REACH Methodology Analysis Summary Report

A Resource of the Resilience and Energy Assessment of Communities and Housing (REACH) Project

April 2022

Supported by a grant from JP Morgan Chase Foundation

Produced by the Florida Housing Coalition
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Planning Framework Identification</em></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Plan and Policy Crosswalk</em></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination Among REACH Consultant Teams</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying End Users</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determining Policies and Statements for Checklist Self-Assessment</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beta Test Housing Resilience Plan and Policy Self-Assessment Checklist</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checklist Development and Versions</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checklist Instructions</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-Part Webinar &amp; Workshop Series</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop 1: Overview of Key Principles for Resilient Affordable Housing</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop 2: Assessing Progress Toward Integrated Resilient and Equitable Housing</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop 3: Catalyzing Local and Regional Action</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Technical Assistance</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating Local Governments</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Was Learned from the Methodology Process?</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Summary</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top Three Best Performing Plans Based on Self-Assessment Conducted by Local Governments</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top Three Regional Areas of Improvement Based on Self-Assessment Conducted by Local Governments</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Areas of Priority</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Takeaways</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Areas of Opportunity</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

As part of the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council’s (TBRPC) REACH Project, the Florida Housing Coalition (the Coalition), along with the REACH consultant partners, developed tools and resources to assist local governments improve housing hazard mitigation and resilience planning capabilities in communities throughout the TBRPC footprint. The innovative resources developed by each consultant team intersect, providing an extensive process to evaluate the most at-risk elements, including affordable housing stock and vulnerable populations in a community. Seeking to advance implementation of evidence-based mitigation strategies throughout the region, the Housing Resilience Plan Self-Assessment Checklist is one of three tools the Coalition developed for local governments. The Checklist, using an interdepartmental team approach, is intended to be used to evaluate areas of opportunity, resulting in incorporation of affordable housing hazard mitigation and resilience in planning frameworks and spending plans. Taking a data driven and evidence-based approach, local governments can practically apply across various levels of local government to improve their use of mitigation best practices and target investment to address community vulnerabilities by proactively adopting policy and strategies through local planning instruments that provide a stronger and safer place to live for all residents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Florida Housing Coalition REACH Tools and Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing Resilience Plan Self-Assessment Checklist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Mitigation Resources and Funding Sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating a Housing Resilience Strategic Plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Community-wide resilience occurs when departments within local governments work together, integrating plans to result in consistent language, policies, and goals. This prevents gaps and disconnects that can inhibit disaster preparation and the ability to quickly recovery from a disaster. As communities across Florida brace annually for active hurricane seasons, climate-based changes, and other weather-related hazard events that often disproportionately impact low-and-moderate income households, seniors, persons with disabilities, and persons with other needs; the housing stock continues to age, and the threats increase. In the last five years alone, the United States experienced an average of 16.2 weather/climate-related disaster events, totaling an average of $126.0 billion annually, and resulting in a loss of 794 lives per year.¹ Historically, municipalities fail to mitigate existing vulnerabilities and wait for a catastrophic event to occur, resulting in loss of homes, loss of lives, and displacement from the community. Low-and-moderate are at high-risk for negative impacts during disasters. Taking the critical steps to identify, assess, and mitigate vulnerabilities in advance of a disaster prevents these disruptions and hardships.

Research

The development of the Checklist required broad research to identify various contributing elements that define benchmarks to measure a community’s ability to withstand a disaster. This research includes

evidence-based mitigation and resilience practices and resulting data that effects residential development, preservation of affordable housing, planning, implementation of construction standards, and building codes. Located in Appendix A, REACH Literature Search provides an annotated bibliography, summarizing the research’s applicability to the Checklist.

**PLANNING FRAMEWORK IDENTIFICATION**

Beginning at the federal level and traced to state and local planning frameworks, the Checklist process included identifying and documenting guiding policies, regulatory documents, and plans that dictate implementation of disaster preparation and response, housing development and/or rehabilitation, and mitigation and resilience. Defining the origin of the local plan provided a clear linkage to the mandate, specifying the purpose of the planning instrument and linking its purpose to its role in housing mitigation and resilience. This research resulted in the Plan and Policy Matrix.

