



City of Melrose Public Works Committee

Thursday, September 3, 2026, 7:25 PM
City Council Chamber, 1st Floor
562 Main Street, Melrose, MA 02176

AGENDA

NOTE:

To watch this meeting live visit mmtv3.org or local cable station MMTV (Channels 3, 15, 22 on Comcast or Channels 37, 38, 39 on Verizon)

Some Board and Commission meetings meet via zoom. Information on how to enable closed captioning for online commission meetings can be found by clicking [here](#).

I. CALL TO ORDER

Elizabeth Kowal	Vice Chair
Jason Chen	
Christopher Park	
Ryan Williams	
William Bradley Freeman	President, Ex Officio Member
Kimberly Vandiver	Chair

II. MINUTES APPROVAL

A. Public Works Committee Meeting April 28, 2025 7:00 PM

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

When: Sep 3, 2026 07:25 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Topic: Public Works Committee Meeting

Join from PC, Mac, iPad, or Android:

<https://cityofmelrose-org.zoom.us/j/97144838666?pwd=lyhGQBOFjvHz9d8GFBnG4JgKfLwLFt.1>

Passcode: 758278

Webinar ID: 971 4483 8666

IV. INFORMATIONAL ORDER

- A. **(ID # 2026-1631):** Informational Order - Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Public Review Draft

V. ADJOURNMENT

The City of Melrose does not discriminate based on disability and is committed to hosting accessible meetings and events. Individuals with disabilities who need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication, written materials in alternative formats, or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures, in order to access the programs and activities of the City of Melrose or to attend meetings, should contact the City's ADA Coordinator, Polina Latta platta@cityofmelrose.org.



CITY OF MELROSE

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Administration–Engineering–Water–Sewer–Facilities
Parks–Forestry–Highway–Sanitation–Cemetery–Fleet

Elena Proakis Ellis, P.E., BCEE
Director of Public Works

City Yard, 72 Tremont Street
Melrose, Massachusetts 02176
Telephone – (781) 665-0142
E-mail: eproakis@cityofmelrose.org

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Jennifer Grigoraitis
Melrose City Council

From: Elena Proakis Ellis, P.E., Director of Public Works

cc: John White, Fire Chief/Emergency Management Director
Lauren Grymek, Chief of Staff
Jay Coy, Deputy City Engineer
Lori Massa, Director of Planning and Community Development

Date: August 11, 2026

Re: **Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan – Informational Order**

The Melrose DPW, working with consultants from Weston and Sampson Engineers, has recently completed the public review draft of the City's updated Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (NHMP). This plan focuses on the City's preparedness for a variety of natural disasters. Having a fully adopted plan allows the City to continue to qualify for certain federal grants.

As outlined in the attached PowerPoint, which will be presented to the City Council as an informational order on August 17, 2026, the NHMP update is the culmination of a detailed process involving various stakeholders and opportunities for public input. The final step of this outreach effort is the release of this public review draft.

The public review draft Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan can be found here, on the City's website: <https://www.cityofmelrose.org/876/Natural-Hazard-Mitigation-Plan>

Comments may be provided by all interested parties by filling out the comment form available on the website. All comments are due to the City by September 7, 2026. Following the public review period, the City will submit a final draft plan to the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA). Once MEMA's comments have been addressed, the final plan will be submitted to FEMA for review. Upon approval from FEMA, the report will return to the City Council for adoption. **Since no further changes are permitted to the document following FEMA's review, the opportunity for comment is during this public review period.** Based on typical MEMA and FEMA review timelines, we anticipate returning to the Council in late 2026 or early 2027 for adoption of the plan.

If you have any questions about this report or prefer to submit comments in an email rather than using the online comment form, please send comments to Jenn Rosa in the DPW Engineering Division at jrosa@cityofmelrose.org.

Thank you for your interest in the City's emergency preparedness.



Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2026

Presentation to City Council
August 17, 2026

Weston & Sampson



FLOODING



Risk of **extreme rain** and **storm events** are likely to **nearly double** in the next **25 years**.

July 2012 flooding in Melrose. Photo from Patch.com

HEAT



The number of days **above 90°** is expected to reach **30 days by 2030** and **60 days by 2070.**

Photo of Melrose by Weston & Sampson



SEVERE WINTER WEATHER



In Winter 2015, the City experienced a record-breaking **108.6 inches of snow**.

February 2015 snow in Melrose. Photo by Martin Fowler.

WHAT IS HAZARD MITIGATION?

Reduce impacts from natural hazards through plans, projects, and services.



