

## 9. Public Outreach

This section of the plan discusses aspects of long-term redevelopment specific to public outreach. The Public Outreach Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will work to maintain open lines of communication among local, state, and federal governments, partnering agencies, and the public so that the entire community has ample access to information regarding the long-term redevelopment process both prior to and following a disaster.

### 9.1 OVERVIEW

Establishing lines of communication before a disaster strikes helps create a sense of assurance throughout a community. Keeping the public informed of the County and municipalities' plans and efforts to implement the PDRP before a disaster can foster a sense of security and confidence in the plan. The community knows that the County is taking steps to protect their community and they have the ability to give feedback. This will lessen the likelihood of surprises and controversy in the aftermath of an event. After a disaster, effective communication is one of the most significant roles of government, especially during long-term redevelopment when the media focus has decreased.

This chapter of the Hillsborough County PDRP identifies the needs for public outreach that will surface during long-term post-disaster redevelopment and the methods that can be used to successfully inform or involve the public in redevelopment activities. It discusses the particular vulnerabilities that the County must consider when attempting to communicate with the entire population before and after a disaster event, details the existing capacity currently available in the County, and includes a description of each public outreach issue and the strategies that the County plans to implement.

The Public Outreach TAC identified and prioritized the following list of issues that are discussed in detail in **Section 9.4**:

1. Effective and clear communication to all affected groups;
2. Pre-established outreach methods, traditional and nontraditional;
3. Establishment or co-location of well-distributed information centers;
4. Clear and effective cross-communication among governments (local, state, federal);
5. Opportunity for public participation in redevelopment decisions;
6. Public understanding of redevelopment policies before a disaster;
7. Transparency in redevelopment decisions and activities; and
8. Defense and promotion of area's viability/ability to re-build.

### 9.2 VULNERABILITY

Even during blue skies, the County has to communicate with the population through a variety of methods to get its message out. After a disaster, this will be further complicated due to the displacement of some residents and a decrease in available communication technology. Knowing what segments of the population will be a challenge to communicate with post-disaster allows the County to plan accordingly pre-disaster. The County should also be aware of specific populations that may require different information than the majority of residents.

## Potentially Displaced Populations

Both before and after a disaster, Hillsborough County needs to maintain constant communication with as much of its population as possible in order for recovery and redevelopment to be effective and inclusive. One of the largest obstacles in sustaining a high level of communication is the displacement of large portions of the population that live in evacuation and flood zones. **Table 9.1** shows the estimated amount of the population that is exposed to a specific hazard. The table also breaks the population down by characteristics that make certain segments particularly vulnerable to disasters.

**Table 9.1 Estimated Numbers of Persons Exposed to Selected Hazards**

Population	Storm Surge	Flood	Wildfire	Sinkhole
<b>Total</b>	<b>56,498</b>	<b>254,862</b>	<b>449,573</b>	<b>364,784</b>
Minority*	9,507	48,109	106,340	103,720
Over 65	6,469	30,902	52,682	41,491
With disabilities	16,079	81,290	155,865	140,257
Poverty	4,145	24,854	48,731	52,771
Language isolated	1,305	2,606	3,290	6,681
Single parent	2,984	14,961	29,303	27,984

\* Non-white population as determined by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Source: Florida Department of Community Affairs, 2006.

## Language Isolation

While the diversity of the population of Hillsborough County is one of the community's assets, it also can serve as a challenge when it comes to developing succinct methods of consistently communicating with the County as a whole. **Table 9.2** shows that almost 10% of the Hillsborough County population (over the age of 5) speaks English less than "very well." These people are in danger of missing out on essential information that the County needs to distribute to its residents, which can slow down the redevelopment process and cause inefficiency in procedures. Residents also can suffer by missing out on opportunities such as funding or assistance that the County may be publicizing or missing opportunities to give their feedback about the process.

**Table 9.2 Language Spoken at Home**

Population	Estimate	Percent
<b>Population 5 years and over</b>	<b>1,086,623</b>	<b>100.0</b>
English only	821,087	76.0
Language other than English	265,536	24.0
Speak English less than "very well"	106,491	10.0
Spanish	205,606	19.0
Speak English less than "very well"	89,222	8.0
Other Indo-European languages	33,135	3.0
Speak English less than "very well"	6,489	1.0
Asian and Pacific Islander languages	19,271	2.0
Speak English less than "very well"	8,838	1.0
Other languages	7,524	1.0
Speak English less than "very well"	1,942	0.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008.

