

Appendix C: Community Capability Assessment

A. Introduction

The ability of a community to develop an effective hazard mitigation plan depends upon six implementation factors specific to that unit of government:

1. Departments and Agencies
 - a. Local government departments or agencies that have direct responsibility for hazard mitigation activities, e.g., public works department responsibility for stormwater system maintenance;
 - b. Other local departments or agencies that may, by virtue of their work, either increase or decrease local vulnerability, e.g., school system selection of new school construction sites;
2. Existing Policies, Programs and Ordinances;
 - a. Local policies, programs and ordinances that affect hazard mitigation;
 - b. State programs, e.g., NCDOT maintenance of state-owned roads and highways;
3. Legal Capability (State authorization for local government programs);
4. Fiscal Capability (operating budget, capital improvement program);
5. Technical Capability (departmental responsibilities)
6. Political Climate (local political will for implementation of hazard mitigation activities).

B. Departments and Agencies

The Town of Apex is a local government body with a board-manager form of government. The elected Town Board is the decision making body for the Town. A planning board serves as an advisory panel to the Town Commissioners on specific matters, including planning and land use. The Town employs professional staff to carry out day-to-day administrative activities.

Departments and Agencies with Direct/Indirect Impact on Hazard Mitigation

Table C-1: Departments and Agencies – Town of Apex

Department/Agency	Impact	Function
Fire	Direct	Responsible for protecting life, property and the environment in the event of a fire, medical emergency or natural disaster.
Police	Direct	Provides law enforcement for the community. In times of disasters, the Police provide immediate assistance to those requiring emergency assistance.
Emergency Medical Services	Direct	Responsible for preserving human life and protecting property in times of emergency by administering pre-hospital medical care to all in need.
Public Works and Utilities	Direct	Responsible for all issues related to infrastructure installation and maintenance including streets, electric, water, and sewer.
Construction Management	Direct	Responsible for providing engineering services and building standards enforcement.
Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources	Direct	Offers both passive and active leisure opportunities through a variety of activities and programs for youth, adults, and Senior Citizens.
Planning	Direct	Responsible for providing coordinated guidance and regulation of growth and development through the review of subdivision and site development plans, the creation and implementation of long-range land use and transportation, and implementation of hazard mitigation plans.
Administration	Indirect	Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, Town Clerk and Town Attorney.
Human Resources	Indirect	Responsible for the recruitment and selection of Town employees, position classification and compensation, training, and development, employee recognition, personnel policy management and promoting wellness program.
Utilities/Finance	Indirect	Responsible for utility billing, cash collections, accounts payable, payroll, general ledges and investments.
Purchasing	Indirect	Responsible for the procurement of goods and services for all departments.

Source: Town of Apex.

Other Agencies/Departments

Wake County Public School System

The Wake County Public School System provides public educational programming and facilities. The school system is responsible for constructing and maintaining schools facilities. When selecting new school sites, the school system considers environmental factors that would impact the development potential of each site under consideration.

NC Department of Transportation

The NC Department of Transportation is responsible for construction and maintenance of state-owned roads and highways, including the construction and of stormwater drainage systems. Sizing and maintenance of stormwater drainage systems can have an impact on hazard mitigation. If inadequately sized structural elements, e.g., piping, channels, etc., cannot handle stormwater runoff, than upstream flooding will occur. Lack of maintenance especially due to insufficient resources (staff and equipment) can also increase the likelihood of system failure and stormwater damage to system elements (e.g., culverts, during flooding).

C. Existing Polices, Programs and Ordinances

The Town of Apex has the statutory authority to plan for growth and development including the power to make studies of the Town, to determine growth objectives, to prepare and adopt plans for achieving those objectives and to develop policies, ordinances and the administrative means to implement plans. The Town of Apex has a number of policies and regulations in place that help mitigate potential harmful effects of natural hazards.

Each Town policy, ordinance and regulation has a unique and varying impact on hazard mitigation. Although policies and ordinances may have not been created specifically for hazard mitigation purposes, they have been and can be utilized to implement hazard mitigation initiatives. Existing Town policies and ordinances include:

- 2010 Land Use Plan Update (including the NC 55 Corridor Plan and the North Salem Street Corridor Plan)
- Growth Management Plan
- Thoroughfare Plan (including the Western Thoroughfare Plan Extension and the Southern Thoroughfare Plan Extension)
- Parks, Recreation, Greenways and Open Space Master Plan
- Unified Development Ordinance (Zoning and Subdivision)
- Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance
- Sewer Allocation Ordinance
- State Building Code
- Emergency Action Guidelines
- Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
- Annual Town Budget
- EPA Phase II Stormwater Regulations

2010 Land Use Plan Update (including the NC 55 Corridor Plan and the North Salem Street Corridor Plan)

The 2010 Land Use Plan was first adopted by the Board of Commissioners in December 1989, and the subsequent 2010 Land Use Plan Update was adopted in August 1996. Additionally, a small area plan was prepared for the southern NC Highway 55 Corridor area in April 2002, and another was prepared for the North Salem Street area.

The 1996 2010 Update was intended to supplement and build upon the 1989 plan. The 2010 Plan included stated objectives to safeguard property and people from environmental hazards, to protect fragile natural environmental processes from harmful activities of people, and to find adequate land for urban development in the most environmentally suitable locations. The Plan also included recommendations to implement floodplain protective measures through zoning and subdivision ordinances, and to coordinate the provision of open space and passive recreation with a comprehensive stormwater management program.

A land use plan is intended to identify land use issues and to make recommendations on how to address these issues. Proper implementation of the plan requires that modifications be made to land use regulations. The original 2010 Plan and the 2010 Update have experienced a diminishment in utility due to the rapid growth experienced by the Town since 1996. As of 2003, a new, more detailed land use plan is being prepared that provides the opportunity to refine land use goals and objectives.

Growth Management Plan

The Growth Management Plan was adopted by the Board of Commissioners in June 2001. The principal outcome of this document was the establishment of a four percent (4%) Annual Growth Rate to become effective after the build-out of lots which had been approved prior to the adoption of the Sewer Allocation Ordinance in August 1999.

The Town anticipated that more controlled growth resulting from the full application of the ordinance would ensure that the provision of adequate public services and facilities would keep pace with the demands and expectations of new development. Adequate public services and facilities ensure that the Town can become more resilient to natural hazards by not over extending physical and fiscal capabilities. The Growth Management Plan also included a recommendation to adopt policies and tools to ensure that sensitive or unique natural resources and open space are protected.

