



Tessa LeSage
April 13th, 2023

Economic Recovery Branch April Meeting

Lee County Recovery Task Force



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Introductions

Recovery Task Force Updates

Problem Solving Process

Research and Data

Next Steps

Discussion and Questions

Public Comment



Introductions



Membership

- **Branch Leads:**
 - Chad Criswell
 - Dominic Cameratta
- **Branch Members:**
 - Jay Johnson
 - Donna Germain
 - John Lai
 - Ryan Markham
 - Ben Spence
 - Shane Spring
 - Rob Wells
 - Tim Abbott
 - Tim Mitchel
 - Ben Siegel
 - Frank Bonifilia

Introductions



Branch Meeting Support Team

Facilitator(s)

- Tessa LeSage

Branch Support

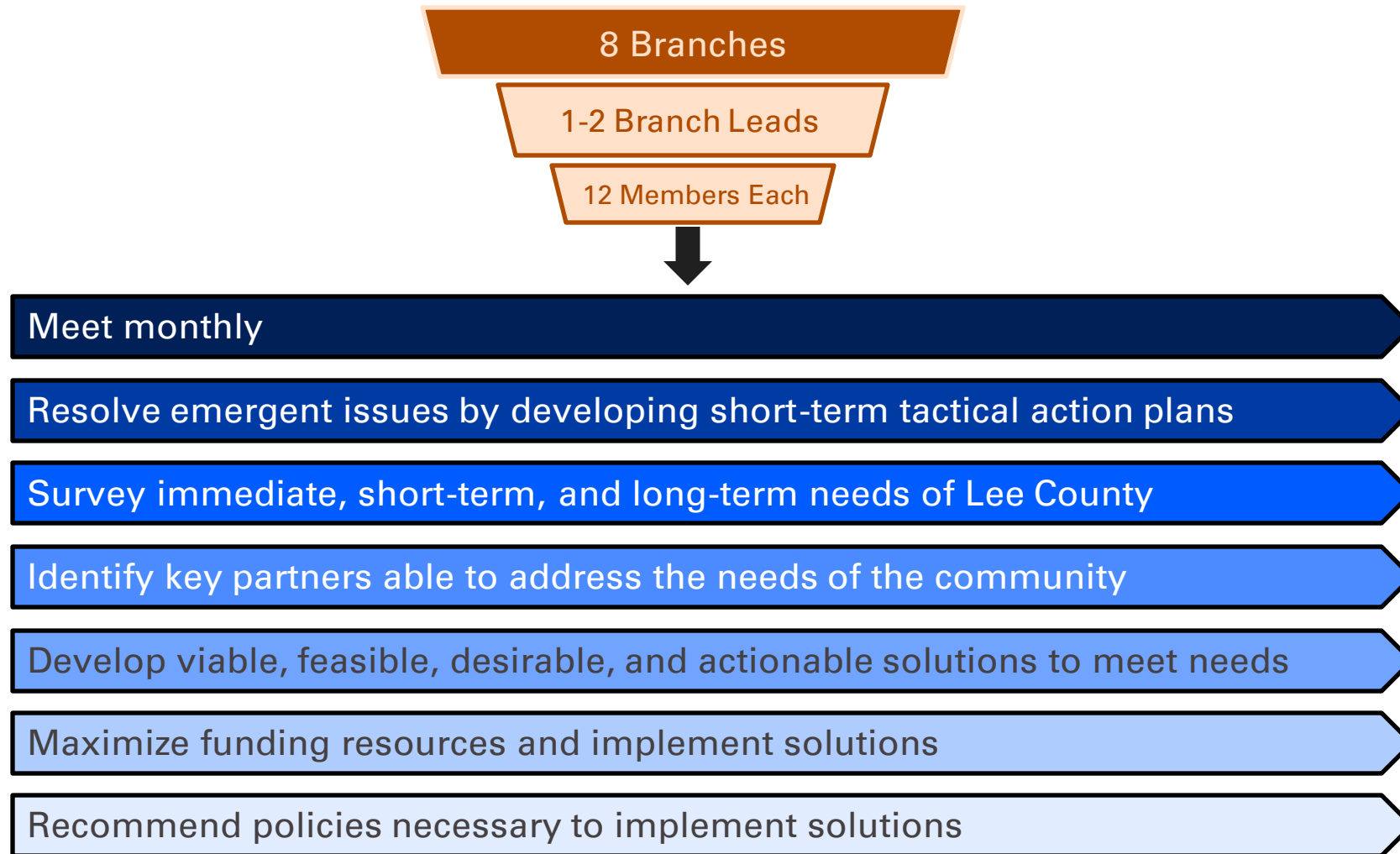
- Ilani Fernandes

Recovery Task Force Membership

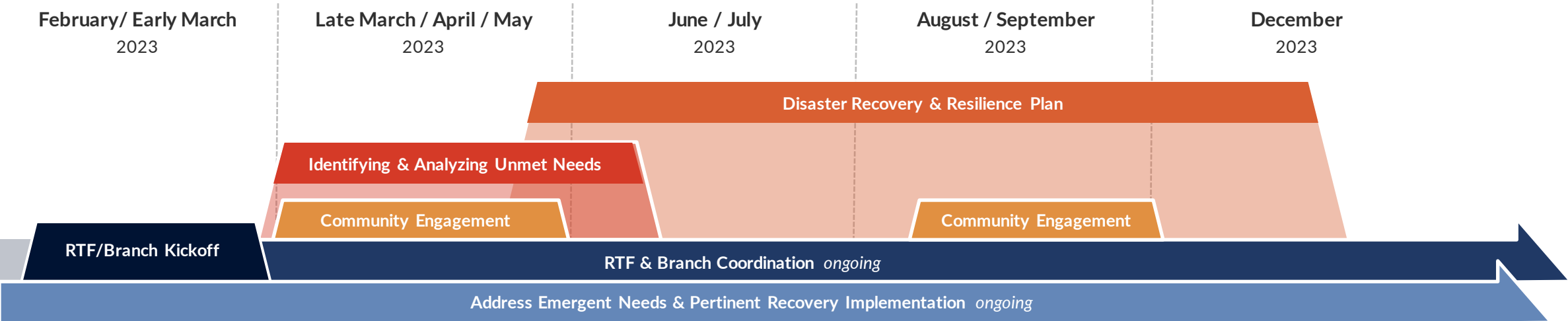


Agency	Position	Representative
Board of County Commissioners	Commissioner	Kevin Ruane, Chair
City of Bonita Springs	Councilman	Chris Corrie
City of Cape Coral	Mayor	John Gunter
Village of Estero	Mayor	Jon McLain
City of Fort Myers	Mayor	Kevin Anderson
Town of Fort Myers Beach	Councilman	Bill Veach
City of Sanibel	Councilwoman	Holly Smith
Law Enforcement	Undersheriff	John Holloway
Lehigh Acres Fire District	Fire Chief	Robert Dilallo
Lee County School Board	Chairman	Aarmor Persons
Lee Health	Board Member	David Collins
Legislative Delegation	Representative	Jenna Persons-Mulicka
Constitutional Office	Property Appraiser	Matt Caldwell

RTF Structure: Branches



High Level Process for Long-term Recovery Planning



RTF / Branch Kickoff

Establish the working structure for RTF and launch branches. Identify immediate needs and goals to address.

Launch website.

RTF & Branch Coordination

Identify recovery objectives; inform impact and needs assessment; establish projects; incorporate community's priorities; inform long term planning; oversee recovery plan implementation

Identifying & Analyzing Unmet Needs

Hurricane Ian storm impact analysis, and a cursory look at outstanding needs that will begin to shape recovery priorities

Community Engagement*

Comprehensive community outreach to inform and validate needs, identify solutions, and validate planning.

Hurricane Ian Disaster Recovery & Resilience Plan

A framework for Lee County's recovery from Hurricane Ian, including prioritized projects, funding sources, and key stakeholders

Emergent Needs & Pertinent Recovery Implementation

Conduct recovery operations and manage recovery funding streams: short-term, intermediate, long-term.

RTF is forum to identify emergent and time sensitive needs and identifying best path forward.