### Housing Tenure

During redevelopment, the County will need to communicate different messages to home-owners and renters about temporary housing and rebuilding procedure. These two populations will also have different needs that the County must meet and have different questions that they want answered. The majority of the housing in the County (65%) is owner-occupied while 35% is renter-occupied (see **Table 9.3**).

**Table 9.3 Housing Tenure**

Housing Units	Estimate	Percent
<b>Occupied housing units</b>	<b>455,341</b>	<b>100</b>
Owner-occupied	294,781	65
Renter-occupied	160,560	35

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008.

### Disability and Age

The County may be required to use different methods to communicate with senior citizens and the disabled to ensure that those populations are properly informed despite limited mobility or sensory handicaps. A total of 12% of the Hillsborough County population is over the age of 65 and 15% of the population (over the age of 5) are disabled (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). These populations may also require additional assistance and instructions during evacuation and an increase in services during redevelopment.

### Businesses

It is extremely important that Hillsborough County actively communicates with its business community after a disaster in order to provide proper assistance. If local businesses are not able to survive an event, there will be long-term effects on the Hillsborough County economy. There are 33,363 operating establishments with one or

more paid employees in Hillsborough County that will need to be reached after a disaster (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007).

### 9.3 INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

An institutional capacity assessment was undertaken for each topic area of the PDRP by surveying the members of each technical advisory committee. The purpose of conducting these assessments was to document what was already in place to contribute to disaster recovery, determine the ability of Hillsborough County to implement this plan, and to identify potential opportunities for establishing or enhancing specific redevelopment policies, programs, or projects. The following capacity discussion is specific to public outreach in Hillsborough County.

#### Existing Capacity

Due to the broad and comprehensive nature of post-disaster redevelopment, there are often many disparate resources that may provide a portion of the capacity needed for pre- or post-disaster implementation of the PDRP.

#### *Organizations*

The organizations listed in **Table 9.4** are those that would be important to have represented on the Public Outreach TAC after a disaster as they are either critical for rapid post-disaster decision-making or may play a role in implementation. This list however is neither exhaustive nor is the participation of these organizations in the planning/implementation process mandatory. Additional stakeholders not listed in the table below attended TAC meetings during the PDRP planning process and, at the discretion of the TAC Chairs, these and other organizations can be invited to participate in the future.

**Table 9.4 Public Outreach Agencies and Organizations**

Organization	Role or Expertise
Agency for Persons Living with Disabilities	Assists with outreach to disabled populations
Citizen Action Center/Library Services Department	Provides information to the public and responds to citizens' concerns
City of Temple Terrace Public Information Office	Coordinates all communications efforts within the City of Temple Terrace
City of Tampa Land Development Coordination Division	Responds to public's need for information related to the development of their property
City of Tampa Public Affairs	Works with all city departments to provide public relations support to the City of Tampa
Crisis Center of Tampa Bay	Provides outreach to socially vulnerable populations
Florida Council of 100	Communicates with County business community
Hillsborough County Aging Services	Provide care and advocacy for senior citizens
Hillsborough County Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Liaison	Acts as an advocate and link between residents with disabilities and the County
Hillsborough County African-American Affairs Liaison	Acts as an advocate and link between African-American Community and the County
Hillsborough County Citizens Corps Council	Communicates with residents and volunteers about disaster preparation and recovery
Hillsborough County Communications Department	Coordinates communications efforts within Hillsborough County

Organization	Role or Expertise
Hillsborough County Emergency Management Department	Provides information to County throughout recovery and redevelopment
Hillsborough County Hazard Mitigation Section	Provides technical assistance and responds to citizens' questions
Hillsborough County Hispanic Affairs Liaison	Acts as a liaison between the County and all segments of the Hispanic community
Hillsborough County Long-term Recovery Program (HELP)	Communicates with vulnerable populations
Hillsborough County Neighborhood Relations	Conducts outreach and disseminates information to neighborhood associations
Hillsborough County Attorney's Office	Provides legal expertise
Hillsborough County Public Works	Provides information to public about transportation, storm water systems, and flood protection
Florida House of Representatives	Represents concerns and wellbeing of voters
National Federation for the Blind	Advocates for the blind
Pinellas, Hillsborough, Pasco Community Organizations Active in Disaster (PHPCOAD)	Fosters communication among community organizations and government agencies active in recovery efforts
Plant City	Provides public information to residents of Plant City
Self Reliance, Inc. Center for Independent Living	Advocate for residents living with disabilities
Community Emergency Response Teams	Local community response
Tampa Bay Workforce Alliance	Network of businesses and regional workforce
Tampa Lighthouse for the Blind	Outreach to blind residents
United Way of Tampa	Communicates with vulnerable populations and works with a large network of partner agencies

*Coordination Capacity*

In addition to identifying the relevant organizations, identifying existing networks and means of communication between these organizations is an important component of understanding the capacity for implementing the PDRP. The following are existing networks between the organizations that could prove useful.