Thoroughfare Plan (including the Western Thoroughfare Plan Extension and the Southern Thoroughfare Plan Extension)

A thoroughfare plan has the potential to guide development away from areas that are subject to natural hazards. As noted earlier, the primary natural hazard that is site specific in the Town is flooding which is confined to the creeks and tributaries that flow through the planning jurisdiction. The Town of Apex has not, historically, constructed many roads, but rather requires that new roads be constructed by new development.

The Thoroughfare Plan plans for future roads and road connections. The current Thoroughfare Plan was adopted by the Board of Commissioners in March 1997 and was amended by a Western Thoroughfare Plan Extension in July 1998 and by a Southern Thoroughfare Plan Extension in April 2000.

The Town has recently completed a comprehensive Thoroughfare Plan which builds the three referenced documents. The Plan includes an analysis of the topography and hydrology for use in determining where future roads should be located.

As new road are developed, care should be taken to ensure that development does not adversely affect the free flow of stormwater through natural water bodies such as creeks and streams. The proposed stormwater design manual along with current floodplain regulations should work in concert to ensure proper engineering design for the crossings of natural drainage ways.

Parks, Recreation, Greenways and Open Space Master Plan

The Parks, Recreation, Greenways and Open Space Master Plan was adopted by the Board of Commissioners in November 2001. In addition to more conventional “developed” parks, the plan calls for “the acquisition of land for passive open space and resource management areas with development limited to greenways and nature study”. Many of the targeted “passive park” acquisition areas border creeks or tributaries throughout the Town planning jurisdiction.

The plan proposes 1) the acquisition of ten (10) acres of passive park land by November 2003 in order to meet immediate needs; 2) the acquisition of an additional thirty (30) acres of passive park land by November 2006 to meet near term needs; and the acquisition of an additional thirty (30) acres for passive use by November 2011 to meet long term needs. The plan recommends that the Town of Apex pursue various options for ownership and management of these lands through land trusts, conservancies, and grants. The Town plans to pursue acquisition grants from the Wake County Open Space Grant program.

The Parks, Recreation, Greenways and Open Space Master Plan has a strong emphasis on the preservation of greenway corridors along the banks of the main creeks and tributaries throughout the planning jurisdiction. Mail-out and phone surveys of town citizenry listed walking as the top physical activity in which people engaged. In response the plan recommends a more aggressive approach to planning through acquisition of corridors and implementation of the greenway system. Again the plan calls for the use of various funding opportunities to acquire and develop “a system that utilizes major stream and floodplain corridors as the primary network, linked together through the use of smaller tributaries, open space, upland trails, bikeways, potential use of utility easements, and sidewalks”.

The acquisition of 70 acres of passive parks and along with new greenway corridors will help preserve natural areas which have the ability to accommodate floodwaters resulting from severe rain storm events. The preservation of these areas is an effective way to buffer development from hazard prone areas—along both FEMA regulatory floodplains and secondary tributaries.

Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)

The Unified Development Ordinance was adopted by the Board of Commissioners in August 2000. Section 1.3.1 of the UDO indicates that the purpose of this ordinance is “to promote the public health, safety, peace, comfort, and general welfare of the citizens and residents of Apex and its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). It is a comprehensive, unified set of regulations that govern the subdivision of land, the development of land, and the use of land”. The UDO contains a number of provisions that function to minimize the potential conflict of human activity via development and natural hazard areas—in particular flood hazard areas. In addition to zoning and subdivision regulations, the UDO includes floodplain management regulations, watershed regulations, and requirements for the preservation of Resource Conservation Areas.

Zoning and Subdivision Regulations

The NCGS in Chapter 160A-381 authorizes municipal governments to establish a variety of zoning regulations to govern and restrict the uses of land and establish minimum specifications such as setbacks, building heights, densities, and requirements for the preservation of open space or environmentally sensitive areas within a development, and other such provisions that apply to such uses. The basis of the state’s granting of zoning authority is for the purpose of “promoting health, safety, morals, or the general welfare of the community”. (Note: Map B-1 in Appendix B depicts current zoning district boundaries.)

The NCGS in Chapter 160A-372 authorizes municipal governments to establish a subdivision control ordinance to “provide for the orderly growth and development of the city” and “for the distribution of population and traffic in a manner that will avoid congestion and overcrowding and will create conditions essential to public health, safety, and the general welfare...”.

Table C-2: Zoning Districts - Town of Apex

Zoning District	Description
B1 (Neighborhood Business)	The purpose of this district is to encourage the development of small-scale, neighborhood serving commercial and business uses providing a wide range of goods and services, generally located at intersections.
B2 (Downtown Business)	The purpose of this district is to the development of a high intensity, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented downtown business district, with retail, financial, service, office, governmental, cultural and entertainment uses, along with residential options on the top floors of buildings.
CB (Conservation Buffer)	The purpose of this district is to designate lands that possess unique environmental values that are under public ownership and management.
HD (High Density Single-Family Residential)	The purpose of this district is to provide lands for high density single-family and duplex residential housing at densities up to 8 units an acre.
HD (High Density Multi-Family Residential)	The purpose of this district is to provide lands for high-density multi-family residential uses, (townhouses, condominiums, apartments, duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes) at densities up to 14 units an acre.
MD (Medium Density Residential)	The purpose of this district is to provide lands for medium density single-family and duplex residential uses at densities up to 6 units an acre.
LD (Low Density Residential)	The purpose of this district is to provide lands for low density, single family residential uses, at densities up to three units an acre.
LI (Light Industrial)	The purpose of this district is to provide sufficient lands in appropriate locations for certain types of businesses, light manufacturing, or processing uses that might cause undesirable effects upon residential or commercial lands.
MEC (Major Employment Center)	The purpose of this district is to encourage the development of a vibrant mix of employment uses at appropriate major intersections and corridors within the Town in a planned and aesthetically pleasing way. This is done by allowing design flexibility as well as a mix of office, research, light industrial, limited neighborhood commercial, and a mixture of residential uses that are reviewed as a plan for development subject to the application of performance standards.
MH (Manufactured Housing Residential)	The purpose of this district is to provide lands for manufactured housing along with other multi-family (townhouse, condominium, duplex, and multi-family dwellings) and single family housing at densities of six units an acre.
MHP (Mobile Home Park)	The purpose of this district is to provide lands for mobile home development in a planned environment at densities of eight units an acre.
MORR (Mixed Office-Residential – Retail)	The purpose of this district is to build on the traditional neighborhood and small-town character of Apex by providing lands that allow a mix of residential, professional office, and limited retail uses that are designed and developed consistent with neo-traditional principles. The district allows single family development on small lots, duplexes, bed and breakfasts, and small-scale professional office and retail uses built to a scale that is consistent with Apex’s small-town character.

