

## DeSoto County Adaptation Strategies

### Introduction

Florida communities face increasing challenges of extreme rainfall, increased temperatures, and extreme storm events, impacting infrastructure, property, and the daily lives of residents. The Adaptation Action Area (AAA) Plan serves as a strategic framework to address vulnerabilities within DeSoto County to enhance community resiliency. To kickoff this effort, the Central Florida Regional Planning Council organized community workshops to understand the concerns of residents. A set of adaptation strategies was developed to address community concerns based on the results of the community meetings. This community outreach effort is followed by a vulnerability assessment which involves identifying socially vulnerable and underserved populations which are disproportionately impacted by the effects of severe weather events by collecting demographic and environmental data. The adaptation strategies and vulnerability assessment along with the quantitative data from the exposure analysis and sensitivity analysis will inform the AAA boundaries and assist the County prioritize investments and guide policymaking decisions.



Image 1: Flooding after Hurricane Ian

The vulnerability assessment involves identification of the County's critical community assets such as healthcare facilities, government buildings and libraries/community centers, schools, public health and safety facilities, parks and natural areas, and roads and evacuation routes. The most up-to-date data and information is used to map current and project rainfall flooding to evaluate the potential impacts on those critical assets during future weather events. The protection of these assets will ensure they can continue to serve the community after major weather events. Combined with data related to underserved communities, the County can identify and prioritize critical action areas for investment.

### Public Outreach

Several meetings were held with municipal staff, community organizations and champions, and the public to gain an understanding of the specific needs of the community in underserved areas based on their experiences. The outcomes of these meetings informed the specific strategies and recommendations of the AAA.

- Meeting 1: County and Municipal Staff – December 20, 2024

A virtual meeting was held with staff from Unincorporated DeSoto County and the City of Arcadia to gain insight regarding vulnerable areas and the challenges they face, particularly related to flooding. Additionally, attendees provided details related to upcoming plans and projects within each jurisdiction, including a Community Redevelopment Plan and Wastewater Treatment Plan.

- Meeting 2: Underserved Communities – January 7, 2025

Hosted at the Turner Agri Civic Center, this meeting was open to the public. Participants shared their experiences with flooding, including transportation challenges, flood insurance concerns, and lost property.

- Meeting 3: Community Organizations – January 15, 2025

Through a series of virtual calls, key community organizations and non-profits from the County and City shared their insights based on the services they offer most often. Participants included including The Patterson Foundation, Arcadia Center for the Needy, Area Agency on Aging, and Arcadia Chamber of Commerce. They shared concerns related to disaster preparedness and evacuation, disaster recovery, transportation challenges, and flooding.



Images 2 & 3: Public Meeting hosted at Turner Agri Civic Center

## Adaptation Strategies

The following strategies are intended to address the climate threats identified by the vulnerability assessment and the concerns discussed during public outreach through protection, accommodation, relocation, and avoidance. The recommendations consider a variety of approaches, including nature-based solutions, policy changes, infrastructure improvements, partnerships and collaboration, and funding mechanisms. Through a comprehensive set of strategies, DeSoto County can ensure a resilient future for the entire community.

## Policy, Codes, & Standards (including Land Use and Zoning)

1. Remove barriers to the installation of green infrastructure and LID features in municipal codes.
2. Require Florida Friendly™ Landscaping for new developments to conserve water and retain runoff.
3. Require the creation of multi-beneficial park amenities with intentional stormwater retention in County owned parks.
4. Update engineering standards manual to account for climate change impacts and support resilient infrastructure development as necessary.
5. Establish standards to require traffic calming measures such as street trees, wide sidewalks, marked pedestrian crossings, narrow lanes, etc.
6. Increase requirements to include vulnerability reductions measures such as additional hardening, higher floor elevations or incorporation of natural infrastructure for increased resilience.
7. Revise Land Development Code to allow non-conforming structures to add flood-proofing.
8. Streamline and modernize regulatory standards to enable greater flexibility in permitting mobile clinics and food vendors, ensuring vulnerable populations have access to essential medical services and nutritious foods.
9. Facilitate targeted infill development in areas of low flood risk.
  - Increase density or intensity by right or through bonus opportunities.
  - Incentives for adaptive reuse and funding for building and façade improvements in targeted infill areas of low flood risk.
  - Impact fee credits in target area of infill development.

