

Chapter 3

Community Profile & Capability Assessment

Introduction

Chapter 3 is divided into two sections:

1. **Community Profile:** Presents a general overview of Thurston County's geography, population, economy, development trends, special purpose districts, and its multimodal transportation system.
2. **Capability Assessment:** Describes the evaluation tools that are available to plan participants to assess their mitigation planning capabilities. This section also summarizes the resources that communities can leverage to carry out this plan and implement risk reduction measures.

Find additional data about the Thurston Region online at www.trpc.org/theprofile.



1. Community Profile

Maps A1-A10 and Tables A1-A13 for Chapter 3.0 can be found in Appendix A: Community Profile Maps and Tables.

Location, Geography, and Climate

Thurston County, located in Western Washington at the terminus of Puget Sound, is home to three tribal areas and seven incorporated towns and cities. Thurston County is known for scenic waterways, native prairieland, and dense protected forests. The county is home to Washington State’s Capitol, and government agencies and enterprises are the region’s largest employer.

It is the 32nd largest county in the state with a total land area of 737 square miles. It is bordered by Mason, Grays Harbor, Lewis, and Pierce counties. The county’s three tribal areas include the Nisqually Indian Reservation in the east, the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation in the southwest, and the Squaxin Indian Reservation which borders the county in the northwest. Joint Base Lewis-McChord, the fourth most populous US military base, occupies a large tract of land from Pierce County into central eastern Thurston County. In the west, Capitol State Forest includes nearly 100,000 acres. While approximately 87 percent of the county’s land area is unincorporated, it includes seven cities and towns and two unincorporated communities listed below (See Map A1 and Table A1):

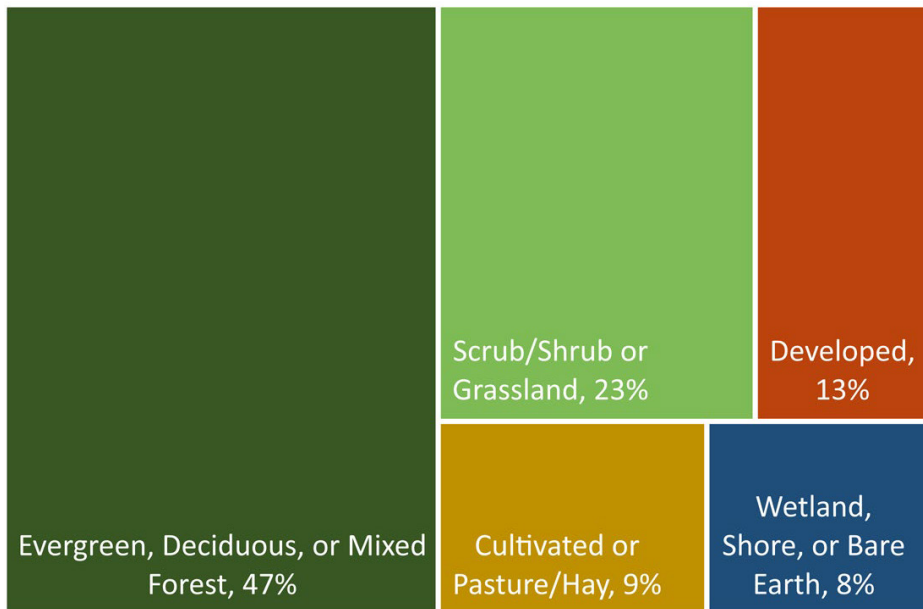


Figure 3.1 Thurston County Land Coverage.

See Table A2 in Appendix A for more detail. Source: NOAA C-CAP

- Town of Bucoda
- City of Lacey
- City of Olympia
- City of Rainier
- City of Tenino
- City of Tumwater
- City of Yelm
- Grand Mound Urban Growth Area (unincorporated)
- Rochester Community (unincorporated)

The county’s landcover ranges from coastal lowlands to prairie flatlands to the foothills of the Cascades (Map A2). The land is dotted with lakes, and the northernmost boundary of the county is lined with the shoreline of Puget Sound. Four local watersheds flow to the Pacific Ocean basin and five flow to the Puget Sound basin. Approximately 43 percent of the county’s waters flow into the Pacific Ocean

and 57 percent drains to the Puget Sound. The northwest and southeast corners of the county are marked by peaks ranging from 1,700 to 3,000-foot elevations. Steep slopes, miles of shoreline, and forested areas leave the county vulnerable to a range of natural hazards.

Thurston County has a marine climate with mild temperatures year-round. In the warmest months, the average high temperature ranges between 70 and 80 degrees. In the winter months, high temperatures usually hover around 45 degrees. Like most of western Washington, Thurston County’s weather is characterized by sunny summers and wet winters. Averaging 52 clear days a year, Thurston County residents live under some form of cloud cover 86 percent of the year, with more than a trace of rain falling on almost half of the days.

Population

As of 2022, Thurston County's is home to a population of 300,500, cementing it as the seventh most-populous county in the state (Map A3). Thurston County has been one of the fastest-growing counties in Washington State since the 1960s, consistently exceeding the state's overall rate of growth. Two factors drive population growth: net migration (people moving in minus people moving out) and natural increases (births minus deaths). Since 1960, in-migration has caused most of the growth, and since 2010 the rate of natural increase has continuously dropped. Between 2016 and 2021, Thurston County's

population increased by an average of 4,357 people annually and 84 percent of growth was the result of in-migration. The increased cost of living in the Seattle metropolitan area has helped drive individuals to the region.

Thurston Regional Planning Council's 2045 population forecast is 383,500, meaning 83,000 more people will live in the region than in 2022 (Map A4, Table A3). Most future residents will live in the cities and urban growth areas while approximately a quarter of the population will reside in rural unincorporated areas.