Coordinating Positions Included in CEMP Recovery Annex

Hillsborough County has a number of public outreach positions that are set in place by existing plans and regulations. The following positions are detailed in the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) Recovery Annex and will be initiated shortly after an event and likely affect the public outreach capacity of the County long-term. These positions could potentially remain active as the recovery phase transitions into long-term redevelopment.

**Communications Department Director** – The primary responsibility for public information rests with the Hillsborough County Communications Department during a disaster, specifically the Communications Director, with all information approved by the Incident Commander before being released to the public (Hillsborough County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, 2006).

**Public Information Officer** – When the County becomes eligible for federal disaster assistance, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Public Information Officer position is initiated as part of a joint local, state, and federal effort to ensure sufficient public information and education are promulgated to affected citizens and entities concerning

the recovery effort and state/federal assistance. The EOC Public Information Officer is responsible for distributing information and status updates for release to the media about recovery operations, available assistance, and how to apply for such assistance (Hillsborough County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, 2006). This information is disseminated in cooperation with other county public information/community relations personnel and state and federal counterparts.

**County Community Relations Coordinator** – The Director, Social Services Division, will serve as the County Community Relations Coordinator and will act as the liaison between the county and FEMA/State community relations personnel following initial recovery and will work in coordination with County Hazard Mitigation officer or other county and city officials. Personnel from this division and the Aging Services Department will provide workers to join with state and federal community relations staff in disseminating information to disaster victims. There are also state employees who work in Hillsborough County who have been designated to participate in community relations activities in the county. State Division of Emergency Management will activate state employees for community relations duty in Hillsborough County (Hillsborough County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, 2006).

#### Emergency Support Functions

Hillsborough County has an Emergency Support Function (ESF) structure to align County response and recovery activities with those of the State. The following ESFs are relevant to the Public Outreach TAC during short-term recovery:

**ESF 2: Communications** – ESF 2 coordinates telecommunications support necessary to conduct disaster response and recovery operations including the restoration of downed communications systems such as radio, telephone, and internet-based systems. The primary responsibility for coordinating communications rests with the County Telecommunications Section under the Information & Technology Services Department. Agencies directly involved in providing and maintaining communications include Verizon, RACES, Sheriff's Office Communications, and City of Tampa Radio Communications Section. Emergency Management, Emergency Dispatch Center, and 9-1-1 Operations are supporting elements for this emergency support function (Hillsborough County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, 2006).

**ESF 14: Public Information** – The purpose of this ESF is to coordinate and disseminate appropriate information in an accurate and timely fashion to the public during emergency operations. The primary responsibility for public information rests with the County Communications Department Director with support provided by other county offices. county offices that provide public information officers to the EOC during disaster response and recovery operations include the Parks, Recreation and Conservation Department; Public Works; Aging Services; Animal Services; Code Enforcement; Water Resource Services; Fire Rescue; Library Services; and Solid Waste Management Department (Hillsborough County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, 2006).

#### Public Outreach TAC

During implementation, all TACs will interact with each other but the Public Outreach TAC, in particular, will work closely with each of the other TACs on the communication and public outreach-related actions and strategies included in their action plans. In

regards to these joint collaborations, the Public Outreach TAC’s roles and responsibilities include:

- Receive recommended public outreach actions from the other TACs and consider for implementation.
- Review other TACs’ actions to look for opportunities/need for public outreach that might not have been thought of.
- Work closely with other TACs to implement public outreach-related actions by coordinating/advertising public meetings, educational opportunities, etc., but require other TAC(s) to be actively involved in developing content for the public outreach effort, as appropriate and necessary.
- Inform the public of any PDRP updates or modifications. This would include an active role in enlisting public input during plan updates as well as assisting the PDRP Coordinator in communicating annual PDRP status reports or other ad hoc public awareness needs for the plan in general.