## Partnerships & Collaborations

10. Continue to partner with non-profits such as Hope DeSoto to rebuild homes and make improvements.
11. Partner with local contractors to offer free or low-cost flood-resilient upgrades, such as elevated structures or waterproof materials.
12. Execute a written agreement for City/County maintenance of the stormwater system on an annual basis so it is prepared for major and unexpected rain events.
13. Work with utilities and independent agencies to identify and fortify their vulnerable critical assets.
14. Coordinate with local organizations, including nonprofits and philanthropy.
15. Coordinate public education and engagement activities.
16. Continue to pursue partnerships for co-development of affordable housing in areas close to job centers, schools, and other community resources.
17. Partner with state and federal agencies to access supplemental funding (e.g., FEMA, HUD grants).
18. Utilize community organization facilities located in historically flood-safe areas as emergency shelters for displaced residents during extreme weather events, while securing funding to harden these critical assets for long-term resilience.



## Planning & Management

19. Pursue shared drainage and water management infrastructure through public-private partnerships.
20. Ensure infrastructure investments in utilities and transportation are aligned with land use priorities for growth and conservation.
21. Align above-ground and below-ground infrastructure specifications and review process.
22. Regularly inspect and maintain gutters, drains, and other stormwater infrastructure and adopt a routine maintenance schedule in coordination with cities.
23. Adopt or update sediment and erosion-control regulations or practices. Ensure guidelines accommodate changes that may occur due to the anticipated increased, heavier precipitation events.
24. Continue to prioritize cleaning out Jordan Branch before major storms and expand this practice to other areas which flood during major storm events.
25. The County should evaluate the potential for County funded projects to create flood impacts on adjacent properties and shall mitigate these flood hazards as necessary.
26. Incorporate green infrastructure and LID features into drainage specifications in the engineering standards manual to slow and filter runoff.
27. Partner with local farms and food organizations to establish mobile markets offering fresh produce in underserved areas.
  - Provide incentives, such as reduced permit fees, for mobile vendors operating in food deserts.
  - Develop community-based farmers' markets in or near food deserts.
  - Encourage vendors to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and offer Double Up Food Bucks programs.
  - Streamline and modernize regulatory standards to enable greater flexibility in permitting mobile clinics and food vendors, ensuring vulnerable populations have access to essential medical services and nutritious foods

## Capital Improvements

28. Stabilize riverbanks with native vegetation to reduce flood risk through riparian restoration efforts.
29. Add the annual clearing of the canal at the terminus of SE Baker St. and 1st Ave. to the recurring maintenance list.
30. Include drainage/stormwater infrastructure projects related to flood prone areas in LMS.
31. DeSoto County has plans to replace the Forest Pines and Kings Baker Subdivision culverts.
32. Prepare W. Harris Road for future flooding caused by extreme rainfall through the integration of Low Impact Development (LID) techniques and green infrastructure.
33. Explore the techniques used to clean and maintain local creeks and replicate those across efforts in flood-prone areas.
34. Continue to keep the creek clear of overgrowth, debris, and invasive species, allowing the local ecosystem to thrive and remain resilient to flooding in extreme rainfall events.
35. Enhance the resilience of Arcadia's wastewater treatment plant against climate-related hazards, such as flooding, extreme rainfall, and hurricanes, to ensure uninterrupted operations and protect public health and the environment.



- Identify critical components of the wastewater treatment plant, including pumps, tanks, electrical systems, and treatment basins.
- Assess risks from flooding, wind damage, power outages, and infrastructure aging.
- Focus on assets that are essential for maintaining operations, such as lift stations, backup power systems, and effluent discharge points.
- Elevate critical equipment above projected flood levels, using FEMA floodplain data for future rainfall scenarios.
- Install perimeter barriers, such as levees or floodwalls, around the facility.
- Incorporate green infrastructure (e.g., bioswales, rain gardens) to manage stormwater on-site.

## Transportation & Access

36. Perform a transportation network study to identify transit market opportunities.
37. Strengthen micro-mobility tactics such as enhanced networks of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and other means that increase equitable access and emphasize connectivity.
38. Implement Complete Streets serving pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists and freight handlers.
39. Integrate dynamic adaptive approaches into processes leading to transportation and other investments.
40. Increase awareness and usage of the DART bus flag-down service in Arcadia to provide accessible, flexible transportation for residents, especially those in underserved or vulnerable areas.
  - Conduct surveys or focus groups to understand residents' knowledge, perceptions, and barriers to using the flag-down service.
  - Explain how the flag-down service works, including where and how residents can flag down a bus, safety protocols, and available routes.
  - Highlight the benefits, such as flexibility and convenience, to encourage adoption.
  - Develop materials in multiple formats (e.g., flyers, posters, social media posts, videos) and languages to reach diverse audiences.
  - Use plain language and visual aids to simplify complex information.

