

ROADMAP TO ENHANCED COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

AVAILABILITY OF HOUSING THAT IS AFFORDABLE

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Developed in Partnership with the
CARRI Gulfport Advisory Group and
Availability of Housing that is Affordable Focus Team

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
CARRI Gulfport.....	1
Resilience Roadmap Structure and Terms	3
FOCUS AREA OVERVIEW: AVAILABILITY OF HOUSING THAT IS AFFORDABLE	3
Scope of Focus Area	3
Summary of Current State.....	4
DESTINATIONS, INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS TO ENHANCE GULFPORT’S RESILIENCE.....	5
Summary of Roadmap Focus.....	5
Destination A: Affordable Housing is an Integral Part of Residential and Commercial Zoning and Development Decisions in the Gulfport Community	6
Rationale for Destination A.....	6
Initiative A.1: Strengthen Development Proposal Review Processes	6
Recommended Action A.1: Challenges and Solutions Workshop.....	6
Destination B: Developers and Builders Regularly Utilize Resilient Building Techniques and Materials to Construct Homes and Commercial Buildings in the Gulfport Community.....	9
Rationale for Destination B	9
Initiative B.1: Transfer Resilient Building Materials and Techniques.....	9
Recommended Action B.1: Resilient Building Knowledge Transfer Workshop.....	9
Destination C: Useful Current Data and Information about Affordable Housing is Available and Accessible.....	11
Rationale for Destination C.....	11
Initiative C.1: Create Housing Affordability Information Clearinghouse.....	11
Recommended Action C.1: Build Web-based Clearinghouse	11
Destination D: The Importance of Developing High-Quality Affordable Housing in the Gulfport Community is Broadly Accepted.....	13
Rationale for Destination D	13
Initiative D.1: Expand Public Education on Housing Affordability	13
Recommended Action D.1: Support Warm Welcome Gulf Coast Campaign.....	13
AVAILABILITY OF HOUSING THAT IS AFFORDABLE TEAM PARTICIPANTS	15

INTRODUCTION

CARRI Gulfport

The Community and Regional Resilience Initiative (CARRI) is a groundbreaking program spearheaded by the U.S. Department of Energy's Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL). In 2007, Gulfport became a CARRI partner community to help develop and share the essential benchmarks, tools and techniques that any community should utilize to enhance its resilience. Highly resilient communities anticipate disturbances, reduce vulnerabilities, respond effectively to disturbances, and recover rapidly with minimized downtime to community, government, and business services.

The CARRI Gulfport Team began by interviewing local government officials and representatives from the nonprofit, faith-based, and business sectors to assess the interests and concerns of key stakeholders throughout the community. Based on this initial assessment, representatives from agencies, organizations, and companies that play critical roles in the community were invited to serve on the CARRI Gulfport Advisory Group. The Advisory Group formed in early 2008 and met monthly from April to June to scope the parameters of the CARRI effort in Gulfport. Based on knowledge of the issues facing the community and experience preparing for, responding to, and recovering from Hurricane Katrina, the multi-stakeholder Advisory Group identified approximately thirty-five candidate focus areas that, if addressed effectively, could lead to enhanced community resilience.

At the June 2008 Advisory Group meeting, members collaboratively selected, from the list of candidate focus areas, the following six priority areas on which to focus development of action plans or "resilience roadmaps":

- 1) Communication and collaboration across sectors
- 2) Individual and family resilience and preparedness
- 3) Availability of housing that is affordable
- 4) Expedient return of businesses
- 5) Preservation of the fabric, culture, history, and environmental quality of the community
- 6) Mental health

The following set of criteria served as a guideline for the Advisory Group prioritization process:

- Resilience Enhancements
 - Involves multiple sectors of the community
 - Impacts social and economic well being of the community
 - Likely to speed/accelerate response and recovery
 - Reduces vulnerabilities
 - Increases community awareness and preparedness

- Feasibility
 - Practical and do-able
 - Builds on an existing community effort OR addresses an important matter on which no one is focused currently
 - Adds value to the community today regardless of a future disaster

In July 2008, the Advisory Group decided to divide roadmap development for the six priority areas into two phases. They agreed that stakeholder teams would develop roadmaps for the first three focus areas listed above in Phase 1, and cover the other three areas in a Phase 2. The purpose of the roadmaps is to outline paths toward an enhanced level of resilience in each of the focus areas. Phase 1 of roadmap development kicked off with a one-day workshop on September 19, 2008. Breakout sessions at the workshop served as the first meeting for stakeholder teams convened around each of the Phase 1 focus areas – communication and collaboration across sectors, individual and family resilience and preparedness, and availability of housing that is affordable.

