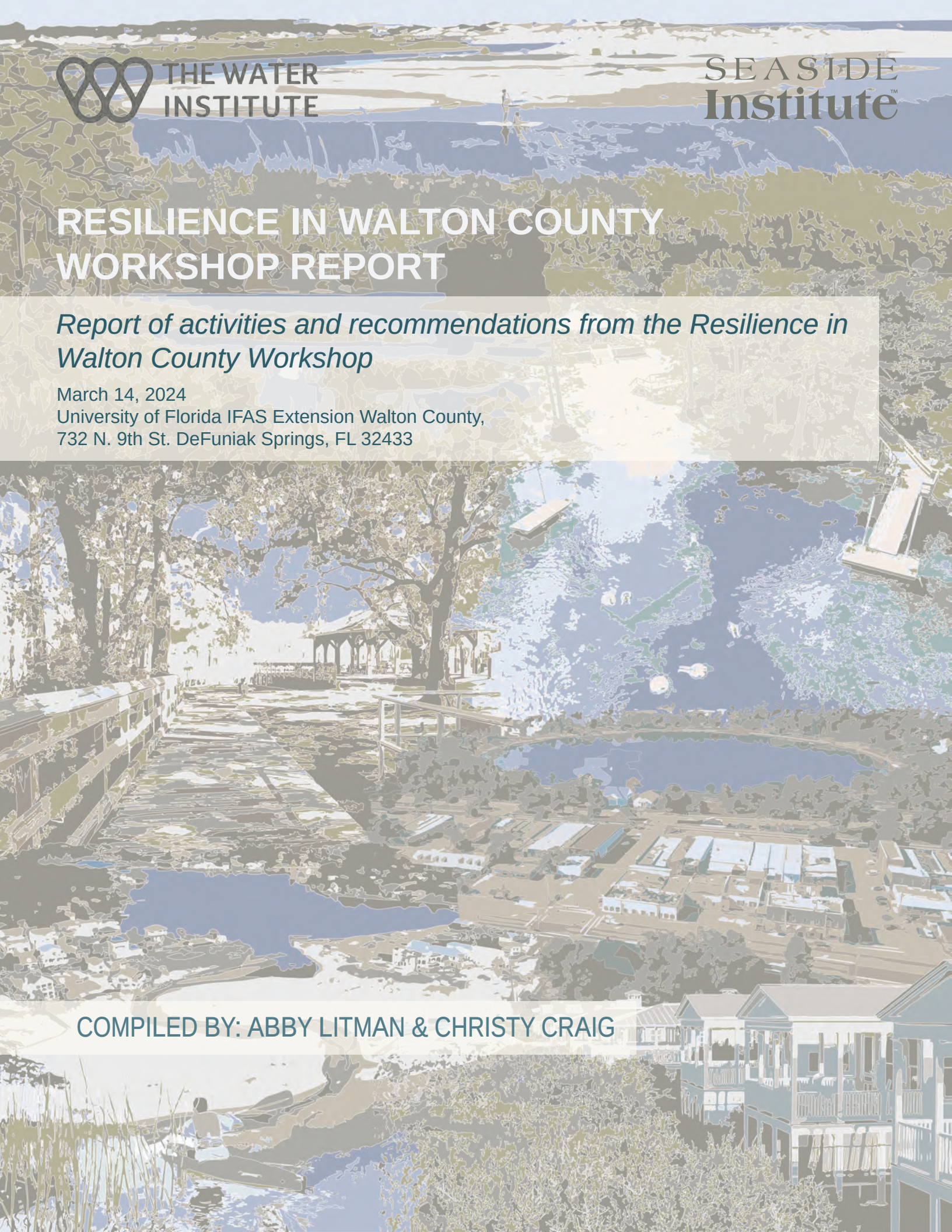

THE WATER INSTITUTE

SEASIDE Institute™

RESILIENCE IN WALTON COUNTY WORKSHOP REPORT

Report of activities and recommendations from the Resilience in Walton County Workshop

March 14, 2024
University of Florida IFAS Extension Walton County,
732 N. 9th St. DeFuniak Springs, FL 32433

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ABOUT THE WATER INSTITUTE

The Water Institute is an independent, non-profit, applied research institution advancing science and developing integrated methods to solve complex environmental and societal challenges. We believe in and strive for more resilient and equitable communities, sustainable environments, and thriving economies. For more information, visit www.thewaterinstitute.org.

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PURPOSE AND PROCESS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to discuss the process and outcomes of the activities that took place during the Resilience in Walton County Workshop on March 14, 2024, and to provide recommendations for advancing resilience across the County based on data collected during the workshop.

PROCESS

During the workshop, notes were captured on flip charts for each activity. After the workshop, all notes were collected, photographed, transcribed, and organized into thematic notes by The Water Institute. Notes were then reviewed more closely and integrated into this report.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

Acronym	Term
ADU	Accessory Dwelling Unit
BRIC	Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities
CBA	Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance
CCMP	Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plans
CHELCO	Choctawhatchee Electric Cooperative
CLT	Community Land Trust
CRA	Community Redevelopment Agency
CRS	Community Rating System
DEP	Department of Environmental Protection
ECAR	Emerald Coast Association of Realtors
ECRC	Emerald Coast Regional Council
ED	Economic Development
EM	Emergency Management
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FDEP	Florida Department of Environmental Protection
FPL	Florida Power and Light
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HMA	Hazard Mitigation Assistance
HMGP	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
HOA	Homeowners Association
LDC	Land Development Code
LMS	Local Mitigation Strategy
NAR	National Association of Realtors
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
SME	Subject Matter Expert

Acronym	Term
UCF	University of Central Florida
UF	University of Florida
UF/IFAS	University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
UWF	University of West Florida
WCHIP	Walton Community Health Improvement Partnership

WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

- Share existing knowledge of risk and resilience activities
- Build relationships between workshop participants
- Identify areas in which resilience needs to be advanced in the County
- Understand what workshop participants think residents need to know from assessment
- Identify actions that can be taken to advance a multi-institution, County-wide resilience plan
- Identify *who* can take responsibility for different near-term and long-term resilience activities

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INTRODUCTION

The Resilience in Walton County Workshop was conducted to advance coastal resilience in Walton County by exploring mechanisms for productive public-private partnerships. With hazards becoming more frequent and severe, and other issues such as the skyrocketing cost of insurance and housing, Seaside Institute identified the need to convene experts, residents, County officials, local non-profits, private sector organizations, and other interested parties in Walton County to review current knowledge on physical hazards and social challenges, build upon existing plans and implementation strategies, and identify key next steps on how different stakeholders can collaborate to advance resilience in Walton County. It is important to acknowledge that Walton County already has many disparate plans that include resilience components, and many people throughout the County within local government, private organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been engaging in resilience-related work for years.

The workshop took place at the University of Florida/IFAS (Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences) Extension Center in DeFuniak Springs, FL on March 14, 2024, from 9am to 4pm Central Standard Time. The group of 40 participants, along with four facilitators from The Water Institute, worked together to:

1. **Identify ongoing and potential future mitigation and adaptation actions** by reviewing a recent synthesis related to resilience in Walton County;
2. **Develop a list of priority actions** and next-steps (both near-term and longer-term actions) and identify responsibility for leading those actions; and
3. **Strengthen community understanding and support** by identifying education partners in the County, building ties between organizations, and identifying risk-related knowledge gaps for residents throughout the County.

DESCRIPTION OF WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES AND CONTENT

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, AND ICE BREAKER

Participants arrived at the University of Florida/IFAS Extension Office in DeFuniak Springs at 9am for coffee, sign-in, and pre-workshop networking. A subgroup of participants from the project Coordinating Committee arrived between 8:15 and 8:30 to set up materials to share with participants. Once participants were seated, project team members from The Water Institute, the Seaside Institute, and partners from the County introduced the effort and provided more information about the workshop agenda. A member of the Coordinating Committee gave a brief presentation about the Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) Working Group called the LMS Working Group Overview Presentation, and explained how the group's current functions are aligned with this effort and why the group is well-positioned to be the organizing body for ongoing and future County-wide resilience work.

The ice breaker was called "What is my role in resilience?" and was intended to build relationships between workshop participants by getting them moving around the room and talking to each other about how their work relates to resilience. Facilitators first defined resilience as a general term, and then explained the nuanced differences between social resilience, economic resilience, flood resilience, and environmental resilience—noting that all these concepts are interrelated. Participants chose two resilience topic areas and congregated separately at each for 10 minutes to introduce themselves (name, organization, title), describe how they see this type of resilience in their work, and discuss the question: "If there was one thing that could make your job easier related to resilience, what would it be?" Project team members from The Water Institute facilitated this portion and took notes on posters where appropriate.

OVERVIEW PRESENTATION: EFFORT & REPORT FINDINGS

Following the ice breaker, The Water Institute presented slides within the Resilience in Walton County Workshop Presentation, which included:

1. A holistic overview of the Seaside-funded effort (the formation of the Coordinating Committee, the development of the *Walton County State of Resilience Report*);
2. The purpose of the workshop (objectives, outputs and intended outcomes, and next steps); and
3. Key findings and takeaways from the *Walton County State of Resilience Report*.

ACTIVITY ONE: UNDERSTANDING VULNERABILITIES AND ONGOING EFFORTS

Objective

- Share existing knowledge of risk and resilience activities.

Activity Details

Activity One began with each participant ranking the four resilience topic areas based on their own knowledge from least knowledgeable to most knowledgeable. Next, participants rotated through four different groups or "stations." Each station was set up with tables, chairs, and easels with chart paper and markers for taking notes. Stations for Activity One included: 1) Social and Economic Resilience, 2) Infrastructure Resilience, 3) Flood Resilience, and 4) Environmental Resilience. Participants rotated based on their rankings. From number one (least knowledgeable), and through the rest until they ended on the topic area they ranked as number four (most knowledgeable). At each station, members of the Coordinating Committee and a few additional pre-identified leaders from several sectors across the County took turns discussing their work and how it relates to resilience. As they spoke, the rest of the workshop participants were encouraged to ask questions, propose ideas, and gain a better understanding of ongoing resilience efforts. As the rotations proceeded and each group moved towards topic areas that they were more familiar with, discussions became increasingly targeted. In sum, the first two rotations were focused on delivering information and explaining unfamiliar concepts, and the final two rotations provided opportunities for more nuanced questioning and discussion. The Water Institute project team members and Laura Tiu—Walton County Extension Director and FL Sea Grant Agent—facilitated and took notes at these stations, and the coordinating committee along with a few other leaders from across Walton County took on roles as discussion leaders and local subject matter experts.

ACTIVITY TWO: PRIORITIZING AND ADVANCING RESILIENCE ACTIONS IN WALTON COUNTY

Objectives

- Identify areas in which resilience needs to be advanced in the County
- Understand what workshop participants think residents need to know from assessment
- Identify who can take responsibility for different resilience activities

Activity Details

Once participants were familiarized with vulnerabilities and ongoing resilience efforts (Activity One), Activity Two provided opportunities for stakeholders to rotate through the previous four stations in reverse order and begin to brainstorm and prioritize potential resilience actions. On flipcharts, participants identified resilience actions needed. After identifying a list of potential actions, participants further discussed context and feasibility for each action, and chose the highest priority/potentially most feasible actions to formulate high-level implementation details related to estimated cost(s), implementation timeframe, formal research or planning requirements, potential leads, and critical partners.

PRESENTATION: WHAT IS A RESILIENCE PLAN?

Before Activity Three, The Water Institute gave a presentation on the purpose and main components of a resilience plan (embedded within the Resilience in Walton County Workshop Presentation); noting that the resilience plan being considered by the Coordinating Committee would be highly collaborative, and unlike other resilience plans, would be co-led by multiple institutions instead of a single county or city. The intended purpose of this presentation was to give participants a better understanding of why they might want to consider developing a County-wide, multi-institution resilience strategy before diving into Activity Three.

ACTIVITY THREE: ADVANCING A MULTI-INSTITUTION, COUNTY-WIDE RESILIENCE PLAN

Objectives

- Identify actions that can be taken to advance County-wide resilience
- Identify who can take responsibility for different resilience activities

Activity Details

The purpose of Activity Three was twofold. First, the activity was meant to get workshop participants thinking about the ways in which partners throughout Walton County (local government, private, and nonprofit institutions) could work together to achieve a multi-institution, County-wide resilience plan, and second, it included discussions that helped participants begin to organize the resilience activities that were prioritized in Activity Two based on implementation details (i.e., resilience actions that were identified as immediately implementable were grouped together, resilience actions that could all be grouped into the same type of plan were grouped together, etc.).

Activity Three was structured in the same way as Activities One and Two, with participants rotating through four stations. However, participants rotated randomly this time—each participant was assigned a color that indicated which station they should start at—and stations were organized into four different themes. The themes were: 1) Challenges, 2), Opportunities, 3) Potential Governance Structure, and 4) Grouping Resilience Actions.

NEXT STEPS: POST-WORKSHOP COMMITMENTS

Objective

- Identify who can take responsibility for different resilience activities

Activity Details

The Water Institute led participants through a whole-group discussion to ensure that there were clear next steps after the workshop ended. Questions included:

- Are there any issues that should be discussed for identified leads or partners on actions?
- What support is needed for moving forward on the actions that were identified as priority resilience actions?
- We currently have the LMS/Resilience Working Group—who else would like to be part of that?
- What other next steps are necessary for this effort to move forward? Who will lead those? Who will contribute to those?

The brief post-workshop commitments discussion was less about soliciting new information, and more about solidifying next steps and organizational roles after the day of the workshop. This was a chance for participants to express any final ideas or concerns and allow people to make any last-minute connections as a whole group. Details about post-workshop roles are indicated within Table A-13. Implementation details for potential resilience actions.

WORKSHOP FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

KEY DISCUSSION AREAS BY RESILIENCE TOPIC

Social & Economic Resilience

Social and economic resilience discussions were centered around challenges and opportunities related to housing and shelter, economic diversification, and community education around resilience—with the awareness that all three of these major topics are deeply connected.

Economic Diversification

Participants noted the connection between the County's thriving but homogeneous tourism industry and the housing affordability crisis. Workshop participants noted that the County needs to diversify its economy to strengthen economic resilience and ensure that all residents—regardless of their location within Walton County—can achieve a high quality of life. Participants noted the importance of increasing salaries for school district employees to continue to attract talent in the education system and improve the County's Gross Domestic Product (GDP); which is relatively low compared to the rest of the counties within the panhandle.

Affordable Housing

Walton County's strong tourism industry is a critical piece of the County's whole economy, but the rate of economic growth that coastal communities in Walton County have been experiencing has also caused extreme stress on the stock of affordable housing available throughout the County. In many areas throughout Walton County, there has been a dramatic increase in short-term rental and investment properties where primary residences once existed. The housing cost burdens that many residents now face have multiple repercussions. The housing cost burden removes capital from the economy and weakens the social fabric of neighborhoods when longtime residents are priced out. The social fabric of a neighborhood is critical for disaster preparedness and recovery and can have major impacts on the wellbeing of residents. As the ratio of original residents to new residents continues to increase, the County needs to plan for how to retain original residents—people who have lived in Walton for a long time and will step in as good neighbors before, during, and after an extreme event. Participants expressed the need for increased housing stock and lower long-term rent prices to accommodate residents and noted that Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) could potentially relieve some of the pressure on the current state of the County's affordable housing stock.