Figure 3.2 Social Vulnerability Index Characteristics for Thurston County

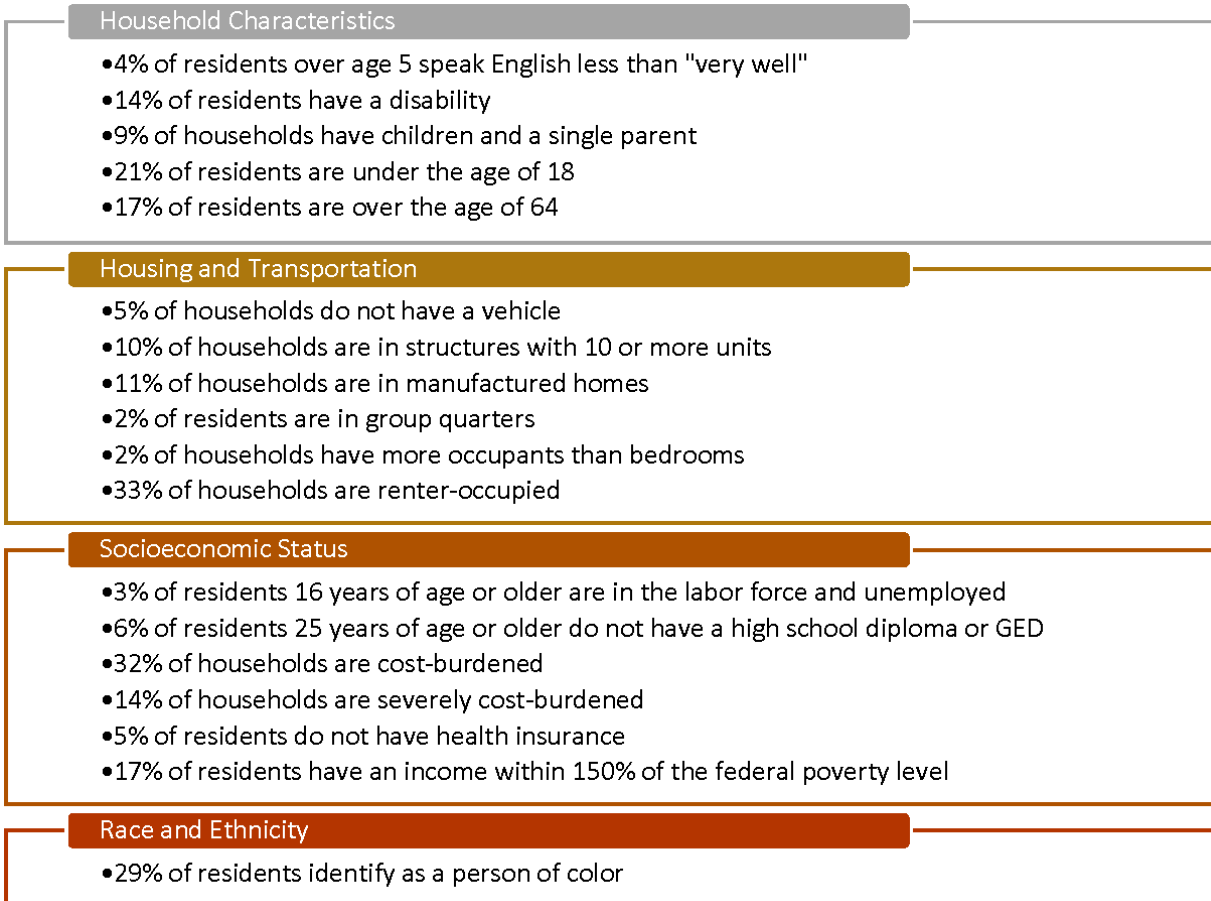
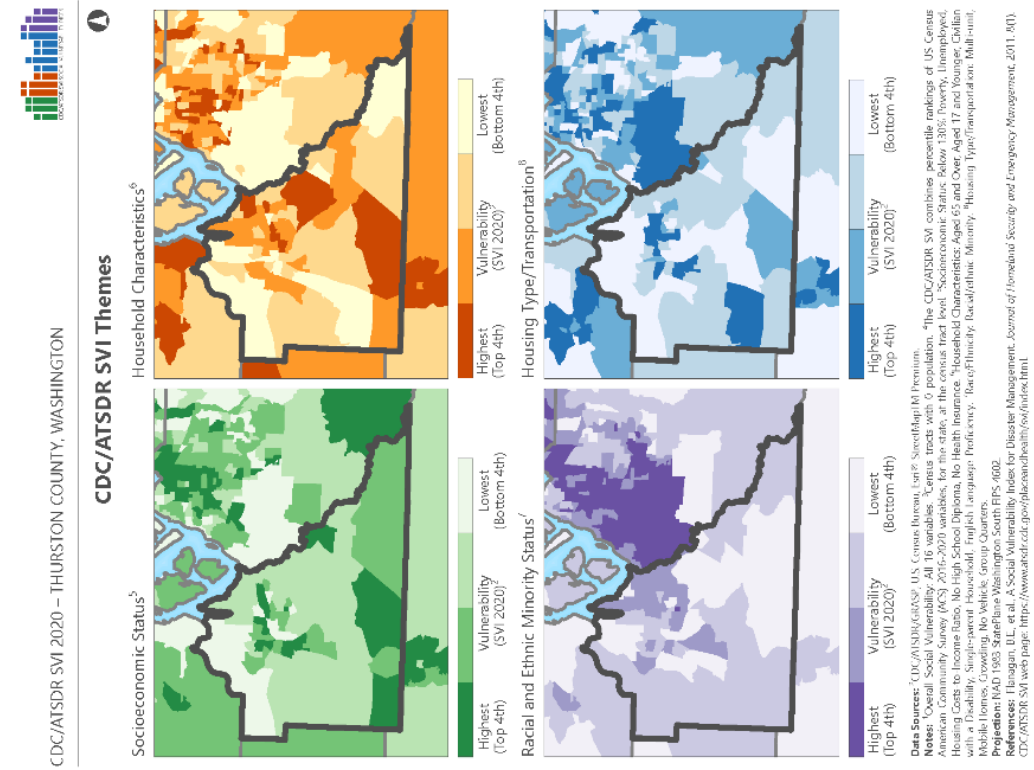
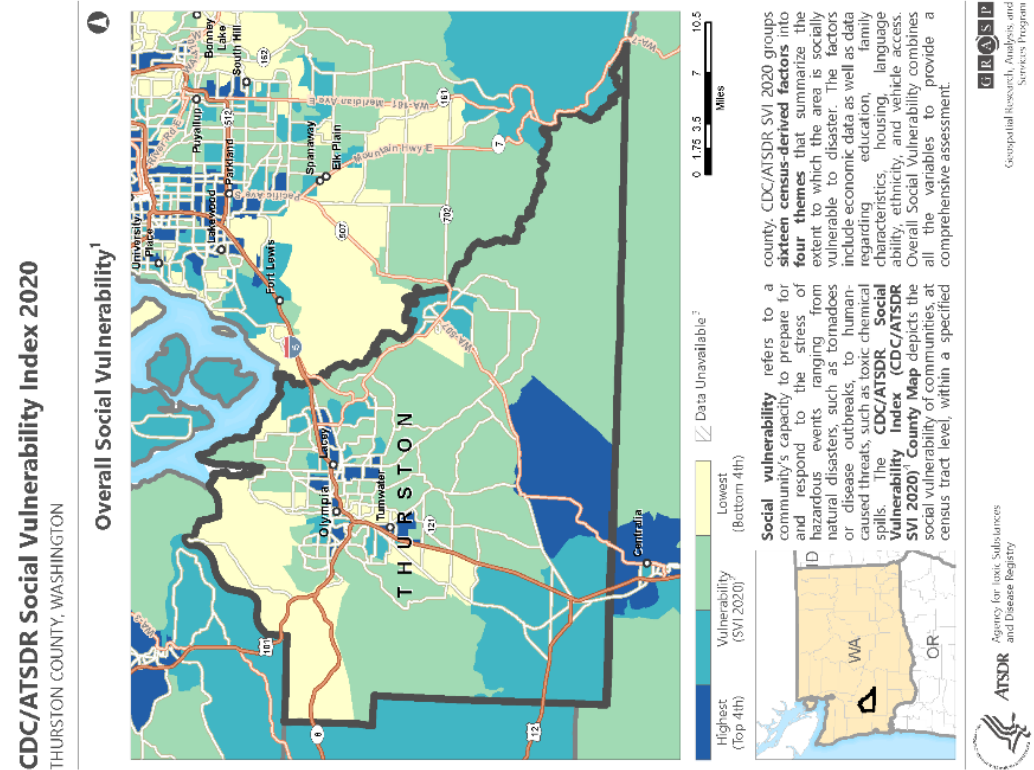