Zoning District	Description
O&I (Office and Institutional)	The purpose of this district is to encourage development of office and institutional uses at moderate intensities, and the integration of complementary retail uses to service the office and institutional development, primarily at major and minor thoroughfares.
PC (Planned Commercial)	The purpose of this district is to encourage the development of a moderate and high intensity mix of convenience and city-wide serving convenience and regional retail and related uses within a planned environment at the intersections of the Town's arterials and major collector roads.
PUD (Planned Unit Development)	The purpose of this district is to permit variations from the strict application of the standards of the base zone districts in order to allow flexibility for landowners to creatively plan for the overall development of their land in a way that is not possible through the strict application of the minimum standards of this Ordinance.
RA (Residential Agriculture)	The purpose of this district is to protect and enhance an agricultural and rural lifestyle by providing lands that allow for agricultural uses, and very low density rural and residential development.
RR (Rural Residential)	The purpose of this district is to provide for lower density rural and residential development while accommodating smaller lot sizes than the RA Residential Agricultural District.
TND (Traditional Neighborhood District)	The purpose of this district is to encourage the development of a vibrant mix of residential, retail, and offices uses that adhere to neo-traditional neighborhood principles. This is done by allowing design flexibility and a mix of residential, retail, office and recreational uses, along with schools and churches that are reviewed as a plan for development subject to the application of performance standards.

Source: Town of Apex UDO.

Floodplain Management

Another provision of the UDO (Section 6.2.16) prohibits new residential development in FEMA regulatory floodplain areas which will contribute significantly to future hazard mitigation efforts. However, it is probable that some existing structures that are currently not within a regulatory FEMA floodplain will be designated as within the floodplain when remapping by FEMA and the State of North Carolina is complete.

The UDO requires that all structures, and substantial improvements thereof, built within floodplain areas have the finished floor elevation (FFE) elevated at least two (2) feet above the base flood elevation (BFE). The UDO also requires that any new residential structures, or substantial improvements thereof, comply with the requirements of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the North Carolina State Building Code with regards to the provision of sufficient hydrostatic venting. Hydrostatic vents are intended to allow the unimpeded movement of floodwaters into and out of the foundation area of the structure. This helps equalize the hydrostatic forces on each side of the foundation wall and minimizes the possibility of the structure being pushed off its foundation.

Watershed Protection

Another set of UDO provisions generally parallel the Swift Creek watershed provisions of the zoning ordinance that predated the UDO, but now apply throughout town. These provisions generally impose 100 foot wide buffers on each side of perennial streams and 50 feet on each side of intermittent streams with no new residential development allowed within these buffer areas. Furthermore, floodplain and buffer areas are to be retained in their natural state to help ensure the adequate disposition of stormwater and to minimize the threat to lives and property. The various UDO sections together should greatly reduce the vulnerability of future development to flooding along FEMA regulated streams and non-floodplain secondary tributaries.

Resource Conservation Areas (RCAs)

Additionally every lot developed under the provisions of the UDO is required to provide perimeter buffers and Resource Conservation Areas (RCA). Typically, the buffers and RCA together must equal forty percent (40%) of the total site area. RCA's are preserved areas which are prioritized to protect environmentally sensitive areas such as floodplains and wetlands. All of these ordinance provisions are effective for hazard mitigation purposes.

Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance

The Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance, Chapter 5 Article X of the Town Code, was adopted by the Board of Commissioners in July 1996. Section 5-142 indicates the purpose of the ordinance is to regulate certain land-disturbing activities to control accelerated erosion and sedimentation in order to prevent the pollution of water and other damage to lakes, watercourses, and other public and private property by sedimentation and to establish procedures through which these purposes can be fulfilled.

The ordinance requires that anyone intending to conduct a land-disturbing activity greater than one acre in size must prepare an erosion control plan and have it approved by the Town prior to beginning work. Additionally, any person conducting a land-disturbing activity is required to take all reasonable measures to protect all public and private property from damage caused by such activity. More specifically this ordinance requires that

- (1) more critical/sensitive areas shall be identified and given special attention to ensure their protection,
- (2) the amount of the exposed (denuded) area must be minimized,
- (3) the denuded area must be stabilized as soon as possible,
- (4) the surface water runoff above a denuded area must be controlled to reduce erosion and off-site sedimentation,
- (5) land-disturbing activities are to be planned and conducted in a manner that prevents off-site damage from sedimentation,
- (6) appropriate steps must be taken to ensure the adequate dispersion of the velocity and energy of the site's stormwater runoff in order to minimize erosion and sedimentation in the stream, and
- (7) the preservation of adequate buffer zones between the disturbed/denuded area and any natural water course.

Without appropriately designed and placed erosion control devices stormwater runoff from a site where the natural vegetative cover has been disturbed may transport fine solid particulate matter from the site which then accumulates in watercourses or on adjacent properties. The accumulation of sediment within the creek bed is, in effect, filling within the critical floodway area. The floodway is the primary area in which the main flow of stormwater is conveyed during and after a severe rainfall event. Sedimentation within the creek bed has the harmful effect of displacing capacity for carrying stormwater by diminishing the cross sectional area of the creek bed.

Off-site sedimentation has several possible origins:

- (1) inadequately sized or inappropriately located sediment traps,
- (2) the failure of one or more sediment traps due to poor design, construction, or maintenance,
- (3) the failure of one or more sediment traps due to the occurrence of a storm event that exceeds design capacity (typically a ten year storm), or
- (4) erosion of the creek banks due to the lack of adequately sized or maintained energy dissipaters (rip rap pads) at the outlets of drainage pipes.