Community Education

Workshop participants discussed the importance of organized, targeted community education that builds awareness of resilience concepts among residents. Participants noted that with the large influx of new residents, there is a lack of understanding related to risk and vulnerability. Specifically, participants proposed the idea of a "Welcome to Walton" campaign to provide all residents with consistent messaging about resilience and how individual residents can do their part to strengthen the County's resilience to acute shocks (e.g., extreme weather events) and chronic stressors like aging infrastructure. Workshop participants agreed that bringing resilience to faith-based communities and utilizing faith-based leaders and non-profit leaders to disseminate and deliver information could increase the message reach. Some

specific concepts that workshop participants raised as “key things residents need to know” are listed in Activity One & Two Notes within Appendix A. Workshop Materials.

Environmental Resilience

Conversations about environmental resilience throughout the workshop were focused on challenges and opportunities related to data and partnerships in the context of protecting natural resources.

Data & Partnerships

Workshop participants expressed the need for centralized data to assist with projects that strengthen environmental resilience in Walton County. Specifically, participants called for a “one stop shop” type of data storage solution that County, municipal, and nonprofit leaders in the environmental resilience space could rapidly pull from when needed.

In terms of partnerships, participants agreed on the power of partnerships and collaboration within the environmental resilience space. Specifically, partnering with local realtor boards for education, aligning with faith communities, and supporting non-profit organizations such as the Choctawhatchee Bay Estuary Program were all proposed as ways to capitalize on partnerships to strengthen environmental resilience.

Protection of Coastal Dune Lakes

Discussions about environmental resilience also focused on Walton County’s Coastal Dune Lakes; specifically with regards to solutions for reducing FDEP permitting issues. Groups agreed on the need to define and survey Coastal Dune Lake Protection Zones.

Infrastructure Resilience

Participants that engaged in discussions around resilient infrastructure identified challenges surrounding aging infrastructure, and discussed potential actions that could be taken to address these challenges.

Aging Infrastructure

Workshop participants noted that aging infrastructure can create barriers to new development and new, affordable housing, and that aging infrastructure also means that there is a need for additional water retention and detention solutions. Participants also discussed the need to consider lessons learned from existing coastal infrastructure in communities like Seaside when planning for new infrastructure or infrastructure improvements. The topic of improving roads was also raised among workshop participants—noting that Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) money has been and can continue to be used to pave dirt roads; which improves access and maintains service provision during extreme weather events.

Undergrounding and Electric Grid Reliability

Workshop groups discussed the fact that large-scale efforts to underground utilities are currently in the works, but emphasized the scale of such an undertaking—noting that undergrounding will take time, money, and organized, targeted public education and buy-in. Specifically, an educational campaign about undergrounding will be critical to ensuring that the public is invested in this major effort and impacted jurisdictions are likely to approve it.

Acknowledging that this type of effort requires a level of project management and coordination with utilities that may not be feasible for a government employee with several other main responsibilities, workshop participants agreed there is a need for a project manager that could dedicate a significant amount of time to this type of coordination, and that this role would be best suited for someone in local government—such as the County—to take on.

Other discussions around implementation indicated the need for a working group dedicated to undergrounding that would consist of utilities, County partners, and other critical stakeholders. Looking to Destin, FL as an example, workshop participants discussed financial and logistical questions related to undergrounding—who is able to pay for it, how implementation would look, and which partners (e.g., electric, cable, telecommunications, etc.) need to be brought into conversations about undergrounding from the beginning.

Additionally, workshop participants noted the fact that undergrounding will require a phased approach in which the County is gridded, and power lines are undergrounded in sections, and will require funding from multiple sources—e.g. Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding, and/or Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) match funding. Finally, participants raised the question of efficiency and effort consolidation. For instance, if implementation timelines were coordinated, digging for the 30A road re-design project and digging for a section of undergrounding could potentially be one in the same; saving both the County and residents time and money.

Post-Disaster Communications

One challenge noted during conversations about infrastructure was related to post-disaster road access, and public knowledge about road closures. The state of Florida and Walton County both have their own alert systems (Alert FL and Alert Walton), but not all residents utilize them. Because these alert systems provide Walton County Emergency Management with usage data reports, this information could be used to target communities that are underutilizing alert systems and help them get set up to ensure they receive these notifications.

Additional Infrastructure Considerations

Infrastructure discussions briefly touched on potable water supply—acknowledging the impact of residential growth on potable water supply. Participants also noted the post-disaster considerations related to potable water.

Finally, workshop participants agreed on the need for more accessible data to support project requests. There are many streams of federal and philanthropic funding available to the County, but it is critical that organizations writing these grants are well positioned to easily pull data and use it to justify the need for funds.

Flood Resilience

Workshop participants discussing flood resilience specifically focused on data needs, important adjustments to land development codes (LDCs), the need for communication and guidance related to implementation of resilient design, and the importance of public education surrounding flood mitigation.

Flood Data

Noting the fact that currently neither FEMA nor the National Weather service provide an accurate picture of what flooding can look like throughout the County for many different types of flood events, participants expressed the need for a real-time flooding data product that provides geospatial information about where and how intense flooding is within a given area.

Resilience Standards in Building and Land Development Codes (LDCs)

Groups discussing flood resilience specifically called for code adjustments that would facilitate protection in place of existing structures because sometimes the requirements to become compliant with updated codes is not financially or physically feasible. They also expressed the need to integrate non-stationarity into codes that would allow for flexibility as time passes (for example, a 25-year storm today is different than a 25-year storm 5 years ago).

Communication and Guidance for Implementing Resilient Design Standards

Workshop participants noted the value of educating new residents about the cost effectiveness of resilient building and other co-benefits, as well as the need for continued education for architects and other types of designers on resilient building standards. It was also agreed upon that education on resilient design should also be inclusive of builders, realtors, and residents.

Public Education on Flood Mitigation

Participants explained that flood mitigation needs to be paired with public education. Currently, the County CRS program is not taking advantage of points that could be gained for public education, which if obtained could lead to more of an insurance discount. This would also have the benefit of providing residents with information needed to make informed decisions around flood protection and insurance.

Finally, groups discussing flooding noted how critical it is to adopt common language around resilience concepts that address or avoid pre-existing biases related to climate and resilience. Participants were concerned that residents may be missing important information or opportunities because they may not understand, see themselves in, or disagree with the language. By identifying and adopting language that has broader appeal, participants thought it could advance the public education efforts further.

PRIORITY RESILIENCE ACTIONS

After resilience actions were identified and prioritized and implementation details were discussed, actions were grouped by theme, and then organized by implementation timeframe within each theme.

Resilience actions were grouped into three main themes or buckets: 1) actions that could potentially be included as recommendations within the Walton County Comprehensive Plan, 2) actions that aligned with education and outreach efforts, and 3) large-scale resilience actions. Actions classified under themes 1 and 2 were identified as actions that could be implemented immediately or in the near-term. Large-scale resilience actions are either particularly expensive undertakings, and/or efforts that require strategic partnerships (e.g., local government, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, utility companies, etc.). Actions classified under theme 3 were identified as medium- or long-term actions (i.e., they would take 3+ years to implement). More detailed information for each resilience action is captured in Table A-13

.

Walton County Comprehensive Plan

Walton County's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code, required by the state of Florida, goes through an Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) planning process every 7 years. Other elements of the plan include capital improvements, conservation, coastal management, housing, infrastructure, intergovernmental coordination, property rights, recreation, and transportation. Because the Walton County Comprehensive Plan contains all these elements and requires regular updates (the County is working on the next update this year), workshop participants noted that several resilience actions could be included in the comprehensive plan. There are some resilience actions that could potentially be written into the plan without requiring additional plans or strategies, and there are others that can potentially be included in the plan as recommendations to towards more detailed future plans or research prior to implementation.

Table 1. Resilience actions organized by theme.

Action	Lead(s)	Partners	Implementation Timeframe[1]	Inclusion in Comp. Plan	Education and Outreach	Large-Scale Resilience Actions
Identify flood prone properties to purchase as conservation lands	The County	Non-profits, state agencies	Long-term	X		
Improve public transit and access	TBD	NAR, Seaside, Chamber of Commerce	TBD	X		
Build out a community land trust (CLT)	County ED: Uriah Matthews and Tom Baker	County, large landowners, ECRC service, non-profits, Sarah Lower	Immediate	X		
Develop data amd ordinance/policy approaches for non-stationarity[2]	County Planning: Mac Carpenter	Academies, LMS, ECRC	Immediate or Near-term	X		X
Encourage density	Uriah Matthews	Seaside Institute, ECAR	Immediate	X		

[1] Immediate = 6-12 months from now, Near-term = 1-3 years from now, Long-term = 5+ years from now

[2] This could be mentioned in the comp. plan, but still needs supporting data and info. to integrate it into other ordinances and planning.

Action	Lead(s)	Partners	Implementation Timeframe[1]	Inclusion in Comp. Plan	Education and Outreach	Large-Scale Resilience Actions
Recommend investing in plans for regional stormwater banks	CRA (Josh Ervin)	General public, Developers, ECAR	TBD	X		
Educate the public on the Community Rating System (CRS)[3]	Walton County Floodplain Manager	Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance, Choctawhatchee Bay Estuary Program, Seaside Institute	Immediate		X	
Identify who could pursue hiring a Walton County Resilience Coordinator	The County	Landlords, churches, community centers, school district, UF/IFAS, CBA, EMS, Housing, Septic, Realtors, HOAs, libraries	Immediate		X	
Bring focused science and resilience-related conferences to Walton County	Seaside, Sea Grant, Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance	EMA, Biophilia, Alaqua, Universities (UF, AWF, UCF), Seacoast, ECAR, local SMEs	Near-term		X	

[3] There is room to get more of an insurance discount through CRS Points by doing outreach and education.

Action	Lead(s)	Partners	Implementation Timeframe[1]	Inclusion in Comp. Plan	Education and Outreach	Large-Scale Resilience Actions
Stand up an education and outreach committee under the umbrella of the LMS/Resilience Working Group	LMS/ Resilience Working Group, Walton County EM	ECAR, Scenic Walton, Seaside Institute, Disciples of Preparedness, general public	Immediate		X	
Address barriers to permitting to nature-based solutions	DEP and USACE	South Walton Community Council	Long-term			X
Underground utilities	CHELCO, Walton County EM, Scenic Walton, FPL	Public Works, Regional Utilities, Freeport, DeFuniak, developers	Long-term			X
Expand sewer system	Commissioner Glidewell, County, Council Member Vallee		Immediate or near-term			X

Table 2. Education and outreach actions: extended table.

Action	Lead	Implementing Partners	What Residents Should Know4
Educate the public on the Community Rating System (CRS)	Walton County Floodplain Manager	Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance, Choctawhatchee Bay Estuary Program, Seaside Institute	Individual actions they can take to reduce flooding (e.g., rain gardens) The value of trees Importance of codes and permitting Awareness of surge and actions that can be taken Hazard mitigation assistance for floodproofing
Identify who could pursue hiring a Walton County Resilience Coordinator	The County	Landlords, churches, community centers, school district, UF/IFAS, CBA, EMS, Housing, Septic, Realtors, HOAs, libraries	Undergrounding Cost savings What does construction/disruption look like? There is a cost to down-time What are people willing to contribute to make this work? (development community, residents) What this means for employment (lineman apprenticeship programs) The value of elevating utilities (e.g., elevated A/C)
Bring focused science and resilience-related conferences to Walton County	Seaside, Sea Grant, Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance	EMA, Biophilia, Alaqua, Universities (UF, AWF, UCF), Seacoast, ECAR, local SMEs	-
Stand up an education and outreach committee under the umbrella of the LMS/Resilience Working Group	LMS/ Resilience Working Group, Walton County EM	ECAR, Scenic Walton, Seaside Institute, Disciples of Preparedness, general public	-

[4] Identified by workshop participants

A MULTI-INSTITUTION, COUNTY-WIDE RESILIENCE PLAN

Opportunities

Participants discussed existing opportunities or activities that a resilience plan could build upon; specifically calling out the upcoming Walton County Vulnerability Assessment, the Comprehensive Conversation and Management Plan (CCMP), the Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS), the visioning work for the Walton County Comprehensive Plan updates, and the Walton Community Health Improvement Partnership (WCHIP). Participants noted that many of these efforts could be tied together into one single implementation plan, and a resilience plan for the County would need to involve undergrounding utilities, hiring a Chief Resilience Officer or Coordinator, preventing silos through multi-institutional collaboration, reducing duplicative efforts, and intentionally connecting projects and service providers.

Challenges

Workship participants identified several challenges associated with developing a resilience plan. They noted the amount of funding it takes for consistent leadership, participation, and coordination, obstacles related to collaboration, openness and jurisdictional boundaries, and political pressure. Participants also discussed difficulty related to time or timelines, the lack of identified, attainable objectives, differing or conflicting institutional objectives, the need to identify the right partnerships (i.e., getting the right people in the room to do the work), and reducing the work happening in silos.

Groups at the workshop also agreed about challenges related to urgency and prioritization of projects and plans, the limitations of land areas (public vs private), infrastructure challenges, and the ways in which pride and territorial decisions can prevent progress.

Finally, participants expressed challenges related to public buy-in, attention span, bandwidth, and manpower, and how biases and regional differences between different parts of the County can complicate collaboration and progress.

Potential Governance Structure

Workshop participants identified that the Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) Working Group is well positioned to be the organizing body that takes responsibility for organizing resilience activities and potentially a future resilience plan. In addition to adding Resilience to the group's name, participants discussed the benefits of increasing LMS Working Group membership and creating subcommittees to strategically divide up work between members. For example, participants noted the need for a subcommittee that would pursue resources for and oversee the development of a resilience plan, a subcommittee to focus on education and outreach, etc.).

WORKSHOP EVALUATION SURVEY RESULTS

Total Participants: 40 Total Responses: 24

SUMMARY OF METHOD

Evaluation forms were nested inside of individual folders that were given to workshop participants at sign-in. In the final 10 minutes of the workshop, facilitators requested that participants complete the evaluation form, and participants filled out forms at their individual seats. Twenty-four of 40 participants turned in evaluations. Because several participants had to leave a few minutes before it was time to fill out evaluations, it can be assumed that this is the reason a handful of evaluations were not completed. However, evaluations are anonymous, so it is not known who turned in evaluations and who did not.

QUANTITATIVE RESPONSES

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each item.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
This event was a good use of my time.	0	0	1	10	13	0
I learned about existing risk and resilience activities in Walton County	0	0	0	8	16	0
I networked with workshop participants	0	0	0	7	17	0
I identified areas in which resilience needs to be advanced in Walton County	0	0	0	11	13	0
I was able to discuss what residents might need to know from the State of Resilience in Walton County Report	0	0	1	13	10	0
I understand which actions can be taken to advance a multi-institution, County-wide resilience plan	0	0	1	14	9	0
I understand who can take responsibility for different near-term and long-term resilience activities	0	0	2	13	9	0

Please note your feelings about the following aspects of today's workshop:

	Very Dissatisfied	**Dissatisfied**	**Neutral**	**Satisfied**	**Very Satisfied**
Workshop Content	0	0	2	12	10
Workshop Format	0	0	4	12	8
Workshop Pace	0	2	3	10	9
Workshop Time Length	0	1	5	9	11
Level of Detail Provided	0	0	1	14	9
Workshop Location	0	1	6	8	9
Knowledge and Communication Skills of Presenters	0	0	0	11	13
Overall Workshop Experience	0	0	1	12	11

How likely are you to use the information you learned today in your work?

