

Appendix B: Countywide Mitigation Initiatives

Appendix B provides a description of representative mitigation programs and initiatives undertaken by PBC and its jurisdictions, and the principles guiding intergovernmental coordination. These programs and initiatives served as the basis for the mitigation projects outlined in Appendix E. This appendix includes:

Section B-1 Mitigation Initiatives of PBC

This sections addresses, in part, the following FEMA requirements:

Requirement §201.6(c)(3)(i): The hazard mitigation strategy shall include a description of mitigation goals to reduce or avoid long-term vulnerabilities to the identified hazards.

Requirement §201.6(c)(3)(ii): The mitigation strategy shall include a section that identifies and analyzes a comprehensive range of specific mitigation actions and projects being considered to reduce the effects of each hazard, with particular emphasis on new and existing buildings and infrastructure. The mitigation strategy must also address the jurisdiction’s participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), and continued compliance with NFIP requirements, as appropriate.

Requirement: §201.6(c)(3)(iii): The mitigation strategy section shall include an action plan describing how the actions identified in section (c)(3)(ii) will be prioritized, implemented, and administered by the local jurisdiction. Prioritization *shall* include a special emphasis on the extent to which benefits are maximized according to a cost benefit review of the proposed projects and their associated costs.

B-1: PBC Initiatives

Palm Beach County and its 39 municipalities participate in a full range of federal, state, and local mitigation programs and initiatives. Representative of these programs and initiatives are the LMS, Community Rating System (CRS), National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), Flood Mitigation Assistance Program (FMA), Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program (PDM), Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), Emergency Management Preparedness & Assistance Program (EMPA), CERT, Continuity of Operations, Post Disaster Redevelopment Plan (PDRP), ESF18, Private-Public Partnerships, counter-terrorism, radiological emergency preparedness initiatives, hazardous materials, etc. The overarching purpose of these activities is the elimination or mitigation of hazards presenting significant risk to PBC and its residents.

The LMS program and its companion mitigation programs are described in detail in Section 4.1.4.

A major mitigation priority of the LMS is the reduction of repetitive flood losses to properties. The County and its CRS participating municipalities track repetitive loss properties countywide on an ongoing basis using data gathered annually from FEMA and the State’s Focus reports. For mitigation planning and strategy development purposes, LMS maintains updated GIS maps and informational databases of repetitive loss property locations relative to historical flood areas and designated Special

Flood Hazard Areas. Repetitive loss properties are an ongoing discussion and planning priority for the LMS, CRS, and Flood Mitigation Technical Advisory committees. These committees, comprised of public and private sector representatives, are encouraged to develop and promote mitigation project ideas and strategies. As a result, a majority of the projects on the Prioritized Project List (PPL) are flood mitigation projects.

In accordance with CRS guidelines, letters are mailed annually to repetitive loss property owners by PBC and municipalities, explaining NFIP program benefits, the availability of mitigation assistance funding through the FMA and other mitigation assistance programs. Non-CRS members of the LMS are encouraged to stay in compliance with NFIP standards.

Information and support is provided in a variety of forms to potential FMA applicants to assist them in developing projects and preparing application packages. Through PBC's LMS committee structure, members of the Technical Advisory Committee is available to offer technical guidance and assistance to applicants, including assistance in preparing benefit-cost analyses.

Mitigation projects are prioritized and implemented according to their direct potential for loss reduction or for their potential in contributing to longer-term, comprehensive plans and strategies for loss reduction. Once projects are underway, it is the responsibility of each jurisdiction to support and monitor performance in accordance with FEMA, state and local guidelines and codes, and to oversee and coordinate documentation and funding processes.

In addition to support of projects, mitigation is encouraged and promoted through a variety of community awareness and education activities including presentations, workshops, expos, panel discussions, plan reviews, publications, websites, etc. prepared and presented utilizing networks of public-private sector partners. As opportunities present themselves, lending institutions and insurers are urged to provide financial incentives for mitigation. Jurisdictions are urged to accelerate permitting and inspections and, if allowable, to waive or reduce fees for mitigation projects. In addition to mitigation incentives, millions of dollars of annual insurance premium savings are realized by a significant segment of PBC residents residing within the County's CRS participating jurisdictions.

Involvement of Planning, Zoning, and Building, Fire-Rescue, and other departments in LMS activities, including committee participation, bolsters communication among key agencies and the LMS. This ensures that mitigation interests are appropriately represented in local building codes, fire codes, land-use ordinances, flood loss prevention ordinances, and other governing documentation.

The PBC LMS plan articulates the goals and objectives of the County and its municipalities to avoid and/or reduce long-term vulnerability to hazards identified by the hazard identification and risk assessment processes. More detailed descriptions of the strategies, programs, and actions are contained in the body of the plan and reflected in the list of prioritized projects in Appendix E. Under the committee structure of the LMS program, increased attention is given to expanding and refining hazard-specific mitigation strategies exclusive of jurisdictional boundaries, capabilities, and interests, and to giving appropriate attention to mitigation in planning future land uses (see Appendix C).

The process and criteria employed for ranking mitigation projects and initiatives are described in detail in Section 4.0 of the LMS plan. In response to federal guidelines applying to grant awards through the

Pre-Disaster Mitigation, Flood Mitigation Assistance, and HMGP, particular emphasis is given to technically feasible and environmentally responsible projects having attractive ratios of loss reduction benefits to cost. Projects involving worthy benefits that are difficult to quantify are given serious consideration, in light of different sets of criteria and are referred to appropriate alternative funding sources not requiring stringent benefit-cost justifications.

Short-term and long-term recovery strategies are addressed by the County and municipal Continuity of Operations Plans, the CEMP, the Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan, and specialized plans and procedures covering key recovery issues such as debris removal, public services resumption, temporary housing, unmet needs, etc. These plans, procedures, and projects address and provide guidance on priorities, processes, schedules, resource requirements, restoration, and redevelopment of critical facilities, infrastructure, services, and economic redevelopment.

The PBC Comprehensive Plan (COMP) includes the following elements: Land Use, Transportation, Housing, Utility, Recreation and Open Space, Conservation, Coastal Management, Intergovernmental Coordination, Capital Improvement, Economic, Fire-Rescue, Public School Facilities, Health and Human Services, Library Services and Historic Preservation. These elements define the components of the community and the inter-relationship among them, integrating the complex relationships of each of these elements in reference to the people who live, work, and visit PBC. Linkages of the COMP plan and LMS have been incorporated into the COMP plan.

Post-disaster mitigation initiatives are developed in response to needs and opportunities identified through collective federal, state, and local inputs following the guidance offered by the Post Disaster Redevelopment Plan. The County and LMS members are also available to work state and federal Mitigation Assessments Teams. It is PBC's goal following disasters to rebuild to a higher standard (meeting or exceeding codes) and, whenever practicable, to apply sound mitigation practices to reduce future risk.