

SECTION 2: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The LMS guiding principles are an expression of the community's vision of hazard mitigation and the mechanisms through which it is striving to achieve that vision. The principles address concerns of the community relative to natural, man-made, and environmental hazards.

2.1 METHODOLOGY

In formulating the guiding principles for the LMS, several techniques were employed. One involved a review of appropriate plans, policy statements, laws, codes, and ordinances of each participating local government. As part of this process, a survey was distributed to each local government. The surveys provided information about the jurisdiction's development plans and regulations, and hazard mitigation projects they have implemented. With 37 local governments involved, defining a community-wide vision became far more complex than one local government defining its mission for local hazard mitigation. Therefore, a facilitated discussion with the Steering Committee was conducted. Using this approach, a comprehensive list of hazards of concern to the local governments was developed. From these defined hazards, the Working Group, through "brainstorming," identified areas of concern. These areas of concern included:

- Loss of life
- Loss of property
- Community sustainability
- Health/medical needs
- Sheltering
- Adverse impacts to natural resources (e.g., beaches, water quality)
- Damage to public infrastructure (e.g., roads, water systems, sewer systems, stormwater systems)
- Economic disruption
- Fiscal impact
- Recurring damage
- Redevelopment/reconstruction
- Development practices/land use
- Intergovernmental coordination
- Public participation
- Repetitive flood loss properties
- Historical structures

These concerns, along with information generated from the inventory of local planning documents and ordinances, led to the mitigation goals and objectives established in **Section 2.3** below.

Palm Beach County's unified mitigation strategy is built upon a comprehensive base of processes including multi-jurisdictional hazard identification, risk and impact analyses, program capability assessments, operational and disaster experience and cost-benefit analyses. These processes, and their results to date, are described in Section 3 of the LMS and in the Situation Section of the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. These processes are applied on an ongoing basis and additions and changes are reflected in revisions to the LMS plan. Hazards most likely to affect each of the county's jurisdictions, the risks those hazards pose to each jurisdiction, the impacts those hazards could have, jurisdictional capabilities to implement and support mitigation strategies, and cost-benefit analyses of mitigation strategies and projects, are

integral considerations in developing, prioritizing and implementing mitigation strategies and initiatives at the county and municipal level.

2.2 PROCESS

The strategy used for the development and revision process of the Palm Beach County Unified Local Mitigation Strategy Plan, consisted of the following tasks:

1. Public involvement
2. Coordination with other agencies or organizations
3. Hazard area inventory
4. Risk and Vulnerability Assessment
5. Coordinated and Integrated Programs and Plans within LMS
6. Review and analysis of possible mitigation activities
7. Continue Public Involvement to ensure a representative plan
8. Local adoption following a public hearing
9. Periodic review and update

This hazard mitigation plan contributes to the overall mitigation strategy outlined above and illustrated in **Figure 2.1** Planning Process Diagram. The Palm Beach County Unified Local Mitigation Strategy summarizes the activities to assess the effects of storm flooding, hurricanes, and all other hazards specific to our area and recommends mitigation activities. In following this strategy, all areas are addressed to reduce the amount of damage after a hazard occurs through mitigation efforts. Participation is encouraged by any individual, agency, organization and jurisdiction who would like to take part in the planning process defined in **Section 1**.

All parties are encouraged to partake in the revision planning process completed at the "Steering Committee" meetings with suggestions, comments, involvement and feedback documented from all participants in the meeting summaries located in **Appendix I** starting from 2003. To ensure all jurisdictions, organizations, and the public are represented throughout the entire revision of the planning process, each meeting will be operated in accordance to Robert's Rules of Order. **Appendix I** will also include the invitation process located in each meeting summary along with jurisdictions, organizations, agencies, and the public in attendance. These procedures are in place to meet the overall objective of the LMS which is to have a plan representative of the entire county and to be a true Palm Beach County Unified Local Mitigation Strategy.

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 set new requirements to be met in all mitigations plans across the country. The LMS Working Group decided the work would be completed by the Administrative sub-committee. The Administrative sub-committee would be open to anyone who wished to participate. Direction to meet all new requirements would be discussed in the Administrative sub-committee. The direction was established through a series of sub-committee meetings. The sub-committee sent requests out to all communities to review and update charts,

and complete a narrative about mitigation initiatives within each community. In addition, all communities were asked to review new additions to the plan for comment and recommendation. However, the LMS Working Group, formerly known as the Steering Committee, ultimately made the final decision. The public was invited to all LMS Working Group meetings to comment before any changes were finalized within the mitigation plan. The meeting summaries from the revision process along with future meetings are located in **Appendix I**. The revision process followed the steps illustrated above. Also a diagram below illustrates all the components that made up the new planning process for the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requirements. The original planning process documenting public involvement can be located in **Section 4.2**.