Very Likely	Likely	Not Likely	I Won't	I'm Not Sure
9	15	0	0	0

How likely are you to stay involved in advancing the County's resilience after today?

Very Likely	Likely	Not Likely	I Won't	I'm Not Sure
8	16	0	0	0

What gender do you identify as?	What is your age?	Which of the following best describe your race and ethnicity? (Select all that apply)
Man (7) Woman (14) Non-binary (1) Prefer to self-describe: _____ Prefer not to say (2)	18 – 30 years (1) 31 – 45 years (10) 46 – 60 years (11) 60+ years (1) Prefer not to say (1)	American Indian or Alaskan Native (1) Asian Black or African American Hispanic or Latino (3) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander White or Caucasian (18) Prefer to self-describe: _____ Prefer not to say (2)

QUALITATIVE RESPONSES

What is one new concept about resilience you learned from this event?

• The work that is already being done in the County and the fact that many groups are communicating and collaborating • Community land trusts • The Local Mitigation Strategy • Resilience resources that are available	• Living shorelines • Undergrounding • The desire of other organizations to collaborate • Flood resilience • The fact that many of these areas intersect

Please share any remaining comments about today's event.

Affirming Feedback	Adjusting Feedback
• Great education today. Well planned and presented! • Great opportunity to meet, learn from others, find areas of collaboration, and come away with actionable items. • It was great!	• All day is a lot to commit to—wonder if 2 morning events would work better • No faith-based representation. Should hospital have been represented? St. Joe? • Room could benefit from being larger, it was sometimes difficult to follow conversation due to noise level

DRAFT

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. WORKSHOP MATERIALS

A.1 AGENDA

RESILIENCE IN WALTON COUNTY COORDINATION WORKSHOP

UF/IFAS Extension, DeFuniak Springs, FL, March 14th, 2024, 9am-4pm

Objectives

1. Share existing knowledge of risk and resilience activities
2. Build relationships between workshop participants
3. Identify areas in which resilience needs to be advanced in the county
4. Discuss what residents need to know from the report
5. Identify actions that can be taken to advance a multi-institution county-wide resilience plan
6. Identify *who* can take responsibility for different near-term and long-term resilience activities

Agenda

Time	Activity
9:00 – 9:15	Arrival/coffee/sign-in
9:15 – 9:25	Introductions
9:25 – 9:35	Presentation: What is the LMS Working Group & how does it connect to resilience?
9:35 – 10:00	Icebreaker: What is my role in resilience?
10:00 – 10:15	Overview presentation on effort/report findings
10:15 – 12:00	Activity 1: Understanding vulnerabilities and ongoing efforts
12:00 – 12:45	Lunch
12:45 – 1:25	Activity 1 Continued
1:25 – 2:25	Activity 2: Prioritizing resilience actions in Walton County
2:25 – 3:35	Break
2:35 – 2:45	Presentation: What is a resilience plan?
2:45 – 3:35	Activity 3: Advancing a multi-institution, county-wide resilience plan
3:35 – 3:50	Next Steps: Who is doing what after this workshop?
3:50 – 4:00	Debrief/evaluation/close out

A.2 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Table A-1. Workshop activity discussion questions.

Activity	Questions
Ice breaker	• What is your name, organization, and title? • How do you see this type of resilience in your work? • If there was one thing that could make your job easier related to resilience, what would it be?
Activity One	• What are some recent, ongoing, or future efforts related to resilience in Walton County? • What questions do you have about these efforts? What clarity do you need? • How can some of these efforts be expanded or built upon to increase resilience across the County?
Activity Two	• What are some resilience actions that are important to consider for Walton County? • What geographies across the County to these resilience actions apply to? • What are the implementation details associated with each potential resilience action? • What is the estimated cost? • What is the estimated implementation timeframe? • Does this action require a detailed plan or strategy to implement? • Who could lead this activity? • Who would be critical partners for this activity?
Activity Three	<u>Opportunities Station:</u> • What existing opportunities or activities can be built upon? • What would you want to see in a resilience plan? • What are opportunities for education and/or collaboration? <u>Challenges Station:</u> • What are the biggest barriers to achieving multi-institution, County-wide resilience plans or actions? • How can these barriers be overcome? <u>Grouping Resilience Actions Station:</u> • Which actions can be grouped together in a specific plan or strategy? • Which actions can be implemented without a strategy/plan document? • Do you see your organization listed as a lead or partner? Does that work?
Next Steps	• Are there any issues that should be discussed for identified leads or partners on actions? • What support is needed for moving forward on the actions that were identified as priority resilience actions? • We currently have the LMS/Resilience Working Group – who else would like to be part of that? • What other next steps are necessary for this effort to move forward? Who will lead those? Who will contribute to those?

A.3 HANDOUTS

A.3.1 Definitions & Ranking Sheet

RESILIENCE IN WALTON COUNTY COORDINATION WORKSHOP

UF/IFAS Extension, DeFuniak Springs, FL. March 14th, 2024, 9am-4pm

Definitions:

Term	Definition
Resilience	The ability of systems to adapt and thrive in the face of acute shocks (sudden, extreme events that threaten a community) and chronic stressors (long-term pressures that weaken the fabric of a community over time).
Economic resilience	The ability of an economic system and individuals to fiscally withstand and adapt to shocks and stressors.
Environmental resilience	The ability of the natural environment to withstand shocks and stressors in a way that maintains their ecosystem functions and services.
Flood resilience	The ability to withstand chronic and acute flood hazards to minimize damage to social well-being, health, the economy and the environment.
Infrastructure resilience	The ability of infrastructure systems to respond or adapt to shocks and stressors in a way that maintains or quickly restores their critical functions.
Social resilience	The ability of individuals and a community to withstand shocks and stressors in a way that maintains their mental and physical health and community connections.
Shocks	Sudden, extreme events that threaten a community.
Stressors	Long-term pressures that weaken the fabric of a community over time.
Vulnerability	The combination of exposure to hazards, the sensitivity to hazards, and the capacity to adapt to those hazards. Vulnerability can be reduced by adjusting any of the three: exposure, sensitivity, and/or adaptive capacity.

A.3.2 Ranking Familiarity with Resilience Topic Areas

Ranking Familiarity with Resilience Topic Areas

Instructions: Rank each topic area from least familiar to most familiar based on your individual knowledge and awareness of ongoing activities.

1=Least familiar
4=Most familiar

Resilience Topic Area	Ranking
Economic and/or Social resilience	
Environmental resilience	
Flood resilience	
Infrastructure resilience	

A.3.3 Resilience Activity Implementation Sheet

Resilience Activity: _____

Estimated Cost:
$ less than 10k
$$ tens of thousands
$$$ hundreds of thousands
$$$$ millions

Implementation timeframe:
Immediate (6-12 months from now)
Near-term (1-3 years from now)
Medium term (3-5 years from now)
Long-term (5+ years from now)

Does this action require a detailed plan or strategy to implement?
Yes
No
Unsure

Who could lead this activity? _____

Who would be critical partners for this activity? _____

A.4 EVALUATION

EVALUATION: Resilience in Walton County Coordination Workshop

DeFuniak Springs, FL
March 14, 2024

Thank you for your participation in today's workshop! Your feedback will help us provide effective workshops in the future.

1. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each item.	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Disagree (D)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (N)	Agree (A)	Strongly Agree (SA)	Don't Know (DK)
This event was a good use of my time.	SD	D	N	A	SA	DK
I learned about existing risk and resilience activities in Walton County	SD	D	N	A	SA	DK
I networked with workshop participants	SD	D	N	A	SA	DK
I identified areas in which resilience needs to be advanced in Walton County	SD	D	N	A	SA	DK
I was able to discuss what residents might need to know from the State of Resilience in Walton County Report	SD	D	N	A	SA	DK
I understand which actions can be taken to advance a multi-institution, county-wide resilience plan	SD	D	N	A	SA	DK
I understand who can take responsibility for different near-term and long-term resilience activities	SD	D	N	A	SA	DK

1a. If for any of these, you selected D or SD please let us know how we could have improved.

2. Please note your feelings about the following aspects of today's workshop:

	Very Dissatisfied	**Dissatisfied**	**Neutral**	**Satisfied**	**Very Satisfied**
Workshop Content	1	2	3	4	5
Workshop Format	1	2	3	4	5
Workshop Pace	1	2	3	4	5
Workshop Time Length	1	2	3	4	5
Level of Detail Provided	1	2	3	4	5
Workshop Location	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledge and Communication Skills of Presenters	1	2	3	4	5
Overall Workshop Experience	1	2	3	4	5

Page 1 of 2 – more on back!

2a. If for any of these you selected a 1 or a 2, please let us know why or how we could have improved.

3. What is one new concept about resilience you learned from this event?

5. How likely are you to use the information you learned today in your work?

Very Likely Likely Not Likely I Won't I'm Not Sure

5. How likely are you to stay involved in advancing the county's resilience after today?

Very Likely Likely Not Likely I Won't I'm Not Sure

What gender do you identify as?	What is your age?	Which of the following best describe your race and ethnicity? (Select all that apply)
○ Man ○ Woman ○ Non-binary ○ Prefer to self-describe: _____ ○ Prefer not to say	○ 18 – 30 years ○ 31 – 45 years ○ 46 – 60 years ○ 60+ years ○ Prefer not to say	○ American Indian or Alaskan Native ○ Asian ○ Black or African American ○ Hispanic or Latino ○ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander ○ White or Caucasian ○ Prefer to self-describe: _____ ○ Prefer not to say

Please share any remaining comments about today's event.

Thank you for your time!

Page 2

A.5 ACTIVITY ONE & TWO NOTES

Table A-2. Social and economic resilience group key takeaways.

Topic Discussed	Key takeaways
Industry diversification	• The County needs to be able to import and export wealth (not just tourism) • GDP is low compared to the rest of the panhandle counties (need salary increases for school employees)
Affordable housing stock	• Housing stock used to be primary residences, there has been a dramatic increase in renting and investment properties (issues with short-term rentals) • The cost of housing (household burden) removes capital • Need increased housing stock, decreased rent • New opportunities with ADUs (accessory dwelling units)
Resource allocation	• Differences between resources in north and south end of County
Shelter after emergencies	• There is no homeless shelter in Walton County • Emergency shelters need generators, fuel, etc.
Value of lifetime residents	• Pricing out of longtime residents has negative impacts on resilience • Ratio of original residents to new residents is increasing • There is a large aging population • Need to retain longtime residents – the type of people that will step in as good neighbors ahead of, during, or after an extreme event
Value of faith-based communities	• Bringing resilience discourse to faith-based communities can create synergy so that local economic, environmental, and housing experts and advocates can all work together
Community education	• Opportunity to develop a "Welcome to Walton" campaign • Utilize faith and nonprofits to disseminate and deliver information • Consider using multiple sources for messaging (e.g., fun videos)

Table A-3. Social and economic resilience group: key things residents need to know.

Key Things Residents Need to Know
• How GDP works • Why original residents and longtime neighbors are important for resilience • Walton County is the number three school district in the state • Bridge closures at 40 MPH winds • Shelters are a lifeboat • What kinds of hazards the County faces and what kind of related financial assistance is available (storms, heat, chemical spills) • The importance of self-resilience and personal responsibility/preparedness

Table A-4. Environmental resilience group key takeaways.

Topic Discussed	Key takeaways
The need to better understand flooding	• Need for updates to flood map
Power in partnerships	• Need for partnerships to maintain environmental resilience • Partner with local realtor boards for education • Aling with non-profits and faith communities • Importance of supporting Choctawhatchee Bay Estuary Program
Protection of Dune Lakes	• How do we reduce FDEP permitting issues? • Need to define and survey the Coastal Dune Lake Protection Zones
Need for centralized data	• Where do we go to find data if we have a problem? Need a one-stop shop

Table A-5. Environmental resilience group: key things residents need to know.

Key Things Residents Need to Know

• Pathways for environmental solutions
  o Securing funding
  o Education
  o Sharing information

Table A-6. Infrastructure resilience group key takeaways.

Topic Discussed	Key takeaways
Aging infrastructure	• Current infrastructure → barriers to development • Need to consider lessons learned from existing coastal infrastructure (e.g., within Seaside) • Need for water retention/detention solutions • Need for large developments to create affordable housing
Undergrounding and electric grid reliability	• Undergrounding will take time, money, and public education/buy-in (Look to Destin as an example) • Who will pay for it? (electric, cable telecommunications all need to be at the table from the beginning) • Need for a project manager in government to work with utilities • Implementation: • Forming working group (utilities, County partners, etc.) • Will require a phased approach (gridding the County) • Needs council approval • LMS project list: HMGP funding is there, BRIC match (406 mitigation funds could potentially be used) • Proactive, frontloaded funding → needs to be shovel-ready • 30A road re-design → can timelines be coordinated so that crews only need to dig once?
Potable water supply	• The impact of growth on potable water supply • Post-disaster considerations
Data needs	• Need for accessible data to support project requests

Topic Discussed	Key takeaways
Road armoring	• Using FEMA $ for paving dirt roads
Post-disaster road access	• Informing the public via Alert FL/Alert Walton • Could pull data reports and target communities that are underutilizing the alert systems

Table A-7. Infrastructure resilience group: key things residents need to know

Key Things Residents Need to Know (about undergrounding)
• Cost savings • What does construction/disruption look like? There is a cost to down-time • What are people willing to contribute to make this work? (development community, residents) • What this means for employment (lineman apprenticeship programs) • The value of elevating utilities (e.g., elevated A/C)

Table A-8. Flood resilience group key takeaways.

Topic Discussed	Key takeaways
Need for real-time, geospatial flood data	• Need for real-time flooding product that provides geospatial information about where and how intense flooding is
Need to increase resilience standards in building and land development codes	• Floodplains, setbacks • Adjustments to code to facilitate protection in place • Need to integrate non-stationarity into codes (e.g., a 25-year storm today is different than a 25-year storm 5 years ago)
Communicating benefits of and providing guidance for implementing resilient design standards	• Need to educate new residents about the cost effectiveness of resilient building and other co-benefits • Need for continued education for architects and other types of designers on resilient standards • Education on resilience should be inclusive of builders, realtors, and residents
Flood mitigation needs to be paired with public education	• Educate the public on the Community Rating System (CRS) • Room to get more of an insurance discount through CRS Points by doing outreach and education
Adopting common language around resilience concepts	• Need to find common language that addresses pre-existing biases related to climate and resilience

Table A-9. Flood resilience group: key things residents need to know.

Key Things Residents Need to Know
• Individual actions residents can take to mitigate flooding (e.g., rain gardens, trees, etc.) • Importance of codes and permitting → the "why" behind these things • Opportunities to integrate art and culture into smaller flood mitigation strategies • Actions that can be taken to address surge (e.g., floodproofing), the existence of resources like hazard mitigation assistance (HMA)

A.6 ACTIVITY THREE NOTES

Table A-10. Resilience action implementation opportunities.