Figure 3.3 Social Vulnerability Index for Thurston County



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Social Vulnerable Populations

Social vulnerability refers to a community’s capacity to prepare for and respond to the stress of hazardous events. There are several factors that may make individuals or families more vulnerable to natural hazards, or socially vulnerable. It is important to recognize and acknowledge these factors to ensure that the hazard mitigation planning process engages individuals with higher vulnerability and produces a mitigation strategy that is beneficial to them. There are many factors that may contribute to a group or individual’s social vulnerability, including but not limited to:

- Income
- Age
- Housing type
- Race
- Health characteristics
- English proficiency

Social Vulnerability Index for Thurston County

The Centers for Disease Control/Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry Social Vulnerability Index (CDC/ATSDR SVI) uses 16 U.S. census variables to help local officials identify communities that may need support before, during, or after disasters. Variables are organized into four topics areas: Socioeconomic Status, Households Characteristics, Racial & Ethnic Minority Status, and Housing Type & Transportation. Census tracts are ranked against other tracts in the state to show overall vulnerability and vulnerability in each topic area. The variables used to determine Social Vulnerability, such as population with a disability, population with no health insurance, or housing units without a vehicle, are reported below for Thurston County (See Figures 3.2 and 3.3). Table A4 in Appendix A includes the variables broken out by each Thurston County jurisdiction.

Homelessness

Individuals experiencing homelessness often face the highest barriers to prepare for and respond to natural hazards and receive timely information about expected hazards. The Thurston County Point-in-Time homeless count in 2022 recorded a total of 661 individuals living in transitional housing, emergency shelter, vehicles, or outside. Approximately 52% of individuals in the count were unsheltered or living in places not meant for human habitation such as cars, tents, or sidewalks (Table A5). It is estimated that the total count underestimates the number of residents experiencing homelessness, as people who did not consent to being surveyed are not included. During the 2022-2023 school year, approximately

1,265 students in Thurston School Districts experienced homelessness (Table A6). This is a point-in-time count and does not include all students who may have experienced homelessness at any point during the year. The districts with the highest number of students experiencing homelessness were North Thurston (684 students) and Yelm (173 students). The districts with the highest proportion of students experiencing homelessness were North Thurston (5%) and Rochester (4%).

Economy

Home to Washington State's Capitol, Thurston County's local economy is dependent on government employment. Government and government services employ 26% of all workers in the county. While the City of Lacey is now the most populous Thurston County community, the City of Olympia and its Urban Growth Area has the highest concentration of jobs, approximately 47% of jobs countywide in 2017. Healthcare and social assistance are the second largest industry in the county, employing approximately 12% of workers. While not located in Thurston County, Joint Base Lewis-McChord employs a significant number of Thurston residents in military and civilian positions.

For most of the 2010s, Thurston County's unemployment rate slightly exceeded that of Washington state and stayed higher than the national rate. In 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic significantly halted economic activity, state and national unemployment rates increased to over 8% and exceeded the county rate. After a sharp incline from COVID-19, Thurston County's unemployment rate as of

2021 still exceeds pre-pandemic levels yet shows the community is returning to normal. Refer to Table A7 for median household income by Thurston County jurisdictions.

Development Trends

Over the past two decades, the proportion of development occurring in urban areas has increased. Density within urban centers and corridors has increased dramatically, allowing residents to readily access goods and services, and preserving rural lands from seeing the brunt of development. As development occurs, the total area of impervious surfaces increases, and natural features such as trees and streams are removed or altered.

Between 2017 and 2021, 8,592 residential building permits were issued countywide (Table A10). Approximately 65% of the permits were issued in incorporated cities, and 18% were issued in areas of the rural unincorporated county. The City of Lacey had the highest proportion of total permits issued at 28%, with Olympia and Tumwater following behind at 17% and 14% respectively. As housing has become less affordable, the amount of multifamily housing permitted has increased. Approximately 52% of residential building permits during this period were for multifamily units. Maps A5 and A6 show housing density for 2022 and 2045 respectively.

Tables A8 and A9 show total house estimates by jurisdiction and housing estimates by type.

Special Districts

Thurston County has many special districts that provide a wide variety of public services including cemetery, conservation, drainage, fire protection, library, parks, port, school, utility, and transportation benefit districts. Maps A7 and A8 show the school and fire district boundaries. Tables A10 and A11 show population by school districts and fire districts. These districts and other regional organizations are important partners in hazard mitigation planning, as they provide focused input and can carry out their own mitigation initiatives. Figure 3.4 lists the special districts and regional agencies that operate in Thurston County.

Multimodal Transportation System

Road Network

Thurston County, as a whole, has a well-connected road network to move people, freight, goods, and services. There are over 2,540 centerline miles of roads countywide. Over 1,660 miles are owned and managed by local governments, 293 miles by the state, and the rest are privately owned or located on Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

In general, most rural roadways operate with minimal congestion. Arterials and collectors