## Capacity Building

41. Plant more climate-adaptive trees to increase shade and ecosystem value. Require Florida Friendly™ Landscaping and disallow invasives and laurel oaks.

## Preparedness & Response

42. Provide residents, property owners and prospective property owners with resources and information about flood risks affecting their property and educate community members about options for mitigating flood risk and of the storm surges in the future.
43. Fortify County-owned assets, such as evacuation roads and bridges.
44. Develop a proactive, equitable, and actionable strategy to prioritize vulnerable communities in emergency response funding and infrastructure repair.



45. Identify communities disproportionately affected by hazards, including those with low income, elderly populations, persons with disabilities, and areas with inadequate infrastructure.
46. Repair damaged infrastructure to modern, hazard-resistant standards (e.g., flood-proof, hurricane-resistant materials).
47. Develop a targeted strategy to incorporate airboats into emergency response capabilities for accessing flooded areas caused by extreme rain events, ensuring timely assistance to vulnerable and isolated populations.
48. Provide climate-related information and warnings in multiple languages.
49. Establish a comprehensive awareness program to ensure residents are informed of evacuation zones, clearance times, shelter locations and capacities, and evacuation routes.
50. Develop a guide including: family disaster planning, disaster supply kits, home protection tips, evacuation zones, routes and shelters, what to expect after the disaster, etc.

## **Funding & Finance**

51. Prioritize low-income neighborhoods in disaster recovery funding allocations.
52. Aggressively participate in FEMA funding programs to protect private property.



**DESOTO COUNTY**  
Underserved Communities Adaptation Strategies

Virtual Meeting with County and Municipal Staff - December 20, 2024

Category	Location	Comments from County and Municipal Staff (2a)	Adaptation Strategies (2d, 2e)
Flooding	Unincorporated	Lake Susie area has flooding issues	Remove barriers to the installation of green infrastructure and LID features in municipal codes. (1)
Flooding	Arcadia	Flooding on Highway 70 and US-17 during heavy rains	Plant more climate-adaptive trees to increase shade and ecosystem value. Require Florida Friendly™ Landscaping and disallow invasives and laurel oaks. (42)
Flooding	Arcadia	Monroe Avenue and Orange Avenue flood and there are houses there and close to the Jordan Branch that have multiple times flooded out.	Plant more climate-adaptive trees to increase shade and ecosystem value. Require Florida Friendly™ Landscaping and disallow invasives and laurel oaks. (42)  Pursue shared drainage and water management infrastructure. (20)  Provide residents, property owners and prospective property owners with resources and information about flood risks affecting their property and educate community members about options for mitigating flood risk and of the storm surges in the future. (43)
Flooding	Arcadia	A lot of flooding in the southwest area, which is the most vulnerable part of the City.	Increase requirements to include vulnerability reductions measures such as additional hardening, higher floor elevations or incorporation of natural infrastructure for increased resilience. (3)  Stabilize riverbanks with native vegetation to reduce flood risk through riparian restoration efforts. (29)
Flooding	Arcadia	Roadwork has been completed in partnership with the County around the hospital but there are still flooding issues there as well.	Remove barriers to the installation of green infrastructure and LID features in municipal codes. (1)  Plant more climate-adaptive trees to increase shade and ecosystem value. Require Florida Friendly™ Landscaping and disallow invasives and laurel oaks. (42)
Ecosystem Restoration	Arcadia	Park will be part of the CRA. Part of it is City owned, but is mostly a County Park.	Require the creation of multi-beneficial park amenities with intentional stormwater retention in County owned parks. (4)
Flooding	Arcadia	Stormwater master plan projects on the LMS list for Desoto County	Remove barriers to the installation of green infrastructure and LID features in municipal codes. (1)  Plant more climate-adaptive trees to increase shade and ecosystem value. Require Florida Friendly™ Landscaping and disallow invasives and laurel oaks. (42)
Flooding	Arcadia	The entire Downtown area from Manatee Avenue to US-17 experiences flooding.	
Flooding	Arcadia	North of SR-70: N. Mills Avenue and E. Cypress Street flood in afternoon storms.	
Flooding	Arcadia	N. Hernando Avenue / E. Cypress Street / E. Maple Street	
			Continue to partner with non-profits such as Hope DeSoto to rebuild homes and make improvements. (11)

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Virtual Meeting with County and Municipal Staff - December 20, 2024

