

Chapter 4. Goals

Goals are needed for this planning effort to guide the review of the possible mitigation measures. This Plan needs to make sure that the recommended actions are consistent with what is appropriate for St. Tammany Parish. Mitigation goals need to reflect community priorities and be consistent with other plans for the Parish.

4.1. Background

4.1.1. ND 2025 The goals of this plan need to be consistent with and complement the goals of other Parish planning efforts. The primary planning effort is the program called “New Directions 2025” (ND 2025). While the ND 2025 plans are still being developed, in 1999, the ND 2025 Steering Committee and the Parish Police Jury adopted the “Vision Element” to provide direction to the effort.

As with the entire ND 2025 effort, the Vision Element has a Natural Hazards section. Although the Vision Element does not have specific goals, the “value statements” provide guidance, similar to goals statements. There are four value statements for natural hazards:

1. All residents and their property will be protected from natural hazards to the maximum feasible extent. We will find ways to achieve these goals that also enhance and complement the natural beauty of St. Tammany Parish.
2. For those natural hazards from which residents cannot be protected in place, both adequate warning and safe escape measures will be available to save as many lives as possible.
3. All future development will be sited and constructed in such a way so as to not only (a) be at less risk than existing development but also (b) to not increase the risk to pre-existing developments.
4. Enhanced cooperation will exist among all bodies of local government.

4.1.2. Goal setting exercise On December 6, 2003, the Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee conducted an exercise to outline its goals for this mitigation plan. Each member was given the handout that appears on the next page, asking for their five goals for the mitigation program. The handout includes a list of possible responses.

Committee members wrote down their top five choices on a Post-it card. Each member then posted them on the wall and explained their choices.



Goals Exercise

What should be the goals of our mitigation program?

Here are possible answers to this question. They are just food for thought. Pick the five that you think are most important. You may reword them or add new ones if you want.

You have five cards. Use one card for each of your top five answers.

- Protect businesses from damage
- Protect homes from damage
- Protect new/future buildings from damage
- Protect forests
- Protect marshes/wetlands/environmentally sensitive areas
- Protect people's lives
- Protect public health
- Protect public services (fire, police, etc.)
- Protect critical facilities
- Protect streets and utilities
- Protect the Causeway and bridges to New Orleans
- Protect power stations and power lines
- Protect downtowns/shopping centers
- Protect centers of employment
- Protect schools
- Protect scenic areas, greenways, buffers, etc.
- Protect cars and other vehicles
- Protect farms, crops and livestock
- Protect repetitively flooded areas
- Protect a particular area: _____
- Protect a particular property: _____
- Protect a particular property: _____
- Make sure future development doesn't make things worse
- New developments should pay the full cost of protection measures
- Restrict development in hazardous areas
- Minimize public expenditures
- Minimize property owners' expenditures
- Maximize the share paid by benefiting property owners
- Maximize use of state and federal funds
- Use public/private partnerships
- Help people protect themselves
- Other: _____
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

The cards were then organized by similar topics. There was quite a bit of consistency in the members' topics. The handout has more than 30 possible goal statements, but the members' nominations covered no more than 10 topics. Several of them were not listed in the handout. The Committee members' nominations were relatively easy to fit into a concise number of goals.

The exercise revealed important information to guide the planning effort, both in what was selected from the handout and what was not selected from the handout. For example, members did not stress protecting natural areas or which sources of funding to use. They focused on protecting people and property.



There was no favoritism shown for, say, residences over other types of property, but there was a strong concern to protect critical facilities and public services, particularly to make sure they will be able to protect people when needed. While this Plan addresses all hazards, flooding was foremost in the members' minds because it has proven to be the most common and damaging of the hazards reviewed.

4.2. Goals

At the end of the exercise, the Mitigation Planning Committee agreed on six general goals for this planning effort:

1. Protect the lives and health of the Parish's residents from the dangers of natural hazards.
2. Ensure that public services and critical facilities operate during and after a disaster.
3. Ensure that adequate evacuation routes, streets and utilities are maintained and available during and after a disaster.
4. Protect homes and businesses from damage.
5. Keep the problems caused by natural hazards from getting worse through wise management of new development.
6. Give special attention to repetitively flooded areas.

These goals are certainly consistent with the vision statements of ND 2025 and practically repeat the first three statements of that earlier planning effort.