Fort Myers Beach Management & Planning Session

Town Hall - Council Chambers
2731 Oak Street
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931

AMENDED Agenda **Thursday, March 7, 2024** **9:00 AM**

ORDER OF BUSINESS

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. FMB Draft Long-Term Recovery Plan

Discussion and Presentation of the FEMA CA Long-Term Recovery Plan Draft

B. LDC/Comp Plan

A discussion regarding the Land Development Code Update Proposal

C. Proposed Ordinance: Expedited Variance Review

This item is for discussion only:
AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF FORT MYERS BEACH, FLORIDA AMENDING SECTION 34-232 "REQUIRED HEARINGS" OF DIVISION 5 "PUBLIC HEARINGS AND REVIEW" OF ARTICLE II "ZONING PROCEDURES" OF CHAPTER 34 "ZONING DISTRICTS, DESIGN STANDARDS AND NONCONFORMITIES" TO REQUIRE ONLY ONE PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY ("LPA") FOR VARIANCES EXCEPT IF THE DECISION BY THE LPA IS NOT UNANIMOUS OR IF THE TOWN CLERK RECEIVES A REQUEST BY ANYONE FOR AN ADDITIONAL HEARING BEFORE THE TOWN COUNCIL WITHIN 10 DAYS AFTER THE LPA DECISION; A PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE TOWN COUNCIL IS REQUIRED FOR A VARIANCE IF THE DECISION BY THE LPA IS NOT UNANIMOUS OR IF ANYONE REQUESTS SUCH HEARING WITHIN 1O DAYS AFTER THE LPA DECISION; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION, SEVERABILITY, SCRIVENER ERRORS, CONFLICTS OF LAW AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

NEW D. Ordinance 23-05; Temporary Housing / Temporary Governmental Use Facilities in Specified Zoning Districts

This item is for discussion only:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF FORT MYERS BEACH, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING THE PLACEMENT OF TEMPORARY HOUSING AND TEMPORARY GOVERNMENTAL USE FACILITIES IN SPECIFIED ZONING DISTRICTS OF THE TOWN, PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT OF LAW, SCRIVENER'S ERRORS, SEVERABILITY, SUNSETTING OF THIS ORDINANCE, AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

IV. AGENDA MANAGEMENT

A. March 2024

V. ADJOURNMENT

NOTE: THIS MEETING IS STREAMED LIVE ON FACEBOOK AND YOUTUBE.

IF A PERSON DECIDES TO APPEAL A DECISION MADE BY THE COUNCIL IN ANY MATTER CONSIDERED AT THIS MEETING/HEARING, SUCH PERSONS MAY NEED TO ENSURE THAT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDING IS MADE, TO INCLUDE THE TESTIMONY AND EVIDENCE UPON WHICH ANY SUCH APPEAL IS TO BE BASED.

For special accommodation, please notify the Town Clerk's Office at least 72 hours in advance. (239) 765-0202

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), persons needing a special accommodation to participate in the Board's proceedings should contact the Town Clerk's Office not later than three days prior to the proceedings.

Town of Fort Myers Beach
Agenda Item Summary

Green Sheet Number: **2024-1481**

1. **Request:**

Meeting Date: March 7, 2024

Discussion and Presentation of the FEMA CA Long-Term Recovery Plan Draft

Why the action is necessary:

What the action accomplishes:

2. **Agenda:**

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

3. **Requirement/Purpose:**

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5. **Background:**

The Fort Myers Beach Long-term Recovery Plan is now drafted and ready for review by the Town staff and input from the Town Council. Town staff have been working with the FEMA Community Assistance (CA) team since back in early June 2023.

The final draft is anticipated to go before the Town Council for final approval at the March 18th, 2024 Town Council meeting.

Attachments:

1. Long-term_Recovery_Plan_FortMyersBeach_20240124

Financial Impact:

6. **Alternative Action**

7. **Staff Recommendations:**

8. **Recommended Approval:**

_____ Date: February 27, 2024
nancy stuparich, Town Attorney

_____ Date: March 01, 2024
Amy Baker, Town Clerk

_____ Date: March 01, 2024
Andy Hyatt, Town Manager

DRAFT
JANUARY 2024

TOWN OF FORT MYERS BEACH

Long-term Recovery Plan

Acknowledgements

TOWN MAYOR

- Dan Allers

COUNCIL MEMBERS

- Jim Atterholt, Vice Mayor
- John R. King, Council Member
- Karen Woodson, Council Member

TOWN MANAGER

- Andrew Hyatt

TOWN STAFF MEMBERS

- Frank Kropacek, Director of Operations
- Jason Freeman, Public Works
- Steve Poposki, Town Engineer
- Chadd Chutsz, Environmental Services
- Jeff Hauge, Cultural, Parks, and Recreation
- Joe Onzick, Finance Director

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

On September 28, 2022, Hurricane Ian made landfall on Estero Island and devastated the Town of Fort Myers Beach physically, economically, and emotionally. A 15-foot storm surge, accompanied by nearly 157 miles per hour winds, flooded and demolished buildings, homes, and infrastructure. Commercial establishments were obliterated, residents were forced to evacuate, and both lives and homes were tragically lost. Town leaders initiated the task of repairing the physical town, restoring economic viability, and returning residents to pre-disaster conditions, while also building resilience in the face of potential future disasters.

In embarking upon the restoration process, Fort Myers Beach town leadership and staff developed and employed a recovery and resilience strategy that would culminate in this Long-term Recovery Plan. This Recovery Plan includes an expression of recovery goals, needs assessments in critical areas, identification of previous and future gaps in infrastructure and services, and proposes and prioritizes general and specific projects to achieve recovery goals.

The 2009 Fort Myers Beach Comprehensive Plan Update served as a guide for the Recovery Plan. The Comprehensive Plan Update had established goals and performance measures for the Town to guide its growth and development into the future. The Recovery Plan incorporated the goals, objectives and policies of the functional elements of the Comprehensive Plan Update in selecting and evaluating the projects identified by the Town as essential for its recovery. The recovery projects were ranked relative to each other for their ability to achieve recovery goals and whether each project could meet performance measures for each goal. The project rankings were also informed by public input through two workshops and an online survey. The overwhelming public preference, expressed in workshops, a survey, and Town Council support, is to preserve the town's "small town feel" while enhancing resilience.

Town staff worked in conjunction with public and private stakeholders, as well as subject matter experts who performed comprehensive studies in areas of particular interest. Most notable is the analysis of economic losses from the hurricane and development of a strategy toward economic recovery and resilience. These studies, along with identification of potential funding opportunities, regulatory considerations, ongoing projects, and other supporting plans and information are included in the Recovery Plan.

The Project Planning Workbook (PPW) includes a project prioritization matrix evaluative tool that was applied to the 37 projects deemed important to the successful recovery of the Town. The projects, costs and other data presented herein are the heart of this Recovery Plan, and the PPW will serve as an adaptable planning tool to be used as projects are completed and circumstances evolve over time. The Town prioritized projects addressing areas including stormwater, utilities, and canal dredging.

Letters of Support

Letters of Support (Pending)

Figure ES-1. Letter of Support 1 (Pending)

Figure ES-2. Letter of Support 2 (Pending)

Contents

Contents

Appendixes

Tables

Figures

1 Introduction

Introduction

1.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Town of Fort Myers Beach (the Town), located on Estero Island off the Gulf Coast of southwest Florida (Figure 1-1), was severely impacted by Hurricane Ian in September 2022. This mid- and long-term recovery strategy is an outline of the key recovery projects identified by the Town and is intended to be used to inform critical community decisions and outline the necessary steps to implement a successful recovery. This plan will serve as a guide for the Town, a living document that will evolve as recovery of the Town progresses. This plan includes:

- An assessment of conditions and impacts to the Town after Hurricane Ian
- A synopsis of recovery resources (including funding opportunities)
- An outline of potential stakeholders and partnerships
- A prioritized list of projects

The purpose of this Long-Term Recovery Plan (LTRP) is to help the Town focus and prioritize projects to ensure a coordinated, holistic, and community-informed approach to reaching their recovery goals.

Figure 1-1. Town of Fort Myers Beach, FL Location Map

1.2 METHODOLOGY

The project team began this planning effort through weekly meetings with the Town staff to better understand the impacts to the community by Hurricane Ian and to explore potential recovery projects with a range of local, regional, state, and federal partners. To better understand the past planning efforts by the community, the project team also reviewed community planning and damage assessment data after initial discussions with the Town. The project team was provided planning documents, studies and analyses to incorporate into this recovery plan. These documents vary in focus and include, but are not limited to, future land use plans, comprehensive community plans, zoning ordinances, master plans, and surface water resource assessments. Below is a list of the key planning documents reviewed in creating the LTRP:

- Comprehensive Plan (updated in 2009)
- Dune Management Plan (2022)
- Bay Oaks Strategic Plan Working Staff Document May (2022)
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2017)
- Canal Maintenance Plan Final Report (2002) with Canal Numbering
- Community Health Needs Assessment, Lee Health and Florida Department of Health in Lee County, 2020
- Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (2019)
- Emergency Berm Construction Plan (2022)
- Estero Island Beach Nourishment Plan (2023)
- Matanzas Mooring Field Management Plan (2021)
- Mound House Strategic Plan (2022)
- Old San Carlos Blvd -Crescent St Master Plan
- Tier 1 Side Street Water Stormwater Design Addendum#1 (2022)

- Water Facilities Plan (2015)
- Water Quality Report (2022)
- Lee County Final Community Development Block Grant Action Plan
- Recovery and Resilience Draft Initiatives Profile[1]
- LeeTran – Lee County Transit Comprehensive Operations Analysis (2020)

A full list of reference materials can be found in Appendix A.

This plan considers guidelines and best practices from multiple sources, including the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM), local governments, Lee County Emergency Management Agency, National Incident Management System, and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), ensuring a well-coordinated and locally led approach to disaster recovery.

1.2.1 Community Engagement and Stakeholders

1.2.1.1 Stakeholders

Ongoing recovery efforts are led by active leadership within the Town and special interest community stakeholders. This LTRP combines and organizes the various recovery needs and interests of the community, and effectively prioritizes them based on the preferences of the whole community. This results in a focused recovery that is responsive to whole community needs and objectives in recovery. Key community stakeholders/Federal, State, and Regional partners include:

- FEMA Interagency Recovery Coordination/Community Assistance (IRC/CA)
- FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)
- Florida Division of Emergency Management (DEM)
- Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO)
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
- Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council (SWFRPC)
- Anchorage Advisory Committee (AAC)
- Audit Committee
- Bay Oaks Recreational Campus Advisory Board (BORCAB)
- Cultural & Environmental Learning Center Advisory Board (CELCAB)
- Local Planning Agency (LPA)
- Marine and Environmental Resources Task Force (MERTF)
- Nuisance Abatement Board (NAB)
- Public Safety Committee (PSC)

1.2.1.2 Community Engagement

Community engagement has been a key component of developing the recovery plan, including identifying priority issues and projects. Community workshops were hosted by the Town during September 18-19, 2023 in order to introduce to the public the long-term recovery planning efforts in Fort Myers Beach, provide an update on these efforts, and solicit public input to gauge the priorities of residents that can direct current and future long-term recovery efforts. The workshops included presentations on short-term recovery efforts (Town) as well as long-term recovery projects (FEMA CA). In addition, the workshops included interactive sessions with public conversations with other state, federal, and philanthropic partners as well as "preference" or "sticker" voting on recovery projects and themes.

Figure 1-2. Community Workshops at Fort Myers Beach

[1] A revised Draft Plan was released in December 2023.

Figure 1-3. Community Recovery Workshop Flyer

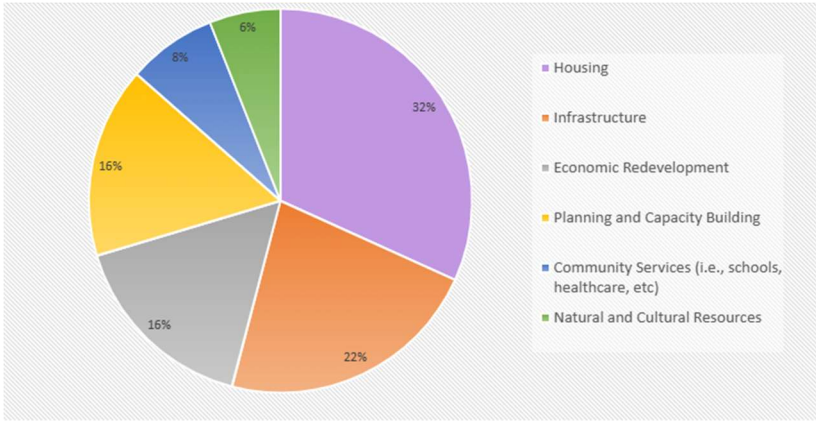
In addition to the workshops, an online survey was developed to allow for greater participation by Town residents to provide input for the recovery plan. The themes were selected to align with FEMA Recovery Support Functions (RSF). The RSFs bring together the core recovery capabilities of federal departments and agencies and other supporting organizations — including those not active in emergency response — to focus on community recovery needs. During steady-state planning and when activated post-disaster, RSFs identify recovery challenges, contribute resources and solutions, facilitate local stakeholder participation, and promote intergovernmental and public-private partnerships. All survey responses were received online, and none were entered manually. A total of 385 respondents completed the survey.

The workshop discussion and the survey focused on gathering public opinion of overall community priorities on the below long-term recovery themes:

1. Housing
2. Infrastructure
3. Economic Redevelopment
4. Planning and Capacity Building
5. Community Services (i.e. schools, healthcare, etc.)
6. Natural and cultural resources

Survey respondents overwhelmingly ranked housing and infrastructure as the top two priorities (over 50% of the respondents identified these two themes as their highest priority) (Figure 1-4). Economic Redevelopment and Planning and Capacity Building were tied as the third highest priority while Community Services and Natural and Cultural Resources received the least votes and was the lowest priority for community recovery.

Figure 1-4. Public Prioritization of Recovery Support Function Themes



Respondents were also asked an open-ended question on how to preserve the heritage and help maintain “the best of the old” feel for the Town all while redeveloping after Hurricane Ian (i.e., canopy streets, “neighborhood” residential districts, “Main Street” feel at the Times Square area, etc.). The Word Cloud in Figure 1-5 illustrates the relative frequency with which key preference words were mentioned in the answers from the respondents. The key words “island”, “beach”, and “square” were used the most in the comments

by the respondents and are therefore the largest in size in the word cloud, with the words that were used less in the answers to the question being smaller in size.

Figure 1-5. Word Frequency in How to Maintain "the Best of the Old"

For more details about the Community Workshops and Survey results, refer to Appendix E.

1.2.2 Recovery Project Prioritization

A foundational element of this recovery plan is a project prioritization tool that incorporates the goals, visions, and objectives as discussed in the Fort Myers Beach Comprehensive Plan (2009). As part of this tool, performance measures were developed from the Town's goals (detailed in the Comprehensive Plan) to then score recovery projects based on the community's priorities and total estimated project cost. Projects at the top of the priority list are those that will make the most progress towards achieving the goals, visions, and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan, and/or can be accomplished in the most cost-effective manner. The lower priority projects either achieve fewer goals and objectives from the Comprehensive Plan, and/or may have higher costs. This tool is adaptable to the Town's changing recovery priorities and can be modified in the future as needed. Appendix C provides a Project Planning Workbook Manual that also includes the Prioritization Matrix, both of which act as guides to use and modify the prioritization tool.

Figure 1-6. Fort Myers Beach Comprehensive Plan

2

Resilience Considerations

2.1 VISION STATEMENT

The Town is a barrier island community dedicated to promoting a safe, vibrant "small town", preserving our natural and cultural environment, and restoring economic viability. A key step to achieve this vision includes increasing resilience to natural disasters and other disrupters.

2.2 WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

Simply stated, resilience is about reducing risk. Every community around the globe faces changing environmental and climate conditions from hurricanes and floods to fires and earthquakes. These types of natural "shocks" can disrupt cities and communities. Added to that are the daily ongoing challenges such as affordable housing, lack of transportation options, economic development, and stress on municipal services.

A resilient community understands its risks and vulnerabilities and takes measures to address them proactively. Since every community is unique in its own ways, building resilience must be locally driven and tailored to the community's identity and vision. The recommendations in this plan are geared towards returning to the Town's community vision through overcoming the challenges presented by Hurricane Ian.

FEMA defines risk as the capacity of individuals, communities, businesses, institutions, and governments to adapt to changing conditions and to prepare for, withstand, and rapidly recover from disruptions to everyday life such as hazard events.[2] The FEMA definition is important because understanding it is the key to unlocking federal mitigation grants and recovery dollars when needed.

2.3 FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

Resilience is about the future and not necessarily the past since that may not be a good indication of what is to come as conditions rapidly change. Florida is already experiencing more severe storms with greater frequency, record heat-creating urban heat islands and health concerns, and extreme precipitation overwhelming older municipal drainage systems. In addition, there are increasing resident and visitor populations throughout the state - the state projects that the population in Florida will reach 25 million people by 2030 (from the 21.78 million in the 2020 Census). Proper planning and prioritizing investments in local infrastructure are critical to prepare and manage these changes, and still thrive as a community.

Current residential population estimates show that the Town has been experiencing a slight gradual decline since 2010 and a more dramatic decline of over 40% between April 2022 and April 2023 as a result of Hurricane Ian. However, the population is expected to increase as the community redevelops and new residential options become available.

According to the latest National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Report (2022), sea level rise projections indicate that surface water levels could rise around Southwest Florida approximately 1.5 feet by the year 2050.[3] Localized flooding, especially in low lying areas, due to high tide events (e.g., King Tides or sunny day flooding) will become more frequent and potentially increase stress on the residents, commercial businesses, and transportation.

Projections of sea level rise along the contiguous U.S. coastline range from 1.96 – 7.22 ft (0.6–2.2 m) by the year 2100 and 2.62 – 12.8 ft (0.8–3.9 m) by the year 2150, relative to sea levels in 2000.[4]

[2] FEMA. 2023. Achieving Equitable Recovery: A Post-Disaster Guide for Local Officials and Leaders. November.

[3] Sweet, W.V. et al. 2022. Global and Regional Sea Level Rise Scenarios for the United States. NOAA Technical Report NOS 01.

[4] Florida Climate Center. n.d. Sea Level Rise. Florida State University.

2.4 RESILIENCE PRIORITIES

The recommendations in the LTRP were developed with resilience in mind - with the intent to strengthen the community to reduce the impact of and bounce back after the next trying event. In addition to the projects recommended in this plan, a culture of resilience is important through policies, other community plans and through people – staff, residents, local businesses, and government contractors. General recommendations for consideration include:

- **Vulnerability and Risk Assessments** should be undertaken periodically to better inform decision making and investment. Understanding risks will help prioritize actions that will make a community stronger, more resilient and bounce back to the community's vision. It is worth highlighting that the State of Florida Resilience Grant Program has been funding vulnerability assessments to address flooding and sea level rise specifically, throughout Florida for the last few years. In Fiscal Year 2024, counties and municipalities with state approved assessments will be eligible for design and construction funding.
- **Adaptation Strategies and Projects** to address vulnerabilities identified in the assessments. To address flooding and storm conditions, these generally include elevation, hardening, flood proofing, relocation, or in some cases even retreat. An example of structure elevation is shown in Figure 2-1. Stronger building code requirements can address wind speed, and that has been successfully implemented in certain parts of the state.

Figure 2-1. Elevating a Housing Unit

- **Operating and Capital Budget Alignment** to prioritize investments that make the community stronger. This may require restructuring the budget and budget process to allocate funds to priority investments and to pursue resilience grant dollars. Resilience or risk reduction measures can be incorporated into existing capital projects. For example, an older municipal building may be due for a new roof. Rather than replacing the roof with the same product or material, a cool roof could reduce energy costs and a roof with higher design standards can address higher wind load impacts.
- **Increase Staff and Build Capacity** to train and arm employees with the best available tools and data to perform their jobs today and in the future. Also, building capacity in emergency management mitigation, response and recovery through periodic emergency management training, drills and exercises should be a community priority.
- **Community Outreach and Engagement** to ensure that residents are prepared to take appropriate action and accept personal responsibility. Public participation in community decision making is becoming stronger and stronger. Residents want to make sure their voices are heard. It is important to develop a communications strategy and execute the plan to share accurate and timely information to inform the community. Information not only about emergency response and recovery, but also about long term resilience, is necessary. Long term resilience may involve reprioritizing city budgets and projects, as well as greater investments in infrastructure. An informed resident base can understand and support local leaders making local decisions.

