Oldsmar Florida Disaster Recovery Planning

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CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotations marks so indicate, and the appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

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Abstract

The problem facing the City of Oldsmar Florida is that it does not have a post-disaster recovery plan. The low frequency high risk occurrence of a direct impact hurricane event has the potential to create a devastating long term effect on the community.

The purpose of this Applied Research Project (ARP) was to determine what resources are available to help Oldsmar in creating, planning and implementation of a pre-disaster recovery plan. The ARP looked at local, state, and federal assistance as well as the importance of identifying and selecting stakeholders representing governmental, non-governmental, private, non-profit, and other community groups who have an interest in recovery planning.

Descriptive research will be conducted to answer the following research questions: a) What is the potential personnel and revenue loss to the City of Oldsmar in the event of a hurricane, b) What resources are available to assist Oldsmar in pre-event planning and how have other communities addressed the issue of post disaster recovery?, c) How do non-governmental entities address post disaster recovery?, and d) What public and private stakeholders should be included in the plan?

The procedures used conducting this research included a literature review of available reference material on the subject as well as interviews with non-governmental business organizations. The results of this research show that pre-disaster recovery planning is a vital component for community survival. The research supports the recommendation that the City of Oldsmar should create a post disaster recovery plan as a means to ensure community resiliency and sustainability.
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Introduction

The problem facing the City of Oldsmar is the lack of a disaster recovery plan in the event of a direct strike from a hurricane or similar major storm. The low frequency high risk occurrence of a such an event has the potential to create a devastating long term effect on the community. Oldsmar has an in depth Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), which includes pre-hurricane preparedness directives, evacuation plans, infrastructure protection steps and personnel response procedures. Post storm strike activities such as damage assessment and search and rescue group activities are addressed. Post event planning is limited to City specific issues and does not address continuity as it relates to the community as a whole. A disaster recovery plan that considers the importance of incorporating local businesses, community and civic organizations, and neighborhood groups is essential to sustaining quality of life issues that are at the core of the community, as well as help to decide the post event look and feel of the new environment.

The purpose of this Applied Research Project (ARP) was to determine what resources are available to help Oldsmar in creating, planning and implementation of a pre-disaster recovery plan.

The descriptive research method will be used to answer the following questions in order to identify the components and stakeholders that should be included in the plan: a) What is the potential loss of business to the City of Oldsmar in the event of a hurricane?, b) What assistance is available to assist Oldsmar in pre-event planning and how have other communities addressed the issue of post disaster recovery?, c) How do non-governmental entities address post disaster recovery?, and d) What public and private stakeholders should be included in the plan?
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Background and Significance

The City of Oldsmar is located on the southwest coast of Florida in Pinellas County. The northern end of Old Tampa Bay forms the southern boundary of the city. Encompassing nine square miles, according to the United States Census Bureau Oldsmar has a population just over thirteen thousand permanent residents (United States Census Bureau, 2008) and a daytime business population of over forty thousand (Clark, 2010).

Oldsmar is situated between the two larger cities of Tampa to the east and Clearwater to the west. The main transportation route, Tampa Road, connects the two larger cities and serves as the major evacuation route for Oldsmar. The close proximity Oldsmar enjoys to local beaches, an international airport, growing cruise terminal, horse racing and casino style poker, and the seasonable year round weather makes Oldsmar a popular destination for local and out of area visitors. Various festivals, celebrations and cultural events throughout the year are designed to attract and promote the city’s quality of life values.

The Oldsmar/Upper Tampa Bay area boasts a strong and varied business community with over two-thousand businesses employing more than twenty-five thousand employees. Major businesses such as Lockheed-Martin, Goodrich-Hella Aerospace, The Nielsen Company, Micon Packaging, United Healthcare, and Mease Countryside Hospital call Oldsmar and the Upper Tampa Bay area home (Upper Tampa Bay Chamber of Commerce, 2009).

Oldsmar Fire Rescue (OFR) is responsible for the initial response and delivery of fire and advanced life support emergency medical services (EMS) in the city. OFR is a career fire department staffed by eighteen line personnel, an EMS Coordinator, two fire prevention/inspectors, a senior administrative assistant and the fire chief. OFR operates two Advanced Life Support (ALS) units, one rescue and one seventy-five foot aerial apparatus. Both units respond
from the department’s single fire station. Six personnel are assigned to each of the three shifts which are standard twenty-fours on and forty-eight hours off.

Oldsmar makes up one part of the larger Pinellas County Fire and EMS system. The system is created by the eighteen first response agencies and a private ambulance contractor that provided transportation services. A common dispatch system, medical control oversight, fireground operational procedures, and continuing medical education program is shared by each member of the system. Pinellas County is the most densely populated county in Florida with a static population over nine-hundred thousand that swells to over a million people with the arrival of tourists and a transient population who spend the winter months here (Census, 2008). The 2009 call volume for Pinellas County was 156,280 of which 135,608 where EMS related (Pinellas County, 2010).