**PLAN AND POLICY MATRIX**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JURISDICTION</th>
<th>Guiding Policy/Documents/Plans</th>
<th>Citation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FEDERAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Flood Insurance Program</td>
<td>Code of Federal Regulations, 44 CFR, Chapter 1, Subpart B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDEM-CEMP</td>
<td>Florida Statutes, § 252.35. (2020)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Plan</td>
<td>Florida Statutes, § 252.3655. (2020)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sadowski Affordable Housing Act</td>
<td>Florida Statutes, Chapter 420 Housing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida Building Code</td>
<td>Florida Statutes, § 553.73. (2020)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Plan</td>
<td>See Florida Statutes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incentive Plan</td>
<td>Florida Statutes, § 125.01055 Affordable Housing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PLAN AND POLICY CROSSWALK**

Using the guiding policy documents identified through the Plan and Policy Matrix, local government plans that incorporate or have the potential to support housing mitigation and resilience activities were identified. A thorough review of each local government’s planning frameworks was conducted. This
review included housing-specific regulations, codes, ordinances, and policies that directly relate to residential development/redevelopment, affordable housing, resilience and mitigation, disaster planning and recovery as it relates to affordable housing, vulnerable populations, affordable housing incentives, and green building practices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Government Identified &amp; Reviewed Documents</th>
<th>Land Development/Regulations/Code</th>
<th>Comprehensive Plan</th>
<th>Local Housing Assistance Plan &amp; Incentive Strategy</th>
<th>Local Mitigation Strategy</th>
<th>HUD Consolidated Plan</th>
<th>Post Disaster Redevelopment Plan</th>
<th>Rehabilitation Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Citrus County</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hernando County</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillsborough County</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manatee County</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasco County</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinellas County</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Bradenton</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Clearwater</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Dade City</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Dunedin</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Gulfport</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Largo</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Madeira Beach</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of New Port Richey</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Oldsmar</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Palmetto</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Pinellas Park</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Plant City</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Safety Harbor</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Seminole</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of South Pasadena</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of St. Pete Beach</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of St. Petersburg</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Tampa</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Tarpon Springs</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Temple Terrace</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Treasure Island</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coordination Among REACH Consultant Teams

REACH consultants from the Coalition, University of South Florida’s Florida Center for Community Design and Research (USF FCCDR), University of Florida Shimberg Center for Housing Studies, and Suncoast United Way partnered together, working in an interdisciplinary manner, to identify intersecting areas of evaluation and ensure all tools and resources demonstrated uniformity, incorporating elements from individual subject matter across each tool. The coordination helped define resilience indicators and data sets within areas of evaluation to identify where the need for housing mitigation exists. Team members worked together to develop questions and queries, identify end users, and evaluated each team’s resources and tools to incorporate elements from other consultants’ subject matter expertise.
Identifying End Users

The Coalition, in partnership with the UF Shimberg Center, identified end users categorized by sector, then subcategorized each sector by title or role. This resulted in the following potential end user groups:

**Public Sector Local Governments:** Executive Administration & Elected Officials, Local Government Planning, Local Government Emergency Management, Local Government Building Services & Code Enforcement, Housing Element Planner from Comprehensive Plan

**Public Sector Affordable Housing Program Administrators:** State Housing Incentive Partnership (SHIP) Administrators, Local Government Housing and Community Development Departments, Public Housing Authorities

**Private Sector Affordable Housing Programs:** Financial Sector Affordable Housing Programs, Non-Profit Housing Developers, Owners, assisted or non-assisted Multi-Family Housing Developers and Managers

**Other:** Housing Counselors, Real Estate Community, Financial Sector, Insurance Sector, Building Contractors, Green Building Professionals, Architects, Engineers, Planners

Based on the end user audience categories, the Coalition and TBRPC developed a contact list and outreached appropriate persons. Potential attendees were invited to participate in the beta test to solicit feedback on the draft Checklist and attend the Coalition’s three-part webinar series. The Coalition provided a contact list of 804 individuals located within the TBRPC region and who fell into the end user categories defined. Furthermore, 19 State Housing Incentives Partnership (SHIP) administrators across the region were targeted for participation. In addition to city and county staff, local stakeholders, federal and state government staff, nonprofit organizations, realtors, developers, financial institutions and Housing Finance Authorities (HFA), utility companies, Homeless Continuums of Care (CoCs), legal services staff, and consultants were identified as potential contributors. The total outreach list contained 1,381 individuals from various sectors relating to affordable housing.