Figure 3.4 Special Purpose Districts in Thurston County

<p>Cemetery Districts Thurston County Cemetery District No. 1 Thurston County Cemetery District No. 2</p> <p>Conservation Districts Thurston Conservation District</p> <p>Drainage Districts Chambers Lake Drainage District No. 3 Hopkins Drainage District No. 2 Scott Lake Drainage District No. 11</p> <p>Emergency Dispatch TCOMM 9-1-1 Fire Protection Districts</p> <p>Fire Protection Districts 1 & 11 - West Thurston Regional Fire Authority 2 & 4 - SE Thurston Regional Fire Authority 3 - Lacey 6 - East Olympia 8 - South Bay 9 - McLane Black Lake 12 & 16 - South Thurston Fire & EMS 13 - Griffin 17 - Bald Hills</p> <p>Park Districts Tanglewilde Park and Recreation District No. 1</p> <p>Port Districts Port of Olympia</p> <p>Public Transportation Benefit Area Intercity Transit</p>	<p>Regional Agencies Capitol Region Educational Services District 113 Housing Authority of Thurston County Lewis - Mason - Thurston Area Agency On Aging Olympic Region Clean Air Agency Timberland Regional Library Thurston Regional Planning Council: Metropolitan Planning Organization</p> <p>School Districts Griffin School District No. 324 North Thurston Public Schools Olympia School District No. 111 Rainier School District No. 307 Rochester School District No. 401 Tenino School District No. 402 Tumwater School District No. 33 Yelm Community School District</p> <p>Special Districts Black Lake Special District</p> <p>Transportation and Utility District Lacey Transportation Benefit District Olympia Transportation Benefit District Tumwater Transportation Benefit District LOTT Clean Water Alliance Thurston Pubic Utility District</p>
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within and near the urban growth areas and the larger cities experience varying degrees of congestion during peak commute periods. Most congestion occurs on Interstate 5 (I-5) from the Nisqually Valley to the City of Tumwater. Congestion on State Routes 510 and 507 through Yelm is problematic when I-5 experiences major traffic disruptions with lane closures.

Highway of statewide significance include:

- Interstate 5
- U.S. Highway 101
- State Route 8
- State Route 12
- State Route 510

Ports

The Port of Olympia operates a 66-acre seaport, the southernmost port on the Puget Sound. The port's marine terminal includes three deepwater berths with a total of 1,750 lineal feet, a mobile harbor crane, and an on-dock 76,000 square foot warehouse, and on-dock rail service. The marine terminal located at the north end of the Port Peninsula in Olympia can provide bulk, breakbulk, heavy-lift, and other freight operations.

The Olympia Regional Airport is located in the City of Tumwater. The airport offers general aviation with aircraft services and maintenance operations, flight instruction, hangars and tie down space, state and corporate aviation facilities, and land and buildings available for aviation related uses.

Public Transportation

Intercity Transit provides public transportation for people who live and work in Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater, and Yelm with a service area of approximately 101 square miles. The agency operates 18 zero-fare fixed bus routes within the Lacey/Olympia/Tumwater/Yelm area and express services to Pierce County. Intercity Transit offers Dial-A-Lift door-to-door service for people with disabilities. In addition, Intercity Transit operates a vanpool program, specialized van program services, and several community services to enhance public transportation.

Rural Transit operates three weekday zero-fare routes for transit customers who live outside of Intercity Transit's Public Transportation Benefit Area. Morning, mid-day, and early evening trips provide basic transit services between Yelm, Rainier, Tenino, Bucoda, Grand Mound, Rochester, the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, Centralia, and Tumwater.

Refer to Maps A9 and A10 for intermodal and multimodal transportation facilities in Thurston County.

are important partners in hazard mitigation planning, as they provide focused input and can carry out their own mitigation initiatives. Figure 3.4 lists the special districts and regional agencies that operate in Thurston County.



Photo courtesy of Intercity Transit.

2. Capability Assessment

Why Conduct a Capability Assessment?

To effectively develop and implement a mitigation strategy, a community must assess the range of tools and capabilities that are available to support the process of planning for and implementing their mitigation strategy. Does a community have the authorities, regulations, plans, financing, and technical capabilities to understand their risks, vulnerabilities, and capabilities to become more disaster resilient? This section describes the regional capability assessment processes performed by the plan participants to assess their capabilities, obstacles, and areas that may need more capacity building. This chapter identifies various federal, state, local, and non-governmental resources that can assist Thurston County communities with hazard mitigation planning.

Hazard Mitigation Capability Self-Assessment

The plan participants performed an initial Hazard Mitigation Capability Self-Assessment Questionnaire in April 2022 to help their jurisdictions identify the capabilities they have available to support their mitigation plan. Fifteen planning partners responded to 20 questions about their organization's political support, familiarity, outreach programs, staff capabilities, National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) status, and obstacles as they relate to hazard mitigation planning and activities.

Key findings from the self-assessment show that most respondents indicated moderate or strong support for participation in the Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) update process, and a moderate or high familiarity with hazard mitigation planning. The top obstacles to implementing HMP projects and programs include lack of staff time, lack of funding, and lack of familiarity and expertise.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Obstacles, and Opportunities (SWOO) Assessment

TRPC had introduced hazard mitigation principles and concepts to the plan participants during their first 10 meetings over the first year of the plan update process. In March 2023, nearly one year into the process, the Hazard Mitigation Planning Workgroup members participated in a self-paced online SWOO Assessment. Fifteen agencies and stakeholders rated their familiarity with twenty-five emergency management and hazard mitigation planning activities/program statements in both a regional and jurisdictional context as an area of "strength", "weakness", "not applicable", or "don't know."

Key findings related to regional hazard mitigation capabilities are that natural hazards are adequately mapped, and planning partners believe they are knowledgeable about hazards and their risks. However, respondents report that more effort is needed to improve community members' understanding of natural hazards, their risks, and how to access useful information. The SWOO respondents believe there is an effective regional planning framework, but more effort is needed to include relevant stakeholders in hazard mitigation planning.

Key findings related to jurisdictional hazard mitigation capabilities follow. Most respondents indicated they feel capable of assessing and mitigating their hazard risks, accounting for changes in population and land use patterns when assessing risk and developing effective mitigation strategies and seeking funding and resources to implement priority actions. Areas identified for improvement include:

- Having a strong policy framework to prioritize actions that benefit socially vulnerable populations.
- Accounting for the impacts of climate change in hazard risk assessments.
- Providing information to residents around flood insurance.
- Maintaining ongoing efforts to coordinate and implement the plan to reduce risks after the HMP is adopted.

A 27-page detailed assessment of the SWOO results is included in Appendix B.

Jurisdictional Capability Assessment

Each plan participant completed a series of detailed capability assessment worksheets to highlight their jurisdiction's capabilities, strengths, and gaps in their ability to implement their mitigation strategies. Jurisdiction-specific capabilities are documented in their annex to this plan. Copies of the assessment worksheets are included in the plan participants' annexes.

Regional Capability Assessment

FEMA identifies four types of mitigation capabilities:

1. **Planning and Regulatory** – Includes laws, ordinances, and plans that guide growth and development. These capabilities can either support risk reduction or create potential vulnerabilities.
2. **Administrative and Technical** – Includes staff, programs, or projects that can be leveraged for mitigation planning or having the means to implement mitigation actions.
3. **Financial** – The range of resources to fund mitigation actions.
4. **Public Outreach** – Includes organizations, programs, and activities that can be leveraged to communicate and encourage risk reduction among community members, businesses, and affected entities.

