

Post Disaster Redevelopment Plan (PDRP) Case Study Manatee County

Introduction to the county and its vulnerability

Manatee County is located on Florida's West Coast on the Gulf of Mexico, with the northern border of the county located approximately 30 miles south of Tampa. The county is part of the Bradenton-Sarasota-Venice Metropolitan Statistical Area and boasts a population that has grown approximately 20 percent since the 2000 Census, according to U.S. Census Bureau population estimates (the population estimate for 2008 was 315,766). This number is anticipated to continue to grow to almost 350,000 permanent residents by 2011. This total does not account for the thousands of tourists that visit the county's beaches throughout the year.

There are six incorporated jurisdictions located in Manatee County. They are:

- City of Anna Maria
- City of Bradenton
- City of Bradenton Beach
- City of Holmes Beach
- Town of Longboat Key
- City of Palmetto

Anna Maria, Bradenton Beach, Holmes Beach and Longboat Key are located on Anna Maria Island which is a barrier island that forms the western boarder of the County. Bradenton, Manatee County's largest city and Palmetto are also located in the western portion of the County but inland from the barrier island and along the Manatee River. The eastern portion of the county is unincorporated and largely undeveloped, but has experienced increased growth in recent years.

Since 1965, Manatee County has been impacted by fifteen hazard events that were severe enough to be designated as Presidential Disaster Declarations. Presidential Disaster Declarations are requested by state governments on behalf of local governments when disasters overwhelm local resources. Once the declaration has been made, several different forms of federal assistance, such as the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Public Assistance Program and Individual Assistance Program, become available from the federal government. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), now part of the Emergency Preparedness and Response Directorate of the Department of Homeland Security, is the federal agency tasked with coordinating the federal assistance. The table below provides a listing of the Presidential Disaster Declarations received by Manatee County.

Presidential Disaster Declarations for Manatee County	
DATE	EVENT
11/07/1968	Hurricane Gladys
06/24/1972	Tropical Storm Agnes
07/07/1982	Severe storms and flooding
09/12/1985	Hurricane Elena
08/14/1992	Severe storms and flooding
03/13/1993	Tornadoes, flooding, high winds & tides, freezing
10/15/1996	Tropical Storm Josephine
03/05/1998	Severe storms, high winds, tornadoes and flooding

Presidential Disaster Declarations for Manatee County	
DATE	EVENT
06/19/1998	Extreme fire hazard
09/28/2001	Severe storms, tornadoes and flooding associated with Tropical Storm Gabrielle
07/29/2003	Severe storms and flooding
08/13/2004	Hurricane Charley and Tropical Storm Bonnie
09/04/2004	Hurricane Frances
09/16/2004	Hurricane Ivan
09/26/2004	Hurricane Jeanne

Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency

A vulnerability assessment was conducted as part of the PDRP to help paint the picture of damage that may be anticipated in the County and the municipalities following a major disaster. The vulnerability assessment was conducted using best available data and technology and it includes a quantitative summary of current exposure to known hazards, such as the number, type and value of existing buildings and critical facilities throughout the County. It also includes the estimation of potential losses for varying magnitudes of the known hazard events. Some of the highlights from the assessment are as follows:

- Most of the structures located on Anna Maria Island will be inundated with storm surge from a Category 1 or 2 Hurricane. Many of the structures on the island were built before floodplain regulations were in place and are, therefore, built 'at-grade' and not elevated above the potential flood hazard areas. This includes many of the properties in the municipalities of Anna Maria, Bradenton Beach, Holmes Beach and Longboat Key.
- In Manatee County, there are many mobile homes located in hazard zones. In a post disaster environment, Manatee County, should try to take advantage of this unique opportunity to reduce the number of mobile homes in hazard zones. This can be done through a variety of post disaster redevelopment policies that can be considered as part of the County's Post Disaster Recovery and Redevelopment Strategy.
- A HAZUS-MH scenario was run to determine the results of what could happen if a Category 5 hurricane were to impact the County. The scenario indicates that:
 - 11,264,348 tons of debris would be generated by a storm with the modeled characteristics.
 - 107,401 households would be displaced as a result of the storm.
 - 27,080 people would seek temporary shelter in public shelters.
- Manatee County could be faced with fairly significant losses in ad valorem revenues from hazard events. This includes:
 - 17% loss of ad valorem revenues from buildings located in the 1% annual chance flood zone.
 - 20% loss of ad valorem revenues from buildings located within the Category 4 storm surge zone.
 - 28% loss of ad valorem revenues from buildings located within the Category 5 storm surge zone.
 - 30% loss of ad valorem revenues from buildings located within the high potential wildfire zone.