Determining Policies and Statements for Checklist Self-Assessment

The content used to create the statements within each assessment tab was developed from plan-specific language taken directly from plan elements, statutes, instructions, guidance from plan origination, best practices supported by a specific plan, allowable activities under the plan, or regulation. The content language was taken directly from planning frameworks and documented mitigation best practices. Statements were then classified and weighted. Responses of No receive zero (0) points, Yes receive the full weighted points based on classification, and In Process responses result in half of the full weighted point.

- **Mandatory: 1 Point**
  *Indicates statutorily required policies or programs, as defined in federal or state law.*
• **Strong Performer: 2 Points**
  Indicates policies that are supportive of effective programs, implementation strategies and/or outcomes.

• **Best Practice: 3 Points**
  Indicates policies or strategies that are highly recommended and encouraged in various laws and leading programs.

• **Equity Principle: 3 Points**
  Indicates policies, goals or program recommendations that address racial and socio-economic vulnerabilities and disparities.

**Beta Test Housing Resilience Plan and Policy Self-Assessment Checklist**

On October 26, 2020, the Coalition and TBRPC facilitated two webinars to walk through the Checklist. Attendees, referenced as “reviewers,” received an overview of the REACH project, detailed explanation of the mitigation principles, and a full tab-by-tab virtual instruction of the entire Checklist. Reviewers were asked to thoroughly evaluate the Checklist content and function and provide feedback, edits, or corrections by November 13, 2020. The full presentation is available in Appendix C.

Feedback provided to the Coalition included various comments related to functionality, formatting, scoring, and context. Comments received led to the following changes to the Checklist:

• Removal of grading scale and progress measure descriptions
• Should be used as a self-assessment to determine areas of opportunity, not as a grading mechanism which can become politicized
• Clarification of descriptions for seven of the mitigation best practices
• Removal of the HUD Consolidated Plan from the Checklist
• The Consolidated Plan provides a Market Analysis and Needs Assessment, as opposed to authorizing policy related to housing mitigation and resilience
• Included area on each tab for person completing the assessment to list their contact information
• Improved upon context of statements
• Addition of the Community Rating System
• The National Flood Insurance Program’s Community Rating System is the link for local governments, allowing higher development standards allowable from the Florida Building Commission
• Addition of Rehabilitation/Construction Standards
• Identifying the origination of construction and rehabilitation standards is essential to applying mitigation best practices to affordable housing

As the Checklist continued to progress, it was recognized as a living document. This provided the opportunity to continue refining the tool as new information is discovered, feedback is presented, and mitigation best practices continue to advance. The Beta test process magnified that approaching the
checklist in an interdisciplinary manner was essential to promoting the connection of each plan, reducing fragmentation, and improving upon the interconnectedness of planning documents.