The remainder of this section identifies capabilities within the Thurston Region that are supportive of or could be leveraged to some degree to support mitigation planning. Each capability is accompanied by a general description and discussion of how it influenced the development of this plan and/or can be used for hazard mitigation.

Planning and Regulatory

There are a wide variety of laws, ordinances, and plans that provide authority for agencies to pursue hazard mitigation actions, though hazard mitigation is not necessarily the core focus of each item. Many of the plans that are detailed below are updated regularly. These regulatory tools provide local governments an opportunity to leverage their amendment and development processes to better incorporate hazard mitigation into their regulatory frameworks through existing plans, goals, policies, and lines of business.

ACRONYMS USED

COM – Washington Department of Commerce

DNR – Washington Department of Natural Resources

ECY – Washington Department of Ecology

EMC – Emergency Management Council of Thurston County

EMD – Washington Emergency Management Division

EPA – Environmental Protection Agency

FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency

FHWA - U.S Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration

FWS – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

HUD – U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

NOAA – National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

SBCC – Washington State Building Code Council

USBR – U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

USDOT – U.S. Department of Transportation

National Mitigation Planning and Regular Mechanisms

NAME	LEAD AGENCY	DESCRIPTION	APPLICABILITY TO HAZARD MITIGATION
Clean Water Act (CWA)	EPA	Employs regulatory and non-regulatory tools to reduce direct pollutant discharges into waterways, finance municipal wastewater treatment facilities, and manage pollutant runoff.	Permitting requirements can affect mitigation projects. CWA requirements can apply to wetlands, which can be used to mitigate risks from several hazards. Requirements strongly influence stormwater management, a critical mitigation tool.
Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA)	FEMA	Directs hazard mitigation planning and puts an emphasis on pre-disaster planning. Requires communities to have hazard mitigation plans to access Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant funds.	This hazard mitigation plan has been developed to meet the requirements of DMA and ensure planning partners can access grant funds.
Endangered Species Act (ESA)	NOAA, FWS	Works to conserve species facing depletion or extinction and their habitats. Determines which species are threatened or endangered.	The planning area includes habitat of several species covered under ESA. Habitat Conservation Plans can be used to mitigate risks from several hazards.
FEMA Risk MAP	FEMA	Provides data and supports long-term hazard mitigation planning, specifically to mitigate flood risks. Program through which Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and Base Flood Elevations (BFEs) are updated.	The flood risk assessment chapter used Risk MAP products to define the floodplain. As products are updated, staff should use these and work to protect new areas at risk of flooding.
National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) & Community Rating System (CRS)	FEMA	NFIP: Provides federally backed flood insurance to communities that enact floodplain regulations. Unlocks grant funding. CRS: Voluntary program within NFIP that encourages floodplain regulations exceeding the minimum NFIP requirements. Provides lower flood insurance premiums.	Several communities in the planning area participate and are in good standing with NFIP. Thurston County participates in CRS. NFIP programs enable communities to reduce flood risk and provide flood protection benefits to residents. Communities will address NFIP compliance in their plan annexes.

State Mitigation Planning and Regulatory Mechanisms

NAME	LEAD AGENCY	DESCRIPTION	APPLICABILITY TO HAZARD MITIGATION
Growth Management Act (GMA)	COM	Directs local planning and sets requirements for comprehensive plans. HB 1181 became law in 2023, which incorporated resiliency into comprehensive planning.	The goals, policies, and guiding principles of this plan should be consistent with the GMA. Under the climate change and resiliency goal, comprehensive plans, development regulations, and regional plans must prepare for climate impact scenarios, foster resiliency to climate impacts and natural hazards, protect and enhance environmental, economic, and human health and safety, and advance environmental justice.
Shoreline Management Act	ECY	Manages and protects shorelines and associated wetlands by regulating development. Authorizes local governments to administer regulations through Shoreline Master Programs (SMPs).	Planning partners with SMPs should ensure their annexes are consistent with their SMP goals, policies, and regulations. SMP goals, policies, and regulations should work to mitigate risks from hazards.
State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA)	ECY	Requires environmental issues to be addressed in land use decisions. The review process involves identifying probable environmental impacts and mitigation measures to reduce adverse impacts.	Agencies can use SEPA to regulate development in and around sensitive areas and areas of known hazards. SEPA can help fill gaps that local development regulations may not cover. Mitigation actions may be subject to SEPA review.
Washington State Enhanced Hazard Mitigation Plan (SEHMP)	EMD	Profiles hazards, identifies risks and vulnerabilities, and proposes strategies and actions to reduce risks to people, property, the economy, the environment, infrastructure and first responders. Unlocks higher funding from HMGP due to enhanced status.	The goals and policies of this plan are consistent with the SEHMP. The SEHMP is used to help identify best available data and methodologies to identify risks.
Washington State Floodplain Management Law	ECY	Gives ECY regulatory control over floodplain management. Authorizes county governments to levy taxes, condemn properties, and undertake flood control activities directed toward a public purpose.	Jurisdictions can use the authority created by the law to regulate development in and around floodplains.
Washington State Building Code	State Building Code Council	Most state building codes are modeled after national codes and amended at the state level. Some are state-specific codes. The codes cover commercial, residential, mechanical, fire, Wildland-Urban Interface, plumbing, ventilation, and historic codes.	Adoption, implementation, and enforcement of building codes is one of the most effective means to mitigate risks from hazards. Planning partners can also advocate for code changes that support resilience and hazard mitigation.

Regional Mitigation Planning and Regular Mechanisms

NAME	LEAD AGENCY	DESCRIPTION	APPLICABILITY TO HAZARD MITIGATION
Countywide Planning Policies	TRPC	Establishes a framework for developing and adopting county and city comprehensive plans. Provides coordination for regional issues or issues affecting common borders.	Hazard mitigation strategies can be included as policies, and the mitigation planning process should be guided by these policies.
Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)	TRPC	Serves as a strategic blueprint for the region’s transportation system. Provides an overall analysis of how transportation will work in the region over a 20-25-year time frame and supports coordination among jurisdictions. Updated regularly.	Hazard mitigation can be incorporated into the guiding principles, goals, and policies of the plan, and these items should influence this plan’s contents and initiatives. Mitigation can be incorporated into the projects listed in the plan.
Thurston Climate Adaption Plan (TCAP)	TRPC	Summarizes observed and projected impacts of climate change with risk and vulnerability assessments. Includes a list of adaptation actions for the public- and private-sectors.	Adaptation actions can be considered as countywide or individual agency mitigation initiatives. When adaption actions are carried out, mitigation from a variety of hazards can be incorporated in the final design and implementation.
Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan (TCMP)	TRPC	Presents a regional framework for how Thurston County, Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater can work together to make measurable progress to reduce local contributions to climate change while building a stronger, healthier, and more resilient region.	Climate mitigation actions can be considered as countywide or individual agency mitigation initiatives. Climate mitigation is critical to reduce the effects of climate change on hazards such as storms and severe weather, flooding, wildfire, landslides, and loss of natural resources.
Thurston County Flood Hazards Mitigation Plan	Thurston County	Assesses countywide flood risks and establishes goals, objectives, and a mitigation strategy to reduce risks from flood events. Updated regularly.	Mitigation initiatives can be carried over between the flood plan and HMP. The risk assessments of each plan build on information presented in previous editions.
Thurston Region Disaster Recovery Framework	EMC	Outlines how local governments can leverage federal and state support and work with community partners to recover quickly and efficiently from disasters.	The framework supports coordinated, efficient recovery in the short- and long-term periods following a disaster. The recommendations from the framework planning process can be included as initiatives in the HMP.