Each of the stakeholder teams was composed of Advisory Group members and additional representatives from local agencies, organizations, and companies. At the September workshop, the first three teams agreed to the scope of their respective focus areas, identified key issues affecting focus area in the Gulfport community, and identified key characteristics of the current state of the focus area. The teams also envisioned elements of a desired future state of enhanced resilience in the focus area, relative to the current state characteristics.

Input generated at the September workshop served as the foundation for two subsequent meetings of each team, during which they developed draft resilience roadmaps by refining and adding detail to the initial concepts. The teams converted the desired future state characteristics into roadmap destinations and outlined a small set of initiatives, with suggested actions for each initiative that will move the community toward the resilience destinations. The focus area teams used the same set of prioritization criteria as the Advisory Group to guide their identification of initiatives and actions to enhance resilience. The teams also identified key stakeholders to involve in implementation of the actions, as well as resources to leverage or garner and key factors to consider in constructing a timeline for implementation.

The Advisory Group provided feedback on the direction and content of the roadmaps during the development process. In December 2008, Advisory Group members shared their thoughts about which initiatives proposed in the suite of Phase 1 roadmaps would have a significant impact on community resilience in the near future if implemented effectively. The following roadmap initiatives emerged as priorities among Advisory Group members, providing guidance to future owners and implementers of the Initiatives and Actions outlined in the Phase 1 roadmaps:

- The Individual and Family Resilience and Preparedness (IFRP) Team’s recommended initiative to develop a comprehensive communication strategy to support improved individual and family disaster preparedness, response, and recovery for multiple hazards.
- The Communication and Collaboration Across Sectors (CCAS) Team’s recommended initiative to encourage broader participation by external organization representatives in NIMS training and exercises.

- The Housing Affordability Team’s recommended initiative to share experience and lessons from ongoing resilient home construction efforts in Gulfport as well as learn about and apply state-of-the-art materials and techniques.
- The initiative recommended by both the IFRP and CCAS Teams to establish a cross-sector coordinating council to promote full implementation of selected initiatives and maintain community focus on resilience.

Resilience Roadmap Structure and Terms

As noted, the resilience roadmaps are structured around the following concepts to reflect the incremental process of moving from the current state or level of resilience in Gulfport, to an envisioned future state or higher level of resilience:

- **Destinations:** Long-term goals for enhancing Gulfport’s resilience in the focus area or the envisioned future state of the focus area.
- **Initiatives:** Key projects or programs that are expected to make a significant difference in enhancing resilience in the short-term, while moving the community toward the associated long-term destination.
- **Actions:** Specific activities to execute in support of associated initiatives, ideally in the first year of roadmap implementation.

The initiatives and actions outlined in the Phase 1 roadmaps represent practical and do-able activities that the focus area teams identified to begin the long-term process of enhancing community resilience in their respective areas. Therefore, community leaders and citizens should not consider the initiatives and actions to be comprehensive strategies for reaching the respective destinations.

FOCUS AREA OVERVIEW: AVAILABILITY OF HOUSING THAT IS AFFORDABLE

Scope of Focus Area

The CARRI Gulfport Advisory Group and the Availability of Housing that is Affordable Focus Area Team (a.k.a. Housing Affordability or HA Team) defined the scope of this focus area as follows:

- Consider ways in which the availability of affordable housing affects the resilience of the Gulfport community and identify strategies to overcome historical impediments to increasing the availability of housing that is affordable;¹ and
- Explore and identify materials and techniques for building, retrofitting, and/or siting homes to withstand hurricane impacts more effectively and thus improve long-term affordability of housing in the Gulfport community.

¹ For an assessment of impediments to affordable housing in Gulfport, see *Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, Gulfport Mississippi*. 2007. Available: <<http://www.makeitfair.com/downloads/GPTAnalysispart1.pdf>>(Accessed January 6 2009).