Figure 2-2. Public Engagement at Community Workshops

- **Promote Equity throughout Recovery** to ensure that the needs of all impacted groups in the community are being addressed. Disasters impact all segments of a community, and to develop an effective resilience planning process, special effort often needs to be taken to identify unequal patterns of disaster exposure and impact, to undertake a fair and open participatory planning outreach effort, and to implement just and responsive recovery projects. A good resource to aid in creating an equitable recovery process and to support future resilience can be found in a recent FEMA publication "Achieving Equitable Recovery: A Post-Disaster Guide for Local Officials and Leaders." Appendix D also provides a local assessment of three equity screening tools used by federal agencies to help support funding applications, where applicable.
- **Comprehensive Plan and Land Use and Zoning Code Review** to understand, manage and influence development. The Land Use Code is a powerful tool to drive resilience towards a community's vision. Often municipal codes can become outdated over time. Infrastructure considerations like elevation, height and where to drive development (or not) can be addressed in the code to reduce risk identified in vulnerability assessments over the long term. The Fort Myers Beach's Comprehensive Plan should be revisited regularly and revised to reflect current conditions and preferences/vision.
- **Municipal Procurement Code Review** to ensure contractors' goods and services are aligned with and encourage resilience. Municipal purchasing power is a strong tool and updating procurement rules to remove any roadblocks can assist with achieving the Town's vision.

Resilience is a journey. Over time and with new science and data all municipal policies, plans and projects should be reviewed and either validated or updated. Delivering services through the lens of resilience requires this discipline and structure to keep up with the best available information to serve and protect our Town.

3 Community Overview

Community Overview

3.1 COMMUNITY LAND USE AND FEATURES

The Town is located on Estero Island, a barrier island off the coast of southwest Florida. The island borders Matanzas Pass and Estero Bay to the north, Big Carlos Pass to the south, and the Gulf of Mexico to the west. The island is approximately 7 miles in length and 1 mile in width at the widest point. The island is relatively low lying with the highest elevation of 13 feet above sea level. The Town is a heavily developed coastal island community with low-density (single-family homes) residential neighborhoods; high-density condominium buildings, hotels, and multi-unit rental housing; and commercial and marina developments. In addition, there are town and county parks, nature preserves, and critical wildlife preserves on the island.

Figure 3-1. Town of Fort Myers Beach, FL and Estero Island

Estero Island has a network of 30 individual canals as part of the overall canal system as well as 22 small lagoons for drainage. The canal system was constructed in the 1950s and 1960s to provide waterway navigation to the interior properties on the island. There are currently over 50,000 linear feet (approximately 9.5 miles) of canals on the island, ranging in length from only 75 feet to over 2,500 feet and in width from 45 feet to 170 feet.

The island is intensely developed with commercial and residential properties, but natural resources and park areas do exist. Bowditch Point Park, located on the north-end of the island, is approximately 17-acres in size with nature trails, picnic areas, and views for bird watching. Matanzas Pass Preserve, located in the central portion of the island, is a 60-acre sanctuary with mangroves, maritime oak hammock, and wetlands and wildlife. Little Estero Island Critical Wildlife Area, located on the south end of the island, is an approximately 50-acre area of a beach and dune system with shorebirds including least tern, snowy plover, and Wilson's plover.

3.2 COMMUNITY HISTORY[5]

While the Town was incorporated in 1995, the history of Estero Island spans back over 2,000 years when the Calusa Indians occupied the island and constructed shell mounds along the bayside of the island. The first American settlements emerged on Fort Myers Beach following the Homestead Act of 1862.

Estero Island's history as a vacation destination began in 1911 with the development of the first cottage rental industry and took off in the 1920s when it gained national attention. With development on Estero Island came the construction of a toll bridge that connected the beach to the mainland (Figure 3-2), two casinos, hotels, a pier and the island's first canal. However, the hurricanes of 1926 destroyed the bridge and slowed further development; however, the bridge was later replaced by another drawbridge. Tourism development on Estero Island began to increase again in the 1950s with new hotels and the electrification of the swing bridge to facilitate traffic.

[5] Town of Fort Myers Beach. n.d. Island History.

Figure 3-2. First Bridge Connecting Estero Island and San Carlos Island (1921)
Photo from Estero Island Historical Society

Estero Island was a part of Lee County but as early as 1935 the residents of Fort Myers Beach began discussing incorporation. In particular, the residents of Fort Myers Beach were concerned with balancing development and ensuring the preservation of their small-town character. Lee County's continued approval of high-rise development on Estero Island brought incorporation efforts to a head and in 1995 a referendum passed to incorporate Estero Island as the Town of Fort Myers Beach. While the Town has its own governance now, the county still owns the parks and the main roadway that runs through the island.

3.3 GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Government services provided by the Town of Fort Myers Beach:

- Building Services and Permitting Services Division
- Community Development Department
- Culture, Parks and Recreation Department
- Finance Department
- Public Works Department
- Public Safety and Emergency Services are provided by the Lee County Sherriff and the Fort Myers Beach Fire District.
- Utilities Department

The specialized departments of the Town are dedicated to its operations, community development, and resident well-being. Departments such as Community Development; Culture, Parks and Recreation; and Public Works play pivotal roles in the Town's operations, maintenance of cultural and recreational resources, and safety of its residents. Other departments ensure economic stability by maintaining infrastructure, managing select utilities, and overseeing building and permitting services. The Town is also responsible for maintaining the canals and local street rights-of-way.

Simultaneously, Lee County operates with a broader perspective, addressing public safety, public works, and parks and recreation issues on County-owned properties within the Town. The County also addresses other concerns relating to the Town that extend off-island and are beyond the services provided directly by the Town. The County's range of services ensures that essential services such as managing the fishing pier, public transportation, conservation, law enforcement, and major roadways are efficiently covered. Estero Boulevard, the main road through the Town, and all the utilities along the roadway, are owned and managed by Lee County. Lee County's additional responsibilities include healthcare, ambulance and emergency management, schools, and community growth via their library systems and economic development initiatives.

There are two bridge connections from the island to the mainland. The Florida Department of Transportation maintains the Matanzas Pass Bridge (State Route 865/San Carlos Boulevard) near the north end of the island. Lee County Department of Transportation maintains the Big Carlos Pass Bridge (County Route 865/Estero Boulevard) at the south end of the island that is part of the Bonita Beach Causeway.

3.4 DEMOGRAPHICS[6,7]

3.4.1 Population

In 2020, the Town had a full-time resident population of 5,582. The Town showed an 11% drop in population between 2010 and 2020. Approximately 95% of the Town's full-time population is white. Additionally, the Town has 60,000 seasonal residents and 1 million annual visitors.[8]

3.4.2 Age Distribution

With a large group of residents who are retired, 56% of the population is 65 years or older, with the median age being 67 years (Figure 3-3). About 15% of the population has a disability, which is slightly higher than the Lee County and Florida rates, which are both just under 14% (Figure 3-4).

Figure 3-3. Age Distribution, 2022.

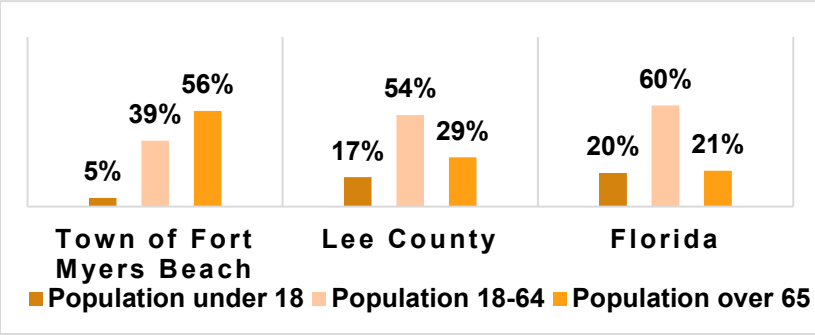
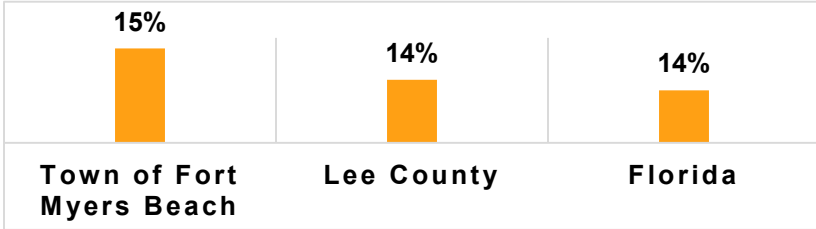


Figure 3-4. Population with Disability, 2022.



3.4.3 Housing

In 2022, the median value of Fort Myers Beach's owner-occupied units was about 85% higher than that of Lee County and Florida, while its median rent was about 18% higher. Compared to the county and state, a higher percentage of the Town's homeowners spend more than 35% of their income on housing costs, while a relatively smaller percentage of the Town's renters are thusly burdened.

Approximately 90% of the Town's homes are owner-occupied. The Town's percentage of renter-occupied households is low, about a third of the rate for Lee County and Florida. The Town has more housing units than residents, and its overall housing vacancy rate is more than double to quadruple that of the County and State respectively, suggesting a large seasonal population.

Of note, almost 60% of the Town's housing is in structures with 10 or more units, about triple the rate for Lee County and state (Figure 3-5). Its housing units also skew older compared to the county and state, with about 80% of the Town's housing units built before 1990 (Figure 3-6).

[6] U.S. Census Bureau. 2023. American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2022).

[7] For more information on an analysis of the Town's demographics and how they compare to the country and state in terms of potential vulnerabilities, please refer to Appendix D.

[8] Hurricane Ian, Public Information Response Presentation.

Figure 3-5. Housing in Structures with 10 or More Units, as of 2022.

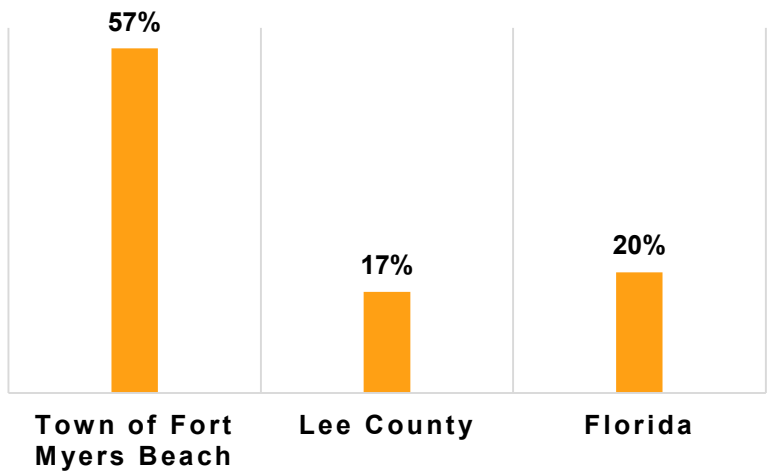
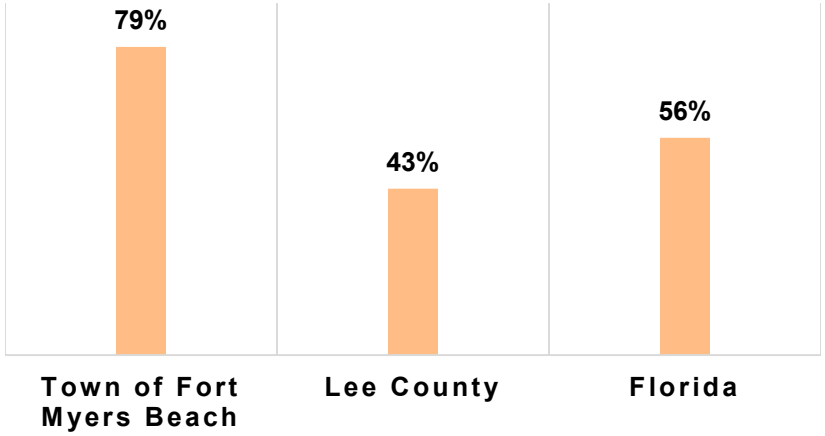


Figure 3-6. Housing Units Built Before 1990, as of 2022.

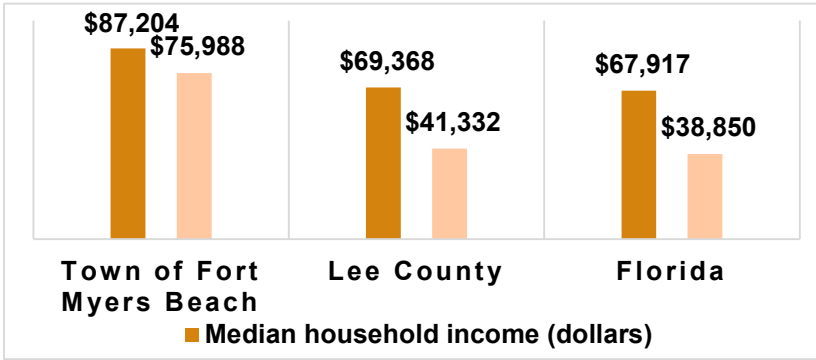


3.5 ECONOMIC ANALYSIS[9]

3.5.1 Income Dynamics[6]

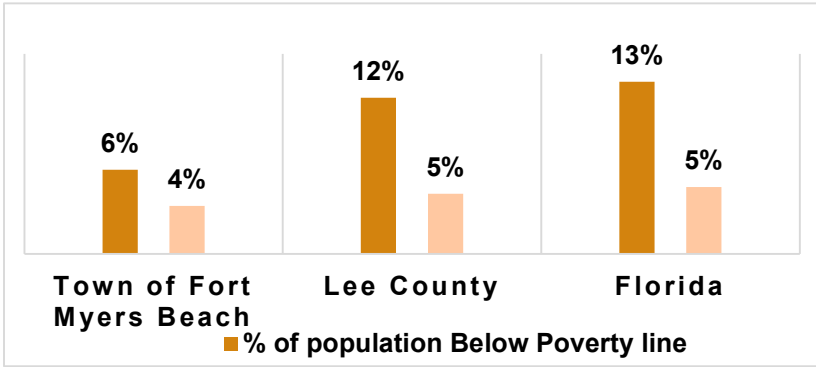
The Town's median household income in 2022 was $87,204, more than 25% higher than the median income for both Lee County and the state (Figure 3-7).

Figure 3-7. Income Comparison, 2022.



The Town's poverty rate was 6%, approximately half the rate at the County and State levels. The Town's unemployment rate was also lower than the County and State.

Figure 3-8. Poverty and Unemployment Comparison, 2022.

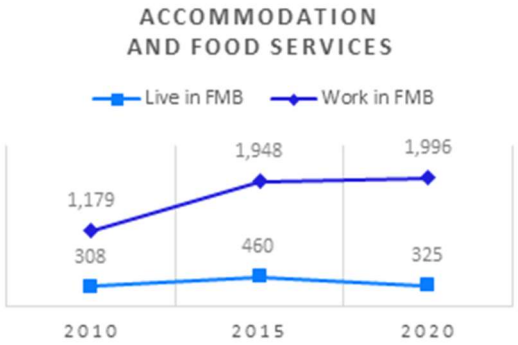


[9] This data will be summarized within a technical memorandum that provides an overview of the community profile and an assessment of the economic impacts experienced by Fort Myers Beach post-Hurricane Ian.

3.5.2 Key Industry Trends[10]

In 2020, 86% of the Town's jobs were based in tourism-dependent industries, including accommodation and food services; retail trade; real estate and rental leasing; and arts, entertainment, and recreation. Of these four sectors, between 2010 and 2020, only the accommodation and food services sector gained jobs within the Town, accounting for most of its job growth; jobs were also gained in the construction, information, utilities, and public administration sectors over that period. However, for retail trade, real estate and rental leasing, and arts, entertainment, and recreation, there were fewer jobs in 2020 than in 2010.

Figure 3-9. Accommodation and Food Services Jobs Located in Fort Myers Beach.



3.5.3 Commuting Trends[10]

Working residents constitute about 29% of the Town's population with the number of working residents trending downward between 2010 and 2020. A majority of working residents (78%) were employed outside of the Town in 2020. In addition, employment characteristics contrast between the working residents and the types of jobs on the island. The resident population's employment characteristics show a larger share of jobs in professional fields with higher earnings, skills, and age. Jobs in professional fields are more likely to be found off island since most island businesses are geared to tourism.

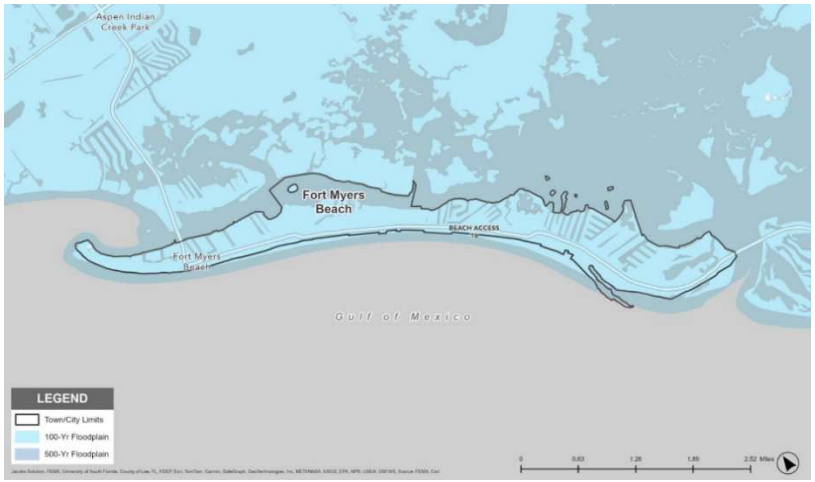
In 2020, 88% percent of the Town's jobs were staffed by employees who live outside of the Town, particularly in the City of Fort Myers and Cape Coral areas. Compared to employed residents in the Town, nonresidents working in the Town tend to be younger and have lower earnings. With most working residents of the Town employed outside the Town, nonresidents are a critical source of the Town's workforce.

Overall, the Town has an interdependent relationship with the mainland: the island serves as a positive employment and economic driver within the county and is in turn supported by a workforce that commutes in from neighboring communities.

3.6 HISTORY OF IMPACTFUL STORMS

The Town of Fort Myers Beach has a long history of enduring many storms and storm surges. Given that the Town is on a barrier island and within the 100-year (1% annual chance of occurring) floodplain (Figure 3-10), it is vulnerable to the impacts of rapid sea level rise and extreme weather events.

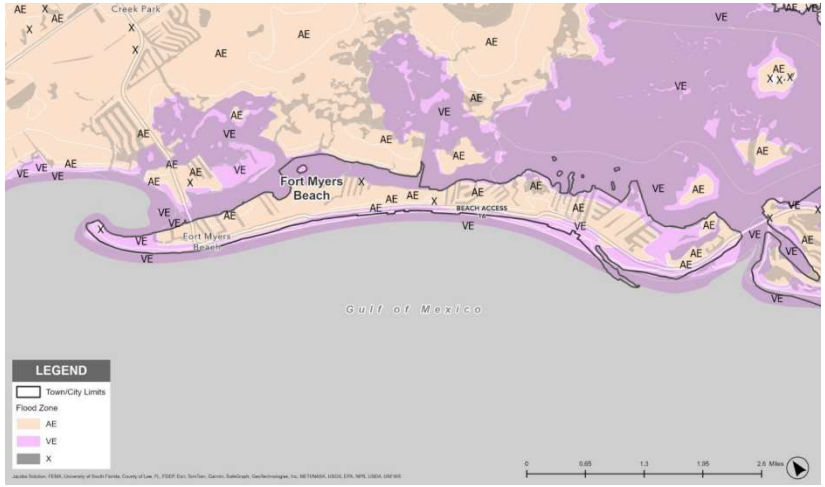
Figure 3-10. Floodplain Area for Estero Island and the Town of Fort Myers Beach



[10] U.S. Census Bureau (USCB). 2023. Longitudinal-Employer Household Dynamic (LEHD) Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (2002-2020).

Recognizing this susceptibility, the FEMA has designated the entire Town as a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) (Figure 3-11).[11]

Figure 3-11. Flood Hazard Zones for Estero Island and the Town of Fort Myers Beach

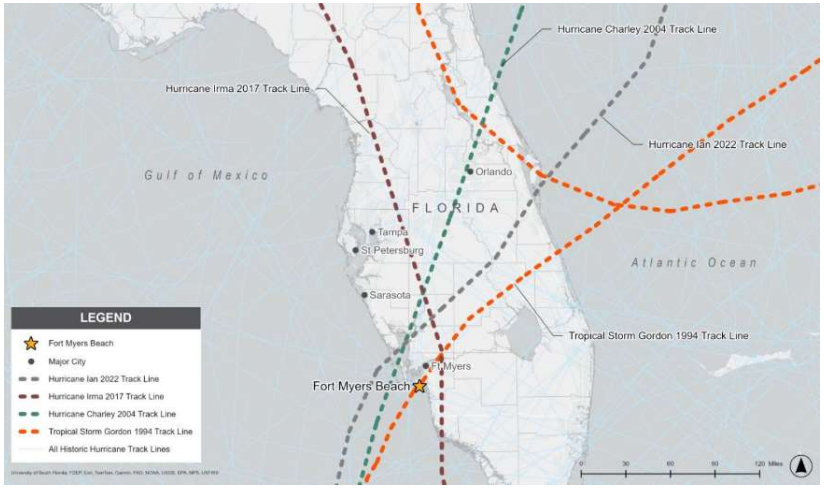


Flooding and water management from heavy rain events has been a key challenge for the Town in these storms. The Town has experienced localized flooding in various areas on the island during heavy rain events due to limited capacity in the stormwater system to be able to take in the high quantity of stormwater and therefore remains on the ground surface. In addition, the high tides can rise above the invert of the stormwater outfalls along the seawalls, thereby preventing the stormwater from draining out and causing it to back up within the system. Further, high winds and storm surge also contribute to worsening erosion for the Town's beaches.

