



SARASOTA COUNTY POST-DISASTER REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

2021 UPDATE

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Background and Purpose of the Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan

The Sarasota County Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan (PDRP) was initially adopted by the Sarasota County Commission in July 2015. The 2021 update seeks to streamline and simplify the document by taking advantage of other planning and preparedness documents and processes. The PDRP establishes a framework to guide long-term recovery and redevelopment after a large-scale disaster. By building upon existing planning and emergency management tools and strategically focusing on local development codes and comprehensive plan elements, the PDRP will affect the timely and efficient redevelopment of a more sustainable and resilient community.

Stakeholders

PDRP stakeholders include Sarasota County Government, residents, businesses, institutions, and municipal partners (City of Venice, City of Sarasota, City of North Port, Town of Longboat Key). Their involvement in developing the annual Action Plan, described below, is the regular opportunity to shape the implementation of the PDRP across jurisdictional boundaries and throughout the Sarasota County community.

Related to bringing stakeholders together for disaster response, recovery, and redevelopment, the Sarasota Long-Term Recovery Committee (LTRC) was formed under the Sarasota Communities Active in Disaster (COAD). Key LTRC organizations include the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, the United Way, other local faith-based organizations, private sector organizations, county human service agencies, and Sarasota County Emergency Management. The purpose of the LTRC is to coordinate the efforts among community human service and housing agencies in addressing the unmet needs of families and individuals. The LTRC is activated at the beginning of the recovery process to assist the community in transition to long-term recovery. The LTRC and its parent, COAD will also be engaged during the annual Action Plan process.

Risks and Vulnerability

The hazards of most significant risk to Sarasota County as identified in the National Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) are hurricane, drought, flood, terrorist attack, tornado, wildfire, severe thunderstorms. The Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP), the Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS), the THIRA, and the risks and vulnerabilities of Sarasota County described therein are the basis for the PDRP, its content, and recommended actions. Other types of disasters may necessitate different approaches to post-disaster redevelopment and are also appropriate to consider in the annual action planning process. The documents that pertain to the County's vulnerability from threats and hazards are described in Appendix A. Other planning documents related to the purpose of the PDRP are described in Appendix B. Many of these documents also include information about likely hazards to affect Sarasota County. Therefore, they may be used to understand the risks to and vulnerable aspects of the area.

Goals

The Sarasota County PDRP aims to enable a more rapid, resilient, and sustainable countywide recovery and redevelopment after a disaster. The redevelopment process should encourage public participation and maximize the efficient and smart use of public funds. More detail for long-term goals is provided

relative to the Focus Areas below. In addition, short-term recovery goals following a disaster event are outlined within the Recovery Annex of the CEMP.

Housing Repair and Reconstruction

Sarasota County will assist residents in rebuilding their homes to be more resilient to future disasters while providing displaced residents with safe, temporary accommodations until they can return to a permanent dwelling.

Planning

Sarasota County will guide future development and long-term post-disaster redevelopment to ensure that the County is more resilient and sustainable and that the land is being utilized intelligently and beneficially.

Infrastructure Restoration and Mitigation, Public Facilities, and Public Safety

Sarasota County will strive to efficiently restore utilities and repair infrastructure while considering mitigation during the long-term redevelopment of infrastructure to avoid future damage. In addition, the County will maintain a constant level of public safety before and after a disaster and throughout the redevelopment process.

Environmental Preservation and Restoration

Sarasota County will employ strategies and policies to increase the resilience of environmental systems, restoration of ecosystem services and native habitats (i.e., wetlands, beaches, forests, etc.), conservation lands or open space damaged during a disaster, restoration of public access to these assets, and maintenance of residents' high quality of life.

Governance and Financial Management

Sarasota County will seek opportunities to ensure that financing pre-disaster mitigation and post-disaster implementation supports the County's long-term resiliency. This includes identifying potential county service and revenue disruptions and discussing their implications for post-disaster redevelopment will help guide pre- and post-disaster actions concerning financial administration.