Summary of Current State

Meeting the basic human need for shelter is a key component of community resilience, both in the immediate response to a disaster event as well as long-term recovery and an eventual return to normal community functionality. The availability of housing that is affordable is a crucial factor underlying many other community functions, as people must have a stable place to live to be active participants in the local economy as workers or consumers, to send their children to school, and to engage in civic activity.

Prior to August 2005, home prices and insurance rates in Gulfport and along the Gulf Coast were largely under the national average and relatively affordable for coastal living. On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina made landfall and destroyed approximately 3,500 housing units in Gulfport and severely damaged 5,000 others.² In the wake of Katrina, the extreme number of destroyed or damaged properties coupled with rising insurance rates for homeowners and rental property landlords resulted in less affordable for-sale and for-rent housing across the Mississippi Gulf Coast.³ For example, the average rent for a market-rate two-bedroom apartment in Harrison County rose from \$564 in August 2004, to \$755 as of March 2007 (a 34% increase) and then to \$804 as of April 2008 (a further 6% increase).⁴

This steep increase has caused a significant housing affordability problem for low- and moderate-income households. Estimates suggest that the impacts of higher insurance rates and the national housing finance crisis have reduced affordability threshold of potential homebuyers by \$25,000 compared to pre-Katrina conditions.⁵ Moreover, Gulfport's median home price has increased by 65% between 2000 and 2007, and its median household income to median home price ratio increased 42% during the same period. At 3.4, this median household income to median home price ratio is higher than that of Mississippi as a state and is the sixty-fifth highest ratio among the 108 largest Metropolitan Statistical Areas in America.⁶ Post-Katrina research also revealed that Gulfport households accumulated a total of \$15 million in debt (\$53,000 per household) due to the loss of homes, vehicles, and jobs, exacerbating the issue of affordable housing choice in the community.⁷ These factors have led to an overwhelming demand for all types of affordable housing in Gulfport, including single-family and multi-family rental housing as well as low-density and high-density homeownership opportunities.⁸



More than three years after Katrina, recovery and rebuilding continue in the Gulfport community, with a multitude of public agencies, non-governmental and faith-based organizations, and private companies actively working to address the issue of affordable housing. A wide range of ongoing initiatives, partnerships, and projects are aimed at rebuilding homes, diversifying housing options, and educating

² Ibid, 1.

³ The Compass Group, LLC and Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District. *Mississippi Housing Data Project: Executive Summary Mississippi Gulf Coast*, 4. ONLINE. 2009. Available: <<http://smpdd.com/housing/MississippiHousingDataProjectExecutiveSummary.pdf>> (Accessed February 5, 2009).

⁴ Ibid, 13.

⁵ Ibid, 13.

⁶ The Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies. *The State of the Nation's Housing 2008*. Available: <<http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/son/index.htm>> (Accessed February 18, 2009). City-Data.com. *Gulfport, Mississippi (MS) Detailed Profile*. 2008. Available: <<http://www.city-data.com/city/Gulfport-Mississippi.html>> (Accessed February 18, 2009).

⁷ Eugenie L. Birch and Susan M. Wachter, eds, *Rebuilding Urban Places After Disaster*, 110.

⁸ Urban Planning Consultants. *Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, Gulfport Mississippi*, 19. 2007. Available: <<http://www.makeitfair.com/downloads/GPTAnalysispart1.pdf>> (Accessed January 6 2009).

citizens about affordable housing, workforce housing, mixed-income development and other innovative approaches that Gulfport has an opportunity to implement as the community recovers. For example, two rounds of funding from the Long Term Workforce Housing Program administered by the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) has helped facilitate the launch of several workforce housing projects and programs in Gulfport and surrounding communities.⁹

The relative unavailability of housing that is affordable for a range of income levels in Gulfport remains a hindrance to long-term recovery from Hurricane Katrina and the community's resilience. However, the fact that there are so many worthy efforts underway, led by competent and dedicated individuals, suggests that the Gulfport community possesses the expertise and skills necessary to achieve a higher level of resilience in this focus area. Understandably, the urgency, complexity, and stress of the recovery seem to have led many agencies and organizations to pursue their activities in a targeted manner without necessarily finding ways to integrate and leverage one another's efforts and expertise. Despite different perspectives and foci, the many housing-oriented stakeholders in the Gulfport community share a common goal of developing and sustaining a sufficient supply of attractive, affordable housing from which citizens across a range of income levels can choose a place to call home.