3.6.1 Recent Storms

The following is a list of recent storms that have tracked in the vicinity of Fort Myers Beach prior to Hurricane Ian (Figure 3-12). These storms highlight the increasing frequency of major storms and hurricanes that have caused widespread damage to the Town, including its residential/commercial, infrastructure, economy, and natural environment.

Figure 3-12. Flood Hazard Zones for Estero Island and the Town of Fort Myers Beach



3.6.1.1 November 16, 1994 Tropical Storm Gordon

Gordon's winding path through the Caribbean brought winds of 45 mph and 2.5 inches of rain to Fort Myers Beach. Though not a hurricane at that time, Gordon continued through Florida, eventually spawning six tornadoes that led to 8 fatalities, 43 injuries, and about $400 million in damages.[12]

3.6.1.2 August 13, 2004 Hurricane Charley

Charley, a rapidly intensifying Category 4 hurricane, carried storm surges of about 4 to 6 feet and winds reaching 130 mph in Fort Myers Beach.[13] This storm led to rapidly increasing seawater along Estero Boulevard in Fort Myers Beach, causing extreme damage to the Town's coastal homes and businesses, particularly those at

[11] Town of Fort Myers Beach. 2008. ORDINANCE NO. 11-02.

[12] FEMA. 2014. Coastal Discovery Report (Final) HSFE04-13-J-0097. October 8.

[13] FEMA, 2014.

ground level.[14,15] Post Hurricane Charley, Florida reported 7 deaths, 780 injuries, $5.42 billion in property damage, and $285 million in crop damages.

3.6.1.3 2012 Tropical Storms Debby and Isaac

In 2012, Debby's arrival caused significant beach erosion and coastal damage resulting in widespread flooding of homes and businesses. Later, Isaac, though less severe, still posed a threat with its winds, rain, and high surf.[16]

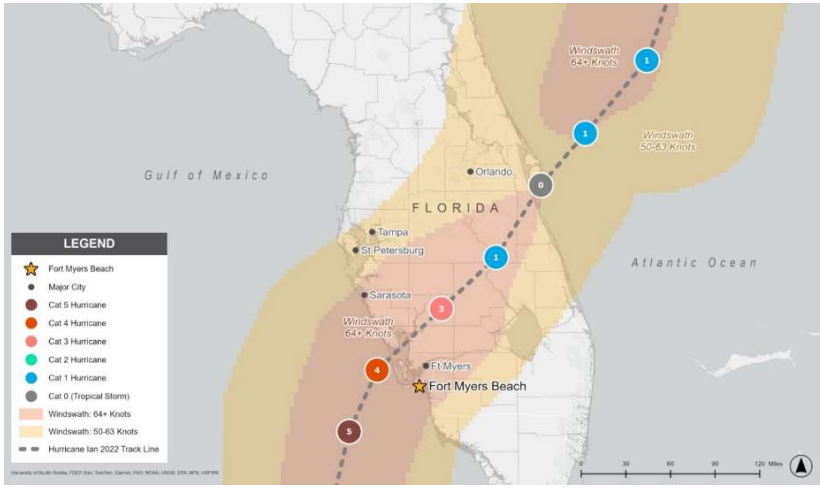
3.6.1.4 September 10, 2017 Hurricane Irma

Irma, a strong Category 4 storm with up to 155 mph winds, made landfall in the Florida Keys and then tracked north towards the Fort Myers Beach area. This hurricane caused significant storm surge flooding in Fort Myers Beach, critically eroding 5 miles of beach and threatening development, recreational areas, and wildlife habitats.[17]

3.7 IMPACTS OF HURRICANE IAN

Hurricane Ian made landfall on September 28, 2022 causing widespread damage and flooding in Southwest Florida (Figure 3-13). NOAA estimates that Hurricane Ian was the third-costliest hurricane on record in the United States and most expensive to ever impact the State of Florida, causing $112 billion in overall damages with more than $109 billion (approximately $5,004 per Florida resident) of that amount occurring in Florida.[18] Lee County experienced major infrastructure systems failures, leaving much of the County without access to water. Power grids were destroyed on barrier islands and severely damaged in inland areas.[19]

Figure 3-13. Pathway of Hurricane Ian, September 2022



The Town of Fort Myers Beach took a direct hit from Hurricane Ian and was one of the hardest hit areas. Sixteen people died and nearly 540 residents were rescued from the storm. Storm surge from Hurricane Ian reached at least 13.8 feet above ground level (the average height of a single-story house), the highest surge ever recorded in Southwest Florida. [20] Sustained winds were measured at 155 mph, just a few miles per hour short of a category 5 storm.[20]

Ray Murphy, the mayor of the Town at the time Hurricane Ian hit, stated, “We took a real bad shot. A real hard hit. There’s a lot of devastation down here.”[21]

A remote camera captured the evolution of the storm surge event on Fort Myers Beach (Figure 3-14). A timeline of images show over a six-and-a-half-hour period (a) the onset of storm surge inundating the

[14] FEMA. 2005. Mitigation Assessment Team Report: Hurricane Charley in Florida: Building Performance Observations, Recommendations, and Technical Guidance. FEMA 488. July.

[15] National Hurricane Center. 2004. Tropical Cyclone Report: Hurricane Charley, 9-15 August 2004. Revised 2011.

[16] FEMA. 2008. Flood Insurance Study, Vol 1 of 2, Lee County, Florida and Incorporated Areas. Via DocPlayer.

[17] Florida Department of Environmental Protection. 2018. Post-Storm Beach Conditions and Coastal Impact of Hurricane Irma.

[18] NOAA and the National Weather Service. 2023. National Hurricane Center Tropical Cyclone Report: Hurricane Ian (AL092022).

[19] Lee County 2023 Action Plan Community Development Block Grant. Disaster Recovery Funds.

[20] Devitt, Matt and Matthew Seaver. 2023. Why Hurricane Ian’s storm surge was so devastating. Winknews.com. March 28.

[21] Saget, Bedel, et al. 2022. What Hurricane Ian Destroyed in a Florida Beach Town. The New York Times. October 1.

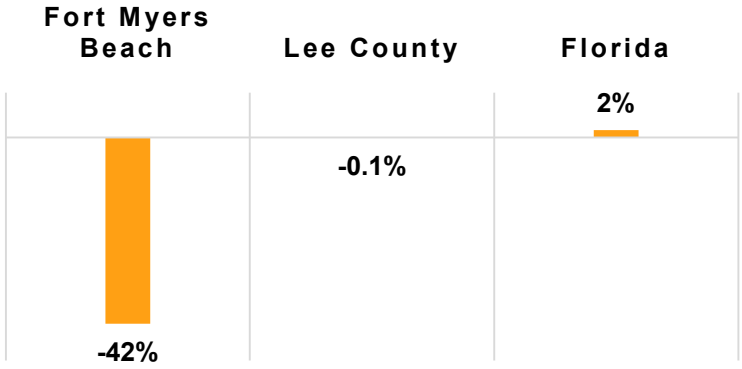
streets, (b) rapidly moving water carrying large floating debris, (c) a home in the view of the camera floating off its foundation with large waves crashing over it, (d) waves splashing over the camera, mounted approximately 12 feet above the road, and (e) receding waters revealing a barren landscape approximately 6.5 hours after the first image. These images show the destructive power of the storm surge and waves that occurred throughout the area.[22]

Figure 3-14. Evolution of the Storm Surge at Fort Myers Beach

3.7.1 Population[23]

The Town of Fort Myers Beach experienced a decline of over 40% in the estimated resident population between April 2022 and April 2023, largely due to Hurricane Ian (Figure 3-15). By comparison, Lee County's population was essentially unchanged, while Florida's grew at 2%. Before the hurricane, the Town's population had shown a gradual declining trend; estimates post–Hurricane Ian show an accelerated decline.

Figure 3-15. Change in Estimated Population, 2022 to 2023



3.7.2 Buildings and Housing

All structures on the island were impacted to some extent, with approximately 1,046 homes and businesses being substantially damaged and another 2,100 homes and businesses being partially damaged.[24] Figure 3-16 provides a view of the significant damage to a commercial property. The Town was also known for its wood frame and older beachfront structures; hundreds of those were destroyed during the Hurricane.[25] The Town has a high percentage of properties that are 30 years or older; over 80% of homes were built before 1990. Older homes are less likely to be up to code and are less resilient to natural disasters. Many homes were inaccessible

[22] Lee County 2023 Action Plan, Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Funds.

[23] Data from University of Florida's Bureau of Economic and Business Research, as summarized in a technical memorandum that provides an overview of the community profile and an assessment of the economic impacts experienced by Fort Myers Beach post-Hurricane Ian. (bebr.ufl.edu).

[24] Hurricane Ian, Public Information Response presentation. "Substantially damaged" means a structure (in the Special Flood Hazard Area) that was damaged by the hurricane and for which the total cost of repairs is 50 percent or more of the structure's market value before the disaster occurred.

[25] Dorsey, David. 2023. Fort Myers Beach faces reshaped, more expensive future after Hurricane Ian. Gulfshore Business. April 1.

through October 2022 as FEMA and fire district representatives conducted search, rescue and recovery efforts.[26]

Figure 3-16. Damaged Commercial Property Near Times Square

3.7.3 Utilities

Hurricane Ian caused complete power outages on the island; the overhead powerlines were taken out by high winds and storm surge. Power was restored to a few homes on October 15th. By November 16th, 1,179 properties were reconnected to power. However, while the properties were re-connected to power, many homes and businesses still required extensive repairs, including elevator repairs in condominium buildings, and remained inaccessible.[27]

The hurricane also caused other utility failures in the Town. For example, the storm surge and flooding inundated and caused issues with the water supply systems on the island, particularly with the assets that were near the ground level. Water pumps were down due to the flood waters and running water was not available in the Town until October 11, 2022.[28] The water supply was slowly restored to approximately 20 streets around October 22, 2022 and along the side streets on the bay side by October 30, 2022.

3.7.4 Flooding and Debris

The flooding and debris from Hurricane Ian caused damage across the Town. As the storm surge engulfed the island, the stormwater system was overloaded. Drain outlets, swales, and channels were filled with water, sand, and/or debris, thereby limiting the conveyance of the flood water from the ground surface. The debris, both man-made and natural, from the hurricane kept beaches, homes and buildings from being accessible for weeks and even months. Sediment and debris were also washed into the canals (Figure 3-17). The Town has estimated that over 255,000 cubic yards of sediment is to be removed as part of the dredging activities of the canals.

Figure 3-17. Damaged Seawall and Building Along a Canal

3.7.5 Public, Natural and Cultural Sites

Many of the Town's key community and tourist sites experienced signification damage:

- Approximately 2.0-2.5 ft (in elevation) of sand eroded from the beaches.
- The Town Hall was damaged beyond repair and the State of Florida demolished it in August 2023.
- Bayside Park was mostly destroyed (although has been substantially restored).

[26] Fernandez, Phil. 2022. Tears, frustration and anger at first Fort Myers Beach council meeting since Hurricane Ian. Fort Myers New-Press. October 20.

[27] Dorsey, 2023.

[28] Storyful at Yahoo News. 2022. Crews Restore Running Water to Fort Myers Beach for First Time Since Hurricane Ian. October 12.

- The Bay Oaks gym building (which is part of the Town's recreation center) took on several feet of water but was not destroyed. The recreation center was used as an island-wide debris staging site for several months after Ian, although the debris has now been transferred to various disposal locations.
- Mound House, a museum that sits atop a 2,000-year-old Calusa Indian mound and is on the highest point on the island, was the lone Town facility was among the first assets to be restored and is now operational. "
- Newton Beach Park and the historic cottage were completely washed away, and the lot has been used for material storage and staging for the emergency berm and beach renourishment projects.
- Although not owned by the Town, other public, natural, and cultural sites on Estero Island suffered significant damage including the Fort Myers Beach Pier, Bowditch Point Park, Matanzas Pass Preserve (all of which are owned and maintained by Lee County), and We're Here Cottage (maintained by the Estero Island Historical Society). Figure 3-18 shows the aerial imagery of the Fort Myers Beach Pier and Times Square commercial area before (December 23, 2021) and after (September 30, 2022) Hurricane Ian.

Figure 3-18. Aerial Imagery of the Fort Myers Beach Pier and Times Square Before and After Hurricane Ian

3.7.6 Business Reopening

The damage and destruction caused by Hurricane Ian initially closed all businesses; however, there are signs of businesses reopening on Estero Island. Prior to Hurricane Ian there were 82 restaurant/bars operating on the island, and 3,032 available hotel rooms. As of November 2023, there are 24 (29% of pre-Ian) restaurant/bars that are open (including mobile and temporary tent operations) and as of August 2023, only 749 (25% of pre-Ian) hotel rooms are available.[29] [30]

Restaurants, bars, and other shops in the Times Square commercial district have reopened (Figure 3-19), as well as hotels and other short-term rental properties across the island. Signs have been posted indicating that some of the gas stations will be returning (although as of January 1, 2024, there are no gas stations currently operating on the island). The main grocery store (Publix) and pharmacy (CVS) on the island reopened in 2023; however, as of January 2024, there are no banks or medical facilities (e.g., urgent care) operating on Estero Island. The Santini Plaza, a commercial shopping center at the south end of Estero Island, is expected to reopen in early 2024 with various stores and restaurants.

Figure 3-19. Businesses Reopening in the Times Square Area

[29] Sims, Shannon. 2023. There's No Spring Break Here. Florida's Gulf Coast Fights to Rebound After Hurricane Ian. The New York Times. February 13.

[30] WFTX Digital Team. 2022. Fort Myers Beach businesses that are now open post Hurricane Ian. Fox4 Southwest Florida. December 14.

3.8 RESULTING GAPS AND CHALLENGES

As a result of Hurricane Ian, the Town of Fort Myers had identified the following gaps and challenges as part of its recovery:

3.8.1 Capacity Challenges in the Stormwater Management System

Hurricane Ian highlighted several challenges in managing stormwater and flooding, as well as the secondary impacts resulting in excess sediment and debris that ended up in the Town's many canals. The Town relied upon side street stormwater collection and drainage systems in order to move rainwater off of the streets, however the underground stormwater storage capacity has not been able to manage runoff as well as storm surge in large storms. The result is flooding throughout the island, which is made worse when debris clogs the stormwater collection systems.

To identify how best to improve these stormwater systems and address flooding, there is a need to understand the impacts to and relationships between the different stormwater management elements on the island. These include the stormwater system's current capacity, the collection and drainage systems, and the system of canals that run throughout the island.

The island-wide system of private and publicly owned canals still contains debris from Hurricane Ian, including boats, trees, and wood and metal debris from homes and buildings, that as of January 2024 has yet to be removed. In addition, stormwater runoff discharges into the canals from the outfalls as part of the Town's stormwater drainage system. Build-up of debris and sand after Hurricane Ian in the canals near the outfalls has slowed the drainage of water from the stormwater system after storm events, and coupled with high tides (or King Tides), is at times causing water to back-up in the stormwater pipes and storm drains and into the streets. Not having a maintenance program in place for routine dredging/clean-out of the canals prior to Hurricane Ian prevented the Town from qualifying for FEMA public assistance funding to support clean-up efforts.

3.8.2 Increase Resiliency of Public Utility Systems

Due to the damage caused by Hurricane Ian to the water and utility systems, there is a need to both repair these systems but also improve them, so they are better prepared for future heavy rain events and storm surge.

During Hurricane Ian, the potable water and wastewater systems for the Town were also inundated with storm surge. These systems need to be made more resilient to withstand future storms and hurricanes. In order to increase the resiliency of the Town's drinking water system, upgrades to side street drinking water distribution lines, increasing on-island water storage, and increasing pump capacity are needed. In addition, the South Pump Station and the Moss Marina Lift Station require an increase in their elevation and pump capacity in order to mitigate future flood and surge related damage.

The Town needs to ensure that all other utilities are also able to continue to provide essential services including electrical, fiber, cellular, water, and natural gas. Utility lines, when above ground, are highly susceptible to storm winds and damage from debris. To increase the resiliency of the Town's electrical and water utilities, generators are needed at multiple locations throughout the Island, including at water pump stations to ensure access to drinking water and to support stormwater and wastewater systems. In addition, the Mound House, Moss Marina lift station, OSC traffic signals, and Town buildings need to maintain electrical connectivity through storms to ensure continuity of essential, strategic locations throughout the island.

3.8.3 Explore Economic Recovery and Resilience

The full impact that Hurricane Ian had on the local commercial economy, including small businesses, large businesses, residential housing, commercial lodging (short-term and long-term), infrastructure, utilities, and tourism remains undocumented at the time of this LTRP. An economic assessment study is needed to better understand the full impact of Hurricane Ian on the economy of this coastal community and assist the Town in prioritizing its future recovery efforts.

3.8.4 Mitigation and Community Recovery Through Nature

The damage to Estero Island's beaches, parks, and cultural sites all require extensive rehabilitation and it has become clear that there are certain areas that are prone to damage and flooding during storms requiring repetitive investment to restore them. In addition, storm surge, flooding, and high winds from Hurricane Ian destroyed many native trees and other areas at Fort Myers Beach, greatly diminishing the natural shading and quality of Town life. While these natural and cultural sites are key economic drivers in local tourism, they are also central to the Town's character, creating a community where families want to live, work, and play. Strategically restoring natural and cultural resources will be key to restoring the community's sense of place. Figure 3-20 shows new palm trees that were planted in the Times Square area to replace the trees removed by Hurricane Ian.

Figure 3-20. Palms in the Times Square Area

3.8.5 Rebuilding and Ensuring Access to Affordable Housing

The destruction of many of the Town's older, affordable homes has put much of the Town at a critical juncture with how to address the need to rebuild and ensure that there are affordable housing options. Access to workforce or affordable housing, whether on the island and nearby off the island, is especially critical for businesses and people working on the island. The Fort Myers Beach Comprehensive Plan (2009) update recommends for the Town to maintain the "best of the old" feel through affordable, single-family housing neighborhoods. However, new homes that are currently being built and homes that were damaged that are being rebuilt will need to meet the current building codes, increasing the price of new housing. The Town is considering options to assist with the reconstruction of substantially damaged homes or elevating restorable residential structures and working with developers to make new homes affordable.

3.8.6 Health, Safety, and Social Services

The Town of Fort Myers Beach has limited on-island availability of medical, public health, mental health, safety, and social services (such as senior citizen care and childcare). In addition, accessing medical and healthcare services is challenging during the peak tourist/part-time resident season. There is a need to improve community health, social services, and safety by:

- Identifying the type and number of medical, public health, safety, and social services needed
- Increasing access to those services
- Improving accessibility to services

3.8.7 Understanding the Impacts of Transportation Infrastructure

There are only two access points (bridges) for vehicle traffic to ingress and egress to Estero Island and only one major roadway to travel north and south along the island. As the Town moves through its recovery from Hurricane Ian, there is a risk that without proper planning and consideration that the new commercial and residential developments could lead to additional traffic and parking congestion, especially during the peak season. It is critical to the long-term vitality of the Town that there is an understanding of the changes in traffic volumes and patterns as the community redevelops post-Hurricane Ian. Additional transportation related challenges include availability of parking on the island and need to increase space, increase useability and ridership on a park and ride system (Figure 3-21), and the feasibility of a water-taxi to reduce the amount of vehicle traffic on the island, especially during peak tourism season.

Figure 3-21. LeeTran Bus Providing Park and Ride Options for Accessing Fort Myers Beach

4 Recovery Projects

4. Recovery Projects

4.1 RECOVERY SUPPORT FUNCTIONS

Recovery projects in this plan are categorized using FEMA's National Disaster Recovery Framework Recovery Support Functions (RSFs), which serve as coordinating structure for key areas of recovery assistance. The six RSFs include:

- Infrastructure Systems
- Economic Recovery
- Natural and Cultural Resources
- Community Planning and Capacity Building
- Housing Recovery
- Health and Social Services

This section describes each RSF and lists the recovery projects that fit under each category.

A Note on Project Prioritization. The Town of Fort Myers Beach, with the assistance of their consulting firm Tidal Basin, developed a list of projects that the Town had identified as needing as part of its recovery post-Hurricane Ian. The list included projects that were eligible for funding through the FEMA PA program, the HMGP, and other grant and loan opportunities. Some projects fall under multiple RSF categories; those that do are marked with an asterisk. Priority projects are featured in Section 4.2 and all projects are detailed in Appendix C.

The icons presented in Figure 4-1 are used to indicate a project's designated RSF(s) throughout the rest of this plan.

Figure 4-1. Recovery Support Function Icons

INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEMS

Description

The projects in this category serve as the backbone for building and bolstering the Town's resilience focused on expanding infrastructure and reducing risk. These initiatives encompass Town facility redevelopment, sustainable transportation and infrastructure planning, maintenance and upkeep of infrastructure, more sustainable and nature-based alternatives, and improvements in and securing utilities. Through collaboration with various stakeholders, the implementation of these projects will collectively contribute to the community's long-term safety, functionality, and overall well-being.