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Updates from the Recovery Task Force Meeting



RTF Updates

1

Community Engagement Strategy

2

Emergent Issues

3

No New Priorities

4

CDBG-DR Process and Progress

Branch Priorities



Branches	Branch Priorities/Initial Themes
Planning & Capacity 	• Plan for improved short-term recovery response (immediately post-disaster) • Increase inter-governmental coordination for long-term planning for resiliency • Propose planning community priorities based on those hardest hit
Economic Recovery 	• Identify partnerships and incentives supporting the workforce, such as affordable housing near jobs • Identify Short-term actions that support the rapid recovery of businesses, including access to financing, and marketing the tourism-based economy • Rebuild more public access to natural resources • Prioritize industry-sector growth to build a resilient economy
Education & Workforce 	• Improve workforce participation by increasing skilled and credentialed workers to fill jobs in Lee County • Create ways to partner and leverage resources to increase shared ownership of education, to improve outcomes and opportunities from early childhood education to career • Create systems that foster lifelong learning and training opportunities for all • Address outside variables (housing, transportation, mental health, childcare, etc.) that hinder education and workforce
Health & Social Services 	• Access through mobile services and for special needs environments that includes necessary services and accessibility to facilities built to provide services, pharmacies, mental health services • Coordination of a resilience hub with dependable and real time information and based on prior mapping critical care infrastructure • Identify mental health responses in real-time, especially one-year anniversaries, with support for staff and considerations for workforce retention and well-being • Identify regulatory requirements for special services and supportive living centers, options for providers

Branch Priorities



Branches	Branch Priorities/Initial Themes
Infrastructure 	• Preserve and harden critical infrastructure such as water, power, transportation, communications and sanitary infrastructure systems • Pre-disaster planning for supplies, evacuation, and shelter, especially for special needs during emergencies fuel, and cascading points of failure of weak links • Address increased shelter needs and return to normal operations for schools • Identify redundancy in infrastructure, systems, and partnerships, and sharing assets among jurisdictions and outside areas • Determine long-term improvements for livability
Housing 	• Deregulation to reduce costs of housing and consistency of codes and permitting for efficiency • Zoning changes to comprehensive planning that increases density and redevelopment • Address housing issues and development incentives for vulnerable populations and communities
Natural Resources 	• Determine regulatory actions and incentives to address impacts of natural resources • Direct actions to improve hydrological and ecological conditions • Create public education and awareness campaigns to reduce the impact on natural resources
Cultural Resources 	• Identify short-term recovery and stabilization of the arts • Convene the arts community supporting cultural facilities and individual artists • Identify regional cultural planning and representation for the arts

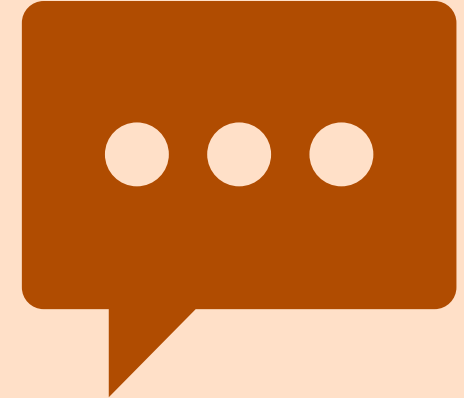
Meeting Purpose



1 What other information do you need to design, identify, or evaluate solutions in this space? Are there information gaps?