Another unique consideration in terms of vulnerability in Manatee County is Port Manatee. The County-owned facility has an estimated 1,100 employees and a diverse tenant base. The facility is the closest U.S. deepwater seaport to the Panama Canal, providing shippers with access to Pacific Rim markets. Manatee County has been actively working to promote the development of the Port Manatee area and has recently rezoned 3,600 acres surrounding the port for light industrial uses. The Port facility is located entirely in a coastal storm surge hazard area and could pose significant problems for Manatee County following a major hurricane.

Unique factors

Manatee County staff, particularly the Pilot Coordinator/County's Comprehensive Planning Director at the time of the plan's development, made the decision to develop the plan primarily as a "staff document" with the emphasis of the plan being on identifying policy recommendations and improvements that will hopefully improve the County's ability to function more effectively during a Post Disaster Redevelopment period. The County already has a very strong Comprehensive Plan in place that includes many policies that were suggested through a community visioning process called Imagine Manatee – A Vision for Manatee County. Because of the amount of thought, time and public input that has gone into creating the Comprehensive Plan, it will be the principal regulatory document for redevelopment of the County following a major disaster.

To develop the PDRP, Manatee County utilized a standard planning process that has historically been used by the county for other types of planning projects. The County formed a **Policy Leadership Committee** that is comprised of certain department directors at the county level and the County Administrator Office. This committee is responsible for providing feedback and direction on proposed policy and other items pertaining to the PDRP. They served as the final staff review team that reviewed, provided feedback and approved the plan to be presented to elected officials.

The County also formed a **Planning Policy and Coordination Work Group** that consists of certain county employees and professional planners with Manatee County and the municipalities within the county. This group was responsible for drafting policy, reviewing the draft sections of the plan, identifying issues and developing the Recovery and Redevelopment Strategy for Manatee County. Finally, the County developed a **Redevelopment Task Force** that will be activated following a disaster for the purpose of implementing the PDRP.

The preparation of the PDRP required a series of meetings and workshops for facilitating discussion, gaining consensus and initiating data collection efforts. More importantly, the meetings and workshops prompted continuous input and feedback from relevant local officials, stakeholders and the public throughout the drafting stages of the plan. The key meetings and community workshops that were held during the development of this plan are described in the plan and detailed meeting minutes were taken for each of the meetings. The meeting minutes provide a more in depth account of the topics discussed and the issues identified during these meetings.

One of the highlights from the planning process was a Post Disaster Redevelopment Planning Community Event held in April of 2009 that featured appearances from guest speakers Mayor Lyda Anne Thomas and Jeff Sjoström (Executive Director of the Galveston Economic Development Partnership) from Galveston, Texas. Over the course of this two-day visit the

Mayor and Mr. Sjostrom held meetings with the County's Planning Policy and Coordination Work Group, the Manatee County Board of County Commissioners, the public and other interested stakeholders. There was also a Business Roundtable meeting that was held with interested members from the Manatee County Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Commission.

The purpose of these meetings was to help attendees learn from the Mayor and Mr. Sjostrom's experiences with Hurricane Ike and to consider the effects of such a disaster in Manatee County. The meetings proved to be quite successful for helping the County identify issues to include in the plan and potential recovery and redevelopment actions.

Over the course of the development of the PDRP, there were many different changes in Manatee County staff operations. This included the unfortunate termination of the County's Pilot Coordinator just weeks before the draft plan was to be presented to the Board of County Commissioners.

Result

The general consensus from project evaluation reports submitted by Manatee County staff members and the project consultant was that the plan development went well. The process used to develop the plan was different than the process used in the other Pilot Communities. This was partially the reason for choosing Pilot Communities of different sizes and different local capabilities. The planning process used to develop the PDRP for Manatee County was kept more internal among the Comprehensive Planning Department and public and stakeholder input was solicited later in the process once the plan was in a more complete form. The public and other stakeholders appeared to generally be supportive of the plan, although their participation was relatively light. Direct efforts were also made to involve the business community. These efforts were generally well-received although also relatively light.

One of the greatest challenges faced over the course of the development of the plan was overcoming the sense of apathy that was encountered throughout the community. For a variety of reasons, there seems to be a belief that a major hurricane will not impact the County. As is the case with most types of planning efforts that involve planning for natural disasters, the most interest from the community and its leaders is found following a disaster and while Manatee County is off to a good start with their Post Disaster Redevelopment Plan, it will probably not receive the attention that it needs until after the County has been impacted by a major event.

The final draft of the plan was initially presented to the Manatee County Board of County Commissioners on June 23, 2009 for the first reading. The Board met again on August 6, 2009 to officially adopt the plan. There were no issues with adoption.