

Creating Short- and Long-Term Goals

Goals describe the outcomes you intend to bring about in a particular time frame. The goals should focus on high-level strategies and conditions you want to achieve rather than actions you want to take. For example, a goal might be something like “reduce the quantity and speed of stormwater runoff during heavy rains,” while things like “start a public education campaign about the benefits of green space” or “apply for grants to plant trees and shrubs in areas that experience heavy runoff” are actions. Any goals you create should strike a balance between being ambitious and motivating but also reasonable and accomplishable.

To identify goals for increased resiliency in the face of a particular hazard, think about any past hazard events in your community and how they could have gone differently. Would a higher level of awareness, communication, available resources, or improved physical infrastructure have led to better outcomes?

Finally, consider whether your goal is likely achievable in the short-term or the long-term. In general, think of short-term goals as those that can be achieved through a single concentrated push. They typically address more immediate and urgent needs. Long-term goals are achieved through more complex efforts, possibly in different phases over time. There are no set guidelines on what timeframe is considered short-term or long-term. This is something that your municipality will have to decide. Alignment with budget and/or election cycles are possible strategies to make the distinction (e.g., short-term goals can be achieved in a single budget cycle or prior to the next election, while long-term goals take multiple budget cycles or require implementation across multiple election cycles).

Examples: Short-Term Goals

- Reduce street flooding from blocked storm drains.
- Increase residents' knowledge about how to identify invasive species.
- Increase access to radon testing devices.
- Ensure residents are prepared to stay in their homes for several days if an earthquake disrupts a major roadway.
- Identify areas at highest risk of landslides.
- Understand current resident priorities regarding land use.

Examples: Long-Term Goals

- Establish natural infrastructure to protect high-risk flooding areas of the community.
- Improve resident access to affordable tree care services.
- Establish an ongoing program to monitor natural areas and address any invasive species.
- Establish a new community emergency center.
- Improve vulnerable populations' access to healthcare services.
- Improve infrastructure in areas most prone to landslides to reduce risk.

Resources

- [EPA guidance on setting general and specific climate goals](#)
- [Examples of municipal energy efficiency goals](#). The majority of these are quantitative, but your goals might not be easily quantifiable.