Business Resumption and Economic Redevelopment

Sarasota County will support the local business community to restore industries, businesses, and tourism that provide a high quality of life for residents and develop new sustainable economic opportunities to adjust to changing circumstances after a disaster.

Resilience, Sustainability, and Synergy

Sarasota County will seek opportunities to increase resilience to disasters and sea-level rise and enhance the community's sustainability. Sarasota County will identify opportunities to collaborate with other jurisdictions and regional resiliency coalitions, using existing processes and procedures to implement post-disaster redevelopment.

PDRP Implementation

Implementation of the PDRP will be based on a disaster of sufficient scale to necessitate long-term disaster recovery and redevelopment. While there is uncertainty in the magnitude and scope of disaster(s) that may result in PDRP implementation, there is a clear connection to many other preparedness, recovery, and redevelopment plans and actions as described earlier and as illustrated below in **Figure 1**.

The County’s recent experiences in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic serves as the basis for the implementation structure of the PDRP. Refer to Appendix C for details. Based on the existing systems and guidance provided at the state level, implementation will be flexible and scaled to the disaster as it occurs. Future updates of the PDRP will be considered on an as-needed basis rather than on a set schedule. The updated approach to the PDRP implementation is intended to be flexible and adaptable through time and to utilize existing emergency response and recovery mechanisms, such as the authority associated with disaster declarations.

