

7. Public Involvement


A) Public Workshops

As part of the Islamorada Matters project, several public workshops and other education and outreach activities were conducted. These workshops and events were held (and attended) for distribution of project information to better understand the unique perspectives of Islamorada residents and solicit community engagement in the planning process. There needs to be continued education and engagement with Village residents and other stakeholders, in particular the real estate community, to ensure that they remain educated about sea level rise impacts and the most appropriate adaptation actions that can be implemented within Islamorada.



Islamorada Matters Workshop
Photo Source: Project Team

Community Workshop #2: How to Prepare for Sea Level Rise in the Village of Islamorada



The Village of Islamorada, as part of IslamoradaMatters, is in the middle of a series of three (3) public workshops to share what we've learned in our sea level rise modeling efforts. We continue to want to engage the public and collaborate on the most relevant local solutions for Islamorada.

For more information, visit www.islamoradamatters.com

Photo credit: ©PD Bachelor

This is the 2nd of three community workshops planned to further engage the community in the Village of Islamorada's sea level rise planning efforts. This 2nd workshop will focus discussions on how to best prepare for sea level rise in the Village of Islamorada.


When & Where:
Monday, November 10th 5:30-8:30 p.m.
Founders Park Community Center
87000 Overseas Highway
Islamorada, FL

At this workshop, the results of the COAST modeling sea level rise vulnerability assessment, specific to Islamorada, will be presented. This presentation will include:

- Predicted dollar damages to buildings, based on public input received during the 1st workshop regarding the data to be used in the model, and
- A discussion of possible adaptation strategies (with attendee participation), such as raising building elevations or relocating facilities entirely.

We want to hear from you - workshop participants will be asked to actively engage and assist in the development of these adaptation strategies by providing local perspectives on how to best prepare locally.

Upcoming Workshops:
Workshop #3: Implementing Strategies
Wednesday, December 10th 5:30-8:30 p.m.



For more information, contact:
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Table 12 below illustrates the workshops and events used to engage the Islamorada community in this sustainability and sea level rise planning process.

Table 12. List of Public Workshops and Events Attended for Islamorada Matters

Date of Workshop/ Event	Title of Workshop/ Event	Workshop/Event Description
September 11, 2014	Initial Sea Level Rise Impact Modeling Presentation	First presentation was made on initial modeling results from projected sea level rise impacts in 2030 and 2060. The Team showed results from its analysis on impacts to Islamorada buildings, electrical supply, water supply, wastewater, roads and habitat.
October 7, 2014	Community Workshop #1	<p>First community workshop focused on the risks of sea level rise and the types of economic and flooding impacts that could affect Islamorada homes and businesses in the future. The Team presented the modeling process to address impacts to homes and businesses and provided an example of how modeling was used to mitigate rising water levels in another community to show how flooding impacts of sea level rise with varying rates of severity can be managed. A panel of local community leaders was present to discuss impacts and potential solutions to sea level rise on roads and other critical areas in Islamorada, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor Ted Blackburn, Islamorada; • Joe Roth, Islamorada Chamber of Commerce, President; • David Makepeace, Water Quality Improvement Citizens’ Advisory Committee, Chair; and • Ana Zalesky, Florida Keys Board of Realtors, Immediate Past President.
November 1, 2014	Islamorada Moose Lodge Bacon Fest	Public education and outreach about the project during Bacon Fest included passing out flyers, promoting upcoming public workshops and attempting to further engage residents in the project.
November 8, 2014	Community Day at Florida Keys Community College	Public education and outreach about the project during Community Day included passing out flyers, promoting upcoming public workshops and attempting to further engage residents in the project.
November 10, 2014	Community Workshop #2	Second workshop focused on how to prepare for sea level rise in Islamorada. Sea level rise vulnerability assessment results were presented showing the anticipated impacts to homes and businesses. Discussion focused on three (3) primary adaptation strategies, including: 1) elevating and floodproofing properties not already elevated or flood-proofed; 2) constructing breakwaters at two “at risk” locations and 3) voluntary property acquisitions where high tide would be at the center of the property either by 2030 or 2060.
November 22, 2014	Florida Bay Appreciation Day	Public education and outreach about the project during Florida Bay Appreciation Day included passing out flyers, promoting upcoming public workshops and attempting to further engage residents in the project.
December 4, 2014	Holiday Festival	Education and outreach about the project during the Islamorada Chamber Holiday Festival at Founders Park.
December 11, 2014	Community Workshop #3	Third workshop addressed pros and cons of each adaptation strategy identified during the previous workshop.

Date of Workshop/Event	Title of Workshop/Event	Workshop/Event Description
December 11, 2014	Islamorada Chamber of Commerce Lunch Presentation	Presented to the Islamorada Chamber of Commerce on sea level rise modeling project.
February 26, 2015	Islamorada Council Update	The Team provided a summary of work to date, including a recap of results from the modeling of Islamorada assets, infrastructure, water supply, roads, wastewater and electrical facilities. The presentation also included a summary of the three (3) workshops on community engagement for sea level rise adaptation strategies.
October 16, 2014 and March 19, 2015	Artwalk	Conducted public education and outreach about the Islamorada Matters projects at Artwalk. Passed out Islamorada Matters flyers, promoted upcoming public workshops and attempted to further engage Islamorada residents in the sea level rise planning project.