2 Are there other experts, organizations, or institutions you would like to hear from?

3 What kinds of solutions are you already considering for exploration?



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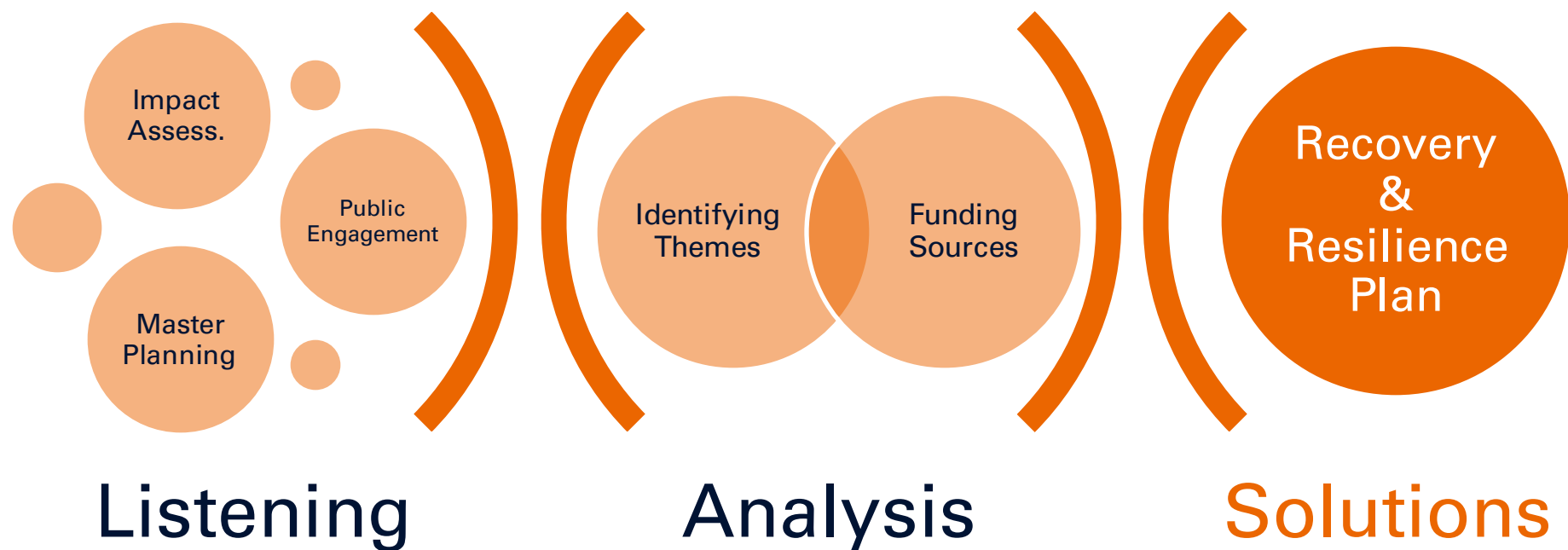
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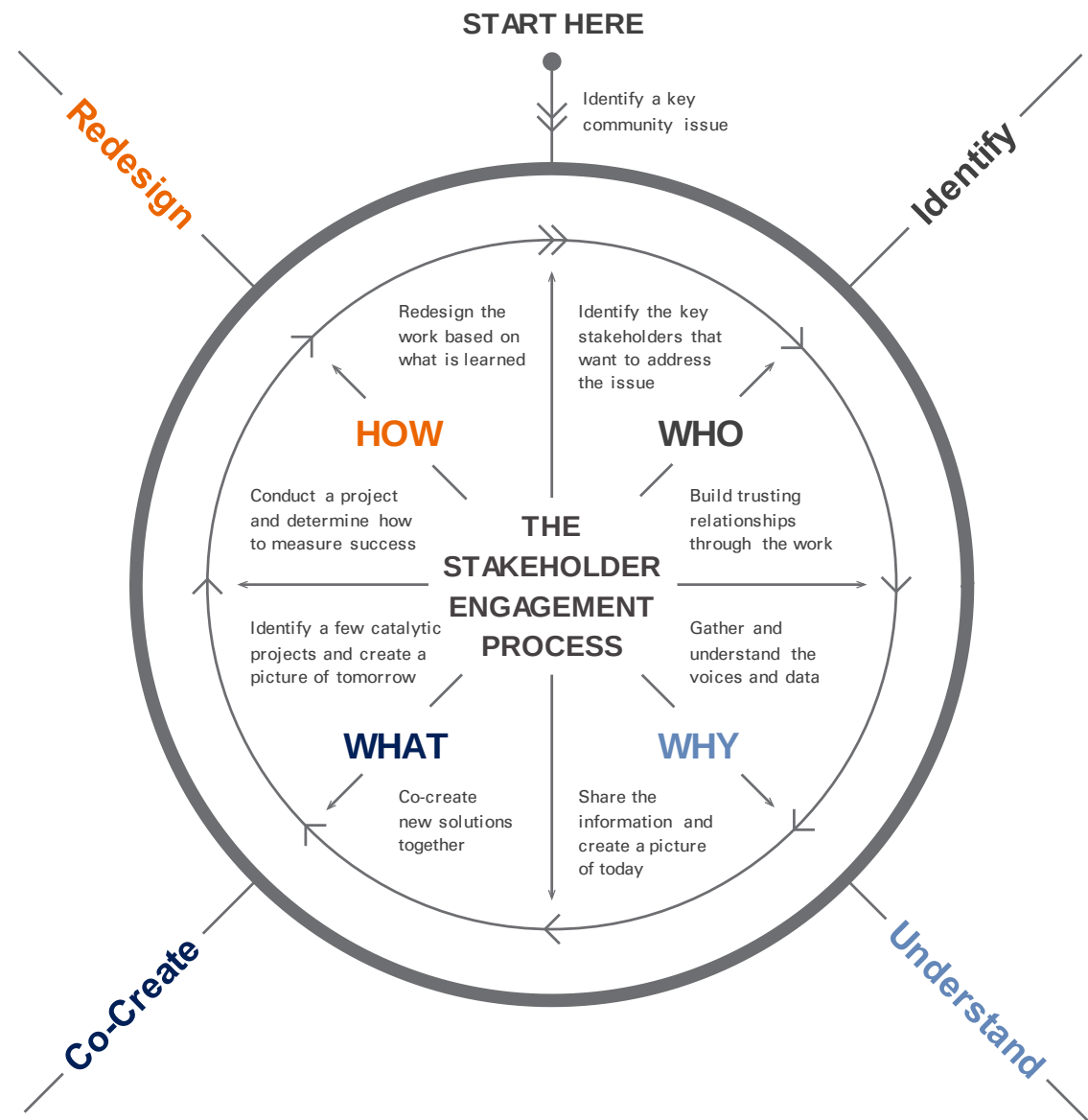
Public Comment