Existing Opportunities or Activities to Build Upon	Most Important for a Resilience Plan
• Walton County Vulnerability Assessment (forthcoming) • CCMP • Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) • Walton County Comprehensive Plan • Visioning for the DPZ • WCHI	• Tying efforts in left column into one "implementation plan" • Undergrounding utilities • Hiring a Chief Resilience Officer or Coordinator • Preventing silos • Multi-institutional • Improving collaboration where efforts are duplicative • Connecting projects and service providers

Table A-11. Resilience action implementation challenges.

Challenges	How Challenges Can be Overcome
• The funding it takes for consistent leadership, participation, and coordination • Collaboration • Openness and jurisdictional boundaries • Political pressure • Facebook • Time or timelines • Lack of identified, attainable objectives • Identifiable partnerships • Getting the right people in the room to do the work • Diversity • Urgency and prioritization • Public buy-in • Attention span, bandwidth, and manpower • Infrastructure • Limitation of land areas (what is public or private?) • Biases • Regional differences (North end and South end) • Differing institutional objectives • Work happening in silos • Largest growing County – distribution of decisions in office • Pride, territorial decisions	• Leadership, communication, and education (speaking the same language) • Logic • Identifying workflow • Norms, principles, and science-based data • Diversity of people, diversity of needs (not a one size fits all, need a multi-prong approach) • Campaign on what resilience means • Collaboration not duplication • Messaging mechanisms of value and consistency • Involvement of public relations • General consensus of institutional needs across organizations

Table A-12. Potential governance structure for a resilience plan and resilience action implementation.

Potential Governance Structure
• LMS Working Group o Get input from residents o Scrub existing project list o Mandate = easier lift o Add resilience to the name o Create a subcommittee responsible for overseeing development of resilience plan

Table A-13. Implementation details for potential resilience actions.

Theme	Resilience Activity	Est. Cost [5]	Implementation Timeframe[6]	Needs a detailed plan?	Lead(s)	Critical Partners	Notes
Potential Recommendations for Walton County Comprehensive Plan	Identify Flood Prone Properties to Purchase as Conservation Lands	$$$$	Long-term	Yes	The County	Non-profits, state agencies	-
	Improve public transit and access	TBD	TBD	Yes	TBD	NAR, Seaside, Chamber of Commerce	Consider County master plan for trails Think about needs of businesses and workers Consider parking capacity in So. Walton
	Build out a community land trust (CLT)	TBD	Immediate	TBD	County ED: Uriah Matthews and Tom Baker	County, large landowners, ECRC service, non-profits, Sarah Lower	-
	Develop data for non-stationarity	TBD	Immediate or Near-term	TBD	County Planning: Mac Carpenter	Academies, LMS, ECRC	Existing data to comp plan Build more detail with local academies and regulators Identify mechanism for code integration
	Encourage density	$	Immediate	Yes	Uriah Matthews	Seaside Institute, ECAR	Integrate into DPZ Comp Plan Recommendations Public meetings - DPZ

[5] $ = thousands, $$ = tens of thousands, $$$ = hundreds of thousands, $$$$ = millions

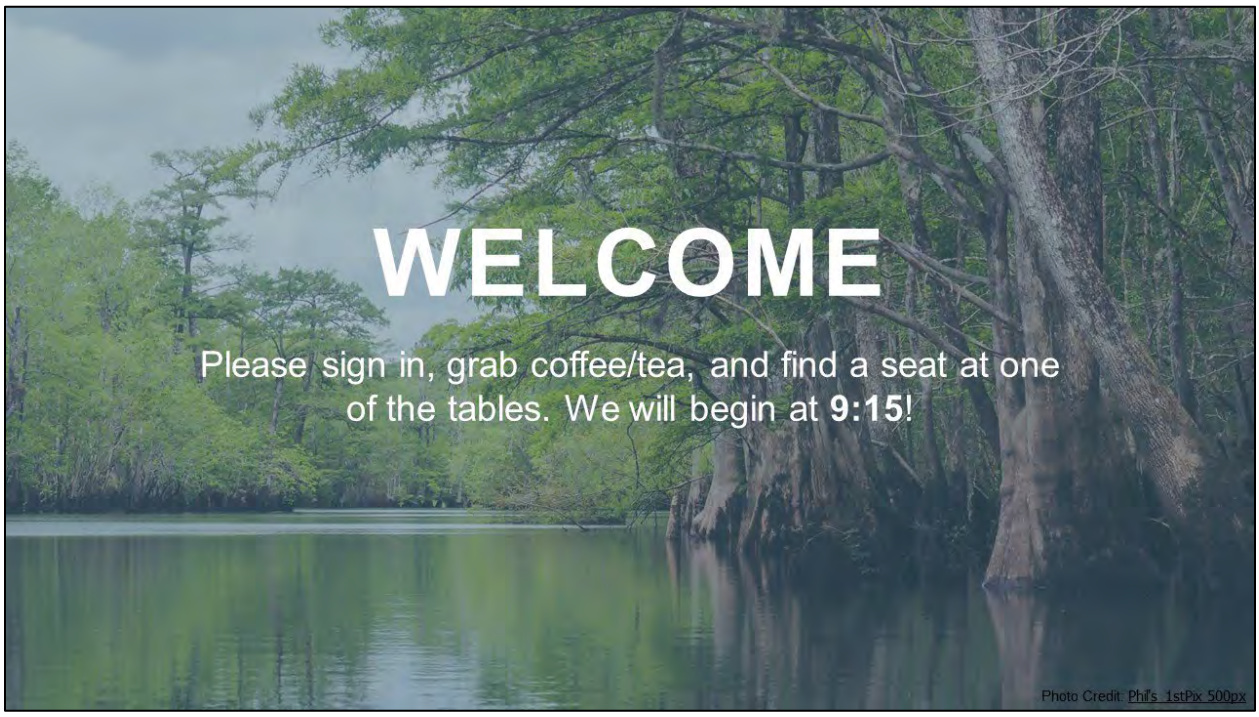
[6] Immediate = 6-12 months from now, Near-term = 1-3 years from now, Long-term = 5+ years from now

Theme	Resilience Activity	Est. Cost [5]	Implementation Timeframe[6]	Needs a detailed plan?	Lead(s)	Critical Partners	Notes
	Recommend investing in plans for regional stormwater banks	TBD	TBD	Yes	CRA (Josh Ervin)	General public, Developers, ECAR	Public Benefit Incentivize Need this for density
Education and Outreach	Educate the public on the Community Rating System (CRS)	$$	Immediate	No	Walton County Floodplain Manager	Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance, Choctawhatchee Bay Estuary Program, Seaside Institute	Will improve County's CRS score
	Identify who could pursue hiring a Walton County Resilience Coordinator	$$$	Immediate	Yes	The County	Landlords, churches, community centers, school district, UF/IFAS, CBA, EMS, Housing, Septic, Realtors, HOAs, libraries	Coordinator could identify, compile, develop, and disseminate resources
	Bring focused science and resilience-related conferences to Walton County	$$$	Near-term	No	Seaside, Sea Grant, CBA	EMA, Biophilia, Alaqua, Universities (UF, AWF, UCF), Seacoast, ECAR, local SMEs	Funding could come from philanthropic grants Attend Apalachicola NERR
	Stand up an education and outreach committee under the umbrella of the LMS/Resilience Working Group	$$	Immediate	Yes	LMS/ Resilience Working Group, Walton County EM	ECAR, Scenic Walton, Seaside Institute, Disciples of Preparedness, general public	Piggyback off existing events/collaborative Central place for meetings not in office (online)
Large-scale resilience actions	Fixing Barriers to Permitting for Nature Based Solutions	$	Long-term	Yes	DEP and USACE	South Walton Community Council	Needs legislative action Put seawalls and living shorelines on same permit Educate communities about importance of living shorelines to encourage legislators to change Ex: Martin County

Theme	Resilience Activity	Est. Cost [5]	Implementation Timeframe[6]	Needs a detailed plan?	Lead(s)	Critical Partners	Notes
	Undergrounding	$$$$	Long-term	Yes	CHELCO, Walton County EM, Scenic Walton, FPL	Public Works, Regional Utilities, Freeport, DeFuniak, developers	Utility companies in Southern part of County need to be at the table
	Sewer system expansion	$$$$	Immediate or near-term	No	Commissioner Glidewell, County, Council Member Vallee		-

APPENDIX B. WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS

B.1 RESILIENCE IN WALTON COUNTY WORKSHOP PRESENTATION



AGENDA

Time	Activity
9:00 – 9:15	Arrival/coffee/sign-in
9:15 – 9:25	Introductions
9:25 - 9:35	Presentation: What is the LMS Working Group and how does it connect to resilience?
9:35 - 10:00	Icebreaker: What is my role in resilience?
10:00 – 10:15	Overview presentation on effort/report findings
10:15 – 12:00	Activity 1: Understanding vulnerabilities and ongoing efforts **Breakout Groups:** 1. Environmental Resilience 2. Flood Resilience 3. Infrastructure Resilience 4. Social and Economic Resilience
12:00 - 12:45	Lunch
12:45 - 1:25	Activity 1 Continued
1:25 - 2:25	Activity 2: Prioritizing resilience actions in Walton County
2:25 - 3:35	Break
2:35 - 2:45	Presentation: What is a resilience plan?
2:45 - 3:35	Activity 3: Advancing a multi-institution, county-wide resilience plan
3:35 - 3:50	Next Steps: Who is doing what after this workshop?
3:50 - 4:00	Debrief/evaluation/close out

3

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

1. Share existing knowledge of risk and resilience activities
2. Build relationships between workshop participants
3. Identify areas in which resilience needs to be advanced in the county
4. Discuss what residents need to know from the report
5. Identify actions that can be taken to advance a multi-institution county-wide resilience plan
6. Identify *who* can take responsibility for different near-term and long-term resilience activities

4

INTRODUCTIONS

5

ABOUT THE WATER INSTITUTE

We employ applied science to assist communities to make informed decisions and plan for an uncertain future

ABOUT THE GULF CENTER FOR EQUITABLE CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Addressing systemic processes, challenges, and barriers to enhance and expand climate resilience.

6

SEASIDE Institute™

- Three core tenets—**Sustainability, Connectivity, Adaptability**
- Promotes the building of sustainable places through education and design
- Promotes mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly communities with lessened dependence on automobiles to promote better health and the ability to age in place
- Working on innovative new means of transportation connecting walkable communities, as well as other common interests with neighboring communities

7

INTRODUCTION TO THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE

- Currently 12 members
- Includes members from the Seaside Institute, Walton County Government, CHELCO, Scenic Walton, DeFuniak Economic Development, Freeport City Government, UF/IFAS Extension, and Eglin AFB
- Coordinating the advancement of resilience in Walton County
- Advising on the Walton County State of Resilience Report

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OVERVIEW OF THE EFFORT

GOAL: **Explore mechanisms for productive public-private partnership**

- Discuss physical hazards and social challenges, and build upon existing plans and implementation strategies
- Convene experts, residents, county officials, local non-profits, and other interested parties in Walton County to enhance equitable climate resilience

9

OUTPUTS

REPORT: SYNTHESIS OF RESILIENCE INFORMATION AND EFFORTS

- Synthesis of existing assessments, plans, coordination, and implementation efforts related to climate change
- Will serve as a backbone for coordination by providing a grounded characterization of current risks and ongoing efforts

REPORT: COORDINATING COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- A report detailing the activities of the coordinating committee and summary materials
- Will be shared with Walton County residents, businesses, and recreators
- Will include a recommended set of actions and next steps for future efforts to advance long-term resilience through public-private partnership
- Can be used by participants of the coordinating committee to communicate quickly with non-technical audiences

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PROJECT TIMELINE: SYNTHESIS

11

PROJECT TIMELINE: COORDINATING

12

OUTCOMES FROM THIS EFFORT

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WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

The **ability** of systems to **adapt** and **thrive** in the face of acute **shocks** (sudden, extreme events that threaten a community) and chronic **stressors** (long-term pressures that weaken the fabric of a community over time).

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SHOCKS VS. STRESSORS

Examples of Shocks

• Hurricane • Flooding • Extreme Heat • High Winds • Wildfire • Tornado • Extreme Cold • Pandemic • Infrastructure Failure • Power Outage • Supply Chain Disruption • Cyber Threat • Hazardous Materials Incident

Examples of Stressors

• Sea Level Rise • Chronic Flooding • Coastal Erosion • Saltwater Intrusion • Groundwater Threats • Urban Heat Island Effect • Drought • Aging Infrastructure • Economic Downturn • Poverty • Social Inequality • Lack of Reliable Transportation • Housing Instability • Food Insecurity • Lack of Healthcare • Chronic and Infectious Disease • Social Isolation

15

RESILIENCE TOPIC DEFINITIONS

Economic resilience	The ability of an economic system and individuals to **fiscally** withstand and adapt to shocks and stressors.
Environmental resilience	The ability of the **natural environment** to withstand shocks and stressors in a way that **maintains** their **ecosystem functions** and **services**.
Flood resilience	The ability to withstand chronic and acute **flood hazards** to **minimize damage** to social well-being, health, the economy and the environment.
Infrastructure resilience	The ability of **infrastructure** systems to **respond** or **adapt** to shocks and stressors in a way that **maintains** or quickly **restores** their **critical functions**.
Social resilience	The ability of **individuals** and a **community** to withstand shocks and stressors in a way that maintains their **mental** and **physical** health and **community connections**.