*Plans, Programs, and Procedures*

**Table 9.5** provides a listing of local plans/ordinances, programs, and/or procedures that are relevant to public outreach during long-term recovery. These tables serve as an inventory of the relevant plans, programs, and procedures for staff and TAC members to reference post-disaster as potential methods of implementation. Staff and financial capacity may be tied to plans and programs, so these can also be viewed as potential local fiscal resources.<sup>1</sup>

**Table 9.5 Public Outreach Primary Plans, Programs, and Procedures**

Program/Protocol/Procedure	Purpose	Lead Entity
Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP)	Identifies the Hillsborough County Communications Director as the lead Public Information Officer for the County in a disaster; responsible for other procedures to communicate and disseminate information after a disaster that would still apply in a long-term redevelopment situation	Hillsborough County Emergency Management Department
Community Liaison Program	Promotes diversity within Hillsborough County through outreach, events, and publications; tracks trends; and identifies/resolves problems. Includes representatives specializing in the Americans with Disabilities Act, African-American Affairs, Asian-American Affairs, and Hispanic Affairs	Hillsborough County Administrator

<sup>1</sup> The programs listed were functional at the time that this plan was drafted. Future PDRP updates will include revising these tables to adjust for programmatic changes.

Community Neighborhood Relations Program	Responsible for working with community groups, county departments and other organizations, in order to build partnerships; disseminates information about County government and related subjects to neighborhood associations; provides mini-grants to neighborhood organizations	Hillsborough County Neighborhood Relations; City of Tampa Neighborhood & Community Relations Office
Community Rating System Outreach Strategy	Informs county residents and business owners about flooding hazards and respective mitigation techniques	Hillsborough County Hazard Mitigation Section
Hillsborough County Citizen Corps Council Strategic Plan	Enhance public awareness about disaster preparation and response through education, training, and volunteer opportunities.	Hillsborough County Citizen Corps Council
Hillsborough County Communications Plan	Identifies policies and procedures that the County government must follow in communications with the public, even during disasters	Hillsborough County Communications Department
Hillsborough Information Line	A direct line that answers questions and gives assistance to residents on county services and provides comprehensive information and referral on health, government, and social services in the community	Library Services/Citizens Action Center
Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS)	Requires that Hillsborough County actively provide the public with opportunities to learn more about mitigation for their families, businesses, and community	Hillsborough County Hazard Mitigation Section
Hillsborough County Public Information Section	Coordinates public information programs including public meetings, special events, television programming, and the County's website; maintains media relations; and publishes a variety of printed and electronic materials	Hillsborough County Communications Department

## Recommendations for Expanding Capacity

The County currently utilizes a broad variety of public outreach methods to communicate with residents, however, communication technology is constantly changing and upgrading. The County Communication Department tries to stay current on the latest advancements and periodically looks for ways to incorporate new technologies into the County Communication Plan. Some suggestions of public outreach methods that the County is not currently using but can implement to better communicate with the public during long-term redevelopment are listed under Issue #2.

### 9.4 ISSUES

The prioritized issues listed below are the most significant post-disaster redevelopment issues relevant to recovery in Hillsborough County as determined by the Public Outreach TAC. Following each issue is a summary of the recommended strategy for implementation. Specific actions that correspond with each issue strategy are listed in

**Appendices D and E**, with pertinent information such as timeframe and responsibilities for implementation. Full details on the actions are found on the Infrastructure Action Forms, which can be obtained through the Hillsborough County PDRP website ([www.hillsboroughcounty.org/pgm/pdrp](http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/pgm/pdrp)).

### **Issue #1: Effective and clear communication to all affected groups**

It is extremely important that the entire community is kept informed about the status of recovery and redevelopment after a disaster. This includes residents and businesses that stayed in Hillsborough County and those who have temporarily relocated. Every effort should be made to inform special populations, such as persons with disabilities or those who speak languages other than English.

#### *Strategy*

The recommended strategy to ensure that the County is communicating clearly with all residents is to periodically survey the community using various forms of communication during redevelopment. These assessments would provide essential feedback to determine if the County's outreach messages are reaching targeted audiences. The County could identify gaps in service and determine if messages or procedures require modification to meet the needs of affected residents. An instrument could be developed shortly after a disaster and be in place for use throughout redevelopment with periodic adjustments and revisions. The instrument should target those post-disaster service/redevelopment areas identified as highly vulnerable and include displaced populations.

It is also recommended that the County ensure essential materials and communications are provided in alternative formats for persons with disabilities or special needs at multiple distribution centers upon request. The County should also provide translations for residents with limited English proficiency. This action would help ensure that all residents of Hillsborough County would have the opportunity to remain informed of recovery and redevelopment activities and to participate in or apply for the programs and services offered. Providing clear and effective communication should facilitate greater efficiencies in transacting redevelopment activities while also meeting any federal or state mandated laws and promoting inclusion by all sectors of the community. The County can identify potential technology, businesses, or organizations that can assist in translating or providing alternative formats of communication. These organizations should be identified and contractual arrangements put in place before a disaster.