Local Mitigation Planning and Regularly Mechanisms

NAME	LEAD AGENCY	DESCRIPTION	APPLICABILITY TO HAZARD MITIGATION
Capital Facilities Plan	Various	Contains a list of capital projects with estimated costs and proposed financing methods. Updated regularly.	Mitigation initiatives can be included as projects to fund. The risk assessment can be used to identify hazard exposure areas, and hazard mitigation can be incorporated into the design of existing projects in these areas.
Comprehensive Plan	Various	Sets goals and objectives that guide decision-making in local governments. Establishes current and future land use designations. Updated regularly.	Land use designations/zoning can be leveraged to mitigate a variety of risks. Hazard mitigation strategies can be included as goals and objectives, and the mitigation planning process should be guided by Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives.
Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)	Various	Sets objectives and policies to minimize disruptions to operations and services from a wide range of emergencies.	COOPs support hazard mitigation by ensuring that during a disaster, all emergency operations can be identified and conducted.
Critical Areas Ordinance	Various	Regulates development in and around critical areas, such as endangered species habitats, wetlands, and steep slopes.	Protecting natural areas can help mitigate a variety of risks, especially flooding and sea level rise.
Development Codes	Various	Regulates where different types of development can occur, and what features development projects are required to have.	Development codes can restrict development in hazard-prone areas or require certain elements such as seismic design principles that will mitigate risks from hazards.
Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP)	Various	Guides an agency's actions before, during, and after a disaster. Defines roles, responsibilities, important locations, and other details that are critical during and after a disaster. Updated regularly. .	CEMPs should be informed by the hazard mitigation plan risk assessments. CEMPs are one of the most important tools to support hazard preparedness, and quick response following an incident.
Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)	Various	Allows for and mitigates the effects of development in endangered species habitats. Offsets development in habitat areas by preserving land.	Hazard-prone areas can be preserved through the land conservation system established in an HCP. Habitat may overlap with hazard-prone areas, and this tool can be used to restrict development in areas at risk of hazards.
Housing Action Plan	Various	Examines current and future housing supply and needs. Identifies strategies an agency can take to support housing needs.	Agencies can support strategies that encourage housing outside of hazard-prone areas. The hazard mitigation plan risk assessment should be used to inform strategies and future housing locations.

Administrative and Technical

The Thurston region is home to many committees, organizations, and ongoing efforts that regularly bring together diverse stakeholders to tackle difficult issues. Local staff can work through these established groups and pathways to build support for hazard mitigation, resilience, and incorporate hazard mitigation into a wide range of projects and community programs.

Local and State Administrative and Technical Capabilities

NAME	PURPOSE	MEMBERSHIP OR ATTENDANCE	APPLICABILITY TO HAZARD MITIGATION
Disaster Assistance Council (DAC)	To establish policies and procedures to organize disaster assistance in the most economical and effective manner.	Membership of the DAC is administered by Thurston County Emergency Management in coordination with the EMC.	The DAC plays a vital role in disaster assistance which can expedite relief and recovery for disaster victims. It can serve in an advisory role to plan participants about the needs of underserved and socially vulnerable populations.
Emergency Management Council (EMC)	Coordinates local emergency management activities of the county, cities, and tribes.	Emergency managers of Thurston County, Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater, Bucoda, Rainier, Yelm, Nisqually Tribe, and Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation.	The EMC oversees the development of the HMP. The group meets regularly and can oversee the progress and implementation of mitigation initiatives.
Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)	Works to develop and maintain emergency plans, conduct drills and exercises, and provide education and outreach to the community.	Representatives from local government agencies, first responders, emergency management personnel, private sector businesses, and community organizations.	The LEPC can serve as a forum to exchange information about funding opportunities, projects, and serve in an advisory role to the region on hazard mitigation planning activities.
Office of the Chehalis Basin (OCB)	Carries out the Chehalis Basin Strategy, a strategy to design and implement projects to restore aquatic habitats and protect residents from flood damage, moving forward.	Local governments, tribes, conservation districts, state agencies, and other community organizations.	The group focuses on protecting residents and communities from flood damage and preparing the region for more frequent and severe flood events. Mitigation initiatives may be carried out as OCB projects.
Puget Sound Partnership (PSP)	Leads the region's collective effort to restore and protect Puget Sound. Brings together hundreds of partners to mobilize action around a common agenda, advance Puget Sound investments, and advance priority actions by supporting partners.	Residents and representatives from federal agencies, state agencies, local jurisdictions, tribes, watersheds, businesses, and environmental groups.	Hazard mitigation can be incorporated into PSP projects.

NAME	PURPOSE	MEMBERSHIP OR ATTENDANCE	APPLICABILITY TO HAZARD MITIGATION
Stream Team	Provides environmental education programs, activities, and hands-on projects to Thurston County.	Storm and surface water utilities of the cities of Lacey, Olympia and Tumwater and Thurston County.	Stream Team can carry out hazard mitigation activities.
South Sound Military and Communities Partnership (SSMCP)	Takes on projects to advance infrastructure and regional improvements that support military readiness and the communities neighboring Joint Base Lewis-McChord.	Cities, counties, tribes, Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM), and regional, corporate, and non-profit organizations.	Hazard mitigation can be incorporated into SSMCP projects. The SSMCP is conducting a JBLM community resiliency study to understand the risks to communities that provide community lifelines to JBLM.
Thurston Conservation District (TCD)	Educates and assists residents of Thurston County in the management of natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations, inspiring voluntary, incentive-based conservation practices.	Residents and representatives from federal agencies, state agencies, local jurisdictions, tribes, watersheds, businesses, and environmental groups.	TCD provides support to all county residents around soil health, conservation planning, habitat restoration, and more. Hazard mitigation can be incorporated into TCD's guidance, or planning partners could present information on hazard mitigation and risk reduction at public events hosted by TCD. TCD supports community Firewise programs.
Thurston County Emergency Management Council Executive Seminars	Discuss emergency management, build support, and provide a forum for coordination quarterly.	Emergency management staff and elected officials and executives from agencies in the Thurston Region.	These seminars were used throughout this planning process to educate elected officials and executives about the HMP update. Going forward, these seminars can be used to review mitigation initiative progress and build collaboration and support for mitigation.
Thurston County Summer and Winter Weather Hazards Seminars	Brings together subject matter experts to provide information about the upcoming summer or winter season and hazard risks. Biannual event.	Planners, state and regional department staff, first responders, and emergency management staff.	This event can connect staff at local agencies with resources and information around upcoming hazard risks and suggested actions.
Thurston County Fire Chiefs Association (TCFCA)	Fosters communications and sharing among chief fire officers within Thurston County. Leads, supports, and develops fire agency and Emergency Medical Service systems and policies.	Chief fire officers from Thurston County fire protection districts and municipal fire departments.	TCFCA serves in an advisory role to hazard mitigation planning. The fire chiefs have local knowledge of the community, natural hazards and their risks, and are partners in mitigation and resiliency strategies.

