



3.0 BACKGROUND

The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of the *City of Paso Robles Hazard Mitigation Plan*. This includes a review of the background, authority and purpose of the Plan, and a description of the Plan document.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA), commonly known as the 2000 Stafford Act amendments, was approved by Congress on October 10, 2000. On October 30, 2000, the President signed the bill into law, creating Public Law 106-390. The purposes of the DMA are to amend the Stafford Act, establish a national program for pre-disaster mitigation, and streamline administration of disaster relief.

3.2 PLAN PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

This Plan meets the requirements of the federal DMA, which calls for all communities to prepare hazard mitigation plans. By preparing this Plan, Paso Robles is eligible to receive federal mitigation funding after disasters and to apply for mitigation grants before disasters strike. This Plan starts an ongoing process to evaluate the risks for different types of hazards to Paso Robles, and to engage the City and the community in dialogue to identify which steps are most important to pursue to reduce these risks. This constant focus on planning for disasters will make the City, its residents and businesses, much safer.

The local mitigation planning requirements encourage agencies at all levels, local residents, businesses, and the non-profit sector to participate in the mitigation planning and implementation process. This broad public participation enables the development of mitigation actions that are supported by these various stakeholders and reflect the needs of the entire community.

States are required to coordinate with local governments in the formation of hazard mitigation strategies, and the local strategies combined with initiatives at the State level form the basis for the State Mitigation Plan. With the information contained in Local Mitigation Plans, States are better able to identify technical assistance needs and prioritize project funding. Furthermore, as communities prepare their plans, States can continually improve the level of detail and comprehensiveness of statewide risk-assessments.

For the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) program, local jurisdictions must have an approved mitigation plan to receive a project grant. Local jurisdictions must have approved plans by November 1, 2004, to be eligible for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding for Presidentially declared disasters after this date. Plans approved at any time after November 1, 2004, will make communities eligible to receive PDM and HMGP project grants.

Adoption by the local governing body demonstrates the jurisdiction's commitment to fulfilling the mitigation goals and objectives outlined in the Plan. Adoption legitimizes the Plan and authorizes responsible agencies to execute their responsibilities. The Plan includes documentation of the resolution adopting the Plan (Appendix D).

FEMA's Interim Final Rule requires that Local Plans be submitted to the State Hazard Mitigation Officer for initial review and coordination, with the State then forwarding the plans to FEMA for formal review and approval.

3.3 PLAN DESCRIPTION

The City of Paso Robles Hazard Mitigation Plan consists of the following primary functions:

Community Description

To provide an adequate background for the hazard profiles and risk assessments that are presented in subsequent chapters Paso Robles is described in some detail. This description includes a general history and background, and also includes a discussion regarding the historical trends for demographic, population, and economic conditions that



have shaped the area. A community profile is also included to briefly identify growth trends and general plan themes that are currently being experienced in the area.

Historical Record, Hazard Profiles, Vulnerability Assessment

Through this procedure the planning team identified and compiled relevant data on all potential natural hazards that threaten Paso Robles and the immediately surrounding area. Information collected includes historical data on natural hazard events that have occurred in and around the City and how these events impacted residents and their property.

Based upon historical occurrences and best available data from agencies such as FEMA, U.S. Geological Survey, California Geologic Survey, and the National Weather Service, the planning team identified and described all natural hazards that threaten Paso Robles. Detailed hazard profiles include information on the frequency, magnitude, location and impact for each hazard in addition to estimating the probabilities for future hazard events. Maps are included to delineate identified hazard areas and previous hazard occurrences.

Risk Assessment

This section reflects the collection and integration of the best available data, including an inventory of assets that may be affected by natural hazards such as people, housing units, critical facilities, special facilities, infrastructure and lifelines, hazardous materials facilities and commercial facilities. This data was compiled by assessing the potential impacts from each hazard using FEMA's Hazards U.S. (HAZUS) multi-hazard loss estimation model and other risk modeling techniques. The subsequent information provides the City with information that outlines the full range of hazards the City may face and potential social impacts, damages and economic losses.

Mitigation Strategy

Based upon the findings of the capability assessment and the risk assessment, the consultant team worked with the Paso Robles Hazard Mitigation Planning Team towards drafting an overall mitigation strategy for the City. These groups collaborated to engage in an interactive planning process by facilitating discussion on possible mitigation activities and by gaining consensus on the identification of the general planning goals and target objectives for the hazard mitigation plan. Based upon these goals and objectives, the City of Paso Robles reviewed and adopted a comprehensive range of appropriate mitigation measures to address the risks facing the community. Such measures include preventive actions, property protection techniques, natural resource protection strategies, structural projects, emergency services and public information and awareness activities.