DESTINATIONS, INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS TO ENHANCE GULFPORT'S RESILIENCE

Summary of Roadmap Focus

The roadmap developed by the CARRI Gulfport Housing Affordability Team focuses on connecting stakeholders and leveraging ongoing initiatives aimed at addressing the issue of affordable housing in Gulfport. The initiatives and actions in the roadmap are geared toward identifying and developing cross-sector solutions that will enhance the community's resilience. Specific opportunities for enhancing Gulfport's resilience include strengthening and streamlining development proposal and approval processes; sharing knowledge of resilient building materials and techniques and promoting their use in Gulfport; establishing new mechanisms for information dissemination about rebuilding efforts and the local housing market; and altering public perception of affordable housing. The balance of this roadmap will outline the set of practical actions identified by the Housing Affordability Team to begin resolving some of the challenges around post-Katrina development of affordable housing. The recommended actions are not meant to be comprehensive solutions, but rather to support a positive trajectory toward long-term recovery and enhanced resilience in this focus area.

Resilience Roadmap Components

- ***Destinations:*** Long-term goals for enhancing Gulfport's resilience in the focus area; key characteristics of the desired future state for the focus area.
- ***Initiatives:*** Routes to move toward one or more destinations in the short-term; key programs and projects that could make a significant difference in enhancing resilience.
- ***Actions:*** Specific steps to execute and support one or more initiatives.

⁹ Office of the Governor of Mississippi. *Three Years After Katrina: progress Report on Recovery, Rebuilding and Renewal*. ONLINE. 2008. Available: <<http://www.governorbarbour.com/recovery/links/documents/KatrinaThreeYearReport.pdf>> (Accessed November 14, 2008)

DESTINATION A

AFFORDABLE HOUSING IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT DECISIONS IN THE GULFPORT COMMUNITY.

Rationale for Destination A

Destination A reflects stakeholder perceptions that affordable housing and long-term workforce housing are not considered adequately in zoning decisions in Gulfport. Stakeholders said that proximity of affordable housing options to new commercial development needs to be considered more carefully so that workers are able to live near where they work. This is a key principle of smart growth and a benefit of mixed-use development. Local stakeholders also reported a lack of understanding about the requirements and steps of proposal review processes, as local government agencies often receive incomplete development proposals from prospective builders. In addition, many local officials and builders are not familiar with the requirements and purpose of certain non-governmental development review processes. Most stakeholders also agreed on a need for increased and sustained cross-sector (government, nonprofit, and business) dialogue about developing affordable housing.

Initiative A.1:¹⁰ Strengthen and streamline existing development proposal review processes.

Recommended Action A.1: Hold a cross-sector workshop to identify solutions to the challenges local government and local developers (nonprofit and for-profit) encounter in rebuilding affordable housing for the Gulfport community.

The workshop will provide a forum in which parties from different sectors have an opportunity to convey the challenges they face and discuss potential approaches to addressing those challenges. The ultimate goal of the workshop is to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of development proposal and review processes, and accelerate the pace of rebuilding and recovery from Hurricane Katrina. A stakeholder planning committee will work together to design the workshop agenda and structure, develop an invitation list, and identify and garner resources necessary to stage a successful event. Workshop organizers should also consider conducting a pre-workshop survey about challenges faced by City officials, developers and builders so that workshop participants can spend the majority of their time together identifying effective strategies for overcoming challenges. Key objectives of this collaborative forum include sharing perspectives about effective strategies for creating a high quality development proposal, and defining the purpose and parameters of a City-provided troubleshooting mechanism for local nonprofit developers. Other potential objectives and/or agenda topics include:

- a) Review and clarify roles of key agencies and decision-making bodies in the development proposal process including the City of Gulfport Department of Urban Development (Building Code Services and Planning & Zoning) and the Harrison County Zoning Administration.
- b) Review the City of Gulfport and Harrison County comprehensive plans and provide insight to developers about what information guides planning commission approval decisions;

¹⁰ The HA Team also suggested the following initiatives for Destination A, but did not identify specific recommended actions to include in the roadmap: additional innovative public-private partnerships for development of mixed-income and workforce housing; expand conception of housing beyond home ownership and diversify options available to community; establish mechanisms for inclusionary zoning.