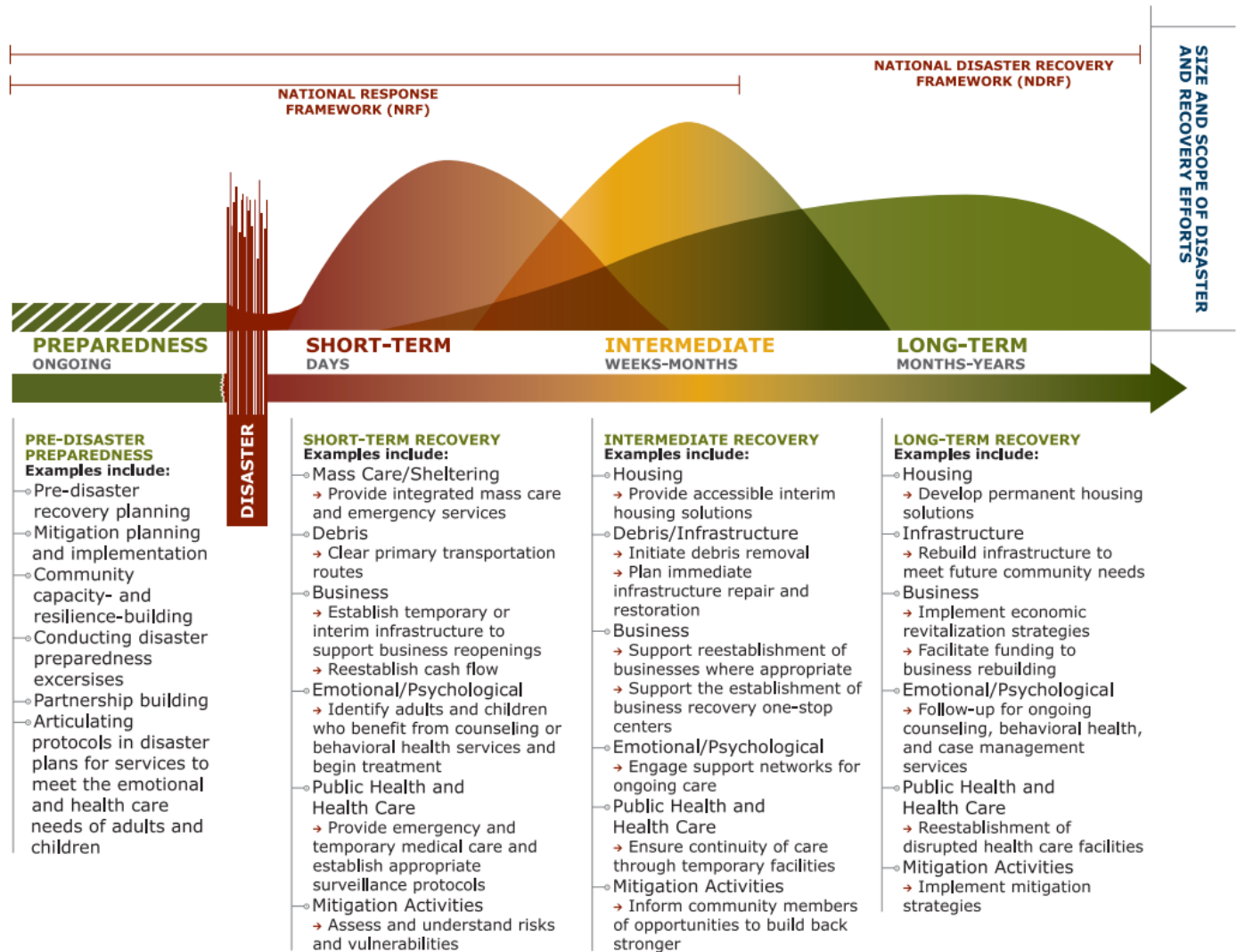


Figure 1. The National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF) "Recovery Continuum" diagram (2011 NDRF, Page 8)

Action Plan Implementation and Annual Review

The Action Plan is vital to the PDRP. Without meaningful advancement and implementation of the Action Plan, the PDRP has limited purpose and value. The approach to the Action Plan is to create an annual prioritized list of actions that will be advanced or completed within the upcoming planning period. For increased effectiveness, this corresponds to the County's strategic planning efforts.

Action Plan items support the PDRP goals, are unique to the purpose of the PDRP (compared to the purposes of shorter-term recovery plan goals) and are supported by and/or are synergistic with other initiatives.

The Action Plan will be evaluated each year, likely during the annual Emergency Management exercise, and priority action(s) will be selected for advancement. As appropriate, PDRP-related action items may be incorporated into the County's Strategic Plan and policy level items will be brought forward for consideration by the Board.

Annual Review and Action Implementation

Annually, the County will identify the priority actions related to the PDRP. This process builds on the existing process and functional teams. Policy decisions will be elevated to the Board as needed. However, much of the PDRP implementation and associated actions will be accomplished administratively. An annual report will be provided to the County Administrator on the status of the past year's actions in advance of their strategic planning retreat.

As organized around each of the PDRP Goals, the Focus Areas below serve as a starting point for developing specific actions. Several Focus Areas may be represented each year in the selected Action Items. Implementation will be accomplished by the logical, responsible entity.

Housing Repair and Reconstruction

- FOCUS AREA#1: Temporary Housing
- FOCUS AREA#2: Rapid Repair Permitting
- FOCUS AREA#3: Contractor Licensing
- FOCUS AREA#4: Funding Assistance & Under-Insured Problems
- FOCUS AREA#5: Hazard Mitigation During Redevelopment
- FOCUS AREA#6: Historic Structures Restoration
- FOCUS AREA#7: Abandoned Homes

Planning

- FOCUS AREA#1: Non-Conforming Structures, Substantial Damage Regulations
- FOCUS AREA#2: Redevelopment Areas
- FOCUS AREA#3: Alternative Future Use Considerations for High Hazard Areas
- FOCUS AREA#4: Affordable and Workforce Housing Redevelopment Opportunities
- FOCUS AREA#5: Property Acquisition to Reduce Vulnerability
- FOCUS AREA#6: Neighborhood Preservation and Redevelopment