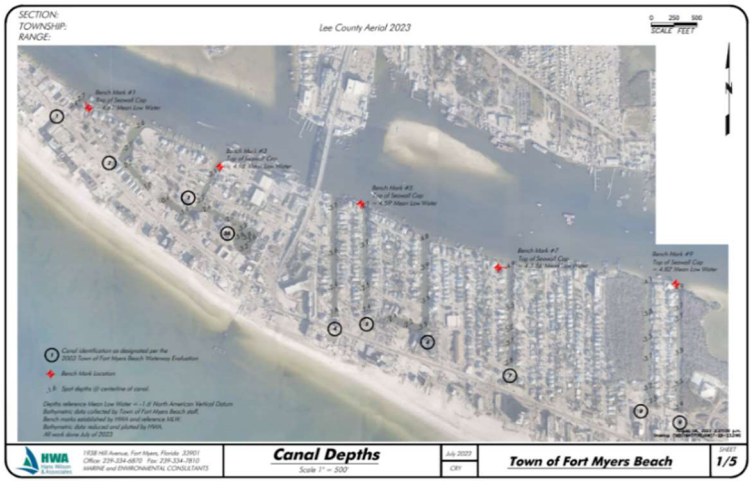
Project List

- Canal dredging
- Submerged debris removal
- Generators*
- Community retrofit/hardening*
- South Pump Station elevation to prevent future flood/surge related damage*
- Moss Marina Lift Station elevation to prevent future flood/surge related damage*
- New facility for the Town's Public Works and Utilities Departments*
- Public parking garage*
- Traffic analysis*
- Develop a more sustainable transportation system with water-taxis and the park-n-ride*
- Water distribution capacity/reliability improvements beyond pre-storm facilities*
- Stormwater system capacity/reliability improvements beyond pre-storm facilities*
- Tier 1 side streets water and stormwater improvements*
- Green infrastructure study
- Sea level rise and seawall study*
- Elevated public bathrooms/flood protection at 5 Beach Accesses*
- Bury exposed electric and utilities along side streets
- Bury exposed electric and utilities along Estero Blvd*
- Construction of a new bridge onto Estero Island*
- Funding for TECO Energy to run natural gas down Estero Island's side street*
- Parking garage at Town Hall for municipal vehicle protection and staging equipment

Community Partners

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- FEMA
- Florida Department of Transportation
- Fort Myers Beach Chamber of Commerce
- Fort Myers Beach Town Administration
- Lee County
- TECO Energy
- West Coast Inland Navigation District

Figure 4-2. Map of Canals at Fort Myers Beach



ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Description

The projects in this category encompass both long-term recovery and economic development, working with the Town's Comprehensive Plan in order to promote economic redevelopments such as with commercial "hub" zones (for example, Santini Plaza [Figure 4-3] and Margaritaville development [Figure 4-4]) to help drive overall resilience, economic vitality, and community well-being. In addition, working and meeting with local business owners to plan and identify potential funding resources to assist with responding more quickly to the disruption of their businesses and being more resilient after future storms or disasters.

Project List

- Long term recovery and economic development planning and studies*
- Analysis and preparation of community improvement and disaster relief plans*

Community Partners

- Fort Myers Beach Chamber of Commerce
- Fort Myers Beach Town Administration
- Fort Myers Beach Town Council
- Lee County Economic Development Office (EDO)
- Small Business Administration
- SWFRPC
- U.S. Economic Development Agency (EDA)

Figure 4-3. Commercial Development of Santini Marina Plaza

Figure 4-4. Restaurants and Bars Near Margaritaville Resort

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Description

Projects in this category seek to preserve, protect, conserve, rehabilitate, recover, and restore natural and cultural resources during recovery. These projects include coastal rehabilitation and beach and dune renourishment at Newton Park (Figure 4-5). Examples with infrastructure and eco-tourism development could include the restoration of the Mound House (Figure 4-6), expansion of the blueway network around the island, as well as teaming on cultural tourism projects such as developing programs with the Estero Island Historical Society. These efforts collectively aim to enhance environmental resilience, foster community well-being, and attract visitors through thoughtful and strategic improvements.

Project List

- Nourishment of Non-Engineered Beach and Scours
- Improvements to Newton Park or Bayside Park*

Community Partners

- Estero Island Historic Society
- Fort Myers Beach Chamber of Commerce
- Fort Myers Beach Town Administration
- Lee County Parks and Recreation
- U.S. Department of Interior – National Park Service
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- USACE

Figure 4-5. Newton Park

Figure 4-6. Mound House

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Description

These projects include infrastructure expansion and renovation, enhancing local emergency preparedness, and resilience and infrastructure planning. These projects seek to strengthen the community by ensuring safety and vibrancy that withstands and recovers from natural disasters. In addition, these projects may include land acquisitions of substantially damaged properties in order to expand and create conservation, open space, and beach access (Figure 4-7). In addition, working within the building and zoning codes will help the community follow the goals, visions, and objectives as established within the Town's Comprehensive Plan (Figure 4-8).

Project List

- Expansion or renovation of Town Hall beyond pre-storm facilities*
- Expansion or renovation of community/recreation center beyond pre-storm facilities*
- Expansion or improvement of community pool beyond pre-storm facilities*
- Private property acquisition to create additional beach access and open space

Community Partners

- FDEP
- Fort Myers Beach Residents
- Fort Myers Beach Town Administration
- Fort Myers Beach Town Council
- SWFRPC
- Trust for Public Lands

Figure 4-7. Water-side Properties for Sale

Figure 4-8. Zoning Map of Fort Myers Beach

HOUSING RECOVERY

Description

These projects tackle the pressing demand for affordable housing in the Town of Fort Myers Beach, focusing on both restoration and expansion of housing options. This includes constructing and reconstructing affordable housing for the workforce and local residential housing, renovating and reconstructing homes to enhance resilience against potential storm damage (for example, modular home structures that can sustain high winds), and aiming to create a more sustainable and resilient housing landscape for the community. These projects signify a dual commitment to bolstering economic resilience and ensuring the long-term vitality of the Town. Examples of housing recovery could include modular homes (Figure 4-9) or elevating existing housing (Figure 4-10).

Project List

- Workforce housing*
- Fort Myers Beach Residential Property Elevation
- Reconstruction for substantially damaged homes

Community Partners

- FEMA Public Assistance
- Fort Myers Beach Chamber of Commerce
- Fort Myers Beach Residents
- Fort Myers Beach Town Administration
- Fort Myers Beach Town Council
- Lee County Economic Development Office
- U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Figure 4-9. Modular Housing

Figure 4-10. Elevating Housing

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Description

These projects aim to restore and improve health and social services and emergency response networks to promote resilience, health, independence, and the well-being of the community. These projects also include making improvements to healthcare access, public safety, and code enforcement, and expanding on the communications infrastructure. These initiatives aim to enhance the overall well-being and resilience of the community. Examples of projects could include expanding existing public safety services (Figure 4-11) or increasing healthcare services with mobile units (Figure 4-12).

Project List

- Increased on-island medical and healthcare services*
- Public safety improvement*
- Emergency communications and response continuity, and working with private cellular companies about increasing resiliency to the infrastructure (adding/strengthening structures) *

Community Partners

- Fort Myers Beach Fire Department
- Fort Myers Beach Town Administration
- Fort Myers Beach Town Council
- Lee County Office of Public Safety
- Lee County Sheriff's Office
- Lee Health
- Pharmacies (for example, CVS and Walgreens)
- Regional cell service provider(s)

Figure 4-11. Fort Myers Beach Fire Station

Figure 4-12. Mobile Health Unit

4.2 PRIORITY PROJECTS

To address the gaps and challenges left by Hurricane Ian, the Town of Fort Myers Beach is committed to employing a whole community approach to clearly define and tailor its recovery projects to meet the unique needs of the community. This section outlines the Town's highest-priority projects for recovery, in priority order. These projects are organized into six themes modeled after FEMA's six RSFs (as detailed in Section 4.1). Appendix C contains a detailed list of additional projects in the recovery plan. Figure 4-14 presents a map of priority project locations.

Figure 4-13. Priority Project Map

CANAL DREDGING

RSF/Category Name:	Infrastructure
Community Name:	Town of Fort Myers Beach
Lead Local Department:	Environmental Services
Local Department Contact:	+1 239.765.0202
Date Last Updated:	January 22, 2024

Project Description

Estero Island has a network of 30 individual canals (Figure 4-14) and canal systems as well as 22 small lagoons that require dredging due to pre-storm fill and additional overwash and debris from Hurricane Ian. The canal system was constructed in the 1950s-60s to provide waterway navigation to the interior properties on the island. There are currently over 50,000 linear feet (approximately 9.5 miles) of canals on the island, ranging in length from only 75 feet to over 2,500 feet and in width from 45 feet to 170 feet. The Town has estimated over 255,000 cubic yards of sediment material needs to be removed from the canal network.

ESTIMATED COST (IF CALCULABLE)
>$10,000,000

ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE
Long-Term (5+ years)

Potential Partnerships and Stakeholders

- Florida Department of Environmental Protection
- Fort Myers Beach Town Administration
- Town of Fort Myers Beach property (residential and commercial) owners along the canals
- USACE
- West Coast Inland Navigation District

Potential Funding Sources

- FEMA Public Assistance
- National Estuary Program
- NOAA Marine Debris Removal/Marine Debris Interception Funding
- NOAA Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience Grant
- West Coast Inland Navigation District

Project Next Steps

- Identify additional funding for construction

Figure 4-14. Canal at Fort Myers Beach.

ACQUISITION OF PROPERTIES TO CREATE BEACH ACCESS AND CONSERVATION AREAS

RSF/Category Name:	Community Planning/Capacity Building
Community Name:	Town of Fort Myers Beach
Lead Local Department:	Community Development
Local Department Contact:	+1 239.765.0202
Date Last Updated:	January 22, 2024

Project Description

The purpose of this project is the acquisition or purchase of repetitive loss/flood-risk areas on Estero Island by the Town of Fort Myers Beach to be transformed into beach access points, green and park space, or other permanent conservation areas (Figure 4-15). Due to the substantial damage to buildings and houses by Hurricane Ian, many structures were demolished and those lots are now for sale. By purchasing properties along the beach, canals, or the back bay side, the Town would help create additional public access to the water. The Town is also considering teaming with land trusts or other conservation groups in order to purchase available properties. An additional option being explored includes encouraging residents to donate their property to the Town (including land, air rights, easements, water rights, rights-of-way, buildings and other real property improvements, and other interest in real property).

ESTIMATED COST (IF CALCULABLE)

Between $2,000,000 and $10,000,000

ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Long-Term (5+ years)

Potential Partnerships and Stakeholders

- Residential property owners
- Town of Fort Myers Beach

Potential Funding Sources

- HMGP
- Land and Water Conservation Fund
- NERRS Habitat Protection and Restoration Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Competition
- Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnerships Grant Program
- Parks and Open Space Florida Forever Grants Program
- Stan Mayfield Working Waterfronts Florida Forever Grant Program

Project Next Steps

- Continue to contact various funding sources and teaming partners to assist with land acquisition.
- Identify properties for acquisition.

Figure 4-15. Property for-Sale

STORMWATER SYSTEM CAPACITY/RELIABILITY IMPROVEMENTS

RSF/Category Name:	Infrastructure
Community Name:	Town of Fort Myers Beach
Lead Local Department:	Environmental Services
Local Department Contact:	+1 239.765.0202
Date Last Updated:	January 22, 2024

Project Description

This project will focus on the completion of side street stormwater collection and drainage system improvements. Excessive rain quantities, not only from Hurricane Ian but from other storm events, are difficult for the current stormwater system to manage which results in ponding and/or flooding in low-lying areas. Mitigation measures such as increasing stormwater storage capacity and restoration of stormwater swales could assist in better managing run-off during storm events. Additional improvements to storm pipe sizing, storm drain conditions, drainage swales, and outfall locations, could help improve stormwater management on the island (Figure 4-16). In addition, rising sea levels and higher high tides can limit the amount of stormwater that can discharge at outfalls if the surface waters rise and back-up into the outfalls. A study of the outfall system relative to the surface water levels could help with understanding the potential impacts to the overall management of stormwater and the need to increase storage capacity.

ESTIMATED COST (IF CALCULABLE)

Feasibility study: $250,000

Construction: >$10,000,000

ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Long-Term (5+ years)

Potential Partnerships and Stakeholders

- Fort Myers Beach Property (residential and commercial) owners along side streets
- Fort Myers Beach Town Administration
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Potential Funding Sources

- FDEP Water Quality Improvements Grant Program
- FEMA Public Assistance
- Florida Department of Environment Protection Stormwater Grant
- Resilient Florida
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Water and Environmental Program
- Clean Water State Revolving Fund

Project Next Steps

- Conduct a feasibility study to look at alternatives to increase storage capacity for stormwater and thereby reduce the amount of ponding and localized flooding from run-off after storm events.

Figure 4-16. Outfall of the Stormwater System

IMPROVEMENTS TO NEWTON PARK AND BAYSIDE PARK

RSF/Category Name:	Natural and Cultural Resources
Community Name:	Town of Fort Myers Beach
Lead Local Department:	Parks and Recreation
Local Department Contact:	+1 239.765.0202
Date Last Updated:	January 22, 2024

Project Description

Improvements will be made to Newton Park and Bayside Park, two Town parks which experienced extensive damage due to Hurricane Ian. While the facilities at Bayside Park, including the covered stage area for public events and concerts, were restored by the summer of 2023, other improvements are still being considered (Figure 4-17). The needed improvements at both parks include the addition of green space (tree canopy and vegetation), redevelopment of dune systems at Newton Park, new public buildings, and bathrooms, gathering areas, and parking beach access, and public access to the parks.

ESTIMATED COST (IF CALCULABLE)
Between $2,000,000 and $10,000,000

ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE
Mid-Term (3-5 years)

Potential Partnerships and Stakeholders

- Fort Myers Beach Town Administration
- Fort Myers Beach residents
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Potential Funding Sources

- Community Development Block Grant
- FDEP Land and Recreation Grants Program
- FEMA Public Assistance
- Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Grants Program

Project Next Steps

- Continue to contact various funding sources and teaming partners.

Figure 4-17. Bayside Park

TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING ANALYSIS

RSF/Category Name:	Infrastructure
Community Name:	Town of Fort Myers Beach
Lead Local Department:	Public Works
Local Department Contact:	+1 239.765.0202
Date Last Updated:	January 22, 2024

Project Description

Hurricane Ian exacerbated long-standing transportation and parking challenges that the Town had already been experiencing, including congestion during peak times and limited parking. This project will include an assessment of existing and future congestion during peak season, understanding how future redevelopment of Fort Myers Beach will influence the traffic volume, evaluating whether the current stock of parking spaces can manage the number of vehicles, and identifying options for reducing traffic volumes on the island. Areas of study and possible solutions to explore could include:

- Identifying alternative island access including park-n-ride and water taxi options. LeeTran currently has a park-n-ride bus network, so this would include exploring ways to improve ridership and refine the existing network. An evaluation of potential water-taxis dock locations is also needed.
- Reviewing available parking on the island relative to peak traffic, current businesses and lodging, and future businesses.
- Evaluate potential changes in traffic volumes, especially during the peak season as the island is redeveloped with residential and commercial properties.
- Replacement of the temporary street signs with permanent signs
- Acquire property and construct a multi-level public parking facility.

ESTIMATED COST (IF CALCULABLE)

Study: <$500,000

Property acquisition: $2,000,000 up to $10,000,000

Parking deck: >$10,000,000

ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Long-Term (5+ years)

Potential Partnerships and Stakeholders

- Florida Department of Transportation
- Fort Myers Beach Town Administration
- Lee County Transit (LeeTran)

Potential Funding Sources

- FEMA
- Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) - Planning
- Safe Streets and Roads for All – Planning
- Surface Transportation Block Grant

Project Next Steps

- Explore potential funding sources and teaming partners.
- Identify potential sites and construct a public parking facility.

Figure 4-18. Public Parking Areas at Fort Myers Beach

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STUDY

RSF/Category Name:	Community Planning/Capacity Building
Community Name:	Town of Fort Myers Beach
Lead Local Department:	Environmental Services
Local Department Contact:	+1 239.765.0202
Date Last Updated:	January 22, 2024

Project Description

Hurricane Ian destroyed many palm trees and other native vegetation especially within pedestrian areas. This study will evaluate ways to increase canopy cover and landscaping along streets, sidewalks, public gathering areas (for example, Times Square), and within neighborhoods. This will include planting native trees and vegetation to increase urban cooling (Figure 4-19). In addition, the study will evaluate increasing pervious surfaces on the island through multi-usable space (for example, vegetated areas used for both recreation space as well as vehicle parking at different times) and through storage of stormwater within swales and ponds.

ESTIMATED COST (IF CALCULABLE)

Planning/study: <$500,000

ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Long-Term (5+ years)

Potential Partnerships and Stakeholders

- Town of Fort Myers Beach

Potential Funding Sources

- FDACS Urban and Community Forestry Grant - Planting, Preservation, and Invasives Control (UCF- PPI)
- FDEP Resilient Florida
- National Coastal Resilience Fund

Project Next Steps

- Continue to contact various funding sources and teaming partners to assist with developing the study.

Figure 4-19. Palms in Public Areas for Shading

SOUTH PUMP STATION IMPROVEMENTS TO PREVENT FUTURE FLOODING

RSF/Category Name:	Infrastructure
Community Name:	Town of Fort Myers Beach
Lead Local Department:	Utilities
Local Department Contact:	+1 239.765.0202
Date Last Updated:	January 22, 2024

Project Description

The South Pump Station (Lenell Road), which includes a 1,000,000-gallon water storage tank and booster pumps, is one of two drinking water storage tank facilities which holds water for distribution into the Town's water system. Hurricane Ian caused extensive damage to the station, which resulted in a lack of access to clean drinking water for the Town residents for weeks after the storm. This project will provide improvements to the South Pump Station facility, including flood hardening measures such as elevating the booster pumps and other electrical equipment (Figure 4-20). These improvements will help prevent future flood and surge related damage.

ESTIMATED COST (IF CALCULABLE)
>$10,000,000

ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE
Long-Term (5+ years)

Potential Partnerships and Stakeholders

- Town of Fort Myers Beach
- Lee County

Potential Funding Sources

- FDEP Water Quality Improvements Grant Program
- FEMA Public Assistance
- Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA)
- HMGP
- Hurricane Loss Mitigation Program
- Resilient Florida

Project Next Steps

- Continue to contact various funding sources and teaming partners to make improvements to the pump stations.

Figure 4-20. Booster pumps at the South Pump Station facility.-

NOURISHMENT OF BEACH AND DUNE SYSTEMS

RSF/Category Name:	Natural and Cultural Resources
Community Name:	Town of Fort Myers Beach
Lead Local Department:	Environmental Services
Local Department Contact:	+1 239.765.0202
Date Last Updated:	January 22, 2024

Project Description

Hurricane Ian caused significant erosion to the beaches on Estero Island; in certain areas along the island, much of the beach was eroded by the storm up to buildings and other structures (Figure 4-21). This project will support the rehabilitation of scours and beach sand loss using dredged sands. Public assistance funding has already supplemented the building of an engineered sand berm along the beach on the Gulf side of the island to mitigate from higher waters during smaller storms. The project will implement alternatives outlined in the Fort Myers Beach Dune Management Plan (2022) to develop natural and vegetated dune system for a more resilient coastal environment.

ESTIMATED COST (IF CALCULABLE)

Between $2,000,000 and $10,000,000

ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Long-Term (5+ years)

Potential Partnerships and Stakeholders

- Town of Fort Myers Beach
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Florida Gulf Coast University

Potential Funding Sources

- FDEP
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- National Coastal Resilience Fund
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Project Next Steps

- Continue to contact various funding sources and teaming partners.
- Identify sources for local share of project funds.

Figure 4-21. Shoreline at Fort Myers Beach

GENERATORS FOR TOWN FACILITIES FOR EMERGENCY BACK-UP

RSF/Category Name:	Infrastructure
Community Name:	Town of Fort Myers Beach
Lead Local Department:	Utilities
Local Department Contact:	+1 239.765.0202
Date Last Updated:	January 22, 2024

Project Description

The Town of Fort Myers Beach experienced complete power outages after Hurricane Ian. To ensure that the Town has back-up power options for future storms. This project will provide generators to serve as back-up power services at multiple locations throughout the island including the Mound House, water pump stations, Moss Marina lift station, Old San Carlos traffic signal, and (new) Town Hall. Generators would be elevated where possible in order to increase resiliency (Figure 4-22).

ESTIMATED COST (IF CALCULABLE)

Between $500,000 and $2,000,000

ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Long-Term (5+ years)

Potential Partnerships and Stakeholders

- Town of Fort Myers Beach

Potential Funding Sources

- FEMA Public Assistance
- HMGP
- Preventing Outages and Enhancing the Resilience of the Electric Grid Grants
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program

Project Next Steps

- Identify funding for the purchase of generators.