Erosive velocity is caused by an increase in the rate of stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces (which reduces the rate of infiltration), or the removal of natural vegetative cover which diminishes a site's ability to absorb stormwater. There have been several occurrences of sediment trap failures due to a combination of the reasons noted above. Rapid growth has limited staff ability to adequately inspect sediment control devices as frequently as desired (although ultimate responsibility to ensure proper function falls upon the developer or owner of the land). Additionally, new development has resulted in a significant increase in the amount of impervious surface coverage.

New development has greatly reduced the amount of land available for rainfall infiltration which in turn has resulted in a significant increase in both the rate and amount of stormwater runoff. Increased runoff has caused erosion of creek banks whereby sediment deposits has reduced stormwater conveyance capacity. While evaluating creeks and tributaries for diminished stormwater carrying capacity, the Town will continue to ensure adequate enforcement of soil erosion and sedimentation ordinance regulations.

Sewer Allocation Ordinance

Explosive population growth has caused a severe strain on wastewater treatment capability. In early 1999 the Town realized that residential development that had already been approved, along with potential non-residential development, could potentially exceed the treatment capacity at the wastewater treatment plant within two years. As an interim solution to this problem, the Town decided to allocate, over a four-year period running through June 30, 2003, the remaining sewer capacity to the residential developments that had already been approved. This would allow time to find an intermediate solution while exploring options for a long range solution. No new site plan applications were processed during this four-year period.

NC State Building Code

Chapter 5 Article II of the Town Code Section 5-20 incorporates the North Carolina State Building Code as adopted by the North Carolina Building Code Council. The purpose of the State Building Code is to ensure "safe and stable design, methods of construction, minimum standards, and use of materials in buildings or structures hereafter erected, enlarged, altered, repaired, or otherwise constructed or reconstructed". This document pertains not only to the structure itself but also governs all plumbing systems, mechanical systems, and electrical systems, as well as relevant energy conservation standards. The State Building Code contains regulations that help ensure that new construction, or reconstruction of existing structures, will be better able to withstand these four basic forces of nature; earth, water, fire and wind.

Earth

The State Building Code classifies Wake County as Seismic Design Category B which indicates that the area is not expected to experience even a moderate intensity earthquake, but, because the area has experienced some ripple effects from far away earthquake activity, certain minimal consideration should be made to address minor movements of the earth's surface. The State Building Code does not specifically address landslides, but some provisions therein ensure that structures are built on soils that are adequately compacted so as to minimize the risk of localized slumping of soil bearing the weight of the structure. Other provisions that ensure positive drainage away from the structure reduce the chance for excessive soil saturation which could result in localized landslides.

Water

The State Building Code establishes design rain loads to ensure that the structural elements of the roof are adequate to sustain the load of rainwater that could accumulate if the drainage system becomes blocked. The design standard in Wake County for a 100-year 60-minute rainfall event is four (4) inches per hour. Likewise, the design standard for snow loads on a roof system is 15 inches. As noted above there are provisions in the State Building code to ensure that positive drainage is established away from the structure. Additionally there are a number of provisions that deal with construction in the regulatory floodplain. These provisions are discussed in greater detail in the subsection on stormwater management regulations.

Fire

The State Building Code has standards that are intended to minimize the combustibility of materials and the spread of fire. The primary requirement for an average single family detached home which would come into effect in minimizing the threat from a wildfire is the requirement for flame retardant roof shingles. There are more restrictive provisions for fire retardation that apply to residential structures with shared (party) walls such as apartments, condominiums and town homes and for commercial and other types of non-residential structures. The State Building Code has minimum separation requirements between structures to minimize the spread of fire from one structure to another. These minimum separation requirements can only be reduced if a higher standard of flame retardant materials is used in the construction (fire rated walls).

Wind

The State Building Code requires that structures in Wake County must be able to withstand design wind speeds of 100 miles per hour, and gusts of 110 miles per hour for three minutes. There are supplemental standards in the State Building Code that do not apply to Wake County, but are mandatory for coastal counties. These standards require "hurricane straps" to help anchor the structure to its foundation and the roof system to the structure.

Emergency Action Guidelines

Emergency Action Guidelines were developed in late 2001 to establish procedures to aid Town personnel in dealing with a variety of natural and man-made hazards and events. The natural hazards addressed by the Emergency Action Guidelines include earthquakes, floods, winter storms, hurricanes, severe thunderstorms and tornadoes. Man-made events include gas leaks, personal injuries and illness, hazardous material accidents, radiation accidents, structural fires in a Town facility, and a bomb threat to a Town facility.

The guidelines provide a list of emergency response telephone numbers, designates key personnel to contact in the case of a particular event or hazard, lists sources for emergency public information and outlines evacuation procedures and routes. The guidelines are intended to outline the appropriate response and line of action that should be followed in the event of an emergency. The guidelines also provide some general information such as a more detailed differentiation of a watch versus a warning that has been issued by the National Weather Service.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

The Town of Apex has in the last couple of years prepared a semi-formal Capital Improvement Program (CIP). A CIP is a financial planning document which is often adopted in conjunction with the annual operating budget. The CIP establishes a plan for the scheduling, prioritization and funding of land acquisition, buildings, vehicles and other “durable goods” equipment. A CIP is typically prepared for a five year period and is evaluated and revised annually. CIP items that may be related to the hazard mitigation efforts or that may provide hazard mitigation benefits include open space acquisition, public safety improvements, and public works projects such as drainage improvements and construction of retention or detention ponds.

Annual Town Budget

The Town Budget is adopted annually for a 12-month period from July 1 – June 30. Revenue sources for the 2002-2003 General Fund included-52%, property taxes; 23%, from State collected revenue; 10% solid waste fees; 6%, development fees; 6%, grants and fund balance; 3%, miscellaneous revenue sources; and 1%, interest earned.

Examples of specific expenditures related to hazard mitigation listed in the fiscal year 2002-2003 annual budget are \$50,000 as a capital outlay for a Williams Creek Stormwater Study, \$4,000 for a snow plow attachment, and \$4,186 for the 800 megahertz radio.

EPA Phase II Stormwater Regulations

The Public Works Department is currently preparing a comprehensive Stormwater Manual. This document will work in concert with Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) provisions. Development of the manual will be shaped, to some degree, by requirements originating with State and Federal governments including Neuse River and Cape Fear River watershed regulations and EPA National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II regulations.

The Town of Apex will become a NPDES Phase II community in 2003. The NPDES Phase II program requires compliance with the program’s stated objectives by small municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) and construction activities that disturb between one (1) and five (5) acres of land. State program objectives include:

- 1) reduce the discharge of pollutants to the “maximum extent practicable” (MEP),
- 2) protect water quality, and
- 3) satisfy appropriate water quality requirements of the Clean Water Act.