Infrastructure Restoration and Mitigation, Public Facilities, and Public Safety

- FOCUS AREA #1: Transportation Repair/Mitigation/Improvement

FOCUS AREA #2: Potable Water, Sewer, Stormwater Systems Repair/Mitigation/Improvement
FOCUS AREA #3: Coordination with Power, Natural Gas, and Telcom Company Restoration
FOCUS AREA #4: Debris Management
FOCUS AREA #5: Public Focus Facility Structure Repair/Mitigation
FOCUS AREA #6: Public Transit Restoration, Adaptation to New Needs
FOCUS AREA #7: Public Safety Service Levels Reestablished Throughout County
FOCUS AREA #8: Location of Public Safety Facilities
FOCUS AREA #9: Special Needs Long-Term Assistance

Business Resumption and Economic Redevelopment

FOCUS AREA #1: Business Resumption and Retention
FOCUS AREA #2: Identification of Most Vulnerable Industries and Priority Industries/Employers for Recovery
FOCUS AREA #3: Workforce Retention
FOCUS AREA #4: Assistance to Hospitals & Healthcare Providers for Rapid Reopening
FOCUS AREA #5: Opportunities to Sustainably Restore Economic Vitality
FOCUS AREA #6: Tourism Renewal/Image Marketing

Environmental Preservation and Restoration

FOCUS AREA #1: Erosion of Beaches and Dunes
FOCUS AREA #2: Wetland Restoration
FOCUS AREA #3: Restoration of Urban Forests
FOCUS AREA #4: Habitat Restoration on Conservation Lands
FOCUS AREA #5: Restoration of Recreational and Cultural Activities
FOCUS AREA #6: Soil and Water Pollution
FOCUS AREA #7: Environmental Impact of Temporary Disaster Recovery Sites
FOCUS AREA #8: Debris Recycling
FOCUS AREA #9: Health-Related Pollution

Governance and Financial Management

FOCUS AREA #1: Coordination Capacity
FOCUS AREA #2: Public Outreach and Communication
FOCUS AREA #3: Transparency in Recovery Decisions
FOCUS AREA #4: Financial Planning

Resilience, Sustainability, and Synergy

FOCUS AREA #1: Vulnerability Assessment of Critical Assets
FOCUS AREA #2: Resiliency and Adaptation Planning
FOCUS AREA #3: Sustainable Buildings
FOCUS AREA #4: Health and Equity
FOCUS AREA #5: Regional and Municipal Coordination

APPENDIX A – RISKS AND VULNERABILITY STUDIES

[Sarasota County Sea-Level Rise Working Group Report \(2021\)](#)

Sarasota County is a coastal community reliant upon healthy ecosystems to support significant economic benefits and quality of life. The County's low coastal topography, high water table, and outlying islands make it particularly susceptible to flooding, storm surge from hurricanes, and sea-level rise (SLR). Addressing and planning for these vulnerabilities is vital to maintain the resiliency of our coastal systems, County and community infrastructure, and the economic benefits of tourism.

Recognizing that sea-level rise will affect public assets of infrastructure and facilities, a Sea Level Rise Working Group was established by County Administration. This working group was tasked to conduct a vulnerability assessment of public facilities and infrastructure using a Geographic Information System (GIS) tool and to develop recommendations to be reviewed by County leadership. This analysis provides a foundation for further evaluation to inform future policy decisions.

[Taylor Engineering Baseline Coastal Analysis \(2021\)](#)

Sarasota County received a Florida Resilient Coastlines Program Planning Grant from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. As a result, Taylor Engineering, Incorporated, was engaged to complete a baseline coastal analysis and vulnerability assessment for the County's coastal barrier islands. The analysis supports and advances the Sea-Level Rise Working Group Report noted above and will serve as a foundation for further examination and inform policy decisions regarding development and post-disaster redevelopment.

APPENDIX B – Summary of Related Documents

There are several other emergency management and preparedness documents and planning tools that complement the PDRP. Below is a summary of the function of each, their relationship to the PDRP, and related resources.

Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS)

The 2021 Sarasota County Unified Local Mitigation Strategy plan was developed as a multi-jurisdictional, multi-hazard strategy to involve the public, assess the hazards, determine the vulnerability, identify risks, set goals, and identify mitigation activities, and plan for natural and manmade hazards to Sarasota County and the jurisdictions therein. Specifically, the 2021 Sarasota County Unified Local Mitigation Strategy includes Sarasota County, its unincorporated areas, four incorporated municipalities, Sarasota County Sheriff's Office, the Sarasota County School Board, Sarasota Memorial Hospital, and the Sarasota County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Local hazard mitigation planning is the process of organizing community resources, identifying and assessing hazard risks, and determining how to best minimize or manage those risks. This process culminates in a hazard mitigation plan that identifies specific actions designed to achieve short-term planning objectives and a long-term community vision.

The development and implementation of the Sarasota County Unified Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) provide a mechanism for the County, its jurisdictions, and partners to address issues by implementing projects that will reduce or eliminate exposure to and the impacts of hazards. The last update of the LMS, conducted in 2016, resulted from a coordinated, cooperative effort of local government and partners who make up the Sarasota County Local Mitigation Strategy Working Group. The LMS was established and operates per prevailing federal, state, and local guidelines and requirements.

Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP)

The Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) is an operation-orientated document authorized by Chapter 252, Florida Statutes. The CEMP establishes the framework to ensure that Sarasota County and its Municipalities will be adequately prepared to deal with all hazards threatening the lives and property of Sarasota County citizens. The CEMP outlines the roles, responsibilities, and coordination mechanisms of local County and municipal governments, state and federal agencies, and volunteer organizations in a disaster. The CEMP also coordinates response and recovery activities with voluntary organizations active in disasters and the business community. The plan unifies the efforts of these groups under the Emergency Support Function (ESF) format with a designated lead agency for a comprehensive approach to mitigation, planning, response, and recovery from identified hazards. The Sarasota County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan is broken into five (5) essential elements; The Basic Plan, Annex I – Recovery Functions, Annex II – Mitigation, Annex III – Emergency Support Functions (ESF's), and Annex IV – Flood Warning and Response Plan. This plan is considered a "living document" in that it is subject to continuous review and revision based on an ever-changing environment. Therefore, CEMP participants are encouraged to question the effectiveness of their sections as they strive to provide the most efficient, effective response and recovery procedures possible with the available resources at their command. The CEMP is both a planning and an operations-based document that provides guidance for all aspects of emergency management, including disaster

preparedness; evacuation and sheltering; warning and notification; public education and information; resource management; mutual aid; Special Needs Program; impact and damage assessment; debris management; training and exercises; and post-disaster recovery programs.

Floodplain Management Plan (FMP)

Among all natural hazards, floods are the costliest and most pervasive hazard in the United States. Property losses from flooding events in the United States have steadily increased since the mid-1900s and have now reached billions of dollars per year.

The U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) estimates that property in a special flood hazard area has a 26% chance of suffering flood damage during the term of a 30-year mortgage. The National Weather Service Annual Flood Loss Summary Reports to the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (see: <https://www.weather.gov/water/>) indicates that direct flood damage to property in Florida between 2015 and 2020, averaged over \$118 Million per year.

To plan for these types of flooding events, Sarasota County developed a Floodplain Management Plan (FMP). An FMP is a plan designed with the following objectives:

- 1) To organize community resources to reduce or eliminate flood risks to people and property.
- 2) Implementing strategies prior to a hazardous flooding event to help reduce the impacts of a disaster, which can result in substantial savings in life and property following the event.
 - Give guidance in developing pre- and post-mitigation plans.
 - Identifying priority projects and programs for funding.
 - Increase the likelihood of State and Federal funding for pre- and post-hazard mitigation projects.
 - The FMP serves as an appendix to Sarasota County's Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS). The geographic and jurisdictional scope of the Sarasota FMP includes all unincorporated areas of Sarasota County. The FMP offers a structure in line with the Floodplain Management Planning activity of the Community Rating System (CRS). The CRS is a voluntary incentive program designed to encourage communities to exceed the minimum National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) requirements.