Although Oldsmar and Pinellas County experience the same types of major fire and EMS concerns, and have trained in the post September 11th environment regarding potential terrorist events, the most significant probable disaster scenario facing Oldsmar is the direct impact of a hurricane. The adage that the longer is has been since your last disaster makes you closer to the next one applies for Oldsmar. The last direct hurricane strike for Pinellas County was in 1921. The entire population of the five county areas around Oldsmar, (Pinellas, Hillsborough, Pasco, Citrus, and Hernando counties) was 135,000. Six deaths and an estimated one to ten million dollars damages accompanied the Category 3 (sustained winds from 111-130 miles per hour) storm (St. Petersburg Times, 2004).

One major factor related to the amount of damage a direct impact event would cause to Oldsmar is the bay itself. Tampa Bay is a shallow water estuary encompassing approximately four-hundred square miles. Despite its large surface area, the average depth of Tampa Bay is
only eleven feet (Tampa Bay Estuary Program, 2009). It is estimated that a Category 4 (sustained winds of 133-155 miles per hour) hurricane that makes land fall in Pinellas County will create a storm surge of twenty-three feet in Oldsmar. The Oldsmar fire station sits approximately one mile north of the bay at fourteen feet above sea level. The entire city as well as much of Pinellas County will be under water. Civilian deaths from such an event are estimated in the thousands, property damage in the billions (Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, 2009). The potential long term effects of population and business loss could prove to be a death blow for the city.

Oldsmar has received the designation as a StormReady community from the National Weather Service. StormReady communities are those cities and counties that have twenty-four hour warning capabilities, a public education program to promote readiness, train severe weather spotters, and ways to alert the community of an approaching storm (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 2010). The cities EOP discusses infrastructure protection, pre-event activities, and post event short term response, all relating to the city. No business entities are included in the post event scenarios. Quality of life issues such as green spaces, neighborhood parks and recreation facilities, cultural events and other such programs are not included in the plan. A disaster recovery plan for the community would address these as well as other issues. Cities and fire departments pre-plan target hazards, parades, ribbon cutting ceremonies, infrastructure development, and a myriad of other events and projects. Long term recovery planning should be included on the list. The survival of the community depends on it.

The Executive Fire Officer (EFO) is in an opportune position to support the creation and implementation of a community long term recovery plan. The material presented in the second year EFO class Executive Analysis of Community Risk Reduction (EACRR) helps to build a framework for the successful endeavor of long term planning. Incorporating the course concepts
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of identifying the importance of analyzing the potential impact of unaddressed community risks, identifying benefits associated with successful community risk reduction, and why challenges to reducing risk are best addressed through collaborative organizational and community support are key objectives in the long term recovery planning process (National Fire Academy, 2009).

Additionally, the Community Risk Reduction model used during the course helps establish a method by which to not only address planning for long term recovery, but also suggests methods on how to evaluate the plan prior to and during its use by using the following components:

- Getting Ready;
- Risk Assessment;
- Building Support;
- Intervention Strategies;
- Action Plan; and
- Evaluation Strategy.

The creation of a disaster recovery plan for the City of Oldsmar is directly related to the United States Fire Administration’s operational objectives of “developing a comprehensive multihazard risk-reduction plan for 2,500 communities” as outlined in the EACRR student manual (National Fire Academy, 2009).

**Literature Review**

The need for emergency planning and preparation for recovery from disasters is not new. The early explorers of the Yucatan Peninsula in the 15th century were surprised in the fact that there were very few settlements along the pristine beaches and coastal areas of the Caribbean Sea. As described by Meyer (2005), the incidence of tropical storms and hurricane activity in that area of the world may have been a factor in the locations selected by the inhabitants. It is unknown if this was a learned response over years of exposure to the destruction of the storms or the earlier than thought beginnings of a concerted effort by the population to manage their own recovery from a disaster event. Five-hundred years later Hurricane Camille comes ashore on the
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United States Gulf Coast causing widespread death and destruction. In Pass Christian, Mississippi, a sixty-nine unit condominium complex is built on the land washed away by Camille. A short thirty-seven years later the arrival of Hurricane Katrina completely destroys the same complex (Meyer). It is not a question of if, but of when regarding the direct strike of a hurricane in the Tampa Bay area of Florida. A short thirty-seven years between Camille and Katrina. It has now been a long ninety years since the last direct storm strike in Pinellas County. It’s coming. Local, state and federal agencies must take advantage of what time is left before the event to plan for the recovery phase of such a potentially devastating community disaster.

The terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001 have put in place a renewed opportunity for local governments to begin the process of preparing for disaster planning. Much of what has been accomplished in this area is related to terrorist events. Florida, a long-time leader in disaster preparedness, has managed to keep the emphasis to a more realistic approach. Although several potential terrorist targets are located in Florida, such as Central Command at McDill Air Force Base in Tampa, where the bulk of the United States military planning and operations for the middle east conflict is managed, the emphasis for the more plausible scenario of a hurricane event is foremost on the minds of local and state planners and emergency management personnel. A nationwide effort with emphasis on emergency management has helped to grow the resources and planning tools necessary to accomplish the goal of disaster recovery. Local state, and federal processes are in place and have been created to assist in disaster recovery as well as in the pre-disaster time frame as well. As discussed in NFPA 1600 Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity the generally accepted phases of emergency management are: preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery. Each portion of
the overall goal of emergency management should be looked at not in sequential order, but as a management system for planning for the event and the days, weeks, months and years after it.