VALUE OF HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING

EVERY \$1
SPENT ON MITIGATION



SAVES \$6
ON DISASTER RECOVERY



HMP OVERVIEW



CH 1: INTRODUCTION & GOALS

MITIGATION GOALS

Increase education and awareness around threats, hazards, and vulnerabilities

Align risk reduction with other state, tribal, or community objectives

Build partnerships for risk reduction involving government, organizations, businesses, and the public

Identify implementation approaches that focus resources on the greatest risks and vulnerabilities

Identify long-term, broadly supported strategies for risk reduction

Communicate priorities to potential sources of funding

CH 2: PLANNING PROCESS

City Representatives



Steering Committee

Led by Melrose DPW Engineering Division

who guides the planning process and endorse draft Goals

4 Meetings

Hazard Mitigation Committee



Hazard Mitigation Planning Team (HMPT)

12 stakeholders

including advocates, residents, business-owners, state and local agency representatives, and people from various other organizations.

2 Workshops

Public and Stakeholders



Public Engagement

Everyone

Results from public meetings and other feedback are integrated into the final report.

*2 Public Meetings
64 Survey Responses*

CH 3: NATURAL HAZARD PROFILES



Hurricanes /
Tropical Storms



Flooding from
Precipitation



Average / Extreme
Temperatures



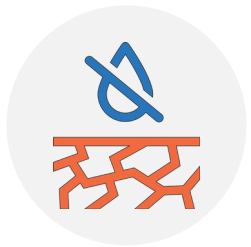
Severe Winter
Storms



Invasive
Species



Changes in
Groundwater



Drought



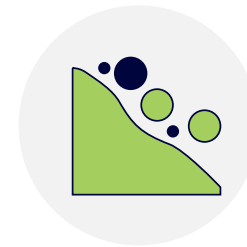
Wildfire



Earthquakes



Tornadoes



Landslides /
Mudflows



Other Severe
Weather



WHAT WE'VE HEARD FROM YOU...

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS

Most concerning natural hazards

1. Extreme temperatures (heat/cold)
2. Winter Storms/ Nor'easters
3. Flooding

Most concerning impact of natural hazards

1. Power outages
2. Damage to the home
3. Contaminated drinking water
4. Limited access to food or supplies

CH 3: NATURAL HAZARD PROFILES

Chapter 3 Identifies the natural hazards that can affect the city:

- **Description:** Explains and defines natural hazard
- **Location:** Areas of Melrose that might be affected
- **Level of Intensity:** Potential size of natural hazard event
- **Previous Events:** How often events have happened in the past?
- **Future Probability:** How likely they are to occur in the future?

Information is consistent with the Massachusetts' 2023 State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan (ResilientMass)

ResilientMass Plan

2023 MASSACHUSETTS STATE HAZARD MITIGATION
AND CLIMATE ADAPTATION PLAN



CH 4: ASSET INVENTORY

Examples of assets in FEMA categories

- **People Assets:**
 - Populations, shelters, housing, schools, and food distribution
- **Structures Assets:**
 - Emergency buildings and facilities, grocery stores, medical facilities, transportation infrastructure, schools, and public works
- **Systems Assets:**
 - Power grid, cell towers, transit routes, MWRA facilities, hazardous materials sites and water/sewer/stormwater systems
- **Natural Resources Assets:**
 - Parks, waterbodies, open spaces, conservation areas
- **Cultural and Historic Resources Assets**
 - Historic districts, landmarks, places of worship, and cultural facilities
- **Economic Assets**
 - Businesses or resources that support local or regional economy
- **Community Assets:**
 - Festivals, events, community-building activities that strengthen social capital and resilience



CH 5: VULNERABILITY & IMPACT ASSESSMENT

VULNERABILITY = ASSETS that could be impacted by HAZARDS

IMPACT = potential consequences

Societal Vulnerability

- Senior/aging populations may have impaired mobility, diminished sensory awareness, and/or other social and economic limitations. Power outages could cause inadequate indoor heating or air conditioning, and loss of medical technologies and life support communication, and loss of communication with public safety personnel during emergency events presents immediate danger to the senior/aging population.

Infrastructure Vulnerability

- Transportation infrastructure, including public transit, provide evacuation, distribute relief resources and mobilize vulnerable populations to local shelters or hospitals post disaster. Blocked roadways and parking lots can block routes to hospitals, utility infrastructure, and emergency response facilities.

Environmental Vulnerability

- Drainage systems and flood management measures are designed to convey stormwater runoff to waterways or floodplains to minimize flooding. Blockage and backup of stormwater flows could cause significant structural damage or pose a risk to public safety

WHAT WE'VE HEARD FROM YOU...