Category	Location	Comments from County and Municipal Staff (2a)	Adaptation Strategies (2d, 2e)
Flooding	Arcadia	Lincoln Avenue, W. Bond Street, Owens Avenue, S. Dade Avenue, and Tillis Street are residential streets in the southwest portion of the City which experience flooding.	Prioritize low-income neighborhoods in disaster recovery funding allocations. (51)
Flooding	Arcadia	East Pine experiences flooding and is in the southwest portion of the City, which is vulnerable.	Partner with local contractors to offer free or low-cost flood-resilient upgrades, such as elevated structures or waterproof materials. (12)
Flooding	Arcadia	12 <sup>th</sup> -16 <sup>th</sup> Avenues, Northeast of Turner Road	Revise Land Development Code to allow non-conforming structures to add flood-proofing. (8)
Flooding	Arcadia	Bridle Path neighborhood – Stirrup Way	
Flooding	Unincorporated	Close to the city on 2nd and 3rd Avenue is vulnerable	<p>Provide residents, property owners and prospective property owners with resources and information about flood risks affecting their property and educate community members about options for mitigating flood risk and of the storm surges in the future. (43)</p> <p>Partner with local contractors to offer free or low-cost flood-resilient upgrades, such as elevated structures or waterproof materials. (12)</p> <p>Revise Land Development Code to allow non-conforming structures to add flood-proofing. (8)</p>
Flooding	Unincorporated	Process of creating a CRA within these flood prone areas to develop better drainage systems. Southwest area of the City and the historic area.	<p>Remove barriers to the installation of green infrastructure and LID features in municipal codes. (1)</p> <p>Plant more climate-adaptive trees to increase shade and ecosystem value. Require Florida Friendly™ Landscaping and disallow invasives and laurel oaks. (42)</p> <p>Pursue shared drainage and water management infrastructure. (20)</p> <p>Incorporate green infrastructure and LID features into drainage specifications in the engineering standards manual to slow and filter runoff. (27)</p>



## DESOTO COUNTY

### Underserved Communities Adaptation Strategies

Virtual Meeting with Community Organizations - January 15, 2025

Category	Location	Comments from Community Organizations (2b)	Adaptation Strategies (2d, 2e)
Infrastructure	Arcadia	Housing Authority codeveloped a multifamily site at the southwest corner of E. Gibson Rd. and N. 17th Ave. (NE Turner Ave.) called Hermosa Arcadia. Difficulty building on this site because of stormwater drainage and flooding in recent history. The parking lot flooded prior to construction during the hurricanes, because the parking lot had not yet been leveled.	Continue to pursue partnerships for co-development of affordable housing in areas close to job centers, schools, and other community resources. (16)
Flooding	Arcadia	Standing at the corner of W. Harris and Booker T Washington Rd., looking west, all of W. Harris Rd. was flooded following Hurricane Ian. The water did not make it to the Housing Authority's property.	Prepare W. Harris Road for future flooding caused by extreme rainfall through the integration of Low Impact Development (LID) techniques and green infrastructure. (32)
Emergency Preparedness	Arcadia	Arcadia Peace River Campground was 28 feet under water during Hurricane Ian. Airboats were used to drop food, water, and other supplies to survivors stuck in place.	Develop a targeted strategy to incorporate airboats into emergency response capabilities for accessing flooded areas caused by extreme rain events, ensuring timely assistance to vulnerable and isolated populations. (47)
Response & Rehabilitation		Arcadia Housing Authority owns 130 units, housing 218 children.	<p>Develop a proactive, equitable, and actionable strategy to prioritize vulnerable communities in emergency response funding and infrastructure repair. (44)</p> <p>Identify communities disproportionately affected by hazards, including those with low income, elderly populations, persons with disabilities, and areas with inadequate infrastructure. (45)</p> <p>Partner with state and federal agencies to access supplemental funding (e.g., FEMA, HUD grants). (17)</p> <p>Repair damaged infrastructure to modern, hazard-resistant standards (e.g., flood-proof, hurricane-resistant materials). (46)</p>
Flooding	Arcadia	Mrs. Mercer recounted that her two sons reside across from the Desoto County Fire and Rescue Station 2 at 8789 SW Co Rd. 761. Due to the overwhelming flooding, her sons were stuck in place and airboats were dropping food, water and other supplies.	Develop a targeted strategy to incorporate airboats into emergency response capabilities for accessing flooded areas caused by extreme rain events, ensuring timely assistance to vulnerable and isolated populations. (47)
Response & Rehabilitation	Arcadia	The wind damage from Hurricane Ian on the Housing Authority's property at 7 Booker T Washington Rd. was immense. 87 of 96 units required roof replacements or remediations. The Housing Authority continues to struggle for the insurance capital to fix the remaining structures. Many of them still have tarps to prevent further damage. Further damage was caused by Hurricanes Helene and Milton following Ian, requiring re-tarping 4-5 times per year.	<p>Develop a proactive, equitable, and actionable strategy to prioritize vulnerable communities in emergency response funding and infrastructure repair. (44)</p> <p>Identify communities disproportionately affected by hazards, including those with low income, elderly populations, persons with disabilities, and areas with inadequate infrastructure. (45)</p>