Figure 4-22. Elevated Generator

MITIGATION MEASURES TO ADDRESS SEA LEVEL RISE

RSF/Category Name:	Community Planning/Capacity Building
Community Name:	Town of Fort Myers Beach
Lead Local Department:	Environmental Services
Local Department Contact:	+1 239.765.0202
Date Last Updated:	January 22, 2024

Project Description

High tides events (for example, King Tides or sunny day flooding) are events that are impacting specific areas of the island, especially in the low-lying areas, by overtopping seawalls and inundating properties (Figure 4-23). This project is a feasibility study to identify mitigation measures to address sea level rise which exacerbates high tides. This study will include the following:

- An evaluation of seawall height and outfalls relative to tidal water levels, sea level rise and past king tide heights
- An assessment of the need for replacement or altering the height of the seawalls to mitigate against high tides
- the use of living shorelines or nature base solutions in place of a traditional sea walls
- the use of seawalls on the Gulf side of the island and the bay side of the island

ESTIMATED COST (IF CALCULABLE)
<$500,000

ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE
Long-Term (5+ years)

Potential Partnerships and Stakeholders

- Property (residential and commercial) owners along existing seawalls
- Local and state universities
- Private companies with expertise in resiliency and sustainability

Potential Funding Sources

- FDEP Resilient Florida
- FEMA Public Assistance
- National Coastal Resilience Fund

Project Next Steps

- Continue to contact various funding sources and teaming partners to assist with the study.

Figure 4-23. Seawall at Fort Myers Beach

WATER SYSTEM CAPACITY/RELIABILITY IMPROVEMENTS

RSF/Category Name:	Infrastructure
Community Name:	Town of Fort Myers Beach
Lead Local Department:	Utilities
Local Department Contact:	+1 239.765.0202
Date Last Updated:	January 22, 2024

Project Description

The Town of Fort Myers Beach water supply systems were damaged due to the flood waters during Hurricane Ian. This project would not only address the damage done to the water supply system, but also ensure it can withstand future storms. These improvements include waterline enhancements, upgrades to water distribution lines, increased water storage on island, increased pump capacity and securing water pumps and lines from storm impacts (Figure 4-24).

ESTIMATED COST (IF CALCULABLE)
>$10,000,000

ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE
Long-Term (5+ years)

Potential Partnerships and Stakeholders

- Town of Fort Myers Beach

Potential Funding Sources

- Clean Water State Revolving Fund
- Drinking Water State Revolving Fund
- FDEP Hurricane Stormwater and Wastewater Assistance Grant Program
- FDEP Resilient Florida
- FDEP Water Quality Improvement Grants Program
- FEMA Public Assistance

Project Next Steps

- Continue to identify and contact various funding sources and teaming partners.

Figure 4-24. Water Supply Tank and Pump Facility

SECURING ELECTRIC AND UTILITIES ALONG SIDE STREETS

RSF/Category Name: Infrastructure

Community Name: Town of Fort Myers Beach

Lead Local Department: Utilities

Local Department Contact: +1 239.765.0202

Date Last Updated: January 22, 2024

Project Description

Hurricane Ian caused complete power failures in the Town of Fort Myers Beach due to the above ground powerlines being knocked down by high winds and storm surge. Side streets on the bay side of the island were completely without power for a month after Hurricane Ian and continued to experience power outages in isolated areas in the following months. In addition, Hurricane Ian disrupted access to other utilities such as communications. To help ensure that the utility systems can better withstand future storms, the Town will work with utility companies (including electrical, communications, and fiber) to relocate utilities from above ground to below ground to limit the impacts from those future events (Figure 4-25). (NOTE: This project is only focusing on side streets as Estero Boulevard is managed by Lee County).

ESTIMATED COST (IF CALCULABLE)

Between $2,000,000 and $10,000,000

ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Long-Term (5+ years)

Potential Partnerships and Stakeholders

- Town of Fort Myers Beach
- Public and private utility companies
- Residential property owners

Potential Funding Sources

- FEMA Public Assistance
- Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnership Programs
- Preventing Outages and Enhancing the Resilience of the Electric Grid Grants

Project Next Steps

- Continue to identify and contact various funding sources and teaming partners.

Figure 4-25. Above-ground Utility Lines

WORKFORCE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

RSF/Category Name:	Housing Recovery
Community Name:	Town of Fort Myers Beach
Lead Local Department:	Community Development
Local Department Contact:	+1 239.765.0202
Date Last Updated:	January 22, 2024

Project Description

The substantial loss of residential and commercial structures due to Hurricane Ian has resulted in low housing stock and many vacant lots that are now for sale. Over 1,000 homes and businesses were substantially damaged by Hurricane Ian and over 2,100 homes and businesses were partially damaged. According to the economic analysis completed to look at the impacts from Hurricane Ian on Fort Myers Beach, a 40% reduction in the Town's population occurred as a result of the storm (change from 2022 to 2023). The Town is looking at ways to attract full-time residents to return, so affordable housing stock is paramount. One example could be through modular homes (Figure 4-26). Maintaining the "best of the old" feel is a key aspect of the Town of Fort Myers Beach vision, as outlined in the recently adopted Fort Myers Beach Comprehensive Plan (2009) update. In the plan, the Town noted that a key part of that "old" feel is maintained through low-density housing neighborhoods. The Town understands that workforce or affordable housing can be a part of the recovery of Fort Myers Beach, whether on the island and nearby off the island, so the people that are working for the businesses on the island are able to live on the island, have their children attend the local schools, and not have to travel far distances for their jobs. This project would assist with a plan or study to help assess the post-storm inventory of housing on the island, evaluate how to attract developments of affordable housing (if not on the island, but near to the island), and identify public/private sector, and NGO partners.

ESTIMATED COST (IF CALCULABLE)
>$500,000

ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE
Long-Term (5+ years)

Potential Partnerships and Stakeholders

- Fort Myers Beach Town Administration
- Lee County
- Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Potential Funding Sources

- Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery
- FEMA Public Assistance
- Hurricane Loss Mitigation Grant

Project Next Steps

- Identify funding for the housing study.

Figure 4-26. Modular Home

INCREASE ON-ISLAND MEDICAL AND HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

RSF/Category Name:	Health and Social Services
Community Name:	Town of Fort Myers Beach
Lead Local Department:	Community Development
Local Department Contact:	+1 239.765.0202
Date Last Updated:	January 22, 2024

Project Description

There is a need to assess and address the limited on-island availability of medical, public safety, emergency 9-1-1 and social services (such as senior citizen care and childcare). As of January 2024, there are no urgent care facilities on the island and accessing an off-island medical care facilities can be difficult during high traffic peak season due to the high traffic (Figure 4-27). Many times, calling 911 may be the fastest means for receiving medical services which is an expensive and burdensome delivery of medical and emergency services. This project will evaluate how to improve the delivery of medical, emergency, and healthcare services available on the island. In addition, this project will evaluate the potential need for various medical and health care facilities, including urgent care, satellite clinics to larger regional hospitals, mobile clinics, pharmacies, mental health resources, elderly and senior care, and public and private emergency medical technicians/paramedic services for the island.

ESTIMATED COST (IF CALCULABLE)
<$500,000

ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE
Long-Term (5+ years)

Potential Partnerships and Stakeholders

- Town of Fort Myers Beach
- Lee Health
- Lee County Department of Health
- Pharmacies

Potential Funding Sources

- Community Development Block Grant
- FEMA Public Assistance
- FY2024 New Access Points
- Health Foundation of South Florida
- HHS-CDC Global Health Emergency Response and Recovery Partner Engagement
- Philanthropic Foundation Grants

Project Next Steps

- Identify funding for study.

Figure 4-27. Former Urgent Care Medical Facility at Fort Myers Beach

4.3 NEXT STEPS

Successful planning, implementation, and management of each priority recovery project depends on proper coordination and tracking of a wide variety of elements, including scoping, funding, timing, permitting, and public acceptance. Within this ongoing long-term recovery effort, each of the projects identified in this plan are in one of four project stages in its lifecycle:

- Planning
- Design
- Implementation
- Operation and maintenance

Over the lifecycle of the project and the overall recovery effort, priorities, goals, and support can and often do change; this plan provides tools that can help the Town of Fort Myers Beach officials track and adapt to these changing conditions.

A project that is in the **planning** stage includes a concept, often aspirational, and may need additional definition or details. Afterwards, the project needs to be defined and scoped before appropriate resources and funding can be considered. Studies and plans are often needed to take these projects to the next stage, to provide details, and to vet the idea of the project with the public and potential implementation partners and regulators. Such planning efforts typically draw from community demographic information, assessment of needs, coordination with strategic partners, and overall visioning efforts to help define community and project priorities. Canal dredging is an example of a recovery project that is in the planning stage.

Projects in the **design** stage are at the point of defining critical details, such as materials, costs, timing, location, or funding before implementation or construction. At this stage potential limitations and constraints, as well as potential cost savings and benefits, are more clearly identified through engineering and design, which will provide a much better estimate of potential costs. A clear understanding of funding availability and requirements, as well as the overall fiscal health of the community, is critical at this stage. Another critical component for a construction is acquiring the proper permitting. All of these steps can impact the timing and scope of a project, but if done properly can provide more efficient allocation of resources. The completion of side street drinking water distribution and stormwater collection and drainage system improvements is an example of a recovery project in the design phase.

Projects in the **implementation** stage already have been programmed and some funds may have been allocated or spent. Construction may be underway or new programs or efforts are starting up. Monitoring and controlling the project progress is critical at this stage to ensure that the final design is properly being followed, intended benefits are being achieved, and funding and permitting requirements are being met. The nourishment of beach and dune systems is an example of a recovery project in the implementation phase.

The last stage of the project is **operations and maintenance**. In this stage, a facility or program is already operational and helping in recovery, but additional resources may be needed to successfully continue the operation. In the long run, construction or startup costs are only one part of the total costs of a facility or program. Proper operation requires continued investment of resources that must be taken into consideration. As of January 2024, there are no recovery projects in the operations and maintenance stage.

Appendix C provides a Project Planning Workbook to help the Town of Fort Myers Beach in ongoing planning and implementation efforts at any stage of project development. The Project Planning Workbook is a companion tool to the recovery plan provided in Microsoft Excel format. It includes useful spreadsheets that can help track recovery projects, available funding, community demographics, and permitting, provide other supportive information in seeking grant funding, and can be modified over time. Appendix C also contains a detailed description of each spreadsheet and a how-to manual for using the workbook.

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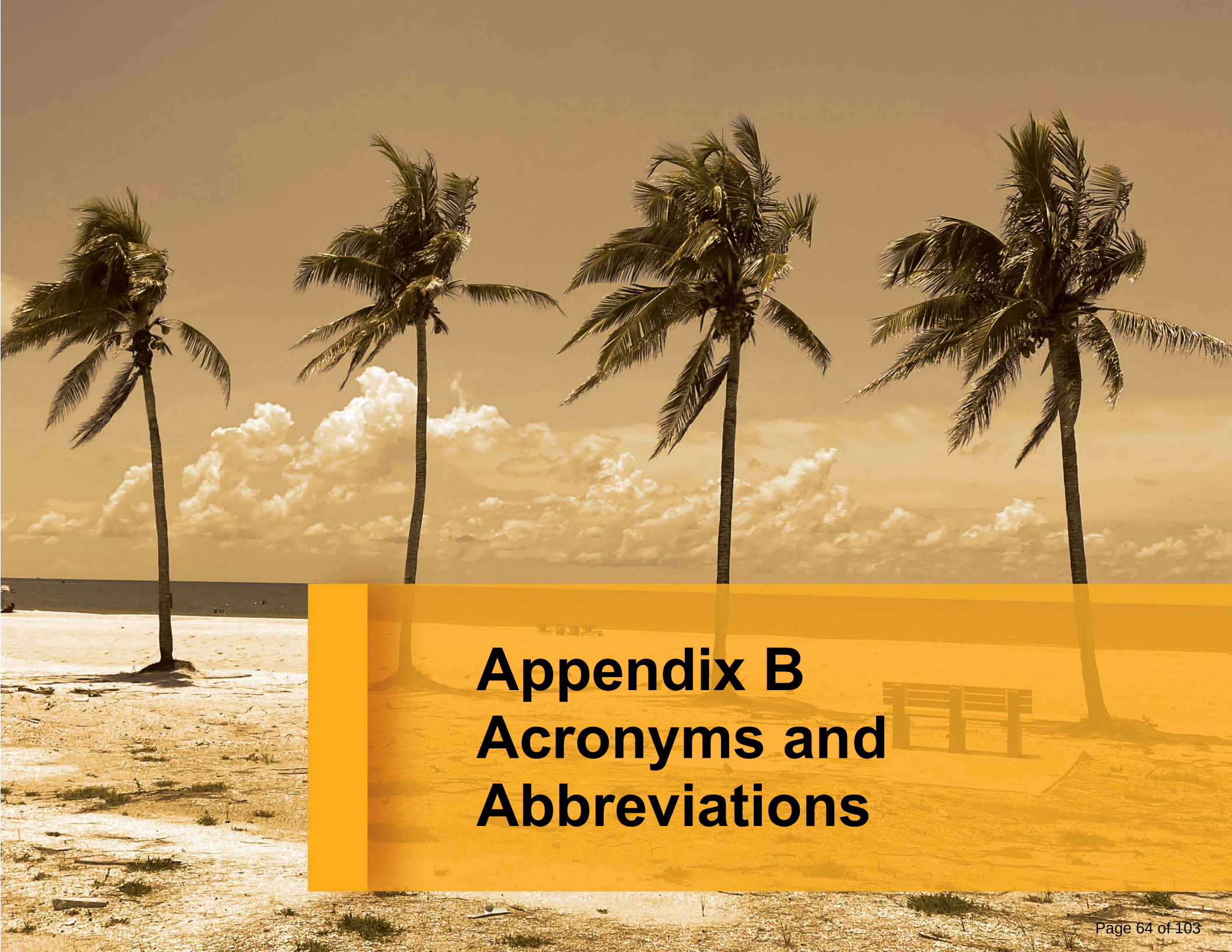


Appendix B Acronyms and Abbreviations

Appendix B. Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAC	Anchorage Advisory Committee
BORCAB	Bay Oaks Recreational Campus Advisory Board
CA	Community Assistance
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant Program
CDC/ASTR	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention / Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
CEHST	Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool
CELCAB	Cultural & Environmental Learning Center Advisory Board
EDA	U.S. Economic Development Agency
EJ	Environmental Justice
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FDEM	Florida Division of Emergency Management
FDEO	Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
FDEP	Florida Department of Environmental Protection
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FMA	Flood Mitigation Assistance
HHS-CDC	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – Centers for Disease Control
HMGP	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
HUD	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
IRC/CA	Interagency Recovery Coordination/Community Assistance
LPA	Local Planning Agency
LTRP	Long-Term Recovery Plan
MERTF	Marine and Environmental Resources Task Force
NAB	Nuisance Abatement Board
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
PPW	Project Planning Workbook
PSC	Public Safety Committee
PSC	Public Safety Committee
RAISE	Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity - Planning
RSF	Recovery Support Function
RSF	Recovery Support Function
SFHA	Special Flood Hazard Area
SVI	Social Vulnerability Index
SWFRPC	Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USEPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
WHCEQ	White House Council on Environmental Quality

Appendix C
Project Planning Workbook How-To Manual

Appendix C. Project Planning Workbook How-To Manual

C.1 INTRODUCTION

The Project Planning Workbook is intended to help the Town of Fort Myers Beach in its in its ongoing long-term recovery efforts. It is a companion planning resource to the Recovery Plan in Microsoft Excel format that contains a variety of spreadsheets with helpful information to assist the community in several important planning tasks, including tracking and prioritizing projects, finding potential strategic implementation partners, researching funding opportunities, and seeking appropriate permitting. Following is a description of what can be found in the Project Planning Workbook and how to use it.

- **Table of Contents**
  - The first tab of the Project Planning Workbook is a Table of Contents that offers hyperlinks to each of the component spreadsheet, a brief description of its content and organization, and how the tool can used in ongoing planning efforts.
- **Tab 1 – Master Project List**
  - The Master Project List is the heart of the Workbook and includes detailed information on each of the projects identified in the recovery effort. The list includes a brief description of the project title, scope, estimated cost, priority ranking, and potential funding sources.
- **Tab 2 – Funding Sources**
  - The funding sources tab further details the primary funding options that may be applicable to the progress identified in the recovery plan. The details include:
    - Program name
    - Funding agency
    - Description of the funding program application
    - Requirements for local cost share or match requirements
    - Funding cycle
    - Eligible activities – includes planning, design/implementation, construction, and operation and maintenance
    - Weblink to program
- **Tab 3 – Community Demographic Data**
  - The community demographic data tab identifies key statistics for the community, comparing the community to the county and state. The statistical characteristics considered include:
    - Population
    - Housing
    - Socioeconomic
    - Other characteristics
- **Tab 4 – Permitting and Compliance**
  - Permitting and Compliance guidance is made up of 5 tabs in the workbook which include the following:
    - Tab 4 Permitting Considerations – this is an overview of the permitting process and provides guidance on best practices when seeking permits for construction projects.
    - Tab 4.1 Federal Permitting – includes a table listing the various permits issued by each federal agency, the permit's applicability to different project sites, and information on where to find more detailed information on the permit and the typical schedule range.
    - Tab 4.2 State Permitting – as with Tab 4.1, this table lists the various permits issued by state agencies.
    - Tab 4.3 Local Permitting – provides a list of typical local permits issued for construction projects and their applicability.
    - Tab 4.4 Sample Permitting Worksheet – provides a template that can be used to help determine which permits need to be acquired before construction can begin.

- **Tab 5 – Strategic Partners**
  - This table provides an overview of potential local, state, and federal implementation partners organized by Recovery Support Function (RSF).
- **Tab 6 – Prioritization**
  - A key component of the long-term recovery planning process is project prioritization. This spreadsheet provides a Prioritization Tool that helps to determine how any project aligns with overall community recovery goals and vision. The tool is adaptable by giving weight to different goals or performance measures that reflect changing community priorities and needs over time. Although not currently included because project costs have not yet been determined for many prioritized projects, the prioritization tool can be modified to provide a method of ranking the projects based on cost-benefit when project costs become available. This will help identify those cost-efficient projects that should be actively pursued and initiated in the short run. The actual ranking of the projects is presented in the Master Project List tab. This tab provides a list of the identified community goals and relative weight or importance that each has to the long-term recovery effort.

C.2 PROJECT PRIORITIZATION

A primary issue for community leaders in implementing recovery projects is limited resources. Community leaders must prioritize projects to determine how best to apply resources in the most efficient manner while leveraging financial resources to attract further investment in the community. A prioritization tool helps decision makers determine where best to invest implementation funding in addressing the identified needs of the community and which projects most closely align with its long-range recovery goals.

Table T6 presents the full contents of the prioritization matrix rubric for evaluating projects. For each of the recognized goals there is a corresponding performance measure or measures, and these performance measures were in turn applied to each of the identified projects. Each performance measure is in the form of a basic yes/no question. Long-range recovery goals and their performance measures were derived from review of the community's long-range planning documents, and/or in collaboration with community leaders.

Performance measures were applied to each project. Each performance measure is awarded a point value to the project if one could answer yes to the performance measure question. For example, for the goal "Revitalize and Improve Residential and Expanding Transitional Neighborhoods", we have the basic performance measure "Project would help rejuvenate and promote sustainable growth in residential, commercial and transitioning areas? If a project would result in an affirmative answer (yes) to the question, then it was awarded the point value of the performance measure.

C.2.1 Project Prioritization Analysis

The point value for each performance measure was determined after discussions with community leadership and was based on the Town's priorities at this time. For example, more value was placed on planning and infrastructure projects to meet the (post Ian) basic public service needs and thus were given higher point values. It should be noted that priorities and their relative importance to the community will change over time depending on new events and changing circumstances. To account for this, point values for performance measures can be changed to reflect the changing priorities. The scoring in the "Combined Projects" tab is linked to the point values in the "Prioritization" tab, so any changes made to the point values will be reflected in the "Combined Projects" tab.

After applying and scoring each of the performance measures to each project, a total score was determined by adding the total points of those measures that the project met, with a potential maximum score of 100. However, it should be noted that because the goals are broad and comprehensive in nature, it is highly unlikely that any one project would achieve a score of 100. In fact, in doing this exercise, the highest score achieved by any project was 73.