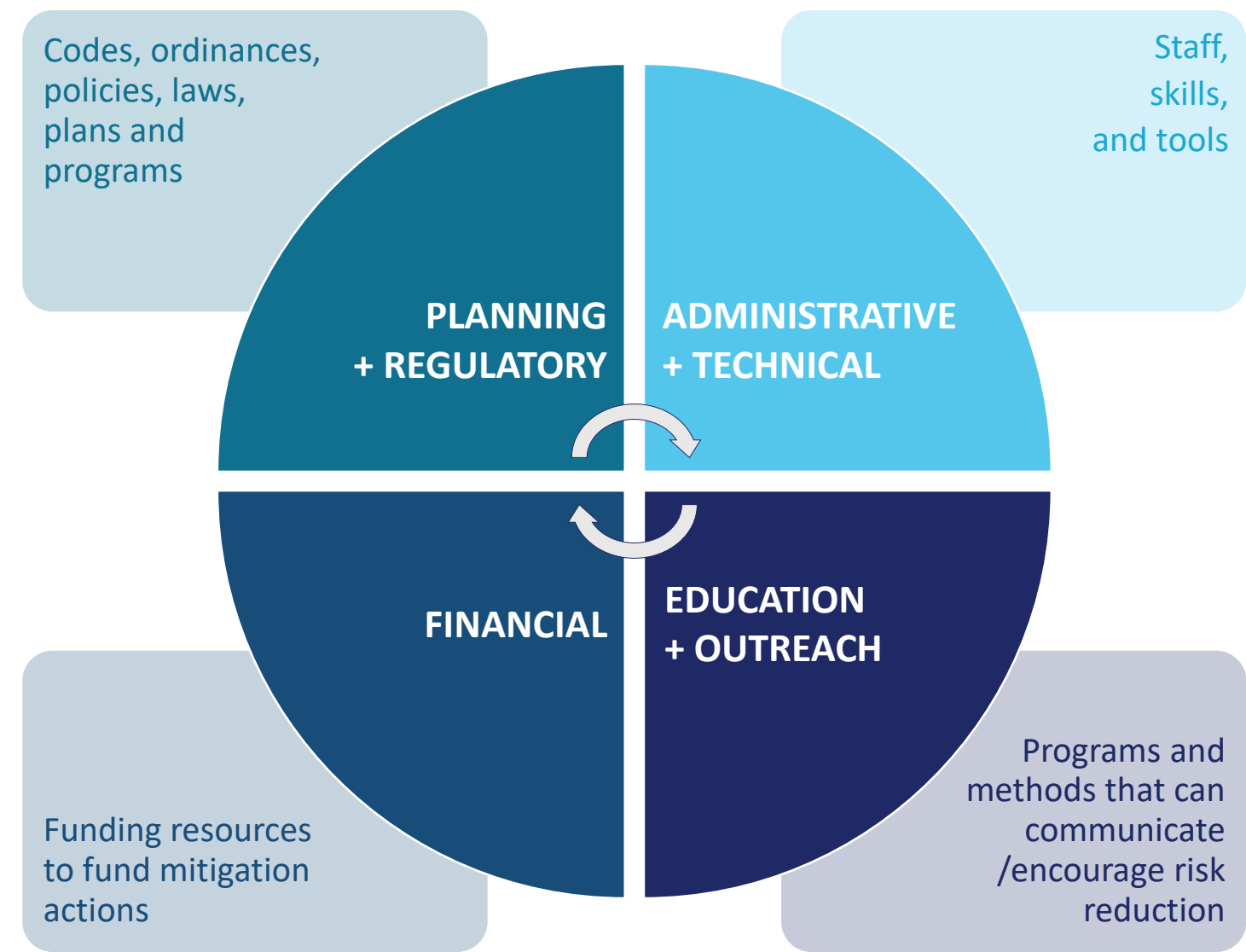
“The recent drought did bring fires to the Breakheart reservation causing concern for property and health.”

“The City Center is generally low lying and my neighborhood has very high groundwater at times that could lead to flooding.”

“Far more extremely hot days each summer/fall season. Central AC is now a must.”

CH 6: CAPABILITIES ASSESSMENT

The City of Melrose has a unique set of capabilities, in the form of **laws, policies, programs, staff, funding and other resources**, to carry out the HMP and increase resilience.



WHAT WE'VE HEARD FROM YOU...