### **Issue #2: Pre-established outreach methods, traditional and nontraditional**

Developing outreach methods before a disaster allows for timely communication with the public, which can reassure the community and ease tensions. Pre-establishing outreach methods could also free up time and more quickly secure funding during recovery. These methods should include a range of complexity, from basic to high-technology based, to ensure that messages are communicated in the most effective manner based on the circumstances.

### *Current Methods*

The following is a list of current public outreach methods that are readily available in Hillsborough County for use during long-term redevelopment:

- All local media e-mail lists, phone numbers and physical addresses, including Spanish language media;
- MediaAlert;
- Tampa and Hillsborough County neighborhood associations' physical addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses (opt-in system);
- Chambers of commerce and civic associations' physical addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses;
- Online and email-based information request, public comment and complaint submittal forms;
- Advertising in local papers;
- Billboards;
- Bus-side advertising;
- Door hangers;
- Bus bench and shelter advertising;
- Posters at various locations for permanent messages;
- Government newsletters;
- Community e-newsletters;
- Websites (dedicated emergency information pages);
- Social media methods such as Twitter;
- Videos on websites;
- Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds;
- Public service announcements on local television and radio stations, including Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) and public access stations;
- Bumper stickers;
- Links to government websites from other community websites;
- E-News citizen opt-in e-mail list;
- Hillsborough County Info Line (813-272-5900 and 813-272-6900) and other government customer call centers;
- County Spanish-language official translator;
- Access to a County employee language pool of staff who speak more than 20 languages, including sign language;
- Public meetings;
- Live broadcast of public meetings on web with ability for people to call in questions;
- Signs along roads;
- Flier distribution system by County employees and/or volunteers;
- Disaster Recovery Centers as central information points;
- Flier distribution at other gathering points such as Points of Distribution (PODs), churches, active businesses, chambers, police and fire stations, post offices, housing facilities, social service locations, etc.;
- Distribution of fliers to children in schools for parents;
- Emergency Alert System (EAS) activated by the EOC;
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radios;
- Ham radio system Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES);
- Florida Association of Broadcasters' resources to out-of-state and in-state media sources;

- Telephone out-dial systems (EOC, Sheriff, County Water Resource Services, Tampa Police Department, TECO, School District);
- Government-owned television stations;
- Law enforcement/fire mobile public address systems or door-to-door contact;
- Variable message boards alongside roads or information signs on highways, expressways, etc.;
- Tampa Bay & Company communication system with local hotels and motels (to contact visitors in emergency or people living in hotels);
- Red Cross disaster welfare inquiry system for concerns about area citizens
- FEMA toll-free teleregistration number for assistance;
- General information numbers (211, 411, and 511); and
- Coordination with ESF 15 (volunteers and donations), Hillsborough Emergency Long-term Recovery (HELP), and Community Organizations Active in Disasters (COAD) and their contacts.

### *Strategy*

The above communications methods are currently available in Hillsborough County. However, the effectiveness of each method is yet to be determined. The County can conduct a survey of its existing methods to make sure that they are successful at reaching target audiences in a timely manner. The survey results can be used to determine any necessary improvements.

There are constant advancements in communication technology that the County can incorporate into its Communication Plan as ways to reach residents in a post-disaster environment. The following is a list of public outreach methods that the County is not currently using but could consider implementing to better communicate with the public during long-term redevelopment:

- Magnetic signs on sides of government vehicles, debris removal trucks, utility trucks and other vehicles;
- Signage on other government-owned assets such as sides of buildings, on property along busy roads, etc.;
- Toll-free 1-800 numbers for out-of-area residents (pre-recorded messages);
- Video on Demand on cable channels (in locally and other areas);
- Unused cable channels in other areas where residents are temporarily living;
- Use of Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and Citizen Corps volunteers;
- Holding public meetings in other areas where residents are temporarily living;
- Podcasts and other forms of social media, such as blogs, live chat with government officials, FaceBook pages, etc.; and
- XM Satellite Radio messages.

### **Issue #3: Establishment or co-location of well-distributed information centers**

Strategically located information centers can ensure that the entire population is kept up-to-date on redevelopment decisions and receives information needed for smart rebuilding.

## *Current Policy and Procedures*

### Disaster Recovery Centers

In the aftermath of a disaster, the state may establish one or more Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) that will provide information on available disaster assistance. Under a Presidential Disaster Declaration, federal agencies with disaster assistance programs, coordinated by FEMA, will be a part of DRC operations. DRCs will serve as a referral and information office for state and federal disaster assistance programs that are available.