Preparedness looks at all the tasks that are designed, created and implemented to support the other portions of emergency management before a disaster strikes. Mitigation relates to whatever steps are taken to lessen the impact or consequences of the event. Response covers all the immediate and ongoing activities to help manage the incident while it is in progress. Recovery is whatever activities or programs are undertaken to return conditions to whatever is deemed an acceptable level to the community or entity involved (National Fire Protection Association, 2009). The first component of emergency management is addressed in Presidential Policy Directive #8: National Preparedness (PPD#8). The directive discusses the importance of the “shared responsibilities of all levels of government, the private and non-profit sectors, and individual citizens” (Department of Homeland Security, 2011). PPD#8 goes on to state that the system must be flexible and have the ability to promote sustainable capabilities throughout the different levels of the local, state and federal government. Mitigation specifically concerns those activities designed to reduce loss of life by lessening the impact of the disaster. Critical infrastructure resiliency, risk-reduction projects, and after disaster efforts to limit ongoing risk are some of the focus of mitigation efforts before and after a disaster strikes. Response is merely that, the response of local, state and federal entities to meet the basic needs of the community after an incident has occurred. Overall and for the most part, these three phases of emergency management are more traditional. The concept of recovery and the effects it may have on the community for the long term survivability of the area are somewhat the newer kid in the block. Although many examples of communities that have recovered from past disasters are available, the overall concept of including recovery and expending more assets to that function in the
earlier phases of emergency management are relatively new. Emergency housing, promoting
economic development, and working to make the cultural and natural resources return to an
acceptable level for the affected community know go hand in hand with the more traditional

There is no question that we can adequately predict a disaster. Scientific enhancements
such as seismic monitors for earthquake and in some areas the following tsunamis, weather
modeling and advanced radars that track storm and provide tornado and hurricane warnings,
have all proved successful in helping to predict approaching disasters. Recent evidence of the
Japan earthquake tsunami warnings for Hawaii and California as well as the tornado activity in
the American south proves this ability. But as Dennis Mileti who ran the University of
Colorado’s Natural Hazards center stated “The challenge that apparently lies beyond our grasp is
to prepare for them” and went on to say “We know exactly-exactly-where the major disasters
will occur, but individuals underperceive risk” (Time, 2006). The phrase “if you can predict it,
you can prevent it” can and should be modified for the preparedness community to “if you can
predict it, you can prepare for it” Instead of just preparing for the event of the disaster itself, and
the response that will be made to manage the immediate threats, recovery should be placed on
that same important pedestal.

A term heard related to the concept of recovery is resilience. Resiliency, when describing
objects, can be described as the ability to return to its original shape, such as elastic bands or
other such material designed to retain its shape after mush use, wear and tear. People and
communities can be just as resilient. Currently in Japan more than a half-million people are
looking for shelter from the low frequency high risk occurrence of a 9.0 magnitude earthquake,
followed by a tsunami and then a series of nuclear reactor meltdowns. The number of persons
affected in Japan is roughly the same number of people displaced by Hurricane Katrina in 2005 (Ambinder, 2011). Perhaps a compare and contrast on the two populations could be made in the future by social scientists to see the difference in resilience in the two groups. As Dr. Shari Fink proposes, resilient people and communities are those that readily recover from trauma (Fink, 2011). It may only be a matter of educating the community in what can be expected to occur after a disaster and what steps can be taken now to not only lessen the traumatic effects of the present situation, but how their participation in the pre-disaster management of the event can be helpful. Early involvement in the pre-disaster phase can help decrease the stresses associated with the emotions of lack of situational control and provide a sense of empowerment to those affected by the event. As stated by Dr. Irwin Redlener, the director of the National Center of Disaster Preparedness at Columbia University’s Mailman School of Public Health, “The more people know what they are supposed to do and what they can expect, the more capable they will be in responding to a disaster.” (Fink, 2011)

One possible essential component missing in the equation of recovery planning is the ability of the community to look at what the risks are and being able to prepare to not just mitigate the event as it is happening but to see what risks can be managed over the long term as it pertains to recovery efforts. A concept proposed by Dr. Louise Comfort, a disaster management expert from the University of Pittsburg, is that of cognition for emergency managers. She describes cognition as a critical component to the process by which a community can recognize the degree of emerging risks and decide on a course of management for them. Her research indicates that cognition could be the key to further command, control, and coordination for the phases of recovery, and “transforms emergency management from a static, rule-bound set of procedures, to a dynamic process…” (Comfort, 2007).
The long term survival of communities is not just based on the ability of the local emergency services to adequately respond and handle the immediate crisis. A serious consideration for community survival is the ability of local business to remain, rebuild, or reopen depending on the damage they receive during the event. In smaller cities, the loss of a single business entity could be devastating if that business is one of the major, if not the only major source of jobs in the area. Emergency managers and community planners should look at the effects that a major event could have on the business interests of the area, and how the loss of jobs and local revenue could affect the survivability and recovery of the community. In local areas where more than one large business can provide a hundreds or thousands of jobs, it is critical that businesses are brought into the planning process early on.