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### Underserved Communities Adaptation Strategies

Virtual Meeting with Community Organizations - January 15, 2025

Category	Location	Comments from Community Organizations (2b)	Adaptation Strategies (2d, 2e)
Response & Rehabilitation	Arcadia	Arcadia Housing Authority owns 20 units at the southwest corner of E. Cypress St. and N. 12 Ave. There were no flooding issues during the hurricanes, but immense wind damage to roofs, soffits, downspouts, and gutters. The Housing Authority's goal is to keep the residents housed in their units so immediate roof replacement and mold removal occurred as quickly as possible in the worst units.	<p>Partner with state and federal agencies to access supplemental funding (e.g., FEMA, HUD grants). (17)</p> <p>Repair damaged infrastructure to modern, hazard-resistant standards (e.g., flood-proof, hurricane-resistant materials). (46)</p>
Ecosystem Restoration	Arcadia	The creek crossing near the intersection of S. Orange Ave. and W. Harris Rd. does not have a history of flooding. The Housing Authority owns 4 units requiring flood insurance at the corner of W. Harris Rd. and S. Dade Ave.	<p>Explore the techniques used to clean and maintain local creeks and replicate those across efforts in flood-prone areas. (33)</p> <p>Continue to keep the creek clear of overgrowth, debris, and invasive species, allowing the local ecosystem to thrive and remain resilient to flooding in extreme rainfall events. (34)</p>
Infrastructure	Arcadia	Entire community was challenged by the loss of the wastewater treatment plant.	<p>Enhance the resilience of Arcadia's wastewater treatment plant against climate-related hazards, such as flooding, extreme rainfall, and hurricanes, to ensure uninterrupted operations and protect public health and the environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Identify critical components of the wastewater treatment plant, including pumps, tanks, electrical systems, and treatment basins.</li> <li>-Assess risks from flooding, wind damage, power outages, and infrastructure aging.</li> <li>-Focus on assets that are essential for maintaining operations, such as lift stations, backup power systems, and effluent discharge points.</li> <li>-Elevate critical equipment above projected flood levels, using FEMA floodplain data for future rainfall scenarios.</li> <li>-Install perimeter barriers, such as levees or floodwalls, around the facility.</li> <li>-Incorporate green infrastructure (e.g., bioswales, rain gardens) to manage stormwater on-site. (35)</li> </ul>
Response & Rehabilitation	Arcadia	Townhouses on Jordan Ave. across the street from the wastewater treatment plant were flooded during Hurricane Ian. The units were damaged back in 2004 from Hurricane Charlie and purchased knowing asbestos was present and the owner was working to renovate. Two of the buildings would have been habitable within 3-5 months, but were completely flooded with Hurricane Ian.	<p>Partner with state and federal agencies to access supplemental funding (e.g., FEMA, HUD grants). (17)</p> <p>Repair damaged infrastructure to modern, hazard-resistant standards (e.g., flood-proof, hurricane-resistant materials). (46)</p>
Infrastructure	Arcadia	Boys and Girls Club did not experience issues with flooding.	Utilize community organization facilities located in historically flood-safe areas as emergency shelters for displaced residents during extreme weather events, while securing funding to harden these critical assets for long-term resilience. (18)