A Disaster Recovery Center is a facility established in, or close to, the community affected by the disaster where persons can meet face-to-face with represented federal, state, local, and volunteer agencies to:

- Discuss their disaster-related needs;
- Obtain information about disaster assistance programs;
- Tele-register for assistance;
- Update registration information;
- Learn about measures for rebuilding that can eliminate or reduce the risk of future loss;
- Learn how to complete the Small Business Administration (SBA) loan application; and
- Request the status of application for assistance to individuals and households.

Disaster Recovery Centers will be staffed with representatives from appropriate federal, state, and local agencies, private relief organizations, and other organizations capable of providing disaster-related assistance to individuals. The assignment of county representatives in the center will be coordinated between the EOC Director and the Assistant County Administrator for Human Services. If required, appropriate county human services representatives will be directed to staff the DRCs.

As the numbers of disaster victims seeking assistance decline, FEMA and state representatives will coordinate with the EOC regarding DRC closure. Notice of closure will be provided in press releases from FEMA/state/county (Hillsborough County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, 2006).

### Hillsborough County Land Development Code

The County developed the following regulations for Disaster Relief Structures for Non-Residential Uses (Sec. 6.11.116):

- Following a Disaster Declaration as defined in this Code, temporary structures may be utilized, subject to Hillsborough County building permit requirements, to assist recovery on any parcel that was lawfully developed for non-residential use and suffered structural damage to existing structures which precludes or limits their use. Building permits for the temporary structures may be expedited at the discretion of the Hillsborough County Building Official.
- The temporary structures may be utilized for a maximum of one year from the date of the Disaster Declaration or issuance of Certificates of Occupancy for permanent structures on the parcel, whichever occurs first.

- The temporary structures shall meet required setbacks of the parcel's zoning unless such placement precludes construction/repair of the permanent structures on the parcel, in which case reduced setbacks may be approved by the Building Official. In such cases, the temporary structures shall be placed in a manner to minimize impacts on neighboring residential uses and preserve on-site parking spaces to the greatest extent possible.
- The temporary structures shall not be subject to architectural design requirements of any Community Plan, overlay district and/or the parcel's zoning.
- The total floor space of the temporary structures and any permanent structures on the parcel which remain in use during the recovery period shall not exceed the floor space which was lawfully developed on the parcel prior to the Disaster Declaration.
- The temporary structures shall be removed within 30 days of the issuance of Certificates of Occupancy for permanent structures on the parcel, or no more than one year from the date of the Disaster Declaration, whichever occurs first. Temporary structure permits may be renewed for an additional year, subject to approval of the Board of County Commissioners. Extension requests shall be made through a personal appearance before the Board by the property owner.

### *Strategy*

The amount of time that DRCs remain open is not specifically detailed in the CEMP but in most cases the DRCs do not remain open throughout long-term redevelopment. The Public Outreach TAC has determined that there is a need for central points of information/assistance in affected communities for the entire post-disaster period in the form of long-term DRCs. These centers can either be extensions of the DRCs that were established during recovery or new locations, preferably government office locations so that they are easily recognizable to residents. In the instance of a major disaster, standard government offices may not be re-opened for an extended period and so residents may lose an easily identifiable and easily-reachable location to receive information, attend meetings, and ask questions post-disaster. **Section 5** of this plan addresses strategies to expand services at DRCs to include a variety of services to meet the needs of residents. Ideally, long-term DRCs would be located in facilities large enough to host public meetings and hold offices for various government agencies to meet with residents and disseminate information. Ideal locations for DRCs would include Priority Redevelopment Areas (PRAs) which are discussed in **Section 7**.

### **Issue #4: Clear and effective cross-communication among governments (local, state, federal)**

Clear cross-communication between governments at all levels will help to eliminate repetition of roles and responsibilities, gaps in services, and confusion throughout the community. Government agencies need to create a successful communication system in order for them to work together in an efficient and effective manner over the whole timeframe of recovery, and not just the short-term recovery period in which ESF 14 coordinates efforts.

## *Current Policy and Procedures*

### Joint Information Center (JIC)

During a major disaster, one or more Joint Information Centers (JIC) will be established by public affairs representatives from the state and federal government. County ESF 14 will coordinate with state/federal JIC personnel to ensure uniformity of information released to the public. County public information officers will function at JICs to ensure proper coordination with ESF 14 in the County EOC.