- c) Identify best practices for developers to overcome challenges associated with governmental review and approval processes and meet requirements effectively;
- d) Explore ways to better align housing and economic development needs in the City and County;
- e) Explore whether and how non-governmental review processes such as that of the Renaissance Builder & Developer Guild can complement government review processes;
- f) Identify types of troubleshooting assistance the City of Gulfport can offer that would be useful to local nonprofit developers
- g) Learn about community benefits agreements and explore how developers and citizens might utilize them to enhance the process and impacts of new development in Gulfport;¹¹ and
- h) Provide new tools that help developers convert proposals into actual developments.

The workshop planning committee will identify invitees. Generally, the HA team recommends that the invitation list reflect the cross-sector nature of the planning committee, with particular emphasis on engaging local public officials and active nonprofit development organizations, and with invitees coming primarily from the Gulfport-Biloxi area.

Implementation of Action A.1 is anticipated to propel the community toward Destination A and enhanced resilience in the following ways:

- A process of cross-sector dialogue and collaboration facilitates more thorough integration of affordable housing considerations with residential and commercial zoning and development decisions.
- Local stakeholders across different sectors clearly understand the roles of different agencies, as well as the requirements, steps, and limitations of City and County development proposal review processes, which helps accelerate the process of getting from proposals to construction.
- Developers and builders share best practices and gain new knowledge and tools so that development proposals submitted for local government review and approval are consistently high quality and comprehensive.
- Local stakeholders across different sectors clearly understand the goals, objectives and principles of non-governmental development proposal review processes so that they are able to utilize them effectively.

¹¹ “A Community Benefits Agreement, or a CBA, is a legally enforceable contract, signed by community groups and by a developer, setting forth a range of community benefits that the developer agrees to provide as part of a development project. A CBA is the result of a negotiation process between the developer and organized representatives of affected communities, in which the developer agrees to shape the development in a certain way or to provide specified community benefits. In exchange, the community groups promise to support the proposed project before government bodies that provide the necessary permits and subsidies. The CBA is both a process to work towards these mutually beneficial objectives, and a mechanism to enforce both sides’ promises.” The Partnership for Working Families, *Community Benefits Agreements*. ONLINE. 2009. Available: < <http://www.communitybenefits.org/article.php?list=type&type=39>> (Accessed February 4, 2009)

- The troubleshooting needs of local nonprofit developers are defined so that City agencies such as Department of Urban Development and Public Works can determine the type and extent of assistance to provide (i.e. in the proposal and review processes).
- Local builders and developers become better able to develop proposals that align with the City and County's comprehensive plans, as well as the needs of affected neighborhoods within the community.

Key Stakeholders to Involve

- The planning committee for this event will ideally include at least one representative from each of the following entities or sectors: City of Gulfport, Harrison County, office of the Gulf Coast Housing Director, local nonprofit developer (secular or faith-based), and a local for-profit developer (private company or industry association).
- Preferably, the City and County representatives on the planning committee will be decision makers from departments or bodies directly involved in reviewing and/or approving housing development proposals. For example, representatives from the City of Gulfport Department of Urban Development, planning commissioners, elected officials (or their appointed representatives), and/or economic development officials.
- The HA Team recommends that the planning committee also consider inviting select representatives from State and/or Federal agencies such as MDA or U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Resources to Leverage or Garner

- Potential local sponsors and/or hosts for this event include City of Gulfport, Gulf Coast Renaissance Corporation, and the Knight Foundation.
- Other potential sponsors include CARRI, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC), Urban Land Institute, Home Builder's Association of the Mississippi Coast, and FEMA Long-term Recovery.