C.3 PROJECTED PROJECT COSTS

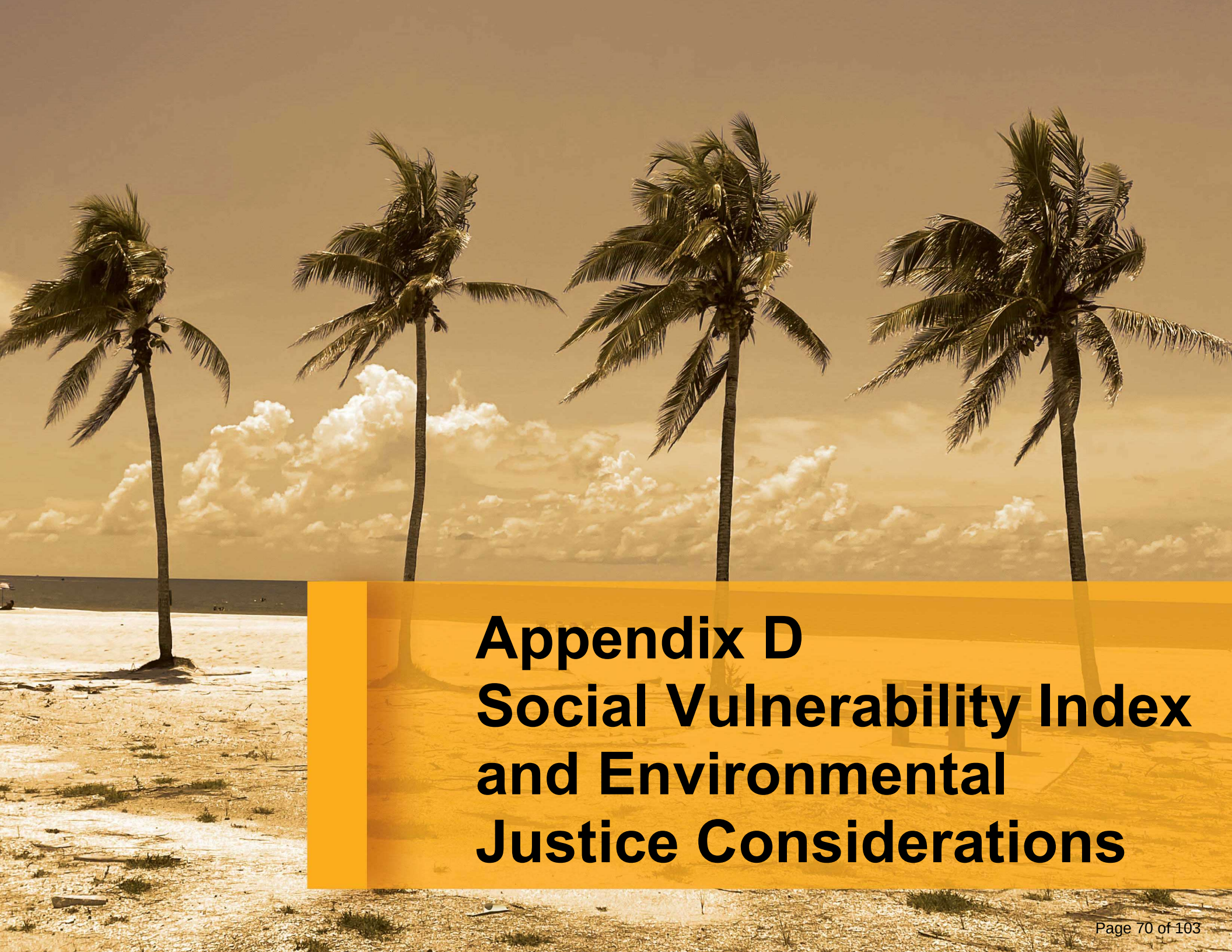
Although project cost considerations are not currently included in the Prioritized Projects rankings because of the generalized descriptions of some of the projects, this step in the analyses can be added once estimated costs have been determined, and the rankings can be recalculated accordingly. After a performance score is determined for each project, the anticipated construction/study costs for each project can also be estimated based on a variety of sources,

including interviews with local officials, adopted planning documents, and the costs of similar projects in other jurisdictions. These costs may be just opinions of probable costs and so would be subject to change based on economic conditions at the time of implementation. Before committing funding for implementation, detailed up-to-date cost estimates must be generated.

C.4 COST-BENEFIT SCORE ANALYSIS

Besides a total prioritization score, each project can be assigned a cost-benefit ranking based on the relative costs or general opinion of high, medium or low costs. High-cost projects would be given a weighted value of 3, medium 2, and low 1. To derive a cost-benefit score, the total prioritization score is then divided by the opinion of probable cost score. These cost-benefit scores would in turn be compared to each other to determine the project cost-benefit ranking of high, medium, or low.

In basic terms, a high cost-benefit ranking would indicate that a project not only ranks high in addressing overall community goals but is also anticipated to do so in a cost-effective manner. This methodology does tend to favor low-cost planning efforts over expensive capital construction projects.



Appendix D
Social Vulnerability Index and Environmental Justice Considerations

Appendix D. Social Vulnerability Index and Environmental Justice

D.1 INTRODUCTION

This memorandum describes three screening tools developed and used by federal agencies to help understand a community's vulnerability using nationally consistent approaches and datasets. These tools include the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, Social Vulnerability Index, and EJ Screening. The memorandum aims to provide awareness of these tools and how Fort Myers Beach's characteristics compare to the country and state. These tools are used to provide context and substantiate application to serve as a basis for funding and community assistance needs. The results for Fort Myers Beach are summarized as follows.

D.2 CLIMATE AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE SCREENING TOOL[31]

The Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) is used by federal agencies to help identify disadvantaged communities that will benefit from programs included in the Justice40 Initiative, as per presidential Executive Order 14008 (WHCEQ, 2022). The tool helps identify communities which have been "marginalized by society, overburdened by pollution, and underserved by infrastructure and other basic services" (WHCEQ, 2022).

The most recent CEJST was developed in 2022 using various datasets. Results are provided at the census tract level using tract boundaries from 2010. A tract is considered disadvantaged if it meets the respective threshold for *any* of eight categories of burden (WHCEQ, 2022).

- The **Climate Change** category considers expected loss rates for agriculture, expected buildings, and population, and projected future flood and wildfire risks, combined with low income.
- The **Health** category considers asthma, diabetes, heart disease, and low life expectancy, combined with low income.
- The **Legacy Pollution** category considers abandoned mine lands, Formerly Used Defense Sites, and proximity to hazardous waste facilities, Superfund sites, and Risk Management Plan facilities, combined with low income.
- The **Water and Wastewater** category considers underground storage tanks and releases and wastewater discharge, combined with low income.
- The **Energy** category considers energy costs and particulate matter (PM 2.5) in the air, combined with low income.
- The **Housing** category considers historic underinvestment, housing costs, lack of green space, lack of indoor plumbing, and lead paint, combined with low income.
- The **Transportation** category considers diesel particulate matter exposure, transportation barriers, and traffic proximity and volume, combined with low-income populations.
- The **Workforce Development** category considers linguistic isolation, low median income, poverty, and unemployment, combined with low high school education rates.

Results for census tracts that intersect Fort Myers Beach are summarized in Table D-1. Of the five assessed census tracts, none are considered disadvantaged. Each category includes a threshold related to income or high school education, in addition to environmental criteria; the town's lack of tracts identified as disadvantaged reflects, in part, its relatively higher income and education rates.

[31] White House Council on Environmental Quality (WHCEQ). 2022. Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, Technical Support Document. Version 1.0. November 2022.

Table D-1. CEJST Categories Exceeded for Fort Myers Beach Census Tracts

Census Tract 2010 ID[a]	Total Categories Burdened	Climate Change	Health	Legacy Pollution	Energy	Water and Wastewater	Housing	Transportation	Workforce Development
12071001908	0	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
12071060102	0	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
12071060201	0	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
12071060202	0	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
12071060203	0	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Number Burdened	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

[a] All of these census tracts include areas outside of town limits. Tracts were excluded if less than 1% of the tract area falls within the town.

Figure D-1 shows the overall results of the CEJST for Fort Myers Beach's census tracts. Each tract is labeled with the number of burdened categories and color-coded according to its number of burdened categories.

Figure D-1. Map of Number of CEJST Categories Exceeded for Fort Myers Beach Census Tracts

Fort Myers Beach

Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) - Total categories exceeded

- 0
- 1-2
- 3-4
- 5-6
- 7-8

Source: Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) – Version 1 Results Published in 2022. Census tracts are based on 2010 boundaries

D.3 SOCIAL VULNERABILITY INDEX[32]

The Social Vulnerability Index (SVI), developed by the Centers for Disease Control, helps to identify communities that may need additional support before, during, or after disasters. The most recent SVI was produced using 16 variables from 2020 census data (CDC/ASTR, 2022).

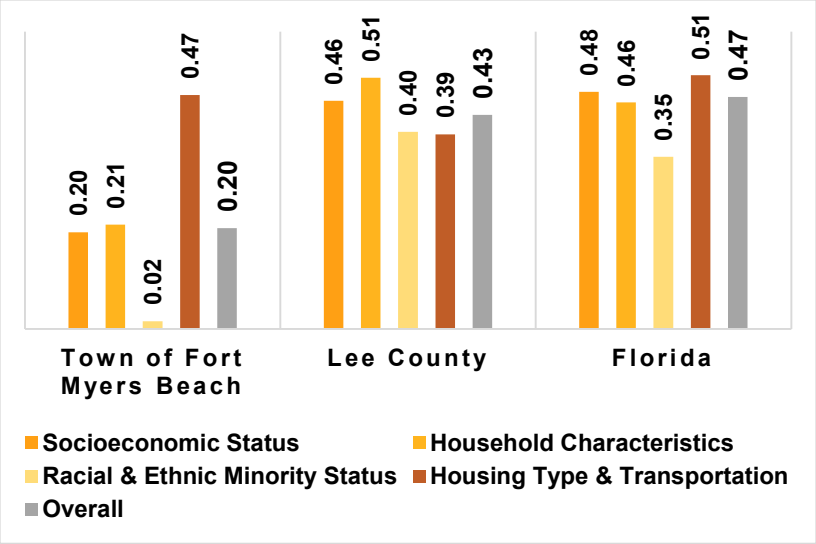
The SVI assesses four themes individually, which are then combined into an overall score.

- **Socioeconomic Status** considers poverty, unemployment, housing cost burdens, and high school education rates.
- **Household Characteristics** considers people over 65 and under 17, people with disabilities, single parent households, English-speaking abilities, and uninsured people.
- **Racial and Ethnic Minority Status** considers people of color.
- **Housing Type and Transportation** considers housing in mobile homes, structures with 10 or more units, group homes, crowded conditions (more people than rooms), and households without a vehicle.

A higher index value indicates greater vulnerability. Communities can also be compared using percentiles, which indicates the percentage of communities against which the assessed community scores more highly (i.e., a ranking of 0 [=0%] indicates least vulnerability, while 1 [=100%] indicates greatest vulnerability). Original SVI results are developed at the census tract level and can also be exported at the county level. Therefore, to develop SVI percentiles for Fort Myers Beach, data for census tracts, which can cross municipal lines, were aggregated to the municipal level using area-weighting (i.e., census tracts which cover a larger area of Fort Myers Beach received a higher weight). National percentiles were used.

Results for Fort Myers Beach are shown in Figure D-2. Compared to either Lee County or the State of Florida, Fort Myers Beach ranks as relatively less vulnerable on all SVI themes, except for Housing Type and Transportation, reflecting below-median vulnerability for all assessed variables *except* for persons over 65, disabilities, and housing in structures with 10 or more units. Overall, Fort Myers Beach's SVI percentiles suggest it falls within approximately the 20% least vulnerable communities nationally.

Figure D-2. SVI Percentiles for Fort Myers Beach



[32] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention / Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (CDC/ASTR). 2022. CDC/ATSDR Social Vulnerability Index 2020 Database Documentation

Figure D-3 shows tract-level results of the SVI for Fort Myers Beach. Each tract is labeled with the tract's overall percentile ranking and color-coded according to its overall percentile ranking.

Figure D-3. Map of SVI Percentiles for Fort Myers Beach Census Tracts

D.4 EJ SCREENING[33]

EJScreen is an environmental justice (EJ) mapping and screening tool developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that assesses a community's relative vulnerability to specific environmental hazards by combining environmental and socioeconomic indicators. The most recent EJScreen was developed in 2023 using various datasets (EPA, 2023).

Two separate indices are derived for 13 different environmental indicators, resulting in 26 indices. The main index considers two socioeconomic indicators: low income and people of color populations. The supplemental index considers five: low income, unemployment, limited English, less than high school education, and low life expectancy populations.

A higher index value indicates greater vulnerability. Communities can also be compared using percentiles, which indicates the percentage of communities against which the assessed community scores more highly. EJScreen results are developed at the census block level and can also be exported at the municipal, county, and state levels.

In general, Fort Myers Beach falls within the least vulnerable 25% of communities, when compared to either the state or the nation, for most indicators and indices (Table D-2, Table D-3, Table D-4, and Table D-5). However, for the over age 64 socioeconomic indicator, it falls within the most vulnerable 25% of communities. Additionally, for the wastewater discharge and underground storage tanks environmental indicators, it falls within the most vulnerable 25% of communities, which ranks Fort Myers Beach as somewhat more vulnerable for those two indices.

Table D-2. Fort Myers Beach's Relative Vulnerability for Socioeconomic Indicators

Socioeconomic Indicators	Fort Myers Beach Versus Florida	Fort Myers Beach Versus US
People of Color	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Low Income	Least Vulnerable 25%	Least Vulnerable 25%
Less Than High School Education	Least Vulnerable 25%	Least Vulnerable 25%
Limited English Speaking	Least Vulnerable 25%	Least Vulnerable 25%
Under Age 5	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Over Age 64	**Most Vulnerable 25%**	**Most Vulnerable 25%**
Unemployment Rate	Least Vulnerable 25%	Least Vulnerable 25%
Limited Life Expectancy	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Demographic Index	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Supplemental Demographic Index	Middle 50%	Middle 50%

Table D-3. Fort Myers Beach's Relative Vulnerability for Environmental Indicators

Environmental Indicators	Fort Myers Beach Versus Florida	Fort Myers Beach Versus US
Lead Paint	Least Vulnerable 25%	Least Vulnerable 25%
Diesel Particulate Matter	Middle 50%	Least Vulnerable 25%
Air Toxics Cancer Risk	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Air Toxics Respiratory HI	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Traffic Proximity	Least Vulnerable 25%	Least Vulnerable 25%
Wastewater Discharge	**Most Vulnerable 25%**	**Most Vulnerable 25%**

[33] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). 2023. EJScreen Environmental Justice Mapping and Screening Tool: Technical Documentation for Version 2.2 July 2023.

Environmental Indicators	Fort Myers Beach Versus Florida	Fort Myers Beach Versus US
Superfund Proximity	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
RMP Facility Proximity	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Hazardous Waste Proximity	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Ozone	Least Vulnerable 25%	Least Vulnerable 25%
Particulate Matter	Least Vulnerable 25%	Least Vulnerable 25%
Underground Storage Tanks	Least Vulnerable 25%	**Most Vulnerable 25%**
Toxic Releases to Air	Least Vulnerable 25%	Middle 50%

Table D-4. Fort Myers Beach's Relative Vulnerability for EJ Indices

EJ Indices	Fort Myers Beach Versus Florida	Fort Myers Beach Versus US
Lead Paint EJ Index	Least Vulnerable 25%	Middle 50%
Diesel Particulate Matter EJ Index	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Air Toxics Cancer Risk EJ Index	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Air Toxics Respiratory HI EJ Index	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Traffic Proximity EJ Index	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Wastewater Discharge EJ Index	Least Vulnerable 25%	Least Vulnerable 25%
Superfund Proximity EJ Index	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
RMP Facility Proximity EJ Index	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Hazardous Waste Proximity EJ Index	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Ozone EJ Index	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Particulate Matter EJ Index	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Underground Storage Tanks EJ Index	Least Vulnerable 25%	Least Vulnerable 25%
Toxic Releases to Air EJ Index	Middle 50%	Middle 50%

Table D-5. Fort Myers Beach's Relative Vulnerability for Supplemental EJ Indices

Supplemental Indices	Fort Myers Beach Versus Florida	Fort Myers Beach Versus US
Lead Paint Supplemental Index	Least Vulnerable 25%	Middle 50%
Diesel Particulate Matter Supplemental Index	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Air Toxics Cancer Risk Supplemental Index	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Air Toxics Respiratory HI Supplemental Index	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Traffic Proximity Supplemental Index	Middle 50%	Least Vulnerable 25%
Wastewater Discharge Supplemental Index	Least Vulnerable 25%	Least Vulnerable 25%
Superfund Proximity Supplemental Index	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
RMP Facility Proximity Supplemental Index	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Hazardous Waste Proximity Supplemental Index	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Ozone Supplemental Index	Least Vulnerable 25%	Middle 50%
Particulate Matter Supplemental Index	Middle 50%	Middle 50%
Underground Storage Tanks Supplemental Index	Least Vulnerable 25%	Least Vulnerable 25%
Toxic Releases to Air Supplemental Index	Middle 50%	Middle 50%

Appendix E
Community Engagement Workshops and Survey Results

Appendix E. Community Engagement Workshops and Survey Results

E.1 COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

On Monday, September 18, 2023, and Tuesday, September 19, 2023, the Town of Fort Myers Beach hosted two community engagement workshops at the Diamondhead Beach Resort. The purpose of these workshops was to:

- Introduce the concept, process, and ongoing long-term recovery planning efforts in Fort Myers Beach (including the long-term recovery plan)
- Provide an update to residents of Fort Myers Beach on the ongoing short-term recovery efforts and projects
- Solicit public input to gauge the priorities of residents that can direct current and future long-term recovery efforts

The workshops included presentations by the Town and FEMA CA representatives on short-term recovery efforts (Town) and long-term recovery projects (FEMA CA). Presentations were followed by an interactive session during which in-person participants engaged with additional state and federal partners and "preference voting" stations. Other partners who participated in the workshops included:

- Small Business Administration
- Small Business Development Center
- FDEM-Mitigation
- APEX Accelerators (formerly PTAP)
- Disaster Case Managers Program (DCMP)/Volunteer Florida

Representatives from the Town of Fort Myers Beach also presented the status of current and near-term projects undertaken since Hurricane Ian. Representatives from Operations Compliance; Culture, Parks, and Recreation; Public Works; and Environmental Services spoke on projects ongoing in their departments. These presentations highlighted the Town's commitment to recovery and showcased the ongoing efforts that have been made.

The presentations by both the Town and CA teams were streamed on the Town's Facebook page and YouTube channel and broadcasted on the local radio station Beach Talk Radio. A total of 60 people (including Town and FEMA staff) attended the September 18th workshop, with 15 people on Facebook, 13 people on YouTube, and 35 people on Beach Talk Radio streaming through the Town's YouTube channel). Forty-five people, including Town and FEMA staff - attended the September 19 workshop. The number of people participating online was not tabulated for the Tuesday workshop.

The feedback and findings from the workshop, as well as the results from the online public engagement survey, play a crucial role in shaping the Town's long-term recovery plan. These lists were presented to the attendees at the workshop and were categorized by long-term recovery themes, similar to the FEMA RSFs. Refer to the following themes:

- Infrastructure
- Economic recovery
- Natural and cultural resources
- Housing
- Health and social services
- Community planning

The discussion on long-term recovery themes not only helped shape a future community vision but also provided insight into how the community would like to prioritize funding.

After the presentations were delivered by Town staff, the public had the opportunity to engage in dot sticker voting. During this process, they cast their votes (using stickers) on the proposed project types listed on posters displayed on the walls (Table E-1). Only in-person attendees were able to take part in the public input voting. Each project type would be categorized under one of the six project themes that were discussed during the presentation. Focusing on project types also allows the Town to obtain data that can be used to inform recovery efforts in the short and long-term, creating data that can be incorporated in the project prioritization matrix's scoring so that the Town of Fort Myers Beach can utilize the tool after this project concludes.