In addition to engaging the Islamorada community about the Islamorada Matters project through events, a database of potentially interested residents and business owners was created. Using Constant Contact, electronic invitations (via email), save the date cards and flyers were distributed to the contact list created for Islamorada in advance of each community workshop. These electronic communications served a dual purpose, increasing attendance at subsequent workshops and ensuring that local residents and business owners remained engaged throughout the Islamorada Matters planning process. The Village also sent out notices through its own email lists.

In addition, the Islamorada Chamber of Commerce (“Chamber”) was extremely helpful in the distribution of Islamorada Matters information. In advance of each community workshop, the Chamber circulated flyers to its membership to promote awareness about the project and increase attendance at the community workshops. With this help, the Team was able to reach a much wider audience of Islamorada businesses than would have been possible without the Chamber’s assistance.

B) Islamorada Matters Public Survey

To assist with the prioritization of recommendations and further engage Islamorada residents and business owners in the Islamorada Matters sustainability and sea level rise planning effort, a Survey Monkey survey consisting of fourteen (14) questions was prepared for distribution within the community. Questions drafted for the survey asked residents and business owners to prioritize and rank several of the Plan recommendations above, as well as provide their thoughts and feedback on Islamorada’s sustainability, climate change and sea level rise planning efforts to date. This survey was distributed to the Team’s Constant Contact database (138 individuals), Village contacts (250 individuals on email lists; 125 individuals on staff email list) as well as to the local Chamber for distribution to their membership.

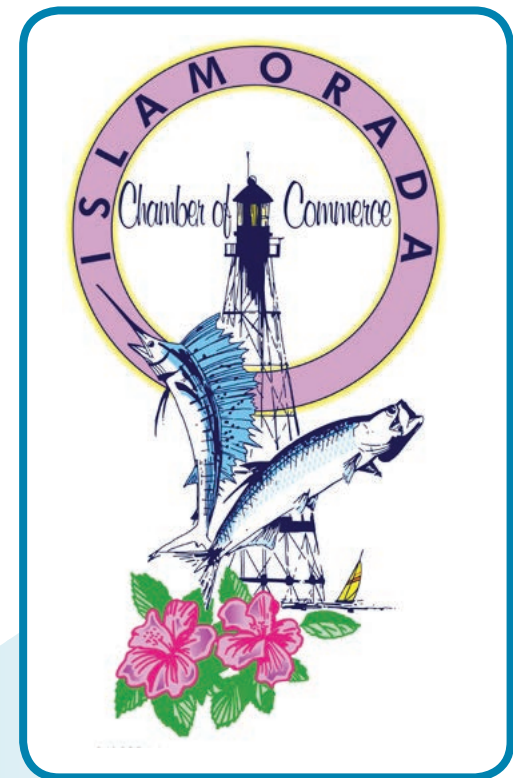


Photo Source: Islamorada Chamber of Commerce

The survey was opened on April 9, 2015 and left open until June 1, 2015 (approximately 53 days), during which time 121 responses were received. Overall, the survey yielded excellent results with community engagement exceeding expectations. Key findings from the survey showed that residents and business owners in Islamorada are most concerned with the Habitat, Infrastructure and Built Environment and Sustainability Focus Areas, in order of importance. Survey respondents prioritized the following actions as extremely important for the Village moving forward:

- A complete streets policy to address all users and design for safety, comfort and convenience of pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers and public transit users as most important for Islamorada;
- Increasing the mileage of sidewalks connecting people with destinations;
- A requirement that internal decisions by local government departments use the most current climate science and staff monitor climate change impacts;
- Adopt energy efficiency regulations for buildings within the Village;
- Reduce or eliminate toxic pesticides in locally-owned or managed buildings through the use of pest management techniques;
- Become actively recognized as a Bicycle Friendly Community or Walk Friendly Community;
- Enforce regulations to control the use or sale of invasive species; and
- Provide incentives to residents and developers to protect critical watershed protection areas.

Because of their importance to Village residents, these were translated to specific recommendations included in this Plan. These priorities are reflected in recommendations S.3, S.5, H.13, I.7, VB.6, VB.7, VB.10, AS.11 and AS.5.

The following were deemed less important or totally unimportant by survey respondents:

- Adopt a policy or code requiring walkability standards for new developments;
- Adopt an energy/water use disclosure ordinance requiring users to disclose consumption levels;
- Adopt a “health in all policies” statement or policy commitment to be applicable to all local decision-making; and
- Educate the public on the impacts of poor air quality on human health and the natural environment and efforts they can take to reduce pollution and exposure.