Summary of Public Survey Results

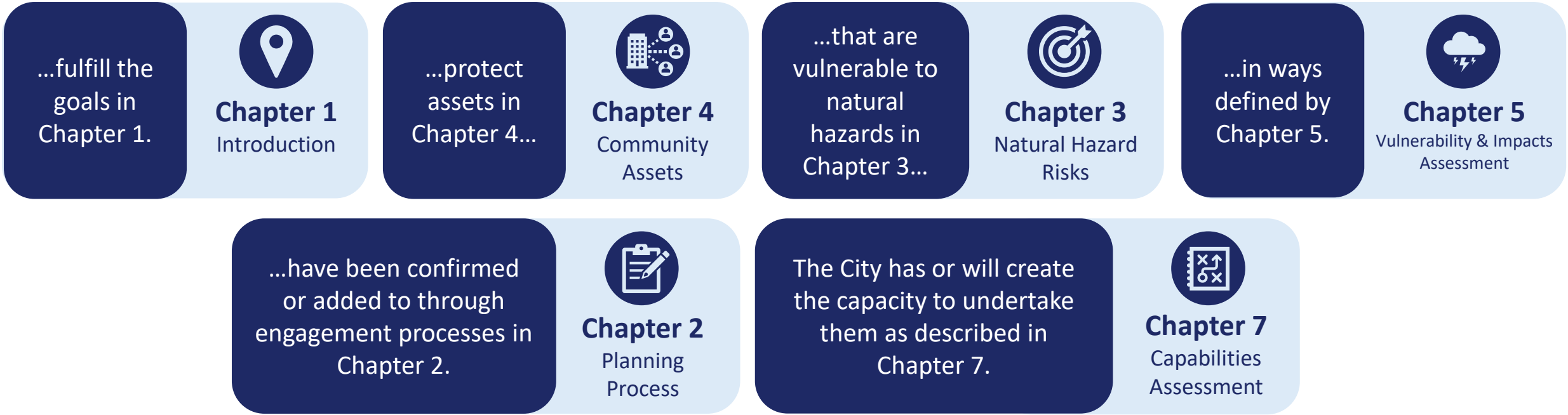
What does the city DO WELL to prepare for natural hazards?

1. Winter road treatment - salting and sanding
2. Snow removal/preparedness
3. Public notification of upcoming extreme events
4. Tree planting
5. Green space

What could the city IMPROVE ON to prepare for natural hazards?

1. Climate resilience planning
2. Flood protection and response
3. Renewable energy implementation
4. Tree planting
5. Prioritize vulnerable populations

Mitigation Actions....



A **mitigation action** is a measure, project, plan, or activity proposed to reduce current and future vulnerabilities. These actions will **create resilience** for the City of Melrose (ability to withstand and swiftly recover from an extreme event). These actions will **support adaptation to climate change**.

CH 7: MITIGATION ACTIONS

Example Actions

Local Planning & Regulation	Update Emergency Management Plan, upgrade communication systems, and develop utility life support contact list to communicate with senior/aging populations.
Structure & Infrastructure	Provide shelter locations when needed, identify/ confirm evacuation routes within Melrose and neighboring communities, create multi-lingual evacuation route signage, work with transportation sector to upgrade emergency communication, elevate pump station equipment
Natural Systems Protection	Expand green infrastructure, upgrade drainage systems in flood prone areas, conduct drainage capacity study, dredge stormwater outfalls in areas prone to flooding
Education and Awareness Programs	Coordinate and cross train emergency management personnel, promote individual and family emergency plans

CH 8: PLAN MAINTENANCE



MONITORING THE PLAN

The City will monitor the mitigation actions to ensure that they are going to plan.



EVALUATING THE PLAN

The City will meet regularly, and after major natural hazard events, to evaluate how well the plan is working.



UPDATING THE PLAN

The City will continue to update the Plan every 5 years.



INTEGRATING THE PLAN

The City will integrate data, information, and actions from the HMP into other City plans and initiatives.



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION THROUGHOUT PLAN MAINTENANCE

The City is committed to conducting equitable and impactful public participation. Public engagement activities will align with the evaluation, monitoring, and plan update meetings.

NEXT STEPS



Comments:

- Comments will be accepted through **September 7, 2026**
- Comments can be submitted by online survey: [Melrose Hazard Mitigation Plan Survey – Fill out form](#)

Review with Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)

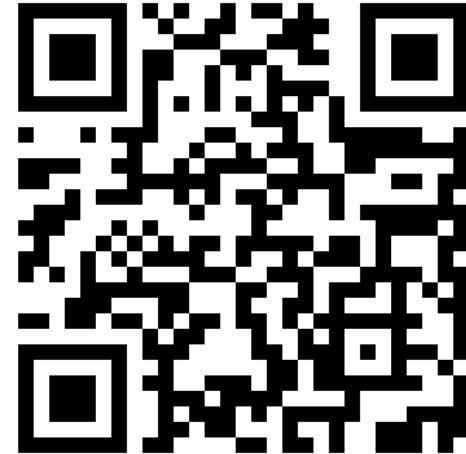
- The city will review comments received and submit the plan to MEMA
- MEMA reviews, and typically provides some comments
- The city will address MEMA's comments and provide an updated plan

Review with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

- MEMA will submit to FEMA
- FEMA reviews and assuming no comments, issues an Approval Pending Adoption

Final Adoption

- Melrose City Council will vote to adopt Hazard Mitigation Plan





Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2026

THANK YOU

Elena Proakis Ellis, DPW Director
eproakis@CityofMelrose.org

Weston & Sampson