Unfortunately, private businesses do a poor job of getting ready for recovery. Although the thought of post disaster recovery may be on their minds, the business climate in the economic condition faced today may be more defined more by day to day survival versus long term recovery. It is important for this to be changed to reflect the advantages of pre-disaster recovery planning and how the long term survival of the business could have some short term positive impact as well.

According to the study *Critical Incident Protocol: A Public and Private Partnership* complete by Michigan State University most businesses do not conduct recovery planning even though they know it is important. Highlights from the study show:

1. 47% of businesses that experience a major fire go out of business within two years.
2. 44% of companies that lose records in a disaster never resume business.
3. 93% of businesses that experience a significant data loss are out of business within five years.

4. The majority of businesses spend less than 3% of their total budget on business recovery planning (Michigan State University, 2000).

The effects of such statistical outcomes as listed in the Michigan State study would be disastrous on the City of Oldsmar. Through either the complete destruction of several large business concerns or the closure of those same businesses in the following years as a result of data loss, the potential loss of jobs and revenues from those companies would be hard to overcome. The potential loss of job related to only the top six businesses in Oldsmar is estimated at sixteen hundred personnel with a combined total sales estimate for 2010 at 252 million dollars. This figure again only looks at the largest six businesses in a city that has over one thousand occupational licenses.

One aspect of disaster recovery planning is the ability of the affected community to decide on what the look of the community will be once it has weathered the disaster and begun the rebuilding phase. Recovery planning at its best looks for the opportunities that might be present after a disaster in which to make changes that may not have been possible pre-disaster. Other post disaster scenarios are also possible. In the National Fire Academy Course *Fire and Emergency Services Predisaster Long-Term Recovery Planning* four specific post disaster scenarios are detailed:

1. Disaster to disaster-the businesses, community, and region does not survive

2. Disaster to something less than normalcy-intended short term recovery becomes the long term recovery through lack of vision, leadership, and distinct goals
3. Disaster to normalcy-rebuild the community and way of life the way it was before the disaster.

4. Disaster to long term recovery planning to sustainability-after the disaster, the community is able to recognize an opportunity to implement what they consider a better plan for the area. This method is similar to on the job training in recovery planning.

5. Long term recovery planning to sustainability-the recovery was planned well before the disaster occurred. (National Fire Academy, 2008).

One of the case studies in this course focused on the town of Stockton, Missouri who benefitted from recovery planning by making changes to the community that were possible with federal disaster recovery funding only available after a tornado had destroyed much of the center portion of the city (National Fire Academy, 2008).

Florida has taken the additional step of requiring coastal communities to conduct post-disaster development plans and making it law to do so (State of Florida, 2008). A series of workshops conducted by the Florida Department of Community Affairs, Florida Division of Emergency Management at four locations throughout Florida in the fall of 2010 introduced the Post Disaster Redevelopment Planning guide. The guide provides a framework for communities to begin the planning process for post disaster redevelopment. The guide covers areas including the planning process, how communities can access their own vulnerability, capacity assessment, and how to get community buy-in and participation. Additionally, health and social services, housing, land use, and infrastructure concerns are addressed. Finally, the guide helps community planners look at how to finance the plan and what pre- implementations should be considered (State of Florida, 2010). One important aspect of the guide is the selection of partners in the
Identifying stakeholders for inclusion in the recovery planning is vital to the overall success of the plan. Governments and communities themselves are not able to look at every aspect of recovery planning and need the assistance of different groups in the community to make sure the rebuilding effort matches what the community as a whole sees as a successful conclusion of the recovery plan. Sarasota County has created the Sarasota County StakeholdersWorking Group for this reason. The group is made up of over sixty different people from different business entities, local government agencies, homeowners, and utilities who meet to develop a program that lists in order of importance what projects and areas they see as vital to any recovery effort post disaster (Sarasota County, 2011).

Florida has also implemented a pilot program of six communities in which to create Post-disaster Redevelopment Plans as models for the remaining communities in Florida to use as guidelines and best practices. The six communities are: Hillsborough County, Sarasota County, Polk County, Manatee County, Panama City, and Nasssu County. Specific goals and objectives were created in the planning process to address these areas:

1. Business resumption and economic redevelopment
2. Housing repair and reconstruction
3. Infrastructure restoration
4. Short term recovery actions that affect long term redevelopment
5. Sustainable land use
6. Environmental restoration
7. Financial considerations
8. Other long-term recovery issues identified by the community
The Sarasota and Hillsborough County plans are complete and are awaiting adoption by their governments (State of Florida, 2010).