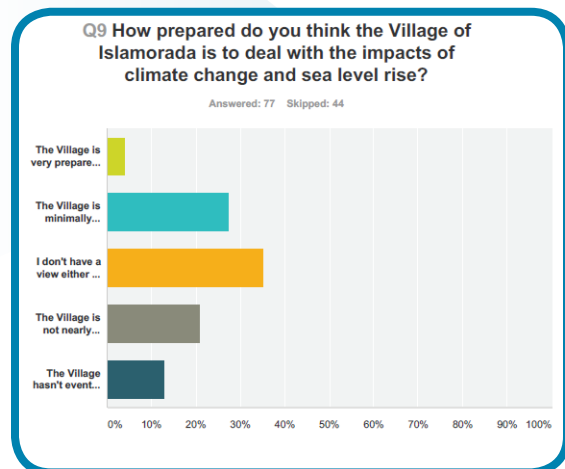
As a result, only one (1) of these was retained as a recommendation in this plan (S.13).



Nearly 43% of survey respondents feel that the Village is doing good, but could be doing better with sustainability (direct survey language). Another 26% of survey respondents feel that the Village is not doing nearly enough, but is doing some small things (direct survey language) with sustainability. Thirty-five percent of survey respondents do not have a view either way on the Village's current level of preparedness to deal with the impacts of climate change and sea level rise. Over 27% of respondents feel that the Village is minimally prepared, but is making significant progress toward becoming prepared.

To prepare for sea level rise, respondents prioritized working to address flooding on roads and in neighborhoods and ensuring that new development incentives address climate preparedness as the two (2) most important things the Village can do. To better prepare for disasters and extreme weather events, respondents want to see implementation of highest priority improvements listed in the local mitigation strategy or other similar plans. Regarding healthcare and health impacts and climate change, there is greatest concern among residents and business owners about waterborne diseases attributable to changing precipitation patterns, stronger storm events, and rising waters.

Responses varied widely on what residents and business owners perceive are the biggest threats to the Village of Islamorada from sea level rise. Flooding was most prevalently identified as the biggest threat, with over one-third of the free survey responses identifying it as the largest threat. Other threats repeatedly identified by respondents included property loss and devaluation, more extreme and frequent storms, saltwater intrusion, overpopulation, and increased flood insurance premiums.



Islamorada Survey Results

The Team used the survey results to assist in the ranking of recommendations in this Plan and confirm high priority recommendations. A copy of the survey and a report of the results is included in Appendix G.



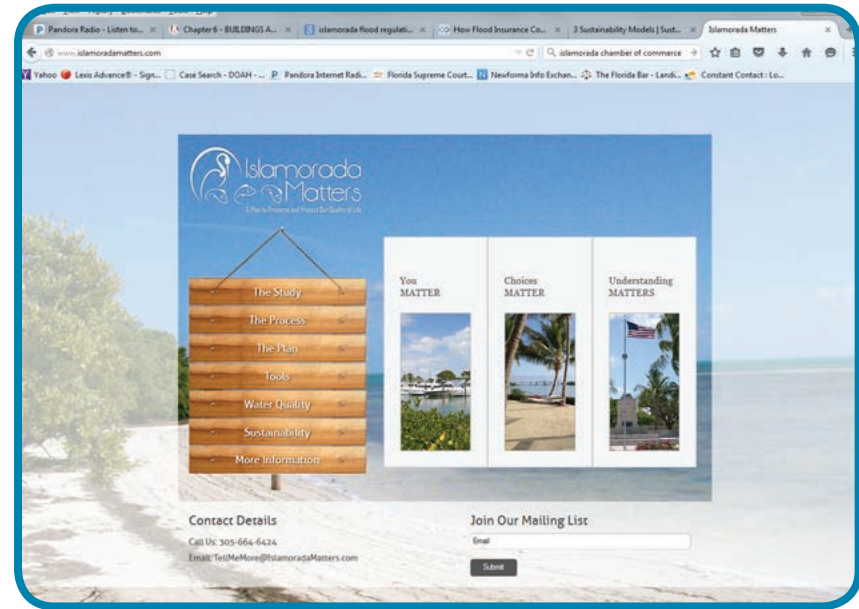
C) Islamorada Matters Website

As part of the Islamorada Matters planning process, the Village created the Islamorada Matters website (<http://www.islamoradamatters.com/>) to serve as a specific source of publicly-available information about the project. The content of this website was developed simultaneously with this Plan and is intended to convey information specific to the Village’s sea level rise planning and sustainability efforts. The Village is making this information available for residents, business owners, the insurance industry, and real estate community to use in making informed decisions on issues to be affected by sea level rise in the coming years.

Ultimately, this website will serve as the Village’s sustainability website and be the resource for all sea level rise and sustainability information for Islamorada.

D) Individual Outreach to Organizations and Agencies

In addition to the public outreach efforts discussed above, individual outreach was conducted to Islamorada organizations and agencies. This outreach was conducted to educate these local organizations and agencies on the Islamorada Matters planning project and solicit their support for the project.



Islamorada Matters Website Landing Page
Photo Source: www.islamoradamatters.com

Table 13. Individual Outreach Conducted for the Project

Date of Outreach Event	Organization	Outreach Description
October 22, 2014	Islamorada Chamber of Commerce	Presentation provided to the Islamorada Chamber of Commerce on sea level rise.
Prior to each of the three (3) community workshops	Islamorada Chamber of Commerce	An informational flyer was created for distribution by the Islamorada Chamber of Commerce to its current membership.