Overview of Branch Problem Solving Process



Process



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Priority 1 Key Challenges



Identify partnerships and incentives supporting the workforce, such as affordable housing near jobs

- Limited affordable housing in Lee County impacts the low- and middle-class workforce.
 - Over 100,000 households spend more than 30% and 50,000 households spend more than 50% of income on housing.
 - The number of people spending more than 30% of their income is expected to increase over the next several years.
- There are only 9-25 affordable and available rental units per 100 renter households with income that is 0-40% of the area median income.
- Employers have cited lack of housing as a challenge for recruiting and retaining workforce.

Priority 1 Key Findings



Housing

- Lee County offers incentives to develop affordable housing near major employment centers and mixed-use developments.
- Research shows, rental units suffer more damage and recover half as quickly as owner occupied housing.

Transportation

- Continued or increased transportation modes can add to the revenue intake.
- Transportation cost burdens are greater for residents commuting to distant employment hubs. The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee highlighted the need for affordable housing near public transit and employment nodes.

Workforce

- Resources like the FutureMakers Coalition help connect untapped workforce with the education and training they need for in demand jobs.

Key Research

- Lee County Attainable Housing Coalition – Attainable Housing in Lee County: 2018 Report
- Lee County Human and Veteran Services – 2019 Needs Assessment
- University of Florida Shimberg Center for Housing Studies – 2022 Rental Market Study
- Lee County Consolidated Plan – HUD Fiscal Years

Priority 2 Key Challenges



Identify short-term actions that support the rapid recovery of business, including access to financing, and marketing the tourism-based economy

- 47% of the surveyed executives indicated economic conditions were worse than a year ago, down from the 60% in the last quarter.
- The County budget requires stabilization to allow services to meet resident's needs.
- Research indicates Hurricane Ian will have a noticeable impact on near-term GDP growth in Florida, expecting to shave 1.5-2.0 percentage points off growth in the third quarter.
- Consumer spending will rise as rebuilding efforts commence including property repair and durable goods like appliances that will boost construction and retail sectors.
 - Missed economic activity from cancelled hotel bookings and vacations, closed restaurants, and damage to citrus crop cannot be recovered.

Priority 2 Key Findings



Short – term Help for Businesses

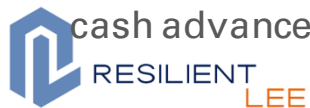
- Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan Program, Florida DEO provided \$2.5 million to Lee County.
- Small Business Administration- 745 applications have been approved (\$140,018,331).
- Other initiatives: Public – private partnerships, return to work referrals, leveraging existing economic recovery plans, and establishing Business Recovery Centers.

Key Metrics to Track Recovery

- Business formation statistics
- Population levels
- Consumer spending

Access to Capital

- Industrial Development Revenue Bonds
- Florida Light and Power offer incentive programs to encourage business growth.
- PPP Alternatives: SBA business loans, business lines of credit, invoice factoring, merchant cash advances, and the Federal Reserve.