Compliance with the MEP standard will require the full implementation of best management practices (BMPs) in order to achieve the following six (6) minimum control measures required by the NPDES Phase II program:

- 1) establish a public education and outreach program,
- 2) provide for public participation and involvement in achieving the goals of the program,
- 3) develop and implement a plan to detect and eliminate illicit discharges,
- 4) develop, implement and enforce an erosion and sediment control program for construction sites with more than one acre of disturbed land,
- 5) develop, implement and enforce a program to control the post construction rate of runoff, and
- 6) develop and implement a program to reduce pollutant runoff from municipal operations and to provide suitable training to relevant members of the local government staff.

As another example, it is anticipated that the Town of Apex will become a named Neuse River community within the next year or two which will require the Town to begin tracking the amount of nitrogen and other containments generated by various land uses and to establish methodologies to minimize the likelihood of these contaminants reaching the creek systems. Also pending are Cape Fear River Watershed Regulations which are currently being developed by the NC Environmental Management Commission (EMC). It is anticipated that these regulations will be comparable to the existing Neuse River Watershed Regulations.

The Town of Apex has already been required by the EMC to basically apply Neuse River watershed requirements throughout the planning jurisdiction as part of an inter-basin transfer certificated (ITC) which the Town received in December 2001. The ITC allowed the Town of Apex to draw water from Jordan Lake in the Cape Fear basin and to discharge treated wastewater into the Neuse River basin.

These various program requirements will probably necessitate the amendment of the UDO to aid in the implementation of specifications and design criteria, to provide for tighter accounting for the amount of impervious surfaces being constructed, to encourage bio-retention and infiltration of stormwater, and/or to establish incentives/penalties related to certain actions as established in the Stormwater Manual.

Community Capability Assessment Summary

The overall assessment of Town of Apex community capability to address hazard mitigation through existing policies and ordinances is summarized in Table C-3.

Incorporating Hazard Mitigation Requirements into Community Plans

No policies, programs or ordinances have been found to have the effect of hindering hazard mitigation; however, there are opportunities to make current policies more effective for mitigation. Existing policies and ordinances are regularly reviewed and considered for updates/revisions to meet changing community needs and to stay in compliance with State and Federal regulations.

The Town will create a process to incorporate requirements in the Hazard Mitigation Plan into existing community plans and ordinances. The Planning Department will be responsible for providing a copy of the Hazard Mitigation Plan to each Town department and for ensuring that the responsible department (see Table C-3) incorporates hazard mitigation goals, objectives and actions into plan updates and ordinance revisions to ensure that updates and revisions do not contribute to increased community vulnerability to natural hazards.

The specific departments, as noted in Table C-3, that are responsible for implementation, enforcement, and updates to community plans and ordinances will be charged with monitoring programs and regulations for opportunities to improve hazard mitigation actions. More specific information on recommendations for new or revised policies and programs is detailed in Section II. Mitigation Action Plan.

Table C-3: Community Capability Assessment – Town of Apex

Policies and Programs	Program Status	Effectiveness for Mitigation	Rationale for Effectiveness	Recommendations for Incorporating Hazard Mitigation into Existing Plans and Mechanisms
2010 Land Use Plan Update (including the NC 55 Corridor Plan and the North Salem Street Corridor Plan) (1989/1996)	Existing	Low	The Land Use Plan provides guidance for decision makers in the approval of proposed land development plans.	The Plan includes recommendations for implementing floodplain protection measures through zoning and subdivision ordinances, and coordination of open space and passive recreation with a comprehensive stormwater management program. The planning department is the lead agency responsible for plan updates.
Growth Management Plan (1999)	Existing	Low	The Growth Management Plan establishes a 4% annual growth rate to help manage growth.	The Growth Management Plan includes a recommendation to adopt policies and tools to ensure that sensitive or unique natural resources and open space are protected. The planning department is the lead agency responsible for plan implementation and updates.
Thoroughfare Plan (including the Western Thoroughfare Plan Extension and the Southern Thoroughfare Plan Extension)	Existing	Low	The Thoroughfare Plan plans for and addresses future transportation needs created by growth.	As new roads are developed, care will be taken to ensure that the development does not adversely affect the free flow of stormwater through natural water bodies such as streams and creeks. The planning department is the lead agency responsible for approval of development plans and for plan updates.
Parks, Recreation, Greenways and Open Space Master Plan	Existing	Moderate	Protects and manages green and open space.	With the acquisition of additional acres of parks along new greenway corridors, this plan will help preserve natural areas which accommodate storm water runoff. Preservation of these areas is an effective way to buffer development from hazard prone areas. The parks and recreation department is the lead agency responsible for plan implementation and updates.

Policies and Programs	Program Status	Effectiveness for Mitigation	Rationale for Effectiveness	Recommendations for Incorporating Hazard Mitigation into Existing Plans and Mechanisms
Unified Development Ordinance (2000)	Existing	High	Ties in multiple ordinances to create a stable foundation for growth and development.	The UDO contains numerous provisions, including zoning and subdivision regulations that limit development in hazard prone areas. The UDO also includes floodplain management, watershed regulations, and requirements for the preservation of Resources Conservation Areas. The planning department is the lead agency responsible for UDO enforcement and revisions.
Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance (1996)	Existing	High	Regulates the disturbance of soil associated with construction.	This purpose of this ordinance is to regulate certain land-disturbing activities to control accelerated erosion and sedimentation in order to prevent pollution of water and other damages. The engineering department is the lead agency responsible for enforcement.
Sewer Allocation Ordinance (1999)	Expired	N/A	Allocated wastewater capacity to help manage growth.	Ordinance expired in June 2003.
NC State Building Code	Existing	High	Established minimum standards for building construction.	These regulations affect hazard mitigation by ensuring adherence to minimum building standards. The State of NC is responsible for code requirements and the Town's construction management department is responsible for enforcement.
Emergency Action Guidelines	Existing	High	Outlines a plan of action in the event of a natural disaster.	These guidelines provide procedures for dealing with a variety of natural and man-made hazardous events, including providing emergency phone numbers, evacuation procedures, and warning services. The emergency management services department is responsible for implementation and program updates.