**Checklist Development and Versions**

The initial two-page tool expanded to a 16-tab Housing Resilience Plan Self-Assessment Checklist tool. The online Checklist was first evaluated internally among the REACH consultants, then presented to planners and local government officials within the TBRPBC region in a three-part series webinar format. Editing of the Checklist was restricted to prevent inadvertent alteration of the formulas and content. The only cells that can be edited are the checkmark response cells, comment fields, and the contact information fields. The final product resulting from the original beta review process includes the following tabs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tab 1</th>
<th>About REACH</th>
<th>Overview of the goals and resources from the REACH project.</th>
<th>Not Scored</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tab 2</td>
<td>Instructions</td>
<td>Information for the Lead and the Team to complete the assessment.</td>
<td>Not Scored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tab 3</td>
<td>Scoring and Performance Categories</td>
<td>Explanation of the assessment scoring, classifications, and performance categories.</td>
<td>Not Scored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tab 4</td>
<td>Policy References</td>
<td>Links to federal, state, and local regulations and brief descriptions of core plans.</td>
<td>Not Scored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tab 5</td>
<td>Housing Mitigation Best Practices</td>
<td>FHC’s recommended Mitigation Best Practices for resilient housing.</td>
<td>Not Scored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tab 6</td>
<td>Addressing Racial Equity</td>
<td>Three resources: framework for assessing equity in your plans; considerations for planning and National Low Income Housing Coalition’s equity in housing principles.</td>
<td>Not Scored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tab 7</td>
<td>List of All Plans</td>
<td>This section lists the local government plans to be reviewed.</td>
<td>Not Scored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tab 8</td>
<td>Hazard Risk Assessments</td>
<td>This section examines hazard and vulnerability assessments that are completed.</td>
<td>Scored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tab 9</td>
<td>Comprehensive Plans</td>
<td>This section examines the framework for housing mitigation within the Comprehensive Plan and other documents such as the Land Development Code, Code of Ordinances, or other adopted plans.</td>
<td>Scored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tab 10</td>
<td>Local Mitigation Strategy</td>
<td>This section considers how the LMS addresses hazard mitigation specific to housing resources along with vulnerable populations.</td>
<td>Scored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tab 11</td>
<td>Local Housing Assistance Plan</td>
<td>This section evaluates the LHAP and State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) resources to harden homes and build new resilient homes.</td>
<td>Scored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tab 12</td>
<td>Post Disaster Redevelopment Plans</td>
<td>This section addresses the Post Disaster Redevelopment Plan’s incorporation of mitigation and resilience actions and strategies.</td>
<td>Scored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tab 13</td>
<td>Community Rating System Plans</td>
<td>This section examines Floodplain Management criteria at the intersection of housing resiliency factors through the lens of the CRS.</td>
<td>Scored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tab 14</td>
<td>Construction and Retrofit Standards</td>
<td>This section focuses on green building and resilience criteria in new housing development and rehabilitation, with consideration for the neighborhood, building site, and housing infrastructure.</td>
<td>Scored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tab 15</td>
<td>Stakeholder Engagement</td>
<td>This section focuses on defining the people needed to create and coordinate housing mitigation and disaster preparation and planning.</td>
<td>Not Scored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tab 16</td>
<td>Program Performance</td>
<td>This section automatically tabulates results from each plan.</td>
<td>Sum of all Scored tabs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Checklist Instructions**

Participants completing the Checklist were encouraged to organize a team of individuals, often from various departments, who are responsible for development or implementation of the plans. Each local government received their own unique link to the Checklist, located in the TBRPC REACH Google drive.
This allowed for the REACH team to have access for questions, technical assistance, and final evaluation. The Team Lead was responsible for coordinating across multiple departments to select the most appropriate staff and combined comments, priorities, and next steps. As part of preparing to complete the Checklist, the recommendation to have plans accessible or draft documents for plan updates. The Checklist included links and resources to available documents in Tab 4, providing easily accessible information to local government staff conducting the self-assessment. Each plan assessment tab offered an extra comment area at the bottom of the sheet to detail any important components or elements that should be added to the next version of this tool.

The person completing the individual plan tab should have experience with the role, knowledge, and expertise to complete the assessment. Within each tab, the Checklist required the assessor to check the appropriate column from a dropdown box. Selection options included Yes, No, N/A, and In Process. Comment fields for each statement were included to capture feedback about the specific statement or acknowledge that some policies are in documents separate from the plan being reviewed. Each tab populates the individual totals per selected answer at the bottom of the sheet. When completed, Tabs 8 to 14 automatically populate the numerical totals in Tab 16, Program Performance.

**Three-Part Webinar & Workshop Series**

The TBRPC and Coalition coordinated the REACH Planning Crosswalk Webinar Series to help local governments review plans, identify gaps and opportunities, and add new housing resilience best practices to support updates to various local government planning documents. The three-part, interactive webinar and workshop series was structured to introduce local government staff to advanced principles for resilient affordable housing mitigation. The Checklist process was considered a resource intended to help people move forward in their practice. The three presentations are located in Appendix C.

**WEBINAR 1: OVERVIEW OF KEY PRINCIPLES FOR RESILIENT AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLANNING**

Webinar 1 provided attendees an opportunity to learn about the purpose of the evaluation tool and review how to use the Housing Resilience Plan Self-Assessment Checklist, offering steps to review and self-assess plans and policies relating to affordable, residential development with an emphasis on affordable housing. Each local government was provided with an individual link for their own unique Checklist. Any staff member who received the link had access to the fillable sections of their Checklist.

**WORKSHOP 2: ASSESSING PROGRESS TOWARD INTEGRATED RESILIENT AND EQUITABLE HOUSING**

Workshop 2 incorporated a preliminary analysis from the evaluation of completed Checklists. The presentation summarized areas of opportunity for improvement areas based on Checklist outcomes. Local government Team Leads presented to the audience, sharing their experience, and describing the participating team, the top three performing plans, top three areas or plans to improve, top three key findings and take-aways, and the top three next steps and priorities.
This opportunity for peer-to-peer sharing guided the facilitated discussion of internal and external barriers, tips, and next steps to address housing mitigation and resilience among local governments within the TBRPC footprint. The defined priorities for housing resilience and equity identified by participating local governments directed the topics for the third and final workshop.