Locally in the Tampa Bay Area, the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council has created *Project Phoenix*, a fictional Category 5 hurricane event that comes ashore in the worst possible location to affect Pinellas County. This storm has a direct impact north of Oldsmar on the gulf coast, sending storm surge waters up Tampa Bay and destroying most of the downtown city of Tampa as well as the most of Pinellas County. It is a planning exercise with scenarios based information relating to pre-planning and recovery efforts. The project is designed to get interagency cooperation efforts in place long before an actual event, and to look at issues that will need to be managed in the post disaster environment. *Project Phoenix* estimates 12 billion dollars damage from wind and water surge, as well as the destruction of over 56% of the residential structures in the county and a displaced population of 889,000+ people (Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, 2009).

Florida has unfortunately been able to execute some of its communities’ disaster recovery plans. One successful example of this is in the City of Punta Gordo, struck by Hurricane Charley, a Category 4 storm, the strongest hurricane to make landfall since devastating Hurricane Andrew in 1992. An economic and community redevelopment team, called Team Punta Gorda was created, made up of over two-thousand citizens, three-hundred and fifty financial contributors, and two-hundred volunteers with the goal or recovering what was lost and to rebuild in a more sustainable manner. Team Punta Gorda raised money and hired an urban planner who along with various volunteers helped create the Citizen’s Master Plan 2005. Public meetings and workshops were held to determine what the future Punta Gorda would look like. Working in conjunction with the City of Punta Gorda, and Charlotte County government, Team Punta Gorda has made a
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major impact to the area that can be seen today. One of the first projects that was completed was the Charlotte Harbor Conference and Event Center. It serves as the gateway to the community. Team Punta Gorda is now a non-profit organization that remains active in the continued growth and implementation of the Citizens Master Plan 2005 (Team Punta Gorda, 2005).

Summary

The literature review of the subject matter provides strong evidence of the importance and the need of pre-disaster recovery planning and the effects it can have on the well-being and survivability of a community post event. Several different avenues for communities to garner help in their individual disaster planning work is available as well as best practices that were put in place by communities that had been affected by disasters. Problems found to exist in planning processes, or the entire lack of recovery planning can be addressed and overcome. Communities and businesses that do not participate in recovery planning run the risk of losing the ability to return to pre-event conditions. Stakeholder involvement that allows for citizen participation in the recovery process is vital. Examples of successful recovery efforts serve as benchmark and proof that the recovery system can work if communities are willing to invest in the process before a disaster strikes. A paradigm shift from just looking at the response to the disaster to looking at how communities can benefit from the planning process before the event happens can help the community to enhance its resiliency and chance for long term sustainability.

Procedures

The applied research project was designed using the descriptive research method. This method was used in order to define the problem as it relates to the City of Oldsmar Florida and the impact a severe storm event would cause. The research was conducted in order to determine
Research for this ARP was initially conducted during the *Executive Analysis of Community Risk Reduction* class held at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland in November of 2010. Review of books and periodicals as well as published and non-published ARP’s was conducted at the Learning Resource Center and on-line.

Local research was conducted at the City of Oldsmar Library as well as through the Pinellas County Library Consortium through their on-line research databases. Several texts and periodicals available at the City of Oldsmar Fire Rescue Station 54 were also researched for additional information.

Interviews with local businesses helped complete the formal research portion of the ARP.

The first research question dealt with what potential loss regarding jobs and revenues could be expected in the aftermath of a direct strike event in Oldsmar. The Reference USA database from Infogroup and accessed through the local library system provided information on the top six businesses in Oldsmar in terms of the number of jobs and gross revenues for the past year. The businesses selected for this portion of the research were:

1. Baycare Ambulatory & Hospital Central Business Office
2. Lockheed Martine Tactical
3. WalMart Supercenter
4. Mease Countryside Hospital
5. Brycoat Incorporated
6. Nielsen Media Research
Research question two related to what other communities have done or are doing regarding post disaster recovery planning. A literature review was conducted to determine what steps for disaster planning have been put in place by other communities. Additionally, a literature review to determine what is available to communities from the State of Florida regarding help in disaster planning was conducted. The coastal community of Punta Gorda was selected to review as well as initiatives at the state level by the Department of Community Affairs who has spearheaded the disaster planning effort in Florida.

Research questions three was designed to answer the question of what specific businesses in the City of Oldsmar were doing to manage disaster recovery. Interviews were conducted with two of the six largest business interests in the city to determine if they had any knowledge of pre-disaster recovery planning, what type of planning had been done, what expectations they had for business continuity, and what was the current status of their plans. The two businesses selected were Baycare Ambulatory & Hospital Central Business Office (Baycare) and Lockheed Martin Tactical. Mr. James Schwamb, Vice President of Patient Financial Services from Baycare and Mr. Jonathan Poggi, Facilities Operations and Business Services Manager from Lockheed Martin were interviewed for this portion of the research. A general discussion on what each business had done to prepare for an impending disaster and what steps did they each have in order to continue in business at their present locations. The interview questions are included in Appendix A.