Table E-1. Dot Sticker Voting Results

Project Types	September 18 Votes	September 19 Votes	Total Votes
Canal Dredging	23	2	25
Bike, walking and paddle trail connectivity to improve transportation and recreation	13	9	22
Assistance with residential property elevation	9	12	21
Bury exposed electrical and utilities along side streets	12	8	20
Submerged debris removal from waterways	13	5	18
Acquisition of properties to create beach access and conservation areas	10	7	17
Mitigation measures to address sea level rise (for example, sea walls, living shorelines, etc)	13	4	17
Side Streets Water and Stormwater Improvements	14	2	16
Stormwater system capacity improvements	10	6	16
Traffic analysis (understand future traffic patterns and volumes, parking, and park and ride options)	7	5	12
Workforce and affordable housing	3	9	12
Nourishment of non-engineered beach and scours	0	11	11
Provide generators for Town facilities for emergency back-up	3	6	9
Assistance in reconstruction of substantially damaged homes	3	6	9
Expand public parking on Estero Island	6	3	9
Green infrastructure study (for example, drainage, water quality, tree shading, etc)	6	2	8
Coastal resiliency through natural and vegetated dune systems	4	4	8
Redevelopment of town buildings and facilities damaged or detstroyed by Hurricane Ian	7	0	7
Increase on-island medical and healthcare facilities	1	6	7
Time Square and beach recreation designs	3	4	7
Elevate public bathrooms at beach accesses for flood protection	3	3	6
Work with partners on expanding park and ride options on the landward side of bridge	2	4	6
Work with private utility to expand natural gas along side streets	3	3	6
Expand emergency communications and resilience to cellular infrastructure	4	1	5
Assist in developing a water taxi system	3	1	4
Improvements to Town Parks	3	0	3
Analysis and preparation of community improvement and disaster relief plans	1	1	2
Hardening or retrofit town buildings to protect from future flooding	1	0	1
Public safety improvements (for example, development of a town police department, codes, etc)	1	0	1
Water distribution capacity improvements and increased storage	0	0	0

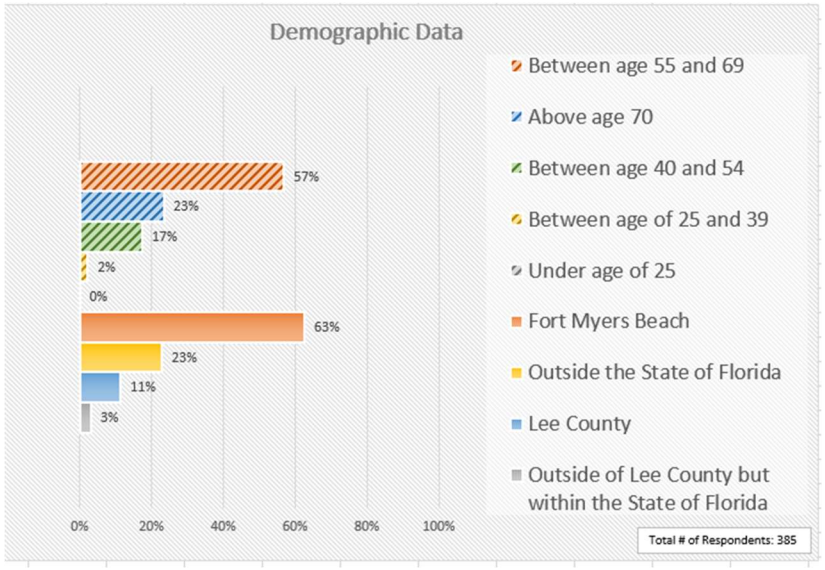
The results and highest-ranking proposed project types from the workshops can be found in the following analysis.

E.2 ONLINE SURVEY

In addition to the community workshops, an online survey was developed to allow for greater participation of Town residents to provide input for the recovery plan. The online survey was hosted on the Town's website during the period of September 13 to October 8, 2023, and was open to all to participate. The themes for the 10-question survey were selected to align with FEMA RSFs. All survey responses were received online, and none were entered manually. A total of 385 respondents completed the survey.

- **Question 1:** Respondents were asked to provide their age within a range (Figure E-1). Possible answers were in the following ranges:
  - Under age of 25 (0 responses, 0.0%)
  - Between age of 25 and 39 (9 responses, 2.3%)
  - Between age 40 and 54 (67 responses, 17.4%)
  - Between age 55 and 69 (219 responses, 56.9%)
  - Above age 70 (90 responses, 23.4%)
- **Question 2:** Respondents were asked where they currently reside (Figure E-1).
  - Fort Myers Beach (241 responses, 62.6%)
  - Lee County (44 responses, 11.4%)
  - Outside of Lee County but within the State of Florida (12 responses, 3.1%)
  - Outside the State of Florida (88 responses, 22.9%)

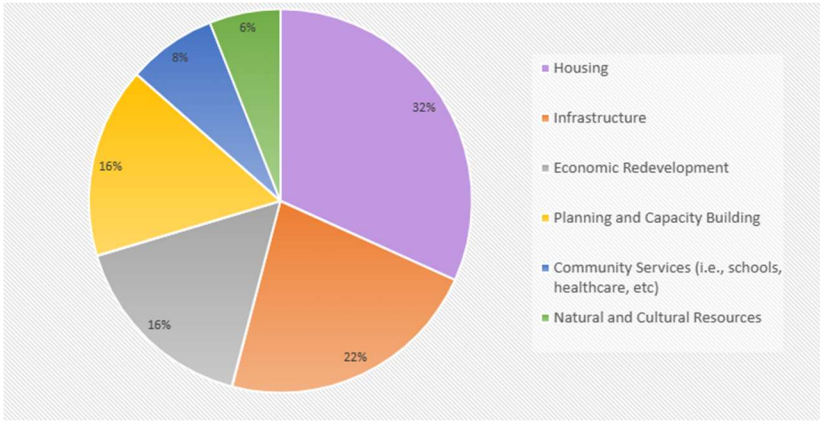
Figure E-1. Demographic Data



- **Question 3:** Respondents were asked to prioritize general long-term recovery themes (align with the FEMA RSFs) identified by the Town of Fort Myers Beach (Figure E-2).
  - Community Services (that is, schools, healthcare)
  - Economic Development
  - Housing
  - Infrastructure
  - Natural and Culture Resources
  - Planning and Capacity Building

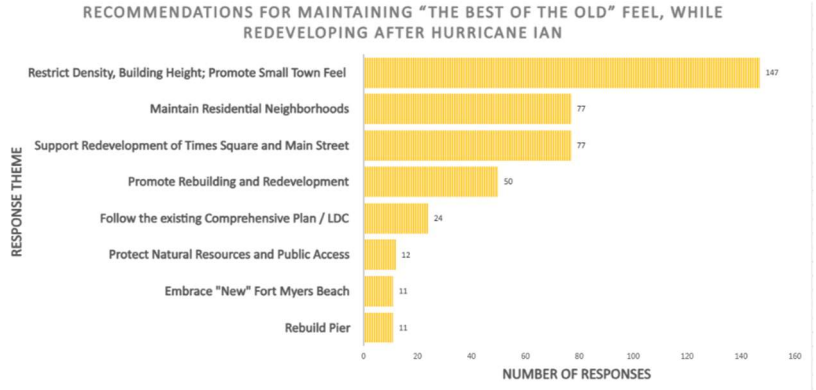
  As demonstrated by Figure E-2, respondents overwhelmingly ranked housing and infrastructure as the top two priorities (over 50% of the respondents identified these two themes as their highest priority). Economic development and planning and capacity building were tied as the third highest priority while Community Services and Natural and Cultural Resources received the least votes as lowest priority for community recovery.

Figure E-2. Long-Term Recovery Priority Ranking



- **Question 4:** Respondents were asked an open-ended question of what you would recommend to the Town of Fort Myers Beach to help maintain "the best of the old" feel for the Town all while redeveloping after Hurricane Ian (that is, canopy streets, "neighborhood" residential districts, "Main Street" feel at the Times Square area). This was the only open-ended question in the survey. Figure E-3 shows the ranking of those responses. "Restrict Density, Building Height; Promote Small Town Feel" received most of the votes, followed by "Maintain Residential Neighborhoods and "Support Redevelopment of Times Square and Main Street".

Figure E-3. Recommendations for Maintaining "The Best of the Old" Feel, While Redeveloping After Hurricane Ian

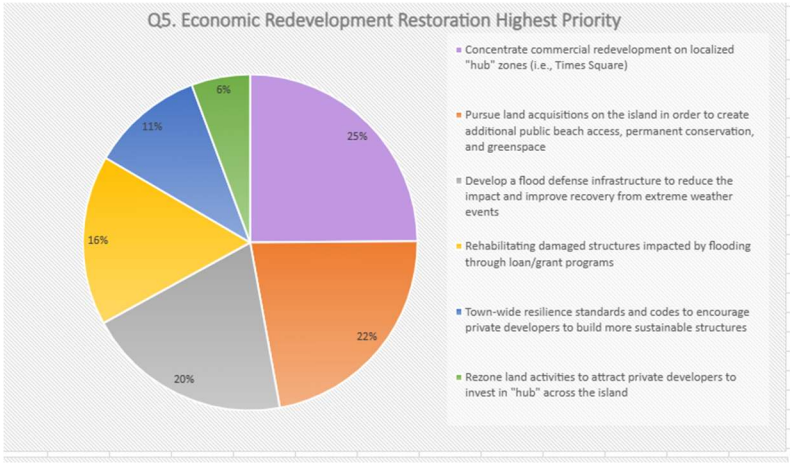


With the 385 responses that were submitted, one way to analyze the responses is to look at the words that were used the most in the responses with a word cloud (Figure E-4). The words “island”, “beach”, and “square” were used the most by the respondents in providing a response to Question 4 (as indicated by the largest font size in the word cloud), suggesting possibly that the respondents were thinking of the “island” setting, the sandy “beach,” as well as Times “Square” in their responses on how the Town can maintain “the best of the old” feel.

Figure E-4. Maintain “The Best of the Old”

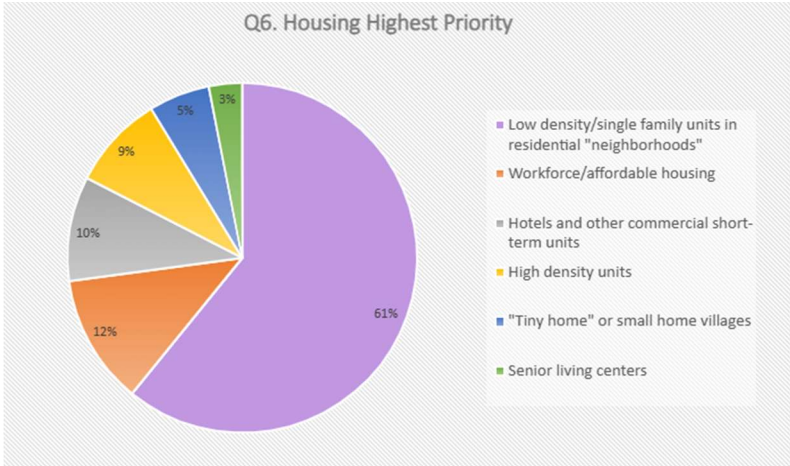
- **Question 5:** Respondents were asked about how they would prioritize economic redevelopment or restoration efforts to build back better. Figure E-5 shows that the top three in ranking for economic development priorities ranked the highest:
  - Concentrate commercial redevelopment on centralized "hub" zones (that is, Times Square, Santini Plaza)
  - Pursue land acquisitions on the island in order to create additional public beach access, permanent conservation, and greenspace
  - Develop a flood defense infrastructure in order to reduce the impact and improve recovery and resiliency from extreme weather events.

Figure E-5. Economic Development Priorities



- **Question 6:** Respondents were asked that with the limited available space on Estero Island, how would they prioritize housing options (permanent and short-term) for the Town of Fort Myers Beach (Figure E-6).
  - A clear majority (61%) of the respondents chose low-density/single-family units in residential “neighborhoods” and was five times more than the next highest housing option of workforce/affordable housing.

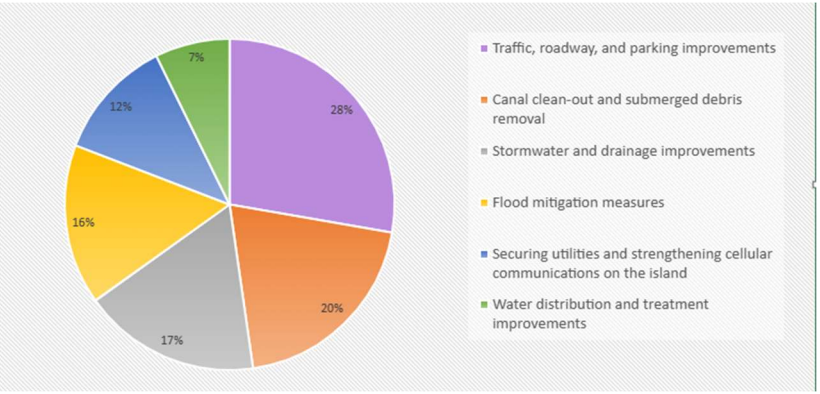
Figure E-6. Housing Priority Ranking



Question 7: Respondents were asked to prioritize select infrastructure projects (Figure E-7).

- Traffic, roadways, and parking garnered the highest number of votes. Canal clean-up and submerged debris removal closely followed, with stormwater and drainage improvements, along with flood mitigation measures, as additional options that received significant support.

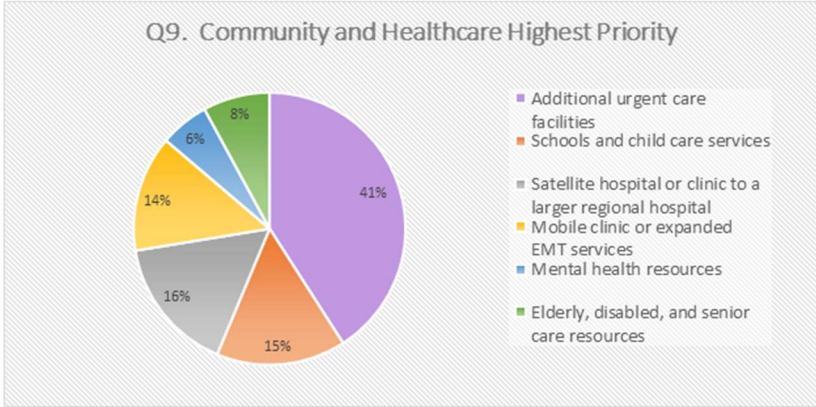
Figure E-7. Infrastructure Priority Ranking



- **Question 8:** Respondents were asked if they experience feelings of increased stress and/or mental health issues as a result of Hurricane Ian (2022) and/or Hurricane Idalia (2023)? Of the responses:
  - 60.3% indicated “Yes;”
  - 28.1% indicated “No;” and
  - 11.7% indicated “Unsure”

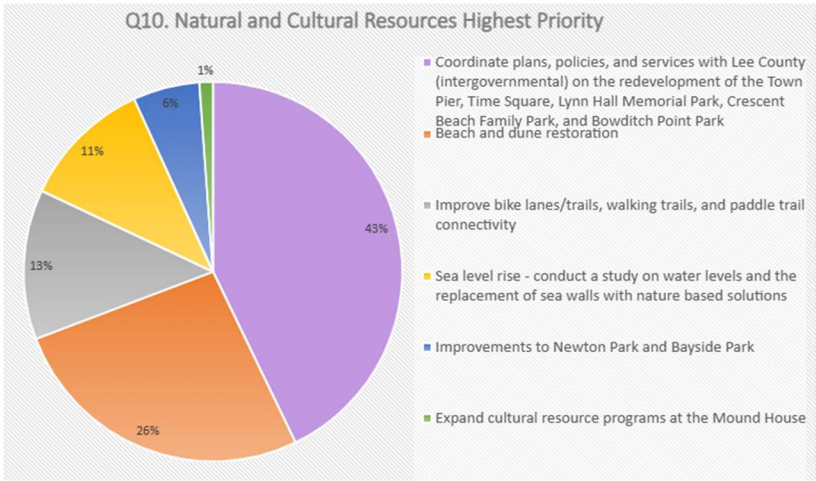
  The results indicate that almost a 2:1 ratio of the respondents acknowledged that they were feeling more stressed compared to those that said that they were not.
- **Question 9:** Respondents were asked to prioritize on-island community and healthcare services. The need for additional urgent care facilities was the clear highest priority, with schools and childcare services, a satellite hospital, clinic, or mobile clinic receiving almost the same number of votes (Figure E-8).

Figure E-8. Community and Healthcare Ranking



- **Question 10:** Respondents were asked to prioritize natural and cultural resources on Estero Island and in Fort Myers Beach (Figure E-9). Having the Town work with Lee County to help with the redevelopment of key sites that, although are not owned by the Town, bring many visitors to the island and therefore will have a major impact on the recovery for the Town, received the most first choice votes, followed by beach and dune restoration. Expanded cultural resource programs at the Mound House received the least number of votes at only 1%.

Figure E-9. Natural and Cultural Resources Ranking



CONTACT US

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Town of Fort Myers Beach
Agenda Item Summary

Green Sheet Number: **2024-1502**

1. **Request:**

Meeting Date: March 7, 2024

A discussion regarding the Land Development Code Update Proposal

Why the action is necessary:

What the action accomplishes:

2. **Agenda:**

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

3. **Requirement/Purpose:**

---

5. **Background:**

Attachments:

1. FMB LDC Proposal Axis Final

Financial Impact:

6. **Alternative Action**

7. **Staff Recommendations:**

8. **Recommended Approval:**

_____ Date: February 27, 2024
nancy stuparich, Town Attorney

_____ Date: March 01, 2024
Amy Baker, Town Clerk

_____ Date: March 01, 2024
Andy Hyatt, Town Manager

February 14, 2024

Andy Hyatt
2525 Estero Boulevard
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931

Re: Land Development Code Update Proposal

Dear Mr. Hyatt,

Please find the following proposal to provide updates to the Town's Land Development Code. Changes to the LDC have been desired by the Town Council and in conjunction with updates to the Town's Comprehensive Plan, are required to make the LDC consistent with the proposed Comprehensive Plan. Sarah Propst will lead the effort to provide changes to targeted Chapters of the Town's Land Development Code, which is also known as Appendix A.

Scope of Work
This contract will result in an updated Land Development Code (LDC), meant to supersede the present LDC that applies to the Town of Fort Myers Beach. The Town desires an innovative and adaptive approach to achieve an attractive, competitive, and sustainable LDC. The new LDC should accomplish the following. This is not an exhaustive list and is in no order of importance:

- Encourage creative and efficient development and redevelopment;
- Address transportation constraints, capitalize on existing infrastructure, and incorporate forwardlooking parking and complete street standards;
- Creating standards to protect and beautify corridor and gateway areas in the form of development standards;
- Eliminate duplicated and/or conflicting LDC provisions and standards;
- Be easy to read and understandable for a wider audience including citizens, staff, developers, businesses, and elected and appointed officials;
- Be simpler, flexible, and more easily administered by staff;
- Illustrated with graphics depicting the requirements, recommendations, and concepts detailed in the LDC, where appropriate;
- Incorporate innovative and creative approaches to land-use regulations;
- Incorporate lasting design principles and best planning practices to improve citizens' quality of life;
- Prepare an LDC that will clearly define the expectations of the Town, in regard to appearance, quality, density of development;
- Ensure compliance of the LDC with all applicable state and federal regulations, especially related to environmental protection;
- Consultant would work with a staff review team to ensure cross discipline consistency;
- Consultant would act as facilitator with a stakeholder group that includes representatives of the Town's residents, business community and other's as directed by the Town Council or Administration;
- Consultant would provide all meeting materials, drafts, and final drafts in electronic format to the Town in Word and PDF versions for reproduction at meetings and printing of the final LDC ;
- The Town of Fort Myers Beach shall retain ownership of all data generated;

Public Engagement

Attend workshops and Council or LPA meetings to cooperatively develop regulations with elected and appointed officials, staff, the development community, and the citizens of Fort Myers Beach. The following meetings will be coordinated by the Consultant and Town staff:

One (1) advertised workshop with the Town Council and one (1) advertised workshop with the Local Planning Agency to define the expectations for the LDC; two (2) citizen engagement workshops to educate current LDC status and to gather citizen/stakeholder comments about priority topics. These community workshops may cover separate topics to provide a full spectrum of issues through this process.

A virtual town hall presentation and continued presence, sharing of information, and preference polling will be utilized to engage public that does not have physical access to the meetings.

A total of five (5) workshops.

Once the LDC is in draft form, one (1) public hearing with the Town of Fort Myers Beach Local Planning Agency to recommend the LDC to the Town Council; and two (2) advertised public hearings with the Town Council.

A total of three (3) public hearings.

The responsibility for meeting public notice requirements, including mailed notices, advertisements, and signs as appropriate, for community workshops and public hearings related to this project shall lie with the Town. The Town shall be responsible for preparation, materials, and mailing costs for mailed notices. The Consultant shall assist with quality assurance, if necessary. The Town shall also be responsible for scheduling all public meetings and reserving appropriate meeting venues. The Consultant may propose to enhance the public notification measures undertaken by the Town with the use of newsletters or other means, which will be published and distributed by the Town. The Town shall be responsible for sign-in of persons attending each workshop on forms provided by the Town.

LDC Revisions

The Consultant is responsible for the following sections of the LDC, which are in Appendix A of the Code of Ordinances:

Chapter 1 General Provisions: Review with the Town's Attorney and Administrative Team. Provide feedback on any conflicts with the remaining LDC, but not responsible for the legal compliance of this chapter.

Chapter 2 Administration: Review with the Town's Attorney and Administrative Team. Provide feedback on any conflicts with the remaining LDC, but not responsible for the legal compliance of this chapter. Definitions will be a critical part of these updates and the Consultant will review and provide necessary edits based on revisions throughout other chapters of the LDC.

Chapter 6 Maintenance Codes, Building Codes, and Coastal Regulations: This chapter is currently in draft form to be updated by others. The Consultant will monitor changes in state or federal law throughout the life of the contract to help accommodate any changes that may be necessary and can be included with the LDC adoption process.

Chapter 10 Development Orders and Engineering Standards: The Consultant will coordinate with Town staff and any engineering Consultants that the Town currently uses for design or operations to ensure consistency between LDC requirements and standard operating procedures.