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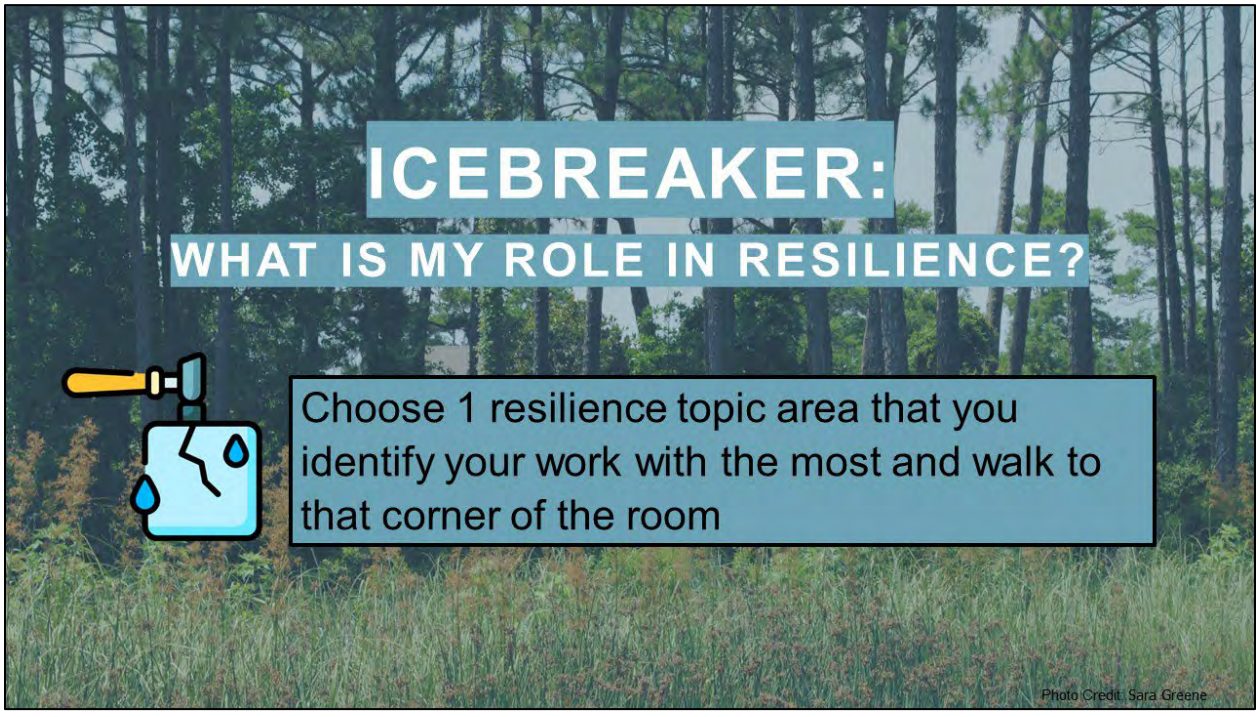
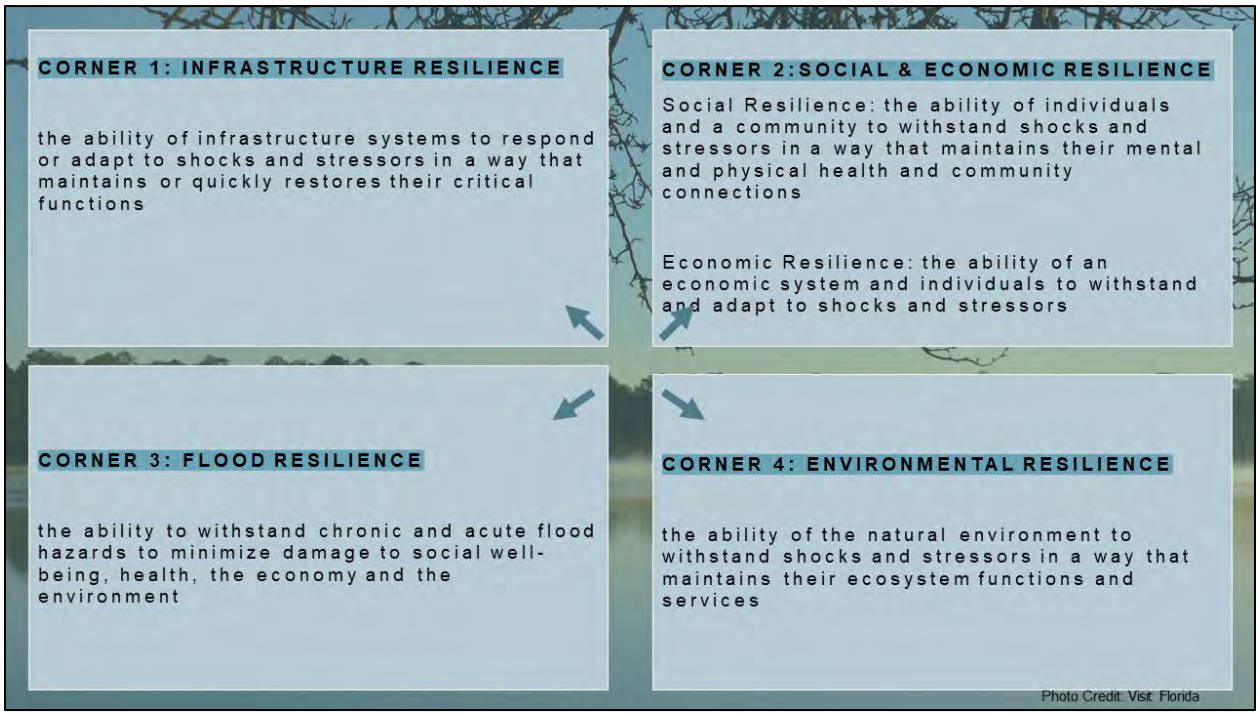
LOCAL MITIGATION STRATEGY
WORKING GROUP OVERVIEW
Photo Credit: Visit Florida


ICEBREAKER:
WHAT IS MY ROLE IN RESILIENCE?
Choose 1 resilience topic area that you identify your work with the most and walk to that corner of the room
Photo Credit: Sara Greene


CORNER 1: INFRASTRUCTURE RESILIENCE
the ability of infrastructure systems to respond or adapt to shocks and stressors in a way that maintains or quickly restores their critical functions
CORNER 2:SOCIAL & ECONOMIC RESILIENCE
Social Resilience: the ability of individuals and a community to withstand shocks and stressors in a way that maintains their mental and physical health and community connections
Economic Resilience: the ability of an economic system and individuals to withstand and adapt to shocks and stressors
CORNER 3: FLOOD RESILIENCE
the ability to withstand chronic and acute flood hazards to minimize damage to social well-being, health, the economy and the environment
CORNER 4: ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE
the ability of the natural environment to withstand shocks and stressors in a way that maintains their ecosystem functions and services
Photo Credit: Visit Florida

WALTON COUNTY STATE OF RESILIENCE
REPORT FINDINGS
Photo Credit: Lone Cypress

ECONOMY AND INDUSTRY

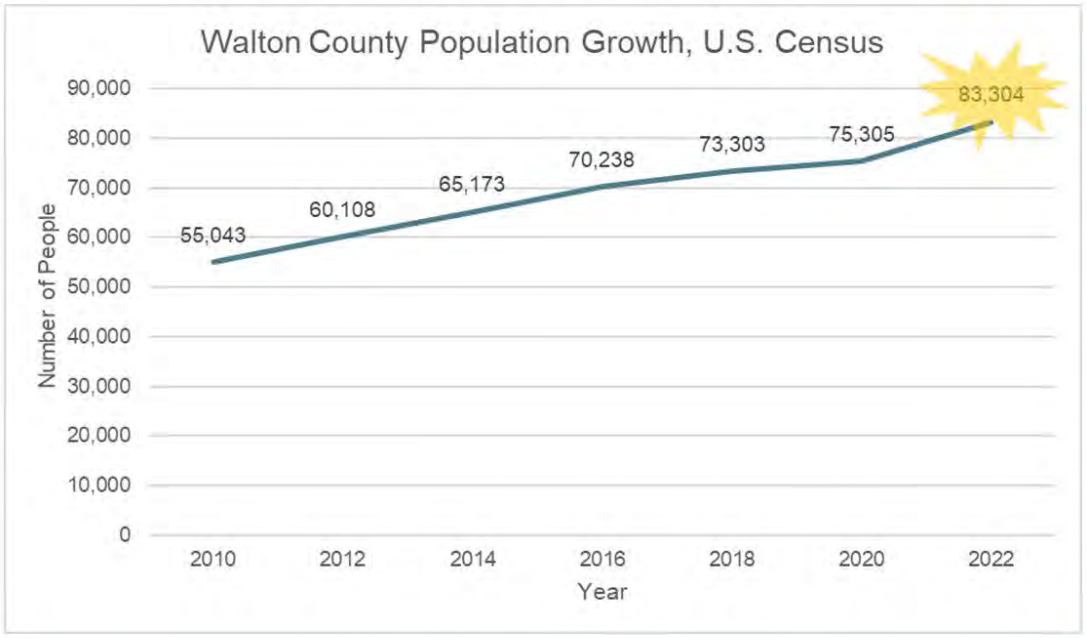
- The **tourist development tax** is critical for preserving natural areas and maintaining public access to the coast
- The **service industry** and **Eglin Air Force Base** employ many of the county's residents
- **Working waterfront** revitalization efforts in Freeport are setting out to improve waterfront access

21

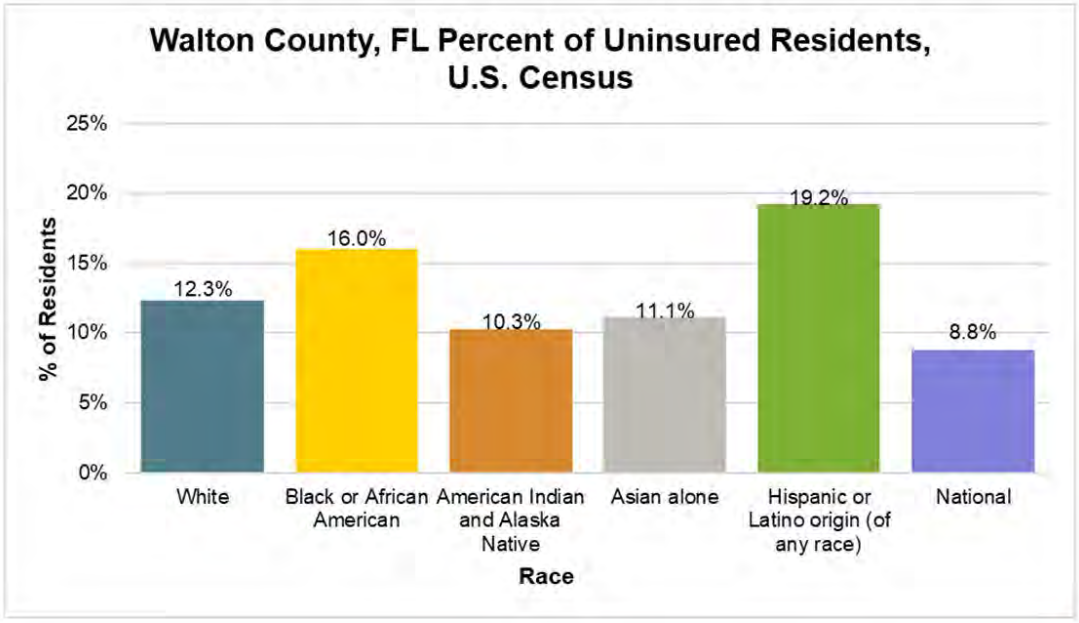
DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Dramatic **increase in migration** and household **wealth** throughout the county during COVID-19
- Increasing **stress** from lack of available/affordable **housing stock**
- 3 most populous groups: White (83%), Hispanic or Latino (6.5%) and Black or African American (4.2%)
- **12.4%** of the county's **residents** are living **in poverty**
- Access to **health care** and % of residents without health **insurance** has been a concern
- 11% of residents lack **broadband** internet

22


Walton County Population Growth, U.S. Census
Number of People
90,000
80,000
70,000
60,000
50,000
40,000
30,000
20,000
10,000
0
55,043
60,108
65,173
70,238
73,303
75,305
83,304
2010
2012
2014
2016
2018
2020
2022
Year

23


Walton County, FL Percent of Uninsured Residents, U.S. Census
% of Residents
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
12.3%
16.0%
10.3%
11.1%
19.2%
8.8%
White
Black or African American
American Indian and Alaska Native
Asian alone
Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)
National
Race

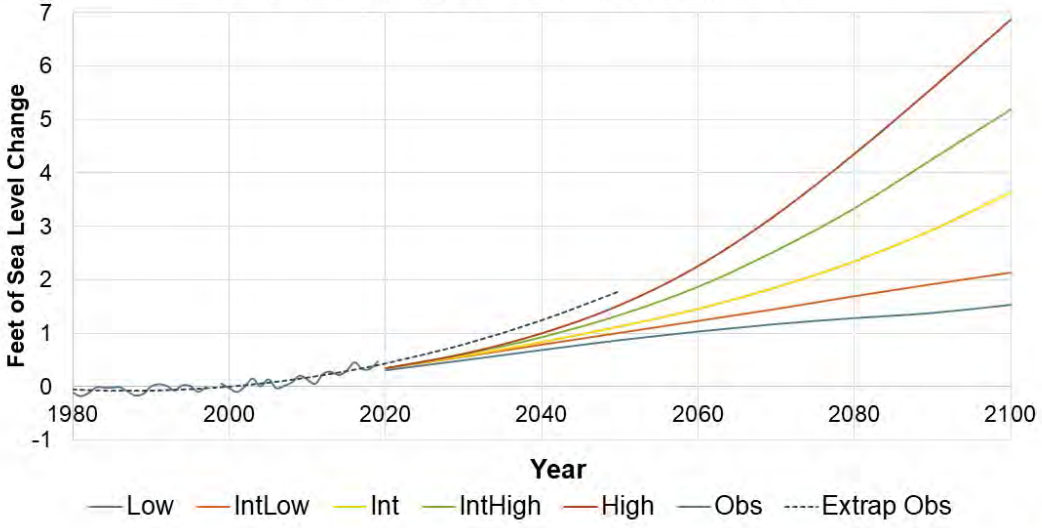
24

ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

- **Seas are rising** slightly above global averages
- **Extreme weather** is intensifying and becoming more frequent
  - The number of days per year with **heavy precipitation** is increasing
  - **Extreme heat** (both daytime and nighttime temperatures) has increased in the past decade, and continues to increase

25

Historic Sea Level Change Trends and Future Projections Demonstrate Significant Increase Under all Scenarios, NASA Interagency Sea Level Rise Scenario Tool



26

RAINFALL & HEAT

EXTREME RAINFALL

REGIONAL OBSERVATION

- The number of days with 3 or more inches of precipitation has been historically high over the past three decades[14]
- The number of days with heavy precipitation is increasing[14]

LOCAL FUTURE PROJECTION

- Under a 5.4°F (3°C) increase in Earth's temperature, the annual number of days with extreme precipitation (rainfall events that fall within the top 1% of historic rainfall events) is projected to increase by 23% [15]

EXTREME HEAT

REGIONAL OBSERVATION

- Average summer temperatures during the past decade have been the warmest on record[16]
- There have been very large increases in nighttime temperatures and more modest increases in daytime temperatures[16]

LOCAL FUTURE PROJECTION

- Under a 5.4°F (3°C) increase in Earth's temperature, the annual number of days with temperatures 95°F or higher in Walton County is projected to increase by 55 days[17]

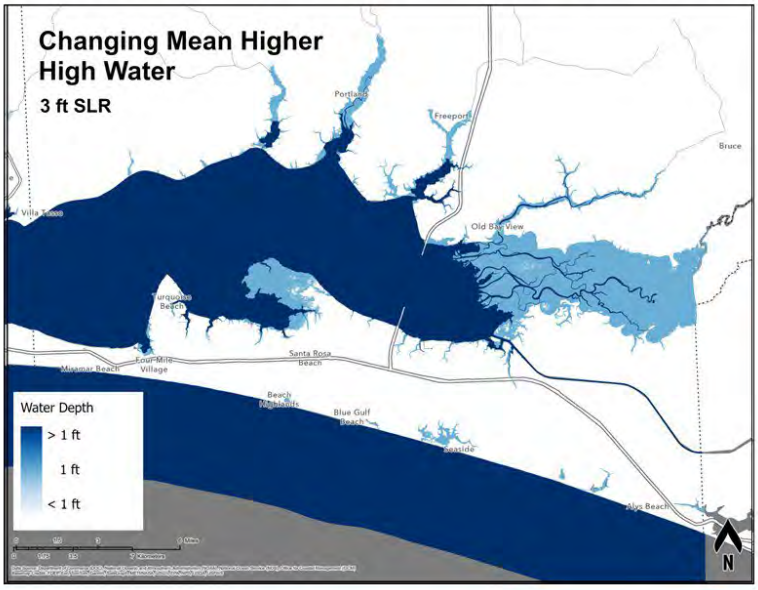
27

SHIFTS IN HAZARDS

- **Floodplains** continue to get **larger** and **deeper** due to SLR and extreme precipitation
- **High tide flooding** has increased in frequency and severity
- Depth and extent of **storm surge** will increase as seas rise
- Higher seas and increased development will likely reduce stormwater **drainage capacity**
- The number of **extreme heat days** per year is increasing with a warming climate