2.3 MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Palm Beach County's unified LMS encompasses diverse mitigation strategies, including, but not limited to: hazard elimination, hazard reduction, hazard modification, control of hazard release, protective equipment, establishment of hazard warning/communication systems and procedures, redundancy of critical resources and capabilities, mutual aid agreements and public-private partnership initiatives, contract services and resources, construction and land-use standards, and training and education.

2.4 MITIGATION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

All mitigation goals and objectives must be consistent with the goals and objectives of the county and the individual jurisdictional comprehensive plans, codes and ordinances, as well as any other jurisdictional documents reflecting aspirations for the welfare, safety and quality of life of their citizens.

In a county as large and diverse as Palm Beach County, no single list of mitigation goals is going to encompass every conceivable mitigation goal and objective. The overall objective is to reduce the vulnerabilities to hazards which directly affect Palm Beach County. In so doing, the following goals will serve provide guidance to the LMS:

2.4.1 Goals

- Reduce the loss of life, property, and repetitive damage from the effects of natural, societal and technological hazards from all sources but especially, in the county, hurricanes, tornadoes, major rainfall and other severe weather events
- Achieve safe and fiscally sound, sustainable communities through thoughtful long-range planning of the natural and man-made environment
- Take preventative actions to reduce the number of repetitive loss properties published annually by FEMA on the list of "Repetitive Loss Properties"
- Qualify the county and jurisdictions for incremental improvements on the Community Rating System classification in relation to flood insurance under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and to reduce flood hazards
- Optimize the effective use of all available resources by establishing public/private partnerships, and encouraging intergovernmental coordination and cooperation

- Promote awareness and preparedness through the distribution of information on hazards and measures to mitigate them
- Increase the level of coordination of mitigation management concerns, plans and activities at the municipal, county, state and federal levels of government in relation to all hazards
- Establish a program that facilitates orderly recovery and redevelopment, and minimizes economic disruption following a disaster
- Ensure an enforceable commitment for the implementation of the local hazard mitigation strategy

2.4.2 Objectives

The ultimate objectives of the LMS are to:

- Improve the community's resistance to damage from known natural, man-made, and environmental hazards
- Place Palm Beach County in a position to compete effectively and productively for pre and post-disaster mitigation funding assistance
- Encourage strong jurisdictional, nongovernmental and public participation in and support of LMS activities
- Reduce the cost of disasters at all levels
- Facilitate community recovery when disasters occur
- Minimize recurrence of damage by incorporating mitigation into post disaster rebuilding
- Promote intelligent development

2.4.3 Benefits

Adoption of this strategy will provide the following benefits to both County and municipal governmental entities:

- Compliance with Administrative Rules 9G-6 and 9G-7, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), requirements for local comprehensive emergency management plans to identify problem areas and planning deficiencies relative to severe and repetitive weather phenomenon, and to identify pre and post-disaster strategies for rectifying identified programs
- Universal points from the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS) Program for developing a Floodplain Management Program, which may help further reduce flood insurance premium rates for property owners

- Access to FEMA's Federal Mitigation Assistance grant program, which provides funding for pre-disaster mitigation projects and activities
- Compliance with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 allowing Palm Beach County to compete competitively for grant money; and
- Identify and prioritize projects for funding under the State of Florida's Residential Construction Mitigation Program, to help reduce losses from repetitive flooding damage
- Sets forth the guiding principles with which both the County and municipal governmental entities of Palm Beach County will address the issue of all hazard mitigation (**Section 2.0**, Guiding Principles)
- Identifies the known hazards to which the county is exposed, discusses their range of impacts, and delineates the individual vulnerabilities of the various jurisdictions and population centers within the county (**Section 3.0**, Hazard Identification and Vulnerability Analysis)
- Reviews and evaluates the existing legal, regulatory, and response framework currently in place to deal with hazard mitigation (**Section 4.0**, Inventory and Evaluation of Existing Hazard Management Goals, Policies, Procedures, Ordinances, Projects, and Activities)
- Develops a detailed method by which the Palm Beach County community (municipalities and County government) can evaluate and prioritize proposed mitigation projects along with new federal requirements (**Section 5.0**, Project Prioritization Methodology)
- Develops a conflict resolution procedure by which municipalities and county governmental entities can resolve any differences that arise over prioritized mitigation projects or mitigation strategies (**Section 6.0**, Conflict Resolution Procedures)
- Develops the process and schedule by which this entire Unified Local Mitigation Strategy will be review and updated (**Section 7.0**, Review and Revision Procedures for the Palm Beach County Local Hazard Mitigation Strategy)
- Ensures jurisdictional plans are consistent and supportive

Figure 2.1 Planning Process Diagram

