

February 2021

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## 2020 Recap: Resiliency in action



### Message from Planning Council Executive Director Sean Sullivan

Like many of you, the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council made major adjustments to how and where we did our work in 2020. Our team was nimble in adjusting to working from home, and we've begun a gradual transition to the office with a staggered schedule.

Working through these challenges, our team worked with our regional partners to make significant progress on major initiatives in 2020, from holding the first resiliency conference to exploring opportunities for solar energy around the Tampa Bay area.

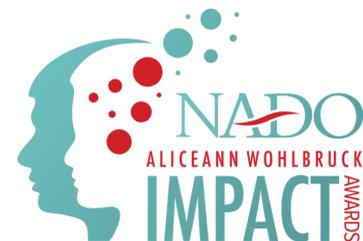
Over the past year, the TBRPC has updated its Project Phoenix model to estimate the impact of a Category 5 hurricane with a direct hit on the Tampa Bay area. The updated model accounted for changes in population density and local economies, plus other criteria, over the past 10 years in Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco and Pinellas counties. The projections are chilling, and our team is working with emergency management officials, chambers of commerce and small businesses to complete tabletop exercises and begin preparing now.

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## Project with Citrus and Hernando counties receives national recognition

The TBRPC has received a 2020 Aliceann Wohlbruck Impact Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) for its work with Citrus and Hernando counties.

The project updated the strategies the counties use to prepare for and respond to climate variability and natural disasters, based on changes in population and economic factors over a five-year period.



Through NADO, regional development organizations work to promote programs and policies that strengthen local governments, communities, and economies through regional cooperation, program delivery, and comprehensive strategies. The awards recognize organizations for noteworthy projects that improve the economic and community competitiveness of our nation's regions and local communities.

It was one of 79 projects nationwide that were recognized during NADO's virtual 2020 Annual Training Conference, held online October 20-22, 2020.

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## Pandemic caused \$2.3B loss in spring/summer

A September report by the TBRPC quantified the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Tampa Bay region's economy.

The region suffered an estimated \$2.3 billion loss in sales in the March-August timeframe, the report stated. Also, the area's unemployment rate stood at 10.1% in July – a figure that would have been more than one percentage-point higher if not for supplementary federal unemployment benefits.

The industry sectors with the biggest losses were restaurants, hotels, auto dealers, merchandise stores and tourism-related attractions. Conversely, big gainers included building materials dealers, grocery and convenience stores, junk yards, heating and air conditioning companies, building contractors and importers/exporters.

The report noted that “the Tampa Bay region is on the path to recovery, but that path is not straight nor is the end in sight.”

The TBRPC will continue to track the pandemic's impact on the local economy into 2021, which in turn can help municipalities as they determine how best to help those in need.

## Study on resilient affordable housing underway

Two recent workshops made progress toward the Resilience and Energy Assessment of Communities and Housing (REACH) Initiative's goal of making affordable housing more resilient to the impact of sea level rise and extreme weather events.



In addition, the TBRPC hosted a small group discussion with local experts in health, equity, housing and resiliency to discuss and define inequities and how to address them in resilience planning.

As a result, the TBRPC provided more than 30 frameworks, white papers, reports, recommendations and models for how to best integrate the topics of health, equity, climate and affordable housing into community development and resilience planning.

Local housing, resilience, and recovery planning experts and community leaders are using a two-year grant from JPMorgan Chase to assess potential risks that local communities face from extreme weather and sea level rise, and define new strategies and policies to increase affordable, resilient housing development and redevelopment.

## REGIONALLY SPEAKING DID YOU KNOW?



Col. Leslie MacDill

### The name behind the base

MacDill Air Force Base is named for aviation pioneer Col. Leslie MacDill. He served in World War I and often conducted hazardous flying in the interest of scientific investigation and development. MacDill assisted in developing a plan to expand the Air Corps as World War II began. He died at age 49 when the engine of his North American BC-1 aircraft failed shortly after takeoff on November 8, 1938.

## TBRPC executive director named to statewide position

Sean Sullivan, executive director of the TBRPC, will serve as chair of the Executive Directors Council of the Florida Regional Councils Association in 2021. The association works to facilitate regional collaboration among councils that are working with municipalities to plan for growth throughout the state.

The TBRPC is one of 10 regional planning councils in Florida that participate in the Florida Regional Councils Association. Through its membership, the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council works collaboratively with other regions to support economic growth, improve infrastructure and enhance the quality of life for all Floridians.



## Demonstrating the impacts of a Category 5 hurricane

In 2020, the TBRPC updated Project Phoenix to estimate the impact of a Category 5 hurricane with a direct hit on the Tampa Bay area. The updated models considered factors like greater population density, increased development near the coast and higher-intensity storms.

The projections show that as many as 40% of area small businesses could be expected to permanently close after a direct hit by a Category 5 hurricane. Storm surge plus significant rain can damage or destroy major roadways, power sources, essential infrastructure, business centers and homes, in turn making it impossible for many small businesses to survive if they haven't done proper advance planning.

In addition, the TBRPC created realistic simulation videos of catastrophic flooding and storm effects in recognizable parts of the region to highlight the potential dangers.

The projections, models and simulations are paired with virtual training tools that emergency management officials and business groups are using to prepare their communities for a worst-case hurricane disaster.



TBRPC worked with WFLA NewsChannel 8 in the simulation.

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In addition, we undertook analysis of COVID-19's impact on our local economy. The study estimates that the economic impacts from COVID-19 are being felt more acutely in the Tampa Bay area and Florida than in many other parts of the country. It expects three key drivers – economic losses related to COVID-19 deaths, a statewide drop in consumer spending, and a national recession – to negatively impact Florida's economy during and after the pandemic.

The cooperation of our partners makes our work possible, and by providing thoughtful analysis and sharing best practices, we contribute to the Tampa Bay region's success.

## CALENDAR

### FEBRUARY

**24**

Local Emergency Planning Committee @ 10:30 am

**26**

Resiliency Action Plan Workshop @ 1 pm

### MARCH

**1**

Agency on Bay Management @ 9 am

**8**

Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council Meeting @10:00 am

**16**

Stormwater Management Committee @ 9:30 am



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## Tampa Bay Resiliency Coalition takes major steps forward

The Tampa Bay Regional Resiliency Coalition (TBRRC) took meaningful steps forward in 2020, with the TBRPC working to turn the Coalition's goals into an actionable plan.

The TBRRC held a Leadership Summit in January to establish overall goals for making the region more resilient, and five virtual workshops were held to engage the TBRRC's Management Planning Committee, partners and subject matter experts on goals for a Regional Resiliency Action Plan.

The next step is to hold cross-jurisdiction workshops on the draft plan in 2021 to collect input and define consensus on the goals, objectives and recommended actions in the Action Plan.

The Planning Council is also taking a lead role in two other significant resiliency efforts. The Clear Sky Tampa Bay project is creating a toolkit for integrating disaster risk and resiliency into planning of solar energy sites and storage facilities. The Resilience and Energy Assessment of Communities and Housing (REACH) Project is quantifying potential risks from extreme weather and sea level rise, while defining strategies to increase affordable, resilient housing.

Reflecting the national-level quality of our resiliency efforts, the Regional Planning Council received a 2020 Aliceann Wohlbruck Impact Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) for our work with the Tampa Bay Regional Resiliency Coalition.