The JIC will be responsible for public awareness and information on statewide and national levels. Tasks will include the following:

- Disseminate information concerning the disaster through the Governor's Director of Communications or the appointed State Public Information Officer.
- Utilize resources available from the Florida Association of Broadcasters to assist in disseminating information to in-state and out-of-state media sources through the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) or the Governor's Press Secretary.
- Coordinate with the County EOC to establish what is and is not needed from entities wanting to volunteer goods and services.
- Identify where the general public can get information about what to donate and where to go by establishing toll-free 1-800 numbers.
- Provide a congressional liaison function to relay information between congressional officers in Washington and federal officials in the field (Hillsborough County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, 2006).

### *Strategy*

The Public Outreach TAC recommends that the County amend the CEMP to specify that JICs serving as central points of coordination and dissemination of public information be extended and maintained throughout the duration of redevelopment and not merely during recovery. This will maintain a consistent location for coordination among the local, state, and federal governments. Long-term, JICs will reduce confusion and improve the efficiency and clarity of public information and the public's perception of professionalism of all governments during the post-disaster period.

During the recovery period, the County should develop a long-term communication strategy and schedule for regular communication among main government communications representatives to discuss and coordinate on-going issues, campaigns, and messages throughout the redevelopment process. The communication strategy can identify means for all major government communications representatives to communicate regularly through such methods as a group e-mail list, joint telephone list, regularly-scheduled meetings, or other means.

### **Issue #5: Opportunity for public participation in redevelopment decisions**

While community involvement may not be feasible in the immediate recovery stage of a disaster due to mobility, displacement, and basic needs constraints, public participation

in long-term recovery decisions is imperative to keep community ties strong and avoid a disenfranchised citizenry in the future.

### *Strategy*

For the public to fully participate in redevelopment decisions post-disaster it needs to be kept informed throughout the process. This will be easier for some residents than others as there is a strong possibility that after a major disaster a portion of the population will be displaced outside of the region. To keep permanent, seasonal, and displaced residents up-to-date on redevelopment decisions and activities, the County can incorporate some of the communication methods listed under Issue #2 into a plan that specifically addresses the challenges of communicating with residents who are living outside of the region. Some methods for this plan could include:

- Video recording post-disaster public meetings held throughout Hillsborough County and making them available on the internet for those who are unable to attend;
- public meetings held outside the region;
- a website targeting nonlocal, displaced residents;
- an information line for nonlocal, displaced residents;
- a public information campaign including a slogan;
- social media efforts by government and involved organizations;
- newspapers (local and nonlocal) and e-mail blasts (from existing lists compiled from county agencies, e-mails collected through sign-in sheets, and citizen requests); and
- television and radio (local and nonlocal).

The plan for communicating with displaced residents should also include a broad range of opportunities for the public to give feedback on recovery decisions and activities. These opportunities for public participation can include:

- surveys and comment opportunities at public meetings;
- surveys and comment opportunities at open-houses;
- on-line surveys and comment forms;
- feedback hotlines; and
- surveys and comment opportunities at Disaster Recovery Centers.

### **Issue #6: Public understanding of redevelopment policies before a disaster**

While the government understands the importance of a complete and honest exchange with the public during important decisions that affect the community, the redevelopment phase is not the best time for lengthy public protest of redevelopment policies. It is ideal, therefore, if the public is aware of all redevelopment policies before a disaster and that they have a chance to voice any opposition in advance so that delays of the recovery process can be avoided, as much as possible.

### *Strategy*

As the PDRP is implemented, new policies will be put into place that will become effective both pre- and post-disaster. It is in the best interest of the County to identify the policies that will most significantly affect County residents and create and launch a public

awareness campaign of these changes and their effect on residents. This should take place as far in advance as possible before a disaster and especially target residents in the high-risk flood zones and coastal high-hazard areas. The public awareness campaign can include producing and disseminating informational publications; websites; public meetings; media outreach and articles.

## **Issue #7: Transparency in redevelopment decisions and activities**

The public will be more likely to accept redevelopment decisions if the decision-making and funding disbursement processes are transparent. Transparency also cultivates an atmosphere of trust between the public and government officials, which contributes to a quicker, smoother, and more efficient recovery process. During post-disaster recovery periods, it may take a greater effort for local government actions to be transparent since typical methods of communication may have changed, residents may not be in the area or could be distracted by many other post-disaster concerns, and some decisions will need to be made quickly to not delay redevelopment progress.

### *Current Policy and Procedures*

#### Florida Sunshine Law

According to the Attorney General of the State of Florida, Florida's Sunshine law provides a right to access governmental proceedings at both the state and local levels. This law applies to any gathering of two or more members of the same board to discuss some matter that will foreseeably come before that board for action. There is also a constitutionally guaranteed right of access. Virtually all state and local collegial public bodies are covered by the open meetings requirements with the exception of the judiciary and the state Legislature, which has its own constitutional provision relating to access (Attorney General State of Florida, 2009).