**WORKSHOP 3: CATALYZING LOCAL AND REGIONAL ACTION**

Based on the Checklist results from local governments that formed the Regional Summary reported in Workshop 2, Workshop 3 focused on taking a targeted approach to mitigation and how to build a case for a Technical Amendment to implement higher construction standards, exceeding the Florida Building Code (FBC) through the Florida Building Commission. The presentation offered a review of Technical Amendments approved by the Florida Building Commission, which highlighted specific modifications and purpose of the amendments. Furthermore, participants received information on effective case studies to further emphasize the importance of resilient residential development in hazard prone areas, like the TBRPC region. Based on Workshop 2’s regional summary and the introduction of increased construction standards, attendees discussed potential next steps that are possible across the region, allowing for a collective impact approach to mitigation and resilience of the affordable housing stock.

**Direct Technical Assistance**

The Coalition actively engaged the local governments who attended Webinar 1, offering one-on-one technical assistance to support the completion of the Checklist, in addition to aiding in the development of next steps for mitigation or to address areas of improvement identified by the self-assessment. However, some local government staff were reluctant to participate in one-on-one assistance, limiting their engagement with the Consultants to context-related questions and coordination assistance due to staff capacity concerns.

**Participating Local Governments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counties</th>
<th>Cities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Citrus County</td>
<td>City of Clearwater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hernando County</td>
<td>City of Gulfport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillsborough County</td>
<td>City of Pinellas Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manatee County</td>
<td>City of Tampa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasco County</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinellas County</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What Was Learned from the Methodology Process?**

The process of developing the Checklist offered insight into areas of opportunity that can be implemented to benefit the region’s ability to evaluate and improve planning tools that direct housing mitigation and resilience policies and actions.
Collective Impact: Convening a regional group of local government departments who, in some form, impact the capacity to create a resilient housing stock is beneficial because it allows for cross-governmental collaboration and consistent implementation of mitigation best practices. If all local governments in the TBRPC region are willing to self-assess their planning frameworks and policies that relate to housing mitigation and resilience and improve upon weaknesses by taking a regional approach to consistent language and standards, the affordable housing stock and vulnerable populations will be more likely to prepare for and quickly respond to a disaster, reducing the loss of life and property.

The Need for Improved Interdisciplinary Coordination: Essential planning staff are not working in coordination when developing plans across departments within the same jurisdiction. Planning instruments and frameworks that impact land development and disaster preparedness and recovery originate in various local government departments and should be interconnected. Mandating interdisciplinary coordination to ensure each plan’s policies, language, and objectives are aligned is essential to a community’s resilience. Improving inter-departmental coordination when developing long-range plans, policies, ordinances, and other regulatory frameworks will improve a local government’s ability to target investment, reduce the impact of a catastrophic event, prevent loss of life and property, and promote a quick recovery in the wake of a disaster. The Checklist process further emphasized the need for inter-departmental coordination.

Vulnerability Assessments: Local governments should conduct a Community Vulnerability Assessment (CVA) prior to completing the Checklist. The REACH initiative has launched the CVA guidebook prepared by the USF team. The CVA Guidebook is a step-by-step manual for organizing, gathering relevant data, and compiling a housing risk assessment that prioritizes low income and otherwise vulnerable populations based on demographic data, structural descriptors of housing, and coastal flood hazard mapping. Once the vulnerabilities are identified, local governments can apply those vulnerabilities to completing the Checklist and identifying areas of opportunity for enhanced policy and program implementation. The result is a more direct approach to updating plans and improving policies or objectives to target the identified vulnerabilities from the CVA.

Development, Redevelopment and Rehabilitation Standards: Local governments are not going to prohibit development in high hazard areas (i.e., Special Flood Hazard Area or Coastal High Hazard Area). Building Codes do not require the highest construction standards for parcels in areas with high probability of a disaster event (flooding, hurricanes, storm surge). Some local governments have applied to the Florida Building Commission to mandate higher construction standards beyond the minimum code. Rehabilitation standards in place do not emphasize mitigation and resilience as the ultimate purpose. There is a lack of regional uniformity in the application of higher standards which will create resilient development or utilization of mitigation best practices. The companion report by the Coalition, Creating a Housing Resilience Strategic Plan, addresses these shortcomings with suggested policy language for existing plans and for a stand-alone housing resilience plan.