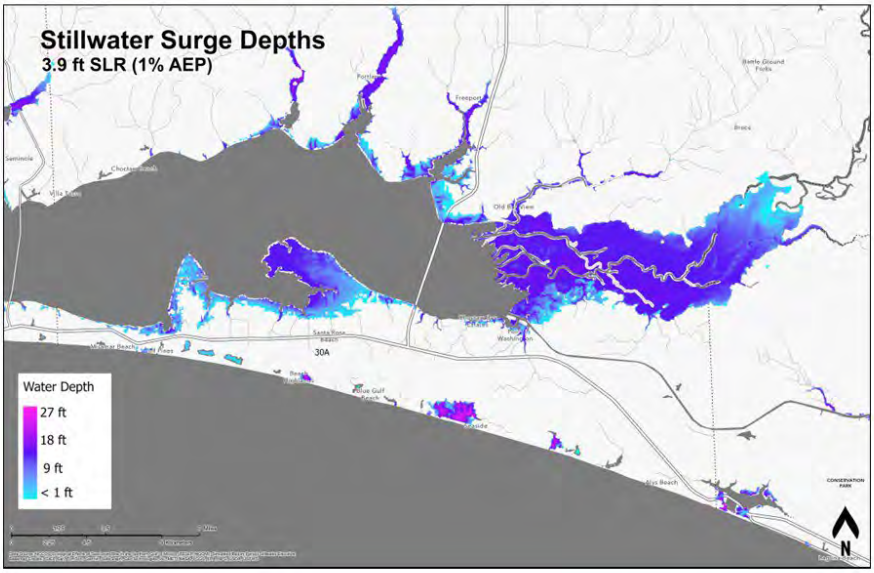
28

CHANGING MEAN HIGHER HIGH WATER



29

STILLWATER SURGE DEPTHS



30

IMPACTS OF CHANGING HAZARDS ON RESIDENTS

- More of the existing **housing** stock will be directly **exposed**
- **Damages** to structures will increase from more frequent and severe storm surge
- The need for temporary **shelter** and **housing** will increase with increased number of disasters
- Small **businesses** and **revenue** from tourism dollars will face increased risk
- It will be more **difficult** for economically insecure residents to **withstand** and **recover** from a disaster

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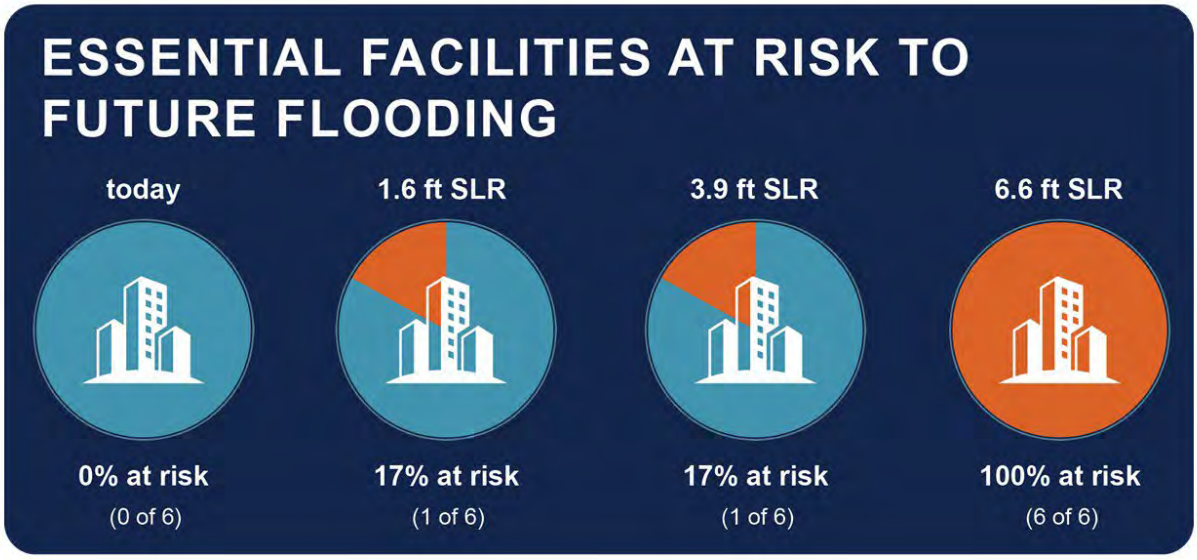
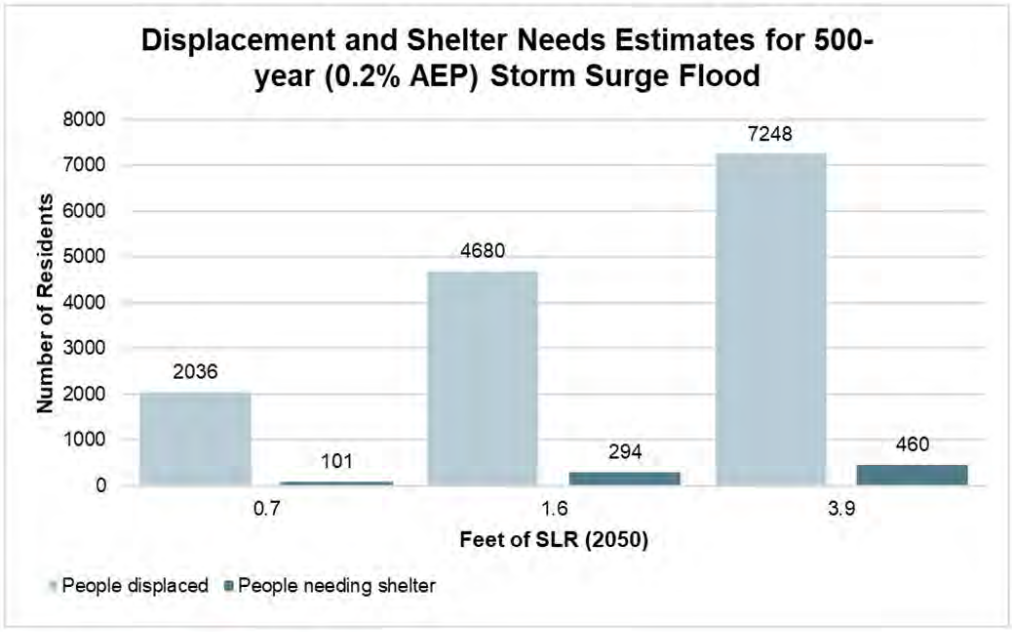
DAMAGE ESTIMATES FOR WALTON COUNTY STRUCTURES UNDER FUTURE STILLWATER FLOODING SCENARIOS

Feet of SLR	AEP	Damage (# of buildings)	Substantial Damage (# of buildings)
0.7	0.2%	389	141
1.6	0.2%	1,355	507
3.9	0.2%	2,695	1,188

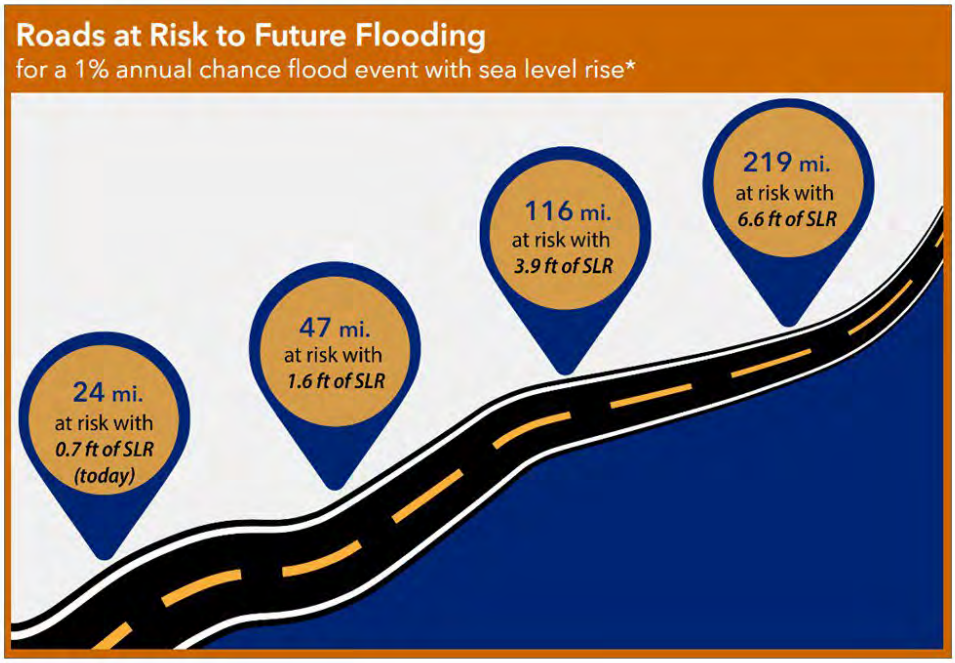
32


ESSENTIAL FACILITIES AT RISK TO FUTURE FLOODING
today
1.6 ft SLR
3.9 ft SLR
6.6 ft SLR
0% at risk
(0 of 6)
17% at risk
(1 of 6)
17% at risk
(1 of 6)
100% at risk
(6 of 6)

33


Displacement and Shelter Needs Estimates for 500-year (0.2% AEP) Storm Surge Flood
Number of Residents
8000
7000
6000
5000
4000
3000
2000
1000
0
2036
101
4680
294
7248
460
0.7
1.6
3.9
Feet of SLR (2050)
People displaced
People needing shelter

34



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RESILIENCE EFFORTS TO DATE

HOUSING
- Live Local Act
- Housing efforts nested in comprehensive plans

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT
- Walton County Floodplain Management Ordinance
- National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and CRS Participation

COUNTYWIDE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING
- Walton County Comprehensive Plan
- Walton County Land Development Code
- Walton County 2021 Beach Renourishment Project
- 2014 Hurricane Storm Damage Reduction Project
- City of DeFuniak Springs 2025 Comprehensive Plan
- City of Freeport Comprehensive Plan & Land Development Code
- 2045 Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization Long Range Transportation Plan
  Walton County 2040 Mobility Plan

HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING
- Walton County Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS)

DISASTER PLANNING
- Walton County Emergency Management Plan (2020)
- Walton County Post Disaster Redevelopment Plan (PDRP)

WATERSHED PLANNING
- South Atlantic Coastal Study (SACS)
- Choctawhatchee Bay Community Based Watershed Plan

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UPCOMING RESILIENCE WORK

- Freeport Working Waterfront
- Vulnerability Assessment (Resilient Florida)
- Other efforts to be discussed and captured today

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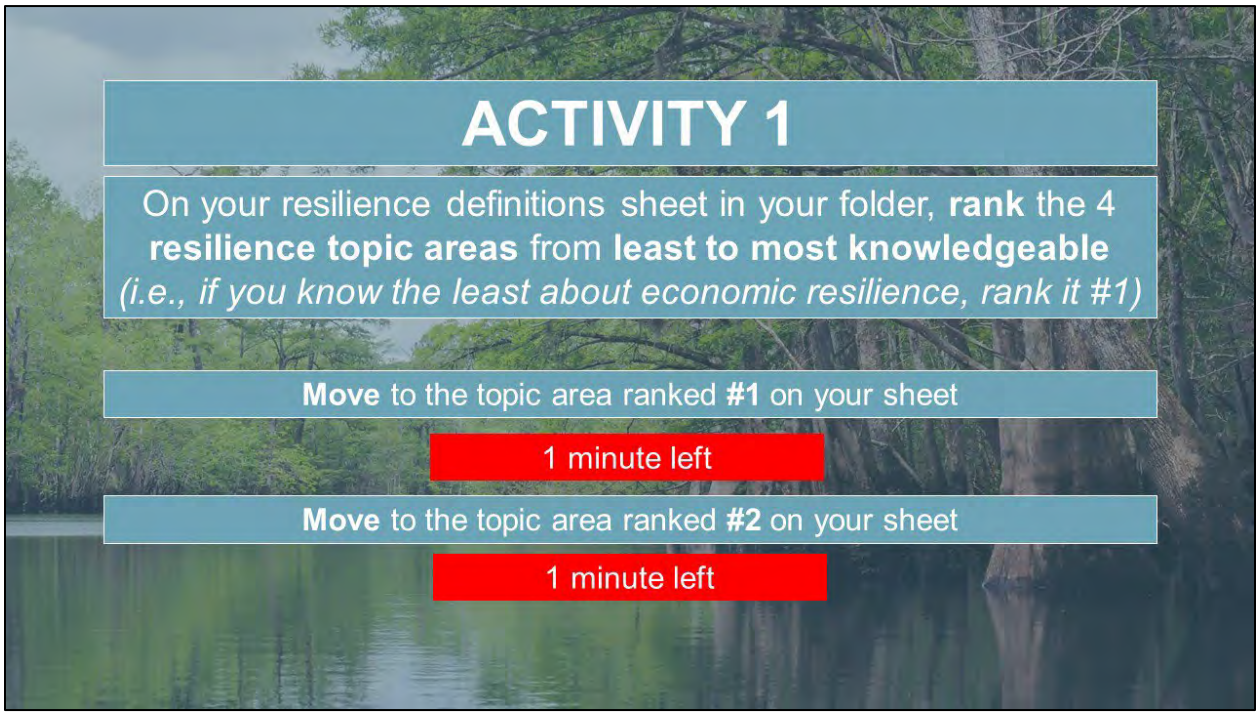
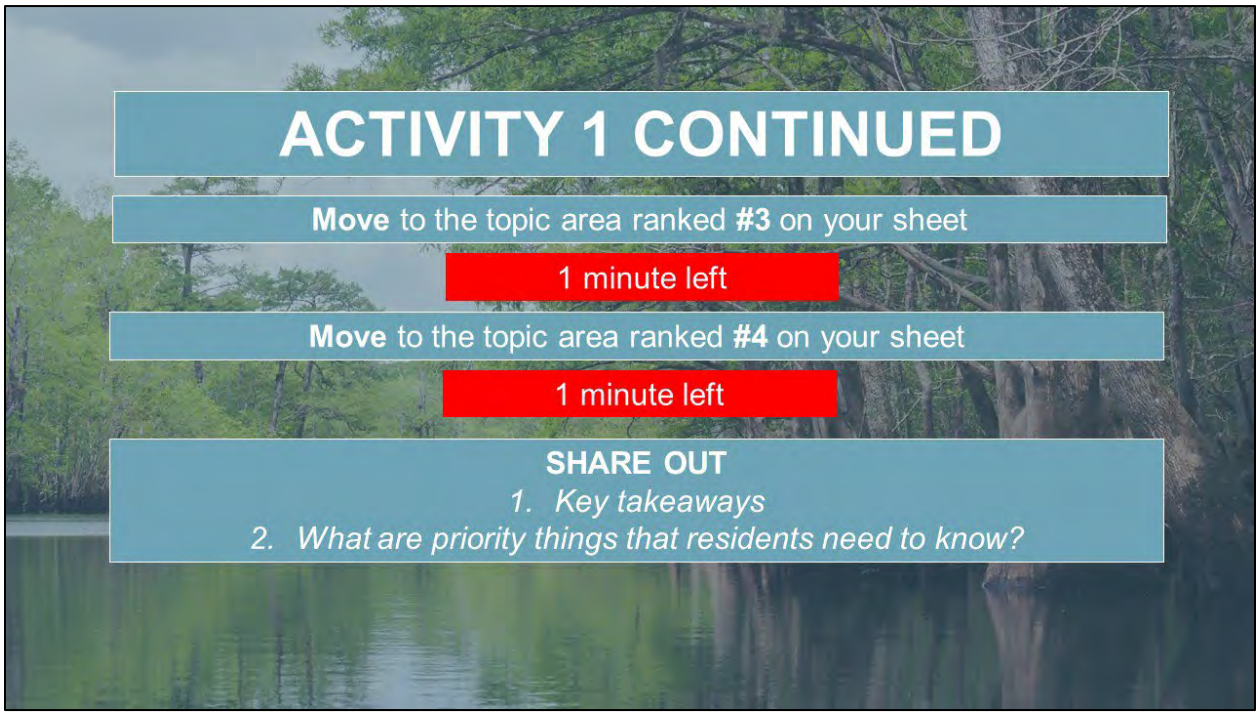
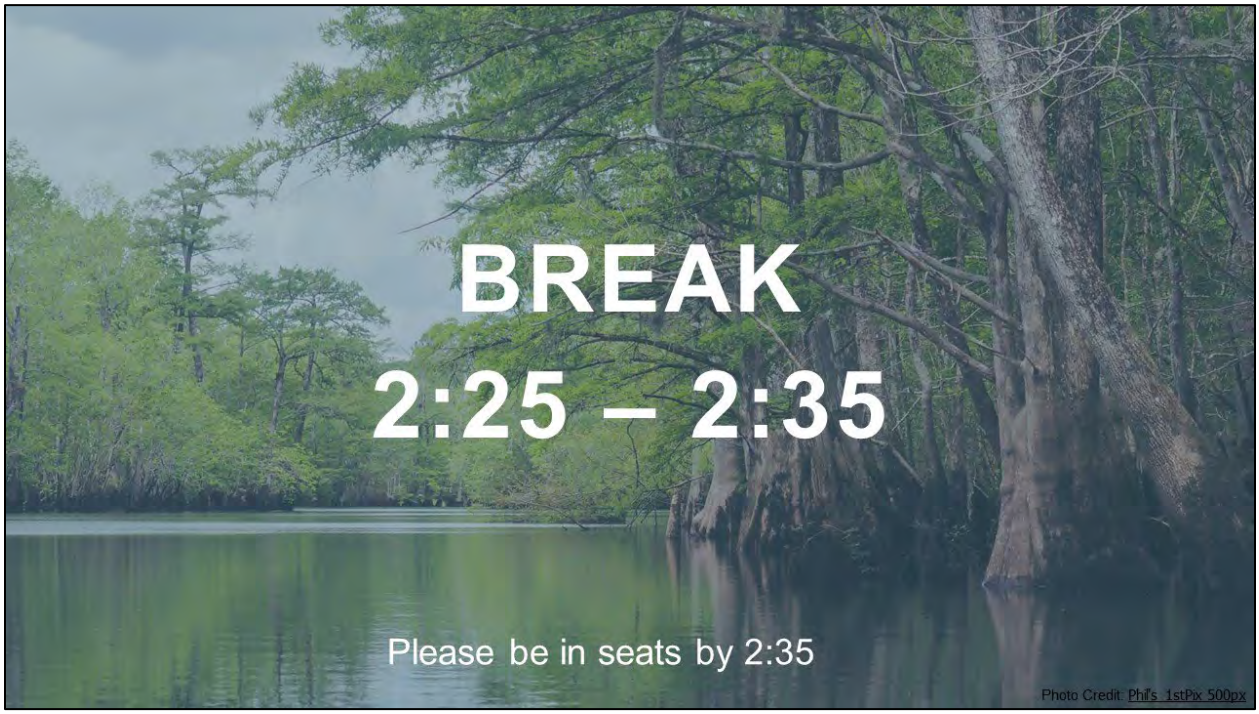