Timeline & Milestones

- Consider synchronizing this event with another major milestone in the affordable housing arena, such as Round 3 of MDA Workforce Housing funding, so that the event directly feeds into opportunities to apply knowledge and skills obtained.
- Avoid scheduling conflicts with other housing-related events already scheduled in 2009 such as:
 - Mississippi Annual Affordable Housing Conference, January 28-30, 2009 (Biloxi)
 - Gulf Coast Home Expo, March 28-29, 2009 (Mobile, AL)
 - Coastal Development Strategies Conference, May 12-13, 2009 (Biloxi).
 - Back Bay Mission Affordable Housing Summit, Fall 2009 (Gulfport/Biloxi)

DESTINATION B

DEVELOPERS AND BUILDERS REGULARLY UTILIZE RESILIENT BUILDING TECHNIQUES AND MATERIALS TO CONSTRUCT HOMES AND COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS IN THE GULFPORT COMMUNITY.

Rationale for Destination B

To sustain affordability over the long-term it is critical to utilize building materials and techniques that strengthen housing structures' capacity to withstand future disaster events. Destination B reflects a desire among stakeholders in the Gulfport community to learn about and implement such materials and techniques. The goal is that developers and builders (and homeowners) will eventually use these materials and techniques routinely to construct new development, retrofit existing structures, and restore damaged structures.

Initiative B.1: Transfer knowledge about state-of-the-art resilient building materials and local resilient home construction efforts occurring in the Gulfport community.

Recommended Action B.1: Hold a workshop to transfer knowledge among builders, developers, and other interested parties in the community about resilient building materials and techniques that may be beneficial to use in new development and in retrofitting existing homes and buildings in the Gulfport community.

A stakeholder planning committee will design the workshop agenda and structure, develop an invitation list, and identify and garner resources necessary to stage a successful event. Representatives from the Resilient Home Program (RHP) at Savannah River National Lab (SRNL), which is affiliated with CARRI, are committed to working with stakeholders in Gulfport to design the agenda and participate in the workshop.

The objectives of this collaborative forum will focus on knowledge transfer between Gulfport stakeholders and researchers from the Resilient Home Program. Experts from the RHP will discuss their research and development efforts, and seek input from local builders and developers about their needs and ideas about future RHP research and development efforts. Potential agenda topics include presentation and discussion of:

- a) Background, program goals, accomplishments, and next steps of the Resilient Home Program;
- b) Resilient building materials and techniques that local builders are currently utilizing;
- c) Outstanding needs of builders along the Mississippi Gulf Coast; and
- d) Incentives for utilization of resilient building materials and techniques.

Implementation of Action B.1 is anticipated to propel the community toward Destination B and enhanced resilience by:

- Raising awareness among local builders and developers about state-of-the-art resilient building materials and techniques so that they can apply them in rebuilding Gulfport and the Mississippi Gulf Coast.
- Connecting local builders, developers, and other interested parties with researchers who are developing new and innovative building materials and techniques so that they are able to stay updated on the latest technology available.

- Providing research and development direction to the Resilient Home Program that is specific to the Mississippi Gulf Coast.
- Sharing information with State and Federal disaster recovery officials about the long-term financial benefits of restoring or retrofitting existing housing to withstand severe weather events.
- Informing the long-term RHP effort to develop a certification system for resilient homes which could eventually bring down insurance costs along the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Key Stakeholders to Involve

- The HA Team recommends that the planning committee for this event include at least one representative from each of the following entities or sectors: SRNL, Gulf Coast Community Design Studio, Home Builders Association of Mississippi Coast, for-profit builder or developer, nonprofit builder or developer (secular or faith-based), City of Gulfport Department of Urban Development, and the Harrison County Zoning Administration.
- The HA Team also recommends that the planning committee consider inviting select representatives from State agencies such as MDA, the Mississippi Windstorm Underwriting Association (Wind Pool), insurance industry, national non-governmental organizations such as Architecture for Humanity and the U.S. Green Building Council, and academic programs conducting related research as event participants

Resources to Leverage or Garner

- Potential sponsors and/or hosts for this event include the City of Gulfport, USM, MGCCC, Habitat for Humanity, Home Builders Association of Mississippi Coast, and Association of General Contractors.
- Other potential funding sources include manufacturers of resilient materials, and the banking or mortgage industry.
- Potential venues include USM or MGCCC, Mississippi Coast Coliseum, or an area casino/hotel.