Policies and Programs	Program Status	Effectiveness for Mitigation	Rationale for Effectiveness	Recommendations for Incorporating Hazard Mitigation into Existing Plans and Mechanisms
Capital Improvement Program (CIP)	Existing	High	Identifies and sets aside funds for major capital improvement projects.	The CIP can be used for hazard mitigation strategy by set aside funds for land acquisitions, public safety improvements, and public works projects such as drainage improvements and construction of retention or detention ponds. The town administration department takes the lead in developing the CIP.
Annual Town Budget	Ongoing	High	Establish budget for fiscal year.	The annual budget can be used to fund programs or projects that involve hazard mitigation actions. The town administration department takes the lead in developing the annual budget. The town administration department takes the lead in developing the town budget.
EPA Phase II Stormwater Regulations	Existing	High	Requires compliance with objectives including municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) and construction that disturbs between 1-5 acres of land.	This program addresses the need to reduce the volume and rate of stormwater runoff through use of bio-retention and other methods with incentives or penalties related to certain actions established in the stormwater manual. The construction management department is responsible for implementation.

Source: Town of Apex

D. Legal Capability

Local governments in North Carolina have a wide array of powers that enable counties and municipalities to adopt and implement policies and ordinances that may be used to mitigate the potential harmful effects of natural hazards. Bellow is a summary of the legal authority and powers that North Carolina has conferred on local governments within the state (*Local Hazard Mitigation Planning Manual*, NC Division of Emergency Management, 1998, Appendix B, pg. 61-64.) These powers fall into four broad categories: regulation, acquisition, taxation, and spending.

Regulation (General Police Power)

Local governments in North Carolina have been granted broad regulatory powers. North Carolina bestows the general police power on local governments, allowing them to enact and enforce ordinances which define, prohibit, regulate, or abate acts, omissions, or conditions detrimental to the health, safety, and welfare of the people and to define and subside nuisances (including public health nuisances). Since hazard mitigation can be included under the police power (as protection of public health, safety and welfare), towns, cities and counties may include requirements for hazard mitigation in local ordinances. Local governments may also use their ordinance-making power to abate “nuisances,” which could include, by local definition, any activity or condition making people or property more vulnerable to any hazard (NCGS 160A Art. 8 (Delegation and Exercise of the General Police Power to Cities and Towns); 153A, Art. 6 (Delegation and Exercise of the General Police Power to Counties)).

Town of Apex

The Town of Apex has enacted and enforces regulatory ordinances designed to promote the public health, safety and general welfare of its citizens. These ordinances are listed and described in detail elsewhere in this section.

Building Codes and Building Inspection

Many structural mitigation measures involve constructing and retrofitting homes, businesses and other structures according to standards designed to make the buildings more resilient to the impacts of natural hazards. Most of these standards are imposed through the building code.

North Carolina has a state compulsory building code, which applies throughout the state (NCGS 143-238(c)). However, municipalities and counties may adopt codes for their respective areas if approved by the state as providing “adequate minimum standards” (NCGS 143-238(e)). Local regulations cannot be less restrictive than the state code. Exempted from the state code are: public utility facilities other than buildings; liquefied petroleum gas and liquid fertilizer installations; and farm buildings outside municipal jurisdictions. No state permit may be required for structures under \$20,000. (Note that exemptions apply only to state, not local, permits).

Local governments in North Carolina are also empowered to carry out building inspections. NCGS 160A, Art. 19, Part 5; and 153A Art. 18, Part 4 empower cities and counties to create an inspection department, and enumerates department duties and responsibilities, which include enforcing state and local laws relating to the construction of buildings, installation of plumbing, electrical, heating systems, building maintenance and other matters.

Town of Apex

The Town of Apex enforces the NC State Building Code throughout the planning jurisdiction.

Land Use

Land use regulatory powers granted by the state to local governments are the most basic manner in which a local government can control the use of land within its jurisdiction. Through various land use regulatory powers, a local government can control the amount, timing, density, quality and location of new development. All these characteristics of growth can determine the level of vulnerability of the community in the event of a natural hazard. Land use regulatory powers include the power to engage in planning, and to enact and enforce zoning ordinances, floodplain ordinances, and subdivision controls.

Each community possesses great power to prevent unsuitable development in hazard-prone areas. (NCGS 160A, Art. 8. (Delegation and Exercise of the General Police Powers to Cities and Towns); Art. 19 (Planning); Part 3 (Zoning); and 153A. Art. 6 (Delegation and Exercise of the General Police Power to Counties; Art. 18 (Planning and Regulation of Development); Part 2 (Subdivision Regulation); Part 3 (Zoning).

Planning

In order to exercise the regulatory powers conferred by the General Statutes, local governments in North Carolina are required to create or designate a planning agency (NCGS 160A-3 87). The planning agency may perform a number of duties, including: make studies of the area; determine objectives; prepare and adopt plans for achieving those objectives; develop and recommend policies, ordinances, administrative means to implement plans and perform other related duties (NCGS 160A-361).

The importance of the planning powers of local governments is emphasized in NCGS 160A-383, which requires that zoning regulations be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan. While the ordinance itself may provide evidence that zoning is being conducted "in accordance with a plan", the existence of a separate planning document ensures that the government is developing regulations and ordinances that are consistent with the overall goals of the community.

Town of Apex

The Town of Apex has established a Planning Board to advise the elected Board of Commissioners on planning issues. The Town has also adopted a 2010 Land Use Plan and a Growth Management Plan which sets guidelines and policies for future development within the planning jurisdiction.

Zoning

Zoning is the traditional and nearly universal tool available to local governments to control the use of land. Broad enabling authority for municipalities in North Carolina to engage in zoning is granted in NCGS 160A-381; and for counties in NCGS 153A-340. (Counties may also regulate inside a municipal jurisdiction at the request of a municipality (NCGS 160A-360(d)). The statutory purpose for the grant of power is to promote health, safety, morals or the general welfare of the community. Land uses controlled by zoning include the type of use (residential, commercial, industrial) as well as minimum specifications such as lot size, building height and set backs, density of population, etc.

Local governments are authorized to divide their territorial jurisdictions into districts, and to regulate and restrict the erection, construction, reconstruction, alteration, repair, or use of buildings, structures or land within those districts (NCGS 160A-382). Districts may include general use districts, overlay districts, and special use or conditional use districts. Zoning ordinances consist of maps and written text.