Use of Checklist: The Checklist can be used holistically to assess the local government’s overall planning frameworks or as a tool during a single-plan update. The Checklist does not need to be completed in its entirety but can provide insight to the development of one unique plan at a time. However, conducting the Checklist as a comprehensive assessment across the entire jurisdiction is optimal as plans are interconnected and it is beneficial to have uniformity and consistency across planning instruments to
effectively apply mitigation best practices and implement policies and strategies to achieve community-wide resilience. As a model, the Checklist can be adapted for other regions in Florida.

**Value of Community Rating System to Achieve Higher Development Standards:** It is not unusual for FEMA and local governments to modify maps that define flood hazard areas as new information and resources become available. In Florida, communities can enforce higher development standards to support increased Community Rating System scores that impact the National Flood Insurance Program, resulting in lower premium rates. Local governments can request technical assistance from the State Floodplain Management Office to craft unique ordinances and development standards that exceed minimum Florida Building Code. This may require submitting a Technical Amendment to the Florida Building Commission, allowing local governments to enforce higher development standards to achieve resilient housing infrastructure. Located in Appendix E are examples of submitted and approved Technical Amendments.

**Regional Summary**

**TOP THREE BEST PERFORMING PLANS BASED ON SELF-ASSESSMENT CONDUCTED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**

1. Local Mitigation Strategy
2. Community Rating System
3. Comprehensive Plan

**TOP THREE REGIONAL AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT BASED ON SELF-ASSESSMENT CONDUCTED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**

1. Post Disaster Redevelopment Plan
2. Construction Standards
3. Hazard Risk Assessments

**AREAS OF PRIORITY**

1. Ensure consistency within planning frameworks to eliminate duplication and emphasize implementation and investment in housing mitigation.
2. Encourage AHACs to promote incentives, green building practices, and housing mitigation activities.
3. Education and training for staff.

**REGIONAL TAKEAWAYS**

- Comprehensive Plan Elements lack the mitigation policy foundation to support and enforce housing mitigation activities.
- There is a regional need for policies, funding strategies, and initiatives for disaster housing mitigation programs.
• Although Green Building is identified as a regional strength in the Comprehensive Plan, it is not being implemented through plans like Construction Strategies, Post Disaster Redevelopment Plan, or the Local Housing Assistance Plan.

• Low- and moderate-income neighborhoods and areas impacted by disinvestment are not being prioritized for housing mitigation activities in the planning and response framework.

AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

**Comprehensive Plan:** Create a policy foundation that directly incorporates disaster housing mitigation which will influence land development regulation and spending plans.

**Local Mitigation Strategy:** Use community resilience indicators and evidence-based policy/standards to enhance disaster housing mitigation strategies.

**Local Housing Assistance Plan:** Define and require disaster housing mitigation in SHIP funded housing activities and evaluate incentive opportunities that can further support mitigation strategies.

**Post Disaster Redevelopment Plan:** Standardize housing mitigation techniques in all post-disaster redevelopment activities.

**Community Rating System Plan:** Identify areas that, when addressed, will increase class rating and prepare for future flood plain mapping that will impact existing housing settlement patterns.

**Construction Standards:** Strive for policies that exceed minimum codes or standards to ensure vulnerabilities are mitigated throughout the housing stock.
Appendix

Provided as a separate attachment to the Methodology report, the Appendix includes the following information:

**Appendix A:** REACH Literature Search

**Appendix B:** REACH Planning & Housing Self-Assessment Checklist for Local Governments

**Appendix C:** Beta Test Webinar Power Point Presentation

**Appendix D:** Three Part Series Webinar and Workshop Power Point Presentations

- **D.1.** Webinar 1: Principles for Resilient Affordable Housing: Conducting a Plan Self-Assessment
- **D.2.** Workshop 2: Assessing Progress Toward a Resilient & Equitable Housing Planning Framework
- **D.3.** Workshop 3: Catalyzing Local & Regional Action

**Appendix E:** Florida Building Commission Technical Amendment Examples