

Delaware Flood-Ready Communities: Plan and Policy Checklist

This checklist is part of the Flood-Ready Communities section of the *Delaware Complete Communities Planning Toolbox* (www.completecommunitiesde.org). Delaware local government officials may use this checklist to “Evaluate” the extent to which their jurisdiction has developed planning, regulatory, spending, ecosystem, economic, and community engagement tools aimed at enhancing a community’s flood readiness.

1. Planning Tools: A comprehensive plan is the basis for land use and development in Delaware. The impacts of flooding due to factors such as sea level rise, seasonal high tides, and an increase in the intensity and frequency of heavy precipitation can be addressed within local government planning processes that engage stakeholders.	✓Yes	X No
a. Has your community conducted a vulnerability and risk assessment to evaluate populations, infrastructure, residences, and natural resources most susceptible to the impacts of flooding caused by storms, seasonal high tides, and sea level rise?		
b. Have maps and data been reviewed to evaluate risks based on future projections of flooding due to storms, seasonal high tides, and sea level rise?		
c. Has your community incorporated climate change and sea level rise (along with maps) into its Comprehensive Plan as recommended by the Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination’s Municipal Comprehensive Plan Guide ?		
d. In addition to jurisdiction’s comprehensive plan, has your community developed a stand-alone or specialized plan to address flood-readiness, such as a Natural Hazards/ Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan or a Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan? If so, has it been adopted as an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan?		
e. Has your community adopted an All Hazards Mitigation Plan approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA)? Are recommendations incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan?		
f. Do land use plans complement Delaware State Strategies for Policies and Spending to direct development to designated growth areas, which are also outside floodplain areas?		
g. Has the jurisdiction assessed the adequacy of local plans, codes, and regulations that affect flood resistance?		
2. Regulatory Tools: Local governments can amend floodplain, zoning, building, land use ordinances, and regulations to improve their community’s flood readiness.	✓Yes	X No
a. Has your jurisdiction adopted higher floodplain standards as per DNREC’s model floodplain ordinance ?		
b. Has your community adopted freeboard regulations?		
c. Has your community adopted regulations which restrict or prevent new development in high-risk floodplain areas?		
d. Are building codes updated to incorporate flood resistant provisions of the International Codes® (I-Codes), the referenced standard American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) 24, Flood Resistant Design and Construction, and NFIP requirements?		
e. Are building codes integrated with floodplain management regulatory processes? For example, if your jurisdiction has implemented freeboard regulations, are other building code regulations (e.g. setbacks, building height) compatible with this higher standard?		
f. Do zoning and subdivision ordinances require that adequate precautions be taken against flood damage with respect to the siting, design, or construction of building and structures?		
g. In addition to floodplain standards, has your jurisdiction adopted improved drainage standards as recommended by the Delaware Floodplain and Drainage Advisory Committee?		

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3. Spending Tools: Local governments can prepare budgets and funding mechanisms to allocate expenditures, finance capital projects, and develop incentive programs that address flooding.	✓Yes	X No
a. Does your jurisdiction have a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) ¹ to plan for and finance future costs of new infrastructure and/or upgrades, relocation, or retrofitting of existing infrastructure to address impacts of flooding?		
b. Has your community considered annual budgetary costs (e.g., maintenance and operation of roads, cleaning storm debris) to address the impacts of flooding and storms?		
c. Are acquisition and buyout programs available for properties at risk from flooding that could be used as flood buffers?		
d. Has your jurisdiction applied for funding grants to leverage local resources and support plans and projects that improve conservation and management of coastal resources?		
4. Ecosystem Tools: Ecosystem strategies aim to enhance, restore, or protect natural areas to help protect communities from the impacts of natural hazards.	✓Yes	X No
a. Has your community implemented non-regulatory strategies that target flood-prone areas, such as restoring riparian and wetland buffers along sensitive areas to provide natural flood control?		
b. Does your community incorporate green infrastructure development standards such as reducing impervious surfaces (e.g. pavements) and constructing wetlands and detention ponds for stormwater management?		
c. Are land management practices such as conservation easements , transfer of development rights (TDRs) , or land trusts utilized to direct growth away from high-risk areas?		
d. Has your community developed “ living shorelines ” to protect wetland habitat, prevent erosion, and provide “soft infrastructure” to reduce inundation and flooding?		
5. Economic Tools: Economic measures provide monetary incentives to encourage community members or businesses to implement resiliency strategies.	✓Yes	X No
a. Are there financial incentives for building owners who retrofit structures to meet or exceed floodproofing or elevation standards?		
b. Are there tax incentives that encourage the relocation of flood-prone properties?		
c. Are there incentives such as streamlined permitting or the waiving of building permit fees, parking requirements, and building height requirements to encourage infill development outside floodplain area(s)?		
d. Have the jurisdiction applied for Downtown Development District designation to incentivize infill and redevelopment in priority growth areas outside of the floodplain?		
6. Community Engagement: Local governments should educate and involve stakeholders in their communities when planning for future flooding and sea level rise adaptation.	✓Yes	X No
a. Do public workshops and outreach efforts use a combination of high-touch and high-tech public engagement methods?		
b. Does your community promote sustainable, on-site retention practices such as stormwater harvesting with rainwater barrels through public information campaigns?		
c. Does your jurisdiction have a Public Engagement Plan to guide education and outreach?		
d. Does your community use surveys or social media to gather local input or opinions on flood ready community initiatives?		
e. Has the jurisdiction formed a stakeholder committee to assess a community’s vulnerability, evaluate, and recommend and sustain strategies for flood readiness?		
f. Does your community require prospective property owners to review the location of the 100-year floodplain in relation to the property prior to purchasing?		

¹ A [Capital Improvement Program](#) (CIP) is a multi-year plan of capital projects that identifies capital projects and needs (e.g., public facilities and infrastructure) and expenditure estimates for those needs.