Research question number four was designed in order to compile a list of stakeholders who should be included in a group for pre-disaster planning for the city of Oldsmar. A literature review of best practices from other communities who have completed a similar task, as well as review of suggestions for such a group as detailed by the State of Florida Department of
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Emergency management Bureau of Community Affair was conducted. Stakeholders from government, non-government, private, not for profit, and service groups were reviewed for inclusion in the group. A sample stakeholder group for the City of Oldsmar is included in Appendix B.

Results

Research question 1: What is the potential loss of business to the City of Oldsmar in the event of a hurricane? The results of the procedures used to determine this research question show the potential loss of both jobs and revenue for that business based on either their 2010 Location Sales Volume as published in the Reference USA database accessed through the Pinellas County Library at the Oldsmar Library, or in the case of Baycare, an interview conducted with James Schwamb, Vice President of Patient Financial Services. The potential loss of jobs should each of the six businesses in question completely shut down and no longer operate in Oldsmar would total more than 2600 employees. Again, this figure only represents the largest six grossing sales employers in the city. Oldsmar currently has 1,046 business listings ranging from single person business entities to businesses with over five hundred employees. The bulk of the businesses show a location sales volume below the million dollar a year mark (65%), but Oldsmar is home to three-hundred and sixty one businesses than show location sales volumes over one million dollars including six businesses with sales over fifty million dollars.

The six highest locations sales businesses have the following number of employees and annual location sales:

1. Baycare 300 employees 1.5 billion/year
2. Lockheed Martin 500 employees 102 million/year
3. Walmart 500+employees 81 million/year
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4. Mease Countryside  550 employees  58.3 million/year
5. Brycoat  30 employees  7.7 million/year
6. Nielsen Media Research  800 employees  3.1 million/year

The total for these six highest grossing locations yearly sales and the potential loss of jobs created by these businesses no longer residing in Oldsmar post disaster is more than twenty-six hundred employees and a financial loss of 1.8 billion dollars.

Research question 2: What assistance is available to assist Oldsmar in pre-event planning and how have other communities address the issue of post disaster recovery? Florida is consistently ranked high in terms of disaster preparedness and has several programs designed to help communities begin the process of pre-disaster planning and recovery. Assistance begins at the local level. The Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council has begun the process of interagency planning and scenario based training events through its use of Project Phoenix. The Florida Division of Emergency Management Department of Community Affairs is the agency assigned at the state level to design and deliver planning and disaster recovery assistance to communities throughout Florida. The Post-Disaster Redevelopment Planning initiative serves as a blueprint to communities who want to develop their own recovery plans. Additionally, it provides grant funding options for communities to help design and prepare for the eventual implementation of a disaster recovery plan. The agency is currently in the early implementation phase of a six community post disaster redevelopment plan that targets potential disaster prone areas secondary to their coastlines. Additional planning and recovery information and reference material regarding best practices is available from several governmental and non-governmental agencies.

*NFPA 1600 Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs* is designed to provide guidance in program management, planning and implementation of any
recovery plan designed for the community. The document also looks at employee issues, public communications, and resource management (National Fire Protection Association, 2009).

Education courses offered at the National Fire Academy (NFA) in Maryland also provide pre-event planning help. The *Fire and Emergency Services Predisaster Long Term Recovery Planning* class at the NFA stresses the importance of getting out in front of the disaster and creating a vision of what the post disaster community can look like, from recovery in its original form to improvements that can be made as a result of the disaster and good pre-event planning. Finally, Presidential Policy Directive #8: National Preparedness enlists the federal government is a cooperative effort to support recovery at the local level from a national view.

Florida has had the opportunity to observe and learn from the success of communities that have weathered a disaster and come back stronger than before. The most recent example is the City of Punta Gorda which was decimated by Hurricane Charley in 2004. Through good pre-disaster planning, and an understanding of involving stakeholders from as many facets of the community, the city was able to determine their vision post disaster, put a team together to manage it, and begin the steps to reach that vision. Team Punta Gorda serves as a benchmark for other communities who can look to them as an example of how pre-event disaster planning can be accomplished.

Research question 3: How do non-governmental entities address post disaster recovery? The two businesses selected for this research question were the two highest yearly sales locations for the City of Oldsmar. Baycare and Lockheed Martin together have over 800 employees and gross yearly location sales of over 1.5 billion dollars. The two companies are for profit organizations that have a vested interest in business continuity as it can cause a severe impact on
their corporate profits. Interviews were conducted with both organizations to gather information on what each group do in response to post disaster planning and recovery.

