

Gulf of Mexico Alliance Resilience Priority Issue Team
Mississippi Engagement Workshop
May 6, 2008 – Biloxi, MS

FLIP CHART NOTES

Action #1

Resiliency Index

- Suggested additions for the index:
 - Add criteria to capture:
 - that building codes are enforced (not just adopting codes)
 - that building inspectors are certified
 - that there is an adequate number of staff to enforce building codes (e.g. not just one person assigned to the office that handles building codes for a large community)
 - Training opportunities for planners and inspectors
 - Determine the minimum level of training that is needed
 - Identify if continuing education credits are being accrued by planners and inspectors
 - Education, code enhancement, and code enforcement on a local level
 - Has the planning commission had formal training in planning?
 - How do we capture if the commissioners had training?
 - Need to have training programs for commissioners (currently training does not exist)
 - Need incentives for commissioners to attend training
 - Identify if code professionals are members of the ICC (International Code Council)
- GOMA could assist with:
 - the process to adopt the same building codes across the Gulf
 - providing Gulf-wide training of code professionals to develop consistency across the Gulf
 - providing grants for Gulf-wide training
 - encouraging the adoption and enforcement of codes
 - developing a network of inspectors and code professionals across the Gulf (similar situation as having a network of power company personnel assist another power company when there is a crisis)
 - providing resources for code professionals to meet / interact with each other and stay up-to-date
- GOMA resiliency group should interact with:
 - Mississippi Coast Building Official Association (MCBOA) (approximately 40 members)
 - Building Official Association of Mississippi (approximately 600 members and parent to MCBOA)

Action #2

Gulf of Mexico Resiliency Clearinghouse

- Include state hazard mitigation plans
- Include hurricane plans (every five years)
- Success stories and best practices to share
- Lessons learned, historical or anecdotal information from previous disasters.
- Green infrastructure inventory and resources (connection to urban forestry, etc.)
- Records of community scorecards (indices)
- Market the clearinghouse so it is dynamic, up-to-date and useful

Action #3

Networking Workshops

- Engage local / county land use planners.
- Considerations for building codes that get homes out of water but now subject then to much higher impacts from winds.

Action #4

Improved Spatial Reference Framework

- Need \$2 million to run new geodetic leveling from Pensacola to and around south Mississippi to establish credible elevation references.
- Consistent datums (NAVD, NGVD, MLLW, etc.)
- Update hurricane evacuation and floodmaps when new geodetic data are available.
- Historic elevation markers for Camille and Katrina flood levels for educating the public.

Action #5

Incentives Research

- Develop partnerships to promote economic incentives for those who construct energy efficient and/or hazard fortified structures. These incentives could include discounts on insurance or a mechanism to increase assessed property values for this type of construction.
- Document the benefits of different building practices (e.g., steel frames, insulated concrete forms) and develop an approach to marketing more resilient building practices to the community, builders, and lenders.
- Promote hazard fortified and energy efficient building practices for workforce housing projects.
- Work with local governments in Mississippi to expand the opportunities/capabilities to utilize Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) for land use decisions. Assist with quantifying the value of ecosystems and habitats as areas zoned for preservation under Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program.

- Develop a coordinated approach and outreach strategy for informing community on how to obtain existing discounts/incentives.
- Have a person to serve as an incentives coordinator for the MS Gulf Coast.
- Include outreach to local government permit offices and support their capacity to inform citizens.
- Involve local leaders and planners in development and implementation of smart code ordinances.
- Promote the Storm Ready program as a mechanism to earn insurance discounts.
- Develop incentives programs to promote green infrastructure and incentives for builders and public to preserve mature tree cover.
- Investigate the performance of structures damaged by Hurricane Katrina wind (only) to determine how they performed and compare to which building codes are utilized in MS Gulf Coast communities.
- Investigate methods to wind retrofit existing structures and determine if retrofits will result in insurance premium discounts. Determine what incentives exist to retrofit structures.

Action #6

Culture / Heritage Documentation

- Engage grad students in ethnographic / oral history research for theses
- Cultural outreach programs, public archaeology
- Main Street Mississippi coordination
- Certified Local Government coordination
- Mini-documentaries of community opinion and cultural traditions
- Inventory (prior to disaster)
- Resiliency attitude/perception surveying
- Evacuation planning for family and community cultural artifacts
- Educate people about what cultural resources are – sense of place.
- Connect people to “home” – why care?
- Photo documentation
- Oral history podcasts kiosk – guide by cell or podcasts. Provides connection, especially for young people.

Action #7

Coastal Community Engagement

- Subcommittee of the PIT leads so they can integrate, coordinate and identify priority issues across teams
- Moss Point can be a test community since they are working on community engagement
- Botanical gardens and horticultural therapy to support recovery, community stability and involvement
- National Estuarine Research Reserves (NERRs) survey community on local perception of resilience and compare to action plan

- Financial resources for comities that can not fund resilient efforts
- Resilient experts that can assist small communities assess resilience.
- Rural communities may have a large pool of retirees/potential volunteers
- Engage rotary, civitans and chambers
- Exhibits at fairs and rodeos
- Boy and girl scouts
- Dog parks (Hiller Park)
- Continuing traditions after event with appropriate adaptations
- Welcome and support volunteers that have been screened for legitimacy

Additional ideas

- Historical perspectives, education about historical events and response so people don't forget
- Education to fight complacency
- Include community in the process (not just professionals)
- Engage more local land use planners
- Lobbying to keep momentum
- Incentives to states to create state-wide / region-wide laws for resiliency standards.
- Social sampling – make sure to capture perspectives from all groups/populations if you can.
- The Federal Flood Insurance program in its current form promotes irresponsible growth. If you can rebuild a house on the beach and reinsure it at a very small price, subsidized by the tax payers, you can just keep doing that and have the taxpayers rebuild you time and time again, and that just seems irresponsible. I would propose that everyone be allowed to federally insure their house at the low rate once. If they are wiped out, they would face four possible choices: 1) Rebuild to a very strict flood proof standard and be eligible for the low rate, 2) Take a fair market value buyout and leave the flood prone area, 3) Rebuild as you wish, and at your own risk- no federal flood insurance available, or 4) Rebuild as you wish with a market based federal flood insurance rate, which reflects the true cost to the taxpayers of insuring your building.