Town of Apex

The Town of Apex has a Unified Development Ordinance that incorporates zoning regulations.

Subdivision Regulations

Subdivision regulations control the division of land into parcels for the purpose of building development or sale. Flood-related subdivision controls typically require that subdividers install adequate drainage facilities and design water and sewer systems to minimize flood damage and contamination. Subdivision regulations prohibit the subdivision of land subject to flooding unless flood hazards are overcome through infilling or other measures. Subdivision regulations are a more limited tool than zoning and only indirectly affect the type of use made of land or the minimum specifications for structures.

Broad subdivision control enabling authority for municipalities is granted in NCGS 160-371, and in 153-330 for counties outside of municipalities and municipal extraterritorial planning jurisdictions. Subdivision is defined as all divisions of a tract or parcel of land into two or more lots and all divisions involving a new street (NCGS 160A-376). The definition of subdivision does not include the division of land into parcels greater than 10 acres where no street right-of-way dedication is involved (NCGS160A-376(2)).

Town of Apex

The Town of Apex Unified Development Ordinance includes subdivision regulations that establish minimum standards for land development.

Floodplain Regulation

In the summer of 2000, the North Carolina General Assembly adopted an act entitled "An Act to Prevent Inappropriate Development in the One Hundred-Year Floodplain and to Reduce Flood Hazards". By this act, the North Carolina statutes regulating development within floodways were rewritten to include floodplain regulation (NCGS 143-214.51-214.61). The purpose of the new law is to:

1. Minimize the extent of floods by preventing obstructions that inhibit water flow and increase flood height and damage.
2. Prevent and minimize loss of life, injuries, property damage and other losses in flood hazard areas.
3. Promote the public health, safety and welfare of citizens of North Carolina in flood hazard areas.

The new statute authorizes local governments to adopt a flood hazard prevention ordinance to regulate uses in flood hazard areas and to grant permits for the use of flood hazard areas that are consistent with the requirements of the statute. The statute provides for certain uses within flood hazard areas without a permit consistent with local land use ordinances (NCGS 143-215.54).

The statute establishes minimum standards for local ordinances and provides for variances for prohibited uses as follows:

- (a) A flood hazard prevention ordinance adopted by a county or city pursuant to this Part shall, at a minimum:
 - (1) Meet the requirements for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program and of this section.
 - (2) Prohibit new solid waste disposal facilities, hazardous waste management facilities, salvage yards, and chemical storage facilities in the 100-year floodplain except as noted in section (b) below.
 - (3) Provide that a structure or tank for chemical or fuel storage incidental to a use that is allowed under this section or to the operation of a water treatment plant or wastewater treatment facility may be located in a 100-year floodplain only if the structure or tank is either elevated above base flood elevation or designed to be watertight with walls substantially impermeable to the passage of water and with structural components capable of resisting hydrostatic and hydrodynamic loads and the effects of buoyancy.
- (b) A flood hazard prevention ordinance may include a procedure for granting variances for uses prohibited under G.S. 143-215.54(c). A county or city shall notify the Secretary (of Crime Control and Public Safety) of its intention to grant a variance at least 30 days prior to granting the variance. A county or city may grant a variance upon finding that all of the following apply:
 - (1) The use serves a critical need in the community.
 - (2) No feasible location exists for the location of the use outside the 100-year floodplain.
 - (3) The lowest floor of any structure is elevated above the base flood elevation or is designed to be watertight with walls substantially impermeable to the passage of water and with structural components capable of resisting hydrostatic and hydrodynamic loads and the effects of buoyancy.
 - (4) The use complies with all other applicable laws and regulations.

The statute authorizes priority ratings for local government applications for revolving loans or grants based on adoption of a local comprehensive land use plan, a zoning ordinance, or other measures that significantly contribute to the implementation of the comprehensive land use plan and the flood hazard prevention ordinance.

The Floodplain Act also instructed the Environmental Review Commission to study and report its findings to the 2001 General Assembly on the need to:

- (1) Increase the minimum elevation requirement.
- (2) Increase the authority of the Secretary of Crime Control and Public Safety to enforce the new statute.
- (3) Increase protection against the potential recurrence of damage to public and private property that resulted from the hurricanes of 1999, and other measures to reduce the likelihood that public assistance will be needed in response to future hurricanes and other storm events.

Town of Apex

The Town of Apex has incorporate floodplain management regulations within the Unified Development Ordinance.

Acquisition

The power of acquisition can be a useful tool for pursuing mitigation goals. Local governments may find the most effective method for completely “hazard-proofing” a particular piece of property is to acquire the property (either in fee simple or a lesser interest, such as an easement). Public acquisition removes the property from the private market and eliminates or reduces the possibility of inappropriate development. North Carolina legislation empowers cities and counties to acquire property for public purpose by gift, grant, devise, bequest, exchange, purchase, lease or eminent domain (NCGS 153A. Art. 8; 160A. Art. 11).

Condemnation

The Town may choose to use the power of eminent domain to acquire property as per NCGS Chapter 40A. This authority is more typically reserved for the acquisition of rights of way but may have some applicability to hazard mitigation for acquisition of flood prone areas.

Taxation

The power to levy taxes and special assessments is an important tool delegated to local governments by North Carolina law. The power of taxation extends beyond merely the collection of revenue and can have a profound impact on the pattern of development in a community. Communities can set preferential tax rates for areas, which are unsuitable for development (e.g., agricultural land, wetlands, and floodplains) to discourage development in hazardous areas.

Because the usual methods of apportionment seem mechanical and arbitrary, and because the tax burden on a particular piece of property is often quite large, the major constraint in using special assessments is political. Special assessments seem to offer little in terms of control over land use in developing areas. Assessments can, however, be used to finance the provision of necessary services within city or county boundaries. In addition, they are useful in distributing to new property owners the costs of the infrastructure required by new development.

Town of Apex

The Town of Apex levies property taxes that provide the major source of income for the annual town budget.

Spending

Another major power that has been delegated by the North Carolina General Assembly to local governments is the power to make expenditures in the public interest. Hazard mitigation principles should be made a routine part of all spending decisions made by a local government, including adoption of annual budgets and a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). With regards to hazard mitigation, these expenditures could range from the purchase of equipment or the contracting of services to prepare for a hazard event before it occurs, during the event, or during the recover phase after the event has occurred. Examples of expenditures related to hazard mitigation which are listed in the fiscal year 2002-2003 annual budget include; \$50,000 set aside as a capital outlay for a Williams Creek Stormwater Study, \$4,000 for a snow plow attachment, and \$4,186 for the 800 mega-hertz radio equipment.