## DESOTO COUNTY

### Underserved Communities Adaptation Strategies

Virtual Meeting with Community Organizations - January 15, 2025

Category	Location	Comments from Community Organizations (2b)	Adaptation Strategies (2d, 2e)
Transportation	Arcadia	<p>People are confused about where the pick ups and drop offs for the DART bus. Some of the elderly residents of the Arcadia Housing Authority use the DART. Needed to be educated that it is a flag down service.</p>	<p>Increase awareness and usage of the DART bus flag-down service in Arcadia to provide accessible, flexible transportation for residents, especially those in underserved or vulnerable areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Conduct surveys or focus groups to understand residents' knowledge, perceptions, and barriers to using the flag-down service.</li> <li>-Explain how the flag-down service works, including where and how residents can flag down a bus, safety protocols, and available routes.</li> <li>-Highlight the benefits, such as flexibility and convenience, to encourage adoption.</li> <li>-Develop materials in multiple formats (e.g., flyers, posters, social media posts, videos) and languages to reach diverse audiences.</li> <li>-Use plain language and visual aids to simplify complex information. (40)</li> </ul>
Land Use and Urban Design	Arcadia	<p>A food desert exists in the southwest corner of Arcadia. 18-wheeler pulls in 1st and 3rd Friday of every month to bring food to the Housing Authority parking lot.</p>	<p>Partner with local farms and food organizations to establish mobile markets offering fresh produce in underserved areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Provide incentives, such as reduced permit fees, for mobile vendors operating in food deserts.</li> <li>-Develop community-based farmers' markets in or near food deserts.</li> <li>-Encourage vendors to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and offer Double Up Food Bucks programs.</li> <li>-Streamline and modernize regulatory standards to enable greater flexibility in permitting mobile clinics and food vendors, ensuring vulnerable populations have access to essential medical services and nutritious foods. (27)</li> </ul>
Response & Rehabilitation	Arcadia	<p>Many members of the Arcadia community are still recovering from Hurricane Ian, particularly in southwest Arcadia, including the removal of black mold. Many sustained additional damages during Hurricane Milton. Many of these homes include an older housing stock.</p> <p>Greater assistance is needed for the elderly in hurricane recovery.</p>	<p>Prioritize low-income neighborhoods in disaster recovery funding allocations. (49)</p> <p>Partner with local contractors to offer free or low-cost flood-resilient upgrades, such as elevated structures or waterproof materials. (11)</p> <p>Revise Land Development Code to allow non-conforming structures to add flood-proofing. (7)</p> <p>Identify communities disproportionately affected by hazards, including those with low income, elderly populations, persons with disabilities, and areas with inadequate infrastructure. (45)</p>

## DESOTO COUNTY

### Underserved Communities Adaptation Strategies

Virtual Meeting with Community Organizations - January 15, 2025

Category	Location	Comments from Community Organizations (2b)	Adaptation Strategies (2d, 2e)
Flooding		<p>Flooding across the County has increased. Flooding areas identified are consistent with those areas identified in the community workshop and other community conversations included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stormwater system needs improvements in several locations in the City.</li> <li>- The southwest area of the City including the wastewater treatment plant has suffered significant impacts. The wastewater treatment plant is undergoing improvements.</li> <li>- The campground north of SR 70, west of Arcadia was flooded.</li> <li>- Road and stormwater improvements needed on roads near the hospital.</li> </ul>	<p>Plant more climate-adaptive trees to increase shade and ecosystem value. Require Florida Friendly™ Landscaping and disallow invasives and laurel oaks. (41)</p> <p>Pursue shared drainage and water management infrastructure. (19)</p> <p>Provide residents, property owners and prospective property owners with resources and information about flood risks affecting their property and educate community members about options for mitigating flood risk and of the storm surges in the future. (42)</p> <p>Increase requirements to include vulnerability reductions measures such as additional hardening, higher floor elevations or incorporation of natural infrastructure for increased resilience. (6)</p> <p>Stabilize riverbanks with native vegetation to reduce flood risk through riparian restoration efforts. (28)</p>
Emergency Preparedness		<p>Community (government agencies, community organizations) is looking at the transportation disadvantaged program and providing additional assistance in evacuating special needs populations.</p>	<p>Establish a comprehensive awareness program to ensure residents are informed of evacuation zones, clearance times, shelter locations and capacities, and evacuation routes. (49)</p> <p>Develop a guide including: family disaster planning, disaster supply kits, home protection tips, evacuation zones, routes and shelters, what to expect after the disaster, etc. (50)</p>
Emergency Preparedness		<p>Disaster Preparedness is a priority across residents. Community is working together to improve robocall emergency system to reach out to as many residents as possible, as there are challenges in getting people to evacuate before it is too late.</p>	<p>Coordinate public education and engagement activities. (15)</p> <p>Provide climate-related information and warnings in multiple languages. (48)</p>