ACTIVITY 1
On your resilience definitions sheet in your folder, **rank** the 4 **resilience topic areas** from **least to most knowledgeable**
(i.e., if you know the least about economic resilience, rank it #1)
Move to the topic area ranked **#1** on your sheet
1 minute left
Move to the topic area ranked **#2** on your sheet
1 minute left

LUNCH
12:00 – 12:45


ACTIVITY 1 CONTINUED
Move to the topic area ranked #3 on your sheet
1 minute left
Move to the topic area ranked #4 on your sheet
1 minute left
SHARE OUT
1. Key takeaways
2. What are priority things that residents need to know?

ACTIVITY 2: PRIORITIZING AND ADVANCING RESILIENCE ACTIONS IN WALTON COUNTY
Objective 1: Share existing knowledge of risk and resilience activities
Objective 2: Understand what workshop participants think residents need to know from assessment
Objective 3: Identify who can take responsibility for different resilience activities (what can start now? What needs a strategic plan before folks can start on it?)
Photo Credit: Lone Cypress

ACTIVITY 2
Stay at your current group for Rotation 1
1 minute left
Move to the topic area ranked #3 on your sheet
1 minute left
Move to the topic area ranked #2 on your sheet
1 minute left
Move to the topic area ranked #1 on your sheet
Photo Credit: Lone Cypress


BREAK
2:25 – 2:35
Please be in seats by 2:35
Photo Credit: Phil's 1stPix 500px

- A **comprehensive** document to **guide** the development of **resilience** related **policies**, **projects**, and **programs** in a designated area (i.e., a city or a county).
- Traditional resilience strategy vs. a **multi-institution** resilience strategy

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POTENTIAL COMPONENTS OF A RESILIENCE STRATEGY

1. **Vision**: Where do we want our community to be? What are our goals, values, and priorities?
2. **Risk**: How, where, and how much do increasing risks threaten the vision?
   (e.g., increased rainfall intensity, sea-level change, increase in number of extreme heat days)
3. **Resilience opportunities** in the face of increased risk
4. **Analysis** of different alternatives
5. **Resilience priorities and actions**

EXAMPLES FROM JACKSONVILLE, FL

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POTENTIAL COMPONENTS OF A RESILIENCE STRATEGY

1. **Vision**: Where do we want our community to be? What are our goals, values, and priorities?
2. **Risk**: How, where, and how much do increasing risks threaten the vision?
3. **Resilience opportunities** in the face of increased risk
4. **Analysis** of different alternatives
5. **Resilience priorities and actions**

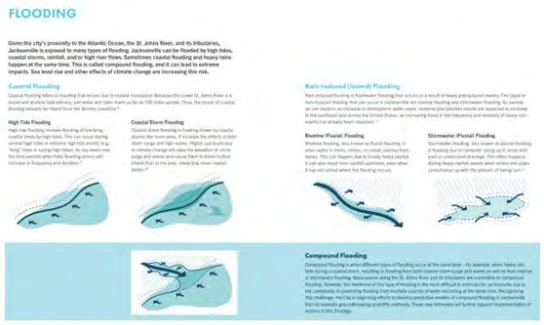
EXAMPLE VISION

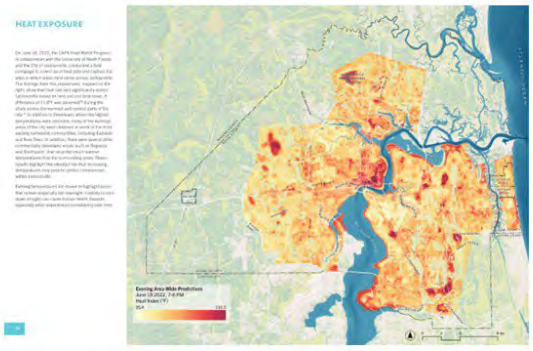
49

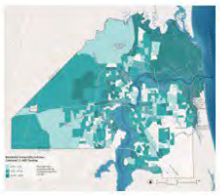
POTENTIAL COMPONENTS OF A RESILIENCE STRATEGY

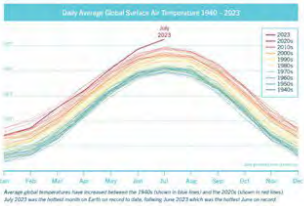
1. **Vision**: Where do we want our community to be? What are our goals, values, and priorities?
2. **Risk**: How, where, and how much do increasing risks threaten the vision? (e.g., increased rainfall intensity, sea-level change, increase in number of extreme heat days) *
3. **Resilience opportunities** in the face of increased risk
4. **Analysis** of different alternatives
5. **Resilience priorities and actions**

EXAMPLES OF RISK







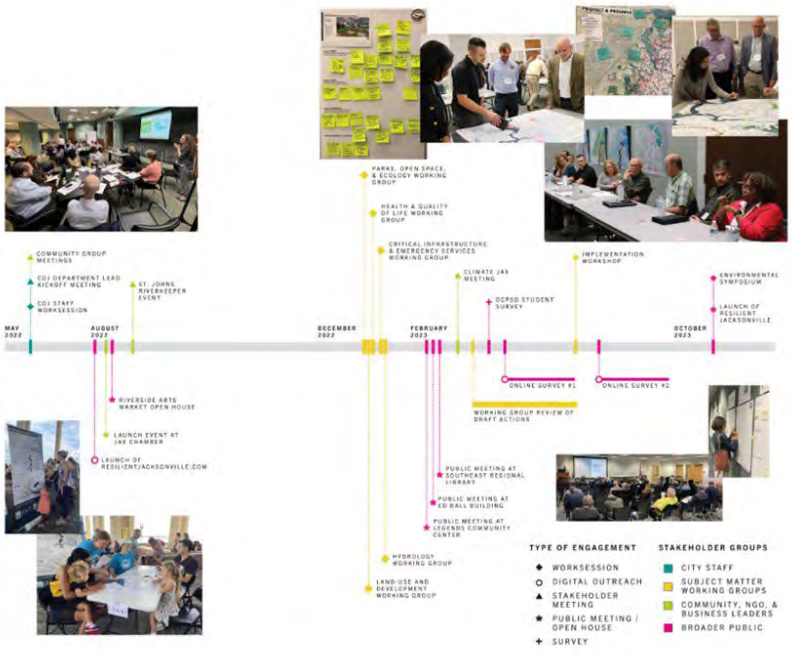


51

POTENTIAL COMPONENTS OF A RESILIENCE STRATEGY

1. **Vision**: Where do we want our community to be? What are our goals, values, and priorities?
2. **Risk**: How, where, and how much do increasing risks threaten the vision?
3. **Resilience opportunities** in the face of increased risk
4. **Analysis** of different alternatives
5. **Resilience priorities and actions**

RESILIENCE OPPORTUNITIES

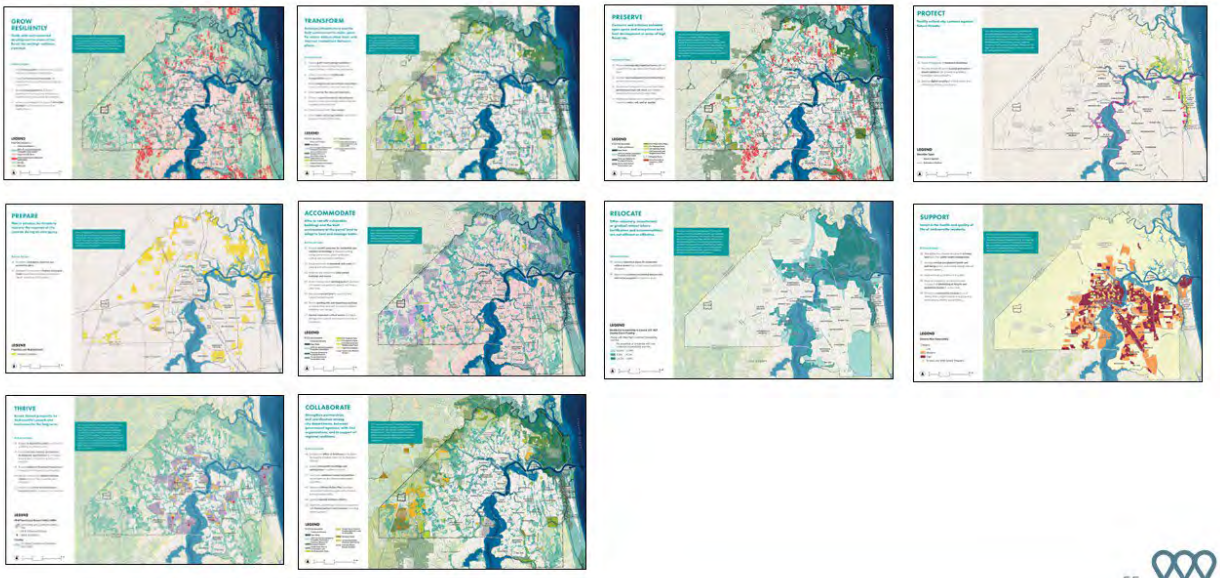


53

POTENTIAL COMPONENTS OF A RESILIENCE STRATEGY

1. **Vision**: Where do we want our community to be? What are our goals, values, and priorities?
2. **Risk**: How, where, and how much do increasing risks threaten the vision?
3. **Resilience opportunities** in the face of increased risk
4. **Analysis** of different alternatives
5. **Resilience priorities and actions**

ANALYSIS

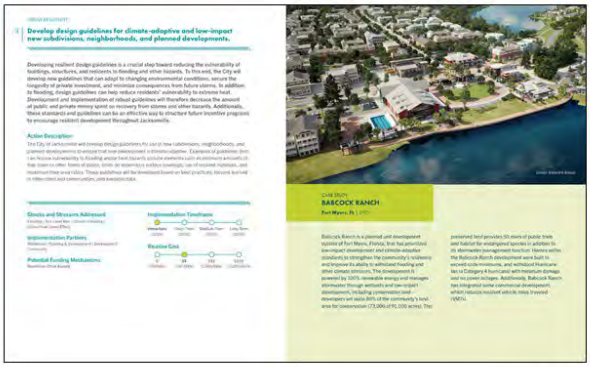


55

POTENTIAL COMPONENTS OF A RESILIENCE STRATEGY

1. **Vision**: Where do we want our community to be? What are our goals, values, and priorities?
2. **Risk**: How, where, and how much do increasing risks threaten the vision?
3. **Resilience opportunities** in the face of increased risk
4. **Analysis** of different opportunities
5. **Resilience priorities and actions**

EXAMPLES OF RESILIENCE PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS



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EXAMPLES OF RESILIENCE PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS

58

THERE ARE ALSO RESILIENCE ACTIONS THAT DO NOT REQUIRE A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN! ☺

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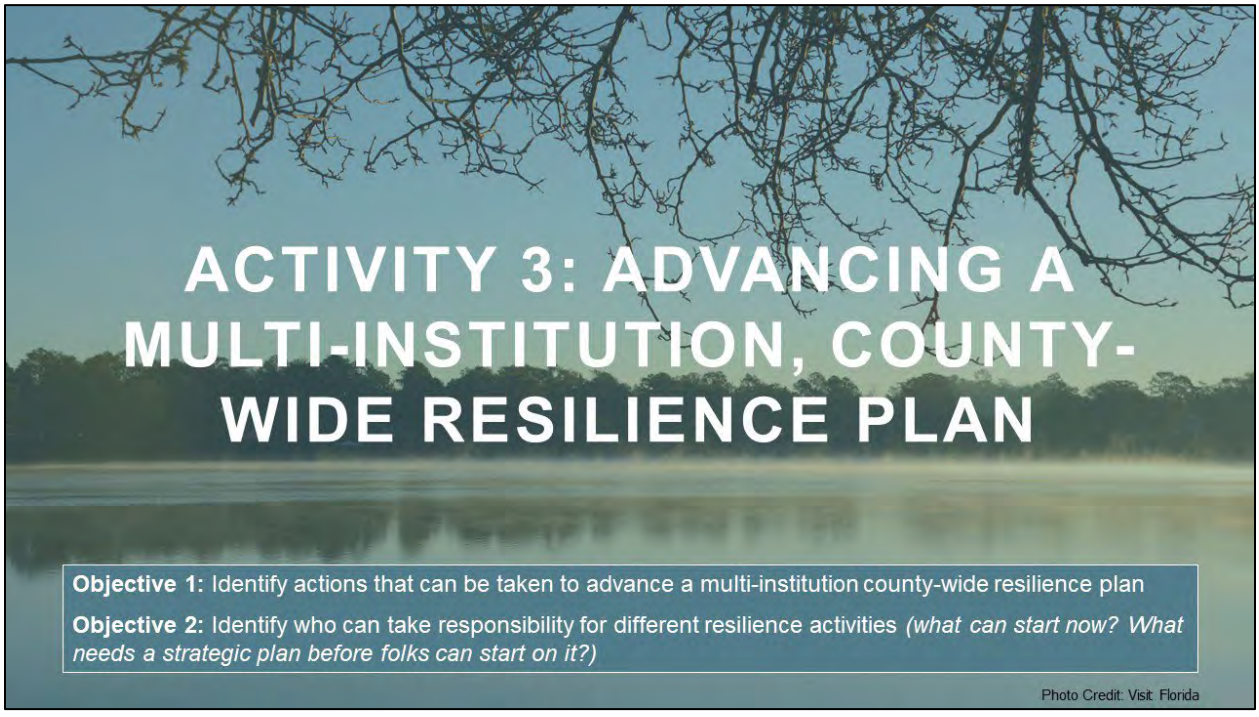
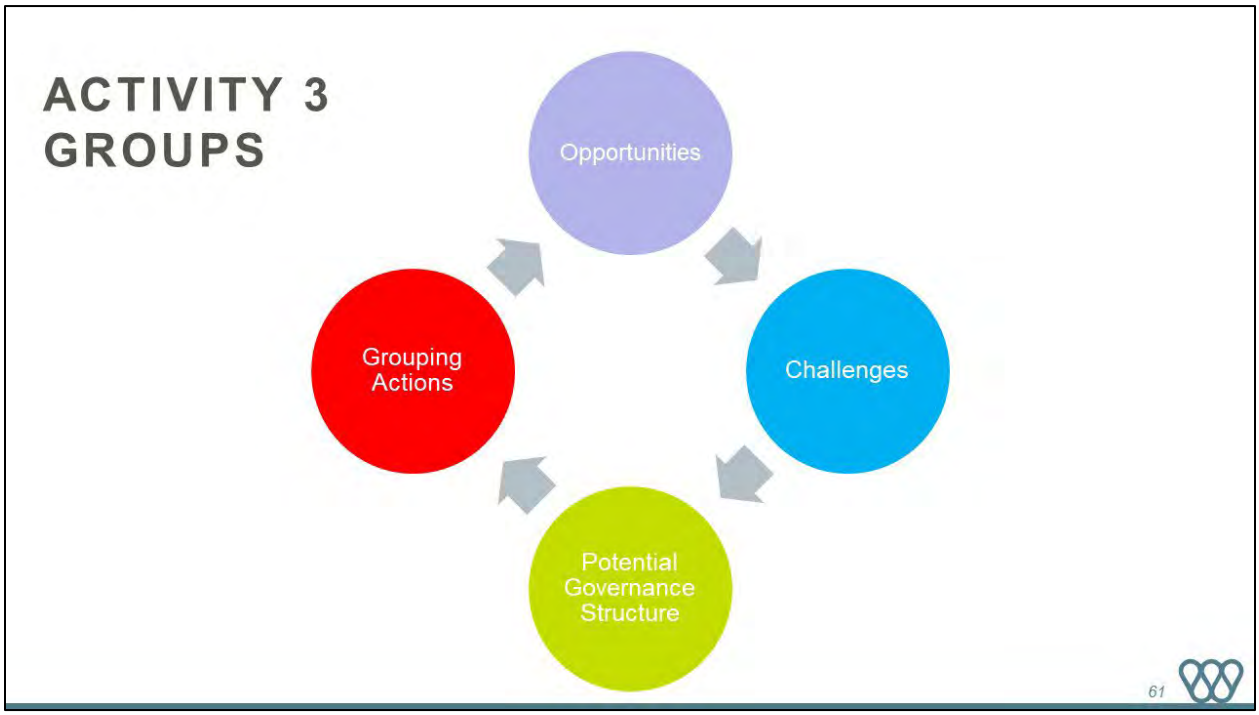
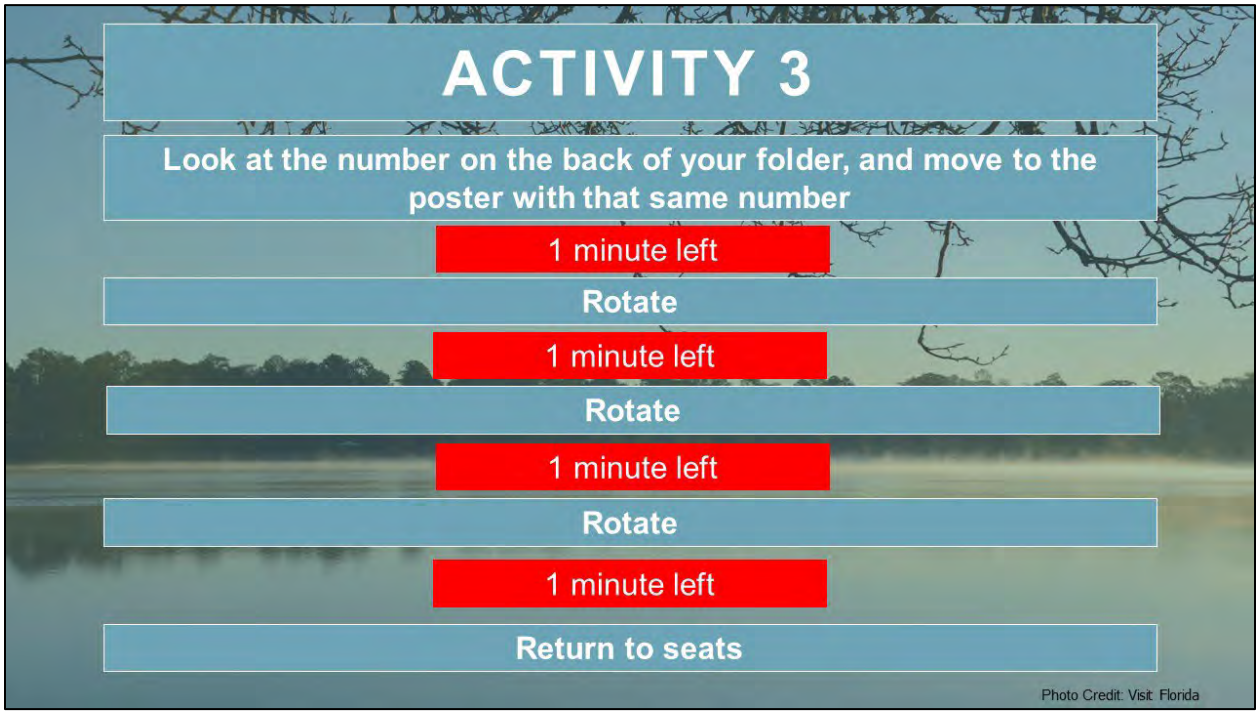



ACTIVITY 3
GROUPS
Opportunities
Challenges
Potential Governance Structure
Grouping Actions
61


ACTIVITY 3
Look at the number on the back of your folder, and move to the poster with that same number
1 minute left
Rotate
1 minute left
Rotate
1 minute left
Rotate
1 minute left
Return to seats
Photo Credit: Visit Florida

NEXT STEPS: WHO IS DOING WHAT AFTER THIS WORKSHOP?

1. Are there any issues that should be discussed for identified leads or partners on actions?

2. What support is needed for moving forward on the actions that were identified as not needing to wait for a resilience plan?

3. Who is willing to spearhead the development of a multi-institution resilience plan?

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NEXT STEPS: WHO IS DOING WHAT AFTER THIS WORKSHOP?

4. Who is willing to participate in pursuing the necessary resources and contributing to such a plan?

5. We currently have the resilience coordinating committee – who else would like to be part of that?

6. What other next steps are necessary for this effort to move forward? Who will lead those? Who will contribute to those?

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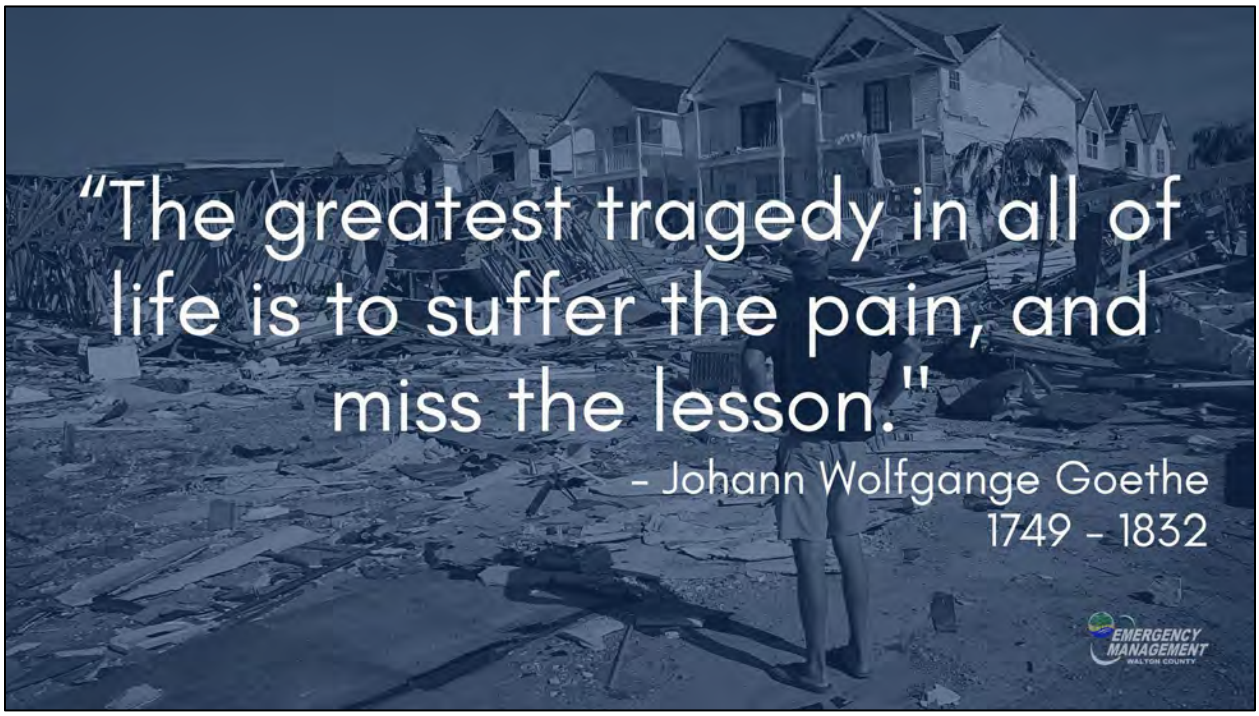
CLOSE-OUT & EVALUATION
65

B.2 LMS WORKING GROUP OVERVIEW PRESENTATION



Disaster Resilience

- The ability to prevent, withstand and recover from the harmful impacts of natural hazards on people, places and the environment

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
WALTON COUNTY

Community Resilience

- The ability to prepare for anticipated hazards, adapt to changing conditions, and withstand and recover rapidly from disruptions.
  - Prevention
  - Protection
  - Mitigation
  - Response
  - Recovery

Mitigation

- Any action taken to reduce or alleviate the loss of life, personal injury, and property damage that can result from a disaster

Examples

- Facility hardening
- Stormwater drainage projects
- Structural elevation
- Utility undergrounding

Benefits

- Reduce the loss of life, property, essential services, critical facilities, and economic hardship
- Reduce short-term and long-term recovery and reconstruction costs
- Increase cooperation and communication within the community through the planning process
- Increase potential for state and federal funding for pre- and post-disaster projects

Working Group Products

- Local Mitigation Strategy (the Plan)
  - Identifies resources, information, and strategies for reducing risk from natural* hazards
- Project Priority List

Local Mitigation Strategy

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT WALTON COUNTY

Project Priority List

Project #	Project Description	Hazards Mitigated	Cost Per Unit ($)	Units	Total Cost ($)	Potential Funding	Timeframe for Completion	Jurisdiction - Department Responsible	Cost / Benefit	Goals + Objectives	Project Score
2020-1	Generators for Fire Stations	Tornado Severe Weather Geological Winter Storm Utility Outages	$75,000	12	$900,000	HMGP, PDM, FMA	Short Term	•Walton County Fire Rescue	High / High	1.2, 2.1, 2.2	53
2020-2	Safe Rooms for Fire Stations	Tornado Severe Weather Geological Winter Storm	$150,000	15	$2,250,000	HMGP, PDM, FMA	Long Term	•Walton County Fire Rescue	High / High	1.2, 2.1, 2.2	55
2020-3	Drought coordination planning between water utilities and County and City governments.	Drought	Staff time	1	Staff time	Staff Time, General Funds	Long Term	•Walton County Emergency Management, •DeFuniak Springs Public Works, •City of Paxton Utilities, •City of Freeport Water Dept, •Water Utility Companies	Low / Medium	1.1, 1.2, 4.1	68
2020-4	Reentry coordination planning between water utilities and County and City governments.	Tornado Severe Weather Geological Winter Storm	Staff time	1	Staff time	Staff Time, General Funds	Long Term	•Walton County Emergency Management, • DeFuniak Springs Public Works, •City of Paxton Utilities, • City of Freeport Water Dept, and • Water Utilities	Low / Medium	1.1, 1.2, 4.1	68

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT WALTON COUNTY

Goals

- Provide the communities with the programs and the administration to protect life, property, and support community lifelines
- Improve mitigation capabilities and reduce the future expenses of the County, the municipalities, and their citizens through the support of mitigation initiatives and provide standards to protect structures in areas susceptible to damage by flooding and/or high winds

Goals

- Protect the environment and natural resources of the area by controlling development activities that would damage or destroy watersheds, wetlands, coastal resources, or other natural areas which serve as natural buffers and help prevent extensive infrastructure damage
- Coordinate in planning and provide land use regulations to limit damage to developments

It's All Connected

Next LMS Meeting

- Wednesday, April 3, 2024
- 2:00pm – 4:00pm
- Walton County EOC
- 75 S. Davis Lane
- Defuniak Springs

LMS Working Group Email List

Thank You!

Jeffrey M. Goldberg, FPEM, FMI, ICT3
Director
Walton County Emergency Management
Mobile: 850-307-4121
jeff@waltoncountyem.org

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
WALTON COUNTY

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BATON ROUGE, LA 70802

(225) 448-2813
WWW.THEWATERINSTITUTE.ORG