened through mitigation of the repetitively flooded properties, most of which are roads, bridges and culverts. The FIRM maps are not compatible with the GIS maps containing contour, rivers, roads and structures and it is not possible to estimate the amount of potential loss at this time. It is recommended that the NFIP maps be redone using the Vermont

Geographic Information System standards based on orthophoto mapping. The Median Housing Value (MHV) for Guildhall is \$146,100. The Equalized Value for all properties in Guildhall is \$32,758,924. If one percent (1%) of all properties in Guildhall were damaged, the value would be assessed at \$327,589.24.

2.6 Analyzing Development Trends

Guildhall is not a rapidly developing community and is not expected to have an influx of new development in the near future. The growth rate of Guildhall is about 0 % or a total population decrease of 1 person between 2010 and 2019. The Town of Guildhall has adopted a local plan and zoning regulations to guard against future development in inappropriate locations such as flood prone areas. Guildhall is a member of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). All buildings being improved in or near frequently flooded areas are required to elevate or provide additional mitigation measures. There are considerable limitations to development of land in Guildhall, among them large amounts of lands at high elevations, steep slopes, excessive remoteness, and flood plain. Due to a lack of development since the last plan, vulnerability overall has remained the same in Guildhall.

Population Decrease 2020 Census

Town	Estimated	Census	Decrease
Guildhall	-1	261	2.61%

Section Three – Mitigation Strategy

Hazard Mitigation Strategies and Measures **avoid** the hazard by stopping or limiting new exposures in known hazard areas, **alter** the hazard by eliminating or reducing the frequency of occurrence, **avert** the hazard by redirecting the impact by means of a structure or land treatment, **adapt** to the hazard by modifying structures or standards and could include tools or projects such as:

- **Town Plan** – this document contains goals and objectives for community growth, health, safety and welfare for public and private interests.
- **Zoning Bylaws** – Updated in 2013.
- **NFIP** – National Flood Hazard Insurance Program.
- **C & S = Highway Codes and Standards** – The Town of Guildhall has adopted the Vermont Transportation Agencies recommended Highway Codes and Standards. This is perhaps the most beneficial mitigation program in Vermont and the NVDA region. By adopting these codes, all maintenance and new construction on roads, highways, bridges and culverts must be enhanced to meet the new standards to withstand large flood events, (2013 Vermont Local Roads Technical Assistance Report). See attached.
- **VTRC** – Guildhall does not have a Vermont Red Cross Shelter Pre-Agreement.

- **Emergency Operation Plan (EOP)** – Guildhall has updated its EOP updated to include all-hazards. When completed it will include this Plan as its risk assessment to all-hazards.
- **Rapid Response Plan (RRP)** – Guildhall has updated its RRP as of September 2014
- **Public Water Supply Protection** – Groveton, NH has a protection plan for their municipal water system that is used by Guildhall. See Appendix.

Table 3-A Development Tools

Town	Town Plan	Zoning	NFIP	Flood Regs	Codes & Standards	Culvert Inv.	VT Red Cross	Maps FIRM
Guildhall	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES

3.1 Guildhall Hazard Mitigation Goals

- Reduce the loss of life and injury resulting from all hazards.
- Mitigate financial losses incurred by municipal, residential, industrial, agricultural and commercial establishments due to disasters.
- Reduce the damage to public infrastructure resulting from all hazards.
- Recognize the connections between land use, storm-water road design and maintenance and the effects from disasters.
- Ensure that mitigation measures are compatible with the natural features of community rivers, streams and other surface waters; historic resources; character of neighborhoods; and the capacity of the community to implement them.
- Encourage all-hazard mitigation planning as a part of the municipal planning process.

3.2 Community Preparedness Goals

Overall, Guildhall is working to decrease its risk to flooding, water supply contamination and hazardous material incidents through proactive planning, policies and mitigation actions. Other lesser risks are being addresses through the same procedures and policies.

- Review this plan with essential town government.
- The Lancaster Fire Department is used to minimize the impact of a HAZMAT incident.
- Ensure that all emergency response and management personnel receive HAZMAT Awareness training via the Lancaster Fire Dept.
- The Lancaster Fire Department maintains the dry hydrants on a regular basis. The Town

Water Commissioners regularly flush the main hydrants.

- Update flood hazard regulations to exceed minimum NFIP standards by prohibiting new Development in the floodplain, increasing freeboard requirements of substantially improved properties and prohibiting encroachments into the river corridor.
- Inventory and map flood loss properties, including repetitive loss properties. Encourage Property owners to document damage from flood events, including repair costs, photographs, and high water mark.
- Research the feasibility of a shelter pre-agreement with the Red Cross.

Maintain and update Local Emergency Operations Plan annually.