## DESOTO COUNTY

### Underserved Communities Adaptation Strategies

Virtual Meeting with Community Organizations - January 15, 2025

Category	Location	Comments from Community Organizations (2b)	Adaptation Strategies (2d, 2e)
Response & Rehabilitation		Heartland Coalition for the Homeless has funds for home restoration and for temporary housing. They are working to get the word out.	<p>Coordinate public education and engagement activities. (15)</p> <p>Coordinate with local organizations, including nonprofits and philanthropy. (14)</p>
Transportation		Transportation continues to be a concern.	<p>Perform a transportation network study to identify transit market opportunities. (36)</p> <p>Strengthen micro-mobility tactics such as enhanced networks of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and other means that increase equitable access and emphasize connectivity. (37)</p> <p>Implement Complete Streets serving pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists and freight handlers. (38)</p> <p>Integrate dynamic adaptive approaches into processes leading to transportation and other investments. (39)</p>
Flooding		The Community of Small Harlem – mostly an African American Community - had many homes were flooded during Hurricane Ian. Community members supported each other to recover. This area will flood again if there are no improvements.	<p>Plant more climate-adaptive trees to increase shade and ecosystem value. Require Florida Friendly™ Landscaping and disallow invasives and laurel oaks. (41)</p> <p>Partner with local contractors to offer free or low-cost flood-resilient upgrades, such as elevated structures or waterproof materials. (11)</p> <p>Incorporate green infrastructure and LID features into drainage specifications in the engineering standards manual to slow and filter runoff. (26)</p> <p>Prioritize low-income neighborhoods in disaster recovery funding allocations. (51)</p>
Land Use and Urban Design	Arcadia	Arcadia has no clinics nearby. The Housing Authority has a large parking lot to accommodate a mobile clinic if one were to try to reach this group.	Streamline and modernize regulatory standards to enable greater flexibility in permitting mobile clinics and food vendors, ensuring vulnerable populations have access to essential medical services and nutritious foods. (8)

**DESOTO COUNTY**  
**Underserved Communities Adaptation Strategies**

Meeting with Public in Underserved Areas - January 7, 2024

Category	Location	Comments from the Public (2b)	Adaptation Strategies (2c, 2d)
Flooding	Arcadia	Oak Street floods during any major rain event, including afternoon thunderstorms. This is a paved road with no stormwater infrastructure, but with a planned culvert replacement through CDBG funds.	<p>Incorporate green infrastructure and LID features into drainage specifications in the engineering standards manual to slow and filter runoff. (26)</p> <p>Update engineering standards manual to account for climate change impacts and support resilient infrastructure development as necessary. (4)</p>
Flooding	Arcadia	Both Crews Bank (400 N. Brevard Ave.) and the Farm Credit Bank (330 N. Brevard Ave.) were flooded during Hurricane Ian. The Crews Bank endured 5-7 feet of flooding and was demolished and reconstructed in Englewood.	
Flooding	Arcadia	Intersection of E. Cypress St. and N. Mills Ave. floods during a heavy rain event (located at the northwest corner of Memorial Elementary School)	
Flooding	Arcadia	Jordan Branch beginning at the Peace River just north of the Arcadia Waste Water Treatment Facility (223 Parker Ave.) running east, parallel to W. Magnolia St. was cleaned from the river all the way to the end after Hurricane Ian in response to difficulty with the culverts along this route during Hurricane Ian.	Execute a written agreement for City/County maintenance of the private system to be included on an annual clearing and snagging of the ditch system on a regular basis so it is prepared for major and unexpected rain events. (12)
Flooding	Arcadia	Canal at the terminus of SE Baker St. and 1st Ave. running west towards the Peace River is all natural and has not been channelized.	Add the annual clearing of the canal at the terminus of SE Baker St. and 1st Avenue to the recurring maintenance list. (29)
Flooding	Arcadia	Intersection of N. Mills Ave. and E. Gibson St. floods very quickly in a moderate to major rain event and is not on the list for drainage improvements. (located at the northwest corner of Desoto Middle School and while not directly adjacent to Desoto Memorial Hospital, is a point of access for the hospital). Drainage is needed near the middle school and hospital as it floods here. Needs to be cleaned out.	<p>Remove barriers to the installation of green infrastructure and LID features in municipal codes. (1)</p> <p>Pursue shared drainage and water management infrastructure. (19)</p>
Infrastructure	Arcadia	Master Stormwater Plan and Stormwater System are non-existent.	<p>Ensure infrastructure investments in utilities and transportation are aligned with land use priorities for growth and conservation. (20)</p> <p>Align above-ground and below-ground infrastructure specifications and review process. (21)</p> <p>Remove barriers to the installation of green infrastructure and LID features in municipal codes. (1)</p> <p>Pursue shared drainage and water management infrastructure. (19)</p>
Infrastructure	All	FDOT roadway construction on SR-70 is providing stormwater swales, but only addressing the runoff from the roadway. No additional compensation is provided.	Execute a written agreement for City/County maintenance of the stormwater system on an annual basis so it is prepared for major and unexpected rain events. (12)
Infrastructure	All	<p>Culverts and other stormwater projects on the horizon are included in the LMS - mostly in the Jordan Branch area, including:</p> <p>Drainage ditch behind Department of Health building at 1031 E Oak St.</p> <p>Forest Pines failing culvert to be replaced.</p> <p>Kings Baker Subdivision 1/2 mile of failing culvert to be replaced.</p>	Include drainage/stormwater infrastructure projects related to flood prone areas in LMS. (30)
Flooding	Arcadia	No flood insurance for mobile homes or manufactured homes, and most Arcadia residents can't afford flood insurance.	Aggressively participate in FEMA funding programs to protect private property. (52)