Timeline & Milestones

- The HA Team recommends organizing and holding this workshop during the 2009 calendar year.
- The HA Team recommends that the planning committee identify related events taking place on the Mississippi Gulf Coast in 2009 and consider opportunities to link the Resilient Home Building workshop with an existing event.

DESTINATION C

USEFUL CURRENT DATA AND INFORMATION ABOUT AFFORDABLE HOUSING IS AVAILABLE AND ACCESSIBLE.

Rationale for Destination C

Destination C reflects the need for a central repository of useful and current information related to affordable housing in Gulfport and the surrounding area. Stakeholders report that current (real-time) data about the post-Katrina recovery and rebuilding process and the local housing market is either not available or not accessible by all parties that need it.

Initiative C.1: Create a housing affordability information clearinghouse that includes useful real-time information and is accessible to all.

Recommended Action C.1: Build a Web-based clearinghouse of information related to affordable housing in Gulfport and the surrounding area.

The website will serve as a gateway for interested stakeholders to access a wide range of pertinent information including research reports, fact sheets, outreach and education materials, links to pertinent agency and organizational websites, and real-time data about ongoing recovery and rebuilding efforts. Ideally, the site will utilize innovative web-based technology such as wiki and interactive mapping software, especially for collection and dissemination of real-time data.¹² The site could also include an events calendar that tracks upcoming meetings, events, and deadlines across sectors. The site should also include mechanisms for tracking and compiling statistics about visitor traffic so that site managers can track its reach over time.

This project will require cooperation among relevant agencies, organizations, and companies to conceptualize, build, and sustain so that it offers quality content and serves as a useful resource over time. A potential starting point to conceptualize and design this resource would be for Gulfport stakeholders to identify, reach out to, and learn from other coalitions working on affordable and/or workforce housing that have developed similar online information gateways for their communities or regions. A key candidate for such cross-fertilization is the Greater New Orleans Community Data Center (www.gnocdc.org). The HA Team also suggests asking Mississippi Development Authority's Gulf Coast Housing Director for his suggestions and support for this project.

Implementation of Action C.1 is anticipated to propel the community toward Destination C and enhanced resilience by:

- Strengthening communication and collaboration among the network of housing-focused agencies, organizations and companies working to increase the availability of housing that is affordable in Gulfport.
- Providing shared access to a common set of information for agencies, organizations and companies involved in identifying, proposing, approving, and building affordable housing so that the transparency and effectiveness of the post-Katrina rebuilding effort is increased.

¹² Wikipedia. *Wiki*. ONLINE. 2008. Available: <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiki> (Accessed November 24, 2008).

- Equipping local housing-focused agencies, organizations and companies with a broader range of reliable current information so that they are able to make well-informed decisions in an efficient manner.

Key Stakeholders to Involve

- Agencies and organizations to involve in defining the scope, features, and content of the clearinghouse include MDA, Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District (SMPDD), Mississippi Home Corporation (MHC), City of Gulfport, Harrison County, office of the Gulf Coast Housing Director, Back Bay Mission (Warm Welcome Gulf Coast campaign), Habitat for Humanity, Mississippi Center for Justice, Gulf Coast Fair Housing Center, Mississippi Economic Policy Center, Gulf Coast Renaissance Corporation, Gulf Coast Association of Realtors, and the Compass Group.
- Other potential information and data collection partners include FEMA, MEMA, Region VIII Public Housing Authority, Mississippi Association of Housing and Redevelopment Organization (MAHRO), Greater New Orleans Community Data Center, Gulf Regional Planning Commission, USM Katrina Resource Center, Harrison County Tax Assessor, and The Compass Group, LLC.
- Potential partners with GIS mapping expertise include Stennis Space Center, MSU Geosystems Research Institute, MSU High Performance Computing Collaboratory, and the Northern Gulf Institute.
- Potential hosts and/or administrators include USM Gulf Coast Center for Policy and Resilience, Gulf Coast Business Council, Mississippi Economic Policy Center.

