

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the last several years, increased attention and concern have been focused on the impacts of disasters. This is particularly true at the state and local level, where disasters similar to those expected within Hillsborough County have devastated communities, caused billions of dollars worth of damages, and impacted the economic viability of all communities and regions for years after the event occurred (Florida Department of Community Affairs, 1998).

There are proven techniques available to communities that can reduce or eliminate the long-term impacts of natural hazards. These techniques (within Florida) – known as Hazard Mitigation – when undertaken before the next flood or hurricane strikes will lessen the likelihood that potential hazards will become disasters. Understanding hazard mitigation at the local level will enable our community to lessen vulnerability to various hazards, which in turn, better supports the economic and social development goals. Through Hazard-mitigation processes there will be less business disruption, and less government financial outlay required. By addressing hazards in advance by mitigation, businesses and citizens recover, repair public facilities and return the community to normal much sooner after a catastrophic event.

In the implementation stage of the strategic planning process an analysis of hazards present in the community are reviewed so that cost-effective mitigation can become a part of community plans. This process places community governments in the position to influence the manner in which both new development and redevelopment is undertaken by incorporating appropriate mitigation techniques.

The purpose of this report is to identify the potential hazards that may strike Hillsborough County and the cities of Tampa, Temple Terrace, and Plant City. Additionally, the report is to provide an assessment of the areas vulnerable to various hazards and identify possible actions that can mitigate potential damage in the future. Through such proactive planning, in advance of a disaster, the communities within Hillsborough County will minimize property loss, disruption of the local economy and maintain essential services to its population following natural or man-made disasters.

This report has seven sections and 14 appendices, which include information on Unincorporated Hillsborough County and encompasses the cities of Tampa, Temple Terrace, and Plant City.

Section I provides an introduction to the Local Mitigation Strategy, its goals and objectives and a description of the planning process.

Section II provides a profile of the county and its growth patterns. It includes general population, housing, employment, land use, and economic characteristics. The profile provides a frame of reference in evaluating the risks that are associated with various hazards including a discussion on future land use and corresponding community maps.

Section III is the hazards analysis which identifies hazards and provides a history of damages from natural hazards such as hurricanes, floods, droughts, sinkholes and wild fires, etc. Also included in this section is a discussion of technological hazards such as hazardous materials incidents, spills, terrorism, and utility failure. The analysis defines the probability of a particular hazard occurring in the county and quantifies the risk to the

populations, housing and employment centers. This analysis provides a basis on which to prioritize areas within the county for targeted hazard mitigation planning.

Section III also includes Hazard Vulnerability Maps illustrating the potential threat to the county and its jurisdictions.

Section IV provides a detailed vulnerability analysis due to exposure to the natural hazards for types and numbers of structures affected, for population affected and for types of land use. Maps and summaries of these analyses are included. The maps and data presented result from a comprehensive model called MEMPHIS, Mapping for Emergency Management and Parallel Hazard Information System. Maps are provided to identify areas most affected by expected disasters. The summaries identify structural and economic losses associated with the most expected and devastating hazards including storm surge, flooding, and wind-related damages caused by hurricanes in billions of dollars. Concerns for critical facilities and infrastructure are expressed. A recent economic analysis describes the employment losses and government spending associated with devastation caused by hurricanes, and the accelerated rate of recovery positively influenced by appropriate disaster planning and hazard mitigation. Risk factors are assigned to specific types of disasters and mitigation techniques are suggested.

Section V presents the LMS Blueprint, an overview of the guiding principles and evaluation of existing authorities, policies, programs, and resources.

Section VI describes potential mitigation initiatives as determined by the Local Mitigation Strategy Working Group. It briefly describes subject level solutions, such as wind protections, and then goes on to show specific solutions and estimated costs that can be implemented by the County and the three municipalities. Also included in this section is a discussion of techniques used by the Working Group when evaluating potential mitigation initiatives.

Section VII details the LMS Plan maintenance and the process the county and cities will use to monitor, evaluate and update the LMS.

In addition to these seven sections, there are appendices attached that provide background information on topics such as:

- A. Conflict Resolution
- B. Evaluation of Existing Programs, Policies, and Ordinances
- C. County and Municipal Departments and Their Functions
- D. Public and Private Section Participation Progress Report
- E. Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan Stakeholders and Technical Advisory Committees
- F. Criteria to Prioritize Mitigation Projects
- G. Mitigation Initiatives (updated annually)
- H. Mitigation Accomplishments (update annually)
- I. Potential Funding Sources
- J. City of Tampa Floodplain Management Plan
- K. Critical Facility Inventory Information
- L. Repetitive Loss Properties Information
- M. Planning Process (Meeting Notices, Agendas, etc.)
- N. Resolutions Adopting the Unified Local Mitigation Strategy 2009

Hillsborough County has developed a website to keep citizen informed on Mitigation Strategies and again input into the ongoing planning and implementation efforts. Citizens are encouraged to go online to participate in this important effort to make our community safer. There is also a survey on the website where the citizens can test their knowledge regarding mitigation, request more information on the process or sign up to participate on the LMS Working Group. The link is:

<http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/pgm/hazardmit/localmitigation.cfm>