A CIP is a schedule for the provision of city or county services over a specified period of time. Capital programming by itself can be used as a growth management technique with a view towards hazard mitigation. By tentatively committing itself to a timetable for the

provision of capital to extend services, a community can control growth to some extent especially in areas where the provision of on-site sewage disposal and water supply are unusually expensive.

In addition to formulating a timetable for the provision of services, a local community can regulate the extension of and access to services. A CIP that is coordinated with extension and access policies can provide a significant degree of control over the location and timing of growth. These tools can also influence the cost of growth. If the CIP is effective in directing growth away from environmentally sensitive or high hazard areas, for example, it can reduce public costs associated with degradation of the environment and damages to properties caused by natural hazards.

Bonds

The Town of Apex has the ability to issue a variety of bond instruments (general obligation bonds, revenue bonds, etc.) to pay for various long term capital needs such as the construction of buildings and the purchase of open space for recreational needs. Most common bond issues require voter approval via a bond referendum; however, revenue bonds which designate a source of revenue for payback only need approval by the Board of Commissioners. The Town of Apex has four outstanding bond issues totaling approximately \$11 million. The Town is paying down approximately \$1 million of this debt annually.

The State allows municipalities to have outstanding bond issues of up to eight percent (8%) of the value of the tax base. The local tax base for fiscal year 2002-2003 is \$2,121,254,059; therefore, the bond issuance restriction of eight percent of the total tax base would yield an allowable bond issuance amount of \$169,700,325. The Town's outstanding bond issuance is just over one-half of one percent of the total tax base (0.0052%) versus the eight percent (8%) allowable by the State. These figures indicate that the Town of Apex has considerable financial capabilities via bond issuances. This sound financial position is reflected in the Town's high bond rating of AA- from Standard and Poors and A+ from Moody.

E. Fiscal Capability

Beyond legal authority and political willpower, fiscal capability is a key component to effectively developing and implementing a hazard mitigation plan. In addition to local tax funds, non-profits and other non-governmental organizations are often interested in helping to implement hazard mitigation projects. Local governments can also apply for State and Federal funds to implement hazard mitigation initiatives. Appendix D lists state and federal sources for information and funding of hazard mitigation initiatives. The NC Emergency Management website at http://www.ncem.org/Mitigation/additional_funding.htm includes a more exhaustive list of over 300 state and federal funding sources.

Local Funds

In North Carolina, property taxes provide the primary source of revenue for municipalities. These taxes are typically used primarily to finance services that must be available and delivered on a daily basis, such as police and fire emergency services, solid waste collection and disposal, street maintenance, etc. and, leaving very little, if any, for additional services and projects. Fortunately, State and Federal funds are available to local governments for the development and implementation of hazard mitigation programs.

Ability to Pay

In recognition of the disparate economic prosperity of the State's one-hundred counties, the North Carolina Department of Commerce ranks counties in an economic tier system. The impetus for this system was the William S. Lee Quality Jobs and Business Expansion Act of 1996 (Lee Act) which provides for a sliding scale of state tax credits for economic investment. The Lee Act has become the State's main development tool in an effort to help smaller rural counties become more economically competitive. The tier ranking is also used by the State as a measure of an individual county's ability to pay when applying for state and federal grants.

The most economically distressed counties are ranked in Tier 1 and the most economically prosperous in Tier 5. The rankings are evaluated annually using these three factors – population growth, unemployment rate, and per capita income. The 2003 NC Department of Commerce ranking places Wake County in Tier 5.

F. Technical Capability – Staff Resources

The Town of Apex has a wide variety of technical capabilities available to aid in hazard mitigation efforts. The Town's most valuable technological resource is the wealth of knowledge accumulated by its personnel through years of experience. The staff's technical capabilities include planning, code compliance, information management, and emergency services provisions. Together these technical capabilities can help build a more resilient community by implementing better planning before the occurrence of a natural hazard, as well as better response during the event and during the recovery period.

Planning Department

The department is responsible for long range plans and for the enforcement of the unified development ordinance. The department provides professional advice and technical expertise to the citizens, elected officials, appointed boards and committees, and other Town departments. The Planning Department is committed to ensuring quality development within the Town and extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) by protecting environmentally sensitive areas, providing for adequate transportation networks, promoting economic vitality, providing quality housing at affordable prices, and promoting a sense of community that is compatible with the small town character of Apex. The department employs 4 professional planners.

Fire Department

The Apex Fire Department has 15 full time employees and numerous part-time employees and volunteers. Full-time employees staff Station 3 on Hunter Street. Station #1 on North Salem Street and Station #2 in the New Hill area are staffed with 3 part-time employees each week day during regular working hours. The mission of the Apex Fire Department is to continually protect life, property, and the environment from fire, medical emergencies, natural disasters, and other emergencies for those who live, work, and travel in and through Apex and surrounding districts with competent, professional, and honest personnel.

Police Department

The Apex police department strives to offer the optimum in services for citizens and business owners, to safeguard families and homes, and to watch over commercial properties throughout the day and nighttime. This is accomplished through departmental interaction with the community with an emphasis on citizen concerns. The department employs 46 personnel ranging from the chief and uniformed officers, to detectives and telecommunicators.

Emergency Medical Services

Apex EMS consists of volunteers and paid personnel, both full-time and part-time, which staff two paramedic level ambulances twenty-four hours a day. The agency is based out of a 6,500 square feet station and boasts a fleet of three ambulances and two special response vehicles.

Public Works and Utilities

The department maintains the Town infrastructure including the storm water drainage system. The department also strives to protect and preserve natural resources of the Town.

Construction Management

The department is responsible for providing engineering services and building standards enforcement to ensure that new construction meets minimum State building code construction standards.

G. Political Climate

The Town of Apex has experienced the devastating effects of natural hazards including hurricanes, flooding and ice storms. The citizens, property owners, business owners, and elected officials are committed to improving the community through hazard mitigation. The Mayor along with the Town Board of Commissioners and the Town Manager continually strive to make the Town of Apex a safer community in which to live and work. These officials see the Hazard Mitigation Plan as a key component in helping to achieve that goal.