Resources to Leverage or Garner

- Potential sponsors or funding sources include the Knight Foundation, Kellogg Foundation, Brown Foundation, MDA, FEMA Long-term Recovery, and Google.org.
- January 2009 report of the Mississippi Housing Recovery Project containing a wide array of data on the housing recovery from Hurricane Katrina.¹³
- Model information gateway websites to review for design ideas include:
 - Greater New Orleans Community Data Center: www.gnocdc.org
 - Conflict Resolution Information Source: www.crinfo.org
 - Child Welfare Information Gateway: www.childwelfare.gov
- Model workforce housing websites to review for content ideas include:
 - Central Florida Workforce Housing Toolkit: www.orangecountyfl.net/cms/WorkforceHousing/
 - Workforce Housing St. Louis: www.workforcehousingstl.org
 - Florida Workforce Housing Network: www.floridaworkforcehousing.net

¹³ The Compass Group, LLC and Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District. *Mississippi Housing Data Project: Detailed Report Mississippi Gulf Coast*. ONLINE. 2009. Available: <
<http://smpdd.com/housing/MississippiHousingDataProjectDetailedReport.pdf>> (Accessed February 5, 2009).

- Workforce Housing Coalition of the Greater Seacoast (NH and ME): www.seacoastwhc.org

Timeline & Milestones

- An initial step may be to visit Greater New Orleans Community Data Center to glean lessons about development, maintenance, and data management to apply to affordable housing information gateway site.
- Development of a Web-based affordable housing information gateway for Gulfport and the surrounding area will be a long-term project requiring cooperation and collaboration from a number of players, both to develop the site initially, and to maintain it so that it remains a viable and useful source of information over time.

DESTINATION D

THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING HIGH-QUALITY AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE GULFPORT COMMUNITY IS BROADLY ACCEPTED.

Rationale for Destination D

Many stakeholders believe misperceptions and negative public attitudes toward affordable housing persist in Gulfport and inhibit progress toward developing an adequate stock of housing choices in the community.

Initiative D.1: Expand and leverage support for existing public awareness and education campaigns focused on affordable housing in Gulfport and along the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Recommended Action D.1: Encourage support for Back Bay Mission's Warm Welcome Gulf Coast (WWGC) public outreach campaign to increase its reach and boost its credibility.

WWGC is designed to position affordable housing as critical to rebuilding the Mississippi Gulf Coast (www.warmwelcomegulfcoast.org). Options for individuals, agencies, and organizations to support WWGC include:

- a) Attend Planning & Zoning Commission meetings and/or City Council-Board of Supervisors meetings and stay informed;
- b) Publicly endorse the campaign's mission and messages (i.e. provide logos for posting on WWGC website);
- c) Host a community meeting to discuss affordable housing issues;
- d) Join the WWGC speaker's bureau which will conduct in-person outreach in Gulfport and communities across the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Implementation of Action D.1. is anticipated to propel the community toward Destination C and enhanced resilience by:

- Increasing the reach and impact of the Warm Welcome Gulf Coast Campaign.
- Raising public awareness about the critical importance of affordable housing to the long-term recovery of the Mississippi Gulf Coast from Hurricane Katrina.

- Dispelling myths and increasing public understanding about the residents, design and quality, and community impacts of affordable housing so that it is more readily accepted in the community.
- Mobilizing public support for proposed affordable housing developments and facilitating passage/approval of affordable housing developments in local municipalities.

Key Stakeholders to Involve

- Any interested agencies, organizations or individuals; elected officials, planning commission members, or other personnel of municipalities who affect housing decisions.
- Back Bay Mission
- Mississippi Development Authority's Gulf Coast Housing Director (or appointed representative)
- Employers (large and small business, nonprofit organizations, etc.) whose workforce is in need of affordable housing.
- Sun Herald and WLOX editorial boards.

Resources to Leverage or Garner

- Potential funding sources for increased capacity of paid media include Knight Foundation, Gulf Coast Community Foundation, Enterprise Community Partners, and Deutsche Bank.
- Political influence and professional networks of reputable individuals, agencies and organizations.
- Identify ways to link the existing WWGC website with other organizations and/or coalitions leading similar efforts.

Timeline & Milestones

- The WWGC campaign is ongoing and Back Bay Mission aims to sustain the campaign over the next few years. Interested stakeholders and other organizations may contact WWGC and begin supporting and participating in campaign activities at any time.

AVAILABILITY OF HOUSING THAT IS AFFORDABLE TEAM PARTICIPANTS

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