Key Research

- Lee County Economic Development Performance Dashboard
- National Association of Counties article
- S&P Global blog post on the economic impact of Hurricane Ian
- Lee County Hurricane Ian Progress Report

Priority 3 Key Challenges



Rebuild more public access to natural resources

- Lee County tourism rates have fluctuated since 2020.
- The County attracts 5 million visitors and \$3 billion in spending each year with beaches that sustained hurricane impacts listed as a major attraction.
- Hotel rooms were swamped by heavy rains, winds, and flooding.
 - 67.3% of hotel rooms in the County were opened as of January 2023.

Priority 3 Key Findings



- The Lee County Visitor and Convention Bureau (VCB) developed a four-stage recovery campaign to promote tourism.
- Lessons Learned from Other Tourism Hotspots:
 - Caribbean countries lost over \$1 billion in tourism revenue after Hurricane Maria.
 - Tourism makes up about 10% of the economy in Puerto Rico with about 3 million people visiting each year.
 - About a year after the storm impacts, the number of tourists had increased 62.3% with the help of businesses like American Airlines promoting travel.

Key Research

- Florida Gulf Coast University – Southwest Florida Regional Economic Indicators
- News articles regarding tourism in Lee County post-Hurricane Ian

Priority 4 Key Challenges



Prioritize industry-sector growth to build a resilient economy

- The fishing industry, second in Fort Myers Beach to tourism has an estimated \$50 million annual impact and has endured major impacts from Hurricane Ian:
 - 43 shrimping fleet vessels were grounded.
 - Increased importation dumping leading to increased pricing for locals.
 - Shrimpers have moved on to other places for better business.
- Resource and tools are need to bridge the gap between the unemployed workforce and understaffed industries and employers.

Priority 4 Key Findings



Fishing Industry

- A request from the governor for Fishery Disaster Assistance from NOAA was denied on March 23rd, 2023.
 - Florida Fish and Wildlife is working with NOAA to find a way to support recovery.
 - Requests can also come from local appointed officials.
- The Southern Shrimp Alliance works to identify solutions to industry concerns in eight states .

Future of Work

- Businesses can build strength by expanding focus on strategic clarity, fostering outcome-based management, increasing talent velocity, finding zero cost collaborations, and increasing technology adoption.

Business Retention and Redevelopment

- City of Fort Myers EDO conducts site visits to capture current business needs and provide assistance.
- New business sectors are developing with the County encouraging manufacturing and distribution development near RSW due to the Southwest Florida Direct Connect from I-75 to the airport.
- Information technology companies are expanding starting with Gartner.
- The County is also looking to expand the medical field business from manufacturing equipment to lab services and education.

Key Research

- Articles and information regarding the fishing industry devastation following Hurricane Ian in Lee County
- Florida Economic Development Council article regarding attracting business to Lee County
- Future of Work article by McKinsey & Company

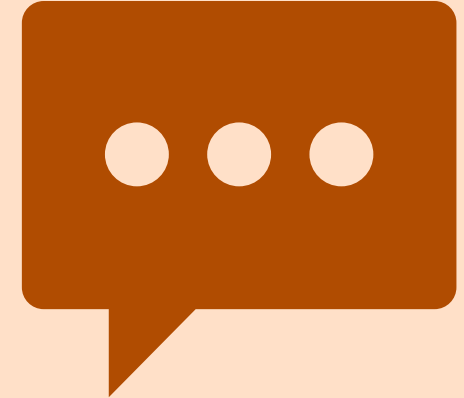
Meeting Recap



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Next Steps



Calendar of Meetings	
Date	Time (p.m.)
Thursday, April 13, 2023	3:00 – 4:30
Thursday, May 18, 2023 *	3:00 – 4:30
Thursday, June 8, 2023	3:00 – 4:30
Thursday, June 15, 2023 (as needed)	3:00 – 4:30
Thursday, July 13, 2023	3:00 – 4:30
Thursday, July 20, 2023 (as needed)	3:00 – 4:30
Thursday, August 3, 2023	3:00 – 4:30
Thursday, August 17, 2023 (as needed)	3:00 – 4:30
Thursday, September 7, 2023	3:00 – 4:30
Thursday, September 21, 2023 (as needed)	3:00 – 4:30

*Rescheduled due to a holiday



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Discussion and Questions



Discussion to close after final member questions, before opening to Public Comment.

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Public Comment





Public Comment

Adjourn

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Economic Recovery Branch



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