The FMP is an annex to the LMS. It was adopted by the County in 2019 but is currently undergoing another update to align with the update cycle of the LMS.

Comprehensive Plan

Each local government in the state is required by Florida Statutes to enact a Comprehensive Plan. Florida Statutes also mandate the contents of the Plan, including a Coastal Element.

The Sarasota County Comprehensive Plan is a blueprint, adopted by the Board of County Commissioners, to guide development of land, economic growth, resource protection, and the provision of public services and facilities in Sarasota County. The Comprehensive Plan is a resource for managing the short- and long-range growth of Sarasota County. It is designed to be a working document used by county officials, staff, and residents as a policy guide to direct community development decisions, to assist with community infrastructure budgeting, and as a tool to guide private housing, business, and industrial investment in the County.

Within the context of post-disaster redevelopment, the Comprehensive Plan is a powerful document for guiding decision-making after a significant, large-scale event that may impact the County, especially the most vulnerable areas such as the barrier islands and the Coastal High Hazard Area.

[Statewide Regional Evacuation Study for the Southwest Florida Region](#)

In coordination with the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council, the Florida Division of Emergency Management, the Department of Community Affairs Division of Community Planning, and the Department of Transportation developed the Statewide Regional Evacuation Study for the Southwest Florida Region. This report updates the region's evacuation population estimates, evacuation clearance times and public shelter demand. The study covers Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry Lee and Sarasota Counties and their municipalities. This document is currently undergoing an update (Fall 2021).

[Sarasota County Strategic Plan](#)

Sarasota County reaffirms its strategic plan annually. The Board of County Commissioner's approved strategic plan includes 15-year vision and mission statements and an annual action plan. The purpose of the process enhances the effectiveness of the County Commission (Board) by providing a unifying vision, goals, and an annual work program. Each year, Board goes through a strategic planning exercise, at which time action items are set for the upcoming planning period, December 1 to November 30 annually. This process creates an opportunity for the Board to select one or more action items that support the implementation of the PDRP. When an item is added to the County's strategic plan, this ensures that staffing and resources are allocated to see it to completion. Further, to do so, regular reporting on the status of the project is required.

Appendix C – Sarasota County COVID-19 Response

On March 9, 2020, Governor Ron DeSantis issued Executive Order 20-52, declaring a State of Emergency for COVID-19. By declaring a State of Emergency, Governor DeSantis helped to ensure that state and local governments could acquire the resources and have the flexibility they needed to prepare and respond. On March 16, 2020, Sarasota County declared a State of Emergency for the novel Coronavirus, and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) went to Level 2 (partial activation). Due to the contagious factors of the virus, the EOC was activated using initial entry screening, multiple rooms, social distancing, and virtual meetings.

From March 2020 until May 2021, the EOC was in a continuous state of level 2 activation (partial) with daily virtual Command meetings, weekly coordination calls with the Florida Division of Emergency Management and municipal, constitutional officers, and response partners. Effective May 27th, 2021 the Local State of Emergency was lifted and the EOC went back to a level 3 monitoring state for COVID-19.

The first major strength identified was the working relationship and cooperation between all parties involved using existing governance and reporting structures. All members of the team were prepared to perform their role in the preparation and response. This event also provided an opportunity to use technology that enabled the team to maintain situational awareness while maintaining separation and social distancing. Working with the Advanced Planning Team provided a process to approve changes in workflow, staff/citizen interface and provided protocol to reduce risks at County facilities as soon as possible.

Overall, the response to this event was deemed very successful by all responders. The level of participation by various local agencies also strengthened existing relationships and established new partnerships within the County. The close coordination with the Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County Leadership Team provided us with a force multiplier to use in the alert and warning and the response and recovery phases if flooding would have occurred.

The shift towards recovery began with the disbursement of CARES Act Funding and was followed by the Emergency Rental Assistance Program. These resources provided significant community relief and economic support. Our Business and Industry Partners have worked closely to monitor conditions and promote economic stability within the community.