**DESOTO COUNTY**  
**Underserved Communities Adaptation Strategies**

Meeting with Public in Underserved Areas - January 7, 2024

Category	Location	Comments from the Public (2b)	Adaptation Strategies (2c, 2d)
Flooding	Arcadia	In the Golden Melody neighborhood, grading of the roadways is a higher elevation than many of the residential properties, causing stormwater to flow into the front yards and homes.	Partner with local contractors to offer free or low-cost flood-resilient upgrades, such as elevated structures or waterproof materials. (11)
Flooding	Arcadia	Hurricane Milton flooding devastated the neighborhood near the Nav-A-Gator	Continue to partner with non-profits such as Hope DeSoto to rebuild homes and make improvements. (10)  Prioritize low-income neighborhoods in disaster recovery funding allocations. (51)  Partner with local contractors to offer free or low-cost flood-resilient upgrades, such as elevated structures or waterproof materials. (11)
Flooding	Arcadia	Jordan Branch Bank flooded to include where it crosses at US-17. Culverts also flooded on US-17. The branch was cleaned out from the Peace River to the Start of the Branch after Hurricane Ian. This cleanout helped with not causing flooding with the next few hurricanes. There are plans for culverts and other stormwater projects here, funded by CDBG.	Continue to prioritize cleaning out Jordan Branch before major storms, and expand this practice to other areas which flood during major storm events. (24)
Infrastructure	Arcadia	There are lots of different construction types, and stormwater has never been improved.	Fortify County-owned assets, such as evacuation roads and bridges. (43)  Work with utilities and independent agencies to identify and fortify their vulnerable critical assets. (13)  Remove barriers to the installation of green infrastructure and LID features in municipal codes. (1)
Flooding	Unincorporated	Storm surge impacts have increased over the past several years.	Increase requirements to include vulnerability reductions measures such as additional hardening, higher floor elevations or incorporation of natural infrastructure for increased resilience. (6)
Flooding	Unincorporated	Concerns related to the impact of multifamily development on surrounding properties.	The County should evaluate the potential for County funded projects to create flood impacts on adjacent properties and shall mitigate these flood hazards as necessary. (25)  Require Florida Friendly™ Landscaping for new developments to conserve water and retain runoff. (2)  Facilitate targeted infill development in areas of low flood risk. -Increase density or intensity by right or through bonus opportunities. -Incentives for adaptive reuse and funding for building and façade improvements in targeted infill areas of low flood risk. -Impact fee credits in target area of infill development. (9)
Flooding	Unincorporated	The Navigator Area just off Peace River floods and has been affected by Ian/Idalia & Milton.	Continue to partner with non-profits such as Hope DeSoto to rebuild homes and make improvements. (10)  Prioritize low-income neighborhoods in disaster recovery funding allocations. (51)  Partner with local contractors to offer free or low-cost flood-resilient upgrades, such as elevated structures or waterproof materials. (11)

## DESOTO COUNTY

### Underserved Communities Adaptation Strategies

Meeting with Public in Underserved Areas - January 7, 2024

Category	Location	Comments from the Public (2b)	Adaptation Strategies (2c, 2d)
Community Engagement	Unincorporated	Folks who live in the southwest portion of the County are multi-generational who have lived there for a hundred years and would rather deal with it themselves.	Coordinate with local organizations, including nonprofits and philanthropy. (14)
Community Engagement	Unincorporated	Challenges communicating the services and resources that non-profits such as Hope DeSoto have to offer. For example, Hope DeSoto installs smoke detectors, but not many people utilize the program due to communication and trust issues.	Coordinate public education and engagement activities. (15)
Flooding	Unincorporated	Spring Lake Subdivision off King's Highway floods all the time i.e. afternoon rainstorm	Remove barriers to the installation of green infrastructure and LID features in municipal codes. (1)
Transportation	Unincorporated	DART needs official stop locations along the route not just at the retail shopping centers, with improved bus stops and a more frequent schedule.	Perform a transportation network study to identify transit market opportunities. (36)  Strengthen micro-mobility tactics such as enhanced networks of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and other means that increase equitable access and emphasize connectivity. (37)
Transportation	Unincorporated	Bus stops needed for larger developments.	Implement Complete Streets serving pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists and freight handlers. (38)  Integrate dynamic adaptive approaches into processes leading to transportation and other investments. (39)
Transportation	Unincorporated	There are not any volunteers to take resources to residents.	