Baycare began the process of disaster planning and recovery after the 2004 hurricane season which saw four named storms affect Florida and the Tampa Bay area. Baycare created an emergency organization personnel chart, similar to an incident command organizational chart, to identify key personnel who would be included in the recovery plan should it be implemented. Baycare is a 6 million dollar a day health care billing organization that requires sophisticated computer billing systems connected to several health care facilities including major hospitals and clinics in the Tampa Bay area. Baycare employs approximately three-hundred personnel in the Oldsmar office, but this number shrinks to between thirty and thirty-five as identified in the emergency organizational chart. These key personnel were selected not on years of service but on their individual specialties including information management systems and billing processes. Baycare recognized the potential dollar loss that a short time out of operation would be, and designed their recovery to be able to begin operations immediately upon recognition of the need to do so. Billing computers are designed to never be more than thirty seconds behind real time in the event of a disaster. This is accomplished by switching their current computer server core to a new hardened facility away from the Oldsmar area. The ability to move its computer operation to a new server made it clear to Baycare that the survival of the physical building was not as important as originally planned. The key personnel recognized in the plan have the ability to work from off-site locations such as some of the Baycare associated hospitals, various local Baycare training rooms, and also from individual members homes who are located outside of a potential disaster area. The Baycare interview with James Schwamb produced one interesting inclusion in the recovery plan specific to their mission. The goal is for the company to limit its
loss of data in the form of paper records that has sensitive patient healthcare and billing
information on it. In the event of an approaching storm, Baycare has contracted with a
commercial documents shredding company to come in pre-event and shred as much paperwork
as possible to avoid it from being scattered outside the building during a storm and
compromising the information on it.

Lockheed Martin Tactical designs and builds several different electrical components for
various communications and guidance systems for civilian aerospace and military agencies. The
Lockheed Martin Oldsmar location participates in annual business continuity drills based on
different disaster events. Previously, Lockheed Martin has conducted drills concerning pandemic
flu, terrorist activity, and since the 2004 e season, a hurricane scenario. The company has
developed a Crisis Management Plan with Action Levels from one to five, according to the
severity of the incident. The worst case scenario is designed to have the Oldsmar location shift
it’s processing and design capability to other Lockheed Martin locations in the United States
until it is able to resume normal operations. The business continuity drills are not announced in
advance. Staff members report for work and receive an on-line briefing regarding what the
scenario for the drill is. The crisis management team must then put in place the facilities
emergency plan based on the scenario. The drill is time compressed and the crisis management
team reports back with benchmarks from one hour, to six hours, to one day and farther out. The
goal is for the management team to have an idea of what percentage of the business is
operational at those specific times. According to Jonathan Poggi, redundancy is a critical factor
in the plan, with “Back-ups on back-ups, on back-up’s”.

Both Baycare and Lockheed Martin look at the key personnel requirements to remain in
business during the recovery period, as well as what facilities need to be maintained or moved to
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other locations to continue operating. The results of this research question are proven by the proactive planning and implementation of business continuity best practices by these two companies. The results suggest that other Oldsmar non-governmental organizations that are profit driven, and with an interest in not seeing any fluctuation in their earnings, also practice similar business continuity planning and best practices.

Research question 4: What public and private stakeholders should be included in the plan? The research shows that a disaster recovery plan can be very effective as long as the plan includes stakeholders for a wide array of community interests. The old manner of the local government being the only member of a planning team is archaic and shortsighted at a minimum and can be a disaster itself. All of the articles, texts, and other sources referenced for this research conclude that the importance of building an all-inclusive team from governmental, non-governmental, profit, non-profit, community based and service industry elements for the recovery to have its most chance for success. The importance of such stakeholder involvement is reiterated throughout the research from each level of planning involvement, beginning at the local level in Pinellas County with the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council and Project Phoenix, to the state level with the Post Disaster Redevelopment Plan guide from the Department of Community Affairs and associated initiatives in surrounding counties. Stakeholder importance is an essential component at the federal level as described in Presidential Directive #8: National Preparedness as well as in disaster recovery training courses held at the National Fire Academy in Maryland.

One aspect of stakeholder involvement is the flexibility each of the planning groups has to include anyone they recognize as a potential “player” in the post disaster plan. Communities who rely on tourism as a major source of revenue may include local businesses affected by loss
of tourism dollars, whereas a community who may be more affected by loss of agricultural or manufacturing revenue can include in their plan any members they see as important to manage that facet of the recovery plan.

The inclusion of a cross section of the business and residential concerns in a recovery plan can bring forward to the planning group some ideas that may not have been developed without their participation. The overall result of the research relating to this question is that for a community to be successful in its recovery panning, it must first be successful in “planning the plan” by including the many different stakeholders in the process from the beginning.

Discussion

The results obtained from the research for this ARP show clear evidence of the importance of pre-disaster recovery planning and how the lack of an effective plan can hamper or potentially prove fatal to a community’s ability to recover post disaster. Although the probable disaster event facing the City of Oldsmar is a catastrophic storm event, the concepts described here can be utilized by any community facing almost any threat, both natural and man-made. The recent events facing Japan post-earthquake and the American south ravaged by tornados and flooding can serve as benchmarks for such post disaster recovery efforts. The possibility exists to use these disasters in a long-term study to see what pre-disaster plans may have been in place and to follow the affected regions and communities to see what happens to the business and residential populations in the coming years. Will the coast areas be rebuilt in the same manner as before or will they look to the past as described in Meyer (2005) and follow the examples of the early Yucatan inhabitants?