- **The Florida Public Records Law** (Florida Statute section 119) governs the inspection and copying of public records. It is the policy of this state that all state, county, and municipal records are open for personal inspection and copying by any person. Providing access to public records is a duty of each agency. An exemption of Section 119.071(1) states that specified records or meetings, or portion thereof, are not subject to the access requirements. These specified records include certain information that is relevant to post-disaster redevelopment planning such as details that relate to the physical security of facilities used by the jurisdictions and to the security systems of these facilities.
- **The Florida Open Meetings Law** (Florida Statute section 286) governs the extent to which public meetings are open to the public. All meetings of any governmental body where official acts will be taken are public meetings and always open to the public, and no resolution, rule, or formal action shall be considered binding except as taken or made at such meeting. The body must provide reasonable notice of all meetings.

### *Strategy*

To comply with the Sunshine Law, the County can determine which documents should be made available to the public at which locations including websites, public meetings, Disaster Recovery Centers, and in local gathering places. During a timeframe when

travel by residents is restricted, efforts should be made to ensure that materials of concern are made available for review in several locations so residents do not have to travel long distances. Responsibility will reside with the County Communications Department and County Attorney to identify which documents need to be made available to the public and to address public records requests.

The County can also publicize meetings through a range of methods such as roadside signs, fliers in public gathering locations, notices on websites, advertising in available locations, press releases, etc. Efforts should be made to ensure that public meeting locations are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act and can accommodate all residents that request special assistance to participate.

As a way to ensure transparency during redevelopment, the County can set goals and recovery milestones after the immediate response is completed and disaster assessments have been reviewed. The County then can develop a system of reporting to the public on the progress of recovery operations and the status of meeting those goals. The Public Outreach TAC and the Communications Department can lead this initiative and be responsible for ensuring that regular progress reports on meeting the goals are released to the public. The County Communications Department can also partner with local media (for example The Tampa Tribune) to provide details to the public on how recovery funding is being used. The County and media can launch an interactive website linked to press releases or news reports on particular funding expenditures.

Quantitative and qualitative indicators should be pre-determined so that a “dashboard” of recovery can be tracked throughout a multi-year process. This will also be a good way to catch lessons learned to make future changes to the PDRP. Indicators could include:

1. financial expenditure;
2. performance and schedule variance from set goals or estimated timeline (that is determined after level of damage is known);
3. contracting statistics – amount of local businesses, small or minority businesses;
4. public participation levels – interaction and transparency statistics;
5. employment resumption metrics;
6. organization and coordination effectiveness;
7. standard of living measurements to judge quality of recovery; and
8. number of actions/projects started and accomplished – some estimate of population benefited may be possible from this.

### **Issue #8: Defense and promotion of area's viability/ability to re-build**

Population return is imperative for a community and an economy to recover from a disaster. After a disaster, the County needs to promote a clear and positive message about the area's viability and ability to rebuild to encourage residents and businesses to return to their neighborhoods at the appropriate time and to feel safe in their communities.

#### *Strategy*

An important part of redevelopment is ensuring that internal and external audiences are aware of the improvements and milestones being reached in the community. This will ensure that audiences outside the area including potential tourists, businesses, the

media, and displaced residents are aware of improvements and may consider returning to the area. Celebrating the steps of returning to normalcy within the Hillsborough Community can be a way to restore community pride and help residents understand what services are newly available.

Hillsborough County is highly dependent on tourism and businesses whose headquarters are based in other areas. The Public Outreach TAC, in coordination with the Economic Redevelopment TAC, recommends that the County launch a swift and coordinated publicity campaign highlighting the area's successes in redevelopment as soon as it can again accommodate tourists and normal business activity after a disaster. As reconstruction gets underway, efforts should target restoring tourism levels and re-attracting businesses. A joint committee of public relations representatives from various organizations along with economic redevelopment and tourism industry experts should be formed to cultivate partnerships, acquire funding, and develop a publicity campaign. Public and private tourism groups and chambers of commerce should play a role along with major businesses, community organizations, and local public relations agencies in this joint publicity effort. The group should also actively monitor messages in internal and external media post-disaster to correct or improve negative images being publicized about the local redevelopment efforts. Research should also be conducted on successful campaigns in other areas that have recovered from disasters. The issue of tourism renewal is discussed in greater detail in Issue #4 of **Section 6** of this plan.