

## *GOALS - OBJECTIVES - POLICIES*

Based on the analysis of coastal issues in this element, the following goals, objectives, and policies have been drafted for inclusion in the Fort Myers Beach comprehensive plan.

**GOAL 5: To keep the public aware of the potential effects of hurricanes and tropical storms and to plan a more sustainable redevelopment pattern that protects coastal resources, minimizes threats to life and property, and limits public expenditures in areas subject to destruction by storms.**

### **OBJECTIVE 5-A COASTAL PLANNING GENERALLY —**

Protect and enhance coastal resources through an on-going planning process that recognizes the advantages and limitations of living within a sensitive coastal environment. Enhancement of coastal resources can be measured by increased sea turtle nesting, improvements in estuarine water quality, and restoration of sand dunes. Important limitations on development in this coastal high hazard area include the existing over-concentration of people plus town, state, and federal policies against public expenditures that subsidize further private development.

**POLICY 5-A-1** The town shall maintain and enforce building codes at least as stringent as required by Florida law to limit the potential damage of structures from hurricanes and tropical storms. These codes shall include wind-resistance commensurate with the risk of a coastal environment and building elevation requirements that

conform with federal laws and Flood Insurance Rate Maps.

**POLICY 5-A-2** The maximum density of future residential development is limited to the densities described in the Future Land Use Element in recognition of natural hazards and existing population concentrations. For rebuilding of existing development, refer to the build-back policies under Objective 4-D and 4-E of the Future Land Use Element.

**POLICY 5-A-3** When state funding is required for the relocation of replacement of infrastructure currently within the Coastal Building Zone, the capacity of the replacement structure shall be limited to maintaining required service levels, protecting existing residents, and providing for recreation and open space needs.

**POLICY 5-A-4** Since the entire Town of Fort Myers Beach is within the coastal planning area and is designated as a coastal high hazard area, specific policies addressing historic buildings, phasing of infrastructure, limitations on development, and environmental resources are contained in other elements of this plan and are not repeated here.

**POLICY 5-A-5** Due to the physical constraints of its coastal location, the Town of Fort Myers Beach commits to a future policy of no increase in the net development capacity (island-wide) that would be allowed by the Fort Myers Beach comprehensive plan.

**POLICY 5-A-6** The entire town is located within the coastal high-hazard area, as shown on Figure 17 which is part

of the adopted Future Land Use Map series (see Policy 4-B-2).

**OBJECTIVE 5-B NATURAL DISASTER PLANNING** — Reduce the threat of loss of life and property resulting from catastrophic storms by reducing evacuation times and improving shelter capabilities from their current levels.

**POLICY 5-B-1** The town shall work to improve the capability of evacuating Fort Myers Beach when a tropical storm or hurricane threatens to strike. Specific problem areas include:

1. County officials may be reluctant to order a county-wide evacuation even though an evacuation may be warranted for low-lying coastal areas such as Fort Myers Beach. Town officials should be prepared to order a local evacuation if one is warranted.
2. Australian pines and other trees along evacuation routes can pose a threat to evacuation routes due to decay or shallow root systems; such trees need to be identified and pruned or removed.
3. In a cooperative process with Lee County, Sanibel, and the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council, the town shall seek to improve mainland shelter capacities including private sheltering options.
4. The town shall work closely with Lee County and Florida DOT to maintain or improve hurricane evacuation times and procedures, including off-island traffic bottlenecks.

**POLICY 5-B-2** The town shall participate fully in the federal government's National Flood Insurance Program and seek constant improvements under the Community Rating System.

**POLICY 5-B-3** The town shall encourage owners of private buildings to strengthen or otherwise protect them before severe storms strike to reduce avoidable damage to life and property. Town regulations that unnecessarily interfere with this important form of hazard mitigation shall be modified as described in Policy 4-E-3 of the Future Land Use Element.

**POLICY 5-B-4** The town shall develop and adopt a storm emergency plan for preparing for, responding to, and recovering from a hurricane or tropical storm. Hazard mitigation recommendations of local peacetime emergency plan or interagency hazard mitigation reports shall be evaluated for inclusion in the town's plans.

**POLICY 5-B-5** Capital improvements to infrastructure and facilities under the town's jurisdiction that can maintain or improve evacuation times will be identified and included in the Capital Improvements Element.

**POLICY 5-B-6** The town shall maintain substantial reserve funds for emergency work that will be needed immediately following a major storm.

**OBJECTIVE 5-C POST-DISASTER REDEVELOPMENT** — Plan for post-disaster rebuilding that will reduce the exposure of human life and property to future disasters and improve the community in other ways during the rebuilding process.

POLICY 5-C-1 By 1999, the town in cooperation with Lee County officials shall prepare a post-disaster redevelopment plan. Such plan shall be consistent

1. Activities which prevent further loss of life or that minimize public health risks;
2. Activities which restore the basic public infrastructure and services to support the population;
3. Activities which prevent further damage to public or private property;
4. Activities which begin the rebuilding process as promptly as possible.

POLICY 5-C-2 By 1998, the town shall evaluate the elevation and drainage characteristics of evacuation routes to the mainland to identify problem areas that may prematurely block evacuation. Solutions shall be sought in cooperation with agencies having jurisdiction over such facilities.

POLICY 5-C-3 Rebuilding after a natural disaster is allowed in accordance with the "buildback policy" found in Policy 4-C-7 of the Future Land Use Element.