NAME	PURPOSE	MEMBERSHIP OR ATTENDANCE	APPLICABILITY TO HAZARD MITIGATION
Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC)	Develops regionally focused plans and studies on topics such as transportation, growth management, and environmental quality. Provides information regarding the region and its emerging planning issues.	Elected officials from jurisdictions and organizations in the Thurston region.	TRPC acts a regional convener for multijurisdictional plans and projects, and can support coordinated initiatives. TRPC provides regional data that has been used in this plan and has facilitated coordination and development of the regional core HMP.
University of Washington Climate Impacts Group	Builds climate resilience by advancing understanding of climate risks and enabling science-based action to manage those risks.	Interdisciplinary research group at the University of Washington composed of natural, physical and social scientists as well as communications and administrative professionals.	Resources from this group were used in the HMP’s risk assessment. New resources can inform future plan updates and support incorporating climate mitigation and adaptation into hazard mitigation initiatives.
Deschutes WRIA 13 Salmon Habitat Recovery Committee	Identifies and prioritizes salmon habitat projects in the WRIA 13 watershed.	Tribes, federal and state agencies, local governments, citizens, non-profits, businesses, and technical experts.	Hazard mitigation can be incorporated into salmon habitat projects.

Financial

In addition to agencies' capital budgets, the following funding sources may be eligible to fund hazard mitigation initiatives, projects, or programs. Agencies in Thurston County are encouraged to engage in planning processes outside of hazard mitigation and incorporate hazard mitigation into the design and implementation of projects across disciplines and sectors.

Federal and State Funding Sources in Support of Hazard Mitigation Planning Activities

NAME	LEAD AGENCY	DESCRIPTION	APPLICABILITY TO HAZARD MITIGATION
Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)	FEMA	Supports states, local communities, tribes and territories undertake mitigation projects. Annual program.	BRIC can fund a wide variety of mitigation actions, from infrastructure projects to capability- and capacity-building including hazard mitigation planning.
Carbon Reduction Program (CRP)	FHWA	Funds projects designed to reduce transportation emissions, defined as carbon dioxide emissions from on-road highway sources. TRPC receives an allocation of these funds to award to eligible high priority local agency projects.	Transportation projects can be designed to incorporate hazard mitigation, or this program can fund mitigation initiatives on highways.
Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)	HUD	Provides annual grants on a formula basis to entitled cities and counties to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment, and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons.	CDBG eligible projects include design, renovation, or construction of public facilities, housing rehabilitation, relocation of individuals or businesses, and more. Initiatives that involve retrofitting public facilities or relocating businesses or individuals in floodplains may be eligible for funding.
Community Wildfire Defense Grant Program	USDA	Supports at-risk, local communities with planning for and mitigation against risks from wildfires.	This program can fund the development, revising, or implementation of Community Wildfire Protection Plans.
Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)	FEMA	Provides state, local, and tribal emergency management agencies with the resources required for implementation of the National Preparedness System and works toward the National Preparedness Goal of a secure and resilient nation.	The EMPG's allowable costs support efforts to build and sustain core capabilities across the prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery mission areas.

NAME	LEAD AGENCY	DESCRIPTION	APPLICABILITY TO HAZARD MITIGATION
Flood Control Assistance Account Program (FCAAP)	ECY	Assists local governments with comprehensive floodplain management planning and implementation of actions to mitigate flood risks.	FCAAP can fund flood hazard management plans, feasibility studies, and some infrastructure projects.
Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA)	FEMA	Provides funding to local jurisdictions and states for projects and planning that reduce or eliminate long-term risk of flood damage to structures insured under the NFIP.	FMA funds can be used for a variety of projects benefiting NFIP structures, such as acquisition or retrofits.
Floodplains by Design	ECY	Funds collaborative and innovative projects that integrate flood hazard reduction with ecological preservation and preservation. Biannual program.	This program can fund ambitious flood mitigation projects that also work to provide other community co-benefits or mitigate other hazard risks.
Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)	FEMA	Funds hazard mitigation measures and planning following a presidential disaster declaration.	HMGP can fund a wide variety of mitigation actions, and priority is given to initiatives listed in a community's HMP.
Increase Cost of Compliance (ICC) under NFIP	FEMA	Provides funding under the NFIP to homeowners with NFIP flood insurance whose structures have been substantially damaged.	Funding can be used to pay for or offset the costs of mitigation when the structure is rebuilt. It is often used to offset the non-federal share for hazard mitigation grants.
Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Program	WSDOT	Provides funding to help make surface transportation more resilient to climate change and natural disasters.	PROTECT projects can mitigate a wide variety of hazard risks through planning, resilience improvements, evacuation routes, and other projects that incorporate resilience.
Public Assistance Grant Program (PA)	FEMA	Provides funding to assist communities responding to and recovering from major disasters or emergencies declared by the president under the Stafford Act.	Mitigation can be incorporated into recovery projects to reduce long-term risk.
Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program	USDOT	Funds planning and capital construction of projects seeking to reconnect communities previously cut off from economic opportunities by transportation infrastructure.	Planning partners could incorporate hazard mitigation into existing project proposals in the area.
Safeguarding Tomorrow Revolving Loan Funding Program	FEMA	Supports capitalization grants to states and tribes to establish revolving loan funds that provide hazard mitigation assistance for local governments to reduce risks from natural hazards and disasters.	These low-interest loans allow jurisdictions to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters, foster greater community resilience and reduce disaster suffering.