Forward thinking disaster pre-planning has shown to be effective in communities across the country already. The example of Punta Gorda, Florida and their Team Punta Gorda planning
team moved from the theoretical to practical after the arrival of Hurricane Charley in 2004. The ability of the local community coupled with help from the Charlotte County and the State of Florida has helped the area return to what could be argued a better future for the community (Team Punta Gorda, 2005).

The ability of a community’s ability to make positive changes in the face of or the aftermath of a disaster can be directly related to that community’s pre-event planning. Stockton, Missouri’s example of post tornado recovery is studied at the NFA as a benchmark for successful recovery efforts that were managed by pre-event planning and post event implementation.

The question of if a disaster will occur is no longer a major concern for emergency management planners. The questions needing to be asked now are what type of event, and what type of post-disaster environment will we be operating in? The important concern for emergency managers now is how to involve the community, how to build a recovery coalition representing a cross section of all potentially affected groups to start the process of recovery before the disaster strikes. Fink (2011) emphasizes the point that knowledge of what could happen and what would be expected of the affected population, the better that population can be prepared for the event.

The resources to adequately plan and prepare for eventual disasters is available at several different levels from local to federal governmental agencies asked with recovery planning, to the example of best practices such as Baycare and Lockheed Martin. Training and scenario based planning exercises are a good way to test the plan and see what changes are necessary, or to identify areas of concern or need that were not considered initially. NFPA 1600, PPD#8, Florida’s *Post Disaster Redevelopment Planning* guide, and various courses related to recovery planning from the National Fire Academy as available to assist communities in these efforts.
The implications of not participating in pre-event disaster recovery planning are severe as described in the Michigan State study. Businesses spend only a fraction of their budgets on continuity or recovery planning and in the event of loss of data or facilities, most do not reopen or are not able to return to pre-event status. Oldsmar would have a very difficult time in returning to its pre-disaster state in the event of its major employers not remaining in the City. The loss of any one of the top six businesses in the city could create a depressed economic situation that the City might not be able to recover from. The loss of all six would be fatal to business and community survival.

It is the belief of the author that the research stands on its own merit as it relates to the importance of the concept of pre-disaster recovery planning. The several examples listed in the research demonstrate the positive benefits that creating a recovery plan, using stakeholder groups that represent all possible community interests for the plan to be successful. Additionally, the research shows what happens when no planning takes place, and the loss of control that ensues, sometimes leading to the demise of the community.

**Recommendations**

The City of Oldsmar should implement a pre-disaster recovery planning project. The plan should look at all aspects of creating a premier working document that outlines several key items for recovery planning as stated throughout the research. Initially, senior management personnel from the city should begin the process by attending courses related to disaster planning in order to gather best practices and examples from other entities that have gone through a similar process. The planning team should then form a recovery planning team of stakeholders identified through the educational courses attended or through networking with other communities that have experienced a disaster or developed their own recovery plan. The availability of reference
materials related to creating such a team can be utilized in order to start the process but the final make-up of the team can be determined once a general plan is decided. The initial general plan should be for immediate needs for business continuity and residential stability but the team should be able to begin to address different plan aspects such a community quality of life issues, and long term stability. The additional responsibilities of this plan will require the team to carefully consider what stakeholders should be involved and at what point in the process to involve them. The recovery plan should be a fluid document that has the ability to expand and contract, such as the scalability of the Incident Command System, to meet the current needs of the plan.

Training and exercises based on likely disaster events for the city should be conducted. Community buy-in to the process should also be a key component of the plan. Several different ways to involve the community should be explored, from town-hall type meetings to all of the public educations options Oldsmar currently has should be used.

A critical portion of the plan should be the involvement of the largest businesses in the City. The City should consider this as one of the major outcomes of the plan, as it is designed to keep the businesses operating and its employees local. Support from local business groups, the Chamber of Commerce, civic associations and homeowner associations should be a priority concern addressed by the team.

They City of Oldsmar should create a recovery plan based on its most predicted threat at the earliest opportunity.
References


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1. What is your company’s primary business concern?
2. How many employees at this location?
3. What is your estimated yearly sales revenue?
4. Does your company have a disaster recovery plan?
5. Did any event prompt you to look at disaster recovery planning?
6. What are the priorities of your disaster recovery plan?
7. How do you plan to operate immediately following a disaster?
8. Did your recovery plan identify any areas of concern that were not originally thought of in your initial planning?
9. If you answered “Yes” to Question 7, what were those areas identified?
10. Do you conduct training or personnel development related to the recovery plan?
Oldsmar Florida Disaster Recovery Plan Sample Stakeholder Group

1. City of Oldsmar
2. Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners-Department of Emergency Management
3. Florida Department of Emergency Management, Bureau of Community Affairs
4. Upper Tampa Bay Chamber of Commerce
5. Pinellas County Builders Association
6. American Red Cross
7. Lockheed Martin
8. Baycare
9. WalMart
10. Nielsen Media Research
11. Bay Arbor Homeowners Association
12. East Lake Woodlands Homeowners Association
13. Community United Methodist Church
14. Oldsmar Baptist Church
15. Tampa Bay Business Alliance
16. Rotary Club of East Lake Sunrise