POLICY 5-C-4 To further coordinate the redevelopment activities proposed under this plan with state and federal floodplain management programs, the town shall pursue the following activities:

1. Pursue all potential measures to encourage corrective and preventative measures to existing houses and businesses to increase their resistance to flooding and high winds before a disaster occurs. Examples include storm shutters; shatterproof glass;

with this comprehensive plan and use the following priorities:

- strengthening roof attachments, floors, and walls; and minor floodproofing.
2. Allow non-conforming buildings to be modified provided the modifications do not increase the non-conformity.
3. Investigate the feasibility promoting pedestrian activity in some redeveloping commercial zones by raising the existing grade of roads and sidewalks one to three feet, thus allowing adjoining commercial space to remain at ground level while reducing the required height of dry floodproofing.
4. Explore with the Department of Environmental Protection an alternative method of controlling building intensity seaward of the Coastal Construction Control Line. The current rule allows 20% of any single building's frontage to be enclosed at ground level. This percentage may be too high for most parts of the town, but is too low where pedestrian zones exist or are being created. An alternative means of computing the 20% rule could better meet the state's coastal management goals and the town's revitalization program.

POLICY 5-C-5 New publicly funded buildings within the town shall be designed to withstand major storms and be

able to serve as shelters/operation centers for emergency personnel.

POLICY 5-C-6 Design new and replacement infrastructure to minimize damage caused by flooding and high winds:

1. Power lines shall be relocated underground whenever possible.
3. Roads should be designed to manage minimum levels of flooding and be located where least susceptible to storm damage.

POLICY 5-C-7 Continue to inventory buildings that are repeatedly damaged by flood waters to identify those that have recorded one or more National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) flood losses of \$1,000 or more since 1978.

OBJECTIVE 5-D BEACHES AND DUNES — Conserve and enhance the shoreline of Estero Island by increasing the amount of dunes, renourishing beaches to counter natural erosion, and reducing negative man-made impacts on beaches and dunes.

POLICY 5-D-1 The town's policies on shoreline protection measures shall be as follows (see also Objective 5 and related policies in the Conservation Element of this plan):

1. Beach renourishment will be necessary along much of the Gulf beach. The long-term recreational and economic benefits will offset the cost. The town shall work closely with Lee County, which has agreed to take the lead role in carrying out this important activity. All practical measures shall be taken to ensure that beach

2. Water and sewer systems should eliminate infiltration of flood waters and be designed to function with auxiliary power when needed.

renourishment improves sea turtle nesting habitat rather than interfering with it. Public access to existing and renourished beaches is an important priority of the town of Fort Myers Beach.

2. Sand dunes should be protected and re-created wherever they have been removed. Native dune plants should be protected and non-native exotics removed. Dune walkovers should be constructed where they do not exist and existing structures should be maintained.
3. The use of vehicles on any part of the beach should be severely limited in accordance with Conservation Policy 6-E-4(iv).
4. Buildings and other structures should be located as far away from the shoreline and dune system as possible since the beach is a constantly changing environment. Beachfront development shall be protected from coastal erosion, wave action, and storms by vegetation, setbacks, and/or beach renourishment rather than by seawalls or other hardened structures which

- tend to hasten beach erosion, interfere with public access, and block sea turtle nesting.
5. Development (other than minor structures) shall not be allowed seaward of the 1978 Coastal Construction Control Line. Development seaward of the 1991 Coastal Construction Control Line may be permitted provided it complies with this comprehensive plan and all state and local permitting requirements.
  6. Where buildings are threatened by erosion that cannot be reversed by major beach renourishment, the town's priorities are (1) to allow the structure to be

moved away from the beach; (2) to allow emergency renourishment (including the use of trucked-in sand); and (3) to allow rip-rap only when the previous priorities are not possible. Existing seawalls on the beach may be maintained or removed but not rebuilt.

7. The absolute last resort for shoreline protection is the use of hardened structures (except that terminal groins may be permitted at inlets if acceptable to state and federal permitting agencies). New beachfront buildings requiring seawalls for protection from coastal erosion shall not be permitted.

**OBJECTIVE 5-E ACCESS TO THE WATER** — Increase the number of well-maintained accesses to beaches, bays, and navigable waters to serve the existing and future population and visitors.

**POLICY 5-E-1** Ensure the continued maintenance of existing beach access points, currently provided by Lee County with funds from the Tourist Development Council.

**POLICY 5-E-2** Evaluate the need for expanded parking areas and the potential for revenue generation from metered parking as a funding source for additional public access amenities.

**POLICY 5-E-3** The town encourages Lee County to continue its program of improving beach access points that are not currently marked.

**POLICY 5-E-4** The town shall identify any water access points that are hidden, fenced off, or blocked by encroachments, and then ensure that appropriate public access is restored.

**POLICY 5-E-5** The town shall attempt to acquire one or more beach access points at the southern end of the island.

**POLICY 5-E-6** The town shall monitor the effectiveness of its ordinances regulating water activities (vessel control, water safety, personal watercraft, and parasailing), and install manatee habitat education signs at waterfront locations. In cooperation with providers and citizens, develop a program of education, interagency cooperation for enforcement, and additional regulation as needed to protect the coastal waters and the safety and welfare of residents and visitors.

**POLICY 5-E-7** This plan minimizes the potential for land use conflicts between waterfront uses and other land uses through the following priorities for development/ redevelopment of the shoreline:

1. Intense multi-family uses are limited to areas vested by previous regulations; to the rebuilding of existing sites following a natural disaster (see Policy 4-D-1); and to voluntary rebuilding of existing sites in accordance with the Future Land Use Element.
2. Future development or redevelopment of shoreline land uses must ensure compatibility with surrounding lands and provide proper buffering where needed.

3. In determining applicable land uses for a site, priority shall be given to water dependent land uses in the following order:
  - Conservation uses