NAME	LEAD AGENCY	DESCRIPTION	APPLICABILITY TO HAZARD MITIGATION
School District Bonds	School Districts	Can fund structural additions or renovations to schools and district-owned facilities.	School districts can use bonds to fund construction projects that mitigate risks from a variety of hazards.
Surface Transportation Block Grants (STBG)	TRPC	Provides flexible federal funding to local agencies for projects to preserve and improve the conditions and performance on transportation facilities.	STBG funds can support a wide variety of planning and construction projects to mitigate risks from hazards.
Transportation Alternatives STBG Set-Aside (TA)	TRPC	Provides funding for a variety of generally smaller-scale transportation projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas, community improvements, environmental mitigation related to stormwater and habitat connectivity, recreational trails, safe routes to school projects, and vulnerable road user safety assessments.	TA funds can support a wide variety of planning and construction projects to mitigate risks from hazards.
Urban and Community Forestry Grants	DNR	Offers grants to cities and towns, counties, tribal governments, non-profit organizations, and educational institutions to improve the health of community forests and develop local urban forestry programs.	This program can provide smaller awards (\$10k-\$40k) for projects that support the planning, growth, and maintenance of trees in urban areas. This could fund educational programs or other mitigation initiatives to mitigate the risks of wildfire, landslides, and other hazards.
WaterSMART Grants	USBR	Provides financial assistance to water managers for projects that seek to conserve and use water more efficiently, implement renewable energy, investigate, and develop water marketing strategies, mitigate conflict risk in areas at a high risk of future water conflict, and accomplish other benefits that contribute to sustainability in the western United States.	Planning partners could work to incorporate flood, drought, and mitigation of other hazard risks into existing project proposals in the area.
WRIA 13 Salmon Habitat Recovery Funding	WRIA 13 Lead Entity	Funds projects in the Deschutes Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) that improve conditions for salmon.	Local agencies can apply for grants or engage with other applicants to incorporate hazard mitigation into habitat restoration projects. Projects can mitigate landslides or flood risks.

Public Education and Outreach

The following list includes committees, organizations, and events that already inform the public about hazard risks and mitigation actions or could be used to do so in the future. Planning partners are encouraged to collaborate and form partnerships on outreach efforts to ensure all residents and visitors to the Thurston Region are well informed about the risks to their communities and how to mitigate them.

Public Education and Outreach Resources in Thurston County

NAME	PURPOSE	MEMBERSHIP OR ATTENDANCE	APPLICABILITY TO HAZARD MITIGATION
Nisqually River Council (NRC)	Promotes the environmental, social, and economic integrity of the Nisqually Watershed.	The Council is a non-regulatory advocacy, coordination, and education organization represented by tribes, cities, counties, utilities, and other government agencies.	The NRC's Nisqually River Education Project inspires youth about environmental health and sustainability of the Nisqually Watershed. It provides outdoor environmental education with hands on learning opportunities to engage them in the stewardship of natural resources and problem solving.
Stream Team	Provides environmental education programs, activities, and hands-on projects to Thurston County.	Storm and surface water utilities of the cities of Lacey, Olympia and Tumwater and Thurston County.	Stream Team can carry out education and outreach activities.
Thurston Community Alert	Alerts residents of hazardous conditions in the area with several modes of notification: phone, email, and text message.	Local agencies are members to acquire the service; community members must subscribe for notifications.	This system is used to ensure residents receive timely, accurate information before, during, and after hazard events. Partners should continue to use this system and conduct outreach to register more community members.
Thurston Conservation District (TCD)	Educates and assists residents of Thurston County in the management of natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations, inspiring voluntary, incentive-based conservation practices.	Residents and representatives from federal agencies, state agencies, local jurisdictions, tribes, watersheds, businesses, and environmental groups.	TCD provides support to all county residents around soil health, conservation planning, habitat restoration, and more. Planning partners can present information on hazard mitigation and risk reduction at public events hosted by TCD. TCD supports community Firewise programs.

NAME	PURPOSE	MEMBERSHIP OR ATTENDANCE	APPLICABILITY TO HAZARD MITIGATION
Thurston County Emergency Management Council Executive Seminars	Discuss emergency management, build support, and provide a forum for coordination quarterly.	Emergency management staff and elected officials and executives from agencies throughout the Thurston Region.	These seminars were used throughout this planning process to educate elected officials and executives about hazard mitigation planning and this plan update. Going forward, these seminars can be used to educate elected officials and executives about hazard mitigation and pass along information to a wide range of agencies.
Puget Sound Partnership (PSP)	Leads the region’s collective effort to restore and protect Puget Sound. Brings together hundreds of partners to mobilize action around a common agenda, advance Puget Sound investments, and advance priority actions by supporting partners.	Residents and representatives from federal agencies, state agencies, local jurisdictions, tribes, watersheds, businesses, and environmental groups.	Hazard mitigation can be incorporated into PSP projects.
Thurston County Flood Bulletin	An annual bulletin provides information to residents on alert systems, flood insurance, flood mitigation activities and programs, and more. Annual bulletin.	Mailed to all households in Special Flood Hazard Areas. Available to all Thurston County residents online and at community locations.	This tool goes directly to a large number of Thurston residents with concise, actionable information on flood risks and mitigation actions. This bulletin can be used to share information about personal preparedness, encourage residents to engage with emergency management staff, or build support for regional mitigation actions.
Thurston County Preparedness Expo	Provides education and awareness to the public about being prepared for disasters and emergencies. Offers an opportunity for vendors and participants to share their products and information. Annual event.	Emergency management staff, first responders, residents, and emergency products vendors	This is the largest regular event in the Thurston region to promote hazard preparedness and provide a range of emergency management, hazard mitigation, and other information and resources to the general public.

NAME	PURPOSE	MEMBERSHIP OR ATTENDANCE	APPLICABILITY TO HAZARD MITIGATION
Thurston County Summer and Winter Weather Hazards Seminars	Brings together subject matter experts to provide information about the upcoming summer or winter season and hazard risks. Biannual event.	Federal, state, local government, and private utility agencies. Meetings are attended by department directors, community planners, emergency management staff, first responders, transit, school districts, public works, and others.	This event connects staff across all levels of government with resources and information sharing. Recordings of the events are shared with stakeholders and the public. Presentations typically cover actions that agencies are taking to reduce risks from weather hazards.
Timberland Regional Library (TRL)	Provides library services to the residents of five counties in Southwest Washington State.	Residents in Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, and Thurston Counties	TRL supported public outreach efforts during development of this plan, and can support outreach efforts for mitigation actions going forward.
Wildfire Ready Neighbors Program	Provides residents with free consultations and tailored plans with suggested actions to reduce risks from wildfires.	Temporary program ongoing at the time of this planning process; open to all Thurston County residents.	This free program provides in-person consultations and forest health assessments that then lead to actionable suggestions for residents to reduce wildfire risks.



Sandwich board outside of Timberland Regional Library.