- Adopt and maintain current Vtrans Road and Bridge Standards to incorporate best practices to minimize washouts and damage (such as culverts).
- Regularly inspect and maintain town bridges and culverts and schedule to replace undersized culverts as identified by field inspection.
- Identify specific at-risk populations that may be exceptionally vulnerable in the event of a storm or long-term power outage.
- Organize outreach to vulnerable populations to direct them to appropriate shelters if necessary.
- Educate public about emergency access to shelters in the event of a winter storm or Power failure.
- Regularly inspect trees in or near the public right of way, and remove them if necessary.
- Remind residents to keep fuel burning vents unobstructed in the event of a heavy winter storm.
- Ensure that residents post their 911 numbers.

3.3 Existing Hazard Mitigation Programs

Guildhall has been proactive in planning its future as well as protecting its citizens from potential disasters.

3.3.1 Emergency Management Planning

Guildhall has recently updated their Rapid Response Plan. Guildhall has updated its EOP to include all-hazards and will include this Plan as its risk assessment to all-hazards.

3.3.2 Codes and Standards

Guildhall has adopted the recommended Highway Codes and Standards that require regular upgrades on bridges, highways, ditching and culverts to avoid flood damage. A number of culverts have already been upgraded. Guildhall has conducted a Hydraulic Study. The plan was revised to reflect the change in EMS services for the Town, as well as the updated Town Plan and Town Zoning By-Laws including the updated flood regulations. (refer to appendix K)

3.3.3 Local Planning and Zoning, NFIP

Guildhall has floodplain zoning regulations. They are a member of the National Flood Insurance Program since June 17, 1991 and compliance is administered by the Selectmen. According to the NFIP Community Status book our current effective maps are June 17, 1991. Guildhall does not have and FEMA repetitive loss properties. All development in or near the identified flood areas shall conform to zoning standards. Guildhall is a member of community of Northeastern

Vermont Development Association, the regional planning commission and economic development corporation serving Caledonia, Essex, and Orleans County. The region covers about one-fifth of the state's land mass, but only about one-tenth of the population. Guildhall, like most of NVDA's communities, is a very small town with limited resources and services, and no full-time planning staff. NVDA therefore is able to provide many hazard mitigation services. NVDA staff includes two GIS Specialists, and Emergency Planner, a Certified Floodplain Manager and a Transportation Planner who conducts Road Foreman training, bridge and culvert inventories, and transportation counts. NVDA is also able to direct town officials to appropriate programs that are critical to hazard mitigation, such as the Agency of Natural Resources River Management Program. Currently, NVDA and other RPCS are working with the Agency of Natural Resources to determine the feasibility of Community Rating System enrollment for more Vermont communities. The feasibility and cost-effectiveness of this program will be evaluated in updates to the region plan (in a flood resilience element). Continued involvement and participation in NVDA programs will definitely benefit and strengthen Guildhall's hazard mitigation program.

3.3.4 Protection of Town Records

The Town office has a vault to protect public records from fire, damage or theft/vandalism.

3.4 Preparedness Tools

Public Awareness, Training, Education

- Conduct Emergency Drills involving all elements of the community to practice procedures associated with a simulated varies incidents.
- Use this plan for Hazard Identification and Mapping.

Public Protection

- Designate shelters.
- Emergency communications and information systems (NOAA weather receivers, Emergency Alert System (EAS)) are at the Command Center.
- Update Hazard Vulnerability Assessments as needed.

- Review and modify evacuation and sheltering plans based on the results of drills and exercises or procedures implemented in an actual incident.
- American Red Cross chapter may be contacted to assist with community education programs.
- Maintain current Rapid Response Plans in coordination with Lancaster EMS services and the Emergency Management Operations Plans.
- Regularly scheduled maintenance programs are ongoing (culvert survey & replacement, ditching along roadways, cutting vegetation to allow visibility at intersections).
- The town is proactive in preparing for potential disasters.
-

Financial and Tax Incentives.

- Use State and Federal funding for mitigation projects and activities.

Hazard Control and Protective Works.

- Utilize regular maintenance programs (culvert survey & replacement, ditching along roadways, cutting vegetation to allow visibility at intersections).

Insurance Programs.

- Participate in NFIP.

Land Use Planning/Management: Flood.

- Guildhall has local zoning, with established Flood Hazard Areas through the NFIP.

Protection/Retrofit of Infrastructure and Critical Facilities.

- A map of Critical Facilities is attached.

3.5 Analysis of Mitigation Actions

Priority Actions:

Local officials in Guildhall have identified several mitigation actions to be included in the Hazard Mitigation Plan. Table 3-B, Implementation Strategy contains these actions, along with the responsible agency, the funding source, and implementation timeframe.

Priorities were reviewed and updated based on new requirements for FEMA funding. Hurricane Irene did not affect our need to update Guildhall’s Plans as Guildhall did not experience “Irene” like some towns that had that incredible experience.

The Guildhall local officials have prioritized the actions using the STAPLE+E criteria, a planning tool used to evaluate alternative actions. The following table explains the STAPLE+E criteria.

S – Social	Mitigation actions are acceptable to the community if they do not adversely affect a particular segment of the population, do not cause relocation of lower income people, and if they are compatible with the community’s social and cultural views.
T – Technical	Mitigation actions are technically most effective if they provide long-term reduction of losses and have minimal secondary adverse impacts.
A – Administrative	Mitigation actions are easier to implement if the jurisdiction has the necessary staffing and funding.
P – Political	Mitigation actions can truly be successful if all stakeholders have been offered an opportunity to participate in the planning process and if there is public support for the action.
L – Legal	It is critical that the jurisdiction or implementing agency have the legal authority to implement and enforce a mitigation action.
E – Economic	Budget constraints can significantly deter the implementation of mitigation actions. Hence, it is important to evaluate whether an action is cost-effective, as determined by a cost benefit review, and possible to fund.
E – Environmental	Sustainable mitigation actions that do not have an adverse effect on the environment, that comply with Federal, State, and local environmental regulations, and that are consistent with the community’s environmental goals, have mitigation benefits while being environmentally sound.

3.6 Implementation of Mitigation Actions

Flooding, severe weather and the potential for hazardous material incidents are the main threats to Guildhall. Local officials are proactive in preparing for the hazards for which ones are most vulnerable. Their highest priority concern is the health, safety and welfare of the local citizens and businesses. The mitigation action determined to have the highest priority is the most cost effective alternative for the community. Readiness and timeliness of the project plays an important role in Guildhall.

Based on a review of the possible Hazards and community at risk the action plan was developed by discussions, past experience relative to the gravel road report by VTrans, location, Town Budget, and time frames.

Annual needs evaluations are explored during the town budget meetings and completed at the March Town meeting votes. The requirements of the mitigation plan shall be considered when the Town Plan and Town Zoning By-Laws are updated. Such as the 2013 plans included the Flood Management updates which is valued assistance from the Flood Management Dept. and

NVDA. Other appropriate items may surface during a business meeting such as location change for the Town salt shed, this plan for the relocation solved.

The Selectboard appointed a town committee to review site locations that were cost effective or within the budgeted funding available, close to the gravel roads, away from wet lands, could be town owned, with easy access, near utilities and town water line. Results of the research was provided to the selectboard who selected to obtain property from the State for \$1.00 with utilities and town water readily available. As of 10/31/15, the salt shed has been totally relocated. So Guildhall has demonstrated their ability to integrate a road related improvement plan that effects gravel roads especially during severe winter storms.

The integration is not being done to any great extent but the Town focuses on its immediate local need, as with the salt shed, and not part of a larger geographical effort.

The evaluating of the STAPLE+E criteria takes into consideration the best available information, any engineering evaluations, and best judgment. The action plan listed in Table 3-B is important to the community, cost effective and feasibility to the community. All projects are still on going with no changes made.

Table 3-B Mitigation Projects by Priority

Project/Priority	Mitigation Action	Who is Responsible	Time Frame and Potential Funding	Initial Implementation Steps
Generator – HIGH	A generator is needed for emergency backup power at the potential shelters. Est. \$10-\$15,000	The Selectboard and Local emergency Management Coordinator	2022/27 HMGP, PDM-C, FMA	Seek appropriate grant source, obtain cost estimate and apply for funding.
Culvert upgrades on Fellows Rd. and Granby Rd. HIGH	One new culvert is needed on each road to prevent future washouts. A cost estimate of \$100,000 has been provided by a hydraulic study.	The Selectboard and Road Commissioner	2022/27 HMGP, PDM-C, FMA, Bridge and Culvert Program	Seek appropriate grant source, obtain cost estimate and apply for funding.
Rescue Boat	The village area is in the floodplain with potential access points closed off in flooding Est. \$5,000	The Selectboard and Local emergency Management Coordinator	2022/27 HMGP, PDM-C, FMA	Seek appropriate grant source, obtain cost estimate and apply for funding.
Shelter Pre-Agreement	Guildhall local officials are interested in developing a Red Cross Pre-Agreement.	The Selectboard and Local emergency Management Coordinator	2022/27– free	Contact the local VT Red Cross office – 1-800-660-9130, Tim Stetson. Plan info meeting
GIS mapping of NFIP areas	Identify flood areas with vulnerable structures consistent with Vermont GIS mapping effort.	Northeastern Vermont Development Association, VT Flood Management	2022/27– FEMA FMA funds, HMGP or EMPG funds	Coordinated statewide NFIP mapping effort for all towns. Notify owners

Section Four – Plan Maintenance Process

4.1 Initial Approval Process

In addition to public involvement in the initial development of the plan, opportunities for public comment will include a warned adoption to review the plan prior to final adoption. The fire chief has been instrumental in participating in the review of the document with local officials.

After local review and comment, the draft local annex is presented to the State Hazard Mitigation Committee through the State Hazard Mitigation Officer (SHMO) for review and comment. The SHMO will issue a recommendation for forwarding the plan to the FEMA Region I. After receipt of comments from FEMA Region I staff, final changes will be made and the resulting document adopted by the Guildhall Selectboard. The final plan will be returned to FEMA Region I for formal approval.

4.2 Routine Plan Maintenance

The Hazard Mitigation Plan is dynamic and changing. To ensure that the plan remains current it is important that it be updated periodically. The plan is reviewed annually by the Selectboard and updated as notations are added if approved as an agenda item. At the annual meeting, plan actions will be reviewed and their status will be updated. The plan effectiveness will also be reviewed to assess whether the goals of this plan are being achieved. The disaster plan is also reviewed with input or advice from the Lancaster EMS team. The Guildhall Town Web Site offers residents the opportunity to provide input regarding any issues such as the mitigation plan. The plan is available to all in the Town Office and at the Town Library. Town Meetings as well as Selectboard meetings identify time for citizens concerns on the agendas. In addition when contracts are reviewed for continuance the mitigation plan provides for community input. The plan shall be updated every five years, pending ongoing financial resources, in accordance with the following procedure:

- 4.2.1 The Guildhall Selectboard will either act as the review committee or appoint a review committee.
- 4.2.2 The committee will discuss the process to determine if the evaluation criteria is still appropriate or modifications or additions are needed to the mitigation strategies based on changing conditions since the last update occurred. Data needs will be reviewed, data sources identified and responsibility for collecting information will be assigned to members. All meetings are open to the public and are noticed according to the Vermont Open Meeting Law.
- 4.2.3 A draft report will be prepared based on the evaluation criteria and in conformance with the FEMA Region I Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Crosswalk document.
- 4.2.4 The Selectboard will have the opportunity to review the draft report. Consensus will be reached on changes to the draft.

- 4.2.5 Changes will be incorporated into the document.
- 4.2.6 The plan will be reviewed by Vermont Emergency Management (SHMO) staff and then FEMA Region I staff.
- 4.2.7 VEM and FEMA comments will be incorporated into the plan.
- 4.2.8 The Selectboard will warn the plan for approval at its regular meeting.
- 4.2.9 The Selectboard will incorporate any community comments into the plan.
- 4.2.10 The Selectboard will finalize and adopt the plan and distribute to interested persons.

4.3 Programs, Initiatives and Project Review

Although the plan will be reviewed, pending ongoing financial resources, in its entirety every five years the town may review and update its programs, initiatives and projects more often based on the above procedure as changing needs and priorities arise.

4.4 Post-Disaster Review Procedures

Should a declared disaster occur, a special review will occur in accordance with the following procedures:

1. Within six (6) months of a declared emergency event, the town will initiate a post-disaster review and assessment.
2. This post-disaster review and assessment will document the facts of the event and assess whether existing Hazard Modification Plans effectively addressed the hazard.
3. A draft report After Action Report of the assessment will be distributed to the Review/ Update Committee.
4. A meeting of the committee will be convened by the Selectboard to make a determination whether the plan needs to be amended. If the committee determines that NO modification of the plan is needed. Then the report is distributed to interested parties.
5. If the committee determines that modification of the plan IS needed, then the committee drafts an amended plan based on the recommendations and forwards it to the Selectboard for public input.
6. The Selectboard adopts the amended plan.

To further one's understanding of the Guildhall All-Hazards Mitigation Plan, please refer to the detailed appendix (19 items) which demonstrates in-depth resources supporting compliance with the FEMA regulations and requests.

Section Five – Maps

Page 27 - Critical Facilities and Local Areas of Concern Map

APPENDICES

- A. Emergency Operations Plan
- B. Emergency Management Institute Certificates
- C. Town of Lancaster Fire Department Contract
- D. Town of Lancaster Ambulance Contract
- E. Town of Northumberland Water (5 items)
- F. Town of Guildhall Road Contract
- G. Road & Bridge Standards Certificate of Compliance
- H. Road Standards
- I. Evaluation of Gravel Roads
- J. National Flood Insurance Program Status
- K. Zoning By-Laws
- L. Town Plan
- M. Road Map (Vermont and New Hampshire)
- N. 911 Map
- O. Rubbish Removal Contract
- P. 2022 Town Report