Chapter 14 Environmental and Natural Resources: The Consultant will coordinate with Town staff that are responsible for implementing this chapter. Several items in the chapter are related to vendors and business operations on the beach. The Consultant will coordinate with but not responsible for any substantial changes to this chapter. The Town can choose to include changes to this chapter during the LDC adoption process or provide a separate process to ensure the remaining revisions are not held up.
Chapter 26 Marine Facilities: The Consultant will review and coordinate discussions on past efforts to revise this chapter to gauge interest in revisions. However, previous efforts resulted in minimal changes due to concerns over changes to commercial and residential uses.

Chapter 27 Personal Watercraft and Parasailing: No major changes are expected due to previous conversations about the verbiage that is currently adopted. Any requested changes by staff or the Town Council can be included by the Consultant to ensure timely adoption.

Chapter 30 Signs: This chapter has recently been updated and will only require review to ensure compliance with changes in state or federal law, along with consistency in language depending on revisions to the other chapters of the LDC.

Chapter 34 Zoning Districts, Design Standards and Non-Conformities: This chapter is expected to be the focus of many of the revisions to the LDC.

Fee Schedule

Project Management and Coordination……..$14,790

Public Engagement…….$15,800

Draft LDC Revisions……$42,680

Final LDC Revisions and Adoption……..$26,200

Sub Total Cost (Lump Sum)……$99,470

Estimated Expenses……..$4,000

Additional Services (per request only)
Additional Workshops…….$3,000
Additional Public Hearings……$800

Town of Fort Myers Beach
Agenda Item Summary

Green Sheet Number: **2024-1530**

1. **Request:**

Meeting Date: March 7, 2024

This item is for discussion only:
AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF FORT MYERS BEACH, FLORIDA AMENDING SECTION 34-232 "REQUIRED HEARINGS" OF DIVISION 5 "PUBLIC HEARINGS AND REVIEW" OF ARTICLE II "ZONING PROCEDURES" OF CHAPTER 34 "ZONING DISTRICTS, DESIGN STANDARDS AND NONCONFORMITIES" TO REQUIRE ONLY ONE PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY ("LPA") FOR VARIANCES EXCEPT IF THE DECISION BY THE LPA IS NOT UNANIMOUS OR IF THE TOWN CLERK RECEIVES A REQUEST BY ANYONE FOR AN ADDITIONAL HEARING BEFORE THE TOWN COUNCIL WITHIN 10 DAYS AFTER THE LPA DECISION; A PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE TOWN COUNCIL IS REQUIRED FOR A VARIANCE IF THE DECISION BY THE LPA IS NOT UNANIMOUS OR IF ANYONE REQUESTS SUCH HEARING WITHIN 1O DAYS AFTER THE LPA DECISION; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION, SEVERABILITY, SCRIVENER ERRORS, CONFLICTS OF LAW AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Why the action is necessary:

The Town Council has shown an interest in looking at methods of expediting non-controversial variance requests to assist with the rebuilding efforts of the Town.

What the action accomplishes:

This proposed Ordinance would eliminate the need for a second public hearing before the Town Council if a variance is unanimously approved by the LPA and no one requests a second hearing before the Town Council as to the variance request within ten calendar days after the LPA meeting. This would potentially expedite non-controversial variance requests and potentially save the expense of having an owner representative appear at two public hearings.

2. **Agenda:**

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

3. **Requirement/Purpose:**

Proposed Ordinance

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5. **Background:**

The Town Attorney was asked to explore potential ways to expedite the approval process of non-controversial variance requests. This proposed ordinance is one potential way of accomplishing that goal.

Attachments:

1. Draft Expedited Variance Review Ordinance - final

Financial Impact:

None on Town. Potential financial savings for applicants for variances.

6. **Alternative Action**

7. **Staff Recommendations:**

Consider the draft Ordinance and give direction to Town Attorney.

8. **Recommended Approval:**

Date: March 01, 2024

_____

nancy stuparich, Town Attorney

_____ Date: March 01, 2024

Amy Baker, Town Clerk

_____ Date: March 01, 2024

Andy Hyatt, Town Manager

ORDINANCE NO. 24-_____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF FORT MYERS BEACH, FLORIDA AMENDING SECTION 34-232 "REQUIRED HEARINGS" OF DIVISION 5 "PUBLIC HEARINGS AND REVIEW" OF ARTICLE II "ZONING PROCEDURES" OF CHAPTER 34 "ZONING DISTRICTS, DESIGN STANDARDS AND NONCONFORMITIES" TO REQUIRE ONLY ONE PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY ("LPA") FOR VARIANCES EXCEPT IF THE DECISION BY THE LPA IS NOT UNANIMOUS OR IF THE TOWN CLERK RECEIVES A REQUEST BY ANYONE FOR AN ADDITIONAL HEARING BEFORE THE TOWN COUNCIL WITHIN 10 DAYS AFTER THE LPA DECISION; A PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE TOWN COUNCIL IS REQUIRED FOR A VARIANCE IF THE DECISION BY THE LPA IS NOT UNANIMOUS OR IF ANYONE REQUESTS SUCH HEARING WITHIN 1O DAYS AFTER THE LPA DECISION; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION, SEVERABILITY, SCRIVENER ERRORS, CONFLICTS OF LAW AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Florida Statutes provide that municipalities shall have the governmental, corporate, and proprietary powers to enable them to conduct municipal government, perform municipal functions, and render municipal service, and exercise any power for municipal purposes, except when expressly prohibited by law; and

WHEREAS, Article X of the Town Charter of the Town of Fort Myers Beach empowers the Town to adopt, amend, or repeal such ordinances and resolutions as may be required for the proper governing of the Town; and

WHEREAS, Section 34-232 of the Town's Land Development Code currently requires 2 public hearings for variance applications, one before the local planning agency ("LPA") and one before the town council; and

WHEREAS, in the recent past a number of variance requests have been unanimously approved by the LPA for consistency with the Town of Fort Myers Beach Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code with no opposition from the public or adjacent property owners; and

WHEREAS, the time and expense of requiring a second public hearing before the town council unless such a hearing is needed is in conflict with the town's efforts to rebuild the community; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding the need to expedite the rebuilding of the town, there may be situations where issues arise during the LPA meeting, which may require further evaluation by the town council; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing of this Ordinance was held before the LPA on the ___ day of _____, 2024, at which time the LPA gave full and complete consideration of the request,

recommendations by staff, the documents in the record, and the testimony of all interested persons, and made a finding of consistency with the Fort Myers Beach Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code and thereafter voted __to ___, to recommend approval of this Ordinance amending the referenced section of the Land Development Code to the town council; and

WHEREAS, on the ___ day of _____, 2024, the town council held a first reading of the Ordinance and gave full and complete consideration to the request of the proposed ordinance to amend Section 34-232 of the Land Development Code, the recommendation of the local planning agency, the recommendation of staff, the documents in the record, and the testimony of all interested persons; and

WHEREAS, a Business Impact Estimate was prepared and posted on the City's website on the ___ day of _____, 2024, as required by Section 166.041(4), Florida Statutes; and

WHEREAS, an advertisement of the public hearing for adoption of the Ordinance was published in the _____ on the ___ day of _____, which is 10 days prior to the second reading of the proposed Ordinance as required by Section 166.041, Florida Statutes; and

WHEREAS, on the ___ day of _____, 2024, the Town Council held a second reading of the Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council determined by a vote of ___ to ___ that adoption of the Ordinance as provided herein is in the best interest of the health, safety and welfare of the public.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDAINED BY THE TOWN OF FORT MYERS BEACH AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. That the above recitals are true and correct, and incorporated herein by this reference and are hereby adopted as the legislative and administrative findings of the town council.

Section 2. That Section 34-232 "Required Hearings" of Division 5 "Public Hearings and Review" of Article II "Zoning Procedures" of Chapter 34 "Zoning Districts, Design Standards and Nonconformities is hereby amended as follows:

Section 34-232 – Required hearings.

(a) *Amendment or adoption of land use ordinances.*

(1) Any proposed amendment to this chapter or to any land use ordinance, or adoption of any new land use ordinance, shall be enacted pursuant to the requirements set forth in F.S. § 166.041.

(2) Prior to a final required hearing by the town council, the local planning agency shall review the amendment at a public hearing.

(b) *Owner-initiated requests.* Owner-initiated requests for rezonings, ~~variances~~, special exceptions, and developments of regional impact require one public hearing before the local

planning agency and one public hearing before the town council. Owner-initiated requests for variances that are unanimously approved by the local planning agency and there is no request for an additional public hearing before the town council made by anyone that is received by the town clerk within 10 calendar days after the date of the local planning agency decision, excluding holidays, only require one public hearing before the local planning agency, and the local planning agency decision is final agency action. Other owner-initiated requests for variances require public hearings first by the local planning agency and then by the town council.

(c) *Town-initiated requests.* Town-initiated requests for rezonings, variances, special exceptions, and developments of regional impact require one public hearing before the local planning agency and:

(1) Applications covering less than ten abutting acres of land will require a single public hearing before the town council.

(2) Applications covering more than ten abutting acres of land will require two public hearings before the town council in accordance with F.S. § 166.041.

Section 3. That the town council intends that the provisions of this ordinance be made a part of the Fort Myers Beach Land Development Code, and that sections herein may be renumbered or re-lettered and the words or phrases herein may be changed to accomplish codification; regardless, typographical errors that do not affect intent may be corrected with notice to and authorization of the town manager without further process.

Section 4. Whenever the requirements or provisions of this Ordinance conflict with the requirements or provisions of any other lawfully adopted ordinance or statute, the most restrictive shall apply.

Section 5. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is for any reason, declared by a court of competent jurisdiction to be unconstitutional or invalid, such decision will not affect the validity of the Ordinance as a whole, or any part thereof, other than the part so declared.

Section 6. This Ordinance shall become effective upon adoption by the town council.

The forgoing Ordinance was adopted by the town council upon a motion by _____ and seconded by _____, and upon being put on a roll call vote, the results was as follows:

Dan Allers, Mayor	___
Jim Atterholt, Vice Mayor	___
John R. King, Council Member	___
Karen Woodson, Council Member	___
Scott Stafford, Council Member	___

ADOPTED this ___ day of _____, 2024 by the town council of the Town of Fort Myers Beach, Florida.

TOWN OF FORT MYERS BEACH

_____
Dan Allers, Mayor

ATTEST:

_____
Amy Baker, Town Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGAL SUFFICIENCY FOR THE USE AND RELIANCE OF THE TOWN OF FORT MYERS BEACH ONLY:

_____
Vose Law Firm, Town Attorney

This Ordinance was filed in the Office of the Town Clerk on this ___ day of _____, 2024.

Town of Fort Myers Beach
Agenda Item Summary

Green Sheet Number: **2024-1532**

1. **Request:**

Meeting Date: March 7, 2024

This item is for discussion only:
AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF FORT MYERS BEACH, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING THE PLACEMENT OF TEMPORARY HOUSING AND TEMPORARY GOVERNMENTAL USE FACILITIES IN SPECIFIED ZONING DISTRICTS OF THE TOWN, PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT OF LAW, SCRIVENER'S ERRORS, SEVERABILITY, SUNSETTING OF THIS ORDINANCE, AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Why the action is necessary:
Requested by Town Council

What the action accomplishes:

2. **Agenda:**
ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

3. **Requirement/Purpose:**

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5. **Background:**
Per Council's March 4, 2024 request, a review and discussion of Ordinance 23-05

Attachments:
1. 23-05, Ordinance 23-05 re Temporary Placement of Governmental Uses and Mobile Homes in the Town(142395789.6)-C FINAL

Financial Impact:

6. **Alternative Action**

7. **Staff Recommendations:**

8. **Recommended Approval:**

ORDINANCE 23-05

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF FORT MYERS BEACH, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING THE PLACEMENT OF TEMPORARY HOUSING AND TEMPORARY GOVERNMENTAL USE FACILITIES IN SPECIFIED ZONING DISTRICTS OF THE TOWN, PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT OF LAW, SCRIVENER'S ERRORS, SEVERABILITY, SUNSETTING OF THIS ORDINANCE, AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Florida Statutes provide that municipalities shall have the governmental, corporate, and proprietary powers to enable them to conduct municipal government, perform municipal functions, and render municipal service, and exercise any power for municipal purposes, except when expressly prohibited by law; and

WHEREAS, Article X of the Town Charter of the Town of Fort Myers Beach empowers the Town to adopt, amend, or repeal such ordinances and resolutions as may be required for the proper governing of the Town; and

WHEREAS, the Town recognizes that redevelopment of the Town, following hurricane Ian requires evaluation and updates to the Town's Codes and Ordinances; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held before the Local Planning Agency (LPA) on January 18, 2023, at which the LPA gave full and complete consideration of the request, recommendations by staff, the documents in the record, and the testimony of all interested persons, and the LPA voted 7-0, to recommend approval of this Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, on March 6, 2023, the Town Council held a first reading of the proposed Ordinance and gave full and complete consideration to the recommendation of staff, and the testimony of all interested persons; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council set a second reading of the proposed Ordinance and a public hearing on this matter to be legally advertised and held before the Town Council on March 20, 2023; at which time the Town Council gave full and complete consideration to the recommendation of staff, and the testimony of all interested persons; and

WHEREAS, the Town finds that it is in the best interests of the health, safety, and welfare of the Town's business owners, residents, and visitors to allow for the placement of temporary housing and temporary governmental use facilities in specified zoning districts of the Town.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF FORT MYERS BEACH, FLORIDA, AS FOLLOWS: [1]

Section 1. The above recitals are true and correct, and incorporated herein by this reference and are hereby adopted as the legislative and administrative findings of the Town

[1]/ Additions to existing text are shown by underline, changes to existing text on second reading are shown by double underline, and deletions are shown as strikethrough.

Council.

Section 2. The Town Council determines that adoption of the following interim regulations is in the best interests of the health, safety, and welfare of the Town's business owners, residents, and visitors, which regulations shall read as follows:

Temporary Placement of Emergency Uses, Manufactured Homes, Mobile Homes, Motor Homes, Recreational Vehicles Other Temporary Residential Dwelling or Temporary Moveable Commercial Units

(1) An emergency governmental use, manufactured home, mobile home, motor home, recreational vehicle, or other temporary unit, may be permitted on a limited basis by the issuance of a temporary placement permit (TPP) by the Town.

(2) Unless otherwise provided in this Ordinance, an emergency governmental use, manufactured home, mobile home, motor home, recreational vehicle, or other temporary unit shall be removed from the site within thirty (30) days after issuance of a certificate of occupancy or certificate of use associated with the approved permit, or at the time of the expiration of the TPP, whichever is earlier. TPP shall not be used for the purpose of placing and operating a Short Term Rental.

A. A TPP may be granted as indicated below:

(i) Within any Commercial or Institutional Zoning District, a TPP may be issued for the purpose of providing an emergency governmental use to provide an essential governmental service adversely impacted due to adverse weather or other acts of God.

(ii) Within any Commercial, Institutional or Residential Zoning District, a TPP may be issued for the purposes of placing a manufactured home, mobile home, motor home, recreational vehicle, or other temporary unit for displaced owner-occupants or tenants if their existing living unit(s) has/have become uninhabitable due to adverse weather damage or other acts of God. Habitability of the existing residential unit(s)

shall be determined by an inspection by the City building official, Florida certified building inspector, architect, or engineer, and subject to the following requirements and restrictions:

(a) No more than one (1) manufactured home, mobile home, motor home, recreational vehicle, or other temporary unit shall be allowed per living unit, for single family and two-family homes. Additional units may only be allowed with approval of a waiver by the Town Council.

(b) The TPP shall only be allowed while the damaged living unit is uninhabitable and in the process of repair or a replacement living unit is in the process of being constructed.

(c) Placement of a manufactured home, mobile home, motor home, recreational vehicle, or other temporary unit on a site must meet all State requirements for tie-downs. Mobile homes shall be installed by a licensed mobile home contractor and in accordance with requirements of Florida Statutes and the Florida Building Code.

(d) Only verified residents of Fort Myers Beach may be granted a TPP.

(iii) The TPP shall be issued in increments of six (6) months by review of the Town and shall not be issued for a period exceeding eighteen (18) months from the date of this ordinance adoption. The Town may, however, grant extensions to a TPP permit exceeding eighteen (18) months if a TPP permit holder demonstrates that a significant hardship exists. The Town Manager or designee shall decide if a hardship exists based upon evidence provided by the permit holder that they have exercised all due diligence in obtaining permits either for repair or replacement of the affected structure. The

Town Manager may consider whether the applicant has had difficulties in completing insurance claims, obtaining an architect or engineer, obtaining construction materials, or obtaining a contractor, and if relevant, whether they have had difficulty in obtaining grants or loans to assist in repair or replacement of the affected structure.

(iv) The holder of the TPP shall apply for a building permit for the damaged or destroyed dwelling unit no later than six (6) months after the date of this ordinance adoption. The Town Manager or designee may, however, grant extensions to this deadline requirement based upon evidence provided by the property owner that they have exercised all due diligence in obtaining permits either for repair or replacement of the affected structure. The Town Manager may consider whether the applicant has had difficulties in completing insurance claims, obtaining an architect or engineer, obtaining construction materials, or obtaining a contractor, and if relevant, whether they have had difficulty in obtaining grants or loans to assist in repair or replacement of the affected structure.

(v) Noncompliance may result in revocation of the TPP.

(vi) The occupants of the manufactured home, mobile home, motor home, recreational vehicle, or other temporary residential unit must comply with all mandatory hurricane evacuation requirements. Failure to do so may result in the revocation of the TPP.

3. Submission Requirements:

A. A completed TPP application; and

B. Map or other documentation indicating the proposed location of the manufactured home, mobile home, motor home, recreational vehicle, or other temporary residential unit; and

C. State Department of Health, State Department of Environmental Protection, and Town permit(s) authorizing the connection of the manufactured home, mobile home, motor home, recreational vehicle, or other temporary residential unit to an on-site or existing community wastewater treatment system.

4. An appeal of any decision made under this Ordinance may be made pursuant to the provisions found in Section 34-86 of the Town's Land Development Code.

Section 3. Whenever the requirements or provisions of this Ordinance conflict with the requirements or provisions of any other lawfully adopted Town Code provision, ordinance. or statute, this Ordinance shall apply.

Section 4. Any typographical errors that do not affect the intent of this Ordinance may be corrected with notice to and authorization of the Town Manager without further process.

Section 5. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is for any reason, declared by a court of competent jurisdiction to be unconstitutional or invalid, such decision will not affect the validity of the Ordinance as a whole, or any part thereof, other than the part so declared.

Section 6. Absent extension of this Ordinance in accordance with State law and the Town Code this Ordinance shall terminate effective eighteen months (18) from its effective date and shall be of no further force or effect after such date.

Section 7. This Ordinance shall become effective upon adoption by the Town Council.

The foregoing Ordinance was adopted by the Town Council upon a motion by Council Member Council Member Veach and seconded by Vice Mayor Atterholt, and upon being put to a roll call vote, the result was as follows:

Dan Allers, Mayor	aye
Jim Atterholt, Vice Mayor	aye
John R. King, Council Member	aye
Bill Veach, Council Member	aye
Karen Woodson, Council Member	aye

ADOPTED this 15th day of May 2023, by the Town Council of the Town of Fort Myers Beach, Florida.

TOWN OF FORT MYERS BEACH

Dan Allers (May 24, 2023 12:52 EDT)

Dan Allers, Mayor

ATTEST:

AMY BAKER (May 30, 2023 15:01 EDT)

Amy Baker, Town Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGAL SUFFICIENCY FOR THE USE AND RELIANCE OF THE TOWN OF FORT MYERS BEACH ONLY:

John Herin (May 30, 2023 11:33 EDT)

John R. Herin, Jr., Town Attorney

This Ordinance was filed in the Office of the Town Clerk on this ___ day of _____, 2023.

AGENDA MANAGEMENT

Subject	Dept		Mtg Date
1st Reading: Ordinance 24-03, Flood Ordinance	Flood	added 11.06.2023	03.18.2024
Lien Reduction: 80 Avenue E	Code	added 02.21.2024	03.18.2024
Lien Reduction: 268/270 Nature View Court	Code	added 02.21.2024	03.18.2024
Lien Reduction: 1661 Estero Blvd	Code	added 02.21.2024	03.18.2024
VAR20230162; 21391 Widgeon Terrace	P&Z	added 02.13.2024	03.18.2024
VAR202302864; 65 Flamingo St.	P&Z	added 02.13.2024	03.18.2024
VAR20230288; 8069 Estero Blvd	P&Z	added 02.13.2024	03.18.2024
2nd Reading: Ordinance 24-03, Flood Ordinance	Flood	added 11.06.2023	04.01.2024
Presentation: Corradino Group - LDC/Comp Plan updates	P&Z	added 07.19.2023	To LPA 3/14
Council Strategic Planning session(s)	Admin	added 10.12.2023	Feb/Mar 2024
Joint Sessions between Council & advisory committees	Admin	added 11.02.2023	Multiple M&P days
Local church updates		added 11.06.2023	TBD M&P
Veteran's Tribute at Bayside Park (JA)	Council	added 09.08.2022	in process
LDC/Comp Plan transmittal hearing	P&